CONVOCATION SPEECH BY

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I am honoured and privileged to have been invited to address the Graduands of the Rajarata University of Sri Lanka on the occasion of the 26th Convocation, 2026.

As you graduate, soaked with knowledge and practical experience in the state of the art technologies and their applications, it is appropriate to recollect the strategies used by the mighty Kings of Rajarata in order to convert the vast dry zone into the 'Granary of the East', exporting food to other countries, using highly advanced conservation and irrigation techniques. Since then, new modern technologies have emerged dominating every aspect of our lives. With them come new hazards that can pose serious risks to our environment and human health. All of you have been born into this new technological world. How quickly and successfully we can become an economically sound nation depends on how intelligently we use these technologies, together with relevant regulations, to ensure safety all round.

For our country to develop rapidly, these new, modern technologies have to be used across the economic spectrum, covering the energy sector including solar, wind and wave power, the information sector for super quick interactions with the world, the biological sector to improve our crops, livestock, floriculture and production of pharmaceuticals through the use of modern DNA technologies, the use of robotics in industries and a myriad of other technologies.

With this vast knowledge, you are now in a position to get actively involved in national development programmes to ensure that Sri Lanka becomes self-sufficient in its food requirements, to expand and find new markets for our value-added exports and to attract high-end visitors to enjoy the beauty of our country, which is one of the Biodiversity 'Hot Spots' of the world.

Whilst thanking the Vice Chancellor and the organizing committee for inviting me to this important ceremony, I wish all the graduands much strength to reach the highest in all of their future endeavours.

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