



PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT

OF

MR. S. K. SINGH

**GOVERNOR OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH
AND
CHANCELLOR OF ARUNACHAL UNIVERSITY**

ON THE OCCASION OF THE

SIXTH, SEVENTH & EIGHTH CONVOCATION

OF

ARUNACHAL UNIVERSITY

ON

29TH MARCH, 2005

Mr. Vice Chancellor, Mr. Chief Minister, Dr. Rangarajan, Members of the faculty, Scholars, Candidate Students who have just received their Degrees, Ladies and Gentlemen,

2. I greet and congratulate our latest graduates on their graduation. Hearty congratulations and all good wishes for a future of happiness and useful service to Arunachal, India and the world. I greet and applaud Mr. Vice Chancellor, and your colleagues, all the distinguished members of your Faculty, who have laboured hard to teach, train and examine the graduates, scholars and members of the student body.

3. You Mr. Chief Minister, had dared dream during the earliest years of your long service as Chief Minister of our State, of gifting to your Pradesh and, people this magnificent University. You have fulfilled your dream and helped build this University at every stage, from its founding until today as it stands poised to emerge as a

Central University, so that it can receive more ample resources than what we have had until now. In this effort, you sought and received encouragement and support from Prime Ministers Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi, two great patriots and achievers, builders of today's India.

4. It was Rajivji who shared your dream, and held you by the hand firmly, who loved the people of Arunachal Pradesh, and backed your effort to establish and shape this University. Let us all salute his memory as the one Prime Minister who loved, cherished and supported our beloved Arunachal, above all other States of the Union. Mr. Chief Minister, both you and the Vice Chancellor perhaps recognize that I have already made my modest contribution in backing your efforts in strengthening this Seat of Learning, for it holds a special place in my heart. I pledge to you that I shall continue my efforts to help you to build and strengthen it so that future

generations of scholars and researchers of Arunachal can bring credit to us and to themselves.

5. As a former University teacher, who has enjoyed maintaining his association, over decades, with several Universities in our own country, and Universities on two other Continents, I warmly welcome Dr. Rangarajan, an academic and an economist, an administrator and a scholar of eminence, distinction and renown as our Chief Guest at this Convocation. I have every hope that he will always think kindly of us and continue giving us his generous support and backing.

6. Our first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru had brooded on what was doable here, what the contribution of our Tribal society should be in building a new India. In this region, he always insisted, that the entire administration act as a huge multifaceted Tribal University where every official and each administrator must become an educationist, capable of assimilating in his thinking ideas and

concepts of modern social management with traditional practices of the Kebug and the Gaon Buras. Our scientific progress in these aspects, he felt, must utilize hundreds of years old knowledge of botany, entomology, horticulture, trees, plants, shrubs, fruits, vegetation and wildlife, which were accepted by the people of the State and the region. He dreamt that the Arunachal people's love for their own environment and soil shall lead them also to love and cherish the larger entity of India in its multi-cultural, multi-linguistic and multi-ethnic vastness. He hoped for a judiciary and an administration here, that would strive for development based on tribal concepts of equality, justice and freedom. He hoped that the old traditions of living fuller and richer lives could also assimilate the geography of the mountains and forests, and lead to tribes voluntarily to reject destructive and deleterious habits like the one of using Opium. Medical workers, Doctors, Nurses could educate our people here to adopt habits of common hygiene and cleanliness, and so on. His dream was to spread the ideals of justice, humane functioning,

fairness, by managing these in our day-to-day life along with tribal games and sports, art and crafts, music, dance and song, tunes and instruments of this region. In Arunachal Pradesh, by building on Nehru's ideas we have produced the only oasis of peace in the rest of the North-Eastern region where discord and violence are persisting. In part this has resulted from the use of Hindi here as the language for teaching in schools, and in part due to utilizing traditional tribal festivals like Nyokum and Mopin etc. to inculcate in our youth the dignity of manual labour and lessons in discipline, obedience, faith, and the tribal code of honour.

7. Social complexity throughout the world has grown. This has happened also throughout India, and in Arunachal Pradesh perhaps a little more so. Educational institutions have to assume social obligations, as they train and teach students to prepare them for employment. Social problems cannot be solved except by providing an ethical direction to the society concerned. While ensuring that all

our children of school and college going ages have access to educational institutions, we need to ensure too that the knowledge imparted to them is refined and sensitized for enabling these students to assume a broader, more general and holistic understanding and appreciation of the wide world. Ideas and ideals regarding identity of the individual person are undergoing major modification throughout India, indeed throughout the world.

8. An individual's identity in the traditional tribal society historically has been seen through that of his tribe or his clan. Neither the tribe nor the clan in today's ambience can be circumscribed or restricted by geography. Management of community-owned land in rural areas, and evolution of ownership of land in urban areas, especially through money transactions, and in the broader context of town planning, and establishment of urban disciplines for land use, tend to present new problems. As the rights of the individual are subservient to tribal rights, essentially derived

from those of the community into which one is born, any individual finds his individual achievement-space horribly compressed. The spread of education demands that the individual seek his own legal, constitutional, democratic rights of identity and personality. Without these rights, he cannot enjoy any individual contractual space for and by himself. Modern education in our globalizing world, therefore, needs make demands on the individual, the tribal group and also on the State authority. These demands can be confusing as they underline the conflicting nature of achievement orientation in today's competing world. The old tradition impinges on the present reality, and the tribal community on the individual. In Arunachal Pradesh society hitherto has mostly been community-centric. The current demands upon it will tend to make it individual-centric. Development of a modern variety demands that our day-to-day striving moves progressively from the traditional to the modern. All this needs deep thought, much debate, and innovative decision making by society.

9. Until now education has been a facilitating factor. But henceforth there will be need for creating complementary opportunities, areas of employment, and promotion of ambition for individuals to improve not only their income but also their broader social status and self-regard. The empowerment of women in our State, though incomplete, is praiseworthy and impressive. Spread of education has reduced the drudgery for women in everyday life. It remains for us to complete the picture by improving our health standards, levels of infant mortality, and life expectancy in Arunachal.

10. Great Seats of Learning always represent the era, culture, and aspirations of societies that give them birth and sustain their growth and tradition during their first decades and centuries. Some of these live and grow, while others wither away. Several Universities and seminaries in India were born and flourished for centuries but faded away, becoming just memories to be recalled by the historian. The

Maha Gurukuls and Brahmalayas of Ujjain, Dhara, Nalanda, Bamyam, Taxila, Bodh-Gaya had to disappear as they were unable to renew themselves by demonstrating flexibility in a changing political and economic situation. However, they did leave behind the traditions of scholarship and research which continue to strengthen Indian scholarship even today. Many institutions of higher learning did survive like Varanasi, Tanjore and Deoband. Some Universities did rise and grow in India since the mid-nineteenth century. Good examples of these are Shanti-Niketan, Bombay and Madras, and these have given us hope and faith and pride. We have also built new seats of learning recently which symbolize India's quest of technology and modern management, a new route of progress towards learning and research. These are our IITs and our globally renowned and acclaimed IIMs.

11. It should be our hope and dream that in coming centuries the University of Arunachal will be acclaimed and get renown for

growing up as a unique seat of learning, specializing in teaching and study and research in all aspects of Tribal Studies and cultures, their development and evolution. I hope we will preserve and build it as a Temple of Scholarship that competes with the Universities of Uppsala in Sweden; Oxford and Cambridge in Britain; Al-Azhar in Egypt; the Qom Seminary in Iran; Florence and Pisa in Italy; Dusseldorf in Germany; and Yale and Harvard and Princeton in the USA. Each of the above had a special and particular concept of study with a specialized theme of philosophy, logic, astronomy, classical learning, mathematics, physics, study of the universe and its vast solar system, of the environment, ecology, oceans, rivers, mountains, trees, birds and animals.

12. My dream is that this our University will grow and mature as a seat to study and research and expound for the world the processes that envelop evolution, growth and assimilation of tribal civilizations. For achieving this we shall study anew all aspects of the maturing

and incorporation of tribal cultures throughout the world. In this context, we will need to examine, with a particular and special tribal vision all aspects and genres of Science, Technology, Business, Finance, Logic, Mathematics and Psychology: keeping in view our ancient, traditional, tribal values and beliefs, codes of conduct and honour. It is my dream also that this University will promote the study of ancient tribal cultures and their histories like the tribal civilizations in Mexico: Mayan and Aztec; in North Africa the Berbers, in the Pacific Ocean region the Maori, Polynesian and Melinisian, in the South East Asian region those of the Khmer and Lao pedigree. And these studies are what will distinguish the Arunachal University, and make it the foremost, and a unique seat of learning in our world today, and for the world of tomorrow. Here we shall study tribal literatures, cultures, medicine, philosophies, ethical and religious beliefs from the entire globe in so far as diverse tribal societies are concerned. We shall examine more specially how and when to abandon our isolation, and move on forward to integration

and assimilation, structured and accepted in a constructivist sense, moving forward to globalize the tribes in a globalizing world of knowledge. We have to move from our long and wooded isolation to open and untrammelled globalization of economics and cultures and disciplines. As the Sixth Dalai Lama, a great son of Arunachal, beloved of the Lord Buddha, sang we are like the swan-

“In love with the Lake

He longs to stay

But ice and snow cover the Lake

And the swan flies,

With no regrets”
