

## **Following is the full speech of the Vice President –**

“I am pleased to release the book, ‘NETAJI—India’s Independence and British Archives’ authored by Dr. Kalyan Kumar De, an associate member of the Netaji Subash Bose-INA Trust.

This book is a valuable addition to the vast published works on India’s freedom movement in general and the contribution of Netaji to the freedom struggle in particular.

Netaji was a charismatic leader and one of the towering personalities of the freedom movement. His patriotic zeal and unbridled love for the motherland made him to resign from the coveted Indian Civil Service and return to India from England where he was sent to appear for the ICS Exam.

The prominent role played by him in the freedom struggle is quite well known. So are other aspects of his life like his perspective on how to attain freedom, the enforced exile in Europe, his escape to Germany after his arrest; the operation of Azad Hind Radio in different languages and the revival of the INA.

What is important is to remember his vision and legacy for building a strong India. Even though there were so many different approaches to the goal of attaining freedom, the vision was common. The passion and the commitment was the same. All the illustrious names that shine brightly during the country's freedom movement had a deep, unwavering reverence for their motherland. They connected very effortlessly with the trials and tribulations of fellow citizens and wanted to secure freedom in order to usher in a better life for all the people.

Netaji is a part of this long lineage of charismatic leaders.

His dynamic and courageous leadership during the freedom movement will continue to be a major source of inspiration to the people, particularly the youth. He revived INA and made it a force to reckon with. As the documents in this book indicate, the British were quite alarmed at the rising tide of public sympathy for INA. As a British Government's intelligence report had mentioned in 1945, "the situation in respect of the Indian National Army is one which warrants disquiet". Clearly, Netaji 's leadership of INA gave it a credibility and stature that made the British take serious note of this organisation. It was one of the main contributing factors in the country's freedom struggle.

Today also happens to be the International Youth Day. On this occasion, I call upon the youth to take inspiration from the life of Netaji and strive towards building a New India. Even seven decades after Independence, the country continues to face many challenges on different fronts and the youth should be in the forefront of building a New India, which is free of poverty, illiteracy, corruption, caste, gender discrimination and where every Indian has equal opportunities.

Netaji’s strong personality was rooted in his belief that India has a glorious past and a bright future as a nation, as a civilization and as a culture. He was proud of India’s civilizational values, history and culture, which he felt formed the bedrock of our national pride and collective self-confidence. He also strongly believed that great nations shape their own destinies and he sought to re-ignite this spirit among the people.

At the same time, he believed that we must not insulate ourselves from other contemporary and younger cultures as exposure to them will help in enhancing our strength and resilience.

Bose was of the firm conviction that we are all Indians first and the sub-identities based on religion, region, caste and language must not be allowed to override the primary Indian identity.

Netaji believed that for democracy to thrive in free India, our citizens must imbibe the values of discipline, responsibility, service and patriotism. The concept of Mother India is a uniquely Indian cultural heritage. Patriotism and sacrifice for the well-being of India is therefore an essential duty of every Indian citizen, above any other consideration of religion or ideology.

Netaji had abiding hope for the future of Asia. He believed that Asia shares bonds of soul and spirit through cultural, religious, and historical mutuality and India’s social, economic, developmental and strategic interests are closely intertwined with those of Asia as a whole. While advocating strong Pan-Asia cooperation for collective security and prosperity, he had visualized India as a strong pillar of Asian strength and prosperity.

Netaji and other leaders of his time tapped into the hidden capabilities of each Indian. They galvanized the forces of indomitable courage and sacrifice, of self-confidence and self-reliance to secure freedom. After independence, we are pursuing national development with the same inspiration.

Dear sisters and brothers,

India, undoubtedly, has made tremendous progress since Independence in various fields and has emerged as the fastest growing economy. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic has disturbed the momentum and impacted the economy of India and other nations. This is the time for all of us to display greater resilience and defeat the virus and overcome the setback caused by it.

India is uniquely blessed as compared to many nations because of its youthful population--65 per cent below the age of 35 years and 50 per cent below 25 years. The potential of this demographic advantage has to be fully tapped and the forces of growth have to be unleashed to quicken the nation's progress and build a truly Atma-Nirbhar Bharat.

It is certain that the post-pandemic world will not be the same. While COVID-19 has brought into sharp focus the need for coordinated and concerted action globally to prevent the outbreak of such pandemics in future, it has, at the same time, also underlined the urgency for countries like India to build a resilient economy by becoming truly self-reliant.

The basic aim is to be vocal for local by reducing dependence on imports, promote Indian brands and products, create consumption-led growth through domestic manufacturing, build world-class infrastructure, make Indian industries globally competitive, ensure ease of doing business, attract foreign investments and develop India into a fully independent and self-reliant economy. Atma Nirbhar does not seek to erect trade barriers or promote protectionism, but rather tap India's inherent strengths and make various sectors globally competitive.

For the past many years, India has become a leading global player in the IT and pharmaceutical sectors. We need to fully tap the potential in other areas like manufacturing world-class medical devices.

I am happy to note that the government has recently announced an import embargo on 101 defence items as part of the measures to promote self-reliance. The import of the items from artillery guns to radars would be progressively till 2025. The launch of Atma Nirbhar Saptah beginning from August 10 is also a welcome step. The need of the hour is to give a major push to the Atma Nirbhar campaign by all the stakeholders, including the private sector and academia through research.

Before concluding, I would like to stress the need for our younger generation to be aware of India's history. There is a need to provide a comprehensive, authentic and objective account of the historical events. Also, the stories of sacrifices and valor by freedom fighters from across the country should be highlighted in the textbooks.

The present book contains some interesting documents that throw light on the great contribution made by Netaji to India's freedom movement. I am sure it will be useful to researchers as well as the general public. I compliment the author and the publisher for bringing out this useful publication.

Jai Hind!"