

M. Shrivastava  
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Chairman's Draft Welcome Address, 30th Convocation

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you Sir, to the 30th Annual Convocation of Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad. Let me share with the IIMA community a few words about Mr. Sam Pitroda, our Chief Guest who will address the Convocation of IIMA.

Mr. Pitroda received M.S. degree in Physics from India. In 1964 Mr. Pitroda went to the USA and received M S in Electrical Engineering from Illinois Institute of Technology in 1966. He worked at GTE and formed Wescom Switching Inc. which was sold to Rockwell International where he was Vice President until 1983.

In 1986 Mr. Pitroda returned to India and founded the Center for Development of Telematics. In 1987 he became Advisor to the Prime Minister with the rank of Minister of State on National Technology Missions related to drinking water, literacy, immunization, oilseeds, dairy and telecom. He was also the Chairman of Telecom Commission of India.

Founder of several companies in the USA Mr. Pitroda holds over 50 worldwide patents and has lectured extensively on telecom technology and developments in North America, Europe and Asia.

Sir, We are aware that by accepting our invitation you have graced the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad by your

presence. We are very thankful to you for coming all the way from the USA to deliver this convocation address to the graduating class of 1995 in our Fellow Programme and Post Graduate Programme in Management.

Your presence made us how one man can bring about a transformation in the country. Sir, you have been rightly attributed to having brought a telephone to the smallest and remotest village in our vast land. You have also changed the entire nature of telecommunication and like the green and white revolution of food and milk you have revolutionised the telecom industry. You have brought a concept of accessibility across the nation. Each of the graduating student here can well draw inspiration from you that it is possible to transform a society no matter how difficult, or how unwieldy a system or how mammoth the task. It brings home to the graduating class that determination, resilience and persistence can bring about dynamic changes in the country.

Management education in the country, along with the rest of technical education is poised for an unprecedented growth. Thanks to the open door policy of the Government, scores, perhaps hundreds of new institutions in the private sector have entered technical fields or are about to enter them. In the All India Council for Technical Education while we welcome this headlong growth, we are also concerned that we must ensure high academic standards in

these institutions. This is not just a question of spelling out standards of recognition and of monitoring them. It is also a question of institution building for excellence. We expect that IIMA with its 30 years of institutionalised excellence, experience with various innovations, its Faculty Development Programme and its Ravi Mathai Center for Educational Innovations, will make a significant contribution both in evolving standards and in helping other institutions to become excellent.

Education in management as well as such other technical fields as medicine, engineering, and architecture, is expensive. For a long time this education was subsidised heavily by the Government. But the Government now wants to concentrate on primary and secondary education and to leave education in the technical fields substantially to market forces. This has necessitated sharp fee increases at many institutions including at the IIMs. While we regret these added financial pressure on parents, there is no choice to fee raises if the quality of education is not to suffer. We hope that the parents will understand our difficulties. Fortunately, both banks as well as such institutions as HDFC have come forward with schemes to finance management and technical education. The Government is also thinking of augmenting loans to students.

Sir, IIMA is the country's premier institute of management which is constantly spurred by its quest for excellence. The IIMA

curriculum is as rigorous and comprehensive as of any other premier management institute in the world. We offer here a wide variety of teaching methods including most well-known case method which is unique to this institute in the country. IIMA focuses on bringing theory and practice of management together in a classroom setting. It offers fifty to sixty elective courses in the second year and as many as twenty four courses in the first year compulsory package. Over the last few years IIMA has kept pace with the changing scenario in the country as well as the world by introducing twelve new courses emphasizing international management and globalisation. IIMA has also continued to encourage entrepreneurial and leadership qualities in our students so that they may take up organizational, industrial and national challenges.

The past year was once again a year of continued excellence. The faculty remained highly productive in terms of course offerings, training programmes, research and consultancy assignments. IIMA was once again rated as India's premier management institution. We continued to make progress in financial self-reliance. The Government of India came up with an innovative scheme to match any savings effected by the IIMs so as to build up a substantial corpus to meet their further growth needs. We welcome this initiative whole-heartedly. IIMA was visited by a long line of distinguished scholars, businessmen, managers, government and other offices and so forth from within the country and abroad.

The opening up of the country with its policies of economic

liberalization confronts the Institute with increasingly complex and competitive situations. The education at the institute focuses on the state of the art management theories and practices, creativity and innovation, code of values to conduct business, and quality and service to transform the business in the country. We are constantly striving toward IIMA remaining a key player in providing management learning - learning which will add value to the management of industry and other strategic sectors of industries in the country and globally. Therefore professionalism and professional management tied with dynamic leadership qualities become essential ingredients to respond to the multi-cultural environment.

IIMA therefore is keeping pace with the fast changing complex environment. If we have to not only survive but make an impact on the minds of our managers we will have to continue to make immense efforts. The faculty of this institute constantly strives to keep IIMA on the map of great learning institutions and IIMA is rated among the very best management institutes in Asia and the Pacific. Our effort is for constant renewal and revitalising ourselves through updating of knowledge, attitudes and skills.

Our participants in the Fellow Programme and Post Graduate Programme in Management are some of the brightest in the country and hold great potential. They come from all walks of life and all across the country. The residential programme provides them with

life long friendships. The Alumni Association provides them with a place of belonging and constant touch with the IIMA.

Sir, the Board, Faculty, and Staff of IIMA constantly endeavour to create a supportive infrastructure to maintain the spirit of professionalism alive, attempt at resource mobilisation and multiplication so that the country is out of the syndrome of scarcity, and seek new paths of excellence rather than following paths laid down by others.

Once again, I thank you for coming to the Institute to deliver the convocation address and Sir, once again I welcome you to IIMA.