

## **MAHARAJA KRISHNARAJA WADIYAR IV**

### **(1884-1940)**



Maharaja Krishnaraja Wadiyar IV, a great patron of education, arts, and science, ascended the throne in 1895 and took over on 8 February 1902 from his mother. Under his leadership industrialization and educational initiatives attained new heights in Mysore. Mysore became the first Indian state to generate hydroelectric power in Asia. In order to create manpower and to foster Science and Technical education, Indian Institute of Science (IISc) was established in 1909 with active support from Jamsetji Tata and H.H. Sir Krishnaraja Wadiyar IV, the Maharaja of Mysore. Apart from introducing compulsory primary education, the Maharaja's government also initiated scholarship for students belonging to backward communities to pursue higher education. Medical colleges and Technical institutions were opened and women's education was encouraged. Mysore University became the first University to be established in a princely Indian state (1916). Krishna Raja Wadiyar was the first chancellor of Banaras Hindu University and also of the University of Mysore.

**BANARAS HINDU UNIVERSITY**  
**CONVOCATION ADDRESS**

BY

**THE MAHARAJA OF MYSORE**

**On December 14<sup>th</sup>, 1921**

‘Mr. Vice-Chancellor, Graduates, Ladies and Gentlemen,—Before calling upon the Vice-Chancellor to deliver the annual address to this Convocation, I desire to express the great pleasure it gives me to revisit this University after a period of three years. I notice with deep satisfaction the remarkable expansion which the University has undergone in every direction, in teaching staff and organization, in college buildings and hostels, indeed in all the moral and material resources; of a great modern University. I congratulate the University on the formation of an officers’ training corps, the sanction for which was announced by His Excellency the Viceroy; in the sympathetic and inspiring speech which he made here a few days ago. I feel that we may rest assured that our University will find him a true friend and well-wisher. The historic ceremony which you witnessed yesterday marks as it were, the admission of the University of Banaras to the franchise of the commonwealth of learning and the recognition of her claims to be the spokesman of a whole people’s cultural tradition. Her new responsibility demands that the University should make a searching examination of her programme, her resources to work out that programme and her present situation in the Indian academic world. Such an enquiry may immensely strengthen the position of the University. It may bring increased financial support from the public, by reviving zeal and confidence, and rousing the imagination of the country at a time of great distraction, doubt and difficulty.

‘The situation today may be described as follows: the movement for residential teaching universities has entered on a new phase in this country. The day of the smaller University is come, and some of the larger centralized universities may even break up into more local institutions for the purposes of what may be termed an intensive culture. In the United Provinces, for example, there will be four or even more universities, besides one or two technological institutes, which will carry on chemical and industrial research of an advanced character’.

‘This University is a novel experiment in educational reconstruction. It seeks to conserve the vital and essential elements of Hindu learning and

civilization, to adapt them to modern conditions and to make such enduring contributions to the solution of the world's problems and difficulties as India is fitted to make by her long experience and history'.

'The time has now come to ask how the Hindu University is equipping herself for her special mission. A clear vision of the genius of India, of the soul of the people, must be her inspiration. Has the University gathered, at this historic centre, a band of teachers preceptors, acharyas, and provided herself with the most up-to-date machinery in order to turn out nothing higher than the standardized B.A.'s and M.A.'s of the approved pattern ? The answer is surely "No". True, there is the Oriental department and even a College of Theology, but what we must ask ourselves is how far our regular curricula and schemes of examination and the ideals of personal and social relationships, which the students of this University imbibe from the atmosphere of its halls and hostels, will foster and enliven all that is really inspiring in the Indian outlook upon life. Nor must a Hindu University, in its Oriental department, forget at the present day to welcome into the bosom of the Indian family the Buddhist Pali and the Jaina Prakrit literature. Benaras must also endeavour to build up Indian schools of Tibetan, Chinese and Central Asian languages, which may serve to recover the vanished treasures of ancient and mediaeval India. This is a pious duty which Benaras cannot neglect.'

'Equally insistent is another factor, that struggle for existence, that challenge of the modern world which a Hindu University must face, and face with sincerity and courage. The University has begun, and begun wisely with faculties in mechanical and electrical engineering, for, after all, industrial power, by which I mean not only machinery but also cheap hand power, is essential to the rebuilding of a sane and healthy life for the Indian people to-day. But we must not forget the masses in our Indian villages living by agriculture; the tillage of the soil, no less than the cultivation of mental and moral resources, must be given a prominent place in the organization of a Hindu University reflecting the form and impress of Indian life and surroundings. The Agricultural department will not, therefore, come a day too soon'.

'A Hindu University must prove itself equal to one more crucial test. The foundations of the old order, like the very foundations of the deep, are being broken up to-day, all over the world. Revolutionary doctrines, economic, social, political, educational, are being spread everywhere under a hundred different



guises and names, and under a hundred banners. Everywhere there is spreading an under-current of revolt against order, progress, and reform. The old hope and faith, the old wisdom and charity, are being forsaken and forsworn. This is the great agony to-day, the agony of the world. It is for Hindu culture to try and root out the seeds of disorder. It was here at Benaras that the Buddha preached his first sermon and set in motion the wheel of the perfect law. Here Shankaracharya, Ramanuja, Kabir, brought deliverance to mankind in new and untried ways. India, the land which has preached and Practised *ahimsa*, the land which has through the ages meditated on Maitri and uttered the great benediction Shanti, has India no message to the world? May we not look to the graduates of this University to go out into the world of humanity to endeavour by precept and example to raise the standard of morality and good citizenship ?'

'Such are some of the problems which confront a Hindu University at Benaras, and they cannot be solved without careful thought and deliberation. But if our University is to achieve anything in this direction it is imperative that her finances should be placed on sound basis. Without this, nothing great or durable can be done or even attempted. If the University is setting out on a great campaign, she must have not only money, the indispensable sinews of war, she must also husband her resources and beware of speculative schemes and barren or illusory projects'.

'Our urgent need of more funds has been and is being pressed forward in a campaign that knows no flagging and no reverse or retreat, thanks to the flaming zeal and persuasive eloquence of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya who has, indeed, been the life and soul of this University ever since its inception and has rendered invaluable service as its Vice-Chancellor. Equally important with the quest of money are the upholding of a pure ideal of the Sanatana Dharma, the core and essence of Hindu culture, and the wide dissemination of right ideas as to the meaning and substance of that Dharma. Indeed, there can be no true Hindu University without such a movement of illumination, purification and revival. In this cause signal service has been rendered to this University, and to the promotion of constructive national education, which it represents by Annie Besant, the founder of the Central Hindu College and by the Maharaja of Darbhanga, one of our most munificent benefactors, and it is only right and proper that this University should express its grateful appreciation of their great services by conferring on them its highest degree, *honoris causa*'.

‘Our Hindu University cannot survive unless she contributes to the reconstruction of life and social order in the India of to-day. She must quicken what is inert, illumine what is dark, rejuvenate what is old and withered. And even as the Eternal city, in which she has her home, is to the pious Hindu the meeting place of the Earth and Heaven so must the University of Benaras stand as the bridge between the past and present, between old and new, and, with the holy river at her side, link the India of the Vedic times with the India of the morrow that is to be.’

