

VALEDICTORIAN'S ADDRESS



The 5th Convocation Valedictorian Address

A very good evening to one and all present here for the 5th Convocation Ceremony of IIT Mandi.

On the behalf of Batch of 2017, it gives me great pleasure to extend a warm welcome to Respected Chief Guest, Mr. Banmali Agarwala; Shri Subodh Bhargava, Chairman Board of Governors, IIT Mandi & Former Chairman, Tata Communication Limited; Prof. Timothy Gonsalves, Director IIT Mandi; the members of board of governors and members of Senate of the Institute, distinguished guests, family members of graduating students, faculty & staff members.

I was quite surprised and honoured at the same time when I had received the invitation to deliver the valedictory speech because a guy who used to hold the mic for rapping and singing was asked to deliver a speech, so please bear with me in case you come across any poetic references ahead.

On a serious note, today is a big day for all the students of Batch of 2017. Today, as we all walk out of this hall, a journey will come to an end. A journey that began four years back from Mandi and ended up in Kamand. Although the ride was bumpy, full of ups and downs, and sharp curves; we all did enjoy the ride as those four-years were like a Four-Year transform ... transforming all of us from a student to a professional, from a teenager to an adult.

As I was traveling back to the campus, the reminisces of the day when we all were coming to this place for the first time with our parents and lots of expectations, flashed in my mind. From that day to today, we all have come a long way. Being the 5th graduating batch of IIT Mandi, we've

seen this institute grow from one academic building to five, from a basketball court and cricket nets to full-fledged fields and indoor sports stadium, from a batch of freshmen to a family that spreads across the batches.

Throughout that long journey we all created some memories, and although those days can't be brought back, memories are there and we will continue to cherish them throughout our life.

One such memory is of staying in Suvalsar hostel in Mandi campus. Our batch was the last to stay in Mandi campus and that too for almost 2 years. Those years taught us how to wake up at 7.55 A.M, have breakfast and still make it to the 8 A.M class which you may call as efficient time-management. It even raised our creativity index as we started events of our own in the Mandi campus since we were too lazy to go to Kamand, and most importantly brought all the batchmates together as a family. Ten years from now when we will discuss with our friends how stupid we looked back in college or how much we miss all those movie marathons, the memories of Mandi campus will surely pop-up.

Be it the beauty of this place, teachings of the faculty members or the love of the students, there is something that all of us like about this college. Assuming an average lifespan of 60 years, I can proudly say that almost 6.5% of my life was well spent here in the Himalayas and I am sure that my fellow batchmates would agree with me.

It would be no surprise if I say that new IITs like ours are almost similar to next-gen startups. Although the struggle is a lot more as one has to start off with a culture, which didn't use to exist, but the learning that one gets at the price of those struggles makes us the person who we are today.

Our batch just like our senior batches played its small part in helping to take this institute to great heights. Be it the research publications, hefty placement offers, first-ever TEDx event and coming up with the first company to be funded by IIT Mandi Catalyst, every student of our batch tried to make his/her contribution to the growth of IIT Mandi and this would have never have been possible without the guidance and help of our faculties and staff at IIT Mandi who are always there to help you, irrespective of the circumstances. I am pretty sure that students of upcoming batches with their immense efforts will continue to add up more jewels to the crown of IIT Mandi.

Before concluding my speech, I would like to talk about two major things that I learned from this place.

First, Nothing is Impossible. Although we hear that quote quite often, we forget to apply that in our life when it's needed. But this place gave me a real-life example of that. If one can build an institute of national importance in a terrain like this, and take it to the levels that we have reached

in such a short span of time, then we can also start our career and lead our own path, take inspiration from this place and rise above failure with our hard work and persistence.

Second learning is that there is no end to success. This is one of the things that I learned while trekking through the mountains around this place and I am sure many of my friends here would relate to this. Whenever you start a trek, you plan to climb up the biggest peak in your vision and start moving, however, on reaching the top, we realize that there is another peak much higher than this one and we must try climbing up that peak too and this loop continues on and on and depending on your stamina and skills you may or may not be able to reach up to the highest peak. That's how life is: we think that we have accomplished something and that's the end and we can stop and enjoy that. But another opportunity comes up and you must be ready to take that up and accomplish that too and continue to do the same until you reach **your** highest summit!

In the end, I would just like to say that, this institute acted as our second home for the last four years and it should be our responsibility to make it proud wherever we go.

Best wishes to you all for your future endeavors.

Continue to believe in yourself.

Plan to win, prepare to win and expect to win.

Thank You !

Vivek Sharma

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