

**EXCERPTS FROM SPEECH OF THE PRESIDENT ON THE  
OCCASION OF RECEIVING THE FIRST COPY OF THE  
NATIONAL HERALD COMMEMORATIVE PUBLICATION ON 1ST  
JULY 2017**

It is indeed a privilege for me to be present amidst you on this happy occasion and to receive the first copy of the re-launched National Herald. Today, a soldier and a witness of the Indian freedom struggle has risen again.

National Herald began its journey during the dark days of colonial years. That was an era where subjects of the crown refused to accept subjugation as their fate. They aspired to be free citizens of a free land. To be masters of their own fate.

National Herald gave voice to the freedom movement, but more than that, it gave a voice to the hopes and aspirations of every Indian. It represented a cause, the cause of freedom. Commercial considerations were always secondary and almost non-existent.

For every Indian from that era, aspirations for freedom were not just about a change in the political stewardship, but were aimed at creating a new India for every Indian.

From Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to Sardar Patel, Maulana Azad and many others, the paper gave a voice to the freedom struggle. The British shut the paper down for three years on August 15, 1942 because of an editorial titled *Bande Mataram*. Its editor Rama Rao was imprisoned for writing against the inhuman living conditions of the freedom fighters in prison.

It resumed publication on November 11, 1945.

The paper marked its return with an editorial titled *Jai Hind*. Written by Pandit Nehru himself, the editorial represented the yearning of every Indian to break free from the chains of slavery.

Below the masthead of *National Herald*, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had inscribed the words- freedom is in peril, defend it with all your might. These words may have been written in 1939 but have its application and relevance for all times when freedom is in danger and peril. Eternal vigilance is the price of freedom.

Our struggle for freedom was driven by the Mahatma's commitment to truth and non-violence. In a world where might was considered right, Mahatma Gandhi told the world that means were as important as the ends.

Our struggle then was for freedom against oppression from foreign rule. Our struggle today is to defeat the demons of poverty, hunger and disease in line with the transformational characteristics of our Constitution.

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