

**Dr. R. A. Mashelkar**

**Trustee & Chairman, Council of Advisers, Jamnalal Bajaj Foundation**

Our revered Chief Guest Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji, beloved Chairman Shekharji Bajaj, Minal Bajaj, distinguished members of the Bajaj family, respected jury colleagues, honoured awardees, ladies and gentlemen.

Today, as we gather for the Jamnalal Bajaj Awards, our hearts feel a quiet void.

We deeply miss Shri Madhur Bajaj, whose presence, especially in his closing remarks, always brought warmth, wit, and wisdom in equal measure. He carried the Bajaj legacy with dignity, humility, and a deep sense of purpose. While he is not with us in person today, his spirit of goodness, grace, and gentle humour still lights this hall.

Let me first extend a respectful welcome to our revered Chief Guest.

Pujya Swamiji is a divine soul whose life's motto is "to serve God and humanity."

At the tender age of eight, he chose a path of silence, meditation, and selfless service in the Himalayas.

As the revered Head of Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh, he has transformed it into a global sanctuary of spirituality, yoga, and compassion.

He unites faith with action for mother nature and is a true symbol of renunciation and grace, through countless peace walks and inter-faith dialogues across the world, he has become a bridge between religions and nations.

He has inspired generations to live with purity and purpose.

Today, we bow in reverence to welcome this saint of service, this light of love - Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswati Ji.

Every year, the Jamnalal Bajaj Awards remind us of that Gandhiji's spirit still lives among us - not in monuments or memories, but in men and women who quietly transform lives through truth, compassion and service.

Jamnalalji Bajaj, the devoted disciple of Mahatma Gandhi, showed that enterprise can coexist with ethics, and that leadership is not about power but about purpose. His life proved that moral courage could build nations. The Bajaj family has kept that faith alive for nearly five decades through these awards, ensuring that Gandhian values remain a living force in modern India.

Why, one may ask, do we speak of Gandhi again and again? Because the world around us seems to have lost the music of harmony. Conflicts rage, trust erodes, and greed grows faster than grace. In such times, Gandhiji's message is not nostalgia - it is necessity. He reminded us that "An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind."

When power becomes arrogance, Gandhi teaches humility.

When division becomes destiny, Gandhi reminds us of unity.

When the world builds walls, Gandhi shows how to build bridges.

And tonight, our awardees personify that spirit. You are our modern-day satyagrahis - warriors of conscience who fight with compassion, not confrontation. Each of you has proved that one determined heart can bring light where there was darkness, hope where there was despair.

As we have seen, our winners today transforming forgotten tribal villages into havens of dignity through self-reliant constructive work, turning compassion into courage, rescuing and restoring thousands of exploited women and children, Showing how science, when guided by simplicity and service, can turn farm waste into livelihoods

for the poor and also carrying Gandhiji's message of peace and non-violence across continents, uniting the youth of BRICS in moral fellowship.

Each has chosen action over indifference, service over comfort, and humanity over self.

Their diverse journeys converge in one timeless truth - that the Gandhian way still lights the surest path to justice and joy.

Let us salute these four luminous souls who keep the Jamnalalji's inspiring vision and Mahatma's dream alive.

On behalf of the jury and the Foundation, I offer our deepest congratulations and gratitude. May your light continue to guide us towards a world that is peaceful, compassionate, and inclusive - a world that Jamnalal Bajaj and Mahatma Gandhi dreamed of.

Thank you.

