



Convocation Address – IIM Ahmedabad

IIMA Director Prof. Bharat Bhasker's Convocation Address

61st Annual Convocation | March 28, 2026

Our distinguished chief guest, Ms. Chandrika Tandon, our alumna and someone who seamlessly bridges the worlds of business, humanitarian service, and music; Shri Pankaj Patel, Chairperson, Board of Governors; Board members; faculty colleagues and staff members; family members and friends of the graduating students; members of the media; and my dear graduating students- greetings and welcome to the 61st annual convocation of the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad.

Today is a day of celebration, pride, and reflection. We are gathered here to celebrate the accomplishments of 629 graduating students who have received their degrees today. You have navigated a demanding and transformative academic experience with dedication, resilience, and determination. I also congratulate parents and family members of graduating students for extending your unwavering support and love in the journey to reach this pinnacle.

I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the graduating class of 2026. Each of you arrived here with aspirations. During your time at IIMA, you challenged yourselves in the classroom, engaged in rigorous debates, and worked collaboratively with peers. You also developed new ways of thinking about complex problems. In the process, you gained valuable knowledge and skills, and built friendships and experiences that will stay with you for a lifetime.

Acknowledging the Chief Guest:

It is our privilege that **Ms. Chandrika Tandon** has joined us on this occasion. Her distinguished career across business, philanthropy, and music exemplifies how visionary leadership and relentless efforts can transcend disciplines and create meaningful impact in society. Ms. Tandon, I am sure that your words have resonated deeply with our graduating students.

Institutional Highlights:

The past year has been eventful, and the Institute continued to take strides in various domains. Allow me to present to you some of the major highlights that shaped the year.

Academics:

On the academic front, several new initiatives were undertaken this year.

- Extending our global presence, we launched our first international campus in Dubai with a full-time One-Year MBA programme, welcoming the first cohort of 35 students. We are also establishing two centres of excellence at the Dubai campus, focusing on case writing and startup incubation.
- Building on our commitment to develop capabilities for the future, we inaugurated the Krishnamurthy Tandon School of Artificial Intelligence at IIMA this week with a generous endowment by Ms. Chandrika Tandon and Mr. Ranjan Tandon. This initiative will open doors to new possibilities in AI research and its real-world applications.
- We also launched a unique degree-granting Blended MBA Programme in Business Analytics & AI. It is designed for professionals and entrepreneurs who want to integrate advanced analytics and AI skills with leadership and strategic expertise. We are set to induct the programme's first batch next month.
- At the same time, our programmes continue to grow steadily. We welcomed the second batch of the BPGP programme, comprising 138 professionals from diverse backgrounds.
- Our PGP, PGP-FABM, and PGPM programmes continue to uphold their stellar global standing. We are proud to share that IIMA has been featured among the top 25 institutions globally by securing the 21st rank in Business & Management Studies and Marketing in the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2026.
- We climbed to 27th rank globally in the coveted Financial Times Global MBA Rankings 2026. Our MBA-FABM programme has been ranked number one in Eduniversal Best Master's Ranking in Agribusiness/ Food Industry Management 2025, retaining its top position globally for over a decade now.
- The Institute retained its number one position in the Management category of NIRF rankings for the sixth consecutive year. We also continued to maintain the top position in other reputed national rankings by business magazines.

- Being recognised globally for its excellence, IIMA obtained the EQUIS Accreditation for a period of five years for the third time in 2025.
- As part of our Executive Education programme, we offered 253 programmes, including 58 new programmes, which provided training to 8,450 participants, including 466 international participants, from more than 1800 companies. We also collaborated with Goldman Sachs on the ‘10,000 Women’ programme to help Indian women entrepreneurs hone skills, expand networks, and grow their businesses.
- Achieving a major milestone, our Online@IIMA initiative crossed 6 lakh learners globally, with around 15% of enrolments coming from outside India.
- We organised the fourth edition of the ‘Leadership and Strategic Thinking’ programme for visually-challenged people, and this time it attracted working professionals from across the country and diverse sectors.

Major Developments:

Some of the other major developments also took shape in the past one year:

- We also inaugurated the Madan Mohanka Centre of Excellence in Case Method of Learning with support from Mr. Madan Mohanka. The Centre will advance research, teaching, and training in the case method while carrying forward the Institute’s longstanding legacy of this pedagogy.
- We partnered with OpenAI to promote the responsible and effective use of artificial intelligence at the Institute, laying the foundation for an integrated AI ecosystem on campus that will support teaching, research, and innovation.
- We signed an MoU with Mr. Ravi Mattu for setting up the ‘Mattu Centre for Research in Security Pricing and Corporate Finance’ at IIMA. The Centre shall promote research, training, and development in various areas of asset pricing, corporate finance, and corporate governance.

Scholarships:

- Our extensive portfolio of scholarships continues to support the talent of our students without letting financial constraints hinder their growth. This year, the Institute offered an impressive 81 full scholarships and 75 partial scholarships to students, amounting to around Rs. 14.90 crores.

- Additionally, we awarded 198 Special Need-based Scholarships worth Rs. 3.83 crores for first and second year students.

Research and Practitioner Conferences and Other Events:

The Institute also organised a number of significant events:

- The second edition of the Indian Management Research Conference on the theme ‘The Future of the Economy: People, Organisations, and Policy’, continued to maintain its global appeal. The conference grew in scale with submissions from 30 countries and over 850 conference attendees participating on campus across 12 diverse tracks.
- The IIMA Endowment Fund organised the inaugural edition of Accelerating India’s Development (AID) Conference this year to reflect on India’s development priorities.
- A Roundtable Discussion of West India Vice-Chancellors on The Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan Bill, 2025, was organised at the JSW School of Public Policy.
- We also hosted the IIMA Ventures Summit earlier this year, which brought together over 1,000 delegates, along with exhibitions by over 40 startups across a wide range of sectors.
- Our Brij Disa Centre for Data Science and Artificial Intelligence, in collaboration with the Operational Research Society of India’s Ahmedabad Chapter, organised the 2nd edition of a national Competition on the practice of Management Science and Analytics.
- IIMA hosted the second edition of the India Conference on Information Systems in collaboration with the AIS India Chapter, and over 250 national and international participants attended the event.

Faculty Research, Contributions, and Achievements:

Our faculty members continue to set a high benchmark year after year through their excellence in research, teaching, and engagement with practice.

- During the past year, our faculty members presented papers at 70 international and 14 national conferences.
- Beyond research, our faculty members continued to contribute actively through advisory and consulting engagements. This year, faculty members undertook 86

consulting and advisory projects for central ministries, state governments, PSUs, and leading private organisations. The Institute also undertook 25 diverse and high-impact externally funded research projects.

- The year also saw 6 new faculty members joining the Institute.
- Last year alone, our faculty members received around 31 awards, achievements, and appointments, once again underscoring the quality and impact of the Institute's faculty members.

Alumni Relations Activities:

Our alumni community remains one of our greatest strengths, with graduates making their mark across a wide range of domains in India and globally.

- Recognising the outstanding contributions of our alumni, we conferred the Young Alumni Achiever's Award on 10 alumni across three categories.
- Continuing to strengthen engagement with the alumni community, this year we organised 7 reunions on campus, with participation from 465 alumni.
- In addition, we introduced an exclusive health insurance programme for the IIMA alumni community.

Key Engagements:

During the past year, the Institute hosted several international delegations and dignitaries on the campus to discuss and expand partnerships and collaborations. These included:

- A team from Burgundy School of Business, led by the International Relations Manager.
- A team from the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.
- A delegation from the University of Economics and Finance (UEF) and Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology (HUTECH), Vietnam.
- A delegation of 27 journalists and content creators from Europe.
- A team from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland.
- A delegation from Singapore Management University.
- Deputy Counsel General from the German Consulate in Mumbai.
- Dean from Henley Business School, UK.

- We also signed MoUs for General Partnership with Italy's Rome Business School and the USA's University of California, San Diego.

Student Activities:

Our Student Cell has been remarkably active throughout the year, organising and participating in over 360 events, including speaker series, quiz competitions, the cultural festival Chaos, and major sporting events like Sangharsh and Ekatva.

Message to Students:

While the Institute continues to grow and evolve, today's celebration is ultimately about the graduating students and their journeys that lie ahead.

Dear Students,

As you prepare to step beyond this campus, you will enter a world that is dynamic, interconnected, and often unpredictable. The pace of change across industries, technologies, and societies is accelerating, and the path ahead for each of you will never be linear. Careers today rarely follow a predetermined trajectory. Instead, they evolve through opportunities, choices, and sometimes unexpected disruptions.

In such a world, one of the most important capabilities you can cultivate is resilience. Your ability to absorb setbacks, recalibrate, and move forward with renewed clarity will define your long-term success.

As you move forward, I would also encourage you to cultivate a perspective that is global in outlook but grounded in values. The world may be your marketplace, but your impact begins in your own communities. Understand global trends but adapt them thoughtfully to local realities. True leadership lies in the ability to connect global knowledge with local insights.

In doing so, remember the importance of humility. The more you learn, the more you will realise how much more there is still to understand. Leaders who remain open to learning are often those who create the most enduring impact.

I encourage you to be the architects of your own future, take initiative, and approach your journey with confidence, curiosity, and a sense of purpose.

My best wishes are always with you. Congratulations once again!