



Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal Calls for Integration of Modern Education and Spiritual Values at Krishna Guru Spiritual University Convocation

Satriya exponent Padma Bhushan Jatin Goswami conferred honorary doctorate for lifetime contribution to Indian classical dance

Governor of Assam Laxman Prasad Acharya attended the event as the Chief Guest

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The **Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (MoPSW), Sarbananda Sonowal** urged students to pursue spiritual education alongside quality modern learning, saying such a balanced approach is essential for building a developed, self-reliant and value-driven India during the Amrit Kaal.

Sarbananda Sonowal was speaking at the first convocation ceremony of Krishna Guru Spiritual University held at Na-Satra in Barpeta district of Assam. The Governor of Assam, Laxman Prasad Acharya graced the occasion as the chief guest.

Degrees including doctorates, postgraduate degrees and other academic qualifications were conferred on students from various disciplines. Gold medals were also awarded for outstanding academic performance.

During the ceremony, eminent Satriya dance exponent and Padma Bhushan awardee Jatin Goswami was conferred an honorary doctorate (Honoris Causa) in recognition of his lifelong contribution to Indian classical dance, culture and spiritual aesthetics. The award drew prolonged applause from the audience, acknowledging Goswami's role in preserving and promoting Assam's rich cultural heritage.

Addressing the gathering, Sarbananda Sonowal said India is a youth-dominated nation and the responsibility of shaping the country's future rests largely on students. He emphasised that education must not be limited to degrees and technical competence but should also nurture inner strength, ethical values and social responsibility.

“Along with quality modern education, students must illuminate themselves through spiritual learning. Only then can we build a strong society and a developed India,” **Sarbananda Sonowal** said.

Recalling his own life experiences, the Union minister said he had learnt invaluable lessons from Param Guru Krishna Guru. “Whatever public service I have been able to render in my life, I have done by remembering my Guru. His teachings on humanity, compassion, harmony with nature and service to society continue to guide me at every step,” Sonowal said.

Sonowal said institutions like Krishna Guru Spiritual University give a new dimension to the vision of holistic education by blending spirituality with academic excellence. He noted that when Krishna Guru Sevashram was established, the Na-Satra region was flood-prone and underdeveloped, and building a strong civilisational centre there was a formidable challenge. “Today, that vision has blossomed into an institution that spreads light and values in society,” he said.

Calling upon students to shoulder greater responsibility, Sonowal said graduates from such institutions must reflect their training through their character, conduct and commitment wherever they serve. He urged students to use time wisely in an intensely competitive world and to continuously upgrade their skills in the era of smart classrooms, smart teachers and smart cities.

Sonowal also highlighted the importance of yoga for holistic development, noting that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, yoga has gained global recognition as a means of strengthening the body, mind and soul.

Referring to India’s demographic advantage, Sonowal said while many countries such as China, Japan and South Korea face the challenge of aging populations, India’s youthful population has the potential to transform the nation into a global power. He called upon students to understand and contribute to the ambitious youth-centric initiatives launched by the central government.

In his address, Governor Acharya underscored the central role of spirituality in social and national reform. “Spirituality is about values and संस्कार (sanskar). To reform society and the nation, one must first reform oneself,” he said, expressing confidence that the graduating students would internalise this principle.

The governor said that historically, India’s educational institutions were global centres of intellectual and spiritual thought. Beyond formal curricula, they emphasised character building, ethical conduct, compassion and holistic development. He said preserving and revitalising this tradition is crucial for building a strong and prosperous Assam and India.

Praising the felicitation of Jatin Goswami, Acharya said that witnessing the 93-year-old maestro’s energy and discipline was deeply inspiring. “By honouring such a personality, it is not just the individual who is honoured—the institution itself becomes honoured,” he said.

Acharya also lauded Sonowal’s address, saying it reflected simplicity, depth of knowledge and sincerity rather than conventional political rhetoric.

The convocation ceremony was attended by spiritual leader **Guru Krishna Shri Shri Premananda Prabhu**, Bhaktimata and Chairperson of the Krishna Guru Foundation Trust, **Kuntala Patowary Goswami**, Vice-Chancellor **Prof. Mohan Chandra Kalita**, senior academicians, trustees, students and their families, along with other distinguished guests.







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