

Director's Address Convocation 2018

Mr. Sunil Munjal, Chairman Mr. Pankaj Patel, members of the Board of Governors, my faculty colleagues, parents, students, invited guests, ladies and gentlemen:

Mr. Munjal, thank you for accepting our invitation to be the chief guest at IIMU's 6th convocation. Your message to our students on this momentous occasion in their lives could not have been more appropriate. On this convocation day, it is natural that students are focused on the excitement of moving on to a future filled with promise. And so it is doubly important that before leaving IIMU they take a moment to reflect on how they have changed and grown since they first entered the gates of the institute. In your remarks you have given them the benefit of many decades of insight and experience – invaluable lessons that will assuredly inspire them and help guide them as they deal with the many difficult decisions they will inevitably face in their careers and their lives.

This morning we have more than 700 visitors here on campus to celebrate with us. Most of you have made a long journey and we are sincerely touched by this gesture of support to our students and to the Institute. I am especially pleased that so many parents and family members have joined us here today. I know that our graduates will honour the sacrifices that you have made for them and the love and nurturing you have given them by becoming outstanding citizens and professionals as they go forward in their lives.

I am joined on this stage today by IIMU's faculty members who have worked unstintingly to exemplify the highest standards in both their teaching and their research. Along with our full-time faculty members I want to particularly acknowledge the presence of 18 visiting and adjunct faculty colleagues who made the effort to be with us today – you have played an instrumental role in enabling IIMU to provide one of the best educational experiences of any Indian management school. I hope you know that we consider you a part of the IIMU family.

The Chairman, in his address, talked about some of the milestones that IIM Udaipur has attained in the past year. We are justly proud of our achievements. We are the first of the new IIMs to move to our permanent campus. But the journey has often been arduous. To all of our students graduating today I want to say that we would not have been able to arrive at this day, here on this campus, without your truly extraordinary help, support and collaboration.

Just before we moved, I remember telling my team that “students can manage without water but they can’t manage without WiFi”. Little did I know that our project team would take me literally! You all know what happened – almost no water for three days! Yes, we have faced many hurdles. It was far from easy and we asked you to adjust and adapt in so many ways. But now when I look out on all your faces what I see is a group that responded with absolute commitment and absolute maturity. A simple “thank you” is not sufficient.

Our graduates today will always have a special place in our hearts – not only for your support during the move from MLSU to Balicha but also for the fantastic work you did outside the classroom taking the events and activities you organized to the next level. This will be a tough benchmark for your juniors to meet, but of course that is what IIMU is all about.

Yesterday during the Convocation dinner I had conversations with several parents. Most of them talked about the difference IIMU has made in their wards. Hearing this was especially gratifying because we want the IIMU experience to be a transformational journey for our students. Dear graduates, I hope that the high expectations we have for you will not intimidate you and make you reluctant to take risks. Actually, these high expectations are a sign of our confidence in you. We know that you are capable enough to take on the world. For sure the next few decades will be the most important ones in your careers but they are also going to be defining years for India. Speaking personally I can tell you that I and people of my generation envy you for the possibilities and challenges that await you.

But always remember that a career is only one part of a fulfilling life. Invest in yourself and your family with the same zeal as you invest in your career. As you go forward, make the right choices so you can ensure that your relationships with your spouse, parents and family become an enduring source of happiness. And always take with you the strong moral compass that IIMU has tried to instill in you. Let the ethics and values of the Institute guide you at every step of your life.

For the past year we have been talking about the initiative “Building ‘U’ Together”. This is an important process of reflection about our mission and culture, about how to continue raising the bar and how to sustain our momentum in the long term so IIMU can reach our goal of becoming a globally recognized management institute. But for you, our new graduates, “Building ‘U’ Together” has been much more than a slogan and an aspiration. You have truly been an essential part of “Building ‘U’ Together”. Your DNA is now a unique component of the Institute and the campus.

When you leave us today, you will become IIMU’s ambassadors in all you do in your careers and your lives. Always remember that this Institute is owned by you. Keep connected with us not just as alumni but as stakeholders in the Institute. As your experience grows, come back as mentors to future batches. And as the Chairman noted, I hope that some of you will aspire to become future members of our Board so you can make the connection even closer and more impactful.

My dear students – but now I should say my dear graduates – never stop dreaming. Nurture your curiosity. Cherish the values that IIMU has helped instill in you. My warmest wishes to you all.