



# SRI SATHYA SAI INSTITUTE OF HIGHER LEARNING

(Deemed to be University)

## Press Release

22 November 2019

### Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning celebrates its 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Convocation

Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning (SSSIHL) (Deemed to be University) held its 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Convocation at Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam, Andhra Pradesh in the Divine Presence on 22 November 2019 at 3:20 p.m.

The grand ceremony saw the Honourable Chancellor, Sri K Chakravarthi, IAS (Retd.), admit 470 candidates to their degrees. This included 277 undergraduate, 97 postgraduate, 86 professional and 10 Ph.D. awardees.

SSSIHL was honoured to have Dr. G Satheesh Reddy, Secretary, Department of Defence R&D, Government of India, Chairman, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Director General, Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA), as the chief guest for the event. A native of Andhra Pradesh, Dr. Reddy has made significant contributions to indigenous design and development of missile technologies and avionics, such as complete self-sufficiency in missiles and pioneering technological developments for Indian Missiles (including the country's first intercontinental ballistic missile, the Agni-V). For instance, he is the brain behind the mission critical technologies for the Long-range Agni-5 missile.

The event began at 3:35 p.m. when the SSSIHL convocation ceremonial procession, led by the university brass band, and two students carrying the University Standards on either side of the Registrar (who carried the Ceremonial Mace) entered Sai Kulwant hall in Prasanthi Nilayam. Other members of the procession included the Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, Deans and the Heads of Departments along with the Chief Guest, members of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning Trust, Academic Council and the Board of Management.

Following the invocatory *veda* chanting, the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. K B R Varma prayed to the Revered Founder Chancellor to declare the convocation open. The Convocation was then declared open in the Divine voice of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

In his Convocation Address, the Vice-Chancellor emphasized how, the residential culture here combined with the nation leading student-teacher ratio of 8:1, excellent infrastructural facilities, highly qualified and dedicated faculty members teaching high quality academic programmes in Sciences, Management & Commerce and Economics & Humanities, has led to excellent academic performance across the Institute. This is reflected in the fact that SSSIHL has an overall examinations pass rate of 95%, he reported. In addition, He also mentioned the high number of postgraduate students who passed National examinations and the fact that Institute attracts over 180 visiting faculty and guest lectures last year.

For a student body of just 1350, over 100 students are pursuing their Doctoral Research in different interdisciplinary areas from Machine Learning to Fungal Biotechnology to Energy Harvesting and Green Building Technologies. Moving on, he reported that the faculty at the individual level across various departments did exceptionally well in obtaining research funding to the tune of ₹3.27 crores from both the Government and non-Government agencies last year, and with the now established SSSIHL Central Research Instruments Faculty (CRIF), which has enabled giant strides to be made (within a short duration) on a number of translational research projects in various frontier areas of science and technology covering Physical, Biological, Chemical, Materials Science, Food Sciences and Computational and Various interdisciplinary areas, research at SSSIHL is on a high development arc. To add to this, SSSIHL has recently inaugurated the SSSIHL Central Research Laboratory (CRL) at our Anantapur Campus, which is designed and customized to cater to the research needs of our women faculty and students.

The convocation oath was then administered by the Vice-Chancellor, after which the twenty Gold Medallists of the Institute were honoured. These fine women and men students excelled in the Faculties of Sciences, Management & Commerce and Economics & Humanities during the academic year 2018/19. In addition, ten doctoral research scholars, some of them who are teachers of the Institute, were conferred their Ph.D. degrees by the Chancellor.

Following this, the Chief Guest, Dr. G Satheesh Reddy delivered his convocation address to the students. He recalled that he grew up studying at the District of Anantapur and was fortunate to receive Bhagawan Baba's blessings in his early days. He congratulated the students, Gold Medallists and Ph.D. awardees. He told the students that they are walking out as ambassadors of this spirited Institute and the most important aspect of their future is the values (that they learnt here) that they will practice in the real world.

He emphasized the major role Technology plays in society today and cited examples of how countries like Finland and Israel have prospered due to it. He gave a brief history of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and how over the past decades, India has launched satellites and spacecraft such as the Chandrayaan 2 mission to further India's space programme. He narrated examples of missile programmes and complex missions from the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), where he currently serves as the Chairman.

He emphasized that India must change from being technology followers to being technology leaders. This is where the research done at the academic institutions is important, as they can work with the R&D institutes, who in turn collaborate with industry to usher in futuristic, innovative technologies. Dare to dream, he said.

Dr. Reddy applauded the advanced research facility at SSSIHL as it serves as an important stepping stone to manufacturing many materials for India's space programme. Export of high quality, innovative technologies is the key to a strong economic future, he said.

He encouraged students to be pioneering in their research and combine it with the strong foundation of values that they learnt here, with unity and cooperation.

Finally, the graduands were blessed the Divine Benediction by the Revered Founder Chancellor, Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. He began by telling students that there are nine important gems that will put them in good stead. These are: Sacrifice, Humility, Service, Friendship, Discipline, Truth (honestly), Love, Non-Violence and the Divine Truth itself. He reminded students what true education really means. Education is meant to foster the personality growth, blossom divine qualities and develop real human qualities in man, He said. Gratitude is important, especially towards parents. Respect and honour is not a one-way traffic. You have to give it to receive it.

He told students to serve their own motherland and have firm faith in her. Gold medals and degrees are only meaningful when we practice the human values and destroy our ego, whilst purifying the heart. Duty is God, work is worship, Bhagawan Baba concluded.

The event concluded following the national anthem and Mangala Aarati.

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#### **Notes for Editors**

*Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning (SSSIHL) is a unique university established in 1981 to inculcate ethical and moral values in students. It is a modern gurukula that puts equal emphasis on both secular education and spiritual growth and the development of a student's character in an effort to fulfill the vision of education for human transformation of its Revered Founder Chancellor, Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.*

*The university hosts over 1350 students across four campuses in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, India. It has a merit-based open admissions policy for all, irrespective of income, religion or social status.*

*SSSIHL provides free education to all programmes of study. This includes waiver of all fees- including tuition, examination, laboratory, library, sports and medical.*

*Programmes offered include undergraduate, postgraduate, professional and research.*

*For further information, visit: [sssihl.edu.in](http://sssihl.edu.in).*

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