

Hon'ble Shri E. S. L. Narasimhan, Governor of Andhra Pradesh and Chief Rector of the University; Respected Dr. C. H. Hanumantha Rao, Chancellor of the University, Professor T. V. Ramakrishnan, the distinguished Chief Guest of the Convocation, members of the Convocation, colleagues, dear students and esteemed guests: On behalf of the Executive Council of the University of Hyderabad and on my own behalf, it is my privilege and honour to extend you all a cordial welcome to the fifteenth Convocation of the University. Our Chief Guest Professor T. V. Ramakrishnan is an eminent physicist, presently DAE Homi Bhabha Professor of Physics at Banaras Hindu University (BHU).

Professor Ramakrishnan completed his B.Sc. (Hons.) and M.Sc. in Physics from BHU in 1959 and 1961 respectively. He then worked as a CSIR Research Fellow at BHU from 1961 to 1962. He later completed his Ph.D. from Columbia University in 1966. He started his professional career as Lecturer in the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, and subsequently shifted to the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, where he continued till 2003. He was awarded the Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Award in 1983 and the Padma Shri in 2001. Professor Ramakrishnan has made significant contributions to the scaling theory of electron localization. He has made contributions to the theory of liquid to solid transition

and of mixed valence systems. We are indeed privileged and honoured to welcome you, Sir, as Chief Guest at this Convocation.

We extend a warm welcome to our respected Chancellor Dr. C. H. Hanumantha Rao, former member of the Planning Commission and member of the National Advisory Council, Gol. Dr. Rao earned his Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Delhi, and worked in the Department of Economics, University of Chicago during 1966-67. He was the President of Indian Economic Association, 2009-10 and is Honorary Professor at the Institute of Economic Growth, University of Delhi and Centre for Economic Social Studies in Hyderabad. Dr. Rao was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 2004 for his contribution in the fields of Literature and Education.

Let me start by warmly congratulating all the graduates who have received their degrees today. My hearty congratulations also to the medal winners. I hope that for all of you, this is merely the beginning of more recognition and achievements.

Ladies and gentlemen, the University is now 39 years old and retains its position as one of the major Universities in India in the area of higher education, achieving honours and attaining standards that set a benchmark

for other universities in India. Our faculty strength is 400 plus and that of students is a little below 5,000. This needs to increase significantly in the near future. The faculty have written over 1,200 books, more than 14,000 papers and have been granted 15 patents. All these have helped us achieve a position of Excellence within the Central University system of our country.

Our faculty have also been associated with several important national and international bodies, held Professorships of distinction, both in India and abroad, and participated in the global educational arena with as much vigour as we have always done. Furthermore, they have been funded quite handsomely receiving grants from national and international funding agencies like UGC, MHRD, DBT, DST, EU, DoE, so on.

In its twelve Schools of study, at present the University offers postgraduate and research programmes in several areas of the Humanities, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Arts, Management, Medical Sciences and Engineering. The earlier School of Mathematics and Computer/ Information Sciences is now bifurcated into two Schools, namely, Mathematics and Statistics and Computer and Information Sciences. There are also a large number of students under the Centre for Distance and Virtual Learning Programme through 17 PG Diploma courses.

The Academic Staff College at the University has so far conducted more than 80 Orientation Courses, more than 190 Refresher Courses for the benefit of more than 10,000 teachers from the colleges and universities all over the country. The University Campus School is now under the management of Kendriya Vidyalaya. The University is presently running a pre-primary (LKG and UKG) on the campus for the benefit of employees' children as well as for those from the neighbourhood and we have plans for establishing a project school on campus in the coming years.

Our annual student enrolment has grown steadily, now at a little over 4,800 in regular courses. Entrance examinations for selection of students are conducted in 33 centres all over the country. The Library at the University has done very well and has a collection of about 4-lakh books and other reference material, and it subscribes to about 5,000 e-books, more than 30,000 electronic journals, 550 print journals and 49 online databases (includes UGC infonet digital library consortium). It is fully automated with special software for the visually-challenged students.

Our commitment to the environment extends to the preservation of the biodiversity, of the varied habitats, of the fauna and flora, the lakes, the rocks.

One achievement that attracted considerable national attention is our action of using the roof of the Library for harvesting solar power and making this building almost self-sufficient and independent of the state electricity power supply. This coming year we will do more, and while we reduce our expenditure on power, we will also contribute to building a greener campus.

The Ministry for Social Justice and Empowerment has responded positively to our disability audit, and our request to make all our buildings accessible to disabled students, and in the first instance they have funded us to do so for eighteen of the main academic buildings. The University has had a preeminent position in the country with respect to its commitment to excellence in research and teaching. Having seen it intimately these past years, I know that the foundation is very solid, and the base is a strong one. In the past month, in recognition of the fact that twice the UGC has declared us to be a University with the potential for excellence; we are now designated simply as University of Excellence.

Our faculty and students have been recognized nationally and internationally- this year's Amartya Sen award, the SCOPUS young scientist award, the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Award, the B M Birla Award, several KVRSS awards, AP State Football championship...

the list is a long one. Similarly, many individual disciplines have been recognized for their excellence as well. The University's current extramural R&D funding is about Rs. 215 crores. In the past two years the University has received close to Rs. 50 crores.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has approved Special Assistance Programme grants worth Rs. 4.75 crores to the Hyderabad (UoH). The status of the departments was reviewed by the UGC and the grants have been recommended for the following Schools/ Departments/Centres:

School of Management Studies: Rs. 37 lakhs; School of Economics: Rs. 80 lakhs; S.N. School of Arts and Communication: Rs. 58.75 lakhs; under the School of Humanities the Centre for Applied Linguistics and Translation Studies: Rs. 50 lakhs and the Department of Philosophy: Rs. 49 lakhs; and under the School of Social Sciences the Department of Political Science: Rs. 100 lakhs and the Department of Sociology: Rs. 75 lakhs.

PURSE, the programme of the DST for Promotion of University Research and Scientific Excellence will shortly enter its second phase, our Centre for Research and Education in Biology and Biotechnology or CREBB,

similarly, is up for renewal and extension. A crucial and significant addition to the University is the School of Education. As part of its national drive in the XII Plan, the UGC has requested all Central Universities to focus on the discipline of education and has specially granted 7 positions to establish the unit that will focus on pedagogy and education. I see that in the coming years we will be able to reach out to larger and larger number of our fellow citizens in the country and thereby fulfill the responsibility that we all share, namely of educating the bulk of the country to create a modern state.

At this Convocation a total of 1400 students will receive their degrees and of these 140 are Ph.Ds. This brings the total number of Ph.Ds. produced at the UoH to nearly 1990, and the number of graduating students since the time of its inception to over 22,400. The UoH has always been special both in the way for which it was established and the way for which it was grown. Our commitment to increasing the scholarship and the research climate in the University is as firm as ever and we constantly strive to improve our communication with each other and with outside world in as many ways as possible and in as many ways as necessary. Our online newsletter which we update daily bilingual and even the Convocation ceremony is being telecast through live stream. As open-minded academicians, we subjected

ourselves and our organizational activities to an external peer review conducted by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). We are preparing for reassessment and reaccreditation which is due any time now.

The University family has worked tirelessly to fulfil all the expectations that are made of us. All sections of the University have a strong commitment to excellence and our position and our success today is due to the efforts of every member of the community.

Thank you all!

Jai Hind!