

**ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA,
SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND
ON THE OCCASION OF DEDICATION OF NEW CAMPUS OF
AMRUTA INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERING AND MANAGEMENT
SCIENCES AND INAUGURATION OF BASAVESHWAR
VEERASHAIVA VIDYAVARDHAKA SANGHA'S 111TH YEAR
CELEBRATIONS**

Bidadi (Ramanagara): December 30, 2017

1. I accepted the invitation to come to this campus of the **Amruta Institute of Engineering and Management Sciences** because I am a firm advocate of the cause of education. And of students who are the future of our country. I am also here to inaugurate the 111th year celebrations of the **BVV Sangha Bagalkot**.
2. The **BVV Sangha** has a long and rich history. This goes back to the early 20th century, when colonial rule had pushed the Bagalkot region into poverty and misery. Educational and health facilities for the people were inadequate or simply not available. At that stage, a very holy person, **Shri Gurubasava Swamiji of Bilur**, decided to act. And he acted in the best traditions of nation building. In 1906, he established the Sangha. He named it after **Shri Basaveshwar**, a visionary, a spiritual leader and a social reformer from the 12th century whose influence can still be seen in Karnataka. Since then, the BVV Sangha has been devoted to education and to the spread of knowledge.
3. I am told that the Sangha today runs over 150 educational institutions in Karnataka and Maharashtra. These range from primary and pre-primary schools to engineering and medical colleges. I understand that over 50,000 students study in these institutions, and that half of them are women. At medical institutions and hospitals run by the BVV Sangha, I am told that one of every four surgeries carried out in the past three years has taken place free of cost. This emphasis on girl's education – which

is so vital for our society and our country – and on the poor is in keeping with the idealism of the Sangha’s founders.

4. I am also happy to see this fine new campus of the **Amruta Institute of Engineering and Management Sciences**. Students here will benefit from state-of-the-art infrastructure and from tie-ups with local industry. Such a **student-industry connect** is a must to make education and learning practical and solution-oriented. In particular I hope it encourages students here to become not just job seekers but also job creators. This is the era of entrepreneurship. Students and graduates from institutions such as this one must take forward our country’s – and our Karnataka’s – innovation and start-up culture.
5. I would also like to urge a wider and enlightened understanding of the value of education. Education is not simply about reading textbooks and learning the details of science and literature, or medicine, engineering and management. Nor is it only about getting a degree that equips you for a profession. All of those are important – but they are not the only purpose of education. The true measure of education and of a degree is in how it can be useful in helping a student contribute to society. And to the well-being of those who are less privileged and less well-off.
6. Similarly, the imparting of education is a sacred task. From ancient times, Indian tradition has emphasised the concept of **vidya daanam**, of the gifting of knowledge. Far beyond commercial and personal interests, its motivation must be to equip young minds and help them to build society and build our nation. That would be in keeping with the principles of both **Shri Basaveshwar** and **Shri Gurubasava Swamiji**.
7. With these words, I once again congratulate the BVV Sangha for its commendable work in the field of education. My best wishes to the Sangha and to the Amruta Institute for all future endeavours. And my special wishes to the young students present here. The

nation has great hopes from your generation. May you realise all your dreams.

8. And finally, I must not forget to wish everybody here a happy and prosperous New Year!

Thank You
Jai Hind!