

Draft Speech

**Convocation Address of His Excellency the Governor of Meghalaya
at the XXV Convocation of the North-Eastern Hill University,
Shillong
on 28th November 2018**

Respected Chief Minister of Meghalaya, Shri Conrad Sangma Ji, NEHU Vice-Chancellor, Prof. S.K. Srivastava, the Pro Vice-Chancellors, Prof. H. Lamin and Prof. G. Singaiah, the Members of the Court, Executive Council, Academic Council, Registrar and Controller of Examinations, other dignitaries, distinguished guests, faculty and staff, graduating students and parents, Ladies and Gentlemen, I consider it an honour and privilege to participate in the 25th Convocation of North-Eastern Hill University. I convey my greetings and congratulations to the Graduating Students and Scholars who have received their degrees and medals and successfully completed their academic programmes.

I congratulate the teachers who have guided their dear students all these years. I also extend my warm greetings to all the parents who worked hard to ensure that their children receive higher education.

I take this opportunity to congratulate Smt. Mary Kom, Hon'ble Member of Rajya Sabha to whom NEHU has conferred in 2016 the Honoris Causa for winning her 6th Gold Medal in the World Boxing Champion last week.

It is heartening to note that NEHU which was established more than four decades ago imparts higher education in all the major disciplines of knowledge, through good teaching and research and also giving special emphasis on the development of this region which has significant tribal population. NEHU is a premier institute of higher education in this part of the country. It is good to know that NEHU has a Campus in Tura, Garo Hills where PG and research programmes are also being carried out, thus extending access to higher education. Further, I am told that recently Deen Dayal Upadhyay Community College has been established in Jowai

(Jaintia Hills) to impart skill based education under National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF).

NEHU has been accredited with 'A' grade University with an Institutional score of 3.20 by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), Bangluru. Further NEHU also ranks among the top 100 universities of the country in overall category, in the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) of MHRD, Government of India.

The university in addition to imparting teaching to an enrolled strength of over 5100 students in its campuses is also an affiliating University with 70 colleges under NEHU (including NEIGRIHMS and NEIAH). It is worth mentioning that NEHU has 56% female students which reflect the women empowerment in the field of Higher Education in the university.

During the last academic year, the university community could bring out several research publications in peer reviewed journals and they have also completed several research projects having implications for development of the larger society and the region. Several departments are under Special Assistance Programmes of the University Grants Commission and also science departments receiving FIST funding from the department of science and technology is worth mentioning here. Special accolades to the Departments of Botany and Chemistry for having been declared as Centre for Advanced Study under UGC.

I am happy to learn that many of NEHU faculty members have effectively contributed to policy making at the state and national level and also involving themselves in social outreach activities. It is impressive to know that some of our faculty members from the School of Life Sciences are fellows of National Academy of Sciences. Further NEHU is also involved in carrying out the research project entitled 'Micropropagation of Lakadong Turmeric' under Mission Lakadong of the Government of Meghalaya.

It is nice that the University has been organizing in recent times several programmes where eminent personalities from different walks of life have interacted with our students which has provided value addition to their horizon of knowledge. I am sure the students must have been benefitted with the visit of Nobel Laureate Kailash Satyarthi to NEHU, Tura Campus and Shri Sadhguru of Isha Foundation and Guru Kottakkal Nandakumaran Nair, a renowned Kathakali exponent and a Fellow of Indian Council of Cultural Research, Government of India.

I am happy to learn that in recent times high level foreign dignitaries have also visited NEHU, such as, His Excellency Mr. Kenji Hiramatsu, the Ambassador of Japan; Counsellor for Cooperation and Cultural Affairs, French Embassy in India and country director, French Institute in India, Dr Bertrand De Hartingh and they have interacted with faculty and students. As informed this week NEHU had Prof. Fabio Scialpi, Professor of Religions and Philosophies of India and the Far East, University of Studies of Basilicata, Rome speaking on 'Mahatma Gandhi, a man of past India, a guide for present world society and a light for the future of mankind' on 150th Birth Centenary Year of Mahatma Gandhi.

I am indeed very excited to know that the Embassy of Japan in India is sponsoring the visit of 16 students from your university representing two from each of the North-Eastern states as part of their IRIS programme to visit Japan during the last week of January 2019. Some of the Departments of your University have started getting students from Thailand, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Africa, Middle East at PG and Ph.D. levels. I am equally happy to learn that your university either has signed MOUs or in the process of signing MOUs with universities abroad.

I am happy to note that only last week on 21st November, 2018 an Institution Innovation Council under the Ministry of Human Resource Development has been established. I am delighted that NEHU is going to have an incubation council and set up separately

an incubation centre in collaboration with the Government of Meghalaya. I am sure these will be critical measures to promote the culture of commercial and social entrepreneurship among the youth of the region and the state of Meghalaya.

A strong knowledge base in various disciplines ultimately empowers the youth in empowering the society and nation. Science and technology are linked to the National Economy by producing quality products and processes. Here, the importance of continued Innovation, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship also needs to be kept in mind.

I am told NITI Aayog have chosen a few universities, IITs and IIMs to offer third party validation for relevant best practices that have been uploaded by central and state Governments on the portal of NITI Aayog and this University is one of them and therefore has become a partner of the India Knowledge Hub. This is an honour to your expertise and eminence.

I learned, through several other activities and programmes, the students and youth are provided value education and NEHU also inculcates the spirit of National Integration and all-round personal development in students through participation in programmes like Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat, Run for Unity, etc. A University is judged by high quality of teaching and excellence in research and both are interdependent. I urge upon all the stakeholders to do their best to enhance the quality of teaching and raise the benchmark of excellence in research in this prestigious university of the North Eastern Region.

My dear young souls, our great civilization proclaims the ancient principle of *Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam* meaning thereby that the whole world is a single family. 'Live and let live' has been our age old mantra. After this Convocation is over and as the evening gently descends on this magnificent campus, the silvery moon walks your sky, the green pine leaves flutter in the gentle early winter breeze and above all as relative silence engulfs the whole campus; I call upon you all to ponder for a moment about laying a foundation for

our shared destiny in this inspiring campus of this great institution of NEHU. Finally let me complete my address with this beautiful verse in Sanskrit :**"Udyamena hi sidhyanti karyani na manorathaih"** meaning thereby that work will get done by hard work and not by dreaming alone. Hence my young friends let us dream and get inspired but let us also put them in to actions. As **H. W. Longfellow, the famous English poet** once said:

**"Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act,— act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!"**

I am confident that the graduating students of NEHU will make significant contributions to the society, the region and the nation as a whole, in whatever career/profession they choose.

JAI HIND