

FOUNDATION STONE LAYING CEREMONY
KALINGA SCHOOL OF RURAL AMANAGEMENT, KIIT, BHUBANESWAR
20th November, 2006

ADDRESS BY DR. V KURIEN, CHANCELLOR, ALLAHABAD UNIVERSITY

Shri Biswabhusan Harichandan, Hon'ble Minister of Industries, Law and Rural Development, Govt. of Orissa; Shri Surendra Nath Nayak, Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture, Govt. of Orissa; Shri S. N. Tripathi, Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Dept. of Rural Development and Information Technology, Govt. of Orissa; Dr. Samanta, Chancellor, KIIT; Prof. S. C. De Sarkar, Vice Chancellor, KIIT; distinguished members of KIIT Board of Management, faculty, staff and students of KIIT, esteemed guests, media representatives, ladies and gentlemen,

I feel greatly honoured to have been invited to lay the foundation stone of Kalinga School of Rural Management as a part of the growing family of KIIT Deemed University. The KIIT University with a modest beginning with just 200 students in 1997 has grown into an academic giant with enrolment of more than 5000 students in B.Tech, MBA, MCA and M.Tech programmes in less than a decade. Additionally, KIIT Society, outside the University fold, also runs a number of educational and social development institutions. I am indeed very happy, Dr. Samanta had the vision and wisdom to think about the need for a Rural Management Institute in Bhubaneswar.



You may have heard about the Institute of Rural Management, Anand (IRMA).

IRMA was founded in 1979 when I was the Chairman of NDDB. It was set up as an

institution committed to preparing young women and men to serve our farmers as managers of their organizations and institutions, such as cooperatives, NGOs, etc. Such an Institute was very much needed as the graduates of mainstream management institutes like IIMs were not willing to work for the professionalisation of farmers' organizations. IRMA was founded with the firm belief that the future of our nation lies in the villages and if our villages are to prosper, it is essential that rural development and agribusiness organizations be managed professionally. Since my early days in Anand, I always tried to find my own ways of fulfilling the nationalist vision of the builders of modern India such as Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. I share their vision that the nation's independence was more than a political task, that our rural people could not become really free until they were freed from the exploitation of money-lenders, middlemen and from the burdens of caste and class. I firmly believe that an important way to address the problems is to build rural institutions, including those of research and teaching institutions that would respond to the needs of our rural people. Government should play only a facilitator's role, and let our people manage the institutions they own, by employing professional managers.



Having established IRMA in Anand, I also wished for long that the second Institute of Rural Management should come up in Orissa. It would have taken shape in 1998, but, for reasons beyond my control, the plan fell through. Now, with the setting up of the Kalinga School of Rural Management, my wish is fulfilled. I am happy, the initiative of shaping the Kalinga School of Rural Management in Orissa has come from persons like Dr. Samanta - an institution builder of repute in the field of

education – and some faculty members who have worked in IRMA for many years. I am sure that Kalinga School of Rural Management and the professional managers that it will produce will be able to find ways to enlarge and enhance the resources available to our villagers and to improve the ways in which those resources could be converted into the goods and services that our rural people require. The young professionals aspiring to serve rural organizations should also understand the essence of AMUL experiment – the cooperative model of development. The basic idea is that ‘true development is the development of people’. I have always believed that to facilitate the development of people, it is necessary to place the instruments of development in their very own hands. The AMUL experiment does so through the farmer-owned-and-controlled cooperative institutions. The AMUL experiment also suggests that there are many services that are important to our rural people that can, and should be provided by organizations that are owned and controlled by the users themselves. The cooperative model could also be experimented in other fields, such as, community health, education, power distribution, etc.

As I have said in my recently published book -- I too Had a Dream -- “I have often claimed that I have had but one good idea in my life: true development is the development of women and men. This idea took such a hold of me that I remained in this small, sleepy town of Anand for over fifty-five years as an employee of farmers. I was never able to give this up for what many call “a better life”. These years have, without an iota of doubt, been the most rewarding years of my life. Over the years I have spoken ceaselessly of this idea, hoping to enthuse young women and men to adopt my passion as theirs. I have been fortunate that there have been many who took up the challenge.”



The IRMA experiment proves that you require a different kind of management institute - different from the usual type - to professionalise the management of rural institutions and achieve equitable socio-economic development of the rural people. In fact, there were hundreds of management institutes, schools of business administration, university departments of management and business administration when the 'Operation Flood' programme was initiated by NDDDB in the 1970s for the replication of 'Anand-Pattern' dairy cooperatives all over the country. However, the best managerial inputs required for rural organizations were not forthcoming from the institutions imparting management education. It was in this context that IRMA was established in 1979 to produce Rural Managers. Over the last twenty-seven years, IRMA has contributed in its unique way by providing managerial input for the development of rural India. There are thousands of IRMANs now working for rural organizations - in cooperatives, NGOs, semi-government institutions, etc. But, there is an immediate need for more institutions like IRMA, particularly in the backward regions of our country. The demand for Rural Managers is very high and the demand is growing rapidly. Therefore, the new institute being set up here is certainly a welcome development and a step in the right direction.



Every generation has its own challenges and opportunities. Currently, with the onset of globalization, we face a new set of challenges. The academic institutions can, to some extent, help to manage the developmental challenges that India faces today. In the emerging information and knowledge age, the need of the hour, particularly for the institutions of rural management, is to impart knowledge, and produce the desired type of management professionals who will be willing to work in different sectors to promote rural prosperity in the country. The challenge before the young

professionals coming out of the rural management institutes will be to resist the temptation to go and work where they will receive maximum monetary reward, rather than rural-oriented organizations where their talents will be required the most. I hope that Kalinga School of Rural Management will keep this in mind and help its students to orient themselves towards contributing to the development of rural India, thereby improving the lives of the underprivileged rural population of our country.

I wish all success to the Kalinga School of Rural Management.

Thank you.