

(Text of speech delivered by  
Hon'ble Mr. Justice R.C. Lahoti, Former Chief Justice of India  
on December 03, 2006 at  
XXXIII Annual Cultural Fiesta – 2006 of Birla Vidya Niketan, at Siri Fort Auditorium)

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Respected Rajshree Birlaji, Chairperson of the function/respected Dr. Sarla Birlaji/Shri B.K. Birlaji, Vice Chairman/Shri Ram Niwasji Jaju/Principal, Dr. Mrs. Anjali Sethi/Teachers and members of the staff/distinguished guests/ and, above all, my very dear young students - boys and girls of B.V.N., you are the ones for whom I am here this evening.

At the very outset, let me congratulate the students, teachers and management of this institution for the wonderful performances presented on the stage this evening at the Annual Cultural Fiesta – 2006.

I consider it a matter of pleasure to share the dias with an eminent member of Birla family. There are so many industrial houses who believe in and do charity, but contribution made by Birlas as a house in the field of industry and commerce is unique, in as much as they contribute in the field of education. The benefit of other charities is always one to one but charity in the field of education spreads its benefits by geometrical progression. You teach one and in his turn he serves, may be teaches so many. Charity in the field of education is matchlessly superb. For the spread of education, by establishing several educational institutions, the house of Birlas deserves an applause from all of us.

Just now, we have listened to a powerful message, inspiring and titillating, contained in the speech delivered by Smt. Rajshree Birla. There is hardly anything which remains to be said or to be added therein. It is time to ponder over those thoughts and not to receive another speech. However, my dilemma is that I must speak. I am the Chief Guest of the

function. Ordinarily 'C.G.' stands for abbreviated version of 'Chief Guest'. I have a different story to share with you. When Shri Ram Niwasji Jaju approached me with an invitation to be Chief Guest of this function this evening, I had no other option but to accept the same. I have high regards for him. I have also been hearing so many good things about this institution. It was difficult to resist the invitation. To be the Chief Guest of any function in this institution and that too when presided over by Smt. Rajshree Birla is a matter of honour for me. I accepted it. However, Shri Jaju was quick to extract a promise from me. He told me that you shall have to speak also. Innocently, I gave the assurance. Little did I know, what had transpired between Shri Jaju and myself would turn out to be something like a 'contractual guarantee'. For me today, this evening, C.G means not 'chief guest' but honouring 'contractual guarantee'. And hence, I must speak.

To be candid, I owe an apology to you all. My visit to this institution is late by more than a year. When I was Chief Justice of India, Shri Jaju had requested me to be here in the last year's Annual Cultural Fiesta. That invitation I could not honour as I was extremely busy with some other official assignment. I begged an apology. Today having witnessed the performance of the students, I feel that I should have been here last year also and I have missed something.

This evening, began with *Prangeet*, the song which titillates. It breathes life into the body. It stirs the soul. I have been watching the little children and young boys and girls throughout the several performances. At the end, and if you believe that I can judge and deliver a right judgment, than, I can pronounce unhesitatingly that the students of this institution have the competence, capability and confidence to beat and

surpass any of the professionals in art, music, dance and stage performances. I wish them all the best.

My young friends, you are in a school. Have you ever realised what is a school? Why do you come to a school? Every letter in the word 'school' carries a meaning and a message.

'S' stands for 'source of learning'. Every school is a place of learning; but not all schools teach what a young student should learn. That is why 'C' stands for 'character' (culture and creativity included). According to *Swami Vivekanand* and *Gandhiji*, that education which does not help in building character in the youth is no education at all. 'H' stands for 'humility', 'humbleness'. More you learn more you are humbled. *Vidya Dadati Vinayam*. *Vidya* does not stay with egoist. To one who becomes *ahankari* (arrogant) by acquiring *vidya* (knowledge), *vidya* with folded hands bids *vida* (good bye) to him. 'O' stands for 'obedience'. Only those students learn from their teachers who are obedient. A desire to learn also brings in obedience. Thus learning and obedience are interconnected and attract each other. Next 'O' stands for 'optimism'. Learning - acquisition of knowledge - develops positivism and creates optimistic attitude leaving no room for negativism. 'L' stands for 'light'. One who learns, develops character, becomes humble, is obedient and optimism in outlook kindles the light by igniting the spark within. He sets down on the path of fighting against darkness of ignorance and spreading the rays of light consisting of knowledge and learning, so essential for the welfare of the society.

I have learnt about the activities of this institution, also seen the performance of the students for myself. Some indication of this institution's activities was already given in the brief overview contained in the opening address of Shri R.N. Jaju. Learning so much about the institution like BVN

(Birla Vidya Niketan) reminds me of an anecdote. A departmental store claimed that everything required by every customer is available with them and the customer need not go to any other store. The motto displayed as a theme of the departmental store was "if you need it, we have it". In close vicinity, another departmental store was opened by a competitor. That store innovated a motto as a counter blast theme. They claimed - "if we do not have it, you do not need it". An institution like BVN embarrasses both the departmental stores within its fold. Whatever is needed by any child to shape as a good human being and a responsible citizen, the institution has it and provides it. What the institution does not have, the child does not need it.

There are a few highly influencing characteristics or qualities which you need to have to achieve success in life. There are a few secrets contained in certain inspiring words. Let us look at and evaluate them, assigning weightage to every letter of alphabet comprised in these words. English alphabet consists of 26 letters. Let A be equal to 1 and let Z be equal to 26. Let each letter be given a weightage serially progressing. Then<sup>1</sup>:-

$$\begin{aligned}
 L+U+C+K &= 12+21+3+11 &= 47\% \\
 L+O+V+E &= 12+15+22+5 &= 54\% \\
 K+N+O+W+L+E+D+G+E \\
 = 11+14+15+23+12+5+4+7+5 &= 96\% \\
 H+A+R+D+W+O+R+K \\
 = 8+1+18+4+23+15+18+11 &= 98\% \\
 \text{and } A+T+T+I+T+U+D+E \\
 = 1+20+20+9+20+21+4+5 &= 100\%
 \end{aligned}$$

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<sup>1</sup> *Wisdom*, March 2006, p. 45

If you believe in luck and leave everything to it, you achieve 47% success in life. You love your fellow beings then, your success is 54%. You have knowledge and work hard, yet, your percentage of success is 96% or 98%. But if you develop right attitude in life, you can achieve 100% success. You are blessed with luck, you love, you have acquired knowledge and you are putting in hard work yet it is only the right attitude which would enable you in reaching 100% success in life. Thus, it is the attitude which makes our life 100% success. And, in attitude, what matters most is how you see yourself.

My young friends, ladies and gentlemen, I am thankful to you for listening to me with patience. I convey you my greetings and wish you all the best in your life. Thank you.