**Hon’ble Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman joins the leaders of tomorrow at IIM Ahmedabad for an interactive session**

*~ IIM Ahmedabad’s JSW – School of Public Policy hosted the interactive session on the theme: The Economic Rebound and the Indian Economy in 2021 and Beyond~*

**25th February 2021, India:** The Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA), welcomed Hon’ble Finance Minister of India, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman today, as she joined MBA students of the globally recognized, premier management institute, for an interactive session on the theme ‘The Economic Rebound and the Indian Economy in 2021 and Beyond’ with its students.

Hosted by IIMA’s JSW-School of Public Policy, was the first on ground event held at the Institute since the pandemic. The session threw light on various aspects of the Indian economy including return of consumer confidence, robust financial markets, an uptick in manufacturing, education sector and the decrease in the budget allocation this year, PSU disinvestment target, health expenditure, skill India, fuel prices reduction, savings and borrowing scheme, upskilling: for automation and gig workers, investment in infrastructure, agriculture and many more.

Speaking on the occasion **Prof. Errol D’Souza, Director, IIMA Programmes said**, *“It is our honour and an encouragement to have the Hon’ble Finance Minister, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman at the Institute. We are grateful for her presence, in spite of her commitments. I am happy to share that IIMA and its faculty have been supporting the government with their expertise on various aspects of policymaking, which is our way of contributing to the growth of the country. Today’s interaction with the Hon’ble Minister will become a memorable and inspiring moment for our students, who are at the threshold of beginning their journey into the real world.”*

Smt. Sitharaman is an inspiration for all, especially the young people of the country. As the first woman leader to hold the portfolios of Defence and Finance at the Centre, she has become an aspirational model for the young women in the country. During the session, the **Finance Minister** **Smt. Sitharaman encouraged the students to expand their boundaries and said**, “*You all are fortunate enough to be in an institution like this [IIMA]. My only request to you is spare sometime for the country and the nation to get stronger. India needs your support. Concentrate on yourself but also concentrate on making India brighter and smarter”*

**Acting as co-chairs, Prof. Errol D’Souza, with IIMA students Mr. Arunabh Saxena and Ms. Sonakshi Agrawal,** among other points discussed about disinvestment targets of PSUs and government’s approach towards it. They also addressed the concerns of consumers bearing the high costs of fuel today and how is the government resolving these challenges.

**When asked about the rationale and steps taken by the government to ensure quality education, Smt. Sitharaman said,** *“That the desire for encouraging twinning programmes in hopes of getting a world class university certificate and technologically driven tools like optical fibres even at the panchayat level will add to the betterment of education in the country. Hence there has been a conscious attempt in improving the funding of education. I would want to underline the fact that the New Education Policy, the schemes under it, and the long term vision under which the NEP looks at making the Indian education a lot more vibrant has received due consideration in the budget making process."*

Smt. Sitharaman further addressed that the Indian economy was on a rebound and she expects to see an economic recovery in the coming year. While the budget gave a due consideration to the national education policy and its schemes, she also believes that there is a huge potential of digital learning in the country across states, especially for the ones who have lesser access to it. She also threw light on the need for skilling and up skilling across industries and its success rates with a focussed approach.

The institute has a unique model of a convivial combination of the union, state and the business community. IIMA research programmes are the most coveted and prominent in the areas like Strategy, Economics, Finance, Operations and Marketing. IIMA also set up a number of sector or mission-oriented thrust groups termed ‘Centres' to apply management science to other sectors of the economy. These Centres are led by faculty members from different inter-disciplinary areas that come together to pursue research and consulting.

**About Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA):**

Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA) was founded in 1961 as a unique collaboration between the Government of India, Government of Gujarat, local industrialists of Ahmedabad, Ford Foundation and the Harvard Business School, and has emerged as a world-class management institute. IIMA continues to put India on the global map in Management Education.

Over the years, IIMA has benefited more than 38,000 alumni who graduated from its various programmes. Currently, besides its renowned flagship Two-year Master in Business Administration (MBA), the Institute continues to draw top-quality students to its PhD Programme in Management namely MBA in Food and Agri-Business Management (FABM), MBA-PGPX (One-Year Full-Time Post Graduate Programme in Management for Executives), Faculty Development Programme (FDP), Armed Forces Programme (AFP) and many more programmes. IIMA also benefits industry professionals through its short duration Executive Education Programmes. Globally, the IIMA's programmes have earned high reputation and acclaim, becoming the first Indian institution to receive international accreditation EQUIS.

To know more about IIMA, please visit: <https://www.iima.ac.in/>