

Annual Convocation

Address of the Vice-Chancellor

Diamond Harbour Women's University

Sarisha, South 24 Parganas

West Bengali, India

Pin- 743368

2018

Address of the Vice-Chancellor

His Excellency, Shri Keshari Nath Tripathi, the Chancellor of the University and Governor of West Bengal, respected Chief Guest of today's convocation, Professor Sanghamitra Bandyopadhyay, Eminent Guest of Honour, Dr Partha Chatterjee, recipients of the degrees of Doctor of Literature, Srimati Nirmala Mishra and Srimati Alokanaanda Roy, respected members of the Court, respected members of the Executive Council, respected Heads of the Departments, my distinguished colleagues, friends from the media, my dear students, ladies and gentlemen:

On the occasion of the 1st Annual Convocation of Diamond Harbour Women's University, I have great pleasure in welcoming you all amidst this wonderful gathering.

Our deep gratitude to His Excellency, Sri Keshari Nath Tripathi, for kindly consenting to preside over the convocation. Sir, on behalf of myself and Diamond Harbour Women's University, I pay my respect to you and welcome you amongst our midst.

My heartfelt thanks to our nation's eminent expert in Engineering Science, Professor Sanghamitra Bandyopadhyay, currently the Director, Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata for kindly consenting to be the Chief Guest and to deliver the Convocation Address.

It is a great pleasure on our part to have Dr Partha Chatterjee, Minister-in-Charge, Department of Higher Education, Science and Technology and Bio-Technology, School Education and Parliamentary Affairs, Government of West Bengal, with us here on this auspicious occasion as the Eminent Guest of Honour. It is our privilege to have you with us today. I welcome you, Sir!

It is my pleasure to announce that Diamond Harbour Women's University will confer the degree of Doctor of Literature (Honoris Causa) to Srimati Nirmala Mishra and Smt Alokanaanda Roy. Srimati Nirmala Mishra is a living legend. Her melodious voice has charmed our hearts for decades. Srimati Alokanaanda Roy is a versatile genius. She is an actress, a dancer, a choreographer and a social activist. Her initiative in transforming the

minds of the inmates of Alipore Correctional Home through dance therapy is unique and unprecedented. I heartily welcome you both.

Diamond Harbour Women's University came into existence in 2013. It was established under West Bengal Act XXXVII of 2012 on 28th January 2013. It is the first and only Women's University in East and North-East India. It has been envisaged in answer to the long standing requirement of the girl-student not only of this region but also beyond for greater scope in their search for attainment of selfhood. The University hopes to address both research and teaching in the context of its location as well as globally. The objective is to function efficiently and effectively as a University providing teaching, training and research in various branches of learning/courses of study so as to promote advancement and dissemination of knowledge to meet the growing needs of the society. This Women's University is committed to providing women better access to higher education thereby enabling them to reach for their personal as well as social development. Teaching and training programmes here are carefully tuned to enable students to overcome their weaknesses, to expand their knowledge, improve their skills, develop necessary perspective and enable them to perform to their fullest potential so as to cope with the present and future needs of the world. It is the vision of this University to encourage young women to aspire towards their own fulfilment and empowerment.

The University started functioning in the academic year 2014-15 with the introduction of 2-year, 4-semester PG courses in six subjects; Bengali, English, History, Political Science, Education and Women's Studies. Currently, the University offers post graduate programmes in 13 disciplines and M Phil and PhD programmes in two subjects. Two batches of students of the Academic Sessions 2014-16 and 2015-17 numbering approximately three hundred (300) will be receiving their post graduate degrees in today's convocation.

Medals will be awarded to 17 students for their performance in postgraduate examinations in the last two years.

I congratulate all the recipients of degrees and medals and wish them every success in life. I believe that the value-based education imparted by this university will enable our students to actively contribute to the process of making India, and the world, a better place to live in.

The University's quest for excellence is visibly manifested in the teaching, research and extension activities of the departments. The Departments of English, Education and Political Science in the Arts Faculty and the Departments of Geography and Mathematics in the Science Faculty have organized special and extension lectures in the past year.

The Department of Bengali has organized an International Seminar on 'স্বাধীনতা পরবর্তী দুই বাংলার আঞ্চলিক সাহিত্য' and a National Level Seminar on 'Women's Studies: Concepts, Facets and Prospects' jointly with the Department of Women's Studies to commemorate International Women's Day on 8 and 9 March 2017. A lecture in memory of Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain in collaboration with the Departments of History and Women's Studies and a state level seminar to commemorate International Mother Language Day have also been organised by the Department of Bengali. The department will host an International Seminar on Nineteenth Century Bengal in March 2018. The Bengali Department is the earliest to introduce MPhil and PhD programmes in the university and also the first to have a departmental library that currently subscribes to six national and ten international research journals.

The Department of History has organized an International Seminar on 'Revisiting and Remembering Partition: Issues related to Eastern and North-eastern India' in August 2017. In the same month, it collaborated with the Women's Studies Centre, Lady Brabourne College, to organize an International Seminar on 'Beyond the Veil: Muslim Women in South Asia'. Besides, it has been regularly holding special lectures by scholars of national and international repute, at times in collaboration with other departments. In November 2017, it organized a study tour to Mogolmari and Jhargram. The department has introduced MPhil and PhD programmes with effect from January 2018.

The Department of Geography has also witnessed a spurt of activity right from its inception.

It regularly organizes student excursions to various places. An ICSSR Major Research Project entitled ‘An Assessment of Changing Course of the River Ganga and Bank Erosion induced Socio-economic impact on Human Fabric in Manikchak Diara of Malda District, West Bengal: A Spatio-temporal Study for Ex-post Assistance to Erosion victims’ has been undertaken by the Head of the Department of Geography. A one-day seminar has also been organized by the Department of Physics. The other departments of the University; Mathematics, Women’s Studies, Philosophy, Chemistry and Zoology and their illustrious faculty are not far behind in terms of academic and research activities and have shown considerable enterprise and acumen in their respective fields.

The University can boast of a Placement Cell which regularly conducts counseling sessions to assist students in building a career and finding suitable placements. The University Library already has a sizeable collection of books that caters to the requirements of both students and faculty. The library is currently undergoing the process of digitization. A 100-seater girl’s hostel for students is under construction and is expected to be completed by the end of this year.

I may add that the statute of Diamond Harbour Women’s University has been published in early 2017 and its regulations came into effect the same year. The draft of the ordinances has been submitted to the Higher Education Department, Government of West Bengal in late 2016 for its approval and sanction.

On the occasion of the 150th birth anniversary of Sister Nivedita a proposal for a Chair Professorship in her name has been mooted by the Executive Council of Diamond Harbour Women’s University and the proposal sent to the Higher Education Department, Govt. of West Bengal for its consent. It is expected that this proposal will bear fruit.

The university, to forge ahead towards the fulfilment of its goals, has the following plans for the future:

Entry in the 12B list of the University Grants Commission and accreditation by NAAC

Opening of more departments

Opening of Centres for advanced and Interdisciplinary research

Filling up of all vacant posts of teaching and non-teaching staff

Creation of new posts

Establishment of linkages between University and Industry

Modernisation of Library

Acquisition of more land

Let me once again thank my distinguished guests and congratulate my dear students. I also record my deep appreciation of the way in which all sections of the university community are working hand in hand for the development of this fledgling university.

I take this opportunity to put on record my gratitude to the Higher Education Department, Govt. of West Bengal for its all round support, both financial and otherwise but for which the speedy growth of this University would not have been possible. The entire funding for this university has been exclusively borne by the Higher Education Department, Govt. of West Bengal for which I am extremely thankful. My heartfelt thanks to Dr. Partha Chatterjee, Minister –in-Charge of Higher Education.

I conclude with the cherished hope that we will continue to give our best to keep alive the university's quest for excellence and this university will grow to be an internationally acclaimed university in the years to come.