

**XIX CONVOCATION
30th MARCH 2009**

**SPEECH OF
H.E. THE GOVERNOR OF JHARKHAND
HON'BLE CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY
SHRI SYED SIBTEY RAZI**



**BIRLA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
MESRA, RANCHI**

CHANCELLOR'S SPEECH: BIT CONVOCATION - 2009

Dr. G. Madhavan Nair, Chairman, Indian Space Research Organisation & Secretary, Department of Space, Govt. of India, the Chief Guest of today's function, Members of the Board of Governors, Dr. P K Barhai, Vice Chancellor of the Institute, distinguished guests, Ladies & Gentlemen and My Dear Students.

At the very outset I would like to congratulate all those who would be receiving their degrees on the successful completion of their academic programs on this auspicious day. I wish you all great success in your career and prosperity and happiness in life. I am sure learning would continue to be a part of your life as you seek to improve your skill and acquire new knowledge to achieve your cherished goal in life.

Convocation provides an opportunity for self-introspection to an individual and also to an institution. It is an occasion to review the past and design your future. Everyone of you waiting to receive your degree is unique and gifted in your own special way. I sincerely hope that you all would indeed contribute strongly in whichever career you choose. Every generation should indeed give more than it receives. Education does not end here, it continues throughout our lives.

Technical education is the foundation for growth in productivity, income, employment opportunities, and for the development, application and adaptation of science and technology to enhance the quality of life. It is the foundation for access to the benefits of information revolution and the gateway to knowledge based economy.

This Institute, from where you all graduate today was indeed the creation of love of the great visionary, philanthropist & industrialist Late B. M. Birla. His vision was to establish this Institute to be recognized as a world-class learning institution for engineering, technology and science by providing the highest-quality academic programmes that would foster students development and connect knowledge, practice, and outstanding scholarly research. The excellent performance over the years in the field of academics and research has indeed resulted in a glorious track record of achievements. New academic programmes have constantly been added and so have been campuses in the country as well as abroad. The Institute has maintained the quality of its academic programmes which has resulted in its being recognized as one of the top technical institutes of the country.

I take this opportunity to refer to certain issues related to challenges in Higher Education. India has a vision of becoming a Knowledge Superpower by 2010 and a developed nation by 2020. To realize this vision, the universities must conduct technology intensive vocational courses. The academic programs should be in newly emerging, inter-disciplinary and industry oriented areas. The composition of students and teachers must reflect a secular and national character. To achieve these objectives, the universities must enhance the quality of teaching, learning and evaluative methods, establish a network of institutions of higher education for sharing of infrastructure and resources, implement internal quality assurance systems, and promote interdisciplinary teaching and research in collaboration with Indian and foreign universities.

Inequality in education has to be removed. In the present context knowledge is the core of economic and social development. According to the 11th Five Year Plan document, our Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education is only 11%. This is very low compared to the world average of 23.2%, 36.5% for developing countries, 54.6% for the developed countries and 22% for Asian countries. As compared to overall GER of 11%, the GER of SCs / STs and OBCs was 6.5% and 8.8% respectively.

This social disparity in higher education has to be corrected apart from improving overall enrolment in higher education. I am happy to note that Birla Institute of Technology, Mesra, has contributed to the GER ratio in technical and professional education through increased intake at the main campus and establishment of seven extension centers, namely Lalpur, Deoghar, Patna, Noida, Allahabad, Kolkata and Jaipur. I also take this opportunity to inform the students, teachers and the stakeholders of higher education that during my tenure as Chancellor for the Universities of Jharkhand decision has been taken to establish four universities in the State Sector namely Nelamber Pitamber University, Kolhan University, Jharkhand Technical University and a Law School on the lines of National Law School, Bangalore and one Private University namely ICFAI, Ranchi. Further, the Central Govt. has also sanctioned one Central University and one Indian Institute of Management (IIM) for Jharkhand.

Today's world is going through a very turbulent time. The unprecedented global financial crisis is having an adverse effect on Indian economy. In this atmosphere of economic crisis, we need to organize our resources in a planned way. It is imperative today that focus should be maintained towards optimal

utilization of the knowledge infrastructure in the institutions of higher learning which indeed have immense opportunities to capitalize on the innovative and creative genius of its budding professionals and also to maximize the faculty output beyond class room teaching.

In view of the fact that several of the problems today have their roots in individual or collective greed which has resulted in larger loss for the society, it is indeed time for us to remind ourselves that the products of technical education, namely, engineers, managers, architects, pharmacists and other professionals do not work in vacuum. They practise their profession in a social context. The technical education system has to remain concerned about the value system of the students. Good professional values need to be inculcated. Besides, they are also in demand in an increasingly competitive international context and often become informal ambassadors of our country abroad.

As a nation, therefore, we should not just be producing technically qualified individuals who have little or no concern for the society and those who would pursue their personal gains as mercenaries without regard to others. Rather, we should provide a more holistic education, develop a more rounded personality

with commitment to higher values, inculcate sensitivity for societal issues and develop their capabilities to address these issues. It is a collective responsibility of all of us as parents, educators and administrators.

I once again extend my best wishes to the entire BIT community on this day.

Knowledge originates and resides in the minds of people. People with knowledge and skill are, therefore, the most potent renewable resource and the demographic dividend of a nation. The young and educated knowledge workers of today, that is you, are the true assets of the nation. Irrespective of what you do, always adopt a scientific approach and never stop learning.

Our best wishes will always remain with you. Thank you.