

**Personal Reflections About Being Invited  
On the Occasion of The Republic Day  
By The President of Bharat  
to The 'At-Home' Reception  
At Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi  
On Sunday, January 26, 2025**

**W**hen I was younger and was repeatedly exposed to the wandering mentally ill roadside destitutes, I felt that no one was paying him/her any attention, despite them being present slap-bang in front of one's eyes on the roads... It was like their existence never existed... In those days, feeling bogged down, disillusioned and lost myself, I identified with a song I had heard in my childhood from a movie 'Anupama', penned poignantly by Kaifi Azmi and rendered emotionally by Hemant Kumar, the words of which became an anthem for me –

‘या दिल की सुनो दुनियावालों, या मुझको अभी चुप रहने दो,  
मैं गम को खुशी कैसे कह दूँ, जो कहते हैं उनको कहने दो’

followed by the near prophetic

‘क्या दर्द किसी का लेगा कोई, इतना तो किसी में दर्द नहीं,  
बहते हुए आंसू और बहें, अब ऐसी तसल्ली रहने दो,  
या दिल की सुनो’

and I would invariably break down...

But over the years I have realised that some amongst us were ready to acknowledge and accept the pain of that alone, isolated and lonely wandering mentally ill roadside

destitute, and those some amongst us gradually over the years became a legion, with you, me and all of us contributing to take a movement forward...

And by being invited to **the 'At-Home' Reception** (Invitation attached below), I feel that no less than a person of the stature of the Honorable President of India, has reiterated her attention to the cause... And this reiterated, reaffirmed attention and implied pledging by the Honorable President herself, shall hopefully further turn the Tide, in favour of the amelioration of the plight of these wandering mentally ill...

Those un-acknowledged, innumerable humans on the fringe of society, existing, despite their outwardly non-existence...

I humbly acknowledge that I was erroneous in my earlier presumptions... And that empathy, compassion and concern are omnipotent in human society, be they ever so much under cover of the superficial veneer of the same society... And now with the Honorable President of India herself endorsing this empathy, care and compassion... We have been given... You, me, and all of us... A renewed vigor and hope for a nation-wide addressal of the mentally ill on the roads... And a glimmer of a vision of a new tomorrow...

Coincidentally, from amongst the Eminent Doctors, I was the only Doctor invited from Maharashtra. A proud moment and a feather in the cap for the entire Shraddha Team, of which you are an integral part.

❖ *Unsaid* ❖

Expressing deep heartfelt gratitude to the Honorable President on behalf of this endearing approval and encouragement, we remain, indebted and ever grateful, in the service of the wandering mentally-ill roadside destitutes on the streets of India...