

Your Vice-Chancellor Speaks...



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Aka

Kanchi University

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On

The Road Ahead

Respected Registrar, Deans, Members of the Academic Council, Heads of Departments, Fellow Faculty Colleagues, Staff of this great institution, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Pranams to Pujyasri Sankaracharya Swamiji of the Great Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam. Gurubyo Namah.

I deem it a great honour and privilege, to be with you and present my third oration. We missed one in between due to holidays. I have now completed three months since I assumed office as Vice Chancellor. With the help of my colleagues at the apex level of administration I am beginning to understand the potential of this great institution.

Honestly speaking, it is a gold mine! it is an exhilarating experience understanding the potential of this Great institution. Of course the university is in the name of Mahaswami, created by Pujoyashri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamiji who was affectionately called Pudhu Priyava, and now being nurtured by Pujoyashri Sankara Vijayendra Saraswathi Swamiji who lives by the song “Maitreim Bhajata” and the saying “Lokas Samasthas Sukhino Bhavanthu”. The three Swamijis demonstrated the transition from Spiritualisation, Socialisation, and Globalisation, that too inclusively as time went along, by living as examples. We are all lucky to be under the “motherly” fold of Periyava.

Time passes by, as always, nimbly and surreptitiously. We cannot afford to wait as I afraid, the events around us will take over our “fate”. We need to decide and architect our university’s future and our future together. That is the need of the hour.

In the last two orations I talked at length about “Excellence” and “Challenges and Opportunities”. I hope that all of you could get hold of a copy to read, study, and understand them. Mr. Registrar, please ensure that everyone gets a nicely printed hard copy on good quality paper for “take home” reading. Make sure that they discuss collectively in the department and also in smaller groups. Encourage them to come up with ideas for “realisation” of dreams articulated therein. We are all “random vectors” with “energy”. It would be wonderful if we can

align the vectors with the associated energies to present a “Coherent” picture. My job is to try! Having said that, today, I wish to focus on “**The Road Ahead**”.

The Ambience

In my previous oration, I described the University as a Universal Learning Space. Let me expand on that further in a short while. Before that I would like to mention that the teachers, students, and the environment have to be strong, passionate, flexible, and resolute! **Strong** in the resolve to maintain highest possible quality in all our endeavours; **Passionate** in everything that we set out to do; **Flexible** when we cooperate for a larger cause; and **Resolute** in upholding highest standards, enriching our Universal Learning

Space, and not stopping before the goal is reached.

An ideal Universal Learning Space should have no limitations! But being part of a regulatory system and growing organically as is feasible, one must take cognisance of “environmental” limitations. For example, an university should allow freedom and flexibility for a while after a student joins as a fresher. Enough time to explore and understand where his / her interest lies and what he / she would like to pursue. While bulk of our fresher year courses are fundamental and perhaps common, the student can try and evolve after exploring a few disciplines before settling down on any one. Besides, when a student spends a few years and wants to walk an extra mile, the university should be accommodating in providing learning opportunities that helps the student to

pursue the passion, by providing a flexible “**Academic Ambience**” to every individual student. That is a challenge in Curriculum Design. Besides, given the multi-disciplinary nature of the (modern) world around us, we as academics, have to face such a challenge with a flexible and liberal attitude.

The moot questions are:

Are we ready to do it? Are we willing as a team?

When we consider the **Physical Ambience**, improvements can always be made. It is a continuous process. I always use the term “dynamic equilibrium”. The meaning is that the equilibrium is also transient! It changes based on demand, requirement, and external factors that influence our operations. If we strictly follow the passionate expression of our Beloved Prime

Minister Shri Narendrabhai Damodardoss Modi, we will achieve the ideal physical ambience. For example, if we follow Swatch Bharat and Shreshta Bharat, we will be an wonderful institution! A standing example for anyone to follow.

The Apex Team is gripped of this opportunity to change. The Team is working overtime to see that the *usability* and *presentation* of all facilities are at the best level possible; be it a rest room facility anywhere in campus or the kitchen in hostels or the classrooms or the reading facilities in the library or the play area. The Team is also working hard to automate the *activities and interfaces* between various entities of our institution. Please come forward and share your thoughts as well. Let us do it together.

The (Financial) Stability and Sustainability

Let me tell you a small, well known, but often ignored, and “taken for granted” fact. It takes a considerable amount of financial resources to realise any dream. But “strain” experienced by the finance managers is unlikely to be understood, leave alone appreciated by other members of the institution.

We have a single source of revenue, called fees, to meet all our expenditure and realise our expectations. There are no reserves. On the contrary, we carry considerable financial burden from our past. One question that always comes up is how do we ‘face it?’ In my Office as the Chief Executive, I have no one to pass on the problems. My job is to find a solution! But not out of

nothing; I have all of you as resource! Believe me, each one of us can be potential source of revenue for the greater good. Let me tell you how. Before that let me explain *us, institution, and activity*.

First *us*: Each academic is a storehouse of knowledge. The more the academic thinks and researches, the knowledge expands and its value increases. All these do not require any resource outside of us. We are a unique self generating and self enhancing enterprise. There hundreds of us.

Second, the *Institution*: The institution is inherently capable of defining and redefining its opportunity space. The institution defines newer and newer products that are academic which can be used by the community around us (often called

students). The someone uses a product, they naturally pay for it!

Third *activities*: More the activities inside the organisation or institution, more will be the possible revenue generation. For example, if a Bachelor of Commerce student stays for one more year and pursues either Chartered Accountancy or Cost Accountancy or Law or Company Secretaryship, which are professionally related or wants to pursue music, dance or drama or any other fine art which are related to individual's passion, it increases the activity in the institution and consequently, the revenue. The same is true of arts, languages, engineering, and Ayurvedic medicine as well.

At this point, permit me to replace the reference *us* with *people*.

The three elements *people, institution, and activities* have a circular relationship that keeps growing until, we the people, decide to stop growth. Every *rotational run* in this cycle takes the institution to a greater height. More people join us; More products get defined; More activities get generated; New activities get primed. **The power is in your hands!**

Also, each one must learn to compute for oneself the resources *consumed from* the system and the resources *generated for* the system. When you do so, that is return in whatever form, add a simple 20% to the resource consumed. Because that will ensure stability of the system. Learn to create an affordable and sustainable role for yourself. Understand that consumption of any resource from the environment is a sin! As you all know, the environmentalists are crying for conservation

of everything or the planet will vanish! Doctors say that if you only eat (consume energy) and no work (expend energy) your life will be shortened. Such examples are all around us. You are all well aware.

The Road Ahead

Coming back to theme of today's oration, I would like to record that we have to get ready to mine the gold in this gold mine. Also, it is our duty to work towards realising the "Lokas Samasthas Sukhino Bhavanthu" idea with renewed vigour and enthusiasm.

Creating a flexible academic ambience that can be personalised, is the key. Ensuring the coexistence of contemporary thinking, science, technology, tradition, culture, values, and Vedic

understanding (in form and format) is our duty. Contributing toward making a vibrant physical and academic ambience should be an integral part of our existence.

You will continue to hear from my office more about steps being taken periodically. Understand, participate, and Cooperate.

Always remember; If you want to exist, the institution should. If you want to live in style, the institution should. Be assured that if you ensure stability and sustainability of this Great Institution, your stability and sustainability stands assured; of course subject to the required checks and balances of administration in the interest of overall balance.

JAIHIND.