



**Tamil Nadu Agricultural University**  
**Coimbatore**

**34<sup>th</sup> Convocation**

**Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> December 2013**



**Welcome Address**

**Dr. K. Ramasamy**  
Vice-Chancellor

**TAMIL NADU AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY  
COIMBATORE**

**THIRTY FOURTH CONVOCATION**

**26<sup>th</sup> December, 2013**

**Welcome Address**

**By**

**Dr. K. Ramasamy**

**Vice-Chancellor**

His Excellency, The Governor of Tamil Nadu and Chancellor of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Honourable Minister for Agriculture, Government of Tamil Nadu and Pro-Chancellor of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, the Chief Guest of this occasion Dr. J. S. Sandhu, Commissioner of Agriculture, Government of India, Professor Ravendra Naidu, Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of the Cooperative Research Centre for Contamination Assessment and Remediation of the Environment (CRC CARE), Dr. S. Chelliah, Former Director of Research, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, the Recipients of Doctor of Science (*Honoris Causa*) on this occasion, Members of Board of Management, Members of the Academic, Research and Extension Education Councils, Faculty Members, University Officers, graduates of the year, their parents, mass media family, distinguished guests, dear students, ladies and gentlemen,



I feel immense pleasure in extending a warm welcome on the occasion of the 34<sup>th</sup> Convocation of the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University.

I welcome His Excellency, The Governor of Tamil Nadu and the Chancellor of this University. His Excellency, the Governor is a man of deep wisdom and vast experience admired by all the sections of people in India. His contributions as the Minister of Health and the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh remain as milestones in the roadmap of Andhra Pradesh. His contributions towards the development of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University are immense.

I feel privileged to welcome the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Government of Tamil Nadu and Pro-Chancellor of the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University on this occasion. Honourable Minister of Agriculture is a man from farming family practising agriculture from his childhood. His vast experience and practical knowledge in the field of agriculture paved the way for phenomenal growth in Tamil Nadu's agricultural sector which resulted in getting the State Agriculture Leadership Award 2013 for Tamil Nadu. We expect many more awards like this in the coming years under his able leadership with the launch of innovative programmes and knowledge-led transformation of agriculture in Tamil Nadu.

I feel honoured and delighted to welcome Dr. J. S. Sandhu, Commissioner of Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperation, Government of India. Dr. J. S. Sandhu is basically a plant breeder, got his M.Sc in Plant Breeding from G.B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar. His contributions as Assistant Director General (Seed), Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) are noteworthy.

The staff and students of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University feel privileged in honouring Professor Ravendra Naidu, Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of the Cooperative Research Centre for Contamination Assessment and Remediation of the Environment (CRC CARE) and Dr. S. Chelliah, Former Director of Research, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University with the Doctor of Science (*Honoris Causa*) for their valuable contributions to agriculture particularly in the field of environmental risk assessment and remediation, and agricultural entomology and the agricultural research coordination respectively.

Prof. Ravendra Naidu is recognized as world leader in soil science and instrumental in the establishment of the centre which included a \$100 million investment from industry and the Australian government. He is also the Founder Director of the Australian Research Centre for



Environmental Risk Assessment and Remediation. He has been a research scientist in the fields of environmental contaminants, toxicology, bioavailability and remediation for over 20 years. Since 1994, Prof. Ravendra Naidu has worked with scientists from USA, Europe and Asia on environmental contamination, including recent arsenic poisoning in Bangladesh, India and China.

Dr. Chelliah is known for his methodical way of monitoring, mentoring and implementing research programmes of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University. I feel happy to say that he envisaged that the viable technologies to the farming community can be possible only from the sound scientific basis from the State Agricultural Universities. His contributions in the field of insect host plant resistance during his post-doctoral tenure at the International Rice Research Institute, Philippines and research tenure at the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University in rice remain as the models for the present researchers.

I extend warm welcome to all our most distinguished guests, Members of the Parliament, Members of the Legislative Assembly, Agricultural Production Commissioner and Principal Secretary, Members of Board of Management, Academic, Research and Extension Education Councils of this University, endowment sponsors, Officials of the Line Departments, university

officers, teachers, scientists, all other staff members, retired professors, progressive farmers, graduates and their parents, students and personnel from mass media.

On this great occasion of 34<sup>th</sup> convocation of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, one of the leading 57 State Agricultural Universities (SAU) in India, I wish to place on record its achievements in the past year. The achievements are the result of coordinated efforts of all our scientists, scholars and supporting staff with the strong support from the state and central government schemes. The leadership established by TNAU in the areas of education, research and extension is unique and a model across the country. TNAU remains as the educational hub for thirteen undergraduate degree programmes which are being offered in its eleven constituent and eight affiliated colleges across the state. P.G.P. College of Agricultural Sciences, Namakkal and Imayam Institute of Agricultural Technology, Thuraiyur are the new additions to family of affiliated colleges of TNAU during this academic year to offer B.Sc., in Agriculture.

Considering the shift in the mindset of student community towards pursuing biological sciences and especially towards agricultural and allied sciences, TNAU has implemented on-line mode of applications to various degree programmes. Though there were more than 40,000



applicants, a total of 21,163 applicants were found to be qualified for consideration and this screening of applicants was made easy due to the on-line mode of applying and processing to admit 1446 candidates to TNAU's various degree programmes through single window system of counselling. The other innovative component in the under graduate programme is the introduction of "experiential learning" which imparts various viable agricultural technologies to the farm students.

The post graduate degree programmes of TNAU accommodated 436 and 134 students for its various programmes of M.Sc and Ph.D respectively. During this academic year, TNAU has introduced new versions of Ph.D programme called Integrated Ph.D programme and External Ph.D programme. At the M.Sc level, a new course in Molecular Plant Breeding is introduced to facilitate the integration of classical plant breeding with the recent molecular tools to speedup the process of crop improvement activities. The School of Postgraduate Studies (SPGS) in TNAU has organized a national level conference *viz.* Agricultural Graduate Student Conference 2013 by involving the postgraduate students of TNAU wherein 416 student papers in eight different topics were discussed. This maiden attempt unraveled the organizing skills among the students of TNAU.

Another feather in the cap of TNAU is the accreditation of Forest College and Research Institute, Mettupalayam with the A<sup>++</sup> symbol by the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE). The 25 year old Forest College and Research Institute has created six academic and research departments *viz.* Silviculture and Agroforestry, Tree Breeding and Biotechnology, Forest Resource Management, Forest Products and Utilization, Forest Ecology and Environment and Wildlife Biology to broaden its activities with specific focus with five postgraduate programmes *viz.* M.Sc. (Forestry) in Tree Breeding and Biotechnology, M.Sc. (Forestry) in Silviculture and Agroforestry, M.Sc. (Forestry) in Forest Ecology and Environment, M.Sc. (Forestry) in Wildlife Management and MBA in Forest Business Management.

Apart from the regular undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, TNAU is offering courses for the aspirants who could not pursue the studies in agriculture under regular mode. This is made possible through the Directorate of Open and Distance Learning which offers an exclusive undergraduate degree programme (B.F.Tech.), besides three PG degree and five PG diploma programmes, one diploma and 16 certificate courses. A total of 488 students get the benefit of acquiring degrees and certificates in specific areas of agriculture.



The speciality and versatility of TNAU rest on the establishment of competency based directorates to look after the individual components of TNAU. One such component is the TNAU - Examination Management System (TNAU EMS) with on-line examination management software with networking of all constituent and affiliated colleges. The system facilitates the students to have the track record of their performance from registration to final examination through on-line mode. This is being managed by the Controller of Examinations, TNAU.

The Directorate of Students' Welfare, an exclusive centre established to expose the students of TNAU to various job opportunities from various public and private organizations, conducted a Job Fair on 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> March 2013 wherein a total of 463 passing out students of both UG and PG from all constituent colleges of TNAU participated. The centre has organized a total of 21 campus interviews to have the placements for 287 students in the organizations such as Nagarjuna Fertilizers and Chemicals, Union Bank, Bank of India, Mahindra and Mahindra Ltd, Sonalika International Tractor, Monsanto, South Indian Bank and Karur Vysya Bank and ITC-ABD-ILTD, Guntur. The Directorate of Students Welfare is taking the responsibility of shaping up the outgoing TNAU students by organizing various career development courses like GRE, TOEFL, IELTS, Civil Service Coaching and BEC.

Thus TNAU remains as the front runner in agricultural education across the country.

The strength of TNAU among the state agricultural universities is because of its strong base in its research agenda. The scientists of TNAU are always in the frontline in evolving viable research products in the form of crop varieties and technologies. Untiring efforts of the scientists and their team effort resulted in the outcome of 788 crop varieties, 159 farm implements and more than 1500 management technologies. During this year, a total of 12 crop varieties (Rice CO51, Ragi CO15, Greengram CO8, Groundnut CO7, Lucerne CO2, Davana PKM1, Tapioca YTP1, Turmeric CO2, Sweet Potato CO5, Coleus CO1, Amaranthus PLR1 and Eucalyptus MTP1) and two agricultural implements (Tamarind huller and Multi-crop multi-row weeder) have been released for the benefit of the farming community.

The successful performance of varieties released from TNAU in the farmers' field depends on various factors. For example, during the last year the Samba crop faced severe drought in the Cauvery Delta. The timely intervention from the scientists of TNAU in the form of spraying Pink-Pigmented Facultative Methylophilic (PPFM) bacteria saved the crop from the drought stress and helped the framers. Our scientists are pursuing the



identification of causes for the tremendous effect of this group of bacteria so that the strategy can be adopted in other crops also.

TNAU's rice breeders, besides their role of evolving varieties, are involved in the evaluation of advanced materials for their suitability with Tamil Nadu farmers. The Centre for Plant Breeding and Genetics is coordinating a programme on the evaluation of Green Super Rice lines provided by the International Rice Research Institute, Philippines. A total of 32 lines were evaluated at the Paddy Breeding Station, Coimbatore. The lines are being subject to evaluation at three different rice growing conditions viz, Rice Research Station, Ambasamudrum, Rice Research Station, Tirur and Agricultural Research Station, Paramakudi. TNAU is in the process of securing additional 38 lines of Green Super Rice for evaluation during forthcoming seasons. To strengthen the ongoing research activities in millets, TNAU has established a Centre of Excellence in Millets at Athyandal village in Thiruvannamalai district. This centre will take care of immediate research interventions to make the farmers to go for millets cultivation.

TNAU remains as the leader in exploiting research grants from various sources. The competency of TNAU scientists in getting research funding from various

international and national agencies is extraordinary. The major support comes from the organizations such as Indian Council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi, Department of Biotechnology, New Delhi, Department of Science and Technology, New Delhi and University Grants Commission, New Delhi. The funding support from the above organizations provides a strong platform for the research activities in TNAU. Besides these projects, our scientists exploit support provided by the State Government through programmes such as Tamil Nadu Irrigated Agriculture Modernization and Water Bodies Restoration and Management (IAMWARM) and National Agricultural Development Programme (NADP).

The National Agricultural Innovation Project (NAIP) is one of the flagship programmes established to facilitate accelerated and sustainable transformation of Indian agriculture in support of poverty alleviation and income generation by collaborative development and application of agricultural innovation by the public research organizations. In this venture, TNAU is the leader through the project entitled Strengthening of Digital Library and Information Management under NARS. The e-portal serves as the knowledge base for scientists, students, extension personnel, farmers and other stakeholders.

TNAU is one of the State Agricultural Universities among the five short-listed to establish the University Innovation Cluster (UIC) in the country with the support of Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), a Government of India Enterprise. The Directorate of Agri-Business Development is in the process of identifying the various partners in the formation of University Innovation Cluster. This venture is expected to bring the students, scholars, scientists and entrepreneurs to join hands in catalyzing the growth of an innovation driven biotech enterprise.

Finally to conclude, it is an exciting moment for those who are here to receive their degrees. Graduation is a major academic milestone in an individual's life. It is formal recognition that you are ready to move a step forward towards acquiring yet more knowledge in the area of your choice. Never in the past have there been so much hope and expectation about the future of India than at present. For the young graduates, the road ahead is long, but the journey promises to be exciting.

Once again I welcome you all to this 34<sup>th</sup> convocation.





# Tamil Nadu Agricultural University

Coimbatore