

TALK OF HON'BLE LT. GOVERNOR AT GD GOENKA PUBLIC SCHOOL, Gr NOIDA

1. The Chairman, other senior Mgt Director from - Principal, Staff & Faculty, distinguished guests, parents and dear children of -

2. A great pleasure to be here with your very dynamic school on its Annual Day and let me say quite frankly I am here due to your equally dynamic Principal - an Army wife and dynamic Educationist and today's programme amply reflected her dynamism and energy.

3. Let me start by complimenting you all for a fabulous show – can be compared with the Best – very fortunate and proud to be here to witness the young ones show their extraordinary skills and talent.

- I am glad you picked a theme on an environmental issue and our most precious commodity water – we present a contrast that is bewildering.
 - On one hand we revere our sacred rivers.
 - On the other hand we pollute them without a care for the future.
- It may surprise you to know that even in a place like Andaman & Nicobar, surrounded by water on all sides – we have scarcity of drinking water and I had recently ordered the raising of the height of our check dams.

From all of us here witness to your extraordinary talents – let me say BRAVO – Let us give them a standing ovation.

4. Now on a more serious Note let me today talk of a few issues which are of great interest to all of us : so I have decided to cover:

- a. State of the Nation
- b. Our Education system
- c. Our Armed Forces & leadership
- d. Lastly my message to the children, the teachers/management and the parents

State of the Nation

5. India is a rising power with increasing clout in world affairs; economically strong; a professional & well respected Armed Forces; a vibrant Democracy a secular base, a vibrant middle class and a vigilant media; also a Young Demographic profile which is a great asset, but also a ticking time bomb, if we can't meet their aspirations.

6. But let us not get carried away, there are huge challenges that face our country.

- Poverty and hunger still stalk a % of our population.

- We still have religious and regional fault lines – “Muzaffarnagar” !!
- Our best institutions do not inspire the confidence they used to.
- Rising disparity; while the economy is rising – so is the disparity.

7. But on the whole there is hope for the future and among other things, you the Youth and children of today provide that hope of bright future for our country. And let me tell you, how you are different from our Generation.

- we always worked from a fear of failure.
- you , the children of today – You work from Hope of success- “we can - we will” is your Guiding Mantra.

8. With this as a background let me talk a little about our Education System:

- The good news is that Education is beginning to get the importance it deserves.
- Literacy rates are rising incl in the lower strata – The RTE is a landmark legislation which guarantees Education to all children.
- The quantity in our Education system is rising. But the quality is still not there.
- Large shortage of qualified teachers; and they still don’t get the respect they deserve.

- Our skill development base is poor – white collar job focus still prevails.
- At the higher level there is a mushrooming of Pvt. Colleges/Universities, some doing a commendable job; many more fall far short, more of money spinning outlets than temples of learning.

No wonder we don't have a single University in the World's Top 100 or is it 200!!

9. Let me say a few words about the Armed Forces where I have served for over 40 years.

- We are the last resort of the Nation & very conscious of our responsibility – can't afford to fail or be runners up even once- have to win every time, time and again.
- Our core values are intact and these are : apolitical, secular & highly professional; in fact a true reflection of the Constitution of India.
- Leadership in the Armed forces: Never let down the Nation even once.

10. A few words about A&N Islands where I have to honour of being posted as the Lt. Governor.

- A strategic out post of India
- 556 islands; 37 inhabited
- 750 kms N-S; 1200 kms from India, but only 100 – 200 kms from S-E Asia; 25% of coastline; 30% EEZ & Marine Life.
- A mini India with multilingual & multi religious society; approx 4 lakh people and 30000 indigenous tribes.
- Ecologically a paradise with great scope for Adventure tourism
- Being 1200 kms from the mainland, great challenges also.
- Please come and visit this beautiful part of the country.

11. In the end, let me say a few words to the 3 most important people present here: the students; the teachers and the Parents.

12. To you my dear children I would say:

- a. These are the best years of your life – live them well.
- b. Dream big and pursue your dreams.
- c. Try and be an original version of yourself rather than a 2nd rate version of someone else.
- d. Everyone is blessed with different abilities – so never live in the shadows – Do the best you can
- e. Develop character qualities so that you can be a proud and good citizen of our country: The 5 Cs – Character, Courage, Competence, Commitment & Compassion.

- Always share and care specially for the weaker person.
- Always try and give more than you receive.

And always choose the harder right than the easier wrong.

13. The profession of Teaching is indeed challenging – You are not only an educator, but also a facilitator, a friend, philosopher and guide. After witnessing today’s programme, I appreciate the tremendous efforts put in by the entire team led by your dynamic Principal. The future of our children is safe and bright in your hands; I compliment you all – Comparison of Teacher and Armed Forces. Not a profession, but a Passion – A calling - Otherwise will only remain a senior officer/tutor.

14. To the parents, I would say – You all are the ultimate Teachers – role models – the kids look upto you; watch and emulate every action of Yours – so beware that you “Reap as You Sow” – Please always encourage the child - for every child may not be an Einstein or Tendulkar, but he is special – he is yours.

15. I end with 2 Quotes.

a. Tez hawaon se na ghabra (Tu Aquib) – woh toh chalti hain

Tujhko aur ooncha uthane ke liye

b. And to you Dear Children,

I would say:

Tu Shaheen hai, Parvaz

Hai fitrat teri

Tere aage aasman our bhi hain

Sitaron se aage jabaan aur bhi hain

16. And I end by saying

Nikle thee akele manzil ki oar, log milte gaye aur Karvan ban gayaa.

Ladies & Gentlemen and dear children – Thank you for your patience.

Jai Hind