

## Speech: Third Convocation of Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan

Hon'ble Justice Shri P.N. Bhagwati, Vice Chancellor, Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, Shri Radhavallabh Tripathi, Board Members, Faculty Members, Graduating Students, Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is a great pleasure for me to deliver the Presidential Address on the occasion of the Third convocation of Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan. I am truly delighted to be in your midst on an occasion which is both joyous and solemn. It represents a major milestone in your careers. My wholehearted congratulations to you for all your achievements.

Sanskrit is one of the oldest living languages of the world. It has served as a repository of thought and philosophy of life over a period of more than 5000 years. Sanskrit also traveled beyond boundaries of India and made its presence felt significantly in most of the Asian countries. Moreover, Sanskrit is not just a language; it has been to us a synonym of great traditions and learning. It contains knowledge pertaining to several disciplines like Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Life Sciences, Social Sciences and Technology besides Arts and Humanities.

Sanskrit is our mental and spiritual link with the larger world we inhabit, both East and West. Sir William Jones, the English scholar, renowned for his work on the existence of a relationship among Indo-European languages described Sanskrit in the following words: **“The Sanskrit language, whatever be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure; more perfect than the *Greek*, more copious than the *Latin*, and more exquisitely refined than either”**.

Here, it would be appropriate to quote, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, who while endorsing Sanskrit language at the time India's language policy was

being debated in the Constituent Assembly. He said, **“If I was asked what is the greatest treasure that India possesses and what is her finest heritage, I would answer unhesitatingly that it is the Sanskrit language and literature and all that it contains. This is a magnificent inheritance and so long as this endures and influences the life of our people, so long will the basic genius of India continue. If our race forgot the Buddha, Upanisads and the great epics, India would cease to be India.”**

I would also like to refer to the great works of Bharat Ratna Mahamahopadhyaya P.V.Kane, specially his History of Dharmashastra. It is an encyclopedia of our ancient social laws and customs, which he translated from several Sanskrit texts and manuscripts to English. Kane was not only a legal luminary; he was also a great Sanskrit scholar. The richness of his work is attributed to his in-depth knowledge of Sanskrit.

Sanskrit has also been discovered to be a perfect language designed for enlightened communication in every respect. Rick Bricks, a Computer scientist at NASA propounded a thesis in the last quarter of twentieth century that Sanskrit is best suited for Artificial Intelligence and Natural Language Processing for our computers. I am glad to note that some serious work is being done to cultivate Sanskrit as an effective vehicle for this purpose.

I am of the opinion that the wisdom of Sanskrit should enrich the present day Knowledge Economy. Indian languages should derive strength and stimulation from it. The social, moral and ethical values enshrined in the tradition of Sanskrit must be cultivated. Above all, Sanskrit can function as a cementing force for national integration.

I am glad to note that Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, since its inception in 1970 has been playing a stellar role in the development, preservation and promotion of Sanskrit learning all over the country and abroad. The projects undertaken by the Sansthan for developing web-texts and hyper-electronic texts of Sanskrit Shastras are indeed laudable.

I also appreciate the introduction of certain innovative programmes introduced by the Sansthan to extend the frontiers of learning of Sanskrit in the country. I am happy to note that the University has updated its curriculum; proposes to introduce semester system and choice based credit system and new courses on computational Sanskrit, Natya Shastra, Vastushastra, Pali and Prakrit. Another notable Project, Dictionary of Sanskrit and Indian Dialects and Sub-dialects, will hopefully establish the unique contribution of Sanskrit to national harmony and create an understanding of the role of Sanskrit. I am being told that the Sansthan is engaged in a project on national e –data bank of Sanskrit literature, which aims at developing e – learning in Sanskrit and making e-Sanskrit corpus available to public through electronic texts and internet. I am glad to note that some e- texts have already been completed and released for use of public. I am sure that launching of the Sansthan’s e – journal will provide a viable platform for global dialogue and interaction between the members of Sanskrit Community all over the world.

Convocation day is an important day in the calendar of any educational institution. On this day the institution delivers on its promise. Young men and women, who have been nurtured for years in the Institution, enter society. Convocation is also an occasion for looking back and looking forward. In fact, while each one of the students and the faculty may recall the academic performance of the graduating students, what is perhaps more important is to look ahead.

Dear Students, I appeal to you to adopt the values of Sanskrit education to build your character and conduct congenial to the social life of our nation and to build up your self confidence in pursuing your prospects. May you bring reason and hope to all whom you touch in your professional and personal lives and may you make your work deeply rewarding and truly satisfying.

I would like to end my speech by again congratulating the graduates on their successful completion of their academic programs, but reminding them that this is only the beginning of the most important part of their lives: the part in which they are expected to contribute to society.

I wish you all great future and bright career.