

**Good morning MITS family.** Today, our mother nation is celebrating her **71<sup>st</sup> Independence Day**. On this momentous day, while we all proudly assemble before our **glorious national flag**, I salute the supreme sacrifice of millions of nameless patriots who have enabled us to witness this moment. I salute the great visionary leaders and architects of Indian independence. I salute the spirit of freedom and sovereignty which surpasses all other notions, feelings and ideas.

**The Indian national flag is replete with profound symbolism, it has deep connotations.** The Saffron band stands for the strength and courage of the country. The white band signifies peace and truth. The green band represents the fertility, growth and auspiciousness of our land. The Ashok Chakra in the centre, which has 24-spokes, symbolizes law and order, 24 hours of the day, and dynamism: the never-stopping movement of time.

Independence. What is independence? Independence is freedom from being governed by others. And what is freedom? Freedom is the power or right to act, speak or think according to our own wishes. Freedom is a beautiful concept; it opens new vistas of creativity, innovation and excellence for those who are worthy of it. But freedom can be enjoyed only if the associated expectations and liabilities are fulfilled. Freedom has to be closely followed by “accountability & responsibility”. Rights and duties must go hand in hand.

As numerous accounts from history would tell us, if freedom is granted to the unworthy and undeserving, it can cause chaos, confusion and havoc and a very heavy price would be paid by all concerned. Discipline acts as a tool to control, modulate and direct freedom into channels of productivity and growth. Rigidity breeds mediocrity, we have to be flexible and permissive to nurture talent and facilitate invention & innovation.

Technical education is passing through a very critical stage; gone are the days when we all took things for granted. The private universities and foreign universities which are mushrooming in the country may prove to be a threat to our very existence. Now we all have to work very hard to sustain and maintain the grand legacy passed to us by our predecessors, seniors and alumni who contributed in building the 60-year old brand that is MITS. Now is the time to act, or else there may not be any chance of redemption. I am confident that if we all join hands and work as a team, we can take on this formidable challenge, and keep the MITS flag soaring high in this fast changing and globally competitive environment.

My dear students, you are very fortunate to have been born in an era of IT revolution which aids the **“any time any where format of e-Learning”**. You can now take advantage of a multitude on-line platforms to improve your technical skills and employability.

I would like to take this occasion to talk about the **Indian version** of online learning, launched on an **indigenous platform** of learning called **SWAYAM**, which is aimed at widening the access to higher education and to bring down its cost by using technological advances.

**SWAYAM** is an acronym which stands for **“Study Web of Active learning by Young and Aspiring Minds”**. The idea is to develop a unique content delivery mechanism which is responsive to learners’ needs and which ensures seamless transfer of knowledge across geographical boundaries.

With the launching of the SWAYAM platform, Government regulations now permit us to blend on-line learning with regular class room learning. According to the **“AICTE-Credit Frame work for online learning courses through SWAYAM Regulation 2016”** a student can pursue 20% of the total courses being offered in a Semester, on-line through MOOC that is **Massive Open Online Course**, using the SWAYAM platform.

The **SWAYAM** shall notify to all the Institutions, on 1<sup>st</sup> June and 1<sup>st</sup> November every year, the list of the online learning Courses going to be offered in the forthcoming Semester. Keeping in view the academic requirements, the institute can decide upon the courses which it shall permit for **credit transfer**. Then the students can register for the courses and pursue them on-line.

This system gives students as well as the teachers, an academic freedom to learn and teach **“in their own time at their own pace”**.

While enjoying this freedom, let’s all pledge together to be responsible individuals, fully committed to the welfare and wellbeing of the institution and the society around us.

Finally, With Freedom in our Minds, Faith in our words, Pride in our Souls..... Let us salute the Nation.

**Jai Hind, Jai Bharat**