

Proposing a vote of thanks. Professor N. R. Sheth, Director expressed his gratitude to Dr. Sarup Singh for accepting the invitation to bless the graduating students. He stated:

You have been an eminent scholar and teacher as well as an academic administrator of high reputation and professional achievement. Your inspiring speech reflecting an enviable combination of experience and wisdom will stay with the new graduates and the rest of us for a long time. Thank you very much, Your Excellency, for all the trouble you have taken by accepting our invitation.

We are also very happy about the presence of so many of our friends and well-wishers from the community. As in the past, your response to our invitation gives us a good measure of your interest in our work and your goodwill for the Institute and its programmes. Your participation in this function reinforces our confidence and hope regarding the services we are expected to provide to the larger society. We are aware that some family members of the graduating students have travelled long distances to visit the Institute and witness the graduation ceremony.

Mr. Chairman, I am aware that your role in this function is that of the chief host on behalf of the Institute and, hence, I should be rather cautious in expressing gratitude to you. As this is the first annual convocation after your appointment as Chairman, I would like to share with the audience our happiness by welcoming you as head of the Institute's Board of Governors and the IIMA Society. You represent a many splendored career as a civil servant in India's foreign service and ambassador in several countries. We look forward to a period of growth and progress under your distinguished leadership. Thank you, Mr. Venkateswaran for your participation in this solemn ceremony

The various programme and activities of the Institute made a steady progress during the current academic year. The number of organisations interested in our graduates has been consistently increasing over the years along with the number of jobs for which they want to recruit our students. We had over 1100 positions announced for recruitment this year. As usual, all our graduates were placed in jobs very soon after the campus recruitment began. Over 28 per cent of the graduates have been recruited by the public sector while less than 24 per cent will join multinational organisations in the private sector. We do hope this trend will continue to enable us to meet the widely held concern in the community about our graduates being monopolized by multinational enterprise. The doctoral programme and the faculty development programme have continued to receive about the same response as in previous years. Among our management development programmes we are specially happy about the positive evaluation we have received consistently over the years for the management education programme. We have planned a reunion of the alumni of this programme and we hope to benefit from the feedback we would receive from alumni on the quality and usefulness of this programme. We have also decided to organize a reunion of a few batches of our long programmes every year. Accordingly, we invited the batches of 1967, 1977, and 1987 for a reunion last month. Such meetings will

enable us to strengthen our links with alumni and also learn from their experience. We have received support from the Commonwealth Secretariat to repeat the international programmes for managers and development planners in the Commonwealth countries which we had conducted last year. Our research and consulting activities cover a large variety of organisations in industry and government, including core sectors such as agro enterprise, irrigation, cooperatives, social forestry, health and population management, energy, transport and education. Mr. Chairman, I am specially happy to report that the Institute received a meritorious award from the International Council of Management of Population Programmes for its cumulative work in the area of health and population management. We have also made good progress on the project for development of network of library and information services among management institutions which is supported by the International Development Research Centre of Canada. Our efforts in the area of international management and exchange programmes with management schools abroad have continued. One of our colleagues has initiated a commendable attempt to study the implications of Europe-1 1992 for the Indian Society in its various aspects.

As all of us are aware, the Institute's basic health and progress depend on the help and support it receives from the various segments of people concerned with its management and administration. Our friends, well-wishers and stakeholders in industry, government and the larger society including the thousands of our alumni contribute a great deal to whatever institutional satisfaction and success we can claim from year to year. The members of the IIMA Society and Board of Governors play a major role in enabling us to manage the Institute both in the current and long-term perspectives. The public recognition and appreciation earned by the Institute is in no small part a consequence of the hard work and dedication of faculty, research and administrative staff. I take this opportunity to express a deep sense of appreciation and gratitude to all these people for their contribution. This leads me to remember an exceptionally traumatic experience which the family of Ramzanbhai had to go through in October and the exceptional courage and presence of mind with which P. C. Rajput had helped the family.

On behalf of my colleagues, I congratulate the young men and women who have graduated this evening. Our special word of pleasure and commendation for Vijay Aggarwal and S. Nagrajan. Vijay, you have doubled our pleasure and admiration by winning the K. V. Srinivas gold medal for your best all-round performance.

It was very nice to have all of you with us for a few years. By a welcome coincidence, your school has been rated as the best management school in India by people who have used the services of your ilk. While this news should not surprise anyone of us, the natural feeling of pride and joy should soon dissolve into gratitude for all those who have lent their energy and wisdom in placing us where we are. It should also stimulate in us plenty of humility and a sense of responsibility to keep up and enhance public esteem for the school. Although you are physically leaving us, you will continue to be a part of us as our alumni and work as our friends and ambassadors. The way you conduct yourselves in life and at work will make

a lot of difference to us. You will do well to carry the high tempo of IIMA quietly and firmly on your existence. You will do us proud by actions worthy of your diploma.

It is easy for us to imagine the thoughts at the top of your mind this evening. I am sure you are full of sweet dreams about your future career. Your images are in all probability rotating in the pleasurable domain of success, glory, fulfilment and happiness with the mandatory concepts of social service and challenge. You are of course mature enough to know that these achievements are not served in a neatly packaged form on a platter. You belong to a small section of Indian population which can be titled "elite in search of excellence". You can be sure that the path to excellence is paved with possibilities of failures and disappointments. We hope your cumulative education has stored in you enough fortitude to face such obstacles. If I were in your place and believe in some superhuman entity such as God, I would use the following prayer for my daily reflections.

"Lord, fill me with joy and pride for the knowledge I have acquired. But do never let me forget that what I know is a small fraction of total knowledge. My quest for knowledge has got to continue forever.

Help me, Lord, to treat my knowledge as sacred wealth to achieve higher goals. One of the texts of our ancient wisdom includes the following attributes of social responsibility of a graduating student: "Do not fall from truth. Do not shirk your social obligations. Do not neglect your own welfare and prosperity. Do not neglect your obligation of continuous learning and dissemination of your knowledge". Let me therefore use my knowledge for material prosperity. But let it not be a tortuous burden to be imposed on others. Give me the pleasure and pride of being an elite in search of excellence. The social minority to which I belong contains a distinct opportunity to play the role of a trend-setter for overall social excellence.

At the same time, this minority is highly vulnerable to the temptations of the consumerist commandment: The more I have, the more I want. This is where I should use my own mind and pursue my own model of excellence. If others do not like my model, so what? Give me the courage of going it alone as a Tagore or a Nehru or a Vivekanand did. As an A.K. Roy did in Parliament.

Let me endeavour to gain respect and recognition from others, but do never let me demand respect and recognition. Let these come to me coolly and quietly in consequence of my work.

Let me be harsh and firm in my dealings with others if it is necessary. But help me to add to my current asset of love and respect for fellow human-beings—no matter how small or unimportant. Let me discover the thrill and joy of giving and sharing in tune with one of the most lovable Shakespearean slogans: The more I give, the more I have.

The best gift I can seek from you is tolerance for others' views and an ability to discriminate between right and wrong. Let me remember that the war between right and wrong is unending. I need to fight continually to let the good in me overpower the evil.

So, help me, Lord.”

That was a prescription of a daily prayer for you. If you don't like the words Lord and God, never mind. Look for help from within yourself. May God be with you. So long. Thank you.