

UNIVERSITY OF HYDERABAD

FIRST  
CONVOCATION ADDRESS

*Saturday, the 6th April 1985*

*by*

**P.V. NARASIMHA RAO**

Minister for Defence  
Government of India

*Mr. Chancellor, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, friends:*

I am grateful for the opportunity you have given me to be here with you today. To be with young minds is always an ennobling experience. To be with young minds in a young institution is even more so. Although no longer young, I can still recognize freshness and agility of mind when I see them at work. I would like to congratulate all those who have received degrees and wish them all success in life. May the country ever remain proud of them.

I have, quite advisedly, resisted the temptation of accepting convocation assignments right and left, over the past few decades. I chose only a few Universities, among them some with which I was in some way connected. This University happens to be one such, in the sense that I was connected with it before it was born. Thereafter, however, it became impossible to visit your University otherwise than as a trespasser. I am therefore doubly thankful to you for making it possible for me to visit you as an invitee for the first time.

This time last week I was in Soviet Central Asia. There, in the sun-mellowed beauty of fabled cities and the warm memory of men who gave them life, my mind returned to Hyderabad, as it did a hundred times before when I was far from Indian shores. Hyderabad runs through the veins of some of us and whenever we tend to be lost in by-lanes, it reminds us of the vastness and greatness called India. We know its strengths and understand its weaknesses; when the tempo of the day tires us, we seek peace and equanimity in this haven of harmony.

This institution came into being under a formula which was devised in order to save the integrity of the State of Andhra Pradesh by providing opportunities of higher education on a non-regional basis. Before signing the informal draft of the Six-point formula, I had implemented its unwritten seventh point by resigning my Chief Ministership of the State. Standing in front of you today, I feel an indescribable joy of fulfilment. Seeing me for the first time, I do not know how many amongst you can realize the intensity of my feeling; I do not expect you to.

This University was born in the "Golden Threshold". Some of us have lasting and inspiring memories of that hallowed place. Since many of us believe in "Sthala Mahatmya", we should expect the University of Hyderabad to remain for ever a confluence of scholarship, grace and intense patriotism.

I recall that the objective of the University, to start with, was to fulfil a felt need of the State, namely, to get over the regional restrictions pertaining to University education in the capital of the State. In that view, it was originally meant to follow the pattern of any other University, minus the regional limitation. Since this limitation would have operated in any institution started in those days under State legislation, we had to create a Central University established by an Act of Parliament. This is how the intended supra-regional character of the University took on a truly national dimension. The most welcome feature is that along with the territorial scope, the content of the University also underwent a transformation, no longer patterned on traditional lines but in the vanguard of the advancing front of knowledge, with a task-oriented and inter-disciplinary approach.

This is the very first Convocation of the University. There is no past performance to go by. The test of the new pattern deliberately adopted here is yet to begin. One would naturally feel handicapped in making any definitive observations on how the pattern has worked or is likely to work in future. To that extent, whatever is said could only be tentative. Yet I am inclined to hope that some new ground has been broken in the organization of the different branches of knowledge and that greater flexibility of choice and endeavour has been made available to the students.

A characteristic of greater institutions is that those who participate in their creation and growth rarely have the time or the capacity for a detached look, a glance at their own handiwork. They are so much an integral part of the edifice that they get little perspective. You came here ten years ago, to a land with pastoral beauty of rock and lake. You explored the spots which would yield water and with water, brought life to the campus. You tended the land without, I presume, tampering too much with the rugged beauty of the "Gachi Bawli" area. To a campus without a place to work or study, you brought the buzzing activities of the nucleus of a University. All this, I am sure, signifies considerable achievement within a few short, initial years.

A hundred years ago, the then Prime Minister of Hyderabad, Salar Jung said: "The nature of Indians is averse to sudden and violent changes of any kind. What they have contentedly lived under for years, to that they will persistently adhere. They have a settled repugnance to the unsuitable, the unknown and the untried".

This judgement, like all such judgement about India and Indians, has proved to be true only upto a point.

Salar Jung would very possibly not recognize India, or Hyderabad, today. He would also have modified his views and acknowledged India's capacity for innovation and willingness for change—not at all violent but almost imperceptible while it takes place but change of vast dimensions nevertheless. This change has come about through many decades and is mirrored in all its seven hundred million facets today. Each one of us is, and wants to be, different. Each of you, I am sure, see the future as something new but all his/her own. It is this quality of individual excellence and our ability to attain it that account for the large number of trained Indian doctors, engineers, scientists and other professionals flourishing and so much sought after, abroad. It is this that has placed us amongst the world's ten largest economies, amongst the world's eight leading nations in the publishing field, in the top three in terms of the human reservoir of scientific manpower.

But this success of individual excellence does not necessarily reflect an identical measure of national achievement. Our achievements within the country are quite impressive by any standard; but it has to be admitted that they do not quite measure up to our actual needs. Our men and women of medicine are highly valued abroad, but we cannot find more than one doctor for several thousands of our population within the country. The tenth largest national economy belongs to the fifteenth poorest nation. Proud as we are of our achievements in the publishing industry, our literacy is nothing to be proud of. Agricultural advance does not assure the power to purchase and *per capita* access to food leaves much to be augmented. Science has crossed the threshold of space, yet left many of our human settlements untouched.

This all round hiatus bothers us all, as it really should. It is quite obvious that our progress has to be located simultaneously at many points which represent different levels of development. Since we inherited a society bristling with the complexities of extreme inequality, we have necessarily to cater to the jet and the bullock cart cultures at the same time, not to speak of the plethora of stages in between. And when we speak of science and technology, we ought to mean their effective utilisation appropriate to all the stages of development. If it means the use of advanced computers at one level, it should also mean a perceptible increase in the efficiency and output of the bullocks by equally vital improvements in the design of the cart. By the way, this long-standing but unarticulated demand of the bullocks does not appear to have been implemented, to date.

It may not be a good idea to place before the graduates, on the day of their rejoicing and achievement, a grim picture of future tasks and prospects. Yet certain realities cannot be wished away and you cannot turn a blind eye on them, especially because they are, in essence, challenges to science and technology.

I shall start with your own institution. You have initiated several healthy trends, several welcome departures from the beaten track. But in the history of post-independence education in India, there has never been a dearth of fresh ideas and intentions to depart from the beaten track. Whether in methodology or in content, several innovations were decided upon. But sooner than later, they were somehow found unworkable, cumbersome or not worth the trouble. In the result, they were either greatly diluted or abandoned altogether in due course, in sharp contrast to the conviction and determination which had attended their adoption. While

glancing through the report of this University, I find that two new features are already endangered within the first few years. First, the letter grading system seems to be on the way out; second, conventional departments are tending to reappear, threatening the more scientific interdisciplinary approach which you had started with.

It would indeed be a pity if, as a result of certain difficulties in implementation, the University reverts to age-old but largely untenable methods. Both the new features I have just mentioned are educationally sound and ways and means should be found to surmount whatever difficulties have come in their way. I am inclined to think that this is possible.

A look at the educational scene today clearly reveals that there are no soft options available to us. We saw Basic Education foundering on the rocks of apathy, vocationalization at the +2 stage being observed more in breach, work experience programmes not taken off in right earnest, centres of excellence still very few and far between, examination reforms permanently in cold storage, de-linking of jobs from degrees being adumbrated for the nth time - and meanwhile, the backlog of all these desirable programmes weighing us down to desperation. Evidently, something half-hearted, some diffidence, some reluctance to face the problems squarely, has come over us, somewhere down the line, or at several points along the line. We seem to lose nerve at the very first encounter with a hurdle. At this rate, everything in education will only stagnate and become irrelevant to changing situations. It is time that we refuse to get discouraged and decide to stick to the innovations we consider right, with determination born of conviction.

Broadly speaking, the problems of education could, at least partly, be traced to the problems of population. Taking the current birth rate, minus the rate of infant and child mortality which alone is relevant to primary education, the new entrants to the school-age fold may be put around 2.2 crores annually. This, of course, is a very rough estimate. Unlike our mythological child devotee Prahlada, all babies, regrettably, are born illiterate. Be they princes or paupers, they all need schooling from the beginning. Taking the figure of 2.2 crores as the constant annual additional pupil force and assuming that the existing drop out of the first five years is to be eliminated, we have to cater to 11 crores of pupils at the primary stage alone, which puts the total number of primary school teachers necessary for the country between 25 and 30 lakhs depending on the teacher-pupil ratio. Add to this the need for class rooms and other normal facilities and we have a fairly clear idea of the magnitude of primary education alone. Finally, if we project the needs on the basis of the Constitutional directive of fourteen-year schooling, the requirements of educational infrastructure become truly massive.

Even so, the achievements of the past 34 years are quite impressive. According to available reports the enrolment in primary classes is expected to be of the order of 8.5 crores in 1984-85. That leaves a balance of about 2.5 crores uncovered, which represents the measure of the task to be completed in the next few years, at the primary stage alone. The figures could similarly be projected to cover the 14-year schooling target which, of course, makes the task much more difficult. On the whole, however, it has to be observed, with satisfaction and pardonable pride, that the problem of quantitative expansion in education is well on the way to solution, even in the

context of increasing population. While making the marginal expansion still outstanding, it would now be possible to adopt an essentially quality-oriented approach from the Seventh Plan onwards. Improved facilities and teaching aids, better training to teachers, massive use of the Television-video-computer combination and many such devices at once suggest themselves. But apart from these, I should like to emphasise the need for far-reaching innovations in the structuring of educational administration. The Directorates of Education should have a parallel, autonomous complement which exclusively attends to the myriad aspects of quality, entirely free from and unsaddled with mere administrative duties such as transfers, pay-bills etc. From my own experience, I can assert confidently that where this approach was tried even partially, the results were very encouraging.

I would like to observe, at this point, that the principle of fourteen-year schooling is not only in compliance with the Constitutional directive, but has its own independent validity. Only after the fourteen-year schooling period could a boy or girl be called literate and qualified to learn other skills, without the danger or relapsing into illiteracy. This stage, therefore, is crucial in the educational process. I would plead therefore that the entire spectrum of 6-14 years be hereafter treated as one continuous time-frame and not be sub-divided, as was sometimes done in the past, no doubt mainly for the sake of convenience and physical manageability. I am glad to note that our Seventh Five-Year Plan is contemplating to project the target of covering the entire age-group of 6-14 years and to complete the backlog too. It is only then that our educational edifice would come to have a solid base.

The story, however, does not end here. Coming to higher levels of education, inadequacy of facilities has become the chronic malady, compounded by increasing needs, Plan after Plan. The educational pyramid needs strengthening at all levels simultaneously; no single level can wait until the others are fully taken care of. Deterioration is found at all levels and any improvement, to be effective, should necessarily be of an integrated character.

Taking the numbers passing out of High School as the basis, the dimensions of the programme of vocationalisation at the +2 level could be roughly worked out. The full implementation of the Class I-VIII spectrum would leave us with about 2.2 crores boys and girls passing Class VIII. Even if a reduction of the order of one-third is taken on account of failures, drop-outs, diversions into the job market etc., we would still be landed with about 1.3 crore High School leavers to attend to. Even if the current volume of enrolment in the universities, viz, about 35 lakhs, which many consider very high already, is to be retained, we shall have to find job-oriented education for about a crore matriculate candidates annually. And if a sizeable portion of the present level of university enrolment is intended to be prevented, the above figure of one crore would correspondingly increase very considerably in the coming years. In any event, this would represent the order of the commitment on job-oriented education needed in future. In other words, the potential of vocationalisation available at present would have to be augmented several-fold. It remains to be seen whether accomplishing this task within the Seventh Plan period is going to be feasible. If it is not, the rush on the universities is bound to continue as before.

If, on the other hand, we do succeed in providing job-oriented courses to these matriculate candidates numbering about a crore, what will they do after completing those courses? Where are the jobs to absorb them, either by way of employment or self-employment? We will then be facing even a more formidable problem, considering the fact that a graduate *simpliciter* would be more willing to remain unemployed than a technically qualified candidate. The inexorable pre-requisite of vocationalisation, therefore, is the capacity to find job or work opportunities on a really massive scale. The projections currently being made in the Seventh Plan fall far short of the requirements estimated above. This is a matter for serious reflection.

Besides, we have always acknowledged the need to regulate technical education so as to meet national needs and to avoid excessive surpluses. Technical education being much more expensive, this is the correct approach. It would, therefore, fly in the face of sound policies to seek to create job-oriented courses merely for slashing down admission to the universities. Dumping a large number of youngsters from one field on to another, merely to get rid of them, as it were, would only amount to a panicky jump from the frying pan into the fire.

The only sensible course of action that commends itself under the circumstances is -

- a) to continue the effort to provide job-oriented education in conformity with national needs;
- b) to attempt rapid industrialisation so as to augment employment opportunities as much as practicable;

- c) to limit formal university education to what is considered necessary and manageable, consistent with the requisite standards;
- d) to open up vast educational opportunities through open universities, correspondence courses and other methods needing minimum infra-structure; and
- e) to de-link degrees from jobs.

I shall now briefly refer to the last point, *viz.*, de-linking of degrees from jobs. The first obvious exception to this proposal is technical education. We cannot, for instance, de-link an M.B.,B.S. degree from a doctor's job. Nor can we de-link the diploma of a job-oriented technical course from the job relevant to that course. The de-linking, therefore, would be limited to ordinary arts or science degrees and would presumably envisage the degrees being replaced by specific tests relevant to the jobs. A National Merit Examination has also been proposed in this behalf, whose details and implications would, I hope, be available at an early date. Meanwhile, however, it appears fairly certain that once the National Merit Examination is instituted, it could again result in something similar to the present-day graduate degree. If the universities refuse to instruct students for this examination, a large number of teaching shops, charging exorbitant fees or other remuneration, are likely to spring up, leaving students of the weaker sections in the lurch and leading to predictable tensions in the society. These developments need to be anticipated and obviated in time and the merits of the National Merit Examination assessed carefully. One can only hope that the whole exercise will not bring us back to square one. After all,

whichever way one looks at the scenario, the fact of the matter is that we are dealing with a situation of almost unmanageable numbers, which simply cannot be wished away, howsoever we may juggle with improvisations. Success, therefore, is bound to be limited; the main question is how to maximise it within the given outside limits.

We are now seized with the problem of formulating a comprehensive policy on education and a blue-print on higher education policy is under active consideration. There is the urgent need to review our education policy, not only because we have completed four decades of Freedom, but even more because the next century is knocking at our door. What does this entail?

Writers, futurologists in particular, talk about Megatrends and the so-called revolution in technology initiated by electronics is listed as an over-arching Megatrend. I can readily think of some issues related to these developments. First, electronics technology leads to a revolution in information and this revolution transforms the whole structure of industrial production as also of intellectual advancement. In other words, computers have opened up new vistas for the production of goods and services. Thus, in one sense, this is a higher phase of the industrial revolution that the world witnessed during last century. But where the old industrial revolution did not give a direct fillip to the advancement of learning, the revolution in electronics in itself constitutes a direct tool for the phenomenal transformation in our learning process. In this sense, the electronics revolution is probably more benignly related to the intellectual advancement of society than the old industrial revolution had ever been. Secondly, in terms of

the Third World's accessibility to this new industrial revolution, we are on more favourable ground. This qualitative transformation in technology is contemporaneous to the post-colonial stage in world history. Despite the difficulties in both the timing of the new revolution and the pressure of the efforts of the Third World, we have better access to the mysteries of the computer technology than what the age of classical industrial technology afforded a century earlier to our ancestors in our part of the world.

To some extent, the high salience of manpower potentialities in the area of electronics vindicates the hope I expressed above. Third World scientists figure very prominently in both R&D establishments and in industrial establishments relating to the field of electronics even in the developed world. I am proud to reiterate the well-known fact that Indians are in the forefront in this area. Given all these favourable factors, we are in a position to catch up with the new industrial revolution and the initiation of our new educational policy would enable us to emerge into the electronic age.

I have been told that your faculty has been recruited from both the Higher Institutes of Technology and the Universities in the country. This is an ideal synthesis to undertake the new orientation that we are talking about. Again, being a young University, a majority of your faculty would be there occupying high positions by the time we enter the 21st century. This will have given your faculty and students the desired capability to adapt to the changes in the performance of the tasks of the Universities. Above all, as a University of the Centre, and perhaps the only one of its kind which is really centrally located with a high degree of familiarity with contemporary problems, your role in incorporating

changes in educational policy will be much sought after. Therefore, you would do well to take the necessary leadership in carrying out the on-going review of the higher educational policy. Obviously, you will also be in the lead in the implementation of such policy.

I shall now say a few words about research, with particular reference to this University. Timur's grandson Ulufbek, who was a great scientist and astronomer, said several centuries ago, "Religions disperse like mist; Kingdoms come down. But the Works of the Scientists remain for ever". It is heartening to know that research is accorded high priority in this University. Being a new institution, you had the advantage of beginning with the right priorities, without the burdens of an outdated past. I am happy that your research output is already impressive and bids fair to register greater achievements. But I have no means of ascertaining to what extent the University has maintained close contacts with National Laboratories and industries and enhanced its own involvement in the real problems of the day. Since you have been working with some of the most modern equipment, one would expect you to liaise with a field like Defence Research and Development which is adequately represented in Hyderabad itself. It is an important facet of any University's culture to interact constantly and closely with the scientific community in the area in which the University is situated. We know of many technologically- and culturally-progressive cities in the world which have benefitted from such interaction. In this respect, I consider that your University is ideally located. Hyderabad is a unique city wherein we find a galaxy of scientific institutions, technological centres and Universities pursuing practically all aspects of scientific endeavour Nuclear Physics, Geology, Electronics,

Metallurgy, Molecular Biology, Genetics, to name but a few. It has also been said that a very large number of scientists and engineers live and work at Hyderabad alone.

This should provide a unique opportunity to this University to interact and enrich the society it lives in. This University's competence in Pure Sciences should provide its scientific leadership and know-how to the many institutes and industries based on those sciences. This could prove to be a lasting and mutually beneficial partnership.

There are laboratories, teaching institutions and production agencies totally dedicated to the country's defence preparedness in the city. These have been established to provide the necessary scientific and technological leadership in defence. It is well-known that technologies in defence determine the outcome of wars today and thus constitute the back-bone of national independence and honour. In that view, the Hyderabad University has a common cause with these organisations. In addition to providing the much-needed technically qualified young graduates, it can also provide the basic science cover needed for the defence technologies. The sciences need not be esoteric: pure mathematics can help in cryptology, computer sciences in software and language development and physics in a spectrum of technologies. I would therefore commend the building up of this interaction. I do hope that these aspects have been fully engaging your attention and that the fact that they have not been mentioned in your report is entirely fortuitous. There is no doubt that as we go along, there will be more and more occasions to assess your achievements and to find justification for the extra high

investment which this Central University entails, to the envy of many other institutions in the country.

It has often been pointed out that as a nation, we are not very good at pooling our talents and capabilities. This need not be true, in-as-much as our country being totally committed to the development of science and technology, this commitment must bring us all together to the common task of building a strong and technologically-advanced India.

Thank you,

Jai Hind.





UNIVERSITY OF HYDERABAD

# FIRST CONVOCATION

Saturday, the 6th April 1985

*Address*

*by*

**Shri G. PARTHASARATHY**

Chancellor

*Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao, our distinguished Chief Guest, Dr. Shanker Dayal Sharma, the Chief Rector of the University, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, Members of the Faculty and students of the University, Ladies and Gentlemen:*

On behalf of the University, I extend to you a warm welcome and my greetings. The convocation provides an opportunity to a University, as a community of learning, for introspection, for critical self-assessment and for looking into the future. In the case of our university - the latest addition in the network of Central Universities, the youngest of the seven sisters, the first to be established to the south of the Vindhyas - the first convocation is an occasion to look back with modest satisfaction at a decade of intense activity first, to evolve a system of innovative curricular as well as research programmes, which would not be a mere duplication of what is being done elsewhere but a net addition to the academic endeavours of the nation; and second, to build a campus and physical infrastructure to house and support the planned academic work. We, in our own humble way, are an integral part of the national renaissance ushered in by our "tryst with destiny", contributing in our own specific way, to the transformation of colonial under-development into self-reliant national development.

Institution building is no easy task and needs total dedication. I would like to pay a tribute to Professor B.S. Ramakrishna, the second Vice-Chancellor of the University, for his contribution to the development of the University. It would be appropriate also to

commend the work of the members of the Faculty for the standards they have maintained in teaching and research.

The national movement for independence, inspired and led by Gandhiji and Jawaharlal Nehru showed the way to a new India - a democratic, secular and socialist India wedded to a humanistic approach to all men and all things, to a genuinely scientific temper, a fastidious demand for a true quality of life in our villages and cities, an attitude of tolerance, which carefully avoids indifference or smug paternalism and a receptiveness to all human experience. Gandhiji and Panditji had set themselves the goal of building a humane and equitable social order. Our graduating students are inheritors of this great and noble tradition. While congratulating them on this auspicious occasion, I would like to express the earnest hope that they would dedicate themselves to these values and work hard towards the "haven of freedom" in which Rabindranath Tagore wanted us to awake from our slumber of slavery.

The structure of higher education, inherited by independent India was quantitatively microscopic and qualitatively disfunctional. The enrolment in higher education per lakh of population in 1947-48 was as low as 30, corresponding approximately to the figures for present day Swaziland or Somalia and a little less than those for Lesotho.

Adequate and rapid expansion of this inherited miniscule was necessary in view of first, the need for import substitution in the field of the intellect and the building up of a self-reliant academic structures; second, the projected needs of planned economic

development; and third, the pressure from those who were denied higher education for centuries but who saw the possibility, however distant and difficult, of acquiring a university degree which was wrongly or rightly regarded as a passport to a white-collar job. The magnitude of growth and expansion may be assessed from the fact that the enrolment in 1982-83 was nearly 18 times the enrolment in 1950-51. It is quite possible that the Indian higher education may have expanded during the fifties and the sixties without due regard to quality. The dangers of artificially-induced expansion, however, became obvious within a few years and attempts were made to develop centres of excellence in selected universities. This policy resulted in the emergence of a few enclaves of excellence and to the widening of the gap between such centres and the rest of the system.

The University of Hyderabad has rightly set itself the target of becoming a centre of excellence. Some of its schools have already acquired positions of significance in the country and a place on the world map of the intellect. It would, however, be erroneous for it to consider itself an enclave of excellence. On the contrary, it should develop as a mode of diffusion so that other institutions in the region get the benefit of its curricular reforms and its research experience.

A central university would be playing its desired role in the national system of higher learning to the extent that it has the capacity to perform such a diffusion function. The sphere of higher education in the country has unfortunately become quite fragmented as a result of a high degree of institutional inbreeding and the decreasing magnitude of inter-

regional migration of students and faculty. It is hoped that central universities like ours would contribute, particularly through their admission and recruitment policies, to the knitting together of the diverse elements of higher education into a truly national system.

The University will be in a position to play such a role to the extent it gives adequate emphasis to the three-fold function of higher education — Teaching, Research and Extension. Teaching at universities does not only impart the accumulated social, cultural and scientific experience of mankind to the newer generation at the highest level but also performs the “mother” function of teaching the teachers at all levels and builds its bridges with the generation of knowledge. It is a complex task, which does not only call for pedagogic skills of a high order but also the ability to weave within it the continuing stream of generated findings.

The research function relates to the generation of knowledge and its consequent extension along the frontiers. The distinguishing characteristic of education at the tertiary level is the symbiosis between teaching and research. It is the university which, by bringing the two together, enriches and strengthens both. The university is the abode of the unending research-teaching-research continuum, through which the understanding of the being as becoming is being perpetually deepened.

Institutions of higher education are no longer considered to be ivory towers, wherein eggheads contemplate on the problems of the universe in splendid isolation from the rest of society. Integral links between such institutions and the community lead

to mutual advantage. It enables the community to benefit from the expertise available in such institutions. It enables the teachers and students of these institutions to acquire a sense of social relevance and deepen their understanding of nature and society.

I had mentioned earlier that a University is a community of learning. Teachers and students are integral parts of the scholarly community. Decorous conduct is vital in an academic community for the pursuit of scholarship but it is equally important that there is mutual understanding among the various segments of the university community. And it will be desirable to devise carefully worked-out mechanisms for constructive cooperation among students, teachers and the administration.

Our university, situated as it is in the City of Hyderabad, has a special role to play in national life. The city is itself a product and a symbol of the composite culture of the nation. The north and the south, the Hindu and the Muslim, the historical and the contemporary have mingled together in the crucible of time to produce a cultural synthesis with a beauty and character of its own. The meandering lanes of the Androon-i-Baida has a Hyderabadi ambience, which transcends diversities and in which all can take equal pride. It is the national duty of the students and faculty of the university, who breathe this fragrance of unity in diversity, to ensure that this composite culture is preserved and national integration strengthened.

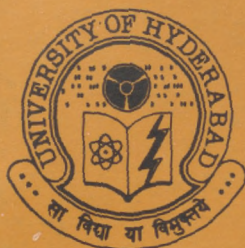
In order to be able to perform such a function, the university should base itself on a broad view of education itself. The ancients believed in knowledge

being a seamless web and the contemporary understanding also emphasises the multi-disciplinary and holistic approach. It has, for example, been suggested that the process of development cannot be analysed with the limited tools of economics alone, and that the human sciences like History, Psychology, Sociology, Geography, Linguistics, would have to be brought in for purpose of diagnosis as well as prescription within a holistic frame.

The role of the humanities and the social sciences in particular needs to be emphasised in the context of inter-disciplinary studies. The humanising role of education is increasingly becoming crucial in a world threatened by a nuclear winter, persistent disparities between and within nations and the yearning of people all over the world for a peaceful and just international order. I am happy to be emphasising this point in the company of our distinguished Chief Guest — Shri Narasimha Rao who is known of his literary sensibilities and his scholarly interests. He is a splendid example of a person engaged in public affairs who is imbued with a humanistic culture. We know that he has been under severe pressure during this period, engaged as he has been in important negotiations both at home and abroad. That he has come to us under such circumstances reflects his deep involvement with education and his keen interest in our university.

Thank You





UNIVERSITY OF HYDERABAD

# FIRST CONVOCATION

Saturday, the 6th April 1985

*Report*

*by*

**Prof. B.S. RAMAKRISHNA**

Vice-Chancellor

Chief Rector, Governor of Andhra Pradesh, Mr. Chancellor, Sir, distinguished Chief Guest, Members of the Court, Members of the Executive Council, Members of the Academic Council, Graduates, Students, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before I begin my report on the genesis and development of the University of Hyderabad, allow me the pleasure of extending to all of you a warm welcome on behalf of the University and on my own behalf. I am particularly happy to have in our midst our Chancellor, Mr. G. Parthasarathi, who is not only known for his knowledge of foreign affairs and policy planning but also for his long experience in education and university matters. We are happy to have with us our Chief Rector, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, who is not only a man of public affairs but is also the Chancellor of all the State Universities of Andhra Pradesh. We are pleased to have with us Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, who has held many important portfolios in the Government and played an important role in founding of this University. Besides, he is an educationist and the *kulapathi* of the deemed university Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha in this very city itself. Never before have we had such a triumvirate combining learning, knowledge and wisdom on the dias in this University. I welcome all of you, Sirs, and stand beholden to you.

It is a rare privilege given to the Vice-Chancellor of any university to summarize it its first convocation the

progress the university has made in its first ten years. I shall try to do this job vis-a-vis the aspirations of the University and its expectations. I shall try to discharge this solemn responsibility as truthfully and faithfully as my knowledge of the University and my understanding of education enable me to do.

## CHRONOLOGY

The University of Hyderabad came into being as a part of the so called "Six-point Formula" to augment the facilities for higher education in the State. The chronology is indeed brief. A working group under the Chairmanship of Dr. George Jacob, the then Chairman of the University Grants Commission, was constituted in 1973 to work out a plan for establishing the University. On the basis of its recommendation a bill was introduced in the Parliament. The University Act received the assent of the President of India on 3rd September 1974 and came into force on 2nd October the same year. The first Vice-Chancellor, Professor Gurbakhsh Singh, assumed charge on 1st November 1974. On 17th November, the late Kumari Padmaja Naidu made a munificent donation of her ancestral property, the now historic building of the Golden Threshold. Exactly a year later, Shrimati Indira Gandhi dedicated the buildings to the University.

On 25th March 1975, the Government of Andhra Pradesh made a generous gift of a plot of land of 2300 acres. The land, as you can see, has a rugged beauty being endowed with rounded granite boulders carved by wind and rain and small natural lakes that are now parched and crying for care and protection.

The first batch of admissions were made in November 1975 and the University began its work using

the laboratories and facilities of a number of host institutions in the city, in particular, Regional Research Laboratory, Central Institute for English and Foreign Languages, National Institute for Rural Development, Administrative Staff College, Electronics Corporation of India Ltd. and many others. In November 1976, the Fifth Plan Visiting Committee visited the University. On the basis of its recommendations, the UGC had sanctioned a grant of Rs. 6.00 crores in March 1977 for the V Plan period. During the Sixth Plan period a further sum of Rs. 9.20 crores was approved. A substantial part of it, however, will be realized only during the Seventh Plan period. During the same period the University also received approximately Rs. 1.48 crores from various funding agencies like Department of Science & Technology, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, Indian Council of Medical Research etc., for the research projects it has undertaken for them.

## A BLUE PRINT FOR DEVELOPMENT

The Fifth Plan Visiting Committee which took a far-sighted view of university education, laid great emphasis on the creation of Schools of Studies in place of the conventional Departments as the basic structural units. The Schools were to be centred around certain broad disciplines, would have to develop a global view of the advancing front of knowledge and would make every effort to stay at the forefront. The Committee was emphatic that the University of Hyderabad was not meant to be just one more university in the country patterned on traditional lines, with an insulated department to cater for each subject. Any attempt at moving towards reconstituting conventional departments should be summarily checked.

Concerning the recruitment of the faculty, the Committee stated that the faculty must be selected on an all-India basis for its academic excellence. Since no university can gather under its roof all the experts that it needs, the Committee suggested that the University should make liberal use of the expertise available in the twin cities and draw heavily on visiting professors.

The Committee recommended that students should be admitted on the basis of a competitive examination and that, in order to attract talented students, the University must have an adequate number of scholarships. The Committee warned the University that the work of the universities in India often is of no relevance to the needs and aspirations of the people and to avoid the repetition of this mistake, the University should keep in close touch with the work of the national laboratories and industries.

To develop along these lines the Committee advised the constitution of

1. a School of Mathematics, Information & Computer Science
2. a School of Physics
3. a School of Chemistry
4. a School of Life Sciences
5. a School of Humanities
6. a School of Social Sciences
7. a School of Environmental Geosciences and
8. a School of Creative Arts

For this purpose, the Committee recommended 174 faculty positions, a Central Instruments Laboratory with modern equipment and a Central up-to-date library. The Committee also urged that buildings should be designed

to encourage inter-school communication and cooperation and that they should be constructed in a phased manner. The UGC generally accepted these recommendations in March 1976, deferring, however, the starting of the School of Environmental Geosciences and the School of Creative Arts to the Sixth Plan period.

## PROGRESS SINCE INCEPTION

Ten years is not a long time in the life of a university. Even as the age of universities goes in India, the University of Hyderabad is still a child but, I venture to say, is not childish. One would not ask of a ten-year old child what it has accomplished; one would rather ask what its expectations are and where its ambitions lie. But, challenged to speak of its accomplishments, if any, the University could indeed talk of some small accomplishments, outstanding for its age, for its size of 700 students and 100 teachers and for the money spent on it. The work of the University is getting recognized both in the country and abroad. The School of Chemistry is recognised for special assistance from the UGC and is selected for assistance under the COSIST programme. The faculty members have received many coveted awards and prizes. Two young professors, Professor Govardhan Mehta and Professor Girish S. Agarwal have won the prestigious Bhatnagar awards in Chemistry and Physics, respectively, before they were forty. Another former professor of the University, Dr. Balasubramanian, now with the centre for Cellulose and Molecular Biology, also received the Bhatnagar award in Chemistry. Professor Jain, Head of the Urdu Department, received the distinguished Sahitya Academy award. Dr. (Mrs.) Ratna Naidu, an eminent sociologist, received the Ghurye award for her book *Communal Edge to Plural Societies: India*

and Malaysia. Dr. E.D. Jemmis and Dr. K.D. Sen received the no less coveted INSA Young Scientist award and two more young scientist awardees will soon be joining the University. My colleagues and the distinguished gathering will bear with me if I refrain from cataloging all the prizes and awards received by the academic community and conclude by voicing my firm conviction that much greater rewards are in store. Quite a few members of the faculty are Fellows of distinguished academic bodies in India and elsewhere. In fact, not only our teachers but also our students seem to be getting so many invitations from within and outside the country that the Vice-Chancellor often finds it difficult to carry on with the normal work of the University.

In a short span of some seven years, the University has published over a thousand papers, trained (in round figures) 800 students for the Master's degree, 400 for the M.Phil degree and 50 for the Ph.D degree. On a *per capita* basis this is an enviable record for any university of its age. It would take me far too long to list all the research and teaching activities of the University. You must bear with me again for referring you for more detailed and specific information to the Annual Reports. I have to be content here with saying that the University has developed a sound academic base on which to build the superstructure: The lecture work of the University, for instance, is organized on a semester basis with a large number of elective courses which gives scope for the introduction of new subjects without great difficulty. We have a central library which compares in current literature, though not in the number of holdings, with the best of university libraries in India. We have acquired some sophisticated laboratory equipment like the mass spectrometer and the scanning electron microscope. We

have a number of spectrometers for infrared, nuclear magnetic resonance, photoacoustic and laser-Raman studies. Very soon we expect to have a liquid helium plant in operation. We are acquiring also several small computers which we expect to link up to a mainframe computer soon. The University has held a number of conferences including an International Conference on Gonadotropin Releasing Hormone and is going to host towards the end of the year the Diamond Jubilee Session of the Indian Philosophical Congress.

But most satisfying is the fact that the Alumni of the University are well received both in India and abroad and that they do not face the unemployment problem after graduation. It is seven years since the University has been awarding Master's and M.Phil degrees and some four years since it has started awarding Ph.D degrees. To this day, not one alumnus has come back to the University in search of a job. That speaks volumes in favour of the quality of training they receive. The University of Hyderabad is one of the very few universities in the country that has no reservations of any kind - except, of course, for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes - that admits every one of its students through an entrance examination, that runs its courses in time, holds its examinations in time and declares the results in time. It has no problems of ragging, of vast amounts of uncollected dues from the residents of hostels or of unauthorized residents in them. It has no interference from political bodies of the State or the Centre. It did not have to declare at any time what has come to be known as a 'zero-year'. At a time when the universities are worried about problems of drug addiction, I am glad to be able to say that the students of this University are thinking of how to eradicate the evils of smoking, drinking and drugs and to

carry their message through audio-visual methods to high schools where it is easier to inculcate good habits. I could easily get eloquent on the achievements of the University, but we still believe in this University that modesty is a virtue to be cultivated. I shall be content with saying that though the University of Hyderabad is a child, it is a very healthy child, endowed with the potential to grow into a mature institution that can play a valuable role in the intellectual development of the nation.

But a child, however, gifted it may be, does not realize its full potential unless it is given proper nourishment, wise counsel and above all, the love and affection that it needs. Those who attended on the circumstances of its birth can very well remember that in a very real sense, the University of Hyderabad was an act creation even if the C in creation were not a capital C. There was no school or college out of which it grew into a university. It came out of nothing that is material. It was born out of the will of the people. But it was not born with a silver spoon in its mouth to be declared an institution of national importance. It had to come up the hardway. Though it was not exactly a Spartan child, it had acquired many Spartan habits. We still live in a Spartan way as a look at any of our offices, school buildings, hostels or laboratories will show. The first laboratory and lecture classes were conducted with tables and chairs improvised from construction planks and empty bitumen drums. We were inspired by the same zeal that inspired Marie Curie to distil radium from pitch-blende in a cattle shed. In fact we are perhaps, unique in starting our academic work 10 years a head of our building development. But we cannot continue in this fashion without our growth becoming, as one journalist had warned, stunted. Students, teachers and buildings are the three legs of the tripod upon which

the University rests and the three legs must grow together if the University is not to tilt one side or the other. Some seven hundred post-graduate students (400 boys and 300 girls), hand picked as it were, and a hundred teachers even more carefully chosen, and a campus of 2300 acres seems at first sight to be an enviable position for any University to find itself in. It indeed is, until we recall that the University is in a country that has 750 million people and that half of them are now under the age of 15. Degrees, we may delink with jobs, but knowledge, we cannot. Jobs are not a substitute for knowledge; they are the means for making the end products of knowledge. In a world that is becoming knowledge-based and in which human intelligence is about to be augmented by computers as muscle power was augmented by machine power in the industrial revolution, the universities have a greater role to play than ever before in history. The teenagers of today brought up on the movie and TV have grown up with a craving for knowledge as no generation had been before and jobs are not alternatives to knowledge. Beset with problems of unions, faced with perpetual shortage of funds, and the resulting upheavals in universities, we sometimes begin to doubt if university education is what the youth really want. I submit in all sincerity that we cannot allow a dichotomy between jobs and university education to develop in our thinking. It is a matter of knowledge and jobs, not knowledge or jobs. In a global society that would soon be knowledge-based, we in India cannot restrict the spread of knowledge except at our peril. The universities, despite their poor performance in recent years, despite their failures and despite all their unholy acts, are needed more than ever before, for they are the bedrocks of knowledge on which alone democracy can be built to its full stature.

I am aware of the shortage of funds to open more universities; I am aware of the inadequacy of the workspace in the existing universities; I am even more aware of the shortage of good teachers, but I do not understand why universities in India must work for only seven hours a day from ten to five and not from 8 AM to 10 PM - in shifts as it were - as indeed some institutions do in freezing cold and biting winds. I do not understand also why teaching must be done only by a few full-time teachers employed by the University. What debarbs an experienced judge, lawyer, medical practitioner, scientist, engineer or artist, not in the regular service of the university, to come and teach a course outside the ten-to-five working hours. I do not understand, too, why university education should be restricted to a limited age group and why we cannot have in a class room a mix of young students, the not-so-young employed people, housewives and even the older age group who are young enough to learn. We have in the twin cities themselves any number of young men and women who are eager to learn, experienced men and women who have all the expertise that we can wish for, and all the wealth of books and periodicals we could ask for. The University has even a place right in the heart of the city where, with some necessary additions, it can extend its facilities to a very large number of men and women, even working men and women.

Yet, I would not like to lull you into thinking that the horoscope of the University of Hyderabad is good and that its future will be bright. As I said a little while ago, the University of Hyderabad is a ten-year old child, which, in this age of advanced communications, is subject to a variety of influences. It has no immunity against the many diseases that afflict universities these days. In the free

atmosphere of a university, good and bad thoughts can thrive equally well. Nurturing independent thinking and research is like rearing a young bird: If you hold it too tight it will die; if you hold it too light it will fly.

I should perhaps recall again the statement of the founding fathers of the University that it is not meant to be one more university patterned on traditional lines. But signs are there that in the University teaching and research are clustering around the traditional subjects. All the disciplines that are there in the University are already there in almost all the major universities and for a much longer time. More serious is the fact, that many important and professional disciplines, like medicine, engineering, management science, etc. are conspicuous by their total absence. It is high time, therefore, that the University should initiate schools of study that are relevant for the years ahead. It is none too soon to reactivate the proposals to have the School of Environmental Geosciences and the School of Creative Arts. It is even more urgent to start schools of medicine and engineering in an interactive environment with the schools of science which have now come of age. It is no less important to start now a School of Ocean Science so that we do not have to depend upon other nations to explore and exploit the resources of our coastal Seas. Last but not the least is the necessity to bring about a synthesis of the cultures of Humanities and Sciences, which have so far been diverging from each other. Would the University of Hyderabad have the courage to take the untrodden paths or would it remain content with going along the safe trodden paths of knowledge? It will have to make the decision soon.

The main restriction on the growth of the University

whether it is increase in admissions or introduction of new disciplines is due to the lack of buildings. The University has planned accommodation for only 150 students, which would, of course, increase to some 450, but that is nowhere near what a residential central university would need if its facilities were to be fully utilized. The University needs also housing for its teachers and its non-teaching staff. The University needs School buildings for the Schools of Social Sciences and Humanities in addition to the Science Complex building and the library, building which we are about to start constructing. A massive building programme is a prerequisite for further growth of the University.

Which way the University will go, whether it will go the way of others before it or whether it will play a useful role in the development of the nation will not depend merely upon its wishes. It needs the resources and the support and the affection of the nation. It is ultimately for the people who wanted the University and the Government that established the University to decide what sort of a university it shall be. I can assure both of them that the University of Hyderabad is the safest place for investment and it can yield dividends expected of it.





# UNIVERSITY OF HYDERABAD

**Prof. Bh. Krishnamurti**

B. A. Honours (Andhra), A. M., Ph. D. (Pennsylvania)  
Vice-Chancellor

Phone:  
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Res: 71165 /36628

Central University P.O.  
Hyderabad -500 134

January 13, 1987

Dear Professor Swaminathan:

I am pleased to inform you that the Executive Council at its 48th meeting held on January 3, 1987 resolved to confer Doctorate Degrees on the following who have made significant contributions in their respective fields:

Dr.G.Parthasarathi, Chairman, ICSSR	(Doctor of Laws)
Dr.M.S.Swaminathan, Director General, IRRI, Phillipines	( Doctor of Science)
Prof.M.B.Emeneau, Emiritus Professor of Sanskrit and Linguistics, University of California, Berkeley	(Doctor of Literature)

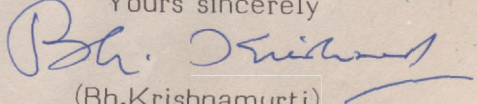
The convocation will be held on the university campus at 4.00 p.m. on February 14, 1987 (Saturday).

We will feel honoured if you will kindly accept the invitation and be present at the Convocation to receive the Degree of Doctor of Science (Honoris Causa) for your outstanding contribution to the field of plant sciences.

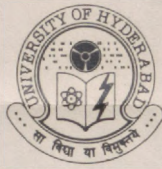
The Executive Council has further authorised me to allow air fare to the recipients of the honorary degrees from abroad. We tried to contact you on the phone but could not reach you. I will appreciate a reply at your earliest convenience.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely

  
(Bh.Krishnamurti)

Prof.M.S.Swaminathan  
Director General  
International Rice Research Institute  
Los Banos, Laguna  
Philippines



# UNIVERSITY OF HYDERABAD

**Prof. Bh. Krishnamurti**

B. A. Honours (Andhra), A. M., Ph.D. (Pennsylvania)  
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**DOCTOR M S SWAMINATHAN  
DIRECTOR GENERAL  
INTERNATIONAL RICE RESEARCH INSTITUTE  
LOS BANOS LAGUNA  
PHILIPPINES**

**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL RESOLVED TO CONFER HONORARY DOCTORATE ON YOU  
AT CONVOCAATION FEBRUARY FOURTEEN STOP WILL FEEL HONOURED IF YOU  
ACCEPT STOP UNIVERSITY WILL MEET AIRFARE STOP WILL APPRECIATE  
ACCEPTANCE BY CABLE BH KRISHNAMURTI VICECHANCELLOR  
UNIVERSITY OF HYDERABAD**

13-1-1987)

Secretary to Vice-Chancellor *S. Krishna Rao*  
University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad: 500 134

Copy by post for confirmation)

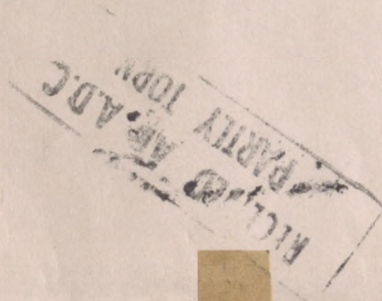
AIR MAIL



To

Professor M. S. Swaminathan  
Director General  
International Rice Research Institute  
Los Banos  
L a g u n a  
PHILIPPINES

Prof. Bh. Krishnamurti  
Vice - Chancellor  
University of Hyderabad  
Hyderabad - 500 134, India.



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To

Prof.M.S.Swaminathan  
Director General  
International Rice Research Institute  
Los Banos, Laguna  
PHILIPPINES.

Respected Sir,

I am by the direction of the Vice-Chancellor to send herewith one set of addresses delivered by the Chief Guest, the Chancellor and the Vice-Chancellor at the first Convocation of the University held on 6th April, 1985 for your kind reference.

Yours faithfully

(K.C.REDDY)  
REGISTRAR

c.c.to:

The Vice-Chancellor : for information please.



# UNIVERSITY OF HYDERABAD

Prof. Bh. Krishnamurti  
Ph.D. (Pennsylvania)  
Vice-Chancellor

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Central University P.O.  
Hyderabad-500134

March 10, 1987

C A B L E

DOCTOR M S SWAMINATHAN  
DIRECTOR GENERAL  
RICEFOUND MANILA  
PHILIPPINES

HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS UNIVERSITY CONFERRED  
HONDRARY DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF SCIENCE AT  
CONVOCATION MARCH SEVEN (.) KINDLY ADVISE  
IF YOU ARE LIKELY TO VISIT OUR CAMPUS  
SHORTLY TO RECEIVE THE DEGREE IN PERSON  
OR WANT IT MAILED (.) REGARDS

= PROFESSOR KRISHNAMURTI  
VICE CHANCELLOR

Conformation copy by post.

Dr. M.S. Swaminathan  
Director General  
International Rice Research Institute  
P O Box 933  
Manila, Philippines

*Bh. Krishnamurti*  
(Bh. Krishnamurti)

A I R M A I L



Dr. M. S. Swaminathan  
Director General  
International Rice Research Institute  
P. O Box No.933  
MANILA, Philippines

**Prof. Bh. Krishnamurti**  
Vice - Chancellor  
University of Hyderabad  
Hyderabad - 500 134, India.

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UNIVERSITY OF





# UNIVERSITY OF HYDERABAD

**Prof. Bh. Krishnamurti**

Ph. D. (Pennsylvania)

Vice-Chancellor

Phone:  
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Res: 71165 /36628

Central University P.O.  
Hyderabad-500 134

February 25, 1987

Dear Dr. Swaminathan:

I thank you for your letter of February 7, 1987 with a copy of your CV and also a copy of your lecture on "The Hunger Project papers". I received your telegram only yesterday. We are certainly disappointed that we will not have the pleasure and honour of conferring the degree on you in person. However, it will be conferred on you in absentia as in the case of Professor M.B.Emeneau. I shall be grateful if you can visit and spend sometime at our university when you can afford the time.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely

(Bh.Krishnamurti)

Dr. M.S.Swaminathan  
Director-General  
International Rice Research Institute  
P O Box No.933  
Manila, Philippines

AIR MAIL



Dr.M.S.Swaminathan  
Director-General  
International Rice Research Institute  
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**Prof. Bh. Krishnamurti**  
Vice - Chancellor  
University of Hyderabad  
Hyderabad - 500 134, India.



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