

EIGHTH ANNUAL CONVOCATION

Address

by

P. C. Mukherji

Vice-Chancellor



UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL

RAJA-RAMMOHUNPUR

May 24, 1974.

Mr. Chancellor, Prof. Gupta, Members of the University, Students and Guests

We are extremely happy to welcome in our midst this morning Prof. P. C. Gupta, an eminent historian and the Vice-Chancellor of Viswa Bharati University who has been pleased to address the Eighth Annual Convocation as the Chief Guest. I take this opportunity of welcoming all our Guests who have been pleased to grace the function of this morning in spite of their multifarious engagements.

It is my proud privilege to announce today that this University has undertaken to start teaching in one more Faculty viz. Faculty of Law at the Degree level. This will increase the number of faculties of teaching to five from the existing four from the coming Session. At present this University is teaching in the Faculty of Arts, Science, Engineering & Technology and Medicine & Pharmacy. It has been decided that the College of Law will start an evening course from July 1974 with part-time teachers till adequate funds are available for appointment of full time teachers and construction of the Faculty Buildings to start the Day College at Raja Rammohunpur.

With the advent of the Fifth Five Year Plan the University has been aspirant and hopeful to institute the Faculty of Education for teaching Post-Graduate course in Education and introduce Post-Graduate teaching in two new subjects viz. Anthropology and Social Anthropology and Life Sciences under the Faculty of Science. The proposals have been sent to University Grants Commission and we are waiting for their approval. Introduction of the study of Anthropology and Social Anthropology will be a landmark for this University situated in the midst of Adibasis and various tribes on the plains and on the hills and will form the nucleus of an Advance Centre of Studies to be developed in future.

The University Grants Commission in their guidelines for the 5th Five Year Plan stressed that plan development should be concentrated more in stabilising the departments already in existence and expanding their research activities rather than multiplying the number of departments. This University accordingly has put more stress on the required minimum development of the existing

departments. It is a pity, however, to have to mention in this connection that the department of Sanskrit could not be started during the Fourth Five Year Plan primarily on account of much too inadequate grant in the last plan and secondly on the embargo placed during the last year not to fill up any new or unfilled teaching post. The University Grants Commission, however, has agreed recently to finance working of Research Projects of merit by Post-Graduate teachers and also by Post-Graduate and College Teachers in a combined team during this plan in addition to their lumpsum grants for Junior Research fellows and Research Projects in the University sanctioned from last year.

The North Bengal Development and Planning Board under the Chairmanship of the Chief Minister accepted our proposals for establishing an Institute of Tea Science and Garden Management under this University in the 5th Five Year Plan. The Board was also convinced about the necessity of constructing a road bridge over the rivers Balason and Mahananda for making a direct passage for the patients to the North Bengal University Medical College and Hospital at Sushrutnanagar from the Burdwan Road. This will shorten the distance by about seven miles and will be an invaluable help and advantage to the patients coming for hospital treatment in the emergency. This project was also accepted for execution in the 5th Five Year Plan.

In March, 1974 the first batch of our students passed the final M. B. B. S, Examination from the University Medical College now being held at the I. P. G. M. E. R. and at the S. S. K. M. Hospitals. They are waiting anxiously for recognition of the College by the Indian Medical Council. The Council inspected the Examinations both at Sushrutnanagar for the Pre-clinical Course and at the S. S. K. M. Hospitals for Para-Clinical and Clinical courses, completed their inspection of laboratories, equipments, the teaching programme etc. and also tested the attainment of the candidates. The team was satisfied with the floor space and the arrangement in the teaching buildings for Para-clinical and Clinical subjects already completed at Sushrutnanagar and appreciated the progress in the construction of the Hospitals. It was stressed by Dr. L. C. Joseph, the Chief Inspector that it was high time to have at least one full time teacher not below the rank of a Reader in every clinical Department

to look into the setting up of the Hospital and laboratories at Sushrutanagar and keep up a liason with the Head of the Department at I. P. G. M. F. R. The Government have been moved already for sanctioning these posts and providing for them a number of beds at the S. S. K. M. Hospitals till the Departments can be transferred to Sushrutanagar. The Indian Medical Council appreciated the decision of this University to adopt the curricula as recommended by them and to reconstitute the Faculty Board and Boards of Studies on their pattern.

The Pre-Medical Course which was so long being taught at University College at Raiganj has been started at Sushrutanagar from the present Session with the help of Part time teachers from Colleges. This will reduce the congestion at Raiganj College and bring the students closer to the Medical College.

The In-service teacher trainees of the 18th months' Part-time B. Ed. course introduced by the State Govt. as a crash programme will appear at the Final Examination along with full time trainees in the B. T. Colleges of this University in July, 1974. The Academic Council has decided to redesignate the B. T. Degrees as B. Ed. in conformity with other Universities in the State.

It is a matter of sincere regret that the conferment of Degrees and Diplomas for the year 1971 has been deferred so long. This has been caused mainly on account of repetition of the Examination programme, and consequent delay in the Colleges in completing the courses of study. There has been inordinate delay in the publication of results on account of introducing the system of examination by two examiners and in many cases by third examiners, one internal and one external, for all Honours and Post-Graduate answer scripts.

I shall be failing in my duty if it is not mentioned here that with the unstinted efforts and whole hearted co-operation of the Principals, Teachers, a section of students and the administrative staff it has been possible to bring back the desired norm of

conduct of Examinations in most of the centres under this University. The Examinations of 1972 had to be held twice or even thrice to help the candidates, who either could not appear due to disturbed conditions or whose examinations had to be cancelled for adverse reports. The repetition of the Examinations can not, however, be a continuous process primarily because it dislocates the teaching programme in Colleges resulting in deferment of academic sessions. The University, therefore, has to make serious reappraisal the mater to bring back the academic sessions to date.

A new College at Islampur was granted affiliation last year for teaching Pre-University Course raising the total number of affiliated College to 32. Total number of students enrolled in the affiliated Colleges is about 25000. At the Post-Graduate level two subjects viz. Botany and Zoology are being taught at the Darjeeling Govt. College, which is a constituent college under this University. The rest 11 subjects are being taught here at Raja-Rammohunpur and the total number of students enrolled is about 450.

In games and sports the students of this University participated last year in almost all the major games and sports in the Inter-varsity competitions and won the championship.

Students of this University participated in a number of Inter-University debates in and outside the state and participated in cultural visit to Madras University sponsored by the University Grants Commission.. Their participation has been appreciated by the Madras University. Students also held inter-College Debate and Cultural Competitions. These cultural activities have been possible on the encouragement of the Chancellor.

A Nepali Kavi Sammellan at Darjeeling was inaugurated last year by the Chief Minister under the auspices of the Nepali Academy. The programme of Research and publication is progressing there under austerity method on account of paucity of funds. It is time now to approach the Ministry of Education, Government of India for developing it into a Regional Institute of Hill Languages under the 5th Five Year Development Plan.

On the subject of additional construction on the University Campus it is to be reported that the Day Students Home has been completed and is being equipped for use of the Day Scholars. The process, however, is being slightly delayed on account of accomodating the Regional Office of the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education.

An annexe for the Faculty building for the Department of Geography & Applied Geography has been completed. The construction of Residential quarters for Professors, Readers and Employees could not yet be completed and the same for Vice-Chancellor and administrative Officers and lower subordinate staff could not be started for paucity of cement. It has been decided that the Administrative Building will be constructed in phases as the cost has augument by a large proportion. As University Grants Commission does not bear the cost of this building State Government have been moved to sanction the amount needed for the construction of the 1st phase consisting of the Vice Chancellor's office, a meeting Room and the Registrar's office. It is to be mentioned much to our disappointment that there is no room to hold the meetings of the University on the Campus. The University Grants Commission have been moved for grants for construction of additional quarters for Teachers and Employees, for expanding Faculty Buildings and for constructing the Buildings for the college of Law and Departments of Anthropology and Life Sciences during 5th Five Year Plan.

The University has purchased two 88 KVA Diesel Generators to act as standby, one for the University and another for the University Medical College. Both of them will be installed shortly.

I am afraid I shall be striking discordant note when I say that the North Bengal Fair which constituted a magnificent adjunct of the Annual Convocation last year could not be held this time in view of financial stringency, inclement weather and also very restricted transport and other facilities available now. It is admitted that a Fair should be an annual feature at Raja Rammohunpur to bring about contact with the University of people at large from all walks of life, irrespective of their age. A University can foster the advancement of learning by opening its portals to all, rather than keeping in isolation. But a fair should be held at the proper season and in North

Bengal midFebruary is perhaps the best time. So steps will be taken from the next year to hold the fair in fair season and not to synchronise it with the Convocation.

In conclusion I offer my hearty congratulations to all new Graduates, Post-Graduates and Doctorates and ensure them the blessings of their Alma Mater for all time to come.

I offer my respectful thanks to all.