

Chairman's Speech for IIM A – Convocation March 2016

Our distinguished Chief Guest, Mrs. Arundhati Bhattacharya, Chairman, State Bank of India, Director IIMA, Members of the Society and the Board of Governors, Faculty, Staff Members, Press, Parents, Students,

Ladies & Gentlemen,

Welcome to the 51st Annual Convocation of IIM Ahmedabad.

I'd like to extend my heartiest congratulations to the Class of 2016 and also to the faculty, the Directors and all the stakeholders who have come together to create another horizon of success. As I see the bright, enthusiastic faces of the students here, who are waiting to go out and shine in the world, it's the collective efforts of each one of you that is reflected in their radiance and optimism.

It is a special honour to have with us this evening, Mrs. Arundhati Bhattacharya who is the first woman and the youngest to Chair the 208-year-old public sector bank – The State Bank of India. She oversees 2,20,000 employees spread over 36 countries with the bank servicing over 225 million customers. She is also ranked amongst the top 30 most powerful women in the world by the Forbes, last year. Thank you Madam, for being a part of this momentous occasion and I am certain that our young talent here today will be inspired by your thoughts.

To show someone the path of wisdom and honing the talent until it shines through is a task of great responsibility. The faculty at IIMA has been a lighthouse, leading the students on the path of learning which is interesting, challenging and a process of discovery. I'd like to thank the faculty and staff members for enriching the process and guiding them on the path.

It is the overarching vision and the direction that is critical for a journey's success. I would like to thank my fellow Board Members and the Director of IIM-A for their leadership and guidance. Without you all, IIMA would not be what it is today – a great institution for a voyage of learning.

The students of IIMA are known to be keen explorers, seeking opportunities for intellectual and social development. Many of our past students have gone on to become great contributors across global communities. For all these bravehearts, it's not merit

alone that mattered. Diligence, commitment and earnestness – not in any particular order – need to be there in good measure.

I'm sure all of you here today will also join these ranks. The expectations from you are many. Take the knowledge that you have learned through your academic pursuits and the pride and respect that you have gained for your alma mater into the world as its citizens.

A defining feature of any advanced learning experience is the diversity of thoughts and ideas that you encounter on campus. I am sure your stay at IIMA has sparked the passion in you for exploration and sustained inquiry and also the pursuit for differentiated thinking. One of the greatest challenges that you face as you step out of this campus is to keep that passion alive in the face of the many realities that lie ahead. Those include the opportunities and also the pressures of making your careers successful. While this is important, so is the need to be open to new ideas and keeping the passion for inquiry alive. Striking the right balance is the key. The quest for learning must not be an end in itself. The path of inquiry, inclusiveness of thought and constantly evolving and growing as a person is a lifelong process. We hope the students will make the best of opportunities ahead of them and uphold the highest standards of ethics as they make a mark in the world.

So as you step into a world which is constantly changing and transforming, how do you look for constancy of purpose? And as a part of a vibrant network of engaged individuals, how will you define a broader purpose for yourself in the community that you are a part of? It's important to seek answers for these questions as you do your part in shaping the future world. It's a world that will be shaped by connected thoughts and actions of each one of us. That is why you will have to rigorously apply the critical thinking and reasoning skills and your competencies, to achieve this broader purpose. Albert Einstein had said, "Logic, it will get you from point A to point B, but it's imagination that will get us anywhere." So unleash the power of imagination, combine it with the knowledge that you have gained here, temper it with the wisdom that you will gain and let your actions create an impact. Stay rooted to the belief that great progress is possible, whatever line of work you choose.

I hope you will keep alive the spirit, the energy and imagination and the commitment to learning that you have shown during your years in this campus. Keep alive the curiosity, that has guided you through your studies here, so that whatever work you undertake will constantly be refreshed by new knowledge. Nourish the respect for diversity of thoughts, tolerance and understanding for others' ideas and opinions which may differ from your own.

As the alumni of this prestigious institution, please stay connected with us. Let us know about your accomplishments. Share your expertise and encourage others to follow your footsteps here at the IIMA.

I want to conclude by saying that we are all proud of you and take great pleasure in specially felicitating the distinguished recipients of the Medals of Merit.

Be happy and make a difference in the world. Congratulations once again to the Class of 2016.

My best wishes to you all!

Jai Hind