



**Address
of
Dr. R. P. Singh
Chairman
Board of Governors**

at

**The 14th Convocation of
Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati
Friday, 25 May 2012**

Distinguished Chief Guest of the Convocation Dr. Abdul Kalam Sahib; Members of the Board of Governors; Director of the Institute, Professor Gautam Barua; Members of the Senate; Faculty and Staff; Graduating Students; their parents/guardians; Ladies and Gentlemen. It is my pleasure to extend the heartiest greetings and warm welcome on behalf of the Board of Governors and Faculty to Hon'ble Dr. Abdul Kalam Sahib on this 14th Convocation Day of IIT Guwahati. I also extend my personal greetings and welcome to all of you who have graced this occasion by your benign presence.

The occasion today is both joyous and solemn because it is a major milestone in your career that propels you to the real world. You have put in hard work and dedication to obtain one of the most coveted academic qualifications.

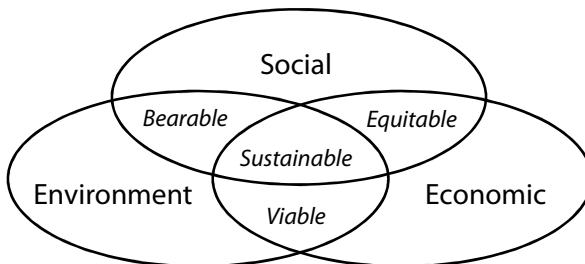
I take this opportunity to also congratulate your parents who have made sacrifices and stood by you all along, and the faculty members of the Institute who have trained and guided you over the years with commitment and dedication.

Dear students, you are the future of this great nation. You must have dreams and be eager to shape them. I wish you all success in your every action that adds to the glory of our great nation.

Today we have amongst us as our Chief Guest Dr. Kalam Sahib who is and should be the role model to every young technocrat and scientist. I say this because the lure of power and money tends to mislead many an individuals.

Therefore, when you are ready to take a plunge in the world of opportunities and become a contributor to economic development and growth, I would like to share some of my thoughts with you on sustainable growth of humanity which I have cherished as a village boy and as a technocrat.

Wealth is the main ingredient to economic growth [***“Arthasya moolam rajyam”*** means ***“States glory comes from wealth.”*** – Chanakya Sutra] but for a sustainable growth, it is imperative that wealth is created through fair means for the benefit of mankind across the globe. For the sustainable development, the environmental protection, the social needs and the economic viability of the project (work) you are engaged in need to be integrated cohesively. For a better clarity this is dem`onstrated in the diagram here:



My dear graduating students, you are entering into the arena of professional life where you will be engaged in wealth creation. Therefore, I urge upon you that you must take into account all the three aspects of sustainable development.

Global warming has awakened us to many global environmental issues. Our planet's ecosystem is under attack on many fronts. Our body structure is too a combination of five main elements of our eco-system. In the words of 'Sant Tulsidas':

***"Chhiti Jal Pavak Gagan Sameera,
Panch Tatva Rachit Yeh Adham Sharira."***

So can we feel safe if our eco-system is disturbed and unsafe?

The ancient Indian philosophy believes in "**Vasudhaib Kutumbkam**" means the entire earth is but a great family. Therefore, we cannot separate ourselves from the world society. The following teachings of Isavasya Upanishad also convey similar message:

***"Om Isavasyam idagm sarvam yat-kinca jagatyam jagat,
Tena tyaktena bhunjitha ma grdhah kasya svid dhanam."***

Means: All this, whatsoever moves in this universe, including the universe, itself moving, is indwelt or pervaded or enveloped by the Lord. That renounced, thou shouldst enjoy. Covet not anybody's wealth.

To express in layman's language this entire universe of multiplicity is pervaded by God. Therefore, through detachment from all plurality come to experience the Supreme Harmony of God through renunciation of attachment, ego, and desire and enjoy what is given by Him and never desire for the wealth of others."

It is important to remember that creation of wealth is different from making money. **Money** itself has no inherent value and it does not actually exist. "**Wealth** is what you are left with when you have lost all your money." **Wealth** is things like your passions, your network, your track record, your access to resources and your knowledge of industry. Unfortunately, in today's topsy-turvy days of consumerism, the sustainable development through creation of wealth has assumed back bench. Instead money making has assumed the centre stage globally on the assumption that it will last forever with the holders. Here I would like to share with you the last wish of Alexander the Great when he was on death bed. He said "*When I die, both my hands should be kept dangling out of my coffin because I wish people to know that I came empty handed into this world and empty handed I go out of this world*".

In kalyug people have become very greedy and reckless for money. Bhakt Kabir says:

***"Kali ka swami lobhiya, Peetal dhari khataai;
Raaj-dubaaran yown firey, jyun harihaayi Gaaye."***

Our ancient religious books have advocated the creation of wealth but with the advice that such creation should be through right means; they ask us to share it with the deserving one; and further advise that one should be a custodian of the wealth not a hoarder.

Man is a social animal and wealth is necessary for social status. Bible says **"Wealth maketh many friends."** Rahim (a Navratna in the Court of Akbar the Great) has beautifully expressed it in a couplet:

***"Jab lagi vitta na aapune, tab lagi mittar na hoye,
'Rahiman' ambuj ambu bin, Ravi naahin hit hoye."***

Means: Nobody befriends a person without wealth. Sun God also breaks His friendship with Lotus Flower that is not in water."

But remember wealth also creates enemies. **Therefore, Chanakya in Arthshastra advises that one has to share his wealth for the sake of safety of his own wealth.** This is further corroborated with the popular saying that you are happy if neighbourers are happy. Aptly Chanakya has substantiated his wisdom giving the example of honeybee. It collects honey; neither consumes nor allows others to consume. But ultimately, others take it away and the honeybee dies lying on the earth covered with dust. The shloka from Chanakya Neeti says:

***"Deyam Bhojyadhanam Sukritibhirno Sanchayastasya Vai
Shri Karnassya Baleshcha Vikrampatreddyapi Keerti Sthitaa.
Asmaakam Madhudaanyogarahitam Nashtam Chiraatsanchitaa.
Nirvaanaaditi Nashtapaadyugalam Gharshhtyamee Makshikaah."***

Means: "All great men should donate eatables and wealth. It is improper to hoard these things. The fame of Karna (of Mahabharata) and Bali (a mythological monarch renowned for his sacrifice and charity) is still unblemished because of their charity. The honeybees ruefully rub their feet against ground to repent for neither themselves enjoying their honey nor gifting it to others.

Therefore, my humble appeal to the young graduates is that your predecessor IITians have been creators of wealth across the globe; you kindly follow their footsteps; create wealth rather than make money; share it for multiplication with the deserving ones; and salvage the mother earth from devastation which is looming large.

Thank you and Jai Hind.

Dr. R. P. Singh
Chairman, Board of Governors
Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati