Vice-President inaugurates Iconic Tower at Sri Sri University in Cuttack, says it symbolises the confluence of India’s rich cultural heritage and modern educational aspirations

India’s higher education sector has undergone a remarkable transformation in the past decade, with substantial growth in institutions and enrolment: Vice-President

Bharat must become strong and capable so that no one can dictate terms to it: Vice-President

Vice-President urges universities in Odisha to introduce School Connect programmes to prevent tribal student dropouts and promote inclusive education

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The Vice-President of India, Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan, today inaugurated the Iconic Tower at Sri Sri University in Cuttack, Odisha, in the presence of the Governor of Odisha, Shri Braj Mohan Ram; the Chief Minister of Odisha, Shri Mohan Charan Majhi; Gurudev Sri Sri Ravishankar, Founder and Lifetime President of Sri Sri University.

> Vice-President Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan, today inaugurated the magnificent Iconic Tower at Sri Sri University in Cuttack, Odisha. Describing the Tower as a symbol of the confluence of India's rich cultural heritage, timeless wisdom and modern educational aspirations, he emphasised the importance of education in nurturing knowledge, character and compassion towards building a Viksit Bharat @ 2047. He also called upon universities in Odisha to introduce School Connect programmes to support tribal students and prevent dropouts. Governor of Odisha, Shri Braj Mohan Ram; Chief Minister of Odisha, Shri Mohan Charan Majhi; Founder and Lifetime President, Sri Sri University, Gurudev Sri Sri Ravishankar; and President and Chairperson of the Board of Governors, Sri Sri University, Shri Aadesh Goyal were present on the occasion.
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> — Vice-President of India (@VPIndia) November 16, 2026

Addressing the gathering, the Vice-President said that the inauguration marked much more than the opening of a building, as it celebrated a vision, an inspiring philosophy of education, India's glorious cultural inheritance and a commitment to shaping the future of Bharat.

Describing Sri Sri University as the manifestation of the remarkable vision of Gurudev Sri Sri Ravishankar, the Vice-President said that Gurudev's understanding of education transcended the conventional boundaries of academic learning. He noted that the University, envisioned as a confluence of Eastern wisdom and Western knowledge, commenced its academic journey in 2012, with a founding philosophy that true education must nurture the character, consciousness and compassion of an individual. Emphasising the relevance of this vision in contemporary times, he said that education must prepare young people not only for academic success but also to contribute meaningfully to society and become responsible citizens of the world.

The Vice-President expressed happiness that Sri Sri University described itself as the "Happiest Campus in the World", observing that happiness was something the entire humanity aspired for and that it was deeply rooted in India's culture and traditions. He appreciated the University's efforts in promoting these enduring cultural values.

Highlighting Odisha's rich architectural and cultural heritage, the Vice-President said that architecture in the State had always represented much more than the construction of physical spaces, with its temples serving as enduring expressions of artistic excellence, scientific knowledge, spirituality and cultural continuity. Referring to the sacred Lord Jagannath Temple at Puri, the temples of Bhubaneswar and the grandeur of the Konark Temple, he said that the Kalinga architectural tradition bore testimony to the extraordinary creative genius of India's civilisation.

The Vice-President observed that the Iconic Tower drew inspiration from this rich heritage, with its ascending form symbolising the journey of human aspiration from the foundations of knowledge towards the heights of wisdom and enlightenment.

Referring to the larger national aspirations, the Vice-President said that the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, had given the country the inspiring vision of Viksit Bharat @2047, envisaging a developed India celebrating the centenary of its Independence with confidence, capability and global leadership. He said that the Prime Minister had repeatedly emphasised the transformative role of educational institutions in realising this national ambition.

Highlighting the expansion of higher education over the past twelve years, the Vice-President said that the number of universities in the country had increased from 760 in 2014-15 to more than 1,400 today. He noted that the number of Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) had increased from 16 before 2014 to 23, while the number of Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) had grown from 13 to 22. He further stated that the number of All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) had increased from 7 before 2014 to 20, while student enrolment in higher education institutions had risen from 3.42 crore in 2014-15 to more than 4.50 crore.

Referring to Odisha's sizeable tribal population, the Vice-President urged all universities in Odisha, both government and private, to introduce School Connect programmes for tribal children to ensure that they did not drop out of education and were encouraged to pursue higher studies.

Emphasising the importance of India's cultural identity and national strength, the Vice-President said that Bharat's culture and traditions had an important role to play in shaping the country's future. He stated that India aspired to become a strong and capable nation so that no one could dictate terms to it, and underscored the importance of national strength in safeguarding the country's independence, dignity and interests.

Reminding the students that the true height of an individual was measured by the depth of knowledge, strength of character and breadth of compassion, the Vice-President called upon them to always uphold "Nation First – Rashtra Pratham" in their thoughts and actions and to say "No to Drugs."

Calling upon the University fraternity to renew its commitment to the ideals represented by the Iconic Tower, the Vice-President said that knowledge should be the foundation, wisdom the guiding light, innovation the instrument, compassion the strength and service the ultimate purpose. He expressed the hope that the Tower would stand for generations as a beacon of learning, a monument to aspiration and a celebration of Odisha's timeless spirit, inspiring generations of students to contribute to the making of a confident, prosperous, compassionate and developed India.

The Vice-President also visited the state-of-the-art planetarium at the newly inaugurated Iconic Tower of Sri Sri University, celebrating the spirit of scientific curiosity, discovery and innovation.

> Vice-President Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan visited the state-of-the-art planetarium at the newly inaugurated Iconic Tower of Sri Sri University, Cuttack, celebrating the spirit of scientific curiosity, discovery and innovation. https://t.co/Rg5XUfuCC2
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> — Vice-President of India (@VPIndia) November 16, 2026

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