

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL



FORTY FIRST ANNUAL CONVOCAATION

MAY 05, 2009
VIDYASAGAR MANCHA



**Address
by the
Vice-Chancellor**



Hon'ble Chancellor Sir, University of North Bengal, Sri Gopal Krishna Gandhi, Hon'ble Chief Guest, Prof. K.N. Panikkar, Kerala State Council of Higher Education. Hon'ble Professor Dipankar Chakravorty, Hon'ble Syed Mustafa Siraj, Respected Members of the Court, Respected members of the Executive Council and other authorities of the University, the recipients of the Degrees, Hon'ble Members of the Faculties, my dear and beloved Research Scholars, Students, Distinguished Guest and Invitees, Ladies and Gentlemen:

On the occasion of 41st Annual Convocation of the University of North Bengal I have the great pleasure to welcome all of you at the University of North Bengal Campus, which is situated at the foothills of the Himalayas, the description of which is found in the pages of the ancient literature "*Astyuttarasyam disi himalayo nama nagadhirajah*" i.e. in the northern part of country there is the king of the mountains called Himalaya. I am grateful to our respected Hon'ble Chancellor Sri Gopal Krishna Gandhi for kindly consenting to preside over this convocation. Sir, on behalf of the University of North Bengal I welcome you most cordially.

I am very grateful to Prof. K.N. Panikkar for being here today amongst us as the Chief Guest, an eminent Historian, Chairman, Kerala State Council of Higher Education and also Chairman, Kerala Council of Historical Research. Prof. Panikkar is well-known for his outstanding contribution to the historical research and allied areas. After a brief stint at the Indian Institute of Public Administration, associated with the project to prepare a source book on Modern Indian History, he graced as Faculty Member at the Delhi University and Jawaharlal Nehru University. He was a visiting Professor at El Colegio de Mexico, Mexico City, visiting Professor, Maison de sciences l'homme, Paris, Resident Fellow, Rockefeller Study and Research Centre, Bellagio, Italy, Visiting Fellow at the Centre for Modern Oriental Studies, Berlin, Visiting Fellow of British Council at London and was also awarded Senior Fellow of Nehru Memorial Museum and Library and Homi Bhaba Senior Fellowship. He retired as Professor of Modern Indian History from Jawaharlal Nehru University, after which he was appointed as the Vice-Chancellor of Sree Sankaracharya University in Kerala. Professor Panikkar has been the Dean of the School of Social Sciences and Chairman, Centre for Historical Studies and the Archives on Contemporary History, Jawaharlal Nehru University. Professor Panikkar has authored several books. Apart from about a dozen books in Malayalam, original and translated, some of the above works have been translated into several Indian languages. Professor Panikkar is also the Editor of the volume for 1940 in *Towards Freedom* series. Professor Panikkar's contribution to the writing on modern Indian History has considerably enriched the secular tradition of Indian historiography.

It is my pleasure to announce that the University of North Bengal will confer the Degree of Doctor of Science (*Honoris Causa*) on Prof. Dipankar Chakravorty, an illustrious scientist for his outstanding contribution in the field of science and technology and allied fields today, the 5th May 2009. Professor Chakravorty is an Emeritus Professor and Indian National Science Academy Honorary Scientist, former Director Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science, Kolkata and is a recipient of DST National Research Award in Nano Science and Technology

2007, Bangalore Nano National Award 2008, INSA Prize for Materials Science 2005 etc. Professor Chakravorty was a Fellow in Indian National Science Academy, New Delhi, Fellow in Third World Academy of Sciences, Trieste, Italy, Fellow, Indian Academy of Science, Bangalore, Fellow, Indian Institute of Ceramics etc. and has published four books and 275 nos. of papers in various national and international journals.

It is also my pleasure to announce that the University of North Bengal will confer the Degree of Doctor of Literature (*Honoris Causa*) on Sri Syed Mustafa Siraj, a noted literary star, for his outstanding contribution to the world of literature, today, the 5th May, 2009. The veteran author is well known through his extensive literary career and by the depth and plurality of his works ranging over 250 novels, short stories, etc. A prolific writer of short stories and novels, Syed Mustafa Siraj is at the same time a renowned contributor to children's literature. His novels and short stories move through nature and a sincere reader can easily notice the appreciative authorial eye suggesting an inseparable bond between the finitude of human existence and the vastness of nature. Syed Mustafa Siraj grew up in an environment of intense cross currents of multiple views and ideas, with almost a natural capability towards accommodating the plurality of human existence - a feature distinctly visible in his works. Sri Siraj, familiar with several languages such as Bengali, Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit, was also deeply inspired by the literary talent of his mother, Anwara Begum, who used to write poems and short stories. His involvement with Aalkaap, a form of folk performances, to which he devoted six years of his life, brought him into closer contact with the grass root levels of the society, thereby contributing to his multifarious experiences of life and contribution to literature. As a mark of recognition of his creative works Syed Mustafa Siraj visited the University of Iowa (USA) on invitation, and received *Bhualka Puraskar*, *Ananda Puraskar*, *Bibhutibhushan Puraskar*, Sahitya Academy Award, Surama Chaudhury Memorial International Award, Sarat Smriti Puraskar, Sailajananda Puraskar etc.

Award of Degrees/ Medals/ Prizes:

The Court of the University of North Bengal will confer degrees to 1064 Post Graduates in addition to 3078 under D.E. Mode and 26,651 under-graduate students for the examinations held in 2007 and 2008 respectively at the 41st Convocation. PG diplomas will be conferred to 64 students for their success in various professional examinations. The Endowment and University Medals/ Prizes will be awarded to 91 amongst PG and 88 amongst UG students as recognition for their academic excellence in the PG and UG examinations held in 2007 and 2008 respectively. The Court has proposed to award Ph.D. degrees in various subjects to 55 successful candidates in this Annual Convocation. I congratulate the recipients of medals/prizes and all successful candidates in various fields. Hope they will prove their worthiness of such attainments through their future works and render services with all sincerity.

Library

During the period since last Convocation, 10,513 new books were added to the collection of the University Library. The University Library has subscribed 175 numbers of foreign journals, 567 numbers of Indian journals and has provided access to 5,555 numbers of e-journals available on-line through UGC Infonet. University library has completed 85% of bar coding work of essential documents for smooth circulation and faster library services. The UGC-INFONET service link is upgraded from SCPC DAMA VSAT connectivity 512 kbps to leased line 2 mbps

to provide UGC-INFONET service faster and user satisfaction alongwith additional four Mbps upgradation of leased line for LAN-VSAT connectivity. The University library has introduced latest IBM Server for maintaining SOUL database and latest Canon network Printer for providing speedy printing services. The University library has contributed 1,78,271 data with bibliographical details regarding books, journals and thesis in the union catalogue of INFLIBNET. University library remains open in all days of the week including Saturdays and Sundays so that the users can avail of the facilities to browse internet, lending facilities in addition to literature searches.

University Press

The North Bengal University Press has been successfully engaged in printing journals of various departments besides printing of routine jobs, prospectus of different courses, abstracts of various seminars being conducted here and different reports of the University and the Newsletters. The Press has started working to print materials under Directorate of Distance Education without taking recourse to outsourcing.

Placement

Apart from imparting higher education, our University has also taken initiative for placement of students for employment. During the above period a considerable number of students of the University of North Bengal have been selected for employment through Campus Interviews organized by the Placement Cell with different reputed organizations like Chembiotech, Kolkata, Cipla India, Sikkim etc. Forty-four students of MBA department have been selected by HDFC Bank, *Himul Jal*, Eureka Forbes, ICICI Prudential Life Insurance Co. Ltd, Axis Bank, IDBI Bank etc. Apart from this, a good number of students of the Department of Law have been selected in West Bengal Judicial Service, 2008.

Sports Board

Besides academic activities, the University team has taken part in the East Zone University Badminton Tournament held at Dibrugarh University, Inter University (Ajay Ghosh Memorial Cricket Tournament) Cricket Tournament held at Calcutta University, and the East Zone Inter University Football Tournament hosted by Tripura University. The Sports Board organized the Gour Ch. Kundu Inter College Badminton Tournament, Daju Sen Memorial Inter College Football Tournament, the S.P. Roy Memorial Inter College Table Tennis Tournament, and the Inter College Volleyball Tournament etc.

Profile of Growth

Since assuming the charge of the office of the Vice-Chancellor from January, 2008 and my first priority was to augment the given rate of growth. The Resource generation from the non-conventional sources recorded a considerable growth. Simply not the external growth, the University took action in assuring quality of programmes and enhancing the status for excellence. Two new departments in emerging areas of knowledge have been planned to introduced from the session 2009-2010. The existing Departments are well-equipped with research programmes from various funding agencies and acquired a distinction. Such trend of development has been continued in 2008-2009.

Academic activities like research projects, publication of books and papers, and organization of seminars/workshops had received an impetus leading to the development of the intellectual health of the University during the year 2008-09. Academic departments organized 50 National level seminars/workshops and 2 International Seminars in 2008-09. The University Library arranged a National Workshop on 'User Awareness Programme on access to E-resources under UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium' in collaboration with the INFLIBNET Centre, Ahmedabad.

The Department of Mathematics has been identified by the UGC for granting basic structure support. Department of Geography has been allocated Rs. 21 lacs towards SAP by the UGC. It is also worthy to mention that the Department of Chemistry has received Rs.50 lacs for continuing different academic activities under SAP in 2008-09. The Departments of Chemistry and Botany have been granted Rs.40 lacs and Rs.20 lacs respectively from the UGC towards the development of Basic Infrastructure in Science. Altogether, there are eight Departments that have been sanctioned Special Assistance Programme under UGC. The 29th Annual Conference of Bengal Economic Association has been organized by the Department of Economics, NBU in early 2009.

Social Responsibility: We are not running behind in associating ourselves to cater to the social needs and demands. The Department of Mathematics have organized voluntary blood donation camp, the Centre for Women's Studies have organized five sensitization/awareness programmes about women's right under Indian law along with women-related issues, the Weather Service Station managed by the Geography Department has been providing the information on weather and tea-planters training programme has been jointly organized by the Tea Management Department and Tea Board.

The teachers of different Departments are carrying out 105 research projects with the financial assistance from the UGC, ICCSR, ICMR, DST, DBT, Food Processing and Horticulture (Govt. of West Bengal), CSIR etc. Our faculty members have published 30 books and 325 research papers in various National and International Journals of repute.

Professor Ananda Mukhopadhyaya was awarded a Silver Plaque as a felicitation by Entomological Society of India 2009 and a student, Sri Kapil Mitra, has received the Best Poster Presentation Award in Science Congress held at Shillong in 2008. Apart from these, three students of three PG departments got selected for Summer Training in CSIR Laboratories out of twenty selected on the basis of All India Competition in 2009 and 20 students belonging to SC/ST have received Rajiv Gandhi Research Fellowship in different disciplines this year.

Details of Developmental work carried out and developmental work under process during 2008-2009

Introduction of semester system: Like IITs and many leading Universities of the country, the semester system, as a modern methodology of studies and assessment, has been introduced in all the post graduate Departments of this University from the session 2008-09, and after completion of first semester, second semester is on the process.

Upgradation of UGC-INFLIBNET facility and Campus Local Area Network (LAN): 512 Kbps VSAT connectivity has been upgraded to 6 Mbps BSNL & Reliance leased line link with anti virus facilities for providing better access to digital library and internet services to the teachers, research scholars and students of the University. We are exploring the feasibility of providing Wi-fi connectivity to the campus dwellers, Research Scholar and Student Hostels.

Establishment of Faculty of Technology: The Faculty of Technology has been established in this University initially with the Department of Management and Department of Computer Science and Applications during 2008 to provide inter disciplinary and trans disciplinary convergence of knowledge in Higher Education especially in the field of Science and Technology after amendment of NBU Act, 1986 in March, 2007.

Implementation of UGC-Merged Schemes: The following new schemes have been implemented during 2008-09, under XI Plan Programme of UGC.

a) Day Care Centre, b) Basic facilities for Women, c) Facilities for differently abled persons, d) Remedial coaching for SC/ST and Minorities, e) Coaching classes for entry in service for SC/ST and Minorities, f) Coaching Classes for NET in respect of SC/ST and Minorities, g) Sports facilities, h) Unassigned Grants, i) Faculty Improvement Programme.

Development of IT infrastructure: All the Faculty members of the University of North Bengal have been provided with a LAPTOP computer along with printer in 2008 for better accessibility of IT applications and for augmentation of research activities.

Publication of the results of Post Graduation Examinations: The results of Post Graduate examinations of 2008 have been published at the end of 39 days from the date of completion of the examination (earlier it used to take at least 90 days). In 2009, the results of the Postgraduate 1st Semester Examination in all the subjects, have been published within 7 days. Notable performance by the faculty members is sincerely acknowledged.

MOU between the University of North Bengal and the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR, New Delhi) : In order to strengthen the academic bond and to accelerate the research activities, a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed on 27.11.08 between the University of North Bengal and the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, New Delhi. During 2009 three students of three PG Departments got selected for Summer Training out of twenty selected on the basis of All India Search Competition.

Setting up of Academic ties: The Academic ties have been set up between the University of North Bengal and (i) Kerala State Council of Higher Education (ii) Poland Academy of Science (iii) Bureau of Police Research and Development for facilitating Faculty Exchange Programmes and to undertake joint research projects. In this connection, I am very happy to mention that the academic tie between University of North Bengal and Kerala State Council of Higher Education, will facilitate regular Faculty Exchange Programme between various Universities of Kerala and University of North Bengal.

Setting up of Energy Educational Park: A proposal for setting up of Energy Educational Park within the University Campus has been submitted to the Ministry of Non-Renewable Energy sources, Govt. of India through WBREDA, Govt. of West Bengal.

Establishment of the Centre for Development of Bamboo and Cane Products: A Centre for "Development of Bamboo and Cane Products" has been approved and funded by the Department of Food Processing Industries & Horticulture, Govt. of West Bengal.

Establishment of University Archive: The University Archive has been established at the University Library for preservation of valuable documents / records of the University since 1962.

Major renovation of the Hostel Buildings: Major renovation of all the Boys and Girls Hostel Buildings have been taken up including the upgradation of the existing facilities at a cost of about Rupees sixty nine Lacs.

Security of all the Girls' Hostel: Security of all the Girls' Hostel have been strengthened by providing Flood Lights all round and providing Grills at all the floors and providing security guards round the clock in all the three shifts at a cost of about Rupees twelve lacs.

Insurance of Articles in the Akshaya Kumar Maitreye Heritage Museum: All the articles in the Akshaya Kumar Maitreye Heritage Museum have been insured covering protection from theft, burglary, damage, etc.

Establishment of Academic Staff College: The UGC has approved the proposal for establishment of an Academic Staff College at the University of North Bengal Campus and has so far sanctioned Rupees 1.25 crore. We have started the process of establishment of Academic Staff College, which will organize, conduct and evaluate the Orientation Programme for newly appointed College / University teachers and Refresher Courses for serving teacher in this region, which will ultimately provide us highly oriented faculties for imparting quality education.

Upgradation of Computer Centre: The UGC has sanctioned Rupees 40 lacs for the upgradation of the existing computer centre, NBU.

Sanction for Academic Programme of the Centre for Himalayan Studies: The UGC has sanctioned Rupees 25 lacs for the Centre for Himalayan Studies, NBU towards its various Academic Programme.

Establishment of two new Departments: We have initiated processes to establish Department of Food Technology under Faculty Council for P.G. Studies in Technology and Department of Journalism and Mass Communication under Faculty Council for P.G. Studies in Arts, Commerce & Law and to commence the courses from the session 2009 – 2010 taking into consideration the demand of human resource as well as employability in various industries and institutes and opportunity to study P.G. Courses.

Visits Abroad:

A considerable number of teachers have visited abroad in connection with various academic programmes viz., Professor B. Basu visited the University of Paris, Sud, Paris, France as a visiting Professor, Professor Raghunath Ghosh visited the Universities of Saarland and Leibzig (Germany), France and Austria (under German Academic Exchange Service Fellowship, DAAD), Dr. Debika Saha visited Greece, South Korea and USA, Professor P.K. Mandal visited Military University of Technology, Warsaw and Darmstadt University of Technology, Germany, Professor Swapan Ghoshal delivered lecture at Chittagong, Bangladesh, Professor Ashis Sengupta visited Universities in Sweden under SASNET Lectureship, Professor Rangadhar Sahoo visited Nanyang Technological University, Singapore and Professor Maitreyee Chaudhury visited Oxford for an International Conference and China under Indo-China Cultural Exchange Programme (under ICSSR) .

Visits of Visiting Faculty:

Many Professors and scholars of International repute have visited the Departments/ Centres and delivered lectures, namely, Professor Arindam Chakraborty of the University of Hawaai (USA), Professor Syed Anwar Hossain, Dhaka University, Professor Naresh Kumar Dadhich, Director, IUCAA, University of Pune, Prof. G.C. Kundu, National Centre for Cell Sciences, Pune, etc.

Our vision

The University of North Bengal has a visionary approach to cater to a quality education with a touch of humanity. The University will be unique in serving the people of North Bengal region, especially the socially exclusive, undereducated and low income group. We are committed to provide multilingual, multicultural and gender-equitable learning.

The University system itself has to meet new requirements in the twenty first century. The university needs to address four important criteria.

- a. The education has to address the needs of the citizen for contributing to the sustainable and inclusive growth in various areas of national and global development.
- b. It has to meet the diverse cultural and ethnic needs.
- c. It should ignite the minds towards research and enquiry.
- d. It has to be cost effective for deserving students to opt subjects of their choice.

Capacity Building

A good educational system is the need of the hour to ensure that the students grow to contribute towards the economic growth of a nation. Normally, research, technology and performance in the four sectors namely agriculture, industrial manufacturing, processing and services lead to economic growth and prosperity of the nation.

In sum, inquiry, creativity, technology, entrepreneurial and moral leadership are the five capacities required to be built through the education process. If we develop these five capacities, in all our students we will produce "Autonomous Learner", a self-directed, self controlled, lifelong learner, who will have the capacity to respect authority and at the same time is capable of questioning authority, in an appropriate manner. These are the leaders who would work

together as a “self-organizing Network” and transform India as a prosperous nation. The most important part of the education is to imbibe the confidence among the students and the spirit of “I can do it”.

Research – Teaching – Research

Good teaching emanates from Research. The teachers’ love for research and their experience in research are vital for the growth of any institution. Any Institution is judged by the level and extent of the research work it accomplishes. This sets in a regenerative cycle of excellence. Experience of research leads to quality teaching and quality teaching imparted to young in turn enriches research. University of North Bengal with its core competence in Science, Technology, Management, Arts, Commerce and Law shall enter into advanced courses in number of interdisciplinary subjects and interdisciplinary & transdisciplinary research. I am convinced that research is an important environment needed for excellence in teaching. The research and development in the University of North Bengal have enriched the quality of teaching and the quality of teaching is enriching the research and development.

21st Century University Vision

I wish to formulate a 21st Century University vision for your consideration.

- The universities have to prepare citizens of the future with a global outlook and be capable of serving his/her nation or nation of his/her choice.
- Science and Technology and public policy are interrelated for mutual benefit and ushering in humankind’s development. This link has to be solidly built in the university education.
- Good teacher can be in any part of the world. The university has to bring in this resource through innovative content generation in virtual class rooms.
- Technological connectivities among universities have to be pursued on a war footing using cost effective virtual class rooms.
- Cost effective continuing education possibilities are essential for citizens to be in tune with time.

Hence, we should emphasise how we can empower our students through university to university collaboration, student – faculty interaction, lab to lab collaboration, reaching out the world class quality teaching and research through a virtual reality environment with the excellent content generated. Ultimately, education in its real sense is the pursuit of truth. It is an endless journey through knowledge and enlightenment. Such a journey opens up new vistas of development of humanism where there is neither scope nor room for pettiness, disharmony, jealousy, hatred or enmity. It transforms a human being into a wholesome whole, a noble soul and an asset to the universe. We have strong commitments to shape the future of our Country by providing quality teaching, research and development of human resource in the field of Science, Humanities and Technology.

Our Under-graduate and Post-graduate students will have an understanding of social and moral values, distinctive technical skill, abilities to contribute to India’s high quality work-force, critical thinking abilities and capability of giving responsible and creative leadership.

On behalf of the Court of the University of North Bengal I express my deep gratitude and grateful thanks to our Honourable Chancellor, Sri Gopal Krishna Gandhi, for his kind presence and active guidance. We seek his advice and active support for all spheres of activities in the University. I convey my heartfelt thanks to Professor K.N. Panikkar, Chairman, Kerala Higher Education Council for his kind presence in the 41st convocation. We have been enlightened to listen to his illuminating address as the Chief Guest. Our relationship will be ever-growing based on mutual understanding and fraternity. On behalf of the Court of the University of North Bengal, I propose vote of thanks to all present at the 41st convocation and also seek their cooperation in future.

To the Graduates, Post-Graduates and Doctorates.

Before concluding I turn to the graduates, post-graduates and doctorates who are going to obtain their degrees today and extend them my best wishes on behalf of the entire University Community. To them I say : whichever profession you choose, I would request you to keep the interest of your country uppermost in your minds along with your duties and obligations to the society. We are living in times of great change. There are opportunities all around. You can make the best out of this opportunity – all you need is a vision. The road ahead is long but the journey promises to be exciting. Have a constructive attitude and think in terms of solution, not in terms of problems. You will find that a commitment to excellence, to justice and fair play, to hard work and team spirit will stand in good stead.

Do remember that advancement of learning is not something to be pursued for its own sake. May you find joy and happiness by putting to work, the knowledge that you have acquired here for the development of the country and for the upliftment of vast mass of downtrodden, underdeveloped and deprived people of our society- '*Sarve sukhinah santu, sarve santu niramayah, sarve bhadrani pasyanttu, na kaschid dukhabhag bhavet* (May all attain happiness, and be free from the diseases. May all be associated with their well-being so that no one suffers from misery).

Thank you all.

Dated : Raja Rammohunpur
The 5th May, 2009

Arunabha Basumajumdar
Vice-Chancellor