

## CONVOCATION ADDRESS

**Shri. Nitin Gadkari**

Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways,  
Shipping, Water Resources, River Development  
and Ganga Rejuvenation,  
Govt. of India

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His Excellency Shri C. Vidyasagar Rao, Governor, Maharashtra and Chancellor, Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth; Shri Chandrakant (Dada) Patil, Hon'ble Minister of Revenue, Relief and Rehabilitation, Public Works (excluding Public Undertakings), Agriculture and Horticulture, Government of Maharashtra and Pro-Chancellor of MPKV, Rahuri; Shri Ram Shinde, Hon'ble Minister of Water Conservation and Protocol, Government of Maharashtra and Guardian Minister of Ahmednagar District; Shri. Sadabhau Khot, Hon'ble Minister of state for Agriculture, Horticulture and Marketing; Dr. K P Viswanatha, Vice Chancellor, MPKV, Rahuri; Members of Executive Council and Academic Council; Dean and Director of Instructions; Director of Research; Director of Extension Education; Registrar, Professors of the University; Invited dignitaries; Staff Members; Graduating Students and their proud parents; Friends from the Media, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I consider it to be a great privilege to address the 33<sup>rd</sup> Convocation of prestigious Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth. MPKV has established itself not only as a

centre of excellence in agricultural education, research and extension education, but also has had a huge impact as transformer of agriculture in Western Maharashtra. That is a great journey of five decades. I am happy to know that the university is celebrating its Golden Jubilee Year of its establishment. This is a matter of great pride and joy to the staff and students. I heartily congratulate MPKV, the graduates of MPKV, and their proud teachers and parents.

The Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth (MPKV), Rahuri is the premier Agricultural University in Maharashtra that renders services to the farmers through Education, Research and Extension Education. The vision of the university is to harness science to ensure comprehensive and sustained physical, economic and environmental access to food and livelihood security through generation, assessment, refinement and adoption of appropriate technologies.

I am happy to know that the Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth is the recipient of "Institution of Excellence Award (2008)" by Govt. of India with special grants of Rs. 100 crore. This university is also bestowed with the "Sardar Patel Best Institution Award" by the ICAR, New Delhi for excellence in the field of Education, Research and Extension Education.

The university offers various educational programmes through the constituent and affiliated colleges for students. The university has significantly contributed in

creation of human resource in agriculture by awarding degrees to more than one lakh candidates since inception.

The components of Student READY and Experiential Learning have been included in the UG syllabus for confidence building among students. As a result, the students of this university have excelled in various competitive examinations, SRF, JRF fellowships, GATE, ARS and extracurricular activities like sports, NCC, NSS, *Avishkar*, *Indradhanushya* and *Utkarsha* etc.

Besides, the University is having International linkages with various foreign Universities like Van Hall Larenstein University, Netherlands, Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok and Al Zahiem Al Azhari University, Khartoum, Sudan. Recently, the University has received a prestigious project on Climate Smart Agriculture and Water Management under National Agricultural Higher Education Programme through ICAR and funded by World Bank amounting to Rs. 20.00 crore.

In view of conducting the research on soil, climate, cropping system, livestock and other aspects of farming business, the university has a network of research stations spread in different agro climatic zones. At present, there are 82 non-plan schemes funded by State Govt., 44 AICRPs on different crops /plant sciences and one Centrally Sponsored Research Scheme funded by the Central Govt., Ministry of Agriculture are functioning in MPKV, Rahuri.

The university has contributed significantly in the area of research by developing 255 varieties of crop plants and 35 farm implements and more than 1470 recommendations since inception for the benefit of farmers. MPKV is a pioneering in development of pomegranate varieties viz., *Bhagawa*, *Super Bhagawa* have revolutionized pomegranate cultivation in the state and also in India.

Sugarcane varieties developed by MPKV (Co-86032 and Phule 0265) have occupied more than 70 % of the area of sugarcane in Maharashtra. The contribution of variety Phule 0265 is to the tune of Rs. 5285 crore as per data from Commissioner of Sugar, Maharashtra State. Contribution of varieties in chickpea and sorghum have enhanced the production of chickpea and sorghum in the country. MPKV has developed several varieties of onion (*Baswant-780*, *Phule Safed*, *Phule Suvarna*, *Phule Samarth*, N 2-4-1 etc.) which helped farmers to contribute 60 % of the onion requirement of the country.

A triple crossbred cow (Gir x Jersey x Holstein Friesian) '*Phule Triveni*' which is the first crossbred cattle in the country developed by MPKV has remarkably helped in increasing the milk production in Western Maharashtra. Further, Agricultural Engineering and Technology College has developed several agricultural implements for farm mechanization which reduced drudgery of women in farming.

With the significant contributions in technology generation, MPKV is taking lead in Doubling Farmers Income (DFI) by developing programmes and showcasing appropriate technological interventions in different agro-ecological situations of Maharashtra.

The Govt. of Maharashtra has sanctioned the budget for Rs. 10 crore for a State Level Gene Bank and Rs. 5 crore for an Organic Farming Research and Training Centre to MPKV, Rahuri. With the initiative of the University to develop the watershed area in the nearby villages, Rs. 1.14 crore has been sanctioned by the Executive President of *Adarsha Gaon Yojana*, Maharashtra State. Six *Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana* projects amounting to Rs. 29.72 crore implemented by this University are Farmer FIRST project for technology application, advisory service of irrigation water requirement, ground water recharge, rain-runoff water harvesting storage tanks, lift irrigation for sustainable seed production and Master training programme for soil carbon enhancement. An Ad-hoc project entitled “Delivering more produce and income to farmer through enhancing genetic gains for chickpea and pigeon pea” worth Rs. 53.013 lakh has been sanctioned to MPKV, Rahuri by Ministry of Agriculture, Govt. of India for the year 2017-18 to 2019-20. Besides, 37 Ad-hoc projects are in operation.

Extension education is one of the important mandates of the university. The Directorate co-ordinates extension education activities in the jurisdiction of University. DEE through its various units *viz.*, Agricultural

Technology Information Centre (01), Regional Extension Centres (04), District Extension Centres (05), Krishi Vigyan Kendras (17) and College Extension Blocks (03) performs this pivotal activity by organizing on campus and off campus extension programmes viz., Training programmes, FLDs, Farmers Rallies, Field Visits, Diagnostic Team Visits, On Farm Trials, Exhibitions, Field days etc. for transfer of technologies and collecting feedback.

The Agricultural Technology Information Centre (ATIC) is a single window delivery system of the University. The extension activities like field visits, replying the queries of the farmers and other stakeholders, diagnostic services in coordination with the other departments of University are being performed by the ATIC. Besides, the seed and seedlings, bio-fertilizers, bio-pesticides, processed products and publications are also sold through ATIC to the end users. More than one lakh farmers visit the ATIC every year.

Special training programmes were organized by this University under Skill Development initiative, Govt. of India. In all 21,233 farmers, farm women, rural youth were trained under this initiative by the Krishi Vigyan Kendras.

The *Unnat Sheti-Sammurudha Shetkari Abhiyan*, an initiative of Govt. of Maharashtra was effectively implemented by the University in collaboration with Department of Agriculture, M.S. in the jurisdiction of MPKV, Rahuri. During this campaign, the university

scientists guided the farmer participants in MPKV jurisdiction. A programme on *New India Manthan: Sankalp se Siddhi* were organized by Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Dhule and Borgaon in collaboration with Department of Agriculture, Govt. of Maharashtra.

University brings out informative publications viz., *Krishidarshani*, *Annual Diary*, *Shri Sugi*, MPKV Happenings, periodicals, booklets, books, folders and bulletins for farmers. In the era of digital India, MPKV has launched the *Krishidarshani* Mobile App i.e *Phule Krishidarshani* and also *Phule Jal* and *Phule Irrigation Scheduler* Apps for the benefit of farmers.

The University has made a dent in extension efforts through innovative approaches like the Farmers-Scientists Forum, Climate Change Knowledge Network-Indian Agriculture project for block level contingency crop plans, RKVY Farmer FIRST and ICAR Farmer FIRST programmes for up scaling and out scaling the appropriate technological interventions to enhance farmer's income.

For showcasing of university technologies, the mega events of *Kisan Aadhar Sammelan* were organized at the MPKV, Rahuri during 2017 and 2018 in collaboration with Department of Agriculture, M.S. and Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA), Ahmednagar.

Dear students, I personally see a bright future for you all. However, you need to be more inquisitive as well as innovative. We see this happening in the western world,

and now we see it happening in China. Innovation is key to the success. Fortunately, for you the private sector is growing fast, banks are opening their coffers, and enabling policies to 'Make in India' are being launched with major support under skill development mission. You just have to harness these opportunities with much needed confidence and an element to take risk. Also be proud of being alumni of Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth and do carry its name to newer heights by being honest and diligent. Remember it is not intelligence alone but your hard work and determination that would lead to success. Never ever compromise on ethics. This nation is yours. Hence, it is your moral responsibility to protect, conserve and replenish available natural resources and pass on to future generations with great dignity and responsibility.

According to late Dr. Abdul Kalam, you must have dream but to achieve your goals you must work hard. Be rest assured, the success will ultimately be yours. At the end, while congratulating all graduating students, I wish to also congratulate their parents for the constant guidance and support provided all through. My best wishes to you all for a very successful career.