

**Speech of Honourable Governor of Uttarakhand Dr. K. K. Paul  
at the First Convocation of Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna,  
Uttarakhand Medical University on 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2018 at FRI,  
Dehradun.**

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Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, Shri Trivendra Singh Rawat Ji

Minister for Higher Education, Dr. Dhan Singh Rawat

Dr. H.S. Dhama, Vice-Chancellor, Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna  
University

Principals, Government Medical Colleges of Haldwani, Dehradun and  
Srinagar

Faculty and Staff of various medical and nursing colleges

Distinguished guests

Members of the Print and Audio-Visual Media

And My Dear Students

It is a matter of honour for me, indeed, to participate in today's  
Convocation of Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna Medical University,  
Dehradun and I thank the V.C. for inviting me.

At the very outset, I would like to congratulate all the students  
who have been declared successful and have received their Degrees.  
They are now on the threshold of entering a new world of their chosen  
profession and assumption of new responsibilities in life. This is also  
an occasion to congratulate the faculty and staff of the University, for  
it is through their untiring efforts, that these budding youth have now

come into their full bloom and are ready to face the challenges of this world.

For a student, a Convocation remains one of the most memorable days in his life. ON this happy occasion, I would like to share a few of my thoughts with you.

Despite handicaps at various levels, higher education has seen a major expansion in Uttarakhand during the last few years. At the time of the formation of the state there were only five Universities in the state. Taking the private and state universities together, the number has now risen to 24. However, the quantitative expansion in higher education that we have witnessed, in the state is not fully matched by qualitative improvement. We cannot, in all fairness, claim that our universities compare with the better institutions of the country. Some news magazines periodically publish rankings of higher education institutions in India. As yet, with the exception of IIT-Roorkee, a Central institution, Uttarakhand-based institutions, except for the GB Pant University of Agriculture & Technology, do not figure in these lists of best institutions in the country. We need to focus in this direction so that our institutions can make a mark on the national scene.

The quality of education provided in an institution, to a large extent, is influenced by the quality of infrastructure, teachers, teaching-learning conditions in the classrooms, and other academic facilities including laboratories and latest equipment. Five characteristics of excellent teachers are : enthusiasm, clarity,

preparation and organisation, besides stimulating love of knowledge. For these we have to have an unhindered and academically oriented environment in the Universities. All these factors indicate that we have, as yet, quite a distance to cover. Since we are in a medical University, let me add that on the health side current scenario in the State is not very rosy as is indicated by the recently released report of NITI Ayog, which prepared a composite index score, taking into account the health outcomes, governance and information inputs for 2015-2016. In this, Uttarakhand has been placed 15<sup>th</sup>, (with 45.22 points) indicating that it has gone one point down in comparison with 2014-2015, where it was placed at 14.

Uttarakhand received special attention when the National Health Mission was launched, it was categorised under the empowered action group (EAG) states, so that special attention could be paid to arrest the problem of neo-natal deaths, maternity deaths, etc, but the efforts of the past seem to have not shown enough results.

The report indicates that the neonatal mortality rate (NMR) or the number of neonatal deaths occurring between 0 and 28 days of the birth of the child has increased. The report further says that in Uttarakhand, it was ranked 26 in 2014-15 and it is now ranked 28 in 2015-16. Further, on the U5MR the state has fared badly as from 36 in 2014-15, it now stands at 38 in 2015-16.

The State's sex ratio too has dipped from 871 in 2014-15 to 844 in 2015-16, indicating that the number of girls born in this period decreased, but happily, the situation under this head has shown

tremendous improvement due to concerted efforts of the present government, in the last year.

Further, in the area of institutional deliveries (child birth taking place at health facilities) the number in 2015-2016 has gone down. It is 62.6 per cent, in comparison to 2014-2015, the number was 64.3 per cent.

Dear friends, let us not forget that Uttarakhand is a relatively new state and has its own unique health problems and health administration related issues. The geographical inaccessibility of the state due to its difficult terrain make the delivery of health care, a formidable and challenging task. This is compounded by the scarcity of doctors and paramedical staff in the state. The government has hugely invested in creating qualified doctors in the state through the government medical colleges in an attempt to overcome this scarcity. To some extent, use of tele-medicine can make up for the deficiencies in the system at far flung places.

Despite these constraints and serious handicaps, it is creditable that the State Government, has been, in the current year itself, able to recruit 584 doctors, whose total strength now exceeds over 2000 as against a sanction of 2700. I am quite confident that this figure too would be achieved in the near future as the current lot passing out of the medical colleges would also fill up a large chunk of vacancies, and we will be well on our way of making good progress. For providing adequate health coverage, visits by composite health teams of doctors and technicians deputed from the District Headquarters to

difficult areas as per a fixed time table, has been found to be very useful in North-East, and can be tried here, too.

In the overall context of the State, the role of the doctors as well as the entire medical fraternity assumes importance, as we must appreciate that emphasis on basic healthcare and the social determinants like clear healthy potable water, basic hygiene, sanitation and behavioural modification can go a long way in improving the existing situation. This can actually lead to a healthier population, reducing the actual burden of medical care. As they say **‘prevention is better than cure’**.

Countries like Brazil, Japan, China, Sri Lanka have made much investments in these areas and have conclusively demonstrated a reduced disease burden, lengthened life expectancies, one-third reduction in emergencies and hospitalisation, and averting of avoidable morbidity. Clubbed together, they add up to huge savings in medical care. Here, we should be able to differentiate between health care and medical care.

We are well aware that our state is recognised as the home of the great traditions of Yoga and Ayurveda. We can contribute greatly in the field of alternate medicine and promote Yoga and Ayurveda, by conserving and promoting our heritage. Of late, the world has also begun to realise and recognise the powers of Yoga and Ayurveda. It is gratifying to note that some of these courses in holistic medicine have now been recognised by the MCI. Sufficient emphasis on these can contribute significantly towards a healthier Uttarakhand. Besides a

systematic organisation of such events can add to Yoga or wellness tourism.

My dear young friends,

A Convocation marks a landmark event but it is not the end of education. The degrees that you have been honoured with today, are a stepping stone to the learning that you would henceforth be starting through practical experiences of your own life, and would be enriching it on a daily basis, when you examine patients. As is the common saying that “With more power comes greater responsibility”, so my dear students with the power of the degrees that you would be bestowed with today, you need to realize that you have an even greater responsibility of utilizing this knowledge and power, with great caution and right judgement throughout your life, and under any circumstances.

Medical studies have been said to be one of the most difficult studies the world over. Along with this, they also have the greatest power and responsibility of dealing with human life directly, and by God’s grace and support, you have been bestowed with the capacity and capability of the most noble act of healing and curing a human life. I wish and pray that you would all be successful in your endeavour of helping mankind in all the ways that you have been trained for.

The field of medicine has undergone massive advances and we are in the era of Robotics, nanomedicine and genetic engineering. So

you must keep abreast of all the advances in the medical sciences. As a skyscraper is stabilized by its deep foundation, similarly in today's era of medical advances we need to be rooted tightly to our core values of humility, respect for the patient, ethics and keeping patients' interest, safety and benefit above all. This is commonly known as the "human touch in medical care", which has been slowly waning away. The satisfaction of seeing the smile of a cured patient and the blessings received from the patients is incomparable to any other feeling in the world. I wish you all the success in your life and pray to the Almighty that you may be guided in your daily endeavours to do benefit to the mankind. I also wish that you may develop and enhance sensitivity towards all human beings. So, dear students, prepare yourself by enhancing your knowledge, developing your skills, character and personality to face upcoming challenges in your life with full vigour and strength.

Medicine is a noble profession as is manifest in the Hippocratic Oath but somehow we find the profession becoming more and more commercialised. Advising patients to get expensive tests conducted from recommended laboratories, conducting unjustified operation or giving an exaggerated diagnosis are some of the most frequent malpractices which the common man suffers today. News papers have also carried stories of some such private hospitals and expensive nursing homes indulging in such malpractices. These do no good for the medical profession in general, particularly, when you are stepping into the world carrying the hopes of thousands and lakhs of poor

people, who are in need of your healing touch. I would expect you to scrupulously adhere to your oath and leave no room for any unethical practices.

And in the end, I call on you to introspect deeply about the purpose of life. Your professional career is only part of that picture. You have several roles to play in life, particularly as doctors in service to the mankind, service to the society and above all service to the Nation. Prepare yourself well for them. I wish you all the best for your future.

**Thank You**

**Jai Hind !**