

Convocation Speech, IIM Calcutta, April 8th, 2023

Shrikrishna Kulkarni

Respected Chief Guest, Mr. Tarun Rai, distinguished and honourable guests, Members of our Board of Governors, our dear graduating students, their families, alumni, members of the press, Director Professor Uttam Kumar Sarkar, Deans, Program Chairs, our loved and respected Faculty colleagues, dear Staff members, the IIM Calcutta community and all those who are gathered for this occasion virtually via the internet. Namaskar!

Every year at the start of the convocation, I request you to pause for a moment and reflect. We should look into our hearts and acknowledge those who made the most important contributions in our lives. Such an act of pausing and reflecting should become a tradition, a pratha at every convocation of IIM Calcutta. Real treasures, must be revisited again and again. There is only gain in doing so. So, this year too, I would like for us to take a moment to recognize the parents who are gathered here to celebrate in your achievements and distinctions. It is the many sacrifices that they have made and their desire that you have a better life than them that has brought you to where you are today. I know the pride and joy they feel. It makes what you have accomplished that much more worthwhile. In honouring you today, we are also honouring them. Sitting amongst us also, and gracing this occasion are our most revered Faculty colleagues. Men and women, who consciously chose the most noble of all professions – teaching. We, who received from them the most valuable gift possible in life – knowledge. Today, I would like all of us here to pay our tribute to the teachers and professors, here at IIMC, and also across our nation, who spend their life in the most significant, but unadvertised work. Could I request you – dear students, to please rise and join me in thanking your parents and your teachers.

My dear graduating class, today you graduate from IIM Calcutta and enter the world of professionals. In your time as a student at IIM Calcutta, this probably will remain the single most important day on campus. All the hard-work and toil is being recognized and culminating in you becoming the newest members of the family of the IIM Calcutta alumni – an incredible distinction and a coveted privilege. All privileges come with responsibilities. The privilege of being IIM Calcutta alumni also immediately makes you responsible as ambassadors of IIM Calcutta. And I am sure you will discharge this responsibility with dignity and grace. Please accept my heartfelt congratulations and admiration for all of you.

You will recall that we met over a Zoom session on 19th June 2021 at your orientation. You were the 4th batch to whom I posed a challenge. Do you remember the challenge? The challenge was this – *can you be THAT batch which will graduate 100% together?* This meant that your batch should not leave a single classmate behind when you go to your 2nd year and not a single classmate behind when you graduate in April 2023? Do you remember why I posed this challenge and why I had asked if you as a batch want to strive for this honour? It is not at all

my intention to under

Mission Mangalam and clearly experienced that it was the inequitable distribution of the created wealth that is at the root of poverty. Our people create wealth but have very poor access to that wealth and more disturbingly they are allowed to get ownership to only an

our nation's problems.

As my teacher Sri M observes:

"When you do selfless work, have no fear. Even if you fail, you will win in the end. This is the courage we should have. Keep in mind that one day you will succeed. That is the clarion call for hope"

I have great hope for each and every one of you. As you step out into the world, please accept my prayers for your continued wellbeing, good health, happiness and peace of mind. May the Divine always bless you.

Thank you & Jai Hind