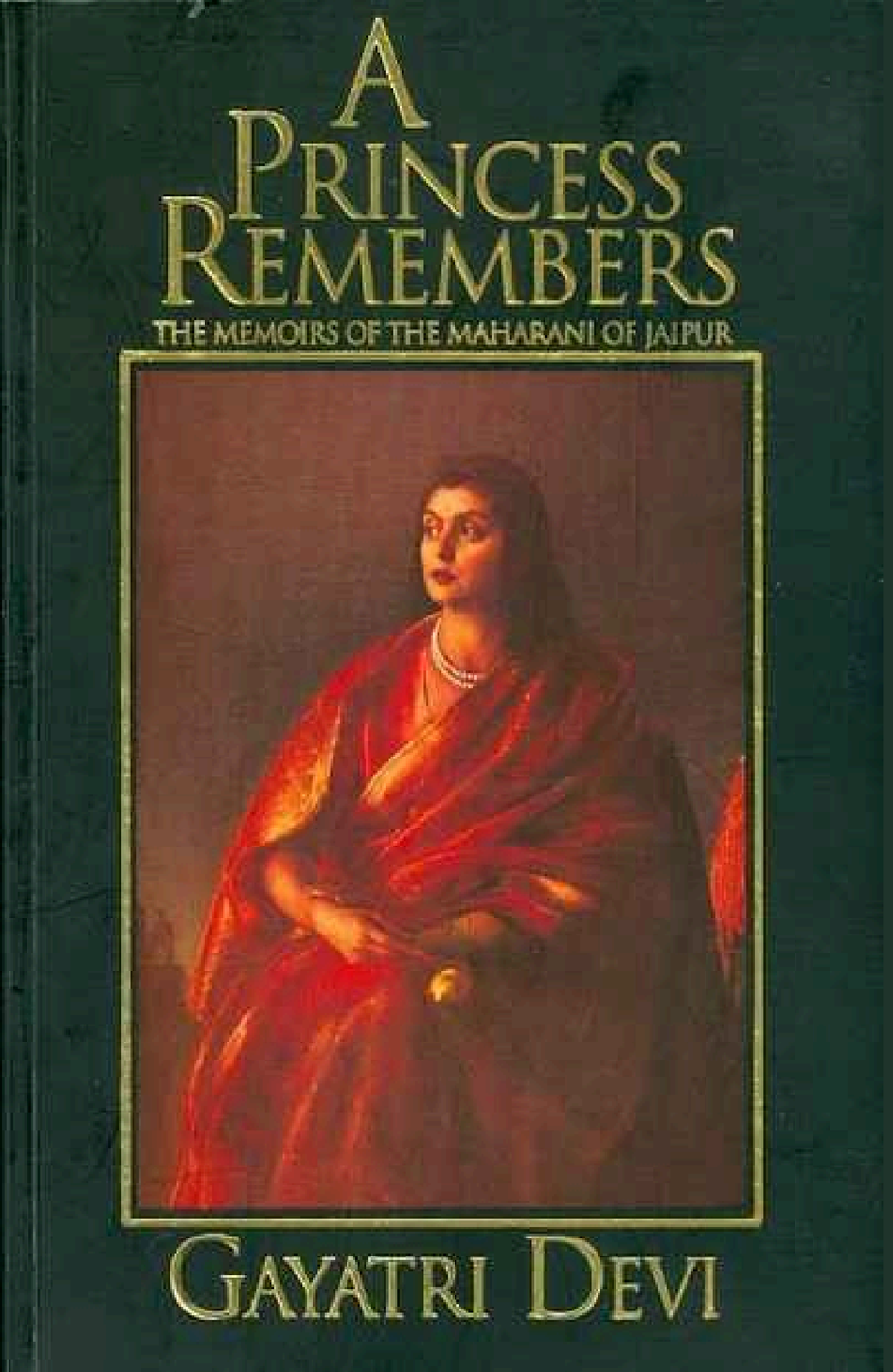




-GROUP 47-

daastaan ek maharani ki, vaani ek loktantra ki

The Life of Maharani Gayatri Devi; Her Contributions to the Making of India and Women Empowerment in Jaipur, Rajasthan



Introduction and Literature Review:

- Maharani Gayatri Devi: Princess, Politician, Educationist, Symbol of women's empowerment.

Literature sources:

- A Princess Remembers (Autobiography)
- Rajmata Gayatri Devi: Enduring Grace
- The Last Queen of Jaipur
- Sawai Man Singh II: Life and Legend

Gaps addressed:

- Lack of common people's perspective
- Limited analysis of long-term influence on women's rights and education policies

Research Questions and Objectives:

Research Questions:

1. How did Maharani Gayatri Devi use her royal identity to advocate for women's rights and democratic participation?
2. What led to the founding of MGD Girls' School, and what was its impact?

Objectives:

- Explore her role in women's education
- Analyze her political contributions
- Understand the balance of monarchy and democracy
- Capture common perceptions of her legacy



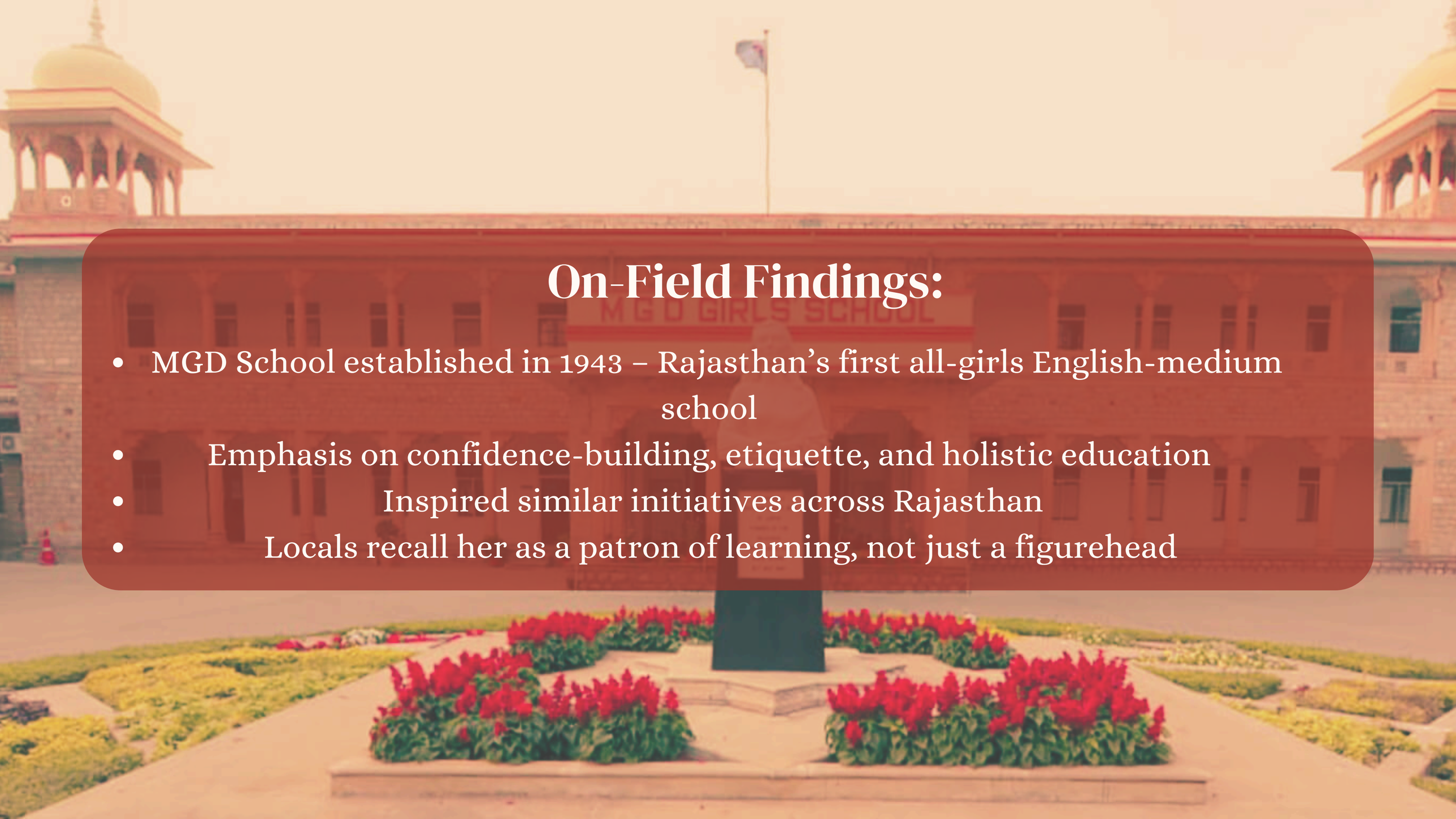
Methodology

Approach:
Qualitative field research

Techniques:
- Semi-structured interviews
- Site visits
- Public perception surveys
- Photographic and video documentation

Key Contacts:
- Archana Mankotia (Principal, MGD)
- Dharmendra Kanwar (Author)
- Locals, alumni, staff at MGD School





On-Field Findings:

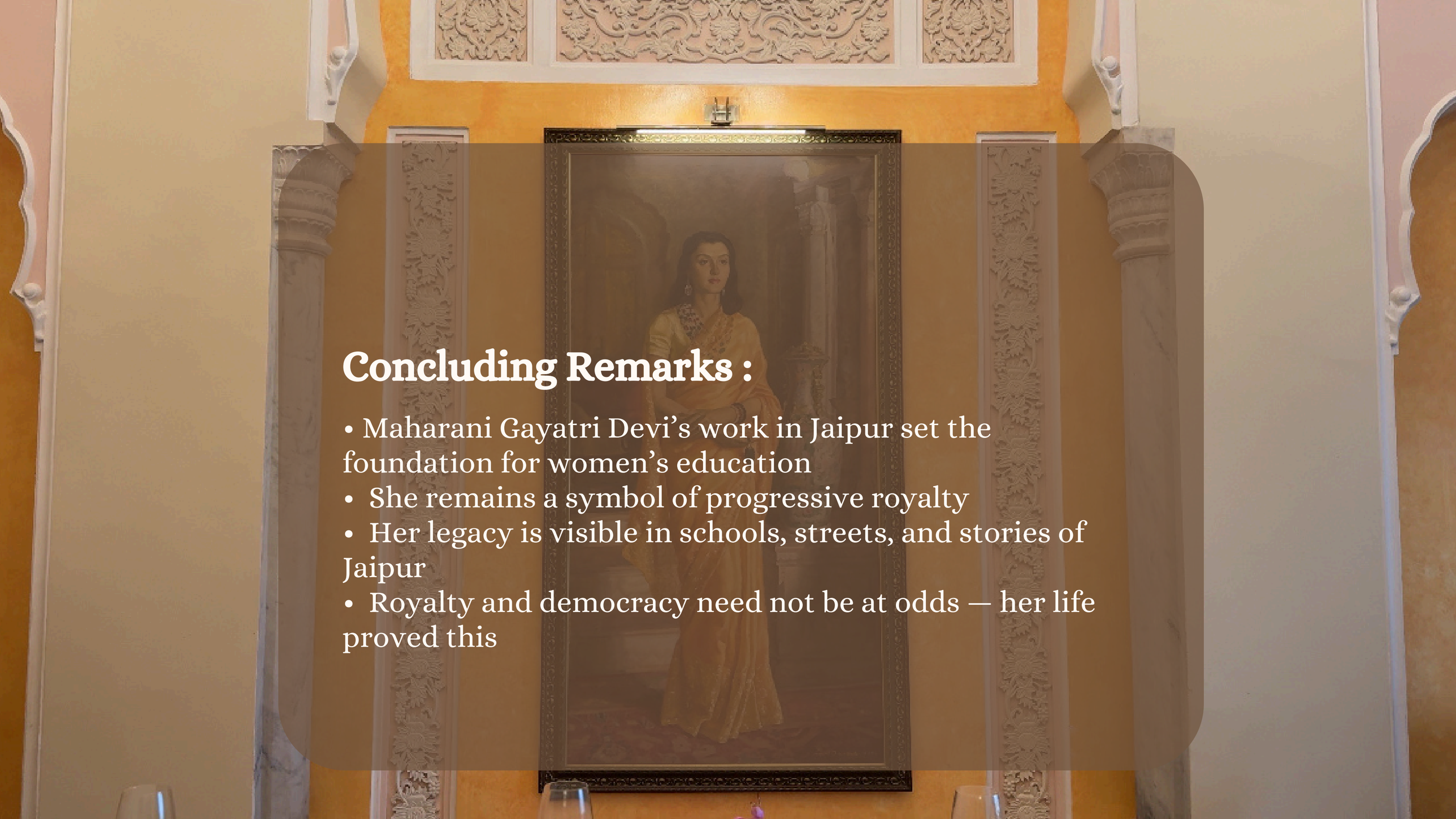
- MGD School established in 1943 – Rajasthan’s first all-girls English-medium school
- Emphasis on confidence-building, etiquette, and holistic education
- Inspired similar initiatives across Rajasthan
- Locals recall her as a patron of learning, not just a figurehead

On-Field Findings – Politics and Royalty

- Elected MP with a record-breaking majority in 1962
- Clean, respected political image; rejected Emergency
- Balanced royal poise with democratic ideals
- Villagers and elites alike respected her
- Used influence for infrastructural and women-centric reforms

Analysis

- Her royal image gave her initial platform — but actions sustained her influence
- Education became a tool for empowerment, not charity
- Common people remember her not just as a Maharani, but as a reformer
- Her life blurred the lines between monarchy and democracy, tradition and change



Concluding Remarks :

- Maharani Gayatri Devi’s work in Jaipur set the foundation for women’s education
- She remains a symbol of progressive royalty
- Her legacy is visible in schools, streets, and stories of Jaipur
- Royalty and democracy need not be at odds — her life proved this

References :

- A Princess Remembers – Gayatri Devi
- Rajmata Gayatri Devi: Enduring Grace – Dharmendra Kanwar
- The Last Queen of Jaipur – R. Bhattacharya
- Sawai Man Singh II: Life and Legend – V. Singh
- Interviews (Archana Mankotia, Dharmendra Kanwar)
- Fieldwork (Jaipur, Feb 2025)


THANK YOU