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St Joseph's University inaugurates new B-block campus on Bannerghatta Road

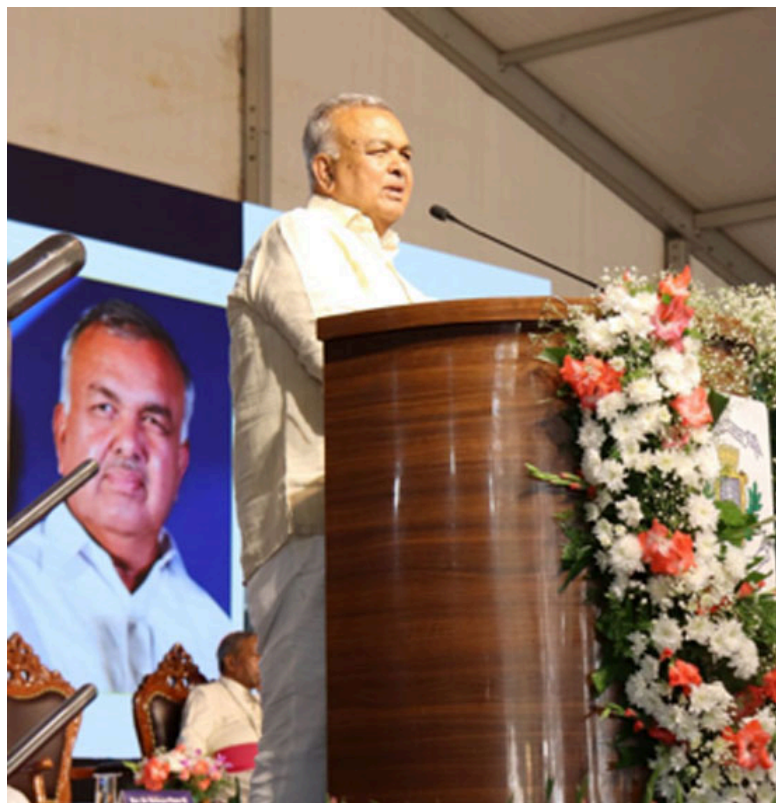
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Media Release

Bengaluru, Sep 8: St Joseph's University (SJU) formally inaugurated its new B-block campus here on September 5 in a ceremony attended by senior state government functionaries, Catholic clergy and members of the university's academic community, at the Campus Ground, SOS Post, Kalena Agrahara, on Bannerghatta Road.

The programme, spread over two-and-a-half hours was attended by Karnataka minister for forest, ecology and environment Ramalinga Reddy as chief guest. Archbishop of Bangalore, His Grace Dr Peter Machado, led the prayer of blessing, while Fr Dionysius Vaz SJ, provincial of the Karnataka Jesuit Province and Chancellor of St Joseph's University, addressed the gathering on behalf of the Bangalore Jesuit Educational Society (BJES), the university's governing body.









The formal programme opened with a prayer song rendered by the KALAH team, followed by the Karnataka state anthem. This was followed by a welcome dance performed by the SJU dance team and the SJU anthem, sung by the University Choir. A video presentation on the B-Block, produced by the university's media team, was screened for the gathering ahead of the arrival of dignitaries on the dais.

The dignitaries, escorted onto the stage by the director of B-block, were welcomed with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp — a traditional inaugural rite performed at most institutional functions in India, symbolising the dispelling of ignorance through the light of knowledge. Dr Victor Lobo SJ, vice chancellor of St Joseph's University, then delivered the welcome address.

The occasion coincided with Teachers' Day, observed nationally on September 5 to mark the birth anniversary of Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, and Dr Lobo drew on this in his remarks, reminding the gathering of Radhakrishnan's abiding conviction that teachers should be regarded as 'the best minds in the country' and act as transmitters of knowledge and human excellence to the generations that follow.

"We are opening the portals not just of the university's gates, but also to ideas, innovation and relationships," Dr Lobo said. "I invite you to B-Block not as a completed building, but like an unfinished story — one that we will write together, and especially you, the students."

Archbishop Machado followed with the prayer of blessing and a message to the gathering. Speaking with evident warmth, Archbishop Machado opened his message on a lighter note. "I was curious about what B stands for — is it Bannerghatta? Then I satisfied myself with the answer that it is Best Block," he said, drawing laughter and applause from the gathering.

Turning to the university's larger mission, the archbishop said, "St Joseph's University stands for the poor. It stands for those who cannot afford education. It is embedded in values and has a place for everyone." He added, "The mark of this university is striving for excellence, and that is why everyone wants to be a part of this esteemed university."

The chief guest, archbishop, chancellor and the BJES vice president were subsequently felicitated on stage by the university.

The unveiling of the SJU-B-block foundation stone, performed jointly by the chief guest along with the other dignitaries, formed the centrepiece of the ceremony and drew applause from the gathering.

Minister Ramalinga Reddy addressed the gathering in Kannada. He said St Joseph's University stood for discipline and moral dignity; values he described as essential to shaping well-rounded citizens alongside academic learning. He also spoke about the state government's engagement with educational institutions in the region and the significance of the university's continued growth on Bannerghatta Road.

In his address, chancellor Fr Dionysius Vaz SJ opened with a reflection on vision and leadership, quoting the American writer and founder of the modern servant-leadership movement, Robert K Greenleaf: "Not much happens without a dream. And for something great to happen, there must be a great dream. Behind every great achievement is a dreamer of great dreams."

He went on to invoke the Swiss psychologist Carl Jung, noting, "A great psychologist, Carl Jung, said one looks back with appreciation to the brilliant teachers, but with gratitude to those who touched our human feelings."

Turning to the university's own mission, Fr Vaz said, "We strive to make men and women that extend empathy to all."

Dr Alphonse Pius Fernandes SJ, director of SJU-B-block, proposed the vote of thanks, acknowledging the university administration, the government dignitaries present, and the students, faculty and staff involved in organising the event. The programme concluded with the singing of the national anthem by the University Choir, following which the dignitaries proceeded to the boardroom.

Among the students present, Zainab said, "It feels great to be part of this event, since we have a legacy of the St Joseph's University Bannerghatta block. It's been a great opportunity to be here."

Fellow student Aleena echoed the sentiment, saying, "I think everyone is so enthusiastic, and the energy is high."

Rahul S, general secretary of the student council, placed the occasion in context for the student body. "It's the first big event happening in the college. Students are very much excited. I hope the event goes well and good," he said.

Anubhav, another student at the event, summed up the mood in a few words: "Fun, energetic and vibrant campus life."

Maria, a member of the mathematics faculty, shared a similar sentiment. "I'm so happy and overwhelmed to be a part of this beautiful inauguration, in an amazing campus with lovely, lovely students," she said, smiling at the interviewer. "I'm proud to be a Josephite. So, thank you."

Also present on the dais were Dr Melwyn Pinto SJ, pro-chancellor; Dr Joseph Antony D'Mello SJ, rector, Mount St Joseph; and Dr V Christo Selvan, convener of the B-Block Inauguration Committee.

The inauguration ceremony came to a close with the singing of the national anthem by the University Choir, bringing the gathering to its feet in a moment of collective pride before the dignitaries proceeded to the boardroom.

