

**SPECIAL CONVOCATION**  
and the  
**SIXTY-FIRST**  
**ANNUAL CONVOCATION**

24 December 2016

**GUEST-IN-CHIEF**

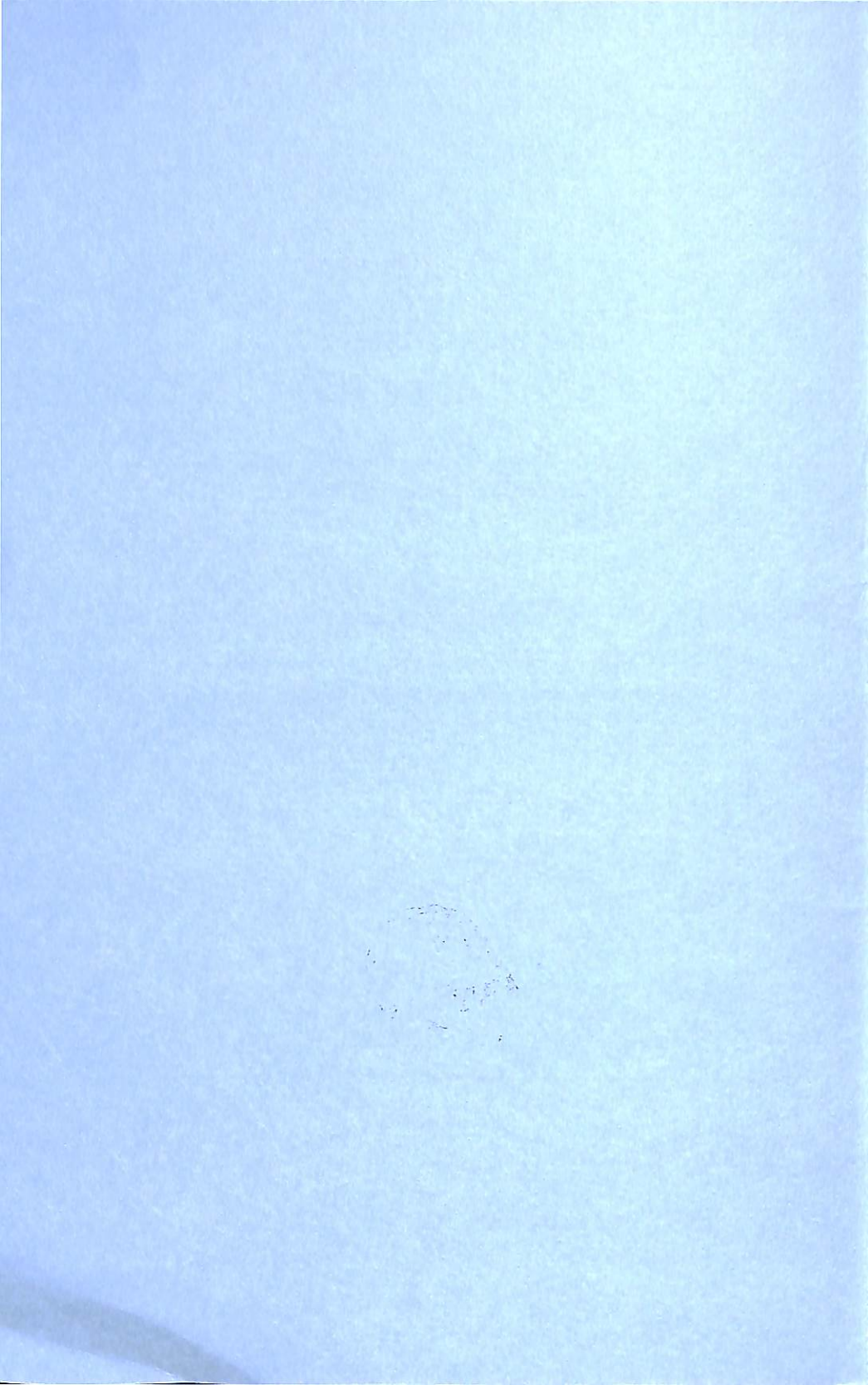
**PROFESSOR ANIL D. SAHASRABUDHE**  
*Chairman, All India Council for Technical Education*



**JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY**

**KOLKATA 700 032**

**INDIA**



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ADDRESS BY  
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24.12.16

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**Convocation Address**  
*by*  
**ANIL D. SAHASRABUDHE\***

Honorable Governor of West Bengal and the Chancellor of the Jadavpur University, Shri Keshari Nath Tripathi ji, Professor Suranjan Das, Vice Chancellor of the Jadavpur University, Dr. Ashish Swarup Verma, Pro Vice Chancellor, Professor Sabyasachi Bhattacharya and Shri Rudraprasad Sengupta, recipient of the degree of Doctor of Literature (honoris causa); Professor Tapan Misra, Professor Ashutosh Sharma and Professor Kasturi Lal Chopra, recipient of the degree of Doctor of Science (honoris causa), Dr. Pradip Kumar Ghosh Registrar of the University, distinguished members of the court, executive council, faculty members, persons from the media and most important of all – graduating students and their parents.

It's indeed a great pleasure and honor to address the convocation of one of the finest universities in India, the Jadavpur University. I am thankful to the university administration for inviting me on this coveted occasion. It gives me great pleasure to acknowledge the visionary leadership of the university.

We are aware of the rich history of Jadavpur University through 6 decades of its existence as a formal university. But its roots emanate long before along with freedom struggle of India through National Council of Education. Stalwarts like Sir Rash Behari Ghosh, Shri Aurobindo, Gurudev Tagore, Dr. Amartya Sen, Prof. Amitava Bhattacharya are associated with the great traditions of Jadavpur University. Through out its existence, the university has distinguished itself as a pre-eminent institution with excellence as its motto. It is the hard work and dedication of faculty and support staff, devotion to quality, contribution of illustrious alumni, and vision of administration, which are

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\* Chairman, All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).

responsible for making this university one of the top ranking universities in India.

My dear young graduates,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate all those receiving their degrees and medals on this momentous occasion, from this great institution. Today marks an important day in your lives and a significant milestone in your life's journey. Entering into this institution facing intense competition, you pursued your academic work with great dedication. By your hard work and by dedication to maintain high standards, you earned your degrees and awards. It is a moment of pride for you as much as it is for your teachers, parents and all those who had contributed in shaping your life so far.

Dear students, there has been rapid expansion in the number of colleges and universities in India during the last two decades. Today we have 50000 plus colleges, both private and government and 780 plus universities. While this number has certainly helped in creating access to higher education and also equity to a great extent, with a GER of more than 24.3% (34.2 million students), the quality of education is much below our expectation in most universities with few exceptions. The quality level of education has unfortunately not seen the degree of growth it should have. The industry bodies such as NASSCOM, CI, FICCI keep lamenting about employability of graduates. This has been often leading to under-employment of graduates. Some of the lacunae pointed out by industry are soft skills such as effective communication, team work, discipline, ethical practice among others.

Hence it is not merely the theoretical courses but hands on practice, work experience, living together with people of different backgrounds, human values, accepting differences, critical thinking, analytical ability, appreciating different art forms, music, drama, participation in sports, NCC, NSS etc which are important for holistic development of students. Those universities who have understood this well and acted have made a difference. Educational institutes and

universities are the best places where there is equal opportunity for one and all. Universities are the crucibles where lot of churning takes place and apart from knowledge generation, better understanding of life takes place.

It is in this context that Jadavpur University has provided you an enriching experience which will come to your rescue in times of crisis.

I would like to stress on another aspect. That of life long learning or learning to learn. The technology is changing very rapidly. What is taught in colleges becomes outdated by the time one graduates. The interdependence of one discipline of engineering with the other is more relevant today than at any other time. Hence interdisciplinary research is gaining importance. Not only is Mechanical Engineering and Electronics Engineering or Computer Science and Electronics are relevant to each other, but Physics and Philosophy, Psychology and Management, Engineering and Biology are all relevant to each other. It is often said that students are required to be trained for solving problems which are not even known today using technologies which are yet to be invented. One needs to catch up with any new subject or technology as it emerges, else one becomes irrelevant. Learning never stops. Hence strong foundations in basic sciences become important. Today, through MOOCs and internet, knowledge is available on your laptops and mobile devices. Make best use of this revolution. Keep learning, keep abreast with new developments. MHRD has embarked upon a mission to develop an indigenous MOOCs platform "SWAYAM" and the responsibility is given to AICTE. Large number of courses are already on the portal and many more are getting added. This will create an unique learning experience for everyone, for people of all ages and backgrounds, learning from anywhere, anytime from any device and anyone, the best in the world. The UGC and AICTE have already brought in regulations permitting 20% of the courses through MOOCs. Thus the way of learning, the way one gets knowledge are going to be transformed in a big way in coming years.

Quite often we lament that none of our universities figure in the top global rankings. We need to consistently put our efforts to challenge ourselves and create models of excellence in education so that at least 10-20 institutes appear in global top 100 institutes. We need to devise a strategy for enhancing quality in all institutes and create competition. The National Institutional Ranking Framework is a baby step in that direction. One of the parameters which world rankings look at is diversity; diversity in faculty, in students, in the programs offered, courses offered, nationalities, cultures etc. Next comes the research outcomes and international collaborations and recognition. Most importantly we need to build strong and world-class graduate schools leading to research, masters and PhDs in a very innovative space.

Last year India produced 21830 PhDs while 1,17,301 are pursuing their PhDs.

Although, these numbers have increased by leaps and bounds compared to a decade ago, there is a long way to go. I am pleased to know that Jadavpur University has been focusing on research work and has several programs running in the university, providing incentives to students for research work. We also need to concentrate on the faculty development programs. They need to be trained right from the time of their induction and during their service. We need to empower them, provide support and change their mindset, work ethics and culture. The attitude of not accepting anything but excellence needs to be inculcated.

For challenging and empowering the student community, recently AICTE in association with I4C, MHRD and 25 ministries of the central government has launched a Smart India hackathon. Through this hackathon, digital solutions to several problems plaguing the government departments are sought so as to make the life of a common man comfortable. Another initiative of AICTE has been that of supporting startup culture in technical institutes so that startup ecosystem is developed in India. Recently, honorable President of India launched this policy during the visitors conference.



My dear students, you are among a few fortunate persons who have had access to an educational experience at this renowned institution. This experience will reward you throughout your life. Knowledge is the supreme power. But mere accumulation of basic knowledge is of limited practical use, unless it is translated into innovations, providing economic or social value. It is transfer of knowledge for economic growth that has revolutionized this world. You must look around and see how some of our countrymen are still struggling to make their living. You have to be sensitive to their problems, find innovative solutions, be nationalistic, care for the nature, be scrupulously honest, put in hard work, dedicate your life for the good of the people of our country and fortune will follow you without seeking.

University education leaves a permanent impression on one's life. The learning curve of a student keeps on rising, keeping him/her interested in getting things done and making things work. The life of a student is full of undying zeal to learn and improve the things around him. I am sure that each one of you have different dreams and undoubtedly, you should never give up on your dreams and aspirations. From the bottom of my heart, I wish each one of you success in your future endeavors.

You all are now standing on the threshold of the real adult life. From now on no one will grade you for well or poorly done homework and evaluate your progress. You are free to go your own way, and it will be absolutely different for everyone. Some of you will continue studies on the post-graduate level and become university tutors or scientists. Other might take up a job in the industry. Some others may become entrepreneurs in their own might and create jobs. When graduation studies are over, it is time to create your own lives, and for this you have the whole world at your disposal. The main thing is to look for opportunities that you really like, and have persistence and faith.

To succeed, the first thing you need is to be in good health and a full capacity to work. If your body and spirit are in harmony and perfect condition, you will be able to go after your dreams while having fun; you will have enough stamina

for action in this world. It is the patience, persistence and perseverance, leading to perfection, which plays a decisive role in success. Sometimes, we come across failures in our lives despite our sincere best efforts. One should not worry too much because of failures, but learn lessons from the failures and not repeat the actions that led to the failures. There is no short-cut in life. Please do not indulge in any type of unethical and unprofessional behaviour to achieve success.

One of the hurdles which often works as a speed breaker is our mental block to think and consider higher targets and goals to be impossible. Our beloved former Honourable President Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam said, I quote, "All technological advancements we have today are the outcome of scientific exploration of scientists of earlier centuries. At no time, man was beaten by problems. He strives continuously to subjugate impossibility and then succeeds."

All of you here today have a long journey ahead. The years and decades to come will offer you incredible opportunities to reshape the world in which you will live, whether as the head of an establishment or a group or a team or as an individual, who helps make things happen. *Leaders are not just the people in charge; they are the ones, who step forward to make a difference.*

The world outside is not as cozy as college life. Be prepared to take a plunge with all earnestness. You have a great opportunity and responsibility. Whether Skill India, Make in India, Digital India, Smart Cities, Unnat Bharat Abhiyan or Start up India, you have an opportunity and a role to play.

The young men and women graduating today are privileged to be part of this historic journey of India to emerge as a world power. The youth will be shaping the future of India. I urge upon you to be the catalyst for change and I am confident that each one of you have the capability to contribute towards the country's growth. I once again congratulate all of you and wish you all the best and am confident that India story will be scripted by you.

Thank you.

Jai Hind.



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