



University of Delhi

Annual Convocation, 2019

Address by Professor Yogesh Tyagi, Vice Chancellor

Respected Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal “Nishanak” Ji, Hon’ble Union Cabinet Minister of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Our Chief Guest of the Day

Respected Professor Dharendra Pal Singh Ji, Hon’ble Chairperson of the University Grants Commission (UGC), Our Guest of Honour

Other invitees, colleagues, graduating students, eminent alumni, ladies and gentlemen,

Namaskaram!

It is with immense pleasure and pride that I welcome you to the 96th convocation of the University of Delhi.

The University of Delhi extends its greetings to all those present here and to all of you joining us through the webcast of this convocation from various parts of the world.

Let me begin by extending my heartiest congratulations to the graduating students and their respective families and friends!

Hon'ble Minister Shri Nishank Ji, the University is honored by your esteemed presence today as the Chief Guest of this noble gathering. Ever since you have assumed the leadership of the MHRD, you have brought renewed energy, fresh enthusiasm and novel direction. You have been a constant well-wisher and a staunch supporter of the University of Delhi. Your positivity continues to inspire us every day. Thank you for extending us this privilege.

May I invite this august assembly to give a standing ovation to the Hon'ble Union Cabinet Minister Shri Nishank Ji!

Hon'ble UGC Chairman Professor Dhirendra Pal Singh Ji needs no introduction! He is an exemplary leader in the field of education. Before taking over the office of Chairperson of the UGC, he had the distinction of serving as Vice Chancellor of three universities -- Banaras Hindu University (BHU); Dr. Hari Singh Gour University; and Devi Ahilya University -- and also as Director, the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). Professor Singh is an ardent

promoter of excellence in higher education. He has always been a constant source of strength and inspiration to me.

May I invite this majestic audience to give a standing ovation to the Hon'ble UGC Chairperson Professor Singh!

This year, the University of Delhi is going to award degrees to about three lakh graduating students. Almost 700 are present here; the rest will get degrees in absentia. And about 300 of them are distinguished medal winners.

Ever since its establishment in 1922, the University of Delhi has been demonstrating consistent progress. It began with about 750 students. Today, it has almost 7 lakh students. The Delhi University alumni family is not only huge but also prodigious and awe-inspiring. Both the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India and the Hon'ble Chief Justice of India are distinguished alumni of our University. And so are eight sitting judges of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, the Hon'ble Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir, and a great many other well-recognized judges, lawyers, scholars, ministers, public servants, artists, sportspersons, and nation builders. In the fitness of things therefore Delhi University holds the twenty-first position in World QS Rankings in respect to the criterion of the alumni strength with a score of 96.6 per cent.

We are proud of our alumni and we wish them all the best!

The University of Delhi has made some significant achievements during the last one year.

Hon'ble Minister, Sir, please bear with me as I attempt to outline it for you now ...

First, the University of Delhi has been recognized as an Institution of Eminence (IoE), for which we would like to thank you, the MHRD, the Empowered Expert Committee (EEC), and UGC. In order to adhere to the objectives of Institution of Eminence status, we have been doing some path breaking work. Some of the brilliant young minds are participants in this process. We continue to engage with the parameters of the IoE status, and are planning to have more discussions in this regard. We believe that the IoE status will enable us to garner good financial support, mobilize more human resources, and take up new academic initiatives so that the University can serve the society better and consequently is able to take its ranking up. At the same time, we are aware that there are some apprehensions and misgivings about the IoE status of our University, which we are confident of addressing and are sure of taking appropriate steps in this regard.

Second, the University of Delhi has received 'A+' grade from NAAC. This is one of the highest grades in the country in the new format of NAAC accreditation. Our colleagues, both teaching and non-teaching, deserve heartfelt appreciation and a huge round of applause for giving their best to the NAAC process.

Third, the University of Delhi has taken initial steps to establish two new institutions: Delhi School of Public Policy & Governance, and Centre for Disability Studies. These institutions will surely go on to add a few more feathers to the cap of the University.

Fourth, the University of Delhi has revised its undergraduate and postgraduate courses – about 3500, in total -- by following a democratic, transparent and inclusive process. We consulted various stakeholders, including students and alumni, and also sought expert advice. There were some differences of opinion, but we did our best to build consensus. The revised courses are implemented with effect from July 2019. Now, our students have fresh intellectual food for thought.

Fifth, the University of Delhi has established equality among its students from different streams: regular mode, distance mode, and the non-collegiate women education board. Now, the University has one curriculum, one examination and one ranking for all students under one university-wide programme. About 1.42 lakh undergraduate students of the School of Open Learning (SOL), more than 2000 postgraduate students of the SOL, and about 11,000 students of the Non-Collegiate Women Education Board (NCWEB) are immediate beneficiaries of this long-cherished equality.

Sixth, the University of Delhi has been graded as Category-I university pursuant to the provisions of UGC (Categorisation of Universities (only) for Grant of

Graded Autonomy) Regulations, 2018. As a result, the University of Delhi may take up several initiatives without approval of UGC. We deeply appreciate UGC for reposing its faith in Delhi University for the betterment of education.

Seventh, for several decades, the University of Delhi has a dream to have its integrated campus without thoroughfare. This dream is codified in the Master Plan of Delhi 2021, which states inter alia:

"The Delhi University . . . has a number of old historical buildings, colleges, Viceroy's lodge etc. of the Colonial period and therefore efforts shall be done to preserve this character. Also, efforts shall be done to make it an Integrated Campus (without thoroughfare) and self-sufficient in terms of modern infrastructure and residential requirements like hostels, staff quarters, security arrangements etc. by optimum utilization of the land. Attempt shall be made to accommodate all institutional requirements within the Campus. Therefore an Urban Design study shall be taken up for this Sub-Zone. MPD-2021 has restricted this area for tall buildings."

There is a massive support for the realization of the dream of an integrated campus of Delhi University. In order to make this dream a reality, the University has established a Campus Development Committee (CDC). This committee is chaired by a distinguished alumnus. It consists of both elected and other representatives, government officials, dedicated alumni and a few other well-wishers of the University. Considering the need to deal with issues pertaining to the peace and security on the North Campus, a Task Force has been constituted. We are confident that both the Campus Development Committee

and the Task Force will help realize the dream of having an integrated campus of Delhi University. Hon'ble Shri Nishank Ji, the University requests you to continue your support and enable us to honor and fulfill this dream of millions of people. We want to have our centenary celebrations in our integrated campus. The University appeals to everyone to help realize this cherished dream.

Eighth, the University of Delhi has taken some steps to strengthen its bonds with its foreign alumni. Last year, a team of University officials went to Kathmandu to hold a meet of our alumni in Nepal. This was a successful exercise, and we wish to continue this exercise in the upcoming year.

Ninth, the University of Delhi has been allotted eight acres of land in Fateh Pur Beri in South West Delhi for the establishment of a college, hostel and other educational facilities. The University would like to record its deep appreciation of the Hon'ble Lt Governor of Delhi, Shri Anil Baijal Ji, and the Member of Parliament of that constituency, Shri Ramesh Bidhuri Ji, for this brilliant contribution for the educational development of the girls of that area. The University has taken possession of the land and has constructed a temporary boundary wall there. The University is thankful to the officers of the Delhi government as well as the police officers of the area for facilitating the process. With the help of the stakeholders, we are going to work on the college project in the right earnest so that the said neglected area of Delhi is benefitted by our efforts in the field of education.

Tenth, the University of Delhi has signed 12 MoUs with CPWD for undertaking development projects worth Rs. 185 crores. This is an initiative to utilize the development grant/funds in the most transparent manner.

These achievements demonstrate the sincerity and strength of the University of Delhi. At the same time, the University is aware that it has to do a lot more. It is conscious of the fact that society expects us to excel in the field of higher education, to produce high quality research, to have a high global ranking, to act as a role model to other educational institutions, and to give our best to nation building as well as the welfare of global society.

As I mentioned last year, we can realize our full potential and meet the rising expectations of society by providing a healthy academic environment, good governance, respect for the rule of law, optimum utilization of resources, a development-friendly approach and positive thinking.

In this direction, the University has taken a number of initiatives. We want to attract bright faculty and administrators to serve our University. To achieve this, a majority of vacant posts of Principals have been advertised. Repeated reminders have been sent to those colleges that have not yet advertised the same. The University has advertised all vacant posts of faculty members in its departments. Many of the colleges have also done likewise. And several reminders have been sent to those colleges that have not yet advertised their respective vacant posts of faculty members.

We have received more than 20,000 applications for less than 1,000 faculty positions in the University. Several departments have either completed their screening of the applications they have received or are on the verge of completing this exercise. In the same direction, the University and its colleges have appointed almost three thousand guest faculty members through a duly prescribed, fair, and transparent process by following the applicable UGC guidelines. In this regard, we have followed 'one person, one job' principle. This has brought a lot of energy, enthusiasm and fresh intellectual air into the system. I congratulate all our guest faculty members for their readiness to give their best services to the University and its colleges. Further, the University is working to streamline the process of recruitment of non-teaching staff with the help of an independent and impartial body.

Hon'ble Minister Shri Nishank Ji, the University of Delhi remains committed to develop a law-abiding, corruption-free, and excellence-oriented educational institution. The University has zero tolerance for corruption. The University knows that its best practices, ethical standards and exemplary services are essential for its march towards greater excellence.

The University continues to provide special assistance to students from the weaker sections of society. The University organizes free coaching classes to those needy students who appear in competitive exams for admission in the most popular courses of the University.

The University has launched a special drive to attract foreign students. This year, the University is going to start its admission process for foreign students earlier than last year. The University wants to strengthen its cooperation with the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR). Tomorrow, the University is going to have a special function for foreign students, in which ambassadors and high commissioners of several countries are expected to participate and the Hon'ble Minister of State for External affairs is going to be the Chief Guest at the function. Moreover, the University has established its Admission Branch to further streamline and strengthen the process of admissions.

We would like to take several new initiatives during the next year. Among others, we will continue to find out from our young faculty members what more do they want from the University. Besides making efforts to provide more facilities such as hostels, the University would also ask its students to express their intellectual expectations. We are determined to be more sensitive towards our students. We have held a couple of meetings with Principals and given directions to colleges in this regard.

Also, it is my exquisite pleasure to announce that the University is going to start preparations for its Centenary Celebrations. Very soon, we are going to establish a Committee for Centenary Celebrations.

Hon'ble Minister, sir, we believe that a great university must demonstrate its exemplary social sensitivity. The University of Delhi not only has a large number

of colleges and departments for Undergraduate and Postgraduate students but it also has two schools for children. It has reconstituted the governing bodies of these schools. The newly constituted governing bodies include a considerable number of young faculty colleagues. These bodies have a strong resolve to uplift the standards of education of our two schools for children.

Hon'ble Minister, Sir, we are aware that Indian higher education is awaiting its 'Darwinian moment'. By the Darwinian moment, I don't merely mean cosmetic changes in our education system limited to the introduction of cutting edge courses and updated curriculum. In my view, it also entails a change where the teacher and the learner renegotiate the purpose of pursuing education and learning. What is envisaged here is a transcending of the physical boundaries of the classroom along with exploring the liberating potential of education to free humankind from the shackles of prejudice. I have no doubt that such education will churn reformers, not complainants, who with their efforts will further strengthen our ongoing fight to rid the nation of poverty, hunger, inequality, disease, ignorance etc. and thereby further solidify the foundation for a peaceful world to live and cherish.

We are glad that under your able leadership as our Minister of Human Resources, Indian higher education is at the cusp of witnessing this key moment of change and a turning point in the evolution of education in India. Let me assure you Minister sir that the University of Delhi is doing its best and ready to

take any other responsibility to fulfill your vision that you have rightly captured in your collection of poems 'ए वतन तेरे लिए'.

- कविता शीर्षक - "ज्योतिबन"

तिल-तिल जला स्वयमेवको,

प्रकाश फिर भी हम करेंगे,

उस क्षितिज के घोर तम में

ज्योति बन हम तम हरेँगे।

Hon'ble Minister Shri Nishank Ji, Hon'ble Chairperson Professor Singh sahib, and every well-wisher of the University, we need your continuing support, we cherish your love and affection, and we seek your best wishes. We have confidence in your presence and are proud to know that you will do your best for our growth and wellbeing.

Thank you and Jai Hind!