

DECCAN Chronicle

INDIANS VERY QUICK TO TAKE OFFENCE: GUHA

DC CORRESPONDENT
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"Indians have become thin-skinned. We are quick to offence and believe our historical figures are flawless. There's something wrong with our democracy if we can't speak dispassionately about our historical figures," said historian Ramachandra Guda.

Addressing a panel discussion organised by Jain University on 'Indian democracy: Looking forward, looking back', Guha identified various concerns in our present democracy. He said, "The Parliament and State Assemblies have become mere shouting chambers and most often Bills are decided backdoor, without our leaders engaging in discussions and debates. In States like Tamil Nadu and Gujarat, politicians are not encouraged to discuss Bills. This is not healthy." He suggested that India was enjoying 'election only democracy'.

Commenting about threat to freedom of expression in our

democracy, Guha said thinkers, political observers, filmmakers and journalists' freedom of expression was curtailed and as long as the person was not advocating violence, there should be no threat to their freedom of expression.

Further, Guha pointed out that public institutions like police and judiciary, which should protect the interest of a society, were becoming a stain on democracy. "They are corrupt and brutal. When such institutions are driven by money and arbitrary power, there is a concern to democracy," he maintained.

"Government jobs do not belong to only Brahmins or entrepreneurship is not entitled to Baniyas alone. This is welcome," he said. Scholar Dr Suhas Palshikar said that people's idea of nation and understanding of democracy was changing and this was due to two reasons. "There's a rise of Hindu nationalism which means there's an inevitable link that you can't be a nationalist if you are not a Hindu.