

IIMA's 43rd Convocation IIMA: March 29, 2008

Address by Prof Samir K Barua, Director, IIMA

Mr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Chief Guest of the convocation, Dr. Vijaypat Singhania, Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Institute, Members of the IIMA Society, colleagues from the Institute, family members and friends of the graduating students and the graduating students, my warm greetings on the occasion to all of you.

As I stand here to deliver the Director's address at my first convocation in that capacity, my mind races back 28 years and I see myself seated on the green lawns of the Louis Kahn Plaza, waiting at the threshold of an academic career, wondering as to how the transition would be from being a student to being a member of the faculty of the Institute. My induction was complete as soon as I entered a PGP-I class, within weeks of my joining. It has since been a wonderful journey. It has indeed been a privilege to serve this great Institution.

The year 2007-08 has been one of transition, one of consolidation as well as one of growth. The robustness of the institutional processes ensured that despite the transition and change at the top, all the activities of the Institute continued and were completed according to plan.

The flagship programme of the Institute, the PGP, continued its dominant position as the top ranked programme in the country and is among the best such programmes in the Asia Pacific region. The programme witnessed record placements despite slowdown in the US and other major economies.

The Institute started the one year post graduate programme for executives – the PGPX, two years ago. There are clear indications from the quality of applications received for the next batch and the interest shown by the recruiters in the graduating batch that the programme is on its way to establishing itself as one of the finest programmes of its kind in the world. I am certain that in another two years, after the programme is eligible for ranking, it would be ranked among the best programmes globally.

The Post Graduate Programme in agri-business management (the PGP-ABM) also saw excellent placements. The doctoral programme of the Institute (the FPM) continues to provide highly skilled individuals to both the academia as well as the practicing world of management.

In addition to these programmes, the Institute completed the maiden offering of the one year post graduate programme in public management and policy (the PGP-PMP). Designed for officers from the government and the public sector organizations, the programme attempts to make a difference to the functioning of

public organizations. The graduates from the pioneering batch too were well placed.

The Institute also offered over 150 management education programmes, several in the social sector, training thereby over 4000 participants from a diverse set of organizations. The Institute has also expanded its global foot-print by conducting several executive education programmes outside India.

As regards research, the faculty of the Institute continued to be as productive as it has been over the last several years, contributing significantly to the pool of knowledge relevant for the corporate as well as the social sector. The Institute received endowments for three Chair Professorships during the year. The faculty of the Institute continued its direct participation in the functioning of companies and the government through membership of Boards of companies and important Government Committees, including the Sixth Pay Commission that just submitted its report to the government.

The year witnessed successful execution of several students managed activities – that have become a permanent feature in the annual calendar of events: Confluence - the academic meet for b-schools, Chaos – the cultural event, Amatheon – the academic event with focus on the agri-sector, Marketing Fair – where companies assess customer responses to new products and ideas, and the Annual Play staged by students that showcases the acting talent of budding managers. The students were also actively involved in the functioning of PRAYAS – an NGO set up by them to educate the Street Children. A large number of students also participated in the conduct of elections in the state.

The year also witnessed the usual number of seminars, lectures and addresses by eminent speakers from academic institutions and other organizations. An event worthy of mention is the address by HH The Dalai Lama, under the Institute Lecture Series. Speaking on the topic of "Ethics in Business", his spiritual and yet child like presence carried conviction with the audience when he offered a refreshingly simple solution based on universal love and concern for everyone – in particular the under-privileged.

Another important event was the visit by the peer Review Team for EQUIS accreditation of the Institute. While we firmly believe that the Institute needs no certificate for the quality of its programmes and activities, this certification done by EFMD is useful for attracting global attention and also for global ranking. The Review Team was impressed in particular with the impact the Institute makes through various linkages on the practicing world of management.

On January 26, ESSEC and IIMA celebrated the silver jubilee of their association at Delhi. The event coincided with the visit by the French President to Delhi on the occasion of the Republic Day celebrations. The well-attended event was centred around a Conference on Corporate Social Responsibility. The speakers

included Directors from the two institutes and business leaders from India and France.

Looking ahead, the Institute needs to redouble its efforts at making a difference to the larger society. As the Institute moves towards its golden jubilee year in 2011, the faculty, the alumni and the students, need to make a concerted effort to contribute to creation of relevant knowledge and new paradigms in management that help in realizing the aspirations of a developing society.

To the graduating students: first, my congratulations to you on successful completion of your respective programmes; my congratulations to your families and to your teachers who provided the supportive ambience and shaped your intellect for you to achieve this academic distinction. As you step out as graduates of the Institute, I would like to remind you that as alumni of IIMA you have acquired iconic status in society. I would urge you to think of this elevated position as an opportunity, as an empowerment, to make a difference to the majority of the people in the world who still remain untouched by the fruits of development. I hope you would experiment, you would innovate, set and implement new agendas, to better the world around you. I wish you the very best as you chalk out your individual paths to discover your - self and achieve fulfilment. Enjoy whatever you choose to do and come back as often as you can to share your experiences with us and to re-live the memories of the time you spent here. We would be there to welcome you back again, and again and again.

Thank you.