

Chairman's Address



Dr. R. Chidambaram
Chairman, Board of Governors
IIT Jodhpur

Honourable Chief Guest Prof. Geoffrey Hinton, Professor Santanu Chaudhury, Director of IIT Jodhpur, distinguished members of the Board of Governors, members of the Senate, faculty and staff of IIT Jodhpur, invitees, guests, parents, and my dear young friends who are graduating today: On behalf of the Board of Governors, it gives me immense pleasure to extend a very cordial and special welcome to our Chief Guest of this function Prof. Geoffrey Hinton.

The IIT system has, as we all know, a very high global brand equity; among the IITs, of course, IIT Jodhpur is a relatively young institution. It was established in 2008. Prof. Santanu Chaudhury has made commendable and successful efforts to attract new faculty members in various disciplines, including highly qualified academics as visiting faculty, and also to bring in bright scientists, many of them awaiting their Ph.D. degrees, as Young Associates. Director Santanu Chaudhury mentioned about the progress of the Institute over the last year. I am very happy that Masters & Ph.D. programmes have been initiated jointly with the proximate AIIMS in Jodhpur in Medical Technology, and Tech-MBA programme on 'Management with Data Science'. There is emphasis on **design thinking** and **creativity**, also experiential learning, from the first year itself. The Institute has also taken the necessary steps to complete the curricula by conducting classes through the online mode, and in fact has also taken up some development projects in this context. I am particularly happy that several inter-disciplinary Ph.D. programmes have been started in Artificial Intelligence, also Science of Intelligence, Smart Healthcare, and so on. The institute is establishing a company: "**iHub Drishti Foundation**", to act as an R&D Hub in the field of Cyber Physical Systems. As you heard from the Director, a new School of Management and Entrepreneurship has also been created here – after all, Rajasthan is famous for its entrepreneurs. The **Incubation & Innovation Centre and the Sports Complex** were inaugurated by the Hon'ble Shiksha Mantri Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' on 16th October this year. IIT Jodhpur has research programmes in various advanced areas and many of them are naturally inter-departmental, because the boundaries between scientific disciplines are continuously becoming more and more fuzzy.

A New Education Policy has been announced by the Government, with many new forward-looking features and flexibility. Young people must have the opportunity to maximize their talents and make career choices in tune with their talents, and the New Education Policy provides the framework for that.

This aspect is built into the IIT Jodhpur curricula. A new Science, Technology & Innovation Policy is also on the anvil.

Technology Foresight is required to select the Critical Technologies needed for rapid development of the country, and for it to become a knowledge economy, and these must be re-assessed periodically, based on the latest scientific developments. In all this, we need to develop self-reliance, that is achieve what Prime Minister Modi ji calls ***Atmanirbhar Bharat***; I am sure IIT Jodhpur will play a major role in achieving this goal. Of course, *Atmanirbharta* does not mean that we should not go in for international collaboration – the scientific world today is very strongly linked; we should go in for international collaboration, but only on an ‘equal partner’ basis, and this is happening now.

Jodhpur has been identified as one of the six cities for initiating city-based innovation clusters by the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India, with the objective of increasing cooperation amongst proximate national laboratories and universities, and also of enhancing academia-industry interactions. IIT Jodhpur will be the coordinator for this cluster.

After the degrees you get today, you young people will start a new chapter in your careers, pursuing research, or acquiring additional academic qualifications, or in industries. Some of you may start your own enterprises. I wish you all the best in your future careers.

Thank you and Jai Hind.
