

## **SPEECH OF SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE, FORMER PRESIDENT OF INDIA AT THE 4<sup>th</sup> CONVOCATION OF G.D. GOENKA UNIVERSITY**

I am happy to be present at the 4<sup>th</sup> Convocation of G.D. Goenka University. Let me at the outset congratulate all of you who are graduating today.

2. I am told a total of 420 graduates and post graduates will be awarded their degrees today. This is a big number and I extend my heartiest congratulations to all the students as well as the management and faculty members of GD Goenka University for achieving this feat in such a short span of time. I also take this opportunity to congratulate the University for awarding the first PhD degree today, 4 years after the doctorate research programme was launched.

3. It is heartening to learn that G.D. Goenka University offers programs from diploma to doctoral level in various disciplines including architecture & planning, communications, engineering, humanities & social sciences, law, management and more through its eleven schools. Multi-disciplinary Universities have the potential to become a melting pot of talent and they can participate in interdisciplinary research and innovation.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies & Gentlemen,

4. India is a fast developing nation, steadily and surely making its mark on the global stage. It is in this context that we must create a diverse pool of talented faculty members, enhance industry-academia collaborations and look for research in the areas which yield results useful for both industry and academia. In this regard, I

am happy to know about the outcome based learning and peer to peer learning, in the form of group engagements formats which are being undertaken by this University. This will surely provide a big impetus to producing students who are in tune with the needs and demands of the industry.

5. I am delighted to see the commitment of the University, towards social transformation and providing assistance to the deserving underprivileged students. ***Udayan Shilini Fellowships*** covering 100% education and transportation fees being provided to 12 girls is a congratulatory step. In a civilized society, no student should be deprived of her Right to Education. Higher education institutes like yours, have a big responsibility to share in this direction. You are the government's partner in taking the mission of creating employable educated population forward and to leverage the potential of the demographic dividend of the nation.

6. To my mind, the vision and mission of an educational institute should not just reflect in the students they produce but should also echo through the society around them as well as the local community. Vocational training programmes for women and youth empowerment which you have been undertaking are steps in the right direction. These can further be integrated into your core curricula with greater intensity with each passing batch handing over the baton to the next batch of students.

7. I believe, the real education lies not in the confinement of classrooms but outside of it. A flexible curricula, greater connect with the outside world and practice based education is what the students of today should be provided. It is also important for the students to aim at acquiring comprehensive knowledge for

emerging technologies in different fields. We are living in a world where technology is the biggest game changer, the 21<sup>st</sup> century is going to be driven by data and information.

8. Global economy, global village and information superhighway are the terms we live by in the modern times. International-ization is the need of the hour. Students should possess international outlook in their approach which can be provided through adequate international exposure. The University's international tie-ups with Institutions and Universities of repute are praiseworthy. You should be aiming at strengthening and cementing it further by exploring residency programmes and dual degree programmes.

Dear Students,

9. Let me share an interesting fact with you all. A recent study done by the 'Institute For the Future' along with 20 tech, business and academic experts from around the world says that 85% of jobs that will exist at the end of 2030, have not even been created. Such will be the pace of change that people will learn 'in the moment' using new technologies such as augmented reality and virtual reality. The ability to gain new knowledge will be more valuable than the knowledge itself. Your generation is poised to live longer and learn for a much longer period of time than your predecessors did. Therefore this is just the end of beginning of one learning cycle for you which should be followed immediately by another learning cycle. So it is very important that we learn the art of being a student for life and never cease to learn new concepts, technologies and ways of dealing with challenges.

11. I am reminded of the words of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. He said and I quote, "***The end-product of education should be a free***

*creative man, who can battle against historical circumstances and adversities of nature.” (Unquote)* As you graduate from formal education and leave the portals of your alma mater, I have these suggestions for you:

a) **Don't be anxious about your future:** Learn to live in the present. Past is history; future is mysterious; so, focus on your present. Your future will be the outcome of your actions in the present.

b) **Don't brood over the past:** You cannot undo what has already taken place. Counter-factual thinking should find no place in your present and future endeavours.

c) **Do not be afraid of failures;** let failure be a source of learning.

d) **Trust yourself:** We do not need magic to change the world. We carry all the power we need inside ourselves already; we have the power to imagine and create a better future.

e) **Be a life-long learner:** Remember that graduation is a concept. In real life, you graduate every day. It is a never ending process as you learn new things from your occupation and imbibe other qualities from your life experiences. Remember that change is the law of nature. Like old foliage that drops off in autumn, to be replaced by new foliage in the spring, try to adapt to change and become an agent for change. Old ideas and approaches that no longer serve any purpose should give way to better ideas. It is your creativity that can usher in change. So, proceed in the journey of life with an attitude to learn and an aptitude to think new

Dear students,

12. We must always remember that progress of any nation is dependent on its citizens. It is dependent on you and me. And we must also remember that progress is not achieved through walking on a smooth road. It is a tough, long walk but because of dreamers, innovators, strivers, activists, all you young people brimming with hope and ideas for the nation, progress seems to be the only way forward. Take us forward. Be the change.

Thank You

Jai Hind