

**90<sup>th</sup> Convocation  
Banaras Hindu University  
March 15, 2008**

**Welcome Speech by the Vice-Chancellor**

It is a memorable occasion and a land mark for all of us to have our esteemed Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh amongst us today as the Chief Guest for the 90th Convocation of Banaras Hindu University. Sir, the citizens of Banaras in general and BHU fraternity in particular feel greatly honoured and join me in sharing the pleasure of having you with us and express their gratitude. On their behalf and on my own, I welcome you, Sir, with greatest reverence and highest admiration on the occasion of your first visit to the holy city of Banaras, and also to this prestigious seat of learning, the Banaras Hindu University. We look forward to having your advice, directions and blessings on this great occasion.

We are delighted to have the gracious presence of Madam Prime Minister Smt. Guru Sharan Kaur on this auspicious

day. The university fraternity warmly welcomes you, Madam, on this occasion.

I warmly welcome His Excellency Shri T.V. Rajeswar, Governor of U.P. who has always taken a keen personal interest in every aspect of this University. He has been a source of encouragement and support to us in all our endeavours.

I also welcome Sri Anant Kumar, Minister (Health) of U.P. Government for gracing this occasion by his presence.

It is our privilege that we have amongst us today our Chancellor Dr. Karan Singh whose invaluable guidance is cherished by all of us. I welcome you, Sir, on the historic occasion of the 90th Convocation of Banaras Hindu University.

I also welcome all the honoured guests present here today, Members of the B.H.U. Academic Council, Executive Council and Court, the students being awarded medals and degrees and others, all the other members of

the BHU family and friends from the Press and Media on this auspicious occasion.

The inception and growth of our University is closely entwined with the saga of rebuilding of Modern India. It was the vision of Mahamana to see India as an economically resurgent country and he looked on education as a means to achieve this. Malaviya ji's view of education was not narrow or sectarian, rather he envisaged Banaras Hindu University as an institution of learning which would transcend all linguistic, racial and other barriers and become a University of National character in letter and spirit. He was aware that the University is not merely an examining body - it is primarily a "nursery of good citizens". Mahamana therefore emphasized the diffusion of scientific, technical and professional knowledge on the one hand and building up of character in youth by making religion and ethics an integral part of education on the other.

The BHU model of education is of paramount importance in today's knowledge based world. Our Hon'ble Prime Minister has reiterated time and again that the highest priority should be placed on education as an instrument for achieving rapid and inclusive growth. We also realize that an ideal educational system is one which fulfills the aspirations of the people of the state.

Banaras Hindu University ranks among the first few in the country in the field of academic and research output. I am happy to say that today we have two campuses, 3 institutes, 15 faculties, 130 departments, 4 advanced centers and 4 interdisciplinary schools. The University is making its mark at the national and international levels in a number of frontier areas of Science, Social Science, Technology, Medicine and Agriculture etc.

A university can grow successfully only when research and teaching mesh together seamlessly - one without the other is incomplete. Therefore we have ensured the development of a collaborative environment conducive to

learning, exposure to the best international practices and promotion of innovation and creativity.

BHU today has nearly twenty thousand students including 2500 research scholars and 650 foreign students from 34 nations, under one roof who are pursuing different academic programmes at this campus as well as the newly established Rajiv Gandhi South Campus. These are some of the brightest young minds in the country and abroad, who have joined this University after clearing a rigorous All India Entrance Test.

We realize that the rapid pace of development in the country has raised the awareness as well as expectations of the people. Institutions of higher learning are instrumental in providing equality of opportunities, which is the essence of participatory democracy. This will not only remove a sense of alienation and neglect in the backward regions but also prevent out migration from these areas.

I am happy to inform you that in keeping with this thrust of the Hon'ble Prime Minister and our Human Resource

Development Minister, BHU has established the Rajiv Gandhi South Campus at Barkachha about 75 Kms southwest of Varanasi on 2760 acres of land. This campus was formally inaugurated by Hon'ble Shri Arjun Singh on August 19, 2006. The first academic session commenced from 2006-07 with six programmes which has increased to more than 25 in the present session. This campus is emerging as a potential hub to impart education, training and entrepreneurship development skills, to the youth, women and marginalized sections of society in the backward region of Mirzapur and adjoining districts of Uttar Pradesh, Western Bihar and Northern Madhya Pradesh. The Campus is heading well as per your vision for education to generate new breed of human resource who would be job creators and not job seekers.

In keeping with the vision of our Hon'ble Prime Minister, an educationist statesman himself, and a strong believer of modernization Banaras Hindu University has already undertaken a mammoth effort to augment the existing pool

of talent. In last two and a half years a total of nearly 900 teaching and 400 nonteaching staff have been appointed/promoted to man the activities. In addition over the last 3 years itself six educational and research centers worth Rs. One hundred and forty six crores have been sanctioned/established, funded by various agencies. Our quality and number of research paper publications have almost doubled in 2007-08 compared to previous years. This is the immediate result of added human resource, infrastructure development and creative work environment.

The Students' Council, which started functioning from October, 2007 is the first of its own kind in the country. This unique experiment has enabled the students to be a part of the decision making process at the University level. This is a landmark step towards ensuring transparency and decentralization in University Governance.

I am happy to inform you Sir that B.H.U. was the first university to start a degree course in Engineering in the

country and I hope we will continue to be the first in adopting every new innovative course and technique in the coming years. In a few years from now we will be a hundred years old and we want to maintain our standards of excellence and therefore request your, sir, for one time catch-up grant to support the system.

We consider ourselves fortunate, Sir, that we have a teacher-administrator like you at the helm of affairs of the country. Needless to say that under your leadership the country has achieved unparalleled growth and exemplary progress in every direction including the education system.

We hope to realize your vision, sir, of establishing an equitable and just society through ensuring equal access to education for all. We have many schemes in the pipeline related to research and extension services, in the areas of health, technology, rural development and self-employment both at the main campus and Rajiv Gandhi South Campus. We need your blessings to make these a reality.

I once again welcome all of you and specially our Hon'ble Chief Guest, H.E. Governor of Uttar Pradesh and Hon'ble Chancellor of BHU to the 90th Convocation.

Now I request the Chancellor to declare the convocation open.

