



Mr. R. Venkataraman
Hon'ble Vice President of India
Chief Guest-1985

The freshness of some occasions remains unaffected by repetition and the passage of time. The annual presenting of the Jamnalal Bajaj Awards belongs to this category. Without doubt this is in a large measure due to the stature of the man Jamnalal Bajaj in whose memory the awards have been instituted.

Gandhiji is often described, accurately, as an alchemist. Whatever he touched, he transformed. But that description is, I think, appropriately applied to the institutions and causes which came under his revolutionary attention. The Indian National Congress of India Society.

In the arena of human beings, however, Gandhiji was not an alchemist as much as a gemologist. He spotted the most precious stones with the accuracy of a laser beam. Jamnalal Bajaj was a ruby of undimmed lustre.

Government is neither omniscient nor omnipresent and hence, in these gigantic tasks, the work of Government needs to be supplemented with the work of voluntary agencies.

The relevance and importance of voluntary agencies lies in their high credibility among the people, their directness and persuasiveness and, most of all, in their robust independence.

Here, one should not undertake voluntarism unless one is prepared to efface oneself and merge with the tasks undertaken. Recognition and appreciation seek such a person and the person does not seek recognition. The examples of the Award winners today bear out this truth.

