

Remembrance and Tribute Speech for Dr. Beyene Chichaibelu

Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests,
graduates, and colleagues,

On this 40th anniversary of our graduation, we pause not only to celebrate achievement but also to remember and honour a man whose presence shaped our journey, Dr. Beyene Chichaybelu. His name will forever be remembered for his selfless service, his unwavering devotion to his students, and his tireless commitment to truth and humanity. His leadership was exceptional, his character defined by honesty, integrity, and humility. He set a standard that continues to inspire admiration and respect. Enriched by his profound historical

knowledge and remarkable gift of oratory, he touched the hearts and minds of all who had the privilege to learn and also hear him speak.

One shining example of his sacrifice was revealed when he chose to travel with us to Gambella, even as other senior faculty members of his age remained behind on campus. Explaining his decision, he said: *“I could not fathom the idea of my children going to a faraway land while I stayed back in the comfort of my home.”* Such words reflected the depth of his compassion and his sense

of responsibility toward his students. During the campaign, Dr. Beyene stood as a beacon of kindness and respect. He treated teachers and students alike with equal attention, generously sharing knowledge and guiding participants in the campfire program. He worked alongside us in every activity, not only as a leader but as a caretaker, offering vital advice on health and security.

In the village-building initiative, his leadership was tireless and his strength remarkable. Even in a hostile environment, where straight branches for construction were scarce, he inspired students to gather crooked and bent wood to build huts for the internally displaced. He was a leader, a teacher, a mentor, and an advocate for his students.

His commitment never wavered. He visited us daily in that unforgiving jungle, encouraging us as we constructed 2,500 cottages, the quota assigned to us. Without his guidance, the task would have been unbearable. He endured every hardship, faced every challenge, and stood as our protector. Truly, he was our lifesaver.

We also remember his powerful words: “*We need not sacrifice our lives merely to save the starving.*” Those words brought the campaign to its timely conclusion, and his reputation spread across all stations. Dr. Beyene was more than a leader; he was a symbol of resilience, wisdom, and compassion. His legacy lives on in the cottages we built, in the students he mentored, and in the countless lives he touched.

As we celebrate this 40th graduation anniversary, we say thank you to Dr. Beyene, for his sacrifice, his guidance, and his enduring example. May his memory remain a guiding light for generations to come, and may his spirit continue to inspire us to serve our nation with courage, humility, and devotion.

And so, in recognition of his extraordinary dedication and lifelong service, we bestow this honorary award as a lasting symbol of our gratitude and respect.

Thank you.