



मौलाना आज़ाद नेशनल उर्दू यूनिवर्सिटी

مولانا آزاد نیشنل اردو یونیورسٹی

Maulana Azad National Urdu University

WELCOME ADDRESS

by

Prof. A.M. PATHAN

Vice-Chancellor

at the

SECOND CONVOCATION

Held at 16th June, 2007

**Welcome Speech
of
Vice Chancellor
Maulana Azad National Urdu University**

At the Second Convocation of the University

16th June 2007 at 10.30 a.m.,

Ravindra Bharati Auditorium - Hyderabad

Respected Shri Arjun Singhji, Hon'ble Minister for Human Resource Development, Government of India, Dr. Obaid Siddiqui, noted scientist and Chancellor of the University, His Excellency Prof. A.R. Kidwai, Governor of Haryana, Janab Shams-ur-Rahman Farouqi, Vice Chairman (National Council for the Promotion of Urdu Language, New Delhi) recipients of the Degree of Doctor of Letters (Honoris Causa), members of the Executive and 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 the occasion of the second Convocation of the Maulana Azad National Urdu University being held at Hyderabad today. The University conducted its first Convocation in August 2005 wherein nearly four

thousand graduates were admitted for various degrees under the Faculties of Arts, Social Sciences and Sciences of this University in subjects of modern thought, relevance and higher education in the Urdu language a feat that was 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 Shri Arjun Singhji, Hon'ble Minister for Human Resource Development amongst us today.. Not only is Shri Arjun Singhji a senior statesman and leader of national standing, it was under his guidance that the initial idea of establishment of this University took place. It was indeed a move of far reaching consequences and one that was in keeping with the inclusive spirit of India and I am happy to note here Sir that this University will strive to achieve greater glory and fulfill its mandate in an increasingly befitting manner in keeping with the ideals and vision that it has been established.

Shri Arjun Singh needs no introduction but I would like to take this opportunity to briefly inform this august gathering about the Hon'ble Minister. Born on 5th November

1930 at Churhat, Madhya Pradesh, Shri Singh began his public career as Member of the Madhya Pradesh Legislative Assembly in 1957. Before serving as Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh in 1985, he served as Minister of Agriculture and GAD, Information and Public Relations, Education in the State Government and was leader of the opposition in the M.P. Legislative Assembly from 1980-85. He was Governor of Punjab before being inducted into the Central Government as Minister of Commerce in 1986 and then as Minister of Communications, Government of India from 1988-91. As member of the ninth Lok Sabha, Shri Arjun Singh served as Minister of Human Resource Development, Government of India from 1991-1996, a time that saw sweeping changes in the country's economic, political and social scenarios due to the initiation of the process of economic reforms.

Prof. Obaid Siddiqi, respected Chancellor of the University is a Fellow of the Royal Society and an eminent scientist in the field of Molecular Biology, Behavior 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. Siddiqi 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 great pleasure for me to introduce the recipients of Honoris Causa. Shri Arjun Singh has already been introduced and I thank him for consenting to accept the degree of Honoris Causa. The other recipients are His Excellency Prof. A.R. Kidwai, Governor of Haryana and Janab Shamsul Rahman Farooqui, former bureaucrat of the

Indian Postal Service and eminent Urdu writer and critic.

His Excellency Prof. A.R. Kidwai Governor of Haryana is a freedom fighter, a recognized scientist in Organic and Bio-Chemistry and member of the British, American and Indian Chemical Societies. With over 40 original articles to his credit in internationally referred journals and as member of many esteemed academic bodies. Dr. Kidwai has had a rich and long academic career culminating as Head and Dean of the Faculty of Science in the Aligarh Muslim University in 1967. Since then, he has served in many distinguished capacities as Governor of Bihar and West Bengal, Chairman of the Union Public Service Commission and Chancellor of the Aligarh Muslim University.

Janab Shamsur Rahman Faruqi, internationally known Urdu writer, critic, theorist, poet and translator hails from Allahbad and is a former civil servant who retired as the Chief Postmaster General of the Government of Uttar Pradesh. Janab Faruqi is an influential and prolific writer in the Urdu language for nearly four decades now contributing to the poetry, literature, theory and criticism of the language from 1968. A multi-lingual personality, he has made special contribution to the study of 18th and 19th century Urdu poetry and literary theory. He has been bestowed with honours and awards from the Urdu Academies of Uttar Pradesh, Delhi and

West Bengal apart from being conferred with the Sahitya Academy national Award for Urdu in 1986 and is the recipient of the Saraswati Samman, the sub-continent's highest literary award, in 1996. He has brought hoary canons of Urdu and Persian poetry to English speakers by his translations and is a widely read and critically acclaimed writer of Urdu not only in South Asia but in countries of Western Europe and North America too.

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 National 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 has 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

This idea has found ready implementation in distance education wherein the University has reinforced and built upon its strength in distance education by registering an enrolment of over thirteen thousand since the last academic year, which brings the total number of students on rolls today in distance education to over 65,000 for the academic year 2006-07. The number of study centres too has increased from 90 to 119. As a concomitant process, the University has established sub Regional centers at Lucknow, Hyderabad, Sambal, Mewat and Jammu, apart from the existing Regional Centres at Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore, Kolkatta, Patna, Darbhanga and Srinagar to offer a wider and more responsive student support network.

The University functions with the philosophy that its endeavour is to provide academic strength, modern education and as wide an intellectual exposure as possible to the Urdu speakers. Keeping this in mind as the guiding principles, translated into empowerment of the Urdu speakers, it has initiated several Development Schemes granted under the UGC X Plan. These include a Centre for Nehru Studies (at the Delhi Regional Centre), providing Coaching for Minority Students for the National Eligibility Test with the establishment of the UGC-NET Coaching Centre, providing opportunity for Urdu speakers to better their English

proficiency, subject understanding and competitive edge by the establishment of the Remedial Coaching Centre, fostering a spirit of competition by the establishment of the Centre for Coaching of Minority Candidates for Entry into Government Service and also an Academy for Professional Development of Urdu Teachers to work in the area of promoting skill development, training, inculcating best instructional practices, fostering research in school education and working towards adding competence, motivation and empowerment of primary and high school Urdu teachers. A feather in the cap for the University has been the establishment of the prestigious Academic Staff College, the 57th such College to be established in the Country. Another notable addition has been the establishment of the Centre for the Study of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policy at the University which is a prestigious achievement for this young institution. Keeping in mind the importance of applying modern Information and Communication Technology to disseminate and propagate its academic endeavors, the University is also establishing an Instructional Media Centre to produce and broadcast lessons and academic programmes via television.

That such an all-round effort and approach towards development of linguistic minorities is extremely pertinent has been brought out by the Sachar Committee Report. The

Report has done yeoman service to the cause of Urdu development in that it has not only presented an objective picture but, has provided critical inputs of data which can inform effective policy interventions. It is indeed a matter of great happiness for me to say that this University has already been working on the lines of the major recommendations of the Sachar Committee, especially the ones dealing with strengthening and expanding the primary education base in Urdu and focusing on artisan skills and vocational development.

The Report presents a unique opportunity and challenge to this National Institution. Among the main findings are the facts By and large Muslims rank somewhat above SC/ ST's but below the Hindu OBC's, other Minorities and Hindu population (upper castes) in almost all indicators considered of education, poverty, social standing, access to resources, employment, representation in Government etc. Poverty, low perceived returns from Education, poor access to schools, non-modernization of Madarsas, and low level of women's education are the main issues plaguing educational development due to which the literacy rates for the Muslim Community are at 59% (2001) below the national average of 65%..

These issues have to be addressed in a comprehensive and institutionally sustained manner with a focus on teacher training and education. The University has established a Teachers Training Colleges at Srinagar, (J&K) and Darbhanga, (Bihar), which offer B. Ed programmes in Urdu Medium. A College of Teacher Education will soon start operating at Bhopal (M.P.) too. The UGC has sanctioned an Urdu Academy/Center for Professional development of Urdu School teachers. This academy shall enhance/ impart extension of knowledge, pedagogy, educational technologies and curriculum contents as per the current trends to the in-service Urdu medium schoolteachers. It will be a common platform to bring together primary, secondary and senior secondary level teachers for training. The Academy is fully funded by the UGC. It will design innovative programmes to update the knowledge of subjects and teaching methods to the teachers. The University Grants Commission has sanctioned Model Schools at Hyderabad and Darbhanga on the pattern of CBSE. The Schools shall offer the programmes from 1st to Xth Class

The artisan class among the Urdu speakers has suffered considerably due to the forces of economic restructuring that have swept over the country, more so in the last decade. The traditional crafts have been replaced by

machine-made low cost products and disempowered a whole section of the people. Realizing this potential in the people, the University will soon establish Industrial Training Institutes at Hyderabad, Bangalore, Darbhanga and Srinagar to impart vocational education in various skills and trades. This is in keeping with the recommendations of the Report which has highlighted this point as one that will be an effective strategy to combat abysmal levels of economic development.

I have taken this opportunity to present before the Hon'ble Minister and this august gathering a profile of the activities of this University. In terms of adding physical infrastructure, the University campus is in a very active phase of growth with the completion of the Directorate of Distance Education, the Lecture Hall, staff quarters, boys' hostel, Instructional Media Centre and Urdu Cultural Centre buildings. All these activities are the signs of an institution that is beginning to establish itself, cast its moorings and getting ready to set out on a glorious path of recognition and achievement in keeping with the spirit of this mandate and Act. It is in this context that the University would like to sincerely thank the Minister for his continuing and abiding interest and concern for the well being of this young and growing national institution.

Thank you.