

## ERA OF STRICT SEGREGATION OF SUBJECTS IS OVER: ADOPT MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACH IN HIGHER EDUCATION – VICE PRESIDENT

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Education and related issues

The Vice President, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu today said that the era of strict segregation of subjects is over and called for adopting a multidisciplinary approach in higher education to produce well-rounded individuals and better research outcomes. He also emphasised the need to give equal importance to humanities in our science and technology institutions.

Inaugurating the new campus of Sant SohrobanathAmbiye Government College of Arts and Commerce in Pernem, Goa today, the Vice President said that exposure to arts and social sciences is known to increase creativity, improve critical thinking and enhance communication skills among students. "These qualities are in high demand in the 21st-century economy where no sector of the economy works in a silo," he added.

Stressing the need to produce world class researchers not just in sciences but also in social sciences, languages and in the fields of commerce & economy, Shri Naidu praised the Government of Goa for setting up Commerce and Economic laboratories and Language labs in several institutes in the state.

Describing commerce as an important area in our quest to make India a five trillion-dollar economy, the Vice President drew attention to the rapid changes happening in this discipline after the advent of e-Commerce. "I would urge you to conduct research in these emerging areas in commerce to make India a leading nation in trade and commerce at the global stage," he told the faculty and students present on the occasion.

Recalling that ancient India was home to several renowned institutions of advanced learning such as Nalanda, Vikramshila and Takshashila, Shri Naidu said that we have to regain the past glory and make India a leading nation in the field of education, research and innovation.

Expressing the need to teach younger generation about India's glorious past and rich cultural heritage, the Vice President stressed the need to come out of colonial mindset and Indianize our education system. He said that we should learn and accept good things from anywhere in the world, but at the same time, must remain firmly rooted in Indian civilizational values. Students should be taught about the liberation of Goa and sacrifices made by many great men and women for it, he added.

Lauding the state of Goa for its natural and cultural richness, Shri Naidu called for the preservation and protection of the both. He also emphasised the need to promote the mother tongue in the school level education.

Stating that innovation is a key driver of the growth, the Vice President said that India with its edge in ICT and an educated young population has the potential to become a world leader in the knowledge-based economy. "We need to create the right ecosystem for research and innovation to thrive in our universities and higher education institutions," he said and urged the Vice Chancellors of various universities and educationists to give the needed thrust to research in tune with the objectives with the New Education Policy--2020. He praised the Government of Goa for its plans to set up Goa State Research Foundation to promote research work in multidisciplinary projects.

Highlighting the importance of higher education, the Vice President said that it prepares students for more meaningful and productive roles and plays an important role in improving the standards of living. Quality higher education is invariably a hallmark of all developed economies, he further added.

Praising the state of Goa for performing well in the field of higher education, Shri Naidu appreciated the state for having the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in Higher education for women at 30% against the national average of 27.3 %. Lauding the state for having a higher number of female students than the male students in higher education, he said “this is a very good sign and must serve as an inspiration to other states.”

Complimenting the Government of Goa for making efforts to provide holistic education for all, the Vice President said that the governments should invest in creating latest educational infrastructure so that the poor and underprivileged are also able to receive quality education at affordable rates. He also exhorted the students and teachers to recognize emerging opportunities and upgrade their skills to face the 21<sup>st</sup> century world and to make ‘a New India – a strong, stable and prosperous India’.

The Vice President expressed happiness that Pernem College has steadily progressed over the years and hoped that the expanded facilities at the college will benefit rural students from the area. He also praised the college for its focus on sports for all round development of the students and asked the faculty and students to always keep the bar high and strive for excellence in their chosen field.

Observing that nature must not be neglected in the quest for development, Shri Naidu said a butterfly and a garden are as important as the latest IT tools. “That is why I always advocate the need for students to spend half of their time in the classroom and the remaining half in the playground or in the lap of nature,” he said and advised youth to avoid sedentary lifestyle, unhealthy dietary habits and consumption of harmful substances. It is important to remain physically fit by undertaking regular exercises or yoga, the Vice President told them.

Stating that the state of Goa and its people hold a special place in his heart, Shri Naidu said that he feels re-energized whenever he visits the beautiful place. Noting that many eminent Indian personalities were either born in Goa or trace their roots to this naturally beautiful and culturally vibrant state, he quoted 18th century poet saint from Pernem, Sant Sohironbath Ambiyee who said - “do not ever extinguish the lamp of knowledge in your heart.”

The Governor of Goa, Shri P. S. Sreedharan Pillai, Chief Minister of Goa, Dr. Pramod Sawant, the Union Minister of state for Tourism, Shri Shripad Naik, Deputy Chief Minister, Shri Babu Azgaonkar, Chief Secretary of Goa, Shri Parimal Rai, people’s representatives from the area, teachers and students were among those present on the occasion.

### **Following is the full text of speech –**

“I am delighted to be here with you all for the inauguration of the new campus of Sant Sohironbath Ambiyee, Government College of Arts and Commerce today.

The state of Goa and its people hold a special place in my heart and I feel re-energized whenever I visit this beautiful place.

Dear sisters and brothers,

As you all are aware, higher education is very important as it provides the much-needed trained human resources for various sectors that drive economic growth and societal well-being.

Quality higher education is invariably a hallmark of all developed economies. It prepares students for more meaningful and productive roles and plays an important role in improving the standards of living.

I am happy to know that Goa has been performing well in the field of higher education. The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in Higher education for women is 30% in the state against the national average of 27.3 %. The Gender Parity Index for higher education has improved in Goa over the past five years and today the number of female students is higher than that of the male students. This is a very good sign and must serve as an inspiration to other states.

Strict segregation of subjects is a thing of past as the world today is increasingly adopting a multidisciplinary approach in higher education to produce well-rounded individuals and better research outcomes. Various assessments have shown that exposure to arts and social sciences results in enhanced creativity, improved critical thinking, higher social and moral awareness and better teamwork and communication skills among students. Such qualities are in high demand in the 21st-century economy where no sector of the economy works in a silo. Therefore, equal importance must be given to humanities even in science and technology institutions and more multidisciplinary courses should be started by all colleges.

It is praiseworthy that in the true spirit of National Education Policy 2020, the Government of Goa has planned to set up Goa State Research Foundation to provide Research Fellowships for carrying out research work in multidisciplinary projects. I am sure this initiative will yield and promote excellence in research and innovation in the field of Higher Education.

Innovation is a key driver of the knowledge-based economy. India with its edge in Information and Communication Technology and an educated young population has the potential to become a world leader in the knowledge-based economy. We need to create the right ecosystem for research and innovation to thrive in our universities and higher education institutions. I am sure that Vice Chancellors of various universities and educationists will give the needed thrust to research in tune with the objectives with the New Education Policy--2020.

Dear sisters and brothers,

Many eminent Indian personalities were either born in Goa or trace their roots to this naturally beautiful and culturally vibrant state. In the field of music, we have Bharat Ratna Smt. Lata Mangeshkar, Padma Vibhushan Smt. Asha Bhosle and Shri Remo Fernandes to name a few. In the field of Science and research; Padma Vibhushan Shri Raghunath Anant Mashelkar, Padma Vibhushan Shri Anil Kakodkar and in the field of international fashion, there is Padmashri Wendell Rodricks among others.

Today we are in Pernem, the northern most taluka of Goa that was in the forefront of Goa's liberation struggle. The Satyagraha of 1954-1955 is an event of great historical significance involving sacrifice and martyrdom and generating the momentum towards the liberation movement.

Pernem is also home to the 18th century poet saint – Sohrobanath Ambiye after whom this college has been renamed as part of the celebrations to commemorate his third centenary birth anniversary. Apart from him, Pernem has the distinction and privilege of being home to other eminent personalities like Bhau Daji Laad, Jivba Dada Kerkar, Anjanibai Malpekar, Shridhar Parsekar and Prabhakar Panshikar.

One of Sant Sohirobnath Ambiyé's well known poems is titled "Antaricha Dnyandiva Malvu Nako Re". Translated in English, it means: "do not ever extinguish the lamp of knowledge in your heart." Though this poem was composed in the 18th century, the essence of this poem resonates with the decision of the Goa government in setting up a college of general education in the rural taluka of Pernem, thus ensuring that the lamp of knowledge remains unextinguished.

I am happy to know that Pernem College has progressed steadily over the years and currently has around 744 students and a faculty of 33 teaching staff both at Undergraduate and Postgraduate level.

This expansion will meet the educational requirement of the increasing number of students. I am happy to know that the college is equipped to cater to the sporting, co-curricular and technological needs of the students. I am sure that students belonging to rural Pernem will greatly benefit from the expanded facilities.

I am also pleased to know that in addition to a big library, spacious auditorium and airy classrooms, the college also has an observatory that houses a sophisticated telescope, a recording studio, a butterfly park, and a modest botanical garden.

Dear friends,

A butterfly and a garden are as important as the latest IT tools. We must progress, but should not neglect nature. That is why I always advocate the need for students to spend half of their time in the classroom and the remaining half in the playground or in the lap of nature. With the growing incidence of non-communicable diseases in the country, my advice to all youngsters is to avoid sedentary lifestyle, unhealthy dietary habits and consumption of harmful substances. It is important to remain physically fit by undertaking regular exercises or yoga.

It is commendable that this college also has a fully equipped gymnasium, NCC and NSS units. I am happy to note that there is a special focus on games like Kabaddi, Kho-Kho and Volleyball. I understand that many of your students have won medals at University, State and National level.

I am told that Commerce and Economic laboratories and Language labs have been established in several institutes in Goa including this college. This is very important as we must produce world class researchers not just in sciences but also in social sciences, languages and in the fields of Commerce & Economic. I appreciate that the College has formed a 'Cluster Research Centre in Commerce' in collaboration with other Colleges of Goa to provide a joint platform for facilitating research in Commerce.

Dear friends,

Commerce is an important area in our quest to make India a five trillion-dollar economy and to uplift the living standards of the people. With the advent of e-Commerce, this discipline is changing rapidly and witnessing a flurry of disruptions and innovations. I would urge you to conduct research in these emerging areas in commerce to make India a leading nation in trade and commerce at the global stage.

Sisters and brothers,

In ancient times, students from several other countries used to come to study at renowned Indian institutions such as Nalanda, Vikramshila and Takshashila. India was famously known as Vishwa Guru. We have to regain that glory and make India a leading nation in the field of education, research and innovation.

I am happy to note that the Directorate of Higher Education has taken up various initiatives towards achieving Educational Excellence through Holistic and Conducive Knowledge Ecology. One such project is DISHTAVO; a project for the development of world class Educational E-content pertaining to the syllabus of Colleges in Goa. In the true spirit of 'share and care', this e-content has been made freely available to the academic community worldwide. I compliment the entire team for completing such an enormous task especially during COVID-19 pandemic.

I urge to the faculty and students to always keep the bar high and strive for excellence. My best wishes for your future endeavours!

**Jai Hind!"**

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