

Speech of His Excellency Shri K. Sankaranarayanan , the Governor of Jharkhand on the occasion of Vice Chancellor's Conference scheduled on 11th August 2009 at Raj Bhavan , Ranchi.

Let me welcome all of you to this conference, which I have convened basically to impress upon you, the necessity for improving the higher education scenario in Jharkhand.

The general feeling of lack of confidence in quality education in Jharkhand is manifest by the higher percentage of exodus of +2 students to other states like Maharashtra, Delhi and Karnataka. Unless we are in a position to instill a sense of confidence among the parents and students of Jharkhand, their preference for educational institutions outside Jharkhand will prevail. The Gross Enrollment Ratio in Jharkhand is only 7.5 against the national average of 11. One of the reasons could be that the accent of education in Jharkhand Universities is mostly on the conventional streams of academics whereas students would prefer to obtain professional job oriented technical education.

During the last two decades there has been a shift in education systems from the conventional to the system, which empowers the students in terms of employment. For a state like Jharkhand with its large number of educated unemployed youths, the accent of higher education should be on courses, which are job oriented.

The demand for job oriented courses makes it imperative to move towards the opening of more professional colleges for Medical /Engineering/ Management studies etc and for this purpose we need to get in touch with the reputed promoters in the field of professional education and persuade them to open such institutions in Jharkhand.

I find that the standard of teaching in colleges under the different Universities is quite different; while we have some institutions which are of national repute there are other which are of average standard. The colleges and institutions which are located away from the District Headquarters and the State Capital do not impart quality education. It is a matter of great concern that there is total lack of commitment on the part of many teachers in providing quality education to the students nor are they interested in enhancing their academic capabilities. There are reports that the teachers do not engage classes regularly.

Vice-Chancellors and Pro Vice Chancellors should ensure that teachers should take classes regularly and there should be proper monitoring system for this.

I feel that all the Universities and institutions of higher learning should be assessed by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council. There should also be emphasis on research activities. Universities should also change their curriculae so that we can adopt the best practices from the other Universities outside the State also.

I am informed that in Jharkhand there are 48 affiliated colleges and 2 newly established Universities, Nilambar Pitambar University and Kolhan University, which are yet to qualify for assistance under from the UGC Act. Concerted efforts must be made to ensure that these Institutions also qualify for UGC assistance.

We have to expand and improve existing educational facilities, as there has been substantial increase in the number of students. At the same time the Universities should also concentrate on new technologies like Nano - technology, Bio-technology, Environmental Sciences, Information Technology, Multidisciplinary Technology involving energy automation, Aviation, Agriculture, Pharmaceuticals, Water Resource Development etc. The Universities also should have active interface with major industries, which will promote innovation and entrepreneurship.

I am sure the Vice Chancellors will stimulate the academic atmosphere by laying stress on lecture series, seminars and talks by eminent speakers in the campus. Efforts should also be made to ensure as much students participation as possible. New communication technologies including internet should be put into more effective use. Regularization of academic session, timely meetings of the Senate & Syndicate and timely holding of University Convocation should get due attention from University Authorities.

I am sure that the Vice Chancellors present here realize the importance of the critical challenges. I would expect them to formulate road maps for their respective Universities for quality improvement especially focussing on the least developed parts of the state. It should be our efforts to make Jharkhand a forceful presence in the national map of higher education.
