

**Speech of the Hon'ble Governor for Vice Chancellors'
Conference to be held on December 18, 2019 at
Raj Bhavan, Assam**

Namaskar,

Good Morning to all of you. I am happy to see you all being here for this all-important interface. I hope this exchange will be very crucial for the face of higher education in our state.

Gentlemen, all of you know, higher education as a public-policy issue enjoys top-most priority. It is seen as a fundamental enabler of social, economic, scientific and intellectual progress and advancement. For Assam, we have a good history of higher education to inspire us as we work to strengthen and illuminate our universities as fountain of knowledge and learning. India has been home to the oldest university in the world. At its peak in the 7th century the Nalanda University had 10,000 students from all over Asia enrolled in its campus. The methods of teaching prevalent in these ancient temples of learning and the emphasis on critical analyses could be of relevance as we look at modern trends in pedagogy today.

Investing in people through higher education and education in general has an omnibus impact on nation-building. The investment is made once but the dividends are realised in perpetuity. A country such as ours that wishes to transform

itself within a short span of time, must transform its higher education journey first.

Higher education is a subject close to my heart. I have myself experienced its power and potential to bring about intra-generational change and mobility. India with over 990 Universities is home to one of the largest higher education ecosystems in the world. Constant efforts are being made to improve their standards and convert them into global knowledge hubs. With this intention in view, a draft for New Education Policy 2019 has been prepared to give us a new aperture to express the aspirational and motivational virtues of education. I am sure it would lay out the path for transforming Indian education landscape suited to 21st century needs.

Education is the most important national activity and the backbone of a country's progress. It helps to strengthen the very fabric of nation "to produce men of education, enlightenment and character". The New Education Policy 2019 envisions an India-centered education system that contributes directly to transforming our nation sustainably into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society by providing high-quality education to all.

Under the New Education Policy, students will be given increased flexibility and choice of subjects to study across the arts, humanities, sciences, sports, and vocational subjects; no

hard separation between 'arts' and 'science' streams, or between 'academic' and 'vocational' streams which is going to be the hall mark of the New Education Policy 2019.

Gentlemen, considering the potential of New Education Policy 2019, we should all lend our brains and hearts for framing the curriculum of higher education in sync with the new policy. I call upon all Vice Chancellors to make concerted efforts in the light of New Education Policy to help the educated youth to be skilled on new technologies that will help them in seeking more avenues in the current dynamic changing IT world. I moreover, hope that the information science which is thought to be constituting the crux of academic programme under the new policy will further help the students undergo their course in new era using smart devices which I am sure will shape the future and improve the employability of our students.

Gentlemen, I am happy to share with you that India is increasingly emerging as a key player in the development of next-generation technology ecosystems and Assam is surely the destination for skill development mission from a digital perspective. In this context, New Education Policy 2019 will become a basic enabler of skill development which in a way will also encourage in outcome-based syllabi and learner centric contents of the course.

Liberal education, implementation of multi-disciplinary campuses, unified curricula for common subjects for all universities to enable credit transfer and students' mobility, common time table for all state universities, common entrance tests for the benefits of the students are the salient features of New Education Policy 2019. I, therefore, urge upon the esteemed dignitaries present here to make these facilities as essential hall marks for imparting their education in their respective universities.

Moreover, since Education Policy 2019 has made elaborate provision for using mother tongue and local languages even in higher education for the benefits of learners, we need to make conscious efforts for giving adequate weightage and creating substantive space for mother tongue in higher education. The New Education Policy has also made special provision for Indianization of higher education, therefore, adequate steps should be taken to introduce Yoga, Sanskrit, Indian culture, Philosophy and Indology as essential components of the curriculum. Since the New Education Policy 2019 has given never before fillip on Internationalization of higher education, we should all take the benefits of this provision and encourage students as well as teachers from Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, Afghanistan, Thailand as well

as from African nations and other South East Asian countries to India.

Moreover, to revamp Secondary Education under New Education Policy 2019, adequate steps should be made for the improvement of Infrastructure and bolstering the systems of education of Government and Provincialized schools in a time bound manner.

Gentlemen, under the New Education Policy 2019 the need of the hour is to change our perspective and be attuned to the changing time. With emerging technologies, tough competition and changes happening every day, it is important that the institutions of higher education help the students to skill themselves. The collaboration between academic institutions with corporate honchos being rolled out at the moment, has augured immense opportunities and we should seize the momentum to make Assam an important hub for higher education. Please lend your hands to make New Education Policy a game changer.

Thank you,

Jai Hind