

Good morning and very very warm welcome to all of you to the iCED.

We are very happy to have you all here. Amongst other things one simple reason, why we are happy is that we all in IA&AD, I repeat we all in IA&AD perhaps belong to a segment, which is common. Which is that segment? It is the segment where we all are contributors to translating thoughts and ideas into practices and so it is we who are the originators, the implementers and the evaluators of certain changes in the department. There is another selfish small reason why I feel happier than other courses. The selfish reason is that all of you are handling administrative problems like the ones which we handle. I am sure you would all be more accommodating and more understanding. That is not to say I do not apologize for any inconveniences you feel. I am sure you would have faced some inconveniences. We are a young institute, less than five years and at the same time at a place where things are not very easy to get across. So some inconvenience, I assure you, you will have. Please bear be with us, but with that I am quite sure that all of you would be more understanding than others when it comes to small problems here.

Coming to what this course is about and why is it there in the first place. Thinking on environment is not new, either to IA&AD or to the world. When I think of environment, I am reminded of a famous sentence by the father of the nation Mahatma Gandhi, "*Earth provides enough to satisfy everyman's needs, by man here he means a person. The earth provides enough to satisfy every person's needs but not every persons' greed*". This is something which perhaps brings into focus the importance of wise use of natural resources. Which are the natural resources- the water we drink, the air we breathe, the food, we eat and beyond these basic needs, the western philosophy tells about perhaps, there are two more. One is the sound we hear and the ecology, the environment, we feel. These together, in my opinion, constitute what can be described as environment. Nothing which goes beyond five main GYANENDRIYAS (senses) as have been described by our great grandfathers.

Coming closer to our times. I am reminded of something which Thomas Friedman, the noted economist says when it comes to environment. He says "At the end of the day, no amount of investing, no amount of clean electrons, no amount of energy efficiency, will save the natural world if we are not paying attention to it". He goes on "if you are not paying attention to all these things the electron, the energy, etc- if you are not paying attention to all these things that nature has given as for free, clean air, clean water, breathtaking vistas, mountains for skiing, rivers for fishing, ocean for sailing, sunset for poets and landscapes for painters," he says, "if we do not pay enough attention to all this, what good is it to have window power lights to brighten the night if you cannot see anything green during the day" and he says "just because we can't sell-shares in nature, doesn't mean it has no value". I don't think there can be better economic description of what environment means and what environment is. Yes, we don't sell clean air on the stock market but these days we do. There are shares of wind energy companies on the stock market. Perhaps we are moving in a world which is monetizing everything. Perhaps a few years from now, we may also have companies which have professional counselors trading their share in stock exchanges. I hope that doesn't happen at least in India but that notwithstanding, environment is something which is so close to us, which we are a part of and yet something which we understand little about. Understanding environment is a prelude to auditing environment. It is for this reason perhaps, that environmental auditing is assuming greater and greater significance in recent time. This is one issue, one audit area which perhaps is highly people centric and perhaps has utmost appeal in mind, media and others.

Let me give an example. Only in last month- April 2015, the Accountant General, Assam, brought out a report on Kaziranga National Park. In less than a month, we have national green tribunal ordering all recommendations to be implemented in a year. How many similar audit reports can we think of. Perhaps very few and yet this is one area where although we feel it is similar to the entire nation, it is so different in each region. Only a few weeks back, we had a special training course on audit of State Pollution Control

Boards for the North-Eastern States. As we in the rest of the country understand we had felt that problems in the North-Eastern States would be more or less similar. To my dismay, when I sat through the presentations on the last day. I found each of these states so different. This points to the fact that a professional approach to environmental audit is called for. In this course, what we propose to do is, not to impart training alone but to work with all of you to become partners with all your institutions is spreading the message and in trying to focus the need for and the skills involved in auditing environment. I am serious when I say we intend to partner with all of you. We consider all of you as a part of iCED. We would look forward to having working relationships where together we all take IA&AD to heights of excellence in the field of audit of environment. Towards this end, we would have some content delivery sessions in a good measure. There would also be sharing of experiences by those who have done some environment audits. Every day in the evening, we would meet for at least half an hour, if more it is up to you, to discuss how we could fine tune, refine, make excellent training methodologies in audit of environment. This is how the course is broadly structured. It could be little taxing for you. Let me apologize for making you work a little longer than you may perhaps normally be working. At the same time we will provide some good breaks. A small trek to a nearby hill for those who are interested tomorrow morning. Those who are shopping lovers have an opportunity today evening and we would also take you for a light and sound show to one of the noted forts in Rajasthan, Amber on one of these evenings. I hope with all the taxing course inputs which we have, you would still enjoy this place and perhaps take away the uniqueness and ambience of this place. I would look forward to you having a pleasant stay and a nice learning experience here. With these words I welcome you again and inaugurate this course.