

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT  
AHMEDABAD

TWELFTH ANNUAL CONVOCATION  
( April 9, 1977 )

Concluding address by:

Dr SAMUEL PAUL  
Director

Mr Chairman, Dr Swaminathan, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Institute, I would like to thank Dr M S Swaminathan for the illuminating and inspiring address he has just delivered. It is always a pleasure to listen to Dr Swaminathan. Our student friends who are leaving the Institute will no doubt take with them his stimulating ideas and advice. Although as the Chairman pointed out, you are one of us, let me take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to you, Dr Swaminathan, for being with us this evening. I am also grateful to all our friends and well-wishers who very kindly responded to our invitation and are present at this function.

It has been our practice at the annual convocation to highlight the Institute's major programmes and achievements in the year that is over. As the Institute grows and diversifies, this task of summary review becomes exceedingly complex. My colleagues will

pardon me if my survey does not fully meet the criterion of comprehensiveness.

During 1976-77, we admitted 157 students to the two year post-graduate programme and 12 students to the Fellow Programme in Management. Eight hundred and thirty practising managers and administrators participated in 21 Management Development Programmes organised by the Institute. Of the 86 Research projects in progress during the year, 24 projects were completed. Among these are 26 projects under the Centre for Management in Agriculture and 17 projects under the Public Systems Group. The consulting projects in progress at the Institute numbered 41 of which 24 were completed during the past year.

A number of special events and new activities were organised during the year at the Institute. The Chairman has already referred to the inauguration of the new Six-month Management Education Programme. Thirty two participants of this programme successfully completed the course and received their certificates yesterday. I consider this programme as the pioneer in a series of longer term management development programmes for practitioners that we might offer

in the years to come. I am glad to say that in response to a request from the Electronics Commission of India, we have decided to hold a three month annual programme on "Computer-based Information Systems" for computer professionals in Government and Industry. The enthusiastic response to these longer term programmes perhaps reflects the growing tendency on the part of Indian organisations and their managers to encourage more serious and sustained management development efforts.

A series of research based national seminars and workshops was another feature of the past year. Planning for Tribal Development, Management of Public Distribution Systems, Identification and Selection of Entrepreneurs and Computer Aided Instruction are the subjects on which our various faculty groups organised national seminars. In addition, the Institute in collaboration with the United Nations, conducted the Asian Workshop on Planning for Public Sector Growth which was attended by senior managers from eleven Asian countries.

The Institute's growing interest in developing an international perspective led to the holding of an international conference on the campus this year in which the heads and senior members of management

institutes and departments from 13 Asian and African countries participated. The group discussed several areas for collaboration and decided that this Institute should act as a secretariat to facilitate future programmes of exchange and mutual assistance.

Yet another special event this year was the first conference of the members of the IIMA Society to discuss the theme "New Horizons in Management". Nearly one hundred chief executives and senior managers from our member organisations participated actively in the deliberations and also provided valuable feedback on the Institute's activities. I hope that the Society conference will become a permanent annual feature on the campus.

The expansion of the Institute's programmes and range of activities was facilitated by the support and recognition we have received from a variety of sources. In this context, you will be glad to learn that two more chairs have been endowed at the Institute this year, thus raising our total number of endowed chairs to five. As was announced earlier, Professor C Rangarajan has been appointed as the Reserve Bank of India Professor of Economics. I am happy to announce that our Board of Governors today have approved the appointment of

Professor Udai Pareek as the Larsen and Toubro Professor of Organisation Behaviour. We are grateful to the Reserve Bank of India and Larsen and Toubro Ltd for their generosity and support.

Focus on immediate events may tend to limit our perception of the emerging trends and the direction in which we are moving. A Committee on Future Directions has been set up recently within the Institute to examine these matters and identify areas for action for the guidance of the faculty and the Board. This Institute was set up to augment the availability and quality of managerial personnel in our country and to help improve the effectiveness of our organisations. How effective is the Institute in fulfilling its mission? What kinds of organisations and which groups of people benefit from the Institute's services? These are certainly relevant questions. I would like to share with you some of the emerging trends which may provide at least some partial answers to these complex issues. In the area of research, over sixty percent of the projects undertaken in the past two years were concerned with the problems of high priority sectors such as agriculture including rural development and energy, and important social services such as health and population programmes and education. In research as well as

consulting, projects with public policy and public management implications undoubtedly dominate and their benefits are available to the society at large.

In the field of management development programmes, the vast majority of participating organisations have been companies in the medium range and the larger public sector corporations. Of the one thousand and odd organisations which have taken advantage of our programmes over the years, 300 belong to the public sector and government departments. More than three-fourths of the 700 private sector firms are medium or small sized and large Indian companies and multinationals account for only 18 percent and 5 percent respectively. It is reasonable, therefore, to conclude that the vast majority of participants in our programmes come from those segments of industry and other sectors which relatively speaking need management development most. The Institute's services and impact are not limited to an elite, but have reached a very wide spectrum of organisations in the country.

The pattern is similar when one looks at the record of the post graduate programme. Although we have no way of allocating our graduates to specific organisations, it is interesting to note that this

year nearly two-thirds of our graduates have been placed in the medium scale sector of industry while 19 percent have opted for the larger Indian companies and 15 percent for multinationals. One third of those who joined Indian companies have gone into the public sector. Only four years ago, medium sized firms had attracted no more than 50 percent of the graduates while multinationals had taken 27 percent. This finding seems to go counter to the myth that most of our graduates go into the large and well-established organisations which perhaps need their skills least.

In the post graduate programme, we have made special efforts in the past few years to facilitate the admission of students from the socially handicapped and weaker sections of society. We have not only stepped up substantially the number of Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe students who are offered admission but also provided remedial classes for weaker students to raise their level of proficiency at the pre-entry stage. This, we believe, is a useful approach to the wider sharing of the benefits of our highly prized post graduate programme, in competing for which the better off and established segments of our society enjoy an edge for the simple reason that educational opportunities and resources have traditionally been more accessible to them.

The question of who benefits from the scarce resources and facilities of our society should be a matter of primary concern to the graduates and fellows of the Institute whom we are bidding farewell tonight. You have been the beneficiaries of a rare mix of educational and developmental opportunities to which the vast majority of young people in our country have no access. You are the custodians of an ever-appreciating asset which the nation has bestowed on you. It should be your endeavour not only to utilise this asset efficiently, but also to ensure that its benefits are fairly and widely distributed. Increased awareness of the public consequences of private actions and a commitment to professional excellence informed by social purpose are important qualities for all professionals in the Indian setting. In the careers that you choose, in the organisations where you work, I hope you will nurture and uphold these qualities and values. It will make us proud to hear in later years that you are second to none in competence. But we will be prouder still when we hear that you are men and women with sensitivity, a sense of compassion and social vision. Our best wishes and blessings go with you as you leave the Institute.

GOOD BYE AND GOOD LUCK !

Nemani\* 7477