



Convocation Address - IIM Ahmedabad

Shri Pankaj R Patel, Chairperson, Board of Governors, IIMA

60th Annual Convocation | March 29, 2025

Good evening, everyone!

Our distinguished Chief Guest today, Dr. S. Somanath,
Professor Bharat Bhasker, Director, IIMA,
Board of Governors,
Members of the faculty,
IIMA community members,
Graduating students,
Members of the media,
Ladies and gentlemen –

A very warm welcome to all of you on this momentous occasion of the 60th Annual Convocation of IIM Ahmedabad.

Today, we are honoured to have Dr. S. Somanath grace this event. A distinguished visionary, innovator and a trailblazer in India's space journey, his presence here today is truly inspiring. Under his leadership, ISRO has reached new heights, with groundbreaking missions like the Gaganyaan. As the former Chairman of ISRO, Dr. Somanath's

dedication, vision, and relentless pursuit of excellence serve as an inspiration to all of us. Dr. Somanath's journey from a small village in India to successfully executing challenging space missions is a testament that no dream is too big.

Another key takeaway from his inspiring journey is the importance of continuous learning. Even while managing prominent positions, he pursued his PhD and earned the degree from IIT Madras last year. Dr. Somanath, thank you for joining us today to inspire our graduating students.

I would like to extend my heartiest congratulations to the graduating class of 2025. Today is your day and this is your moment. When you first walked through the gates of this esteemed institution, you were full of aspirations and optimism, perhaps even some nervous anticipation. Today, you are witnessing your dream and hard work turning into a reality. All your tireless efforts, innumerable assignments, tackling the numerous surprise quizzes, balancing co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, have culminated into this day. I hope that you are leaving with all that you had dreamt of and more. The degree you receive today is not just a certificate of academic excellence, it is a reflection of your resilience, curiosity, and willingness to push boundaries.

As you step into the world beyond this campus, remember that you will always be a part of this iconic institute's ever-growing legacy. As future leaders of tomorrow, you must stay connected, contribute back in meaningful ways and uphold the values that this institution has instilled in you.

Dear class of 2025, you are about to embark on a pivotal phase of your careers. With rapid technological advancements and data-driven decision-making, businesses are constantly evolving. There is an

increased demand for business professionals who can keep up with the latest trends. Your ability to adapt to situations, embrace change and learn new skills, will be your biggest strength and will set you apart in the crowd.

We are already witnessing the rise of newly emerging technology-driven business models, such as quick commerce platforms and AI assistants in various domains, that are redefining industries. With the rise of newly emerging technology-driven business models, your business decisions will also have to be aligned accordingly.

As business leaders ensure that your strategies and decisions are inclusive and create benefits for those at the bottom of the pyramid. Make each one of them a part of India's growth story.

In just over two decades, India will enter its 100th year of independence. We will be making Viksit Bharat 2047, a reality. India needs your energy, optimism and imagination. The richer it is, the more vibrant our future will be. Each one of you who are stepping out today will be creators of this new India. Each one of you will be making your mark with your skills, knowledge and ideas. Together, all of you will be the changemakers envisioning a new, bold future for India.

However, amidst all these changes, remember that business is fundamentally about people. While technology will drive efficiency, it is human insight and collaboration that will lead to meaningful progress. Your ability to work with diverse perspectives and build trust with your teams will set you apart. The ability to relate to each other and bringing convergence of thoughts will be your strongest assets in this new era of business.

Additionally, sustainability and ethical business practices are no longer optional, they are imperative. Investors, consumers, and governments

alike are demanding businesses that prioritise environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors. Companies are focusing on reducing carbon footprints, enhancing supply chain transparency, and making operations more socially responsible. As the leaders of tomorrow, you will be expected to drive this change. Whether you are leading a multinational corporation, a startup, or a social enterprise, your ability to align business success with societal impact will become important.

My Dear Students – you will face several challenges in your journey ahead. Do not fear failure, as it is a stepping stone to something greater. Setbacks are inevitable, but what matters is how you rise from them.

Every successful leader, entrepreneur, and innovator has faced failures, but what sets them apart is their resilience and their ability to learn and grow from those experiences.

More importantly, as you rise in your career, never lose sight of the human aspect of leadership. In today's fast-paced world, where numbers and data often take precedence, remember that great leadership is people-centric. Empathy and compassion are not just good-to-have qualities. They are essential traits of impactful leaders. Treat your colleagues, employees, and communities with kindness and fairness. The best leaders are those who lift others up, creating a culture of trust and collaboration.

As you step into this new chapter of your life, embrace uncertainty with confidence. Stay curious and never stop challenging yourself. The knowledge, skills, and values you have gained here will serve as your guiding light in all your endeavours.

Before I conclude, let me leave you with some words of wisdom from the great poet Robert Frost:

“Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less travelled by,
And that has made all the difference.”

May you all have the courage to take the road less travelled.

Thank you.