



Ashoka University
Convocation
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Keynote Speaker

SHUBHANSHU SHUKLA

Group Captain, Indian Air Force
& Gaganyatri (Astronaut), Indian
Space Research Organisation

Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla, AC, is a highly distinguished fighter pilot in the Indian Air Force (IAF) and a pioneer in India's human spaceflight program. Born in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, he joined the IAF through the National Defence Academy and was commissioned into the fighter stream in 2006. With nearly two decades of flying experience, he has logged over 2,000 flying hours on various aircraft, including the Su-30 MKI, MiG-21, and Jaguar. His expertise and exemplary service record led to his selection as one of the four astronaut-designates for the Gaganyaan mission, India's first indigenous crewed orbital spacecraft.

In 2024, Shubhanshu Shukla achieved a significant milestone by being named the primary astronaut for the Axiom-4 mission, a joint collaboration between ISRO, NASA, and Axiom Space. As part of this mission, he successfully travelled to the International Space Station (ISS), becoming the first Indian to fly to space since Rakesh Sharma in 1984. Known for his technical precision and calm under pressure, Shubhanshu Shukla currently undergoes rigorous training at NASA's Johnson Space Center, representing the vanguard of India's modern era of space exploration.