

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS AWARD

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October 5, 2007, Kanpur

Dr. Padmanabhan, Shri Bhartia, Dr. Vinod Tare, Fellow, Distinguished Alumini, The Reunion Class of '75, Ladies, Gentleman and my young friends,

I am honored and privileged to be here, to receive this recognition from this great institution. When I left the portals of IIT, Kanpur in 1967, I couldn't even have dreamt that I will be standing here thirty two years hence. I am overwhelmed. I thank you for this gesture. I came to IIT, Kanpur, as a young man, less than twenty years of age, to pursue my Master's Degree in Chemistry. I left IIT, Kanpur after two years, in 1967, to the US for my Graduate School at Purdue. I am back here, a long thirty two years since, to live the glorious memories of those two wonderful years, in retrospect, the best years of my life.

What was IIT-K back then? I can speak for the Department of Chemistry of which I was a part. Many of us were awestruck by the outstanding faculty – trained in some of the best schools around the world. We were astounded by the easy informality and accessibility. The content of knowledge in the curriculum was high. More than anything the faculty was excited about the job they were doing – that is teaching. They were caring and understanding. Learning was such a pleasure.

IIT-K showed the stars to us and told us it was reachable. It gave us tremendous faith in ourselves and a courage which made us believe, we are second to none. It created in us the unquenchable thirst for new knowledge.

I am indeed grateful to this great institution for having made me (and all of us) what we are today. I am beholden to my teachers and peers, who taught me chemistry – the legendary trinity – Professor CNR Rao, Professor M.V. George and Professor P.T. Narasimhan, who left an indelible mark on this institution. If I have been successful in my chosen profession today – it is because what this great institution taught me – to stand tall, look at the skies, dream passionately and work relentlessly to convert the dreams into reality. Thank IIT-K!