# India's transformation, growing startup ecosystem and opportunities for youth reflect the country's journey towards a developed nation: Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal at Annual Convocation of DU

## Commerce Minister urges graduates to pursue their dreams, remain lifelong learners and shoulder responsibility towards less privileged sections of society

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Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal today addressed the 103rd Annual Convocation of the University of Delhi, calling upon graduates to pursue their dreams, embrace opportunities and contribute to India's journey towards becoming a developed nation by 2047. Highlighting India's economic transformation, he said that approximately 50 crore Indians had moved out of extreme poverty over the last decade. From a few hundred startups a decade ago, India had emerged as the world's third-largest startup ecosystem, with 2.5 lakh startups and over 130 unicorns. He said that young Indians were increasingly becoming job creators rather than job seekers, demonstrating a willingness to experiment, accept failure and take on new challenges.

Shri Goyal said that the journey towards Viksit Bharat 2047 rested on the shoulders of the country's youth. As graduates progressed in their careers, they would have tremendous opportunities to create a better future for less privileged and marginalised sections of society. He emphasised that their future was intertwined with the future of those who had been left behind and had not received similar opportunities. He urged graduates to remain conscious of their obligations towards these sections and said that the satisfaction of positively impacting even one individual's life was immeasurable.

Congratulating the graduating students and their parents, Shri Goyal said that approximately 2.5 crore young Indians reach college age every year, but very few get the opportunity to study at prestigious institutions such as the University of Delhi. Students had earned their place through board examinations, CUET, mock tests and revisions, and

had subsequently navigated the challenges of CGPAs, society auditions, internships and placements. He said that the strong foundation provided by the University would help them build successful careers.

The Minister said that the achievement of the graduating students belonged equally to their parents, who had sacrificed their own dreams to make their children's aspirations possible. He also urged them to remember those who had supported them during their university years, including canteen staff who maintained their accounts, security guards who recognised them without identity cards, librarians who helped them excel in examinations and Sudama ji, the tea seller whose chai had been part of their university experience.

Shri Goyal emphasised the importance of respecting teachers, observing that a teacher's work did not end when the bell rang but continued to influence students' lives for decades. He said that students often recognised the importance of their teachers' guidance, corrections and lessons only after entering the real world and facing life's challenges.

Referring to the University's 104-year journey, Shri Goyal noted that Delhi University had grown to 90 colleges and over six lakh students and had never missed a convocation in its 103-year history. The University had continued its tradition through the freedom struggle, second World War and the COVID pandemic. He said it was a double honour to be present at the convocation, where more than 400 doctoral degrees, over 1.7 lakh bachelor's and master's degrees and more than 160 gold medals were being awarded.

Highlighting the achievements of the University's women students, he said their hard work, perseverance and success reflected the commitment towards ensuring quality education for every girl child in the country. He said that Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi would be pleased to learn of these achievements.

The Minister also urged graduates to value the friendships they had formed during their university years. He observed that students often spent more time with their friends than with their families during these formative years. Friends had woken them up for 9 AM examinations, lent them notes and believed in their ideas when nobody else did. He encouraged graduates to keep these friendships close, observing that their friends could become their first clients, partners or investors, while remaining their oldest well-wishers and most honest critics. Encouraging students to remember three words, "Pursue your dreams", Shri Goyal quoted Steve Jobs: "Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Have courage to follow your heart and intuition."

Sharing six lessons for success, Shri Goyal encouraged graduates to think big, remain positive, maintain focus, continue learning, prioritise their health and trust their struggles.

First, he urged students to think big, dream big and have conviction in their aspirations. He cautioned them against setting small targets or fearing failure and encouraged them to work hard towards achieving their goals. Referring to Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President of the United States, he highlighted his difficult childhood, limited formal education and early failures in business and professional life. He said that Lincoln remained an avid reader, maintained a lifelong interest in learning and continued to persevere despite setbacks, eventually becoming President and playing a central role in abolishing slavery in the United States.

Second, he advised students to remain positive and never fear course correction. Citing Thomas Edison's repeated experiments in developing the electric bulb, he said that countless setbacks and years of persistence had ultimately led to success. He encouraged graduates to learn from every attempt, adapt to changing circumstances and modify their approach whenever necessary, while continuing to pursue their dreams.

Third, he emphasised the importance of focus, observing that in a world of 30-second reels, the ability to concentrate had become rare and therefore valuable. Quoting Swami Vivekananda, he said, "Pick up one idea, make that one idea your life." He stressed that maintaining focus on one's aspirations was essential to achieving success.

Fourth, he urged graduates to remain lifelong learners. Referring to the age of Artificial Intelligence and emerging technologies, he said that students must remain open to learning and be prepared to unlearn existing practices and rethink their approaches. He emphasised that human experiences were important in solving the problems of tomorrow and that critical thinking was something no one could replace.

Fifth, he advised students to take care of their health, describing the body as the only vehicle that would remain with them throughout life's journey. He observed that young people often took their health for granted, with late nights, parties and irregular habits, but might regret not having developed greater discipline later in life. He encouraged them to build lasting fitness habits through walking, playing, running and yoga, and highlighted the importance of preventive healthcare in preserving the body, mind and soul.

Sixth, he asked graduates to trust their struggles and view hardships as preparation for their destiny. Referring to the 14 years of exile endured by God Ram and the Pandavas' 12 years in the forest followed by one year in disguise, he said that hardships often prepared individuals for their destiny.

Recalling one of his biggest and dearest mentors, former Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Shri Goyal quoted him as saying, "Education, in the truest sense of the term, is the process of self-discovery, art of self-sculpture." He noted that Atal ji had made these remarks at the Golden Jubilee of the University Grants Commission in 2002.

Referring to the five Pran, or five national commitments, outlined by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi from the ramparts of the Red Fort during the 75th Independence Day celebrations, Shri Goyal called upon graduates to make these commitments part of their lives and contribute towards realising them by 2047.

The first Pran was to build a developed India by 2047. Shri Goyal said that a developed India would be one that was prosperous, cared for every child and citizen and provided a good quality of life to every family. He described this as the graduates' job description from the day they left the University.

The second Pran was freedom from the mentality of slavery. Appreciating the University's decision to move away from traditional graduation gowns and robes towards Indian attire, he said that it conveyed a larger message of confidence in India's own identity and traditions. He observed that the change was not merely about the convocation uniform but reflected the confidence of New India to lead with its own mind.

The third Pran was to take pride in India's history, heritage, culture and traditions. Shri Goyal said that no country could develop without respecting its culture and history. Referring to his recent visit to Rome, where he had interacted with Italy's Deputy Prime Minister during a business forum and joint committee meeting, he said that he had also been given a guided tour of Italian art and culture, including a 200-year-old painting and sculpture. He highlighted the importance other countries attached to preserving and showcasing their cultural heritage.

He also referred to the transformation of the North and South Blocks in New Delhi, which had housed government offices for years and had become inefficient due to changing administrative requirements and infrastructure. He said that the two buildings were being developed into the Yuge Yugeen Bharat National Museum, which would showcase India's thousands of years of history and heritage to the world and strengthen the country's cultural confidence.

The fourth Pran was national unity. Referring to the Statue of Unity dedicated to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel at Kevadia in Gujarat, Shri Goyal highlighted the development of the surrounding tribal region following the establishment of the statue. He said that the transformation of the area demonstrated the importance of national unity in achieving development. He emphasised that a divided society could never achieve its full potential or secure its rightful place in the world, and urged everyone to remain united and safeguard the unity of the country.

The fifth Pran was a sense of duty. Shri Goyal said that greater power also brought greater responsibility. As graduates left the University with the power of a new degree, they must also carry their duties and responsibilities towards the country. These included contributing to India's development, building a drug-free nation, keeping the environment clean and taking the country forward in the field of technology. He expressed confidence that by 2047, when India celebrated 100 years of Independence, the country would become an example for the world.

The Minister said that the real takeaway from a convocation was the power to craft and sculpt one's future. He expressed confidence that every graduate would leave the University empowered, encouraged and equipped with a vision for the future. Describing the students as national assets with relentless energy, he said that they would shape the destiny of India and make their teachers, parents and the nation proud.

Concluding his address, Shri Goyal urged students to learn lessons from history but never be afraid of it. He encouraged them to pursue big dreams and audacious goals despite difficulties and challenges, and to participate enthusiastically in shaping both their own future and the future of India. He said that the energy of the graduating students gave him immense encouragement and confidence.

Wishing the graduates a life filled with enthusiasm and zeal, Shri Goyal congratulated them on their achievements and wished them success in their future endeavours.

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