



2nd
Convocation
2009

Address of
His Excellency
Shri Murlidhar Chandrakant Bhandare
the Governor of Orissa
and Chancellor
of the Ravenshaw University, Cuttack

2 May 2009

Hon'ble Chief Guest, **Shri Justice Arijit Pasayatji**,

Vice-Chancellor, **Shri Devdas Chhotrayji**,

Distinguished Recipients of Degrees Honoris Causa,

Shri Anil B. Divanji, Mrs. Kishori Amonkarji,

Shri Jayanta Mahapatraji, Dr. Prabhat Patnaikji and

Dr. Trilochan Pradhanji,

Members of the Executive Council, Senate and Academic Council,

Registrar, **Dr. Satyakam Mishraji**,

Other Recipients of Degrees, Diplomas and Medals,

Members of the Faculty, Staff and my dear Students,

Distinguished Invitees,

Media Persons,

Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives me immense pleasure to preside over the Second Convocation of Ravenshaw University. As the Chancellor of this premier institution of higher education, I extend a very hearty welcome to our Chief Guest, Hon'ble Shri Justice Arijit Pasayatji who not only happens to be very close to me but also a product of the great Ravenshaw College now elevated to Ravenshaw University. Justice Pasayat hails from Orissa, therefore I need not have to say anything about him as the august audience know him closely and even associated with him in many matters including legal field. He has a remarkable credibility as a Judge of the

apex Court by delivering exceptional rulings in the interest of law, justice and the nation. Today he is rated as one of the most respected Judges of the Supreme Court. With his sincerity and devotion to the profession, he has set a high tradition and contributed immensely towards judiciary in playing its rightful role as one of the pillars of democracy. Seeing him from so close and listening to his enlightening address clearly showing his concerns and vision, the present generation students, I am sure, will be inspired and encouraged to involve themselves in the great task of nation building.

It is heartening that Ravenshaw University is conferring honorary degrees to five outstanding individuals. I congratulate Shri Anil B. Divanji, Mrs. Kishori Amonkarji, Shri Jayanta Mahapatraji, Dr. Prabhat Patnaikji and Dr. Trilochan Pradhanji, the recipients of Degrees Honoris Causa. By their significant contributions in their respective fields they have enriched and made the profession proud. The younger generation should learn from their sincerity, devotion and achievements. They have all honoured our university by accepting honorary LL.D., D.Litt. and D.Sc. degrees and I wish them to be crowned with many more successes in days ahead.

Convocation is an important event for both the University and the student community. I am happy to find that Ravenshaw University is emphasizing on holding convocation regularly and I believe this continuity shall be maintained in the years to follow. I congratulate the Vice-Chancellor, members of the faculty, the students and all other staff members for holding this second annual convocation. At the outset, I pay homage to the founders and well-wishers of the Ravenshaw College which now emerged as the first single-campus non-affiliating University in the State. I welcome all of you to this Convocation Ceremony.

During the period between the previous and this convocation it has been a year of many achievements and promising beginnings for the University. For this, I congratulate the teaching and non-teaching community for their contribution to attain higher glories.

Convocation attaches happiness, honour and dreams for students receiving medals and degrees. It is indeed a unique feeling and probably

the greatest achievement and proudest moment in the life of a student as one's hard work put in round the years is recognized. I take this opportunity to offer my heartiest congratulations to those who have graduated and also won various awards, medals and degrees. They all have made their parents, family, teachers proud who in turn have high expectation from them as they are at the threshold of the real life. From here starts a new journey to a wider world outside the portals of the University. To make one's way through this path which is expected to be tough and full of challenges particularly looking at the today's intensely competitive and rapidly changing world, one needs to equip with right skills, knowledge and determination.

My dear students, you have to be confident and show courage and conviction and shed any kind of fear to meet the challenges and responsibility of life ahead. Here, I am reiterating what our former President, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, told at the first Convocation which is most appropriate here. Among other things he had advised the graduating students not to lose hope and courage and to achieve success by their steadfast devotion to the task lying in front of them. I call upon our graduating students to face the world with courage and a spirit of challenge. I am sure the education and the training they have received here will be of immense benefit to withstand the challenge and achieve their goal.

Though, as Ravenshaw University it is new being established in 2006 but as Ravenshaw College the history of this institution is over hundred twenty-five years old and is largely synonymous with the growth and development of the State. It is rightly said, the history of Ravenshaw College is the history of modern Orissa. I reiterate my words I told last year from this dais that Ravenshaw has always shaped the cultural matrix of Orissa and has very successfully connected the Oriyas with their history and culture, art and literature. It has borne witness to all the changes from its establishment not as a mute observer but as a dynamic, living and above all an evolving institution. I am proud to say Ravenshaw has maintained its tradition of producing fine alumni who have left their mark on society and many of them, I understand, are present here who

must be remembering with pride the institution has played in molding their life and career.

The present global trends reflect that it is the power of knowledge that will dominate in the years to come. Universities are the provider and facilitator of this knowledge. If India and Orissa have to keep pace with the fast changing scenario we have to ensure that a spirit of knowledge and learning is cultivated in different spheres and particularly among the young generation. Ravenshaw University has a very strategic role to play in this direction. It is expected that with its rich and historical heritage it will continue to enrich the present and shape the future.

A university must continue to be a leading contributor to scholarship, learning and capacity development. It should evolve access, widening participation and learning, research and knowledge management and transfer and development of workforce and skills based upon professional development. In an information dominant society and inter connected world, the comparative advantage of universities lies in their identity as custodians and managers of knowledge-based networks that give them a global mandate and reach.

Modern day universities are complex organizations operating in challenging and constantly evolving environment. Every University has to be more than the producer of mere degree holders. University has to take up the challenge to produce qualified and trained individuals who are sensitive towards the needs of the society and are aware of their rights, duties and responsibilities as educated citizens of this great country. This is what I understand by education. I would urge the graduating students to first secure a proper livelihood and a good career for themselves. After doing so, they should try to apply their knowledge, experience and education to render social services particularly to our less fortunate brethren and bring smiles on their faces.

Addressing the youth of the country always gives me immense pleasure and I open up to share my expectations from the youth. The youth constitute the majority of our population and we have 55 percent of the

population below the age of twenty-five. It is the greatest asset of the country particularly, when countries like China and Japan have 65 and 70 percent of the population respectively above the age of 65. In that way, we have a country with a young population while leading countries in the world are facing with an ageing population. We are definitely in an advantageous position. It is on the hands of the youth to take the country ahead by sustaining the momentum of our growth and development in every area particularly science and technology, information technology, space technology, etc., so that it leads the world with its youth power. Our young professionals are treated among the best in the world in several emerging sectors with their expertise and knowledge. But there is a concern that as on one hand we are marching and achieving a healthy growth rate and on the other we still have a significant section living below the poverty line. Illiteracy, malnutrition, inadequate healthcare and other social concerns are yet to be tackled. It is the youth who has the ability, vigor and spirit to turn these contradictions and help the country achieve progress and development in true sense where all participate in the process and enjoy the benefits of development. I am confident the young graduating students of the University will realize the challenge in front of them and raise themselves with sincerity and dedication to remove the hard realities the country is confronted with.

Economic development is essential and important and it indicates the country's progress. However, it needs to be accompanied with moral and ethical values as mere knowledge without a strong foundation of these values is of no use. Education is for all-round development and to create better human beings and particularly the university education has a great role to play in achieving this. Here, I want to quote Mahatma Gandhi who said 'The aim of university education should be to turn out true servants of the people who will live and die for country's freedom. I am, therefore, of the opinion that university education should be co-ordinated and brought into line with basic education.' Convocation is an occasion for the university to shoulder its responsibility to contribute to the process of socio-economic transformation and nation building. I would like to see Ravenshaw University as centre of learning plays important

role in expanding the horizon of knowledge and providing intellectual leadership to society.

An educational institution, here I mean the university mirrors the trends of society and is always a pointer to the degree of discipline and progress of the community. Moreover, they have a wider role to play as they are the training centres of future generations to imbibe them with the capacity to change the society. In the process of development of a centre of learning, the students are required to discharge a great responsibility both inside and outside the university.

My dear students, character and discipline are two important qualities in life, which every student should aspire to develop. Here, I am reminded of the words of Swami Vivekananda who said, 'Give me one hundred youth of character and I can change the face of this country'. The foundation of a person is character and the foundation of any nation can be strong only when the citizens of that country have a strong character. When one develops good character he or she automatically knows to distinguish the right from wrong. It is even said, if you have many degrees and certificates but lack in character then everything is worthless. So, character building should be given all importance at every level. Similarly, discipline is the most important ethics to an individual, family, institution or a nation. If discipline is absent, no country, no family, no institution or no individual can grow. It is a must for development. We all should maintain discipline since it is the foundation for development. The students should develop and practise discipline in their action and attitude to achieve success in life. They should come forward to raise their voice against evils like ragging in the universities and terrorism and other disruptive activities posing a great threat to the existence of a civil society.

In this era of explosion of knowledge in all fields of education, we have to continuously strive to keep abreast of the latest developments. The teachers have great responsibility to help the students to develop the habit of learning throughout life. As Dr. S. Radhakrishnan had said, 'The kind of education that we provide for our youth is determined

overwhelmingly by the kind of men and women we secure as teachers. Magnificent building and equipment are no substitute for the great teacher.' Every one of us is indebted to our teachers for the vital role they have played in our life. So, besides teaching, teachers are required to go beyond the four-walls of the class room and have a positive impact on the students with their action and attitude for their all-round personality development.

Orissa is scenic, serene and sublime. Orissa is the most peaceful State in India. Orissa is culturally and minerally richest. But economically it is very poor. As I say, illiteracy leads to poverty but literacy drives away poverty. You have to work hard to remove the ugly spots of illiteracy and poverty from the face of Orissa.

I have spoken long enough and there are many more thoughts which I want to share but unable due to paucity of time. The need of the hour is to reorient our approach to meet the challenges and solve the problems without compromising the humanistic goal on which the concept of university is based. It requires involvement and dedication from all concerned. In the coming years, I want to see Ravenshaw University as a centre of creative and innovative learning as well as a catalyst for correction of social errors. It will grow hopefully as a repository of scholarship, and dedicate itself to teaching and research imbibing the spirit of free and critical inquiry, tolerance of diversity, and a commitment to the resolution of difference of opinion through dialogue and debate.

With these words, I wish the students a very bright future and also wish the Ravenshaw University to attain further heights of glory as a premier center of learning and also as a center of wholesome development of human personality.

Jai Hind