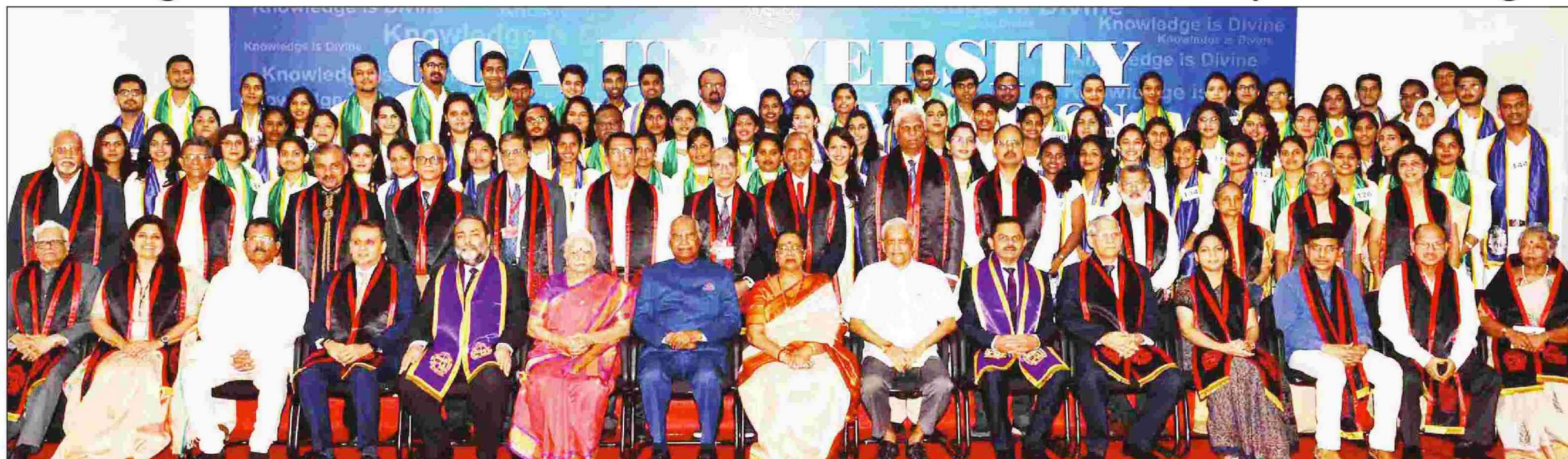


# President of India in Goa; Addresses 30th Annual Convocation of Goa University; Urges It to become a Fulcrum of our Blue Economy Knowledge Enterprise



**New Delhi,** The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, graced and addressed the 30th annual convocation of Goa University on Taleigao Plateau, Goa. Addressing the graduating students, the President said that they should bear in mind that access to higher education is still a privilege in India. It is the contributions of countless citizens, many of whom will not even know them personally, that sustain institutions such as Goa University. “As you go into the world and build your careers do remember that – and do try and give back to society, in whatever manner you can or wish to”. He emphasised that education is empowerment. It not only helps us to know our world better, but also enables us to think of ways of changing the world for the better.

Referring to the higher education scenario in the country, the President said that India has the world’s third-largest education system but this also serves the world’s largest youth population. India has made impressive gains in widening the higher education ecosystem. The very fact that many new institutions, including Central Universities and IITs, are being established in hitherto underserved locations illustrates the national commitment to taking higher education to the masses.

The President said that expanding quantity has to be complemented by quality. This is where the greatest challenge exists. As technology advances and societies grapple with the implications of the Fourth Industrial

Revolution, higher education has to adapt to new expectations. It has to be sensitive to inter-disciplinary and cross-disciplinary pathways, without losing sight of the core of disciplinary knowledge. The President said that there has been a traditional dependence on the government for resource mobilisation, but one must be alive to fiscal constraints as well as to the ever-growing needs of universities. An emphasis on self-mobilisation is called for. He nudged universities towards focused partnerships with industry and other external institutions, without in any manner compromising on the integrity of academic endeavours. He emphasised that it is necessary to promote a culture of entrepreneurship among students and researchers. The

President said that while every faculty, every discipline and every subject in a university has its own stature, universities do tend to specialise. They sometimes offer expertise that is not easily available elsewhere. There are two areas of knowledge in which Goa University can guide the nation. First is the Department of Portuguese and Lusophone Studies. The President noted that this Department is the only such in the subcontinent. He stated that it offers us an opportunity to gain insight into and build networks with Lusophone countries that extend from Africa to South America. It also offers us an opportunity to strengthen relations with Portugal and the European Union. Second, the President said, is the Department of Marine Sciences. The

potential for this Department is near limitless. India is surrounded by the ocean. It has a long coastline and a substantial marine zone. Nevertheless we have been slow in realising the wealth of the ocean, and in developing our blue economy. From marine biodiversity and its uses to energy sources and minerals in the sea, there is so much we can work on. India can be a leader in this field and Goa University could be a fulcrum of our blue economy knowledge enterprise. Later in the day, the President attended a civic reception hosted in his honour by the Government of Goa. Speaking on the occasion, the President said the natural beauty of Goa is amazing. It has attracted people from all over the world for centuries. In turn, this interaction has promoted ideas and thoughts that have contributed to Goa’s development. He appreciated the people of Goa for their welcoming nature, especially when it came to tourists. The President was happy to note that the Government of Goa is giving special attention to the empowerment of girl children and women. He appreciated the legacy of a Common Civil Code that provides equal rights to each woman and man. He stated that the Goa Civil Code reflects the ideal of equality mentioned in our Constitution and presents a good example for the rest of the country.