

Speech delivered by the Director, Dr NR Sheth on the 22nd Annual Convocation, March 30, 1987.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished Chief guest and Friends,

It is my pleasant privilege to propose a vote of thanks to our guests. We are indeed very fortunate this year to have Dr. Ramanna as our chief guest. Sir, your distinguished career as one of the country's top scientists and as a manager of our super-sensitive nuclear energy programme will continue to inspire the younger generations of scientists and managers. The enviable manner in which you could combine your commitment to science for social development with your passion for music is also an example of managerial personality which our graduating students and others would regard as an ideal. On behalf of all of us present here, I express our deep appreciation and gratitude to you for being with us this evening and for sharing your experience, reflections and counsel. We also take this opportunity to wish you a long, happy and healthy post-retirement life in a continuing service to Indian science and society.

We also feel happy and honoured by the presence of all our invited guests, including the parents and other relations of many of the graduating students. Your participation in this very special annual event for the Institute is a symbol of your interest in the Institute and its activities and adds a great deal to our satisfaction and confidence. Thank you very much, all of you.

It is a little awkward for me to make a special mention of our Chairman on this occasion as he is really the chief host for convocation. I would

however, like to say, Mr. Krishnamurthi, that we are aware of the pressures we often generate on your time and energy. We appreciate your generous response and help in the midst of conflicting demands on your work-schedule.

The Institute completed 25 years of its existence in December 1986. We are in the midst of our silver jubilee celebrations. In this context, we have so far organized some special academic and cultural events as a part of these celebrations. A conference on management education and a national symposium on management research were held earlier this month. We were extremely fortunate to have with us Mr. J.R.D. Tata in November and Prof. Derek Bok, President of Harvard University, in February. These dignitaries provided to us an invaluable opportunity to learn from their experience and wisdom. The Darpana academy helped us with a memorable evening of dance-drama. The students organized this year's Inter-IIM Students' Meet with special splendour and also held a marketing fair which yielded commendable response from industry as well as the public. On December 11, 1986 the Institute presented a token gift to all its employees who had completed 20 years or more of service. We propose to celebrate December 11 every year as Institute Day.

Our post graduate programme was reviewed thoroughly by a faculty committee during the year. This review has led us to introduce some

significant changes in the course structure and students' work-load. We are confident that the proposed changes will help us all to improve the quality of the programme and achieve its objectives more effectively. We have planned to undertake a similar review of the doctoral programme. We also hope to invigorate our faculty development programme which is perceived by many of our friends in India and abroad as a potential foundation for an international programme for management teachers.

Our management development programmes continue to attract good response from industry and government. We have been approached for considerable additional help in respect of training programmes, for top executives in public enterprise, civil service and the political wing of government. During the current year, we organized international training programmes for managers of cooperatives and population programmes and women managers. An exclusive programme in MIS was organized for officers of the Government of China concerned with management of population programmes. Our research and consultancy work in industry, agriculture, co-operatives, irrigation, social forestry, health, transport and energy has progressed at a steady rate. An international conference on Organizational Behaviour and Social Development was held during the year. Several scholars from Europe, Africa and North America participated in this conference.

Mr. Chairman, a large number of corporate and individual donors led by TISCO have contributed generously to the proposed Centre for Educational

Innovation in the memory of Professor Ravi Matthai. I would like to make a special mention of the efforts made by Mrs. Syloo Matthai in this regard and express our gratitude to her.

The Institute's progress and prestige depend in no small measure on the ceaseless effort and excellent commitment on the part of all groups of people associated with it. The Board and Society lend us the much-needed support and encouragement for which we are extremely grateful. Members of faculty, research staff and administrative staff are often called upon to bear additional burden to cope with our increasingly complex mix of activities. Mr. Chairman, please allow me to express our sincere appreciation to all colleagues for their contribution to the Institute's health and welfare. I do hope colleagues will not allow themselves to be misled by false propaganda as a section of us did recently.

On behalf of faculty, I congratulate the graduating FPM and PGP students. Special felicitations to Harish, Raghuram and Venkatesh for winning the awards for excellence. We are as proud of you as your families and friends are. We are aware that each one of our graduates has in him or her excellence in one respect or another. A part of your collective excellence was visible in the way in which you organized UTSAV-186 and the marketing fair. I would like to record our appreciation and thanks for your fine gesture to leave for the Institute a handsome amount from your collection on these activities for scholarships for your successor batches.

We wish you all a life full of success, happiness and usefulness in all respects. It was nice to have you with us for a short yet significant period in your pursuit of a professional career. As you leave us as our graduates, we would like to have you back as our alumni. We hope you and the school will remain a part of each other for a long time. We will welcome any thoughts and suggestions from you towards an improvement in the Institute's quality of work and social contribution. At the same time, you will carry with you the Institute's culture and net worth. People of your kind are truly IIMA's ambassadors at large. We hope your conduct and achievements will strengthen and enhance the Institute's prestige.

It is fashionable these days to talk about values and excellence. Values are perhaps best described the way Romeo put it to Juliet: The more I give, the more I have. Excellence can yield expected results only if it is informed by tolerance. We are sure you have acquired a lot of wisdom during your academic career. But wisdom shines only when it is adequately fortified by humility and willingness to learn from anyone, anywhere any time.

Friends, while we say "come again" to you in local style, my mind goes back to the legendary Nachiketas, a boy of eight years who approached Lord Death to learn about the secrets of life and death. The kindly

Lord warned him: Nachiketas, such knowledge is beyond the reach of even the wisest and the ablest. Go back home to your father and give up your pursuit of such impossible knowledge. In return, I offer you pots of wealth, a long life, a kingdom on earth and a bevy of dancing and singing damsels. The young lad looked at the mighty Yamaraja and said: ... keep your dancers and singers for yourself. Young men and women, my colleagues and I hope you will want to discover the secrets of Indian management by avoiding the temptation of managerial dancing and singing of which there is plenty in real life. May your path glitter with bliss and glory all the way!

- So long. Good luck. Thank you.