Address by the Chief Guest, Honourable Union Minister of Education and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Govt. of India, Shri. Dharmendra Pradhan, at the 20th Annual Convocation of the National Institute of Technology Karnataka, Surathkal, on 15 October 2022

Namashkar! Chairman, Board of Governors and Director, NITK Surathkal, Prof. Prasad Krishnaji, distinguished alumni of NITK, Surathkal, Managing Director of Sona Group of Industries, Shri Yajnanarayana Kammaje, Vice President, Tecnimont, Shri Milind Barideji, local MP and my dear friend, Shri Nalin Kateelji, MLA, Shri Bharath Shettiji, MLC and member of BOG, Dr. Y. Narayanaswami, Other members of BOG and Senate, distinguished members of faculty and staff, parents and guardians, students and invited guests, and friends from media, a journey that began in 1960 with merely three departments – Mechanical, Electrical and Civil Engineering, at what was then Karnataka Regional Engineering College, has now reached a stage where the present National Institute Technology Karnataka, Surthkal, has more than 26,000 alumni worldwide from 14 departments. Now hosting a convocation physically after two years of virtual convocations, shows the willpower and adaptability of the institute through more than six decades of existence. Achieving the tenth position in the NIRF 2021 among the engineering institutes is indeed commendable in the very tough and competitive scenario that exists. As one of the modern India's greatest philosopher-saints, Swami Vivekananda has said, 'Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain and runs riot there undigested all your life. We must have life-building, man-making, character-making assimilation of ideas'. In this way India is currently

headed with National Education Policy 2020, which is a philosophical document for the 21st century. The aim is to assimilate ancient with the modern and strive to produce well-rounded citizens of the world – to create global citizens. This is what is expected from an institution with such a long history. Expansion into fields beyond engineering makes for a better research and innovation possibility, especially when platforms like the Central Research Facility provides state-of-the-art technology to faculty and students. The Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modiji gave the call for *Jay Anusandhan* in his last Independence Day address to the nation, though goal is to place India among the developed nation by 2047, when the country celebrates 100 years of independence from the British rule. Addition of new subjects like Artificial Intelligence, Computational & Data Science, and Power Electronics & Control for Electric Vehicle will increase the capability of students. Subjects like Machine Learning, Genome Editing, Augmented Reality and 3D Printing are already part of the Institute's curriculum. Friends, today when I visited the biogas plant, I have suggested my colleagues here to create a full-fledged Sustainable Energy Department. I am confident, the way you have chosen, the beginning you have started, certainly, within a decade Surathkal will be one among the leading lighthouses of energy transition of this country. This is the way forward in the very competitive world where industrial revolution 3.0 has just about ended with the expansion of Information Technology affecting just about every life on the planet Earth. Now, the world stands on the verge of Industrial Revolution 4.0, when the entire world is looking at Asia. Thus, India stands to play a key role in the future development of humanity and also regain its place as a *Viswa Guru*. Novel ideas will emerge from uncluttered minds and incubation facilities at NITK STEP – Science and Technology Entrepreneurs' Park functioning since 1994 is sure to provide ample opportunities to such minds to bring laboratory research into the real world. In the global innovation ranking, India has already climbed to 40 this year from 81 in 2014 and is sure to go higher with increased emphasis on research and innovation. Karnataka is the land of Krishnadevaraya, whose Vijayanagara empire was visited by Portuguese traders and their accounts describe him not only as a strong general but also as an able administrator. The state has also given technically luminaries like Visvesvarayaji who was the chief engineer of the Krishnarajsagar dam on the outskirts of Mysore which stands as an architectural marvel even to this day. With such a rich legacy, it is no surprise that students from this Institute are making mark globally. But the NEP strives to make changes for the future. India needs job creators rather than job seekers, in its march towards becoming the knowledge hub of

the world. Entrepreneurship especially with focus on addressing the problem of the rural population which needs special attention to explore solution to local issues. Recently NITK has initiated a pilot project for extracting hydrogen from biogas. The products like carbon dioxide and slurry derived from the process can also be put to use in various areas. Under the key focus of NEP – the use of local language, engineering textbooks and study materials in Kannada and other regional languages are a challenge that Institutes like NITK must accept and develop required expertise. History provides a strong foundation and research and innovation form the building blocks of the future. The country needs innovators to achieve its future ambitions and the way to the future lies in the hands of those proudly passing out these portals with degrees in their hands. Congratulations and best wishes to all those who received their degrees today. Learning is a lifelong process and that is what makes a student especially sensitive to the needs of the future. Friends, today is an auspicious day! Today we remember Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, the great scientist of the world. You all are fortunate today! On this day you are getting your degree, your certificate – your key to the future journey. It is time to go out and conquer the world! Thank you, friends!

Namashkar!