

Raja Narendra Lal Khan Women's College
(Autonomous)

Convocation Volume

1st Convocation

66th Foundation Day

August 22, 2022



Dr. B.C. Roy Memorial Hall

Raja N.L. Khan Women's College (Autonomous)

Midnapore – 721102, West Bengal

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CONVOCATION VOLUME

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Welcome Address

Good morning, everyone!

Honourable Chief Guest Prof. Deb Narayan Bandopadhyay, Vice-chancellor of Bankura University, Prof. Sibaji Pratim Basu, Honourable Vice-Chancellor of Vidyasagar University, Prof. Dhrubajyoti Chattaopadhyay, Honourable Vice-Chancellor of Sister Nivedita University, Prof. Anuradha Mukhopadhyay, Honourable Vice-Chancellor of Sanskrit University, and all the Members of the Academic Council, distinguished guests, faculty members and staff of the college, members of the press and the bright graduating students!

Today we have assembled here on the 66th Foundation Day of the college to celebrate the 1st Convocation Ceremony of Raja Narendra Lal Khan Women's College (Autonomous) after it received its autonomy in October, 2018. This is a significant milestone in the journey of this elite institute and it gives us immense pleasure to celebrate this achievement with our students. In this context, I would also like to mention that this college ranked 73rd in NIRF college rankings, which is no doubt a great achievement.

As the Chairperson of the 10th Governing Body of the college, I welcome Prof. Sibaji Pratim Basu, Honourable Vice-Chancellor of Vidyasagar University, who will deliver the convocation address. I am also delighted to extend a warm welcome to our Chief guest for gracing this ceremony with his august presence. I am grateful to Prof. Dhrubajyoti Chattaopadhyay, Honourable Vice-Chancellor of Sister Nivedita University, Prof. Anuradha Mukhopadhyay,

Honourable Vice-Chancellor of Sanskrit University and all other distinguished guests for attending this ceremony.

Dear graduate students, I offer my heartfelt congratulations on your academic accomplishments – the culmination of many years of devotion and diligence. Education is not just about grades it is about values, about progress. We have recently emerged from the Covid -19 induced lockdown that has played havoc with our education system. We teachers had to quickly learn how to conduct online classes and you students had to adjust to online teaching. I really appreciate the way you quickly adapted and learnt to study in the online classroom environment. These were challenging times both for the students as well as the teachers. Nothing gives more satisfaction and pleasure to a teacher, than the academic achievement of the students against all odds!

Once again, I extend a warm welcome to all of you.

Thank you

Prof. Asutosh Ghosh

Chairperson of the Governing Body,
Raja N.L. Khan Women's College (Autonomous);
Vice-Chancellor, Rani Rashmoni Green University

Annual Report

Honourable President of this Convocation Ceremony Prof. Sibaji Pratim Basu, Vice-Chancellor, Vidyasagar University.

Honourable Prof. Ashutosh Ghosh, Vice-Chancellor, Rani Rashmoni Green University and the Chairperson of the Governing Body of our College.

Respected Chief Guest of this Ceremony Prof. Deb Narayan Bandyopadhyay, Vice-Chancellor, Bankura University.

Respected Prof. Anuradha Mukherjee, Vice-Chancellor, Sanskrit College and University, University Nominee, the Academic Council of our college.

Honourable Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Dhrubajyoti Chattopadhyay, Sister Nivedita University, and the University Nominee, the Academic Council of our college.

Respected Prof. Anand K. Shenvi, Principal (Retd.) Bangurnagar Degree College, Dandeli, Karnataka and the UGC Nominee of the GB of our college.

Respected Prof. Joyjit Ghosh, Dept. of English, Vidyasagar University, and the University Nominee of the Academic Council of our college.

Respected Prof. Indranil Acharya, Head of the Dept. of English, Vidyasagar University, and the University Nominee of the GB of our college.

Respected Ex GB members, Ex Academic Council members, Ex Principals of Raja N.L. Khan Women's College.

Dr. Biswajit Mondal and Mrs. Debjani Mukherjee, the teachers' representatives of the Governing Body.

Respected dignitaries & guests, members of press fraternity, our beloved teachers, non-teaching staff members, students, friends, and well-wishers—

On this 66th Foundation Day we heartily welcome all and extend our sincere thanks and gratefulness and warm wishes to one and all who are here today with us on this happy occasion. Our joy is further enhanced by the fact that this year we are organizing the First Convocation on the foundation day of the college.

We observe this day to renew our dreams and determination for promoting the cause of education for our learners and society at large. Education is the best means of ensuring social justice, national integrity and communal harmony.

On behalf of Raja Narendra Lal Khan Women's College, I extend a warm welcome to you all.

Raja N. L. Khan Women's College (Autonomous) popularly known as Gope College has come a long way since its foundation on 22nd August 1957. Thanks to the generosity of Smt. Anjali Khan, wife of Sri Amarendra Lal Khan of Narajole royal family. Our college began its journey from the Historical Gope Palace with a handful of students, with the unstinting support and encouragement of Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, the then Chief Minister of West Bengal. The Palace bears the rich legacy of hosting almost all the great political leaders, eminent thinkers and many well-known freedom fighters of the country, in the days of the British Raj.

Over the years, our college has developed into an outstanding institution of higher education. In 2018, Raja N.L. Khan Women's College has been given the Autonomous status by UGC and confirmed by Vidyasagar University from the academic session 2018-2019 for a period of 10 years. It is the first women's college in West Bengal to receive this prestigious distinction. This year the college has been ranked 73rd in college category by NIRF (2022).

At present the college has 28 Undergraduate Departments and 14 Postgraduate Departments and soon we will be offering many more UG & PG courses. Our meritorious and disciplined students, research scholars (total 95 ongoing), highly qualified and dedicated faculty and efficient staff have earned rich accolades from various academic bodies, State Higher Education Department, UGC, CPE-II, DST FIST-I & II and MHRD, Govt. of India. Recently, we have received the DST CURIE grant and we are very proud to announce that our college is the only recipient amongst all Women's PG Colleges and Women's Universities in West Bengal. Two research centres (both in Humanities and Social Science as well as Natural and Applied Sciences) have been established with the affiliation of Vidyasagar University.

It's my privilege to acclaim that Raja Narendra Lal Khan Women's College, despite being situated in rural surroundings at Phulpahari Mouza on the outskirts of Midnapore Town, has all the modern facilities and equipment required in higher education today. Our dynamic website provides comprehensive information regarding all academic activities. All kinds of infrastructural facilities are available within the college campus— ICT and smart classrooms equipped with modern teaching-aids in each Department; modernized laboratories in all science departments;

language laboratory; mentorship; Wi-Fi facilities inside the campus; hostels for the resident students within the College premises; extensive playgrounds; fully furnished gymnasium and spacious auditorium; well-stocked library; entire campus under CCTV surveillance; biometric attendance; free health check-up & medical facility; very affordable canteens and Water ATM. The college has a very active Career Advancement Centre which offers a number of value-added certificate courses with nominal fees and arranges regular campus interviews attended by renowned companies. Our college has been selected by NSDC for imparting training in Office Management and Accounting. With the help and support of the West Bengal Tribal Corporation, Govt. of West Bengal, we have initiated 2 free certificate courses for our tribal students.

Dear students, you will be conferred your degrees today. I sincerely hope that your days in the institution has been a very enriching and fruitful experience and played a very effective role in your academic growth and in moulding your personality. I wish you all success.

On this occasion, we also remember and pay homage to all the employees (retired and in-service) who have left for heavenly abode during 2021-22.

Recently, the New Governing Body and the New Academic Council has been formulated and started functioning. The Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) of the College has been performing satisfactorily in recent years. It has organised 6 seminars on some relevant issues last year.

We have received total grant of Rs. 15 crores 8 lacs 96 thousand 80 last year from different Govt. and Non-Govt. bodies. Special

mention must be made of the donation of Rs. 32 lacs 86 thousand 9 hundred 48 from AMER-SIL KETEX, Kharagpur for the construction of the new entry gate of the college, and a donation of Rs. 55 thousand from Dr. Atanu Kumar Raha, IFS (Retd.) for “Dr. Srilekha Raha Memorial Scholarship for Ph.D. Study”.

Rs. 73 lacs 66 thousand 9 hundred 98 has been spent last year for different infrastructural developments. Rs. 2 crores 15 lacs 32 thousand 4 hundred 48 are to be spent for some ongoing works.

We are very happy to announce that the Dept. of Environment, Govt. of West Bengal has given the administrative approval and financial sanction of Rupees 9 lacs 80 thousand 4 hundred for the project entitled “Development of a Biodiversity Park at the college campus of Raja Narendra Lal Khan Women’s college”. The work is being carried out under the supervision of Dr. Anirban Roy, Research Officer at West Bengal Biodiversity Board. We intend to set up a tree library, grassland mound, butterfly garden and eco-pond within the Biodiversity Park.

For the long-term use of green and clean energy, a solar tree has been installed within our college campus with the help of CMERI, Durgapur (Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute). The solar tree was inaugurated by Dr. Rashmi Kamal, the District magistrate of Paschim Medinipur on 3rd of March 2022. This 11.55 kW peak power solar tree has a total of 35 solar PV panels, each with a power of 330 watts and can produce 35-45 units of green and clean energy on typical sunny day. From the very beginning, a total of 7850 units have already been produced by the solar tree till 15th of August 2022. This solar energy partially meets our institution’s electricity need and a portion of the generated energy is fed into the power grid.

Our college has performed various societal activities in the surrounding localities last year. A purified drinking water system worth of Rs. 2 lacs 50 thousand has been set up at Murakata Primary School & Muradanga Primary School, Kankabati Gram Panchayat.

Our college has made significant progress in teaching, research and extension activities last year. Currently 12 Major Research Projects are active in different departments of the College. The total grant of the active projects is Rs. 1 crore 67 lacs 2 thousand 2 hundred 74.

Online classes for the UG 3rd and 5th semester and PG 3rd semester was initiated from 6th Sept., 2021; the online classes for the UG 1st semester was started from 1st Oct., 2021 and the classes in offline mode was initiated from 16th November 2021.

The various departments of the college have organised 26 seminars on different relevant issues last year, some of which are of national and international level. A total of eight outreach programmes and twenty-four educational excursions have been organised by the Departments.

The number of scholarships received by our students last year is more than 4 thousand, and I am very glad to announce that 45 students of our College have got jobs mostly through the Campus Recruitment Programmes.

The Central Library of the College is almost fully automated with software *Koha* and *DSpace*. Presently, the total number of books in the library is nearly 42 thousand. Rs. 2 lacs 20 thousand have been spent to purchase books in this year. The total footfall at the library during the last one year was more than 7000. Total

number of books issued during last one year was 4 thousand 3 hundred and 36.

Our college has been selected for the “Study in India” programme where international students can get admission in our college. At present, one student from Bangladesh is studying M.Sc. (Computer Sc.) in our college. The College is keen to have more overseas students in the coming years.

Presently, 95 scholars are doing their doctoral research under the two research centres of our college under the supervision of 19 faculty members. 24 scholars have been enrolled last year for the Ph.D. programmes at the centres. Besides, three of our faculty members are supervising 9 Ph.D. scholars under the affiliation of different Universities.

The deed for extension of the lease of the College land for 99 years (from 22/08/2017) has been received from ADM & DLRO this year.

We have 6 hostels with a capacity of nearly 500 boarders. We have been doing necessary renovation works regularly.

The College Cooperative Credit Society Ltd. Has been providing effective service to its members. Total amount of loan given by society to the members in the last financial year is a sum of Rs. 65 lacs 56 thousand.

Banamahotsav has been successfully celebrated this year on 14th of July 2022 with the assistance of the Alumni Association “Balaka”, and the NSS unit of our college.

The Department of NSS has organised several programmes throughout the year. The NSS National Integration Camp 2022 was organised successfully by the college in collaboration with the

Regional Directorate of NSS, Kolkata from May 25 to May 31, 2022. 240 NSS volunteers from 18 states across the country participated in the camp.

The NCC unit of the college successfully organised a number of events last year. The Governor's Medal as the Best Cadet Award 2022 has been received by Senior Under Officer Riya Ghosh.

The College Study Centre of Netaji Subhas Open University has been performing satisfactorily for many years. Presently, it is conducting eight UG, twelve PG and two professional courses. The total number of enrolled students of the year 2021-22 is 4 thousand 5 hundred and 15.

The Career Advancement Centre (CAC) of the college has been playing an important role to enhance the skill of the students at the College over the years. Lately, it has introduced 11 useful certificate and diploma courses for the students. Even during the period of lockdown, it continued the classes through online mode.

The Balaka Alumni Association is working continuously to build up a benevolent student community. It has organised several programmes throughout the year. The association assists in various extension and societal activities of the College.

Last year, our faculty members have received various personal awards and honours. Dr. Partha Pratim Chkravorty has become member of various prestigious international bodies and societies namely – a) Royal Society of Biology, London, UK, b) Working group of NETSOB, FAO under UNO, and c) Working group of INSOP, FAO under UNO. Five faculty members have received their Ph.D. degrees this year.

Our faculty members have written more than 100 research articles in journals of repute, most of which are indexed in renowned databases like Web of Science, Scopus, etc. Besides, they have written 67 books / chapters of books last year, some of which are published by famous national as well as international publishers.

Our faculty members have attended 55 seminars and conferences last year. Many of them have presented research papers at the seminars, and some of them acted as the resource persons too. Fifteen of our faculty members have successfully completed 21 Refresher Courses, Orientation Programmes, Faculty Development Programmes, etc.

At present, the numbers of vacancy of teaching post is one and non-teaching post is ten. One faculty member joined the college last year. Six staff members have retired last year.

Our college has completed 65 years of its journey. These 65 years have witnessed a tremendous and effective growth of teaching and learning in the field of value based human development. We sincerely acknowledge the contribution made by the different Government departments, officials and the community members for providing us the opportunity to develop the credentials in the field of education.

Before I conclude, on behalf of the college, we extend our thanks and gratitude to Vidyasagar University, Higher Education Department, Education Directorate, West Bengal State Council of Higher Education, West Bengal College Service Commission, Netaji Subhas Open University, University Grants Commission, UCO Bank, SBI, Midnapore, Axis Bank, Midnapore, and other Nationalized Banks, post Office, Home Department, Public Health

Engineering, Midnapore Municipality, Paschim Medinipur Zilla Parishad, Paschimanchal Unnayan Parishad, NSS Coordinator, NCC Directorate, District Administration, Friends and Well-wishers for their infinite assistance and co-operation.

We are grateful to the honourable guests and the dignitaries for their august presence on this occasion. We thank them all for their presence in this programme, despite their busy schedules. We are also grateful to all our guests and media persons present in this function.

All stakeholders of the college work for knowledge, peace, equality, love, sympathy, truth, and tolerance through our daily activities. We extend our good wishes and affection to our beloved students. We pray for their good health, kind heart and wisdom. We have so many students working in diverse fields for nation building. We are proud of them.

Once again, I convey my deepest regards and thanks to all who have assembled here. Namaskar.

Dr. Jayasree Laha

Principal,
Raja N.L. Khan Women's College (Autonomous)

Convocation Address

The Principal of Raja N L Khan Women's College (Autonomous) Dr. Jayasree Laha, distinguished Chief Guest, Professor Deb Narayan Bandyopadhyay, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, Bankura University, The Chairperson & Members of the Governing Body of Raja N L Khan Women's College (Autonomous), Members of the Academic Council of the College, Faculty Members, Officers, Staff, Students, recipients of degrees, medals and prizes, distinguished Guests, Members of the Press, Alumni of the College, Ladies and Gentlemen – Good morning/afternoon! I extend a very warm welcome to all of you.

Today, the 22nd of August 2022 is a historic day for Raja N L Khan Women's College. It also coincides with year of 75th celebration of Indian Independence, now popular as “Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav”. Moreover, we have assembled here to celebrate the First Convocation of this Autonomous College which also happens to be the 66th Foundation Day of the College. I thank the Principal, Dr. Jayasree Laha for inviting me to preside over the ceremony. I am delighted to be here amongst you as a part of the grand saga. This is a long cherished and proud moment for those who will receive their degrees.

Before I proceed further, I would like to express my profound gratitude to Professor Deb Narayan Bandyopadhyay, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, Bankura University for honouring us with his august presence to deliver the Convocation Address.

It is a great privilege for me to be able to address you on the First Convocation of Raja N L Khan Women's College

(Autonomous). As the 66th Foundation Day celebration of Raja N L Khan Women's College is going on, we remember with respect and pride the great scholars, freedom fighters, social workers and other luminaries whose contributions have shaped this institution. The walls, corridors, and flagstones of Raja N L Khan Women's College's heritage buildings are imbued with their spirit, their inspiration motivates us all. Now that this College is autonomous, it is time to build on this exceptional foundation.

Raja N L Khan Women's College is well equipped to provide the leadership and play a pivotal role in improving the quality of higher education. The efforts made by the Principal, the teaching and the support staff of the College to develop it into an Institution of repute must be acknowledged and appreciated. This institution still continues to be the preferred destination for the students aspiring for quality higher education.

The epic academic odyssey started from the historical Gope palace with a handful of students on August 22, 1957. From its incipient stage as a Government Sponsored College in 1957, the affiliation of the College changed from the University of Calcutta to Vidyasagar University in 1985. A host of talented teachers, proficient both in teaching and research, diligent and knowledgeable students, committed and zealous non-teaching staff, much-coveted infrastructure, uniquely furnished Library, several academic opportunities, coupled with adequate support services of the College have established it as a premier Higher Education hub not only in the State of West Bengal but also in the Country.

Apart from hosting Research Centres in Humanities & Social Science and in Natural & Applied Sciences, the College is currently disseminating Undergraduate programmes in 28 subjects and Postgraduate programmes in 14 subjects. Raja N L Khan

Women's College has been endowed with Autonomous Status as a feather in its cap by the UGC from the academic session 2018-2019 and it is the first Women's College in West Bengal to receive this prestigious distinction. The Gope palace has been declared as a Heritage Building by the West Bengal Heritage Commission (Act IX of 2001) in 2006. The College has been accredited thrice by NAAC in 2004, 2011 and 2016 respectively with very good grades. For two consecutive years in 2021 and 2022, Raja N L Khan Women's College has been ranked amongst the topmost colleges of the country by NIRF and has been recognized as a Centre of Potential for Excellence by the UGC. The College has also been selected as a 'STAR' College by the DBT, Government of India. Recently, 4 PG departments were awarded the prestigious DST-CURIE award. The College has been bestowed with the "One District One Green Champion" award by the MGNCRE, Government of India. With the help of West Bengal Biodiversity Board, as well as funding from the College fund, a Biodiversity Park has been established in the College. An 11kw Solar Tree, one of the biggest in the world, has been constructed in the College and it is generating electricity in an alternative eco- friendly way.

Raja Narendra Lal Khan Women's College (Autonomous), popularly known as Gope College, in spite of being situated in rural surroundings on the outskirts of Midnapore Town, has all the modern facilities and equipments essential in higher education today: the dynamic Website provides comprehensive information regarding all academic and infrastructural facilities available within the College campus; ICT enabled Smart Classrooms equipped with modern teaching-aids in each department; Modernized Laboratories in all science departments; Language Laboratory; Mentorship; Wi-Fi facilities inside the campus; Hostels for the resident students within the College premises; extensive

Playgrounds; fully furnished Gymnasium and spacious Auditorium; well-stocked Library; CCTV surveillance in the entire campus; Biometric Attendance; Free Health Check-up & Medical facility; very affordable Canteens and Water ATM. The College has its own Counselling, Training and Placement Cell offering sixteen value added courses, entrepreneurship development programmes and campus placement drives. Apart from these, an innovative Environmental Project is being carried out by the students of the College under the mentorship of the teachers to sustain the beauty and biodiversity of the campus.

For an institution, a Convocation ceremony is the most important event in its calendar of events. It is the day when all of us in our respective capacities as stakeholders, as well wishers of the College, as parents, as representatives of the government, come together to recognize publicly the efforts and achievements not only of a graduating class of students who have excelled academically, but also of the institution. It is an important opportunity to review the achievements and lessons of the past year, and reflect on the required strategic directions to address the challenges that lie ahead.

Let me begin by congratulating the students who are receiving their degrees and prizes today. The Convocation marks the fruition of your hard work and your transition from students to professionals. You now don the mantle of the task of dissemination of knowledge and skills acquired at the institute from your teachers and mentors. While you must rejoice and celebrate your achievements, you must also realize the enormity of responsibility that has been placed upon you. The baton of knowledge and skills, that you have received and the values you have imbibed must be carried with the same spirit and zeal as has been done by your teachers. This has to be a lifelong commitment and this is what

your teachers, mentors and your Alma Mater would perhaps expect from you.

I would also like to remind my dear students that a College is much more than the bricks and mortar with which it is built. A College is its people. From the humblest to the highest functionary and the generations of students and teachers who make it into a thriving institution. As we strive for success and riches and fulfilment, we have to remember that we cannot achieve any of it by living in a bubble of self-interest, for we are a part of humanity and until everyone progresses and has the opportunity to fulfil their potential and transform their dreams into reality, our goals will only be mirages. For these mirages to become oasis, we need to not only work hard and dream big, but also strive to use our research capability to innovatively address the real problems that our nation faces. I wish that you graduate not only with good marks and the promise of gainful and satisfying employment, but also with self-confidence. The courage of your convictions should be your true worth as you chart your destiny.

An institution's future is dependent on enabling the faculty, students and the staff to overcome cynicism. Cynicism is an easy alibi to evade responsibility. One way of achieving this is by making everyone a stakeholder in collaborative institution building. It is important to recall that the singular feature of 'Vidyadana' (the act of imparting knowledge) that this country expounded was aimed at attaining happiness for everyone. 'Sarve sukhino bhavantu' (may all people be happy) should be the driving impulse of any conception of education in any period or place.

Friends, Higher Education in India has a history stretching back to the primordial urban centres of learning at Takshashila and Nalanda that was the oldest university- system of education in the

world. Over the time, Indian higher education system has made considerable progress in terms of capacity building and enrolment. Standing here, among these bright faces on both sides of the rostrum and looking at the track record of your distinguished alumni – I have absolutely no qualm that our education system is in the right track to take us to greater heights.

To all the teachers in this auditorium I would like to say that you are the proud inheritors and flag bearers of a wonderful tradition of being in the fortunate position to give your students the greatest gift of all, the gift of knowledge. India is leading the international community in the area of higher learning. Every fourth graduate in the world will be a product of our higher education system. In such a competitive environment, only those professionals who are properly skilled and trained will achieve success. The onus is on the higher educational institutions, especially on the teachers, to prepare their students in a way that they are globally relevant and yet sensitive to the needs of the society they inhabit.

We must bridge a considerable gap in mutual trust that exists between the institutions and industries. We need to reach a condition during the cooperation where both sides see a win-win situation. Considerable work is necessary to create trust between two sides to invest in each other. As we deal with industry, one may also examine the opportunities for a company-relevant research and development. While this approach facilitates practical learning and enables students to boldly meet the challenges they face in real life, the development process will be enhanced by the participation of a knowledge institution, which will become increasingly relevant in a knowledge dominated era.

Never before has there been so much hope and expectation about the future of India than at present. For the young graduates, the road ahead is long but the journey promises to be exciting and rewarding. Being young in today's India is an opportunity and a challenge. Always work with an aim, a mission, and with a vision. Brilliance flourishes where knowledge is free and the mind is unfettered to soar to the highest reaches of excellence. Each one of us sitting here can make a difference. Have a constructive attitude and think of solutions, not the problems alone. Look at the future with hope and expectation, but with your feet firmly on the ground. Carry with you the courage of your convictions and the determination to succeed. With the self-confidence you have gained here, it is time now for you to go out and make your families and teachers proud.

I offer my best wishes to all those who are receiving degrees, with a special word of congratulations to those who have received awards and medals and wish them all success in life. I also extend my heartiest congratulations to your families and your teachers, who have provided the support and shaped your intellect to help you achieve this coveted academic distinction. I hope you will choose professions that will bring you fulfilment of all your dreams, using your talent, competence and energy for bringing peace, harmony and an equitable development for the nation. Remember, the degree, the recognition and the appreciation that you received here had only made you a better learner. One needs to carry with oneself this precious habit of learning till the end because learning is an unending journey. As said by Thakur Shri Ramakrishna Paramhansa "Jatodin banchi, tatodin shikhi" (As long as one lives, so long he learns).

With these few words, I once again congratulate the students of Raja N L Khan Women's College on this auspicious occasion as

you enter a new chapter of life's lessons and experiences. May it be pleasant and rewarding. May you proceed to achieve greater distinctions and higher levels of achievement for yourselves, your proud parents and your society. I look forward to your contribution – each one of you – to the building of our great nation. I wish all the degree recipients a successful career ahead. All your dreams may be adequately realized. Here I would like to echo the words of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore and I quote “Everything comes to us that belongs to us if we create the capacity to receive it.”
Unquote

I would like to finally congratulate Dr. Jayasree Laha, Principal, Raja N L Khan Women’s College (Autonomous) and its entire academic community for their commendable endeavour and convey my deepest regards and thanks to all those who have assembled here to make this First Convocation a grand success.

Thank you very much.

Jai Hind!

Professor Sibaji Pratim Basu
Hon’ble Vice-Chancellor,
Vidyasagar University

Brief CV of the Chief Guest

Deb Narayan Bandyopadhyay is the Vice Chancellor, Bankura University, West Bengal, India. He was Professor in the Dept. of English, Burdwan University, India. He is also the Secretary of the Indian Association for the Study of Australia, Eastern Region and Indian Association of Scottish Studies. In 2001 he was invited to give a course of lectures on “Nineteenth-century Representations of Shakespeare in India” at the University of Vienna, Shakespeare Society of Vienna and the University of Salzburg. He also visited the University of Edinburgh and lectured at a seminar organised at Mansfield College, Oxford in 2002, with assistance from British Council. He was nominated for the Fulbright Exchange Summer Institute Program in 2003 and he worked at Northern Illinois University, University of Chicago and the State University of New York. He was awarded fellowships by the Australia-India Council in 2005 and 2006, and was a Distinguished Visiting Scholar at Monash University (School of English, Communication and Performance Studies) in 2007. He was the Visiting Research Fellow at the University of New South Wales (School of History and Philosophy) in 2010-12. He was the Honorary Adjunct Senior Research Fellow at Monash University (School of English, Communication and Performance Studies, Australian and Indigenous Studies: 2009- 2018). He has published and co-edited many scholarly books, and is the author of innumerable papers. He is also the international contributing editor of the Journal of American History (Indiana, USA). He was the Project Leader of a research project on Gerontology working in collaboration with the

University of Swansea, Wales which has been funded by UKIERI (UK-India Education and Research Initiative), 2014-2016.

Academic Achievements (Awards/Fellowships):

- Fulbright Summer Institute Exchange Program, 2003 (Northern Illinois University, USA)
- Australia-India Council Visiting Fellow, 2005 (University of Melbourne)
- Australia-India Council Australian Studies Fellowship, 2006 (Curtin University)
- Awardee of Distinguished Visiting Scholar Program, School of English, Communication & Performance Studies, Monash University, Australia, 2007
- Honorary Adjunct Senior Research Fellow, School of English, Communication and Performance Studies, Monash University, Australia, 2009-18
- Professorial Visiting Fellow, School of History and Philosophy, University of New South Wales, Australia, 2009-2010
- Visiting Professor, University of Wollongong, September-October, 2010
- Visiting Research Fellow, University of New South Wales, 2010—2013
- Honorary Adjunct Senior Research Fellow, JAIS, Monash University, 2011- 2018
- Awardee of UKIERI (UK-INDIA EDUCATION AND RESEARCH INTIATIVE), 2014-2016
- Professorial Fellow, School of the Arts, English and Media, University of Wollongong, 2018—continuing
- Awardee of Andrew Tannahill Fund, University of Glasgow: Research Visit, October, 2017

- Received support of Travel Grants from Edinburgh Napier University and ASLS (Association for Scottish Literary Studies) for invited lectures at CLAW (Centre for Literature and Writing, Edinburgh Napier University), November, 2017
- Received support for acting as an expert for the Global Engagement Programme of Australian Studies Institute, Australian National University, July, 2018
- Worked on University Grants Commission Major Research Project, Centre for Advanced Studies, Bengali Dept, Burdwan University: “Dialects, Ethno-cultural Identities and Politics of Language in Bengal”, 2005
- International Contributing Editor: Journal of American History (JAH), USA: since 2010- continuing
- Acting as Assessor of Research Projects: Australian Research Council (ARC) since 2015--continuing

Speech of the Chief Guest

Critiquing Higher Education: Challenges and Prospects

*To follow knowledge like a sinking star
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought*

--Tennyson

I

Prelude and postlude

Configurations of higher education had always been challenging and it always called for multiple forms of experiments. Even in ancient Athenian society of 5th Century B.C., the concept of 'paideia' or education of the Elders of the 'Polis' involved a large number of critical diversification. Isocrates' school of oratory, Plato's Academy or Aristotle's Lyceum were examples of various pedagogic formations in classical Greece. In other words, ancient classical education was divided into two distinctive modes: gymnastike (education of the body) and mousike (education of the soul). It is the combination of these two distinctive ideals that would lead to enteleia or perfection. In the Latin critical model, the ideal citizen should be able to identify the antithesis between pietas or piety and furor or fury, between order and disorder. Again in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the principle of 'trivium' (three ways of education) or 'quadrivium' (four ways of education) played an important part in the dissemination of liberal education¹. In the Renaissance analysis, 'wit', 'rhetoric' and 'logic' were

considered to be functional to the development of the man of reason.

The paradigmatic shift of higher education in India came to be noticed in the colonial period when indigenous forms of education (tol/chatuspathi and madrasa/maqtab) came to be replaced by the British model of education. The debate between the Anglicists and the Orientalists largely iconised a mode of erasure by constructing the indigenous forms as savage, barbaric and even immoral. This cultural politics of amnesia in terms of replacing the indigenous knowledge system may be looked upon as a distinct interventionist agenda of the empire¹.

As a consequence of Industrial Revolution in mid-nineteenth century, there developed a phase of positing rival claims between the 'liberal' and the 'utilitarian' forms of education. One significant example is the Calcutta International Exhibition organized in 1883. This was the first remarkable evidence of the rise of Asia in terms of intercolonial transaction and new negotiation in the domain of academic orientation. It was the celebration of new knowledge systems. The time frame for the beginning of the international exhibition movement is significant. The exhibition movement coincided with the consolidation of the effects of Industrial Revolution. The Industrial Revolution beginning in the last decades of the eighteenth century and maturing in the 1850s developed a new form of market economy. Rapid industrialization based on manufacturing and machine tools conduced to a new celebration of the imperialist policy which involved a substantial amount of competitiveness. It was a world of neo-capitalism in which Great Britain and France sought to emulate each other. But the colonial India began to look at the exhibition as a contentious space, a space iconizing new knowledge formation. Such contentious claims in the domain of

higher education led to a constant re-shaping and re-modulation of our cultural identities. Such modifications may be structured under four chronistic phases:

1st Phase: Education and its ideals: Perfect citizenship

2nd Phase: Education and its ideals: Well-trained individuals

3rd Phase: Education and its ideals: Development of Critical spirit

4th Phase: Education and its ideals: Capacity to build new challenges

The model of education as structured in colonial India was essentially humanist and modular. Duff's Free Church School may be considered as a case in point: Duff used to teach Philosophy. Mr Fyfe used to teach English, while Macdonald took Mathematics. Macdonald was later joined by Mr Martin Mowat who relieved Macdonald of part of his work. After Duff went back to Scotland, Macdonald began to teach Logic and Philosophy as well. An Indian teacher used to take classes on history. Macdonald also published a volume called Problems in Dynamics which became immensely popular among the Indian students and even began to be used as a textbook in some government colleges. For developing a truly philosophical mind, he also translated Reid's Enquiry into the Human Mind and Abercrombie's Intellectual Powers. Duff was extremely particular about the methodology of education so as to create an epistemic articulation.

Such modular forms of higher education may not be relevant to the sector of contemporary higher education in India. But Indian ideology, since British colonization, came to be constantly exposed to new challenges and expectations in the field of higher education. In the 90s of the last century, India's alignment with the agenda of

globalization brought about a distinct fragmentation in the monolithic and insular policy of the Indian government.

II

Knowledge Society and Globalisation

One major trend of globalization as an official policy formation has been the developing strategies for internationalizing education and research in higher education. But the strategy of internationalizing the education sector involved certain distinct parameters which may be classified in the following manner:

1. Formation of Knowledge Society
2. Education of Sustainable Development

The ideal of Knowledge Societyⁱⁱ envisions a critical approach that encourages knowledge-dependent operations and orientation of new methodologies. As D. Orr points out, this may be looked upon as “an educational perestroika” which implies “a general re-thinking of the process and substance of education at all levels”ⁱⁱⁱ.

Education for Sustainable Development is the contemporary paradigm for revising and re-orienting higher education. World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg (2002) recommended the following four pillars of education^{iv}:

1. Learning to know
2. Learning to do
3. Learning to live together
4. Learning to be

These four pillars explain how knowledge can be structured in society and how personal agency is allowed to operate in accordance with the demands of higher education. But the major challenge facing India is the growing need for networking and twinning programmes among institutions. In other words, this requires collaborations between institutions to share knowledge across borders. This is an urgent need in a world of cosmopolitan citizenship and mutual interdependence. The educated world is now a 'flat' world that demands global mobility. Especially with the rise of information and communication technologies, 'progress' in the sector of higher education comes to assume a new dimension. India is the 2nd largest higher education sector in the world and the University Grants Commission recognizes the challenges^v:

1. Increasing enrolment figure
2. Dwindling state support
3. Shifting nature of knowledge
4. Changing needs of an increasingly complex global society

The first two challenges are associated with management structures involving distinct economic imperatives. Increasing enrolment entails the provision of decisive patterns of capacity building that helps to accommodate the growing number of student enrolment. This becomes more grievous in rural areas with minimum number of colleges having restrictive enrolment procedures. Even the student-teacher ratio seems to be not very encouraging. With dwindling state support, it becomes more dismal.

The last two challenges imply a major paradigm shift in our traditional knowledge system. With the immense growth of

professional and vocational education in terms of IT and Management sectors, earlier rootedness in traditional forms of higher education has started to encounter new challenges. The rise of new professionalism and corporatisation in private education sectors may be regarded as India's gradual stride into a global scenario.

III

A Brief Statement

To encounter these challenges, it is necessary to formulate well-defined policy decisions. It is therefore required to strategies management and governance which will help keep pace with the new demands. Unless a clear outline of governance structure is manipulated, the new goals in the field of higher education cannot be achieved. The governance structure should seriously identify the performing and non-performing departments and recommend guidelines and performative strategies. This will naturally call for public/private collaborations and partnerships. In other words, public/private partnership in higher education will lead to sharing of funding support, though it should be constantly evaluated in terms of quality assurance. As far as academic funding and grants are concerned, the institutions should identify their potentials in specific fields and apply for funding support even from international agencies through collaboration in research exchange and knowledge sharing. Institutions should therefore be competitive and innovative in planning strategies for future development. In order to be visible and be part of global academic community, institutions should participate in global innovative knowledge clusters as embodied in Erasmus Mundus, UGC-UKIERI, Obama-Singh Knowledge Initiative etc. Moreover,

Indian institutions should learn procedures for exporting higher education to nations like Singapore, China, Thailand, Australia and New Zealand. With its strong background in English education and huge mass of knowledge and human resources, Indian institutions should re-learn to package its academic programmes and export it to countries in Asia. Even new curriculum designs- such as India Studies, Rural Art and Craft, Indigenous Culture etc- may be initiated to attract researchers and students from Europe and America. As a basic preparation, there should be re-organisation of grading systems, study tenures, electronic library resources, faster internet networking and WiFi and upgraded accommodation facility in accordance with international standards. Such arrangements uploaded in institutional websites will naturally attract international students as well as international collaboration.

Long Twentieth Century and After: Challenge against Progressive Teleology

As against the modular formations of humanist tradition, there is a growing spate for developing ‘anti-totality’ models. We now talk about ‘interdisciplinary’ or ‘transdisciplinary’ models of education, but we do not search into the ideational roots for such developments. In the post-Derridean world, Laclau and Mouffe in Deconstruction and Radical Democracy questions the idea of the totality as a valid subject. Talking about the ‘social’, they point out that it always tears itself up somewhere, breaks itself open somewhere, requiring what he calls ‘suture’ or stitching up. The idea of ‘suture’ is untenable, because every ‘suture’ will open others somewhere else. Thus, totality in knowledge is an impossibility. However much we seek to posit the function of a unique kind of ‘suture’, it moves further into multiple and sporadic forms of ‘suture’. This therefore questions the very notion of the humanist tradition of monolithicism, uniformity, organism and

articulation. This humanist idea of knowledge as a relationship of epistemology and ontology in fact encourages modularism and totality models and comes to be severely critiqued.

‘Knowledge’ has always enjoyed a contentious subject position. In ancient classical tradition, three distinctive layers of knowledge, with a pyramidal rise, are mentioned: *lethe* or semblance and false; *doxa* or opinion and, finally, *ᾤον* ([h]on) or final reality or being. In practical domain, knowledge is further subject to a dual divide: the maker’s knowledge and the user’s knowledge. One who makes an object has a componential knowledge. But the user’s knowledge is superior to the maker’s knowledge in so far as he grows with the object in terms of his total acquaintanceship with the object. It is this ideal of acquaintanceship that inspired much later the Lockean and Hartleyan doctrine of ‘Associationism of knowledge’ or later I A Richards’ three levels of communication or diversity of meaning as modes of knowledge.

With the rise of Derridean anti-structuralism stance through diverse discursive modalities, there took place already a socio-cultural transformation in terms of knowledge as a multifaceted subject with no stable, fixed code of meaning. The long 20th-century ‘modernism’ came to be interrogated with the development of neo-radicalist ideology in the 1960s. The Civil Rights Movement, the Stonewall incident, the protesting human chain against the aggression in Vietnam in the 60s of the last century were preparing the discourses of neo-radicalist thought patterns and developing growing consciousness of political and social minority cultures. This new process of cultural diplomacy and transnationalism made knowledge systems largely vulnerable. Knowledge gradually became posthumanist; this means that knowledge unravels a new sector of emancipation where unthinkable permeation and mix of diverse knowledge patterns

work together. In Sanskrit Studies, therefore, we find research on ‘migration’ in Rigvedas or environmentalism in Sanskrit texts. Syllabi of English Literature, Political Science, Sociology creates common grounds for the study of diaspora, transnationalism, hegemony etc. Even the Science Congress to be held shortly recognized in one of its meetings that Science should not be designated as an exclusive discipline, but it should be considered as multi-disciplinary: history of science, history of disease, biography of scientists, politics in the domain of science etc. gradually develop as interesting research areas.

Most impressive work in this connection perhaps is Lyotard’s the Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge. The book was written at the request of the Council of Universities of the government of Quebec. It was originally published in French in 1979, and later it was translated into English in 1984 and it immediately began to stride across the Euro-American academies. This book’s central concern had been to study the development of knowledge and higher education in the most advanced societies. What seems particularly striking to me is his specific emphasis on “heterogeneity of discursive practices”. This begins with the severe criticism of the jargon of efficiency, effectiveness, productivity, gain or funding initiatives etc. He sharply stands against the traditional or radical theories of unitary, totalitarian systems of education. Within this wider rubric of totalitarianism, the ideal of ‘innovation’ strikes us as nothing short of paralogism or false reasoning. Within this façade of unitarism, the dream of evolving ‘innovation’ seems to be a utopian ideal. The complacent positivistic assumptions create a gulf between the practitioners of knowledge and the decision-makers. In other words, the currency of terminologies like ‘consensus’ or ‘alternatives’ further generates a sense of despair in higher education sectors. It conduces to what

may be called a cultural homoeostasis, a cultural fixation. In fact, in compatibility with the postmodernist tradition, consensus seems to be a pejorative word that prevents tautegorical thoughts. Tautegoria is a philosophical principle, derived from Schelling and Kant, that upholds the principle of self-reflexivity and individualism. The effort to impose Unitarianism is therefore an effort to impose cultural imperialism in the sectors of higher education.

Indian higher education sector should therefore strive to become part of a global society. In its effort to participate in the competitive world order, a new dimension of academic cosmopolitanism should be achieved.

Notes

- i. Crane, W.G. *Wit and Rhetoric in the Renaissance*. Mass.: Peter Smith. 1964
- ii. Viswanathan, G. *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India*. Columbia: Columbia University Press. 1989
- iii. <http://www.guninetwork.org/resources/he-articles/the-challenges-of-higher-education-in-the-21st-century>
- iv. Orr, D. (2004) *Earth in Mind: on education, environment and the human prospect*, Chicago, Island Press, 2nd Edition p.17
- v. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001271/127100e.pdf>
- vi. <http://www.ugc.ac.in/oldpdf/pub/report/12.pdf>

Professor Deb Narayan Bandyopadhyay
Vice-Chancellor,
Bankura University

Recipient of “Stree-Shakti” Award

Prof. Anuradha Mukhopadhyay

Prof. Anuradha Mukhopadhyay graduated from Presidency College, Kolkata with Honours in Physics, having obtained a first class which won her a National Scholarship for Post Graduate studies which she completed from Science College, Calcutta University. She subsequently worked in the field of X-ray Crystallography as an honorary DANIDA Fellow, University of Aarhus, Denmark and then as a research scholar, University of Sheffield, U.K. She completed her Ph. D from Calcutta University, conducting her doctoral work as a CSIR fellow from the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science, Kolkata. She joined the Dept. of Physics, Jadavpur University in 1990 as a lecturer from where she retired as Professor, Department of Physics.

Her subjects of interest are X-ray Crystallography and Liquid Crystals. She has many research publications to her credit and several scholars who have completed their Ph. D under her supervision.

She has been awarded the "C.V. Raman Mahila Vijnana Puraskara, 2017" by Swadeshi Vijnana Andolana -Karnataka and "Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose Memorial Award, 2020" by The Science Association of Bengal.

She is the founder Vice Chancellor of Kazi Nazrul University, Asansol which she served from December 2012 to February 2015.

In March 2015 she joined as First Vice Chancellor of Diamond Harbour Women's University. It was during her term that the First Statute, First Ordinance and First Regulations were promulgated.

In January 2022 she assumed the responsibilities of First Vice Chancellor of the Sanskrit College and University which she now continues to serve.

Schedule of the Convocation Programme

Time	Events
09.30 A.M. to 10.30 A.M	Registration & Collection of Gown by Students.
10.30 AM.	Robing of the Members of the Academic Procession.
11.00 A.M.	Arrival of the Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor & the Chief Guest.
11.05 A.M.	The Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor hoists the College Flag.
11.10 A.M.	Robing of the Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor and the Chief Guest.
11.25 A.M.	The Academic Procession enters the auditorium.
11.30A.M.	National Anthem.
11.35 A.M.	Felicitation of the Guests
11.45 A.M.	The Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor declares the First Convocation Open.
11.48 A.M.	Welcome Address by the Chairperson of the Governing Body.
11.54 A.M.	Annual Report for the Academic Session 2021-2022, presented by the Principal.
12.10 P.M.	Convocation Address by the Vice-Chancellor.
12.21 P.M.	Address by the Chief Guest.
12.30 P.M.	The <i>STREE-SHAKTI</i> Award presented to Professor Anuradha Mukhopadhyay.
12.40 P.M.	THE PRINCIPAL ANNOUNCES THE CONFERMENT OF DEGREES.
01.10 P.M.	Presentation of Medals and Certificates of Appreciation to the Rank Holders.
01.30 P.M.	The Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor declares the First Convocation Closed. National Anthem. The Academic Procession leaves the Hall.
02.30 P.M to 06.30 P.M.	Post Lunch Session: Distribution of Degree Certificates & Presentation of Memorial Prizes.

