

**Convocation Speech of
Prof. Bakul H. Dholakia, Director, IIMA
41st Convocation – Sunday, April 2, 2006**

Mr. M.S. Banga, the Chief Guest of our 41st Convocation, Shri N.R. Narayana Murthy, Chairman of our Board of Governors, Members of the IIMA Society, the distinguished invitees, my colleagues, the proud parents of graduating students and the graduating class of 2006.

This is a memorable convocation for all of us at IIMA as we have had the pleasure of listening to our distinguished Alumnus Mr. M.S. Banga. Vindi, your thought provoking convocation address has inspired our faculty and the graduating class. We are all grateful to you for accepting our invitation to be the Chief Guest of this convocation.

Recent years have witnessed the emergence of IIMA as a top ranking management school not only in India but the whole of Asia. During the last three years, several external rating agencies have conducted independent surveys of B-Schools. All of them have rated IIM Ahmedabad as the best business school in India. Leading

international rating agencies such as EIU, Asia Inc and Asiaweek have ranked IIM Ahmedabad among the top three B-Schools in the Asia-Pacific region.

Today, IIMA Alumni occupy key positions in Top organizations in India and abroad. A large number of our Alumni have distinguished themselves as outstanding business leaders and also as leading academicians or professionals. While we are proud of our achievements, our aspirations are much higher. Our vision is to emerge as a top ranking management school in the world and our aim is to achieve global recognition as a leading player in the field of management education. We want to contribute to the evolution of Brand India in the field of management education in the global market.

By now, it is well established that IIMA operates in the premium segment of the recruitment market and it has already emerged as the first choice of both domestic and foreign recruiters. The outstanding success of this year's placements has once again reaffirmed IIMA's position among the world's top ranking business schools, with 26% of

the batch being placed overseas. The number of companies recruiting at IIMA increased by 30%, the number of job offers per student increased by 10% and the average salary for the entire batch increased by 20%. Notwithstanding the large batch-size of the graduating class of 2006, all of them were placed within three slots of campus recruitment.

IIMA has been making a significant contribution to management research in a wide range of areas which are relevant to practitioners and policy makers. We take pride in saying that we are a school of management. Our scope is much wider than that of a traditional business school. The thrust of our research and training activities also extends to the areas of concern for the society at large. Several initiatives were taken in this direction during the academic year 2005-06.

Ravi Matthai Centre for Educational Innovations offered specially designed programmes on Strategic Leadership for Principals of CBSE Schools and also on Leadership Development for Directors of State Councils of Educational Research & Training. The Centre for

Innovation, Incubation and Entrepreneurship launched the fourth round of a unique national search cum competition of high tech and mass impact innovations called Anveshan, which is now being conducted online throughout the year resulting in a large database of live projects and it will be completed by end of April 2006. So far, 16 projects have received support from the Centre.

The Centre for e-Governance developed its website as a knowledge portal on e-governance in the public domain. This year, the Centre for Management in Agriculture also made a significant contribution to the on-going research in the field of Agriculture and Agri-Business Management. Prof. Girja Sharan's work on development of Arid Area Greenhouse in Kutch won World Bank's prestigious Global Development Marketplace award for 2005. The Public Systems Group carried out significant research work in the fields of Health Systems Management, Energy & Environment, Infrastructure Management, and Urban Management.

The recently created Centre for Management of Health Services entered into several new research collaborations with North

American, European and Asian universities. It also conducted a specially designed Workshop on "Strategic Issues in Health Management" and the First Management Consultation on Healthcare in India. Both workshops received an overwhelming response.

The other newly created Centre for Retailing initiated four research projects and offered specially designed executive education programmes on retailing.

The PGPs organised Confluence, the annual international business school meet of IIM Ahmedabad in November 2005. Around 80 foreign participants from 19 international business schools and around 900 participants from 49 Indian schools attended Confluence 2005. A special feature of this year's Confluence was the galaxy of more than 20 eminent and distinguished speakers visiting IIMA to deliver insightful speeches and thought provoking talks covering a wide range of issues. As a result, the event got unprecedented response and coverage in national and international media. This year, the Institute also organised another B-school Meet titled "Amaethon

2006" with sole focus on Agri-Business, Rural Management and allied fields, which also received an overwhelming response.

During the year, the Institute took several initiatives to establish international collaborations and strengthen its global linkages. A comprehensive strategic partnership agreement was signed in February 2006 between the French Business School ESSEC and IIMA during the visit of the French President at an official ceremony in New Delhi. One of the unique features of this agreement was the decision to launch the first ever Double Degree Programme for a select group of MBA students of the two institutions from the next year. The institute also plans to offer joint executive development programmes in collaboration with ESSEC at its campus in Singapore. During the year the Institute conducted two executive development programmes in Egypt for senior executives of private companies and public enterprises in Egypt and neighbouring countries. I am happy to inform you that the Institute plans to offer short duration executive education programmes in the Middle East region and for this purpose it has already entered into agreements with agencies in Dubai and Muscat to launch several programmes during the next academic

year. I am also happy to inform you that today the IIMA Board has approved the proposal to offer joint Management Development Programmes with Fuqua School of Business of Duke University. This will be the first ever collaboration of IIMA with a top ranking north American B-School for conducting open enrolment executive education programmes with a focus on the global market including Europe and North America. This unique initiative will pave the way for an enhanced global branding of IIMA in the field of Executive Education.

During the year, the Institute entered into agreements with six reputed foreign business schools to enlarge and strengthen the international student exchange programme.

Over the last three years, we have implemented a major expansion programme by increasing the intake in the PGP and FPM and today we have launched a unique One year Post Graduate Programme for Executives. Sixty one bright young executives have joined PGPX today and the profile of this pioneering batch is truly world class. As a result, the total student strength on IIMA campus including PGP,

PGP-ABM, FPM and PGPX is likely to reach the level of 700 by June 2006. In addition to this, we plan to launch a new One year full time residential Post Graduate Programme on Public Management and Policy in April 2007. The background work and preparation for the launch of PGP-PMP is in full swing and soon the process of admission will commence. With this expansion, the Institute is now on a high growth path. As you know, we are already in the process of constructing a new campus adjoining the existing campus. By now, we have already constructed seven hostels, five class rooms, 12 seminar rooms, additional rooms for faculty, research & administrative staff, 30 married student houses, an international management development centre with 160 single rooms, three classrooms and more than 20 syndicate rooms and an underpass connecting the main campus with the new campus.

It is the endeavour of the Institute to ensure that no student be denied opportunity to pursue Post Graduate Programme at IIMA for want of adequate financial resources. To serve this purpose, the Institute implemented an enlarged and enhanced Need Based Scholarship

Scheme during the year, under which 97 students were given Need Based Scholarships amounting to Rs.65 lakhs.

We have been able to achieve all this only through the sustained and dedicated efforts of our distinguished faculty and highly committed administrative support staff and I am confident that with their collective effort and team work we will achieve our mission during the years to come.

Before I conclude, I would like to say a few words about the graduating class of 2006. This class has created history by being the first batch in 41 years to launch an ambitious scheme of making mass contribution to help the Institute achieve its global vision and goals. More than 200 of the graduating students have already initiated the process of creating a corpus fund to provide financial resources for sustaining the new initiatives of the Institute. They have informed us about their ambitious target of raising Rs.2 crores towards the contribution of the Class of 2006 by the year 2011. While making this laudable commitment, the Class 2006 has set an example for all previous batches and the future batches in terms of the significant

contribution that the alumni of IIMA can make for their alma mater. On behalf of IIMA community, I compliment and thank all of you for this wonderful gesture.

I congratulate the class of 2006 on successfully completing the highly demanding programme of IIMA. As you leave us this evening, we wish each one of you brilliant success and sustained happiness in whatever you choose to do while climbing the ladder of progress in your career. Let me also add that we are delighted to welcome you as our Alumni. You are going to be our best ambassadors. No world-class institution has been able to achieve its glory without an effective contribution from its alumni. While you have already made a noble beginning, I am sure you would come back to your alma mater in future to enhance your own contribution to the fulfillment of its vision and future plans.

God Bless you. Thank you.