



VIDYASAGAR UNIVERSITY Eighteenth Convocation

Address by

***Professor Ranjan Chakrabarti
Vice-Chancellor***

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Vivekananda Sabhagriha, Vidyasagar University
Paschim Medinipur - 721102
West Bengal**

Respected Chancellor Sir, His Excellency Shri Keshari Nath Tripathi; Honourable Chief Guest Professor Sugata Marjit, an acclaimed Economist and the Vice-Chancellor, University of Calcutta; esteemed recipient of Doctor of Science (*Honoris Causa*) Degree Professor Mihir Kanti Chaudhuri, a distinguished scientist and the Vice-Chancellor, Tezpur University; esteemed recipient of Doctor of Literature (*Honoris Causa*) Degree, Dr. Nanditha Krishna, a noted scholar and the President, The C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar Foundation, Chennai; my esteemed former Vice-Chancellors of Vidyasagar University; Honourable members of the Court and the Executive Council of the University, Faculty Members, Officers and other staff members of the University community; recipients of Degrees, Medals and Prizes, distinguished guests, representatives from the media, Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is indeed a matter of great privilege to welcome you all to the Eighteenth Convocation of Vidyasagar University.

I am particularly grateful to our Honourable Chancellor, His Excellency Shri Keshari Nath Tripathi, for having kindly accepted our invitation to preside over this Convocation. Thank you very much Sir. The entire Vidyasagar University community feels greatly honoured and they 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 visit to Vidyasagar University. We look forward to having your wise counselling, advice and blessings on this great occasion.

I, on behalf of the entire University community, extend a very special welcome to Professor Sugata Marjit, our revered Chief Guest. I

thank you, Professor Marjit, for being kind enough to accede to our request to deliver the Convocation Address this year.

The Executive Council and the Court of the University have, this year, also unanimously recommended, and the Honourable Chancellor has duly assented, to confer the Degree of Doctor of Science (*Honoris Causa*) on Professor Mihir Kanti Chaudhuri, a *Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar* awardee in Chemical Sciences and to confer the Degree of Doctor of Literature (*Honoris Causa*) on Dr. Nanditha Krishna, a distinguished researcher and a member of the ICHR.

The University feels highly privileged to honour these outstanding personalities on this auspicious day of the Convocation. It is also my pleasure to welcome all my previous Vice-Chancellors present here, other distinguished guests and the media persons who have taken all the trouble to join us on this happy occasion.

Coming to our achievements for the last one year, I would like to inform you that the University has made considerable progress both in academic sphere and infrastructural sector, thanks to the commendable team-spirit of the University community. In the academic field, the success rate has been gradually getting higher and higher each year. Since the last Convocation, 21 students in the Faculty of Arts & Commerce and 68 students in the Faculty of Science were awarded Ph.D. Degrees, respectively. Apart from Ph.D, regular D.Litt and D.Sc. Degrees are to be conferred for the first time ever in the history of this University. In the Postgraduate examinations 3413 students received their Master Degrees in Regular Mode. Likewise 6858 students obtained Postgraduate Degrees through Distance Mode of learning. On the other

hand, Undergraduate Degrees (both Honours and General) were awarded to 21632 students. In addition, the number of successful candidates in B.Ed., B.P.Ed., BCA, LL.B. Vocational and Paramedical Courses are 2868.

In order to meet the increasing demands for higher education, various academic programmes have been opened since the last Convocation. The regular M.Phil programmes have been introduced by 6 Departments of the Faculty of Arts and Commerce. M.Ed in Yogada Satsanga Palpara Mahavidyalaya, M.P.Ed in Mugberia Gangadhar Mahavidyalay, M.A. in Bengali in Pingla Thana Mahavidyalaya, M.A. in History and M.Com. in Vivekananda Mission Mahavidyalaya, M.Sc in Chemistry & Chemical Technology, Geography and Environment Management in Haldia Government College, Botany, Physiology in Midnapore College, M.A. in English, Political Science and History in Midnapore College, M.A. in English, M.Sc. in Applied Mathematics in Mahishadal Raj College, Master of Social Work in Mahishadal Girls' College, M.A. in English, M.Sc. in Applied Mathematics in Ghatal Rabindra Satabarshiki Mahavidyalaya.

I am glad to report that Research Grants have been regularly pouring into the different academic Departments of the University from several funding agencies like UGC, DST, DBT, CSIR, ICHR, ICSSR, ICMR etc. Some departments namely, Botany and Forestry, Chemistry & Chemical Technology, English, physics, are continuing UGC SAP-DRS programmes. In addition to that Department Physics and Department of Chemistry & Chemical Technology are also con running DST FIIS programmes. Two Departments - Economics and Anthropology- have been identified for the UGC Special Assistance Programmes. Many of our distinguished

faculty members are also pursuing collaborative research work with other Universities in West Bengal and India. In an effort to continue the ongoing progress of R & D activities, the teachers have been motivated to apply for research projects from the UGC, DST, DBT, CSIR, ICHR, ICSSR, ICMR and other funding agencies. Faculty members who have, in the last two sessions, received research grants from different funding agencies referred to above are: Dr. Nilanjana Das Chatterjee, Department of Geography and Environment Management (ICSSR Project-Rs.45150 & Rs.45084); Dr. Ratan Hembram, Department of Santali (ICSSR Project-Rs.1322000); Dr. Sebak Kumar Jana, Department of Economics with Rural Development (IWMI Project- Rs.45000, NABARD Project-Rs.500000, NABARD Project- Rs.250000); Dr. Keshab Chandra Mondal, Department of Microbiology (SEED CODER Project- Rs.1000000); Professor Braja Gopal Bag, Department of Chemistry & Chemical Technology (CSIR Project- Rs.324382, UGC-Major Research Project-Rs.781600); Professor Susanta Kumar Chakraborty, Department of Zoology (West Bengal Pollution Control Board Project- Rs.643000); Dr. Pradeep Kr. Das Mohapatra, Department of Mircobiology (Biostadt India Ltd. Project- Rs.50000); Dr. Sumita Roy, Department of Chemistry & Chemical Technology (Council of Scientific and Industrial Research Project- Rs.557000); Professor Debidas Ghosh, Department of Bio-Medical Laboratory Science & Management (NTRF Project- Rs.434599, DST-Government of West Bengal Project- Rs.583800, UGC-Major Research Project- Rs.1032000); Professor Chandradipa Ghosh, Department of Human Physiology with Community Health (ICMR Project- Rs.624357 & Rs.572170); Professor Subrata Kumar De, Department of Zoology (UGC-Major Research Project- Rs.353509); Dr. ; Dr. Joyjit Ghosh, Department of English (UGC-Major Research Project-Rs.3237); Dr. Pinaki Das, Department of Economics with Rural

Development (ICSSR Project- Rs.39525, UGC-Major Research Project Rs.-527600); Professor Bidhan Chandra Patra, Department of Zoology (DST Project- Rs.100000 & Rs.1760000, NFDB Project- Rs.235000, DBT Project- Rs.285000 & Rs.468000); Dr. Sujata Maiti Chowdhury, Department of Human Physiology with Community Health (UGC-Major Research Project- Rs.432785); Dr. Indranil Acharya, Department of English (UGC-Major Research Project- Rs.230000); Dr. Sumahan Bandyopadhyay, Department of Anthropology (Backward Classes Welfare Department, Government of West Bengal Project- Rs.350000); Professor Falguni Chakraborty, Department of Anthropology (UGC-Major Research Project- Rs.593000); Dr. Moidul Hossain, Department of Chemistry & Chemical Technology (DST Project- Rs.390000); Professor Raj Kumar Kothari, Department of Political Science with Rural Administration (UGC-Major Research Project- Rs.786600); Mr. Suratha Kumar Malik, Department of Political Science with Rural Administration (UGC-Major Research Project Rs.-531600); Professor Prakash Chandra Dhara, Department of Human Physiology with Community Health (CSIR Project- Rs.81467); Dr. Syed Sirajul Islam, Department of Chemistry & Chemical Technology (DBT Project- Rs.705000 & Rs.1000000); Dr. Tarak Nath Sahu, Department of Commerce with Farm Management (UGC-Major Research Project- Rs.15000); Dr. Santi Mohan Mandal, Department of Microbiology (DST Project- Rs.1530000); Dr. Dilip Kumar Maiti, Department of Applied Mathematics (DST Project- Rs.315671).

I have the pleasure to report that Joint Science Education Panel has selected Vidyasagar University as a venue to organize a Two-day Science Academy Lecture Workshop on *Chemistry and Biology Interface* during April 21 - 22, 2016 and Professor Amiya Kumar Panda of the Department of Chemistry and Chemical Technology will act as the Workshop Co-ordinator.

In addition, a large number of Visiting Professors and Scholars have been invited from esteemed National and International Institutions for the benefit of our Post Graduate students. Pertaining to that, several Scholars have been invited to visit our campus and have delivered lectures under the UGC Merged Scheme Programme. It is pertinent to mention that the "University Lecture Series" has gained momentum by the collective effort of the faculty members of various academic departments. The Academic Departments have also been bringing out Departmental Journals regularly.

I am proud to pronounce that a number of Memorial Lectures have been initiated last year at Vidyasagar University which include the Birendra Nath Sasmal Memorial Lecture and the Rajnarayan Basu Memorial Lecture and these lectures were delivered by eminent and distinguished academicians.

I take the opportunity to inform you that two Memorandums of Understanding have been signed between Vidyasagar University and 1) University of Lodz, Poland; and 2) University of Chittagong, Bangladesh. Apart from this, a number of Collaborative/Exchange Programmes with the Polish Academy of Sciences, Poland; University of Dublin, Ireland; and with Peking University, China are in the pipeline. Professor Kaushik Sankar Bose of the Department of Anthropology has been awarded an Indian National Science Academy - Polish Academy of Sciences Collaborative Exchange Programme in 2015.

It is my pleasure to note that since the last Convocation a good number of our esteemed faculty members represented our institution in

various International Conferences and Seminars. In my academic capacity, I too was invited to deliver two lectures on *Environment in Asian History* and *History and Future of Water in Asia* at the Department of History, Peking University, Beijing, China during July 9 – 17, 2015. I was also invited by the Department of History, University of Chittagong to attend an International Seminar, jointly organized by the Bangladesh Itihash Sansad & the Department of History, University of Chittagong, and to deliver Masterda Surya Sen Memorial Lecture held on November 14 & 15, 2015 at University of Chittagong, Bangladesh.

Dr. Indranil Acharya, Associate Professor, Department of English presented a research paper in an International conference on *31st South Asian Languages Analysis Roundtable* held at Lancaster University, Lancaster, United Kingdom during 14-16 May 2015. Dr. Sankar Kumar Roy, Associate Professor, Department of Applied Mathematics presented a research paper in an International Conference on *Continuous Optimization (ORSC/EURO 2015)* held at Shanghai University, Shanghai, China during 10-12 May, 2015. Dr. Prakash Chandra Dhara, Professor, Department of Human Physiology with Community Health participated at the *International Conference on Ergonomics and 1st International Conference on Industrial Engineering (ICE & ICIE 2015)* at Kuala Lumpur Malaysia during August 19-20, 2015. Dr. Chhanda Ghoshal, Associate Professor, Department of Bengali participated at the *4th International Conference of Bengal Studies (ICBS)* held at Tokyo University during 12-13 December, 2015. Dr. Tirthankar Das Purkayastha, Professor, Department of English, participated at the *2nd International Conference on Language, Literature and Society* held in Bangkok during 18-19 January 2016.

Since the last Convocation, the University has gone a long way in adding to its infrastructure and R & D facilities. An integrated M.Phil.-Ph.D. Programme in Life Sciences is also going to be introduced from the next academic session.

We are proud to pronounce that Vidyasagar University is the first University in the State to initiate a system of analyzing the feedback received from students about their teachers. A new canteen, *Dulung*, has been dedicated to the members of the Vidyasagar University community. Subsidized Meal Plan for the postgraduate students, the first of its kind in West Bengal, has been initiated at Vidyasagar University, keeping in mind the well being of its students. Vidyasagar University is the first University in the state to introduce Employees' Provident Fund for its contractual employees including enhancement of their pay and disbursement of interest-free loan as part of the welfare measures that have been adopted for the well being of the employees of the University. A state-of-the-art Wi-Fi enabled three-storied new Administrative Building, *Vidyasagar Bhavan Annex*, has been constructed and has been dedicated to the service of the University to provide enhanced facilities to its workforce. Vidyasagar University is the first University in the state to establish an interdisciplinary *Centre for Adivasi Studies* equipped with an *Adivasi Museum* to inculcate and infuse the essence of *Adivasi Culture* and *Adivasi Literature* among the entire academic community across the country. Vidyasagar University is one of the three Universities in the State of West Bengal to receive RUSA Grant of Rs. 20 Crores from the State Government in the first go. Following the guidelines of this grant huge developmental work has already taken off. In order to make Vidyasagar University a plastic-free zone, state-of-the-art garbage disposal system has been put into use which is first of its kind in West

Bengal. All the buildings within the campus have been given a name to pay tribute to great personalities. I am happy to pronounce that a new camp office of Vidyasagar University has been inaugurated at Salt Lake, Kolkata in order to facilitate the extension and outreach activities of our University. Apart from this, 8 numbers of Teachers, 6 numbers of Officers and 3 numbers of Non-teaching staff have been recruited since the last Convocation. I also take the opportunity to announce that initiatives have already been taken to publish the *Collected Works of Iswarchandra Vidyasagar* and we shall publish the first volume on September 26, 2016, the next birthday of Vidyasagar.

I am delighted to report that Professor Bidhan Chandra Patra, Dean, Faculty of Science has received the D.Sc. degree from Utkal University, Professor Joydeb Sasmal, Department of Economics with Rural Development has been awarded the Anamitra Saha Prize of the Indian Society of Agricultural Economics for the best paper published in Indian Journal of Agricultural Economics in 2014. Professor Prakash Chandra Dhara of the Department of Human Physiology with Community Health has obtained a design registration from the Patent Office, Government of India on *Brick Dice*.

To cope with the ever increasing demands of the users, our university central library had switched over from traditional library services to computerized information services and in the present scenario our university library seems to be one of the best computerized libraries in our state having an excellent and effective IT infrastructure. The complete record of library collections is available online through Web-OPAC from anywhere within and outside the campus. Recently the central library has received rupees one crore in the current financial

year for the development of the ICT infrastructure of the university library under RUSA project (phase I) and it has been properly utilized towards procurement of the approved items. Initiatives are being taken to introduce RFID systems in the central library from the 2nd phase of RUSA fund. I am happy to report that library service has also been extended to the students of the Directorate of Distance Education.

Learning through Distance Mode has been, it is well known, recognized medium of education throughout the world today. Our Directorate of Distance Education (DDE) has been functioning since the session of 1994 – 1995 to reach those students of rural and urban sections, who are unable to get formal system of education under regular mode. The DDE of Vidyasagar University has increased the number of study centres in West Bengal and the total number of study centres is now 46. I am happy to pronounce that a mobile admission van has been put into service to extend the service of the DDE to the far-flung areas of the *Junglemahal* area to cater to the need of the students who intend to pursue their higher studies through the distance mode of learning. This initiative by the Vidyasagar University is the first-of-its-kind in West Bengal.

As part of our Extension/Outreach activities, Vidyasagar University has adopted Muradanga, a neighbouring village and started working on extending facilities like streetlighting, drinking water, toilets, medical treatment and construction of roads. This is the first time that a University in the State has adopted a village. The Women Infrastructure Facilities have been strengthened than before. The Women's Studies Centre of our University organized a Three-week Winter School Programme on "Gender, Women and Society: Debates and

Developments" held during 5 – 25 January, 2016. Efforts have also been made to revive the activities of the Gandhian Studies Centre. The University Science Instrumentation Centre and Bioinformatics Infrastructure Facilities have been made well equipped to cater to the needs of the students. The RTI Cell, the Prevention of Sexual Harassment Cell, the Anti Ragging Cell and the Equal Opportunity Cell are being efficiently managed to minimize the response time and to become proactive. The NSS Unit has been conducting its regular activities in an orderly manner. It is pertinent to mention here that Vidyasagar University has received the State NSS Award for the year 2013 – 2014 as a mark of its remarkable achievement relating to the National Service Scheme.

Under the aegis of the Department of the Dean of Students' Welfare, the Placement Cell of our University, consisting of different placement co-ordinators of respective departments, invites various organizations to conduct campus recruitment for the interested students of the University. This Cell facilitates recruitment of the eligible students of the University to get employment through on campus or off campus interviews. A partial list of the organizations who conducted campus interview and recruited our students are – Mendine Pharmaceuticals Limited, Carwale, MRF Limited, Cadila Pharmaceuticals, Mahindra Finance, Britannia Industry, Reliance, IndusInd Bank, Chirayu Pharmaceuticals, PNB Metlife, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Reliance Jio Limited, Cloud Lining etc. Apart from this, a good number of students also got selected through on and off campus placement activities.

The University Sports Department organized and conducted Inter College Foot Ball, Volley Ball, Cricket, Kho-Kho, Chess, Kabaddi,

Tournaments and Annual Athletics Meet (both PG & UG), etc. under the auspices of the Students' Welfare Department. 4th Inter College Chess Competition was held on September 23, 2015 at Vidyasagar University where our University Team emerged as Champion. Our University Football Team emerged as the Runner-Up in the Inter University P. C. Memorial Football Tournament 2015 organized by the Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata during April 8 - 28, 2015. Vidyasagar University Cricket Team participated in the CAB Inter University Twenty-20 Cricket Tournament 2015 held during April 4 - 10, 2015 and reached the semi-final. All India Inter University *Yogason* Championship was held at Kurukshetra University during March 17 - 21, 2015 where our University secured 9th Position in the Women's Section. East Zone Inter University Volleyball Championship was held at Tripura University during February 16 - 21, 2016 where our University Team reached the semi-final. This is for the first time that the Vidyasagar University Cricket Team has emerged as the Champion in the All Bengal Inter University T-20 Cricket Tournament organized by the Cricket Association of Bengal during February 26 - March 1, 2016.

Our University's Cultural Team participated in the 31st East Zone Inter University Youth Festival organized by the Tezpur University during January 3 - 7, 2016 and Ms. P. Shaisree of our University Team secured 2nd position and qualified for the 31st Inter University National Youth Festival 2016 to be held at Mysore University during February 15 - 19, 2016. Vidyasagar University Cultural Team also bagged 7 prizes in different events in the said competition. Vidyasagar University organized the 17th Inter Collegiate Cultural Meet on 7th and 8th October, 2015. 23 events were held and 670 students from 35 UG Colleges and 17 PG Departments participated in it.

Fossil fuel resources have changed the Middle East, cheap labour has changed China, banking has served as an agent of change in the smaller European countries, similarly quality higher education, I believe, can serve as a catalyst in the Indian case. Indian intelligence can eventually transform Asia and the wider world. It is here that Universities like VidyaSagar is capable of playing a significant role. Given the fact that the number of central universities or IITs will not multiply magically in the near future, the State Universities will continue to be the key players in the decades to come. As the Vice-Chancellor of this University I would have to be proactive to compete for a slot in the academic map of the country and beyond. I am confident that this will be achievable with a little bit of hard work, dedication and team-spirit.

Values ascribe to the highest levels of academic distinction, academic freedom and accountability; values encourage innovation, individuality and collective effort. And, values strive to promote integrity and respect for diversity and human dignity. Notice a world beyond yourself and put these values into practice by serving the less fortunate members of society. Through service, citizenship is meaningful and dignified. Where there is inequality and injustice, we need you to work for opportunity and equity.

Today, as you receive your qualifications, you will hold in your hands the key to the door of your future professional success. This is your achievement but you should always remember the sacrifices others have made to ensure that you stand here today. As future leaders, I trust that the leadership qualities that you demonstrate in the future will

reflect the values that you have nurtured during your years at Vidyasagar University.

Before I conclude, I extend my warm welcome to all the recipients of Degrees and distinctions at today's ceremonial function. Your University bears through you the glorious legacy of Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar who was a life-long crusader fighting for justice and equality, for modernity and humanitarianism. The University, as your alma mater, will always be by your side. All my best wishes are with you.

Once again, I convey my deepest regards and thanks to all those who have assembled here to make the Eighteenth Convocation of Vidyasagar University a grand success.

Thank you all.