

SPEECH OF HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF SHRI V. SHANMUGANATHAN,
ON THE 3RD CONVOCAATION OF NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
TECHNOLOGY, MEGHALAYA

Chairman of the Board of Governors of National Institute of Technology Meghalaya, Prof. D. K. Basu, Director of National Institute of Technology Meghalaya, Prof. D. K. Saikia, Members of the Board of Governors and the Senate, the Faculty members, Staff members, my dear students, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

It is a matter of great pleasure for me to be here with you to be a part of the 3rd Convocation of National Institute of Technology, Meghalaya.

At the outset, I congratulate the students who have received B. Tech and M. Tech degrees today after having successfully completed the rigorous training in the Institute and are stepping into their professional life. There are enormous challenges and opportunities waiting for you in the whole world. It is for you to face these challenges and work with unwavering dedication to make your contribution to the human society. It is the moment of taking crucial life decisions.

A mighty banyan tree that provides shade and shelter to thousands grows from a humble seed. Similarly, NIT Meghalaya is growing to big banyan tree in the educational landscape of this State and the region as an Institute of National Importance, to fill the long felt void in the arena of technical education of the State of Meghalaya.

Our constitution grants us our right, it also enshrines our duties. One duty that it reminds us of is, "to strive towards excellence in all spheres of individual and collective activity so that our nation constantly rises to higher levels of endeavour and achievement". When Swami Vivekananda called out, "Arise, awake, for your country needs your tremendous sacrifice", he also added, "it is the young that will do it. The young, energetic, the well-built, the intellectual, for them is the task". Such a scenario of change and transformation is at hand today, as the country braces itself towards achieving social and economic justice. In this monumental work, the country looks up to its youth power to lead from the front. There are enormous challenges and opportunities waiting for the youth. You have to face these

challenges and work with unwavering dedication to make specific contribution to society. Being one among the thirty one NITs in the country established as Institutes of National Importance by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India, NIT Meghalaya since its inception in 2010 has been growing at a steady pace. Within this short period of time it has been able to build-up a team of highly talented and motivated faculty who have come from different parts of the country after having received training from premier institutions within the country as well as abroad. The Institute is now ready to play a pivotal role in developing highly talented pool of well trained engineers, scientists and entrepreneurs. I am very happy to note that this Institute is progressing towards its goal of becoming one of the best engineering institutions in the country. It is a matter of great pride that in the national ranking of educational institutions done under the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) this year, NIT Meghalaya has secured the 1st position among the 11 new NITs established all over the country and 15th position among the 31 NITs. Among the 1438 engineering institutions that participated in the ranking, NIT, Meghalaya secured the 57th position. I would like to congratulate each and every person associated with NIT Meghalaya for working towards building this institution with sincerity and unfailing dedication to bring the Institute to this position and to take it beyond.

It is a very good system in the NIT that 50% of the students admitted in the Institute are from within the State and 50% are from the rest of the country. The Institute has also started admitting a small number of students from outside the country. This gives a multicultural and multiethnic environment in the campus. The students from the State get the opportunity to interact and compete with their peers from a wide range of exposures and socio-cultural backgrounds giving them a broader view and allowing them to prepare themselves to face the world ahead of them. The students from outside the State also carry along with them a part of the culture of Meghalaya when they graduate and become, in a way, extension of this State wherever they go.

Meghalaya, this beautiful state, is rich in natural resources. It has very good forest cover, vast reserves of coal and limestone, abundant rainfall and rich flora and fauna. The scenic beauty of the state is unparalleled. There is enormous scope to utilise these resources in a sustainable manner to build a

strong economy in the state and uplift the quality of life of the people. There is need for creation of employment opportunities for the youth to engage them and utilize their energies gainfully. For that there is need for initiatives and enterprises. There is also need for entrepreneurs. The new generation of the state has to take-up the responsibility of development of the State and its people.

If we look at the history of developed societies in the world we will see that it is the initiatives of their own people, their enterprise and struggle that enabled these societies and their countries to come-up. All of them had immense odds against them. But they took-up the challenges and converted them into opportunities. They developed technologies to fight the odds, they built enterprises to produce their needs and to provide for the necessary services. It is their own hard work that has brought them where they are now. External support can only help in starting an initiative. To sustain and strengthen it and to bring it to fruition needs our own hard work, our own unwavering efforts.

The state needs its youth to be well trained, skilled and motivated. There is need for their entrepreneurial sprits to be awakened. There is need for them to be guided to find their path. The educational institutions in the state have an important role to play in these. NIT being an Institution of Technology should play a crucial role in this respect. In addition to training the students to become engineers, it should work towards creating entrepreneurs and job creators in some of them.

I am told that the Institute is participating in the “Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (UBA)” of the Government and adopting some villages to help develop them into Model Villages. The Institute is also a partner in the “Rastriya Aviskar Abhiyan (RAA)” to help in upgrading the Secondary Education Sector of the State. The Institute has also started a chapter of the “Rural Technology Action Group (RuTAG)” and initiated activities for technology based interventions for alleviation of difficulties faced by the rural masses. These are very positive initiatives. The country needs the premier Institutions to work closely with the masses and help improve their quality of life. I am sure that the Institute will be able to contribute well to the development of the State through these programmes.

If we look into the contemporary period, there are enormous examples of Indian youths who have excelled in various fields, both in the national and international fields. To name a few among them are:-

Sundar Pichai: He is an Indian technology executive and the present of Google Inc. Earlier he was the Product Chief at Google. He also worked in engineering and product management at Applied Materials and in management consulting at Mc. Kinsey & Company.

Indira Nooyi: An Indian-born lady who is the current chairperson and Chief Executive Officer of PepsiCo. She has consistently been ranked among the World's 100 Most Powerful Women. In 2014, she was ranked the list of Forbes World's most powerful women. She was named as the 3rd most powerful Women in Business by Fortune in 2014 and 2nd in 2015. Apart from these she had won several other awards and recognition.

Satya Narayana Nadella: He is an Indian-American business executive and the current of Microsoft. Before this he was the Vice President of Microsoft's Cloud and Enterprise group responsible for building and running the company's Computing Platforms, Developer Tools and Cloud Computing Services.

These Indians stand as a proof to intellectual blood of India. India excels not only in Business and technical fields but also in sports.

For instance, we have Vishwanath Anand, the chess Grandmaster from India who was the world champion for five years.

Sania Mirza: She is an Indian professional tennis player who is currently ranked No.1 in women's doubles rankings. She was the highest ranked female player ever from India peaking at World No.27 in singles. She has established herself as the most successful female Indian tennis player ever.

Saina Nehwal. She is an Indian Badminton Player who has been ranked No.1 in the world by Badminton World Federation Women's Singles in 2015. She is the first Indian to win a medal in Badminton at the Olympics and the first to win the World Junior Badminton Championships.

I would also like to mention a girl who had always dreamt of the moon and the stars and had herself become a star. She is none other than Kalpana Chaula. Not only did she achieve her dreams but she also led her life with the highest sense of values and purpose in every respect. In

everything that Kalpana did, she broke stereotypes. She was the only girl at that time to join the aeronautical engineering stream at the Punjab Engineering College. She overcame opposition and migrated to USA for further studies. Here, she joined the University of Texas to pursue her Masters and later, University of Boulder, Colorado for her doctorate. She was a child with a clear mind about her ambition and she had the will to pursue it with full dedication. In 1994, her efforts paid when out of 2962 applicants for a space mission, NASA chose 19 and Kalpana's name figured in it. She would say: "If you look up to the top of the mountain, then climbing it may seem an impossible task. But if you focus on the next step and take it one step at a time, then you certainly will be able to do it." That is exactly what she did. She very dedicatedly charted out her course, stuck to the path and took it in stride, one step at a time. She was chosen again for the next Columbia mission - 107 as a flight engineer and mission specialist. But alas! Sixteen minutes short of the scheduled landing, Kalpana Chawla became one with the cosmos she so loved.

Kalidasa was a classical Sanskrit writer, widely regarded as the greatest poet and dramatist in the Sanskrit language. Kalidasa lost his parents while he was a baby of six months. A cowherd brought him up; he had no schooling of any sort. This great Poet of Ancient India was not so intelligent & learned in his early life. Throughout his life he had to suffer from criticisms and insults.

One day, while wandering around dejected, he came to the bank of the river and contemplated taking his life. Just then he saw some women washing clothes on the edge of the river bank. He observed that the stones which the women were pounding with clothes were smooth and rounded, while the other stones were rough and ragged. This observation hit him like a thunderbolt and it dawned upon him that if stones could be worn through and can change their shape by being pounded upon by clothes, then why couldn't his thick brain change by being pounded upon by knowledge. Thus, he grew determined to become the wisest and most learned man in the country. His determination brought in result and today he is known all over.

To achieve anything, one needs to possess a sound body and mind. Because a trained, disciplined and focussed mind can take you to the height of success. You have to be sharp on intellect by being precise and exact in your career and life dealings in future.

I am thankful to the Board of Governors of the Institute for inviting me to this 3rd Convocation of the Institute. I have no doubt that this young Institute will develop into a destination for technology education and research in the country and bring lots of glory to the State. Its permanent campus is coming-up in the scenic environment of world renowned Cherrapunjee. I wish the Institute a very bright future.

I am concluding the convocation address with a Quotation of Swami Vivekananda “Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain. We must have life-building, man-making, character-making assimilation of ideas. If you have assimilated five ideas and made them your life and character you have more education than others”.

Thirukkural guides us about the purpose of Education. Thiruvalluar Said, “Learn well whatever is worthy of learning, Then act according to that learning”.

Jai Hind !
