



# Speech by the Hon'ble President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind on the occasion of inauguration/foundation stone laying of various projects of Andhra University

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1. This is my first visit to Visakhapatnam since assuming office as the President of India. I am glad it has brought me to this well-known and well-respected institution of higher learning. Andhra University has a proud legacy in our country. Our second President and my distinguished predecessor, the scholar and academic Dr S. Radhakrishnan, was the second vice-chancellor of this University. I am also happy to note that the alumni of Andhra University include the current Vice-President of our country, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, as well as senior judges, technologists and corporate leaders.
2. In coming here, therefore, I am paying my tribute to the rich intellectual heritage of the University and of the state of Andhra Pradesh.
3. My visit here will mark three milestones:
4. Opening of the **Centre for Defence Studies**, Andhra University
5. Laying of the foundation stone for the **E-Classroom Complex and Incubation Centre** of the **Department of Computer Science and Systems Engineering**, Andhra University College of Engineering
- III. Inauguration of the **Classroom and Laboratory Complex** at the Andhra University **College of Engineering for Women**
4. While these three achievements and institutions are different, there is a common thread. The link is in Andhra University's commitment to cutting-edge technologies, their inclusive availability, and their application in fields of public and strategic importance.
5. I am happy to learn that the **Andhra University-Defence Joint Education and Research Programme** is a distinctive effort for any state university in our country. I have been told that the Chief of our Air Force visited this University recently and his visit provided a major boost to the **Andhra University-Defence Joint Education and Research Centre**.
6. It is extremely satisfying that the University, in particular its College of Engineering, is engaged in R&D projects with defence institutions. I understand that the **Centre for Defence Studies** will focus on cybersecurity, nanotechnology, radar and communications, corrosion technology, and other technologies that have strategic dimensions.
7. Professors and researchers from this University are collaborating on specific projects with DRDO as well as with the Naval Research Board and other institutions. Professors from Andhra University have been used as R&D consultants for missile projects, including in the development of the **Brahmos** missile. Additionally, expertise from this University has been sought by the Eastern Naval Command, headquartered here in Vishakhapatnam, for **civil engineering structural applications** and **corrosion** related issues.
8. This is indeed an impressive body of work. Research related to defence and military applications and technologies will have multiple benefits for our country. It will provide a tonic to the effort to **Make in India** and to innovate, develop and manufacture military technology and equipment. And as experience in other countries has shown, research in defence technologies can also lead to innovations that have diverse civilian applications.
9. For example, the **Internet**, advances in **Information Technology** and the development of **space technologies** have changed human society. All of these have either originated in or been accelerated by research in defence technologies. I am confident that will be the route in India as well, and that this University will be an important engine in this journey.
10. The **Department of Computer Science and Systems Engineering** will also have a role to play in this endeavour. I understand it is one of the largest Departments in the University, with over 1200 students. The inauguration of the **E-Classroom Complex and Incubation Centre** will enhance the Department's capacity to innovate and provide solutions for our country's needs, in socio-economic development and defence alike.
11. In fact, here I must commend the efforts of the government of Andhra Pradesh, led by the Chief Minister. It is promoting and using technology for the benefit of common people – in fields as far apart as urban planning and agriculture.

## Ladies and Gentlemen

12. The overall gender imbalance in our scientific and technological institutions continues to be a concern. In this context, I am happy to note that 40 per cent of the students at this University are girls. I am fully optimistic that the inauguration of the **Classroom and Laboratory Complex** at the **Andhra University College of Engineering for Women** will enhance our country's capacities to produce high-quality women engineers and technologists. A true test of India's progress is in the access and opportunity we provide our daughters when it comes to education.
13. I must point out here that some of our leading defence and space scientists - who have powered our missile programmes and our rocket launches - are women. Earlier this week, at a university convocation in Agra, I was privileged to felicitate the senior DRDO scientist Dr Tessy Thomas, known as the "Missile Woman of India". Women achievers like her are role models for our youth, particularly for our girl students.
14. With those words, I wish Andhra University and wish all of you the very best for the future. May the University continue to be a technology hub for our country. And may its technologists, both men and women, continue to help in the building of our defence research capabilities.

Thank you

Jai Hind!

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