



مولانا آزاد نیشنل اردو یونیورسٹی
Maulana Azad National Urdu University

WELCOME ADDRESS

by

Prof. A. M. PATHAN
Vice-Chancellor

at the

FIRST CONVOCATION

Held on 5th August, 2005

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Maulana Azad National Urdu University

Respected His Excellency Bharat Ratna Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, the President of India and Visitor to this University, Dr. Obaid Siddiqui, noted scientist and Chancellor of the University,, Dr. Y.S. Raja Shekar Reddy, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Dr. Raj Bahadur Gaur and Mr. Saiyid Hamid (IAS), recipients of the Degree of Doctor of Letters (Honoris Causa), members of the Executive Council, the Academic Council,, honoured guests, special invitees, my teaching and non-teaching colleagues of the University, guests, students and parents.

It is indeed a rare honour and privilege for me to address such an august gathering at a very historic and joyous occasion - the first Convocation of the Maulana Azad National Urdu University being held at Hyderabad today. It

is a moment of pride in the life of every University when it conducts the first convocation because this event signifies the achievements of a place of learning and attempts to put its social contribution on record for all its well wishers. Another unique aspect is that for the first time in the history of independent India, there are nearly four thousand graduates ready to be admitted for various degrees under the Faculties of Arts, Social Sciences and Sciences in subjects of modern thought, relevance and higher education in the Urdu language - a feat that is replicated after nearly eight decades when the graduates of the Osmania University passed out first in 1921 till 1948.

I would now like to take this opportunity to introduce and present the honoured guests before this august gathering. It is a matter of happy providence and good fortune for this University to have its Visitor, His Excellency Bharat Ratna Dr. A.P.J. Abul Kalam, the President of India amongst us today. His Excellency needs no introduction given his achievements and contributions to the country and his endearing personality that makes him one of the most loved and respected first citizens of the county.

Born on 15th October 1931 at Rameshwaram in Tamil Nadu, Dr. Avul Pakir Jainulabdeen Abdul Kalam

specialized in Aeronautical Engineering from the Madras Institute of Technology. Dr. Kalam made significant contributions as Project Director to develop India's first indigenous Satellite Launch Vehicle (SLV-III) which successfully injected the Rohini Satellite into near Earth orbit in July 1980 and made India a member of the exclusive space club. He was responsible for the evolution of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launch vehicle programme, particularly the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) configuration. After working for two decades in ISRO, Dr. Kalam moved to the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) as Chief Executive of the Integrated Guided Missile Development programme. He was responsible for the development and operationalisation of the AGNI and PRITHVI Missiles and for building indigenous capability in critical technologies through networking of multiple institutions. He was the scientific advisor to the Defence Minister and the Secretary, Department of Defence Research and development from July 1992 till December 1999. During this time, he led the weaponisation of strategic missile systems and the Pokhran-II nuclear tests in collaboration with the Department of Atomic Energy, which made India a nuclear weapon state.

As Chairman of the Technology Information, Forecasting and Assessment Council (TIFAC), he led the country with the help of 500 experts to arrive at Technology Vision 2020 which gave India a road map to transform into a developed nation. Dr. Kalam has served as the Principal Scientific Advisor to the Government of India, in the rank of Cabinet Minister, from November 1999 to November 2001, as Ex-officio Chairman of the Scientific Advisory Committee to the Cabinet and has piloted the India Millennium Mission 2020. He took up academic pursuit as Professor, Technology and Societal Transformation at Anna University, Chennai from November 2001.

In his literary pursuits, Dr. Kalam's has authored many books and articles, many of whom have become household names in India today - viz. "Wings of Fire", "India 2020-A Vision For The New Millennium", "My Journey" and "Luminous Sparks" both of which are a collection of his poems, "Ignited Minds" and "Envisioning an Empowered Nation - Technology for Societal Transformation". Dr. Kalam is one of the most distinguished scientists of India with the unique honour of having received honorary doctorates from 30 Universities and institutions. He has been awarded the Padma Bhushan (1981), the Padma Vibhushan (1990) and also the highest civilian award of Bharat Ratna (1997). He is

the recipient of many other honours and recognitions and fellow of many professional institutions.

His Excellency is known not only for his scientific achievements but his humane and simple personality that enables him to reach out and touch every citizen of this great country. We are all well aware of his burning passion for reform, his grand, noble and beautiful dream of an 'ignited India', an India that is already redefining and re-orienting herself to take an important position on the globe today - a position that it has always occupied through the centuries by her wisdom, tolerance and humanity. Dr. Kalam has shown us how we can realize the true potential of the country by looking into ourselves and realizing that each one of us has the onerous responsibility of discharging our duty with pride and honour to our country and the best way to do this is to spread the light of education and skill to every nook and corner of the country. We at the Maulana Azad National Urdu University feel ourselves as unique pioneers in this noble endeavour as we try to reach out and touch the thousands of variously disadvantaged and dispossessed Urdu learners and try to re-integrate them into the great, vibrant national mainstream through education. Your presence here today with us Your Excellency gives us the energy and vision to rededicate ourselves with renewed

vigour to this noble and challenging task and look to you to guide us with your leadership and vision.

May I now introduce Prof. Obaid Siddiqi, respected Chancellor of the University. Prof. Siddiqi is a Fellow of the Royal Society and an eminent scientist in the field of Molecular Biology, Behaviour Genetics and Neurobiology. He is the founder Director of the TIFR National Centre for Biological Sciences at Bangalore, where he is currently Professor Emeritus. Professor Siddiqi was educated at Aligarh Muslim University, where he began his career in 1954, and at the University of Glasgow. He worked at the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, New York, the University of Pennsylvania, Yale University and MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology at Cambridge before joining the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Bombay in 1962. Prof. Siddiqi was visiting Professor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Gosney Fellow and subsequently Sherman Fairchild Distinguished Scholar at the California Institute of Technology. He is a life Member of Clare Hall, Cambridge.

A past president of the Indian Academy of Sciences, Fellow of the Indian National Science Academy, the National Academy of sciences, the royal society of London and the Third World Academy of Sciences Trieste, Prof. Siddiqi is a

recipient of the Shanti Swaroop Bhatnagar Award, the Aryabhat Medal, the Birla Smarak Kosh Award for Biomedical Research and Padma Bhushan. He has been conferred the degree of D.Sc. (Honoris Causa) by the Aligarh Muslim University and Banaras Hindu University. Prof. Siddiqui is on the governing bodies of scores of Universities in India and has published over a hundred articles in his field. It is a matter of good fortune and pride that this University has him as its Chancellor and I am sure that the University will be vastly enriched by his wisdom and guidance.

Dr. Y.S. Raja Shekhar Reddy, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh is a popular and loved figure not only in Hyderabad and Andhra Pradesh but also in the country. He is an astute politician and a charismatic mass leader who has carved for himself a niche in State politics by his exemplary devotion and dedication to the uplift of the downtrodden and neglected segments of society. Born on July 8, 1949, in Pulivendula in the backward Rayalaseema region, Dr. Reddy has always struggled to secure the rights of the poor and the underprivileged. Completing his medical education from the M R Medical College, Gulbarga and the S V Medical College, Tirupati, Dr. Reddy served as Medical Officer at the Jammalamadugu Mission Hospital for a brief

period. In 1973, he established a 70-bed charitable hospital, named after his father late Y.S.Raja Reddy at Pulivendula. His family established one polytechnic and one degree college in Pulivendula, which were later handed over to the well-known Loyola group of institutions.

Dr. Reddy entered active politics in 1978 and contested elections four times to enter the State Legislative Assembly and an equal number of times to the Lower House of Parliament. During his 25-year-long political career, he has served the people in multiple capacities, both in Government as well as in Party. He was President of the Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) twice - during 1983-1985 and again in 1998-2000. During 1980-1983, he was a minister holding important portfolios related to Rural Development, Medical & Health and Education etc. From 1999 to 2004 he was the Leader of Opposition in the eleventh state assembly and has been elected as Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, an office he assumed in May 2004.

I would like to now introduce Dr. Raj Bahadur Gaur and Mr. Saiyid Hamid (IAS) the recipients of the Degree of Doctor of Letters (D.Litt.) Honoris Causa of this University. Both are eminent personalities in the Urdu world and are

well known men of letters and public affairs. Born in 1918, Dr. Raj Bahadur Gaur is one of the most progressive writers in Urdu who occupies a position of great respect and eminence in his field and has the distinction of being a Freedom Fighter. He has served as a Member of the first Rajya Sabha, apart from being a well known and loved Trade Union leader, the President of the Anjuma Tarraqui-e-Urdu and Vice Chairman of the National Council for the Promotion of the Urdu Language. He was the member of Aziz Qureshi Committee, which was constituted by the Government of India to examine the different aspects related to the establishment of Urdu University. Dr. Gaur is the author of a number of books in Urdu, apart from penning scores of articles in Urdu on various public and national issues. Mr. Saiyid Hamid is a distinguished Civil Servant of the Indian Administrative service. He has served in various capacities as Deputy Secretary, Joint Secretary and Additional Secretary of many Ministries in the State and Central Governments. He has the distinction of being the first Chairman of the Staff Selection Commission. Mr. Hamid is no stranger to the world of academics having served as Vice Chancellor of the prestigious Aligarh Muslim University and is currently the Chancellor of the Jamia Hamdard. Apart from English, he is well versed in Urdu and Persian.

I would like to make a mention of Shri Aziz Qureshi, former Member of Parliament and Prof. Jairajpuri, the first Vice Chancellor of this University. I am happy that both are here with us today on this historic occasion since both have been closely involved with the establishment of this University. Shri Qureshi was the Chairman of the Task Force set up under the Language Commission in 1992 to examine the feasibility, administrative structure and financial commitment for the establishment of the Urdu University. The Report of his Committee was accepted by the then government which laid the functional foundation of this University. Prof. Shamim Jairajpuri has served as the first Vice Chancellor from 1998 to 2003. He is a well established and honoured scientist, with his area of interest being in Nematology. Beginning his career at the Aligarh Muslim University where he is now Professor Emeritus, Prof. Jairajpuri has many firsts and academic recognitions to his credit. He is the youngest person to have been awarded D.Sc. at the age of 28. He has served as Director of the Zoological Survey of India and as Vice President of the Indian National Science Academy. He is the recipient of many national and international honours and awards and has many scholarly articles to his credit. He was appointed as the first Vice Chancellor of this University and the credit for laying strong foundations for this young and growing

University goes to him.

It is only natural that in such an august gathering at this historic occasion, the idea vision and activities of the University may be presented. The Maulana Azad Nation Urdu University has been established in 1998 as a Central University with an all India jurisdiction and with the mandate to promote and develop the Urdu language, provide higher, technical and vocational education in the Urdu medium and to provide focus on women's education. The University has been empowered to offer courses through both the campus and distance modes of education. The Government of Andhra Pradesh have allotted 200 acres of land in the picturesque area of Gachibowli, Hyderabad for the establishment of the University campus.

The very name and idea of the University suggests that the Government recognizes and places special emphasis on Urdu as a national language. It is a language of the masses, spoken like a lingua franca throughout the country. It is a purely Indic language, tracing its roots to hindavi and Hindustani; it is a language that is glimpsed in Kabir's dohas and Amir Khusro's poetry. It is a language of idea and emotion that has served to build bridges across nationalities and cultures. It is the language of drama,

cinema, poetry, politics and everyday conversation. Today, even a cursory look at the Urdu milieu discloses the fact that it is largely made up of economically weak and socially disadvantaged citizens and that the language is spoken in nearly every state of the country and enjoys wide social and cultural use and acceptability. However, the Urdu speakers are not institutionally integrated into the system. Over time, the Urdu speakers have been relegated to the educational and social backwaters. While the reasons for these phenomena are complex and many, ranging from the abdication of the language by the upper classes to the sustained erosion of the Urdu speaking middle class, the one main outcome has been the delinking and dis-engagement of the Urdu speaking masses with the mainstream over the last few decades. The language that once was the medium of instruction for technical and professional courses, for Arts, Commerce and Humanities has now become a barrier to pursue higher education. Thus the basic idea for this University is to convert this barrier into a bridge by offering modern, higher and technical education in the Urdu medium

I have taken charge on 19th March 2004 as Vice Chancellor of this University and have observed that the distance education endeavour of this University has enjoyed

much success. The distance education courses had been introduced right from its year of inception in 1998 and there were 18 study centres and 2500 students then, a number that has grown to 100 study centres and nearly 30,000 students all over India today. Undergraduate degree courses (B.A. / B.Sc. and B.Com.), one Diploma Course (Teach English), five Certificate Courses (Proficiency in Urdu through English and through Hindi, Computing, Food and Nutrition and Functional English), a professional course (Bachelors in Education - B.Ed.) and M.A. in Urdu and in History are offered through distance education. Diploma in Education (D.Ed.) is offered as a campus course.

Upon joining, I had identified three priority areas to work upon. The first was appointing teaching faculty and launching campus-based post graduate courses, the second was establishing institutional linkages with other Open Distance Learning Institutions and the third was adding on to the physical infrastructure. I can say with a measure of satisfaction, that I have been helped by the Almighty, the Government, the University Grants Commission and my colleagues in the University in gaining results in all three priority areas within a year of my joining here.

I believe that the basic strength of any University is

derived from its academic and physical resources. MANUU, being a six-year old University when I took over as the second Vice Chancellor, had rudiments of both these which had to be built upon. I approached the University Grants Commission with a proposal and Vision and would like to thank them for appreciating and sharing my concern on these matters and reviving over 30 lapsed faculty positions and approving the first phase of building in the Campus. Recruitment has already been completed and the University now has five campus based post graduate departments and courses on offer, namely Masters in Communication and Journalism, Masters in English, Masters in Urdu, Masters in Business Administration and Bachelors in Education. Keeping in with the mandate of the University to provide focus on women's education, a Centre for Women's Studies too has been established.

Coming to the subject of establishing institutional linkages, the University already had a Memorandum of Understanding with the Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Open University, Hyderabad extending to adopting and translating various undergraduate and certificate courses. It has now moved forward by entering into a Memorandum of Collaboration with the Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi, in a unique way in that both

Universities have decided to share the physical resources of their distance education framework and IGNOU has offered its nearly 100 programmes for adoption and translation by MANUU. The degrees for such courses will be awarded jointly by MANUU & IGNOU. This University has responded by translating the Bachelors in Education (B.Ed.) programme in Urdu and offering it through Distance Education in ten programme centres spread over the country. This is a unique first in the country and will go a long way in producing competent and qualified teachers in the Urdu Medium.

Addressing to the issue of economics first, I have realized that scholarships will go a long way in promoting the courses and mandate of the University. It is heartening to record in this context that the South Asia Foundation (SAF), with the good offices of Ambassador Madanjeet Singh, has come forward in disbursing 300 scholarships for the postgraduate course under distance mode of the handsome annual amount of Rs. 4,500/- per student. SAF has extended this benefit for the students of campus-based profession course of this University too, namely the Masters of Communication and Journalism course.

Looking at the social milieu, I think that the basic

mission of this University lies in empowering the Urdu speaking masses in educational and economic terms. This could be the cornerstone for formulating a Vision for this University wherein it actively engages in the work of social development and empowerment. The Act of the University offers ample scope for realizing this Vision when it starts offering technical and vocation education as an item of the mandate. The University is in the process of formulating strategies by exploring options with governmental and non-governmental bodies to offer technical and vocational education through its satellite campuses to be established in various parts of the country.

Keeping in with the philosophy of application of modern technology to education delivery and management, the University has initiated dialogue with the programme implementation Committee on EDUSAT for airing its programmes on the newly launched EDUSAT channel and with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting for time on the newly launched Doordarshan Urdu channel. Apart from this, the Multimedia Centre for this University is under construction.

All these activities of the University have been possible because of the support and encouragement

received from various government bodies and the enduring interest and concern of all the honoured guests present here today. It goes, of course, without saying that all this has been possible because of the untiring work and cooperation of my colleagues and staff of the University. Our biggest stakeholders are the students of this University as they are the future carriers of this great and noble endeavour and effort of the University in realizing its national mission and mandate.

I thank you all for your time and attention and for being with us on this happy and historic occasion.

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