PREFACE

Human being, either knowing or unknowing, has been committing crime, perhaps, since the dawn of civilization. The commitment of crime, though undesirable, has been occurring in the society through ages. It is also an undeniable fact that a crime free society is essential for the all round development of human being. The progress of a society gets disturbed unless the safety and security is provided to the people living therein. Hence, the punishment for committing crime also has been provided by the lawgivers through ages.

The crime and punishment for the same has been dealt with great care not only by the modern lawgivers, it did arrest the attention of ancient Indian lawgivers also. In India, the concept of crime and punishment can be traced back to the Vedic period. It has been observed that the seers, the Dharmaśāstra and Arthaśāstra authorities in the subsequent period, came to deal with various types of crime and punishment for the same with special care.

The contribution of Kauṭilya in making a welfare state is great indeed. The Kauṭiliya Arthaśāstra covers different aspects of life related to the welfare of the society. Kauṭilya’s sincere concern in dealing with
different types of crime and also the punishment for the same has been well revealed in the Kautiliya Arthasastra, his monumental work.

At present, the crime has appeared as a threat to human civilization. The non-caring attitude of the criminals towards human welfare and human rights has been a matter of serious concern today.

The increasing number of crime in galloping manner, criminal’s non-caring attitude to punishment and the sense of insecurity and helplessness of the common people prompted me to make a little study of the concept of crime and punishment in ancient India since my college days.

Interestingly enough as I approached my revered teacher Prof. Swapna Devi, Head, Department of Sanskrit in 2005, in the context of pursuing a research scheme in the Department of Sanskrit, she, taking into account my interest in the field, suggested this very topic as for my Ph.D. project.

My revered supervisor also showed much interest in guiding me on this subject. Although I came to carry on the study with all interest, I must humbly admit that in view of the vastness of materials on the subject available in the related Sanskrit literature, I could not help resorting to the famous STHĀLIPULĀKANYĀYA here and there.

The present work entitled – CONCEPT OF CRIME AND PUNISHMENT IN KAUTILIYA ARTHAŚĀSTRA : ITS RELEVANCE
TO MODERN TIME is the result of my investigation carried on for the last almost four years with the valuable suggestions and guidance of my supervisor. My labour will be rewarded only if the present work comes, to some extent, to be of interest and utility for the scholars and researchers in the concerned field of study.

In fine, I must add that I am fully conscious of the probable shortcomings in my work. I, however, humbly submit here:

dṛṣṭam kimapi loke’smin
na nirdoṣaṁ na nirguṇam /
āvṛṇudhvamato doṣān
vivṛṇudhvam guṇān budhāḥ //