

**Mahamaheem's Speech for Vth Karpoor Chand
Kulish International Award for Excellence in
Print Journalism at New Delhi on 6th June, 2011**

Respected Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, who is a rare mix of academic excellence and principled politics; well known journalist and distinguished Chief Editor of Rajasthan Patrika, Dr. Gulab Kothari, invitees, Ladies and Gentlemen, Friends from Media,

Let me begin by saying how greatly privileged and happy I feel today to be a part of this exalted assembly.

We are here to celebrate 55 years of the existence of Rajasthan Patrika and distribution of the fifth ‘Karpoor Chand Kulish International Award’ for excellence in print journalism. Our citizens of today are more persistent to know and learn, trying to be more informed and more conscious of their rights and obligations.

Late Shri Karpoor Chand Kulish, founder of the Rajasthan Patrika was a man ahead of his times. He was born in the small village of Soda in Rajasthan but from the very beginning he was a man of vision, fired with

the zeal of a missionary to bring enlightenment and knowledge to the people of Rajasthan – not particularly known for progressivism at that period of time, through serving them objective news, information and comments on contemporary events. For this, he chose to plant the sapling of a Hindi newspaper which, over the years, has grown into a mighty oak. This, in a way, shows the level of social commitment of the late Kulishji that he chose to employ his resources in, what was then, more a mission than an industry. He could have made

investment in conventional industries, yielding quicker profits and not in a newspaper which, normally, has a long gestation period and takes time to return dividends. Be that as it may. Kulishji was a rare combination of a great determination and a man of vision. I had personally known Kulishji well and admired him for his commitment.

True to the media-motto, Rajasthan Patrika, since its inception, has always strived to inform, educate and entertain, not the people in Rajasthan alone but of the

entire Hindi heartland. There is no need to state the obvious; that newspapers hold a mirror to the society in which they function and it is here that Rajasthan Patrika excels many of its compeers by its tradition of adhering to objectivity and truth in news presentation and comment, abiding by the dictum: News is sacred while comment is free. The lines of great French writer and philosopher Voltaire, regarding freedom of speech, "I disapprove of what you say but I will defend to the death your right to say it" which is published on

editorial page of the Rajasthan Patrika is really indicative of their commitment to ideals.

It is a tribute to the integrity of Rajasthan Patrika that to encourage honest journalism and committed journalists it instituted, five years ago, an international award to be given for outstanding news reporting in print media. Honourable Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, who is amidst us today, will be giving away this much coveted award to some of the outstanding journalists in the country – why, indeed, the world.

Newspapers, I might say are a more special part of the media because of the printed word. Anything, which is in black & white, assumes instant acceptance over and against something stated, orally. Word is God – ‘Shabd Omkar Hai’ – so proclaims our own culture. It is not that other forms of communication and information are, any the less important but there is a certain sanctity associated with the printed word: and this has stood the test of time over centuries.

According to a British wit, radio and television can never take the place of a newspaper because you cannot kill flies with them. Speaking soberly, newspapers which are like beacons must always spotlight the truth, as far as possible, lest, people lose faith.

With these words, I beg to take leave of you but not before offering, my sincere salutations and congratulations to the recipients of this prestigious international award.

Thank you. Namaskar

