



अध्यक्ष द्वारा संबोधन

Address by Chairman

श्री आर. सी. भार्गव
अध्यक्ष, संचालक मण्डल
भा. प्रौ. सं. कानपुर

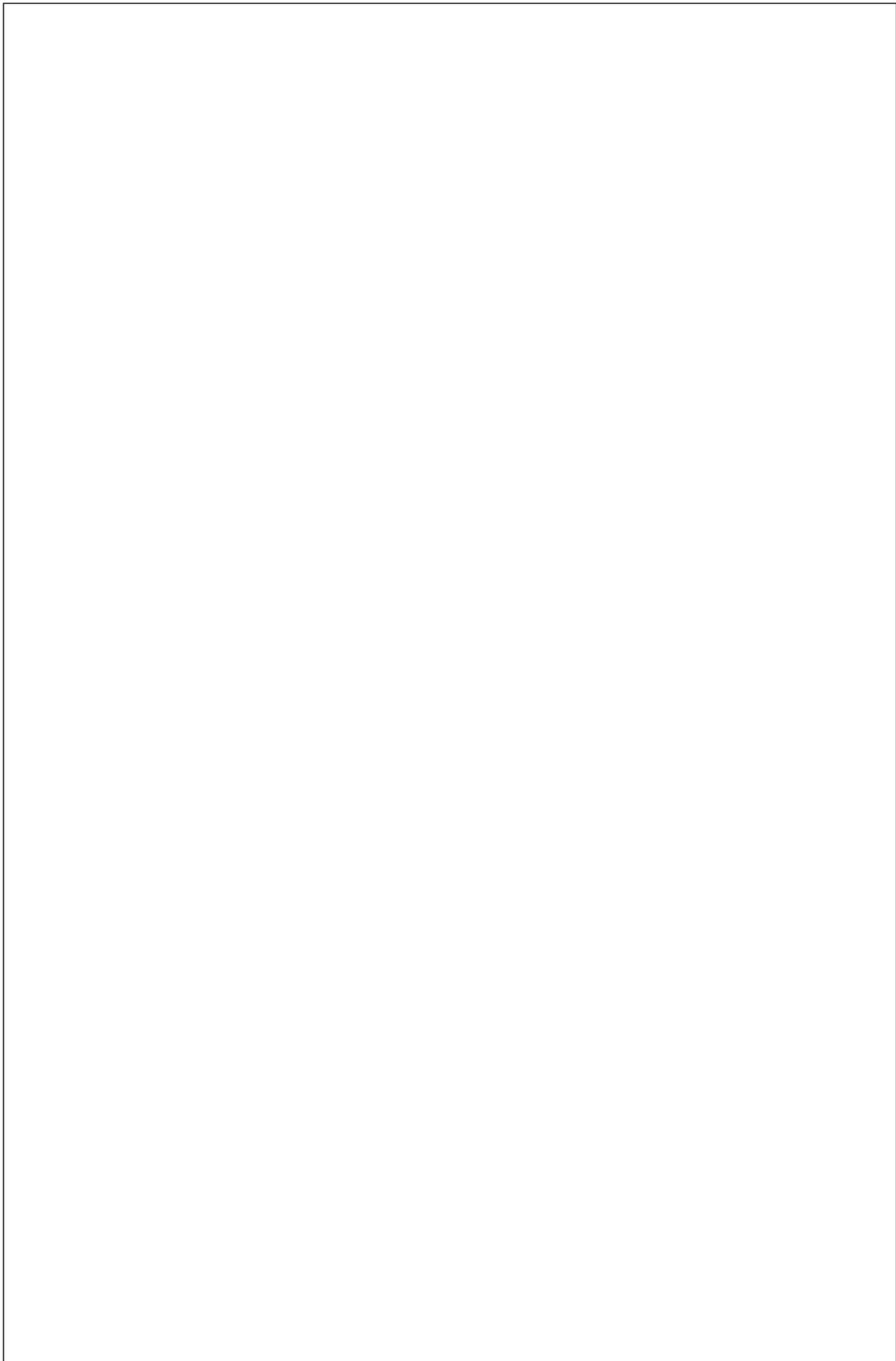
Shri R. C. BHARGAVA
Chairman, Board of Governors
IIT Kanpur

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49th CONVOCATION
27th and 28th JUNE, 2016

भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान, कानपुर
Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur





Distinguished Chief Guest, Members of the Board of Governors, Director of the IIT, guests, students and faculty of the IIT and members of the media. It is my privilege to welcome all of you to the annual Convocation of the IIT Kanpur.

May I start by offering my congratulations, and best wishes for the future, to all the students who have completed their course of studies and would be receiving their degrees. This is a major milestone in one's life and is a day to remember.

I have had the honour of being the Chairman of the Institute for only a few months and so in a sense am a new boy. However, during my career I have interacted with many of the alumni of the Institute and have been highly impressed by their capabilities and contribution. The quality of any institution is determined by the quality of its products, and for this reason IIT Kanpur is rightfully acknowledged as amongst the very best in India. We have also been placed amongst the 50 best Universities in Asia.

The Government recognizes the technological capabilities of the Institute. We are leading the IMPRINT programme, intended to modernize engineering education and enable technology to further our need to develop and become self reliant. We are one of the IITs involved in the Ganga River Basin Management project. This IIT is also in the forefront of the Start-Up programme and many of our alumni have done outstanding work.

I believe the main reason why I was chosen to be the Chairman is the recognition that there has to be closer interaction between industry and such Institutions. It is an unhappy reality that over the years we have not been able to bring industry and academia closer in their functioning. Closing this gap is undoubtedly an essential step towards realizing the priority objective of 'Making in India', and thereby creating employment opportunities for the millions of young people who will be entering the work force each year. Creating productive jobs for them is necessary to create a more equitable society, and reducing the tensions that will inevitably develop between the 'haves' and the 'have nots' if we do not create an adequate number of jobs. The consequences of this are easy to visualize and should be a matter of deep concern to each and every one of us, especially those who have their whole lives before them.

We need to realize that industry in India is working in an increasingly competitive environment. Anything that will help competitiveness would be welcomed by Industry. At the same time, industry would be reluctant to make investments in activities where it is not possible to see a reasonable possibility of returns on the capital invested. I believe the Senate and the faculty of the IITs need to vigorously debate on the changes required to make this happen, and to closely interact with industry leaders before making those changes.

Over the last 65 years of planned development, India has made outstanding progress in several areas. These are there for all to see and are a matter of national pride. But

these achievements should not result in our overlooking our failures. As I have said, the biggest challenge we face is creating productive and sustainable jobs for our population. We have, over the years, helped our weaker sections to survive by implementing programmes to provide temporary employment, like MGNREGA, and by giving various subsidies. However, these schemes were not accompanied by actions that would lead to creating enough jobs that would be permanent and value adding. The challenge before us is to make that happen, and rapidly growing the manufacturing sector is absolutely essential for this.

Make in India has to be accompanied by making quality in India, and making at costs that are competitive. There is no place in today's world for products that are not competitive in terms of quality and costs. The manufacturing sector, which has remained at 15-16% of the GDP, will only grow rapidly if what we manufacture is competitive. Customers want good, reliable, and consistent quality at reasonable prices. In most instances they have a choice of what to buy. Therefore, products that do not measure up to expectations of quality and performance will not sell. This would be even more relevant for products that have to be exported.

This is where the role of institutions like ours becomes critical. Technology is one of the key inputs required for designing and manufacturing products that delight customers and give them ever increasing value for their money. The best minds, that are trained to harness technology to achieve this end, are required by industry.

Today degrees will be conferred on those who have completed their post graduate studies. I expect some of you will go on to do further research in academic institutions or in Industry, while some will teach. In either case, I hope you will bear in mind the necessity of directing your efforts toward making Indian industry more and more competitive, in quality and cost, by the use of technology.

I am aware that in the past a large percentage of IIT graduates sought employment outside India, mostly in the USA. That was understandable as opportunities in India were limited, and the future did not look very bright. Fortunately, things are changing. India is now one of the two fastest growing economies in the world. New and exciting avenues are open in various areas of economic activity and the future is exciting. This opportunity should not be lost.

I am also aware that graduates from the IITs have largely avoided working in manufacturing industry. They have preferred to work in the IT sector, or in Consulting or change track and go into the financial services area. The financial rewards in these sectors are higher than in the manufacturing sector, especially in the short term. However, we have now reached a stage in our national life where we need to take a longer term view of our country, our responsibilities and our future.

If we look at the history of economic development in countries like Japan, Korea and China we will see that each

one of them moved from quite low levels of income to fairly high levels in 20 years and to very comfortable levels in 30 years. All of you who are either completing your post graduate studies, or are graduating have, in my view about 5 decades of active life and 6 decades or more to live. In which country would you like to spend these years? Where would you want your children to grow and work? If you decide that India is where you would like to live, because the glitter of the West is losing a lot of its shine, I believe it becomes a logical necessity to ensure that in the next 2 decades India also does what other countries have done. It is people like those present here who can make it happen.

You are the intellectual elite of the country. You have received the best of education, in facilities created by using national funds, and at a very low cost. You need to think whether this creates any moral obligation to put your intellect and knowledge at the service of the nation and lead the development revolution. Remember, doing so would be not only in your interest but also ensure a brighter future for your children and grandchildren.

India is a democracy. Making changes in democracy is a slow process, and especially if the country has a large population and has a large number of people who are not able to avail of the necessities for a decent life. However, the young people are demanding rapid change and growth, and the political system is recognizing this demand. This is what is creating the opportunities for people like you to make a contribution where it counts. You may not be financially as

well off in the short term by doing so, as perhaps you would be by following past practices, but you would certainly be very comfortable. When India becomes a much larger economy, within the next 2 decades, all of you would be much better off. I urge you to take a longer term view of life and the future of your country.

On behalf of the Board and myself I can assure you that we will do our very best to ensure that this institution plays an ever increasing role in contributing to the priority areas of national life. Thank you, and all my best wishes for your future health and success.



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