

Distinguished Chief Guest, Dr. Joram Aniya Ji, respected Chairperson, Board of Governors, SPA, Bhopal, Prof. H.D. Charan Ji, respected members of Board of Governors and Senate of SPA, Bhopal, esteemed guests, parents, colleagues and my very dear students, a very warm welcome to all of you.

At the onset of the 13th Convocation of SPA Bhopal, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to all the degree recipients across the undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral programmes. You have all done us proud!

All our ongoing and future academic endeavours are designed to further enrich the professions of Architecture, Planning, Design and Building Engineering and Management by offering a highly accomplished pool of valuable human resources, some of whom are graduating today.

I now present some of the milestones achieved in SPA Bhopal since the last Convocation in January 2026.

- **A total of 233 graduands (108 undergraduands, 124 post graduands, and 1 PhD graduand) will be awarded degrees in this convocation**
- **Girl students continue to outnumber boy students across the undergraduate, postgraduate and PhD programmes. They comprise of around 58.5% of the total student strength of 1004!**
- **In the last academic year, we have introduced the Integrated B. Plan – M. Plan Dual Degree Programme inline with the mandate of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and to enhance the competencies and employability of our students in the planning profession. It has proved to be a popular choice with a larger second batch having been admitted this year.**
- **The Department of Architecture and Department of Design have also revised the B. Arch and M. Des curricula respectively, to enhance flexibility, interdisciplinarity, and alignment with the NEP.**
- **The Department of Environment Planning has developed an Elective subject titled 'Urban Waterfront Development' in collaboration with the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) and National Mission on Clean Ganga (NMCG), Government of India, from July 2026, a course which provides students with a comprehensive introduction to aspects of waterfront planning. They also hosted the National Grand Finale of the 6th Season of the Student Thesis Competition on 'Re-imagining Urban Rivers' in July in collaboration with NIUA, MoHUA .**
- **The SPA Bhopal Innovation Foundation has been established as a Section 8 Company, and the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Policy and Innovation and Startup Policy/ Guidelines have been formulated to foster an ecosystem of innovation in the Institute.**
- **A MoU has been signed between the SPA, Bhopal and the Tribal Research and Development Institute, Bhopal, under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, for promoting scientific research and academic collaboration.**
- **We continue to work on the Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan for North Block and South Block, Central Vista, New Delhi, as part of the Yuge Yugeen Bharat Museum project, the largest museum of the World.**
- **A Rural Construction & Research Centre funded by the Department of Panchayat and Rural Development, Government of Madhya Pradesh has been set up in the Institute. A construction yard under the Centre is being established to build and test prototypes of buildings adapting indigenous construction systems documented from more than 6000 different housing typologies across the 55 districts of Madhya Pradesh.**
- **The External Development work undertaken by CPWD has been completed enhancing the landscaping around the academic buildings.**

- The closure report of the Detailed Project Report of SPA Bhopal (DPR-1) has been submitted for acceptance by the Ministry of Education.
- The sustained efforts of my colleagues and commitment of my dear students helped us in keeping our campus ragging free.

SPA Bhopal supports the student community in their holistic development and well-being through diverse cultural, sports, social, and innovation-driven activities.

Our students participated not only in the events held at our institute, but also in other institutes of eminence. Just recently, SPA Bhopal with a contingent of 134 students participated in Sangram 2026 organised by IIT Roorkee, where SPA Bhopal participated in 19 events winning three gold, one silver & one bronze medal. All the fifteen students' clubs of the Institute were enthusiastic and active in conducting many innovative activities. The fifth and sixth editions of the Students' Newsletter titled SPACES capturing various student's events and their creative works in architecture, planning, design, literature, sketching and photography, have been published. Hailing from different geographies, our students showcase the unity in diversity of our country by celebrating Maha Shivratri, Holi, Gudi Padwa, Janmashtami, Ganesh Chaturthi, Onam, Vishwakarma Jayanti and many other events, turning the campus into a vibrant cultural place.

Our students continued to make us proud by bringing laurels to the institute through their participation in various international and national academic events, under the guidance of the faculty mentors. Many of them excelled at various Competitions including (i) The LEED Green Associate Credential, (ii) the Urban Innovation Challenge 2025, (iii) the Saint-Gobain Transparency 20.0 – Architecture Student Contest (ASC) 2026, (iv) the Youth Hackathon 2025, (v) the Influence India Fellowship, (vi) the 27th Annual National NOS Plan Convention, (vii) The 'Moving Millions' Competition and (ix) the Yuva Abhivyakti 2026 among many others. They have also won Best Thesis Awards at the NASA India Thesis Grant, the ITPI MP Regional Chapter and Best Paper Awards at several prestigious events including Aarohan 2026 held at IIT Delhi, ISDF Conference 2026, organised at SPA Delhi in association with the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, the ICRDTIES conference, NIUA Student Thesis Competition 2025–26, and also published in Scopus indexed journals.

Our alumni are excelling academically and professionally. A considerable number of alumni pursue Masters and Doctoral degrees at major institutes including IITs and the IIMs across the country and abroad. Many of them are employed in international firms across the world, global think tanks in India and abroad, consultancy firms of repute and government departments. Many have also chosen to be self-driven entrepreneurs.

I am delighted to share that the faculty members across Departments continue to be prolific in their academic and research endeavours. Prof. Ajay Khare was awarded the prestigious Spring- term 'Guest Scholar Fellowship' by the Getty Foundation, LA USA, for his work on Conservation of Tamil Temple Towns, for which he was at The Getty Centre from April 2026 till June 2026. Several Faculty members across Departments have published their papers in reputed journals and book series brought out by leading publishers like, Springer, Sage, Emerald, Taylor and Francis, etc. Faculty members have presented in Conferences and have been invited speakers at different events and institutions across the country. Faculty members were also members of boards of studies, academic and advisory committees, juries, panel discussions, and journal reviewers, in reputed organisations. Additionally, faculty members are achieving excellence in extracurricular activities too, including winning a bronze medal at a FIDE rated International Open Rapid Chess Tournament.

I am happy to share that we have organised two Conferences in 2026 - the CPTED Conference, and the 'Rashtriya Karmayogi Large Scale Jan Seva Programme'. The Departments organised several training and workshops on a wide variety of subjects since January 2026 including (i) indoor and outdoor building performance, (ii) Performance of Steel Structures, (iii) Earth Construction, (iv) Large-span structures, (v) AI Integrated Approaches in Hotel Architecture, (vi) Water Resilient Development, (vii) urban heat resilience (viii) Airport Design, Planning and Management, (ix) Strategic Management of

Port, Shipping, and Logistics Ecosystems (x) Urban Project Management (xi) Urban Renewal and Housing (xii) Identification of AI and Plagiarism in Academic Writing among many others.

The ten inter-disciplinary Centres at SPA Bhopal, have been engaged in research and consultancy activities based on their respective mandates. The Centre for Geoinformatics published four research papers focusing on urban susceptibility, spatial intelligence, smart monitoring and heat prediction. The Centre of Urban Planning for Capacity Building (CUPCB) under AMRUT 2.0 of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), has completed 14 research projects and conducted 10 Capacity Building Programmes training over 500 individuals. The Design Innovation Centre (DIC) continued field validation and refinement of the patented platforms RAFTAR and SABHI, while filing two additional provisional patents KHO-JO and SAKSHAM. Centre for Human Centric Research (CHCR) continued research on inclusive mobility and universal design, and organised Executive Development Programmes under AMRUT CUPCB. The HARIT Shodh Peeth Centre undertook initiatives promoting water-sensitive planning, sustainability and climate resilience. A workshop on water and river-sensitive planning for Guwahati, was organised in collaboration with NIUA and UNICEF in March 2026. The Centre also organised Yuva Abhivyakti 2026, engaging over 100 students in creative activities promoting water conservation and youth participation. The National Centre for Spatial Rural Development Planning is supporting the State Government in implementing the projects identified in Murwas Gram Panchayat and Vidisha district. The Centre for Land and Real Estate has been engaged in drafting the State Urban Affordable Housing and Habitat Policy for Madhya Pradesh.

The Institute has continued to conduct a number of research and consultancy projects. The research and consultancy projects that are being undertaken in 2026, include (i) GIS Based Master Plan for ULBs in Uttarakhand and in Jammu and Kashmir (iii) Climate-Resilient, Secure and Healthy Environments, (iv) Tamil Temple Town: Conservation and Contestation and (v) Hybrid Stair Climbing Wheel Chair: Human Centred Research and Development.

We are grateful for the academic and industry collaborations with number of institutions across the country as well as abroad, which have continued in 2026 increasing our knowledge partner network.

The campus and state-of-the-art facilities of SPA Bhopal are a matter of pride among faculty and students alike. Among these, the SPA Bhopal Library serves as the Institute's intellectual hub. Presently, with the expanded library space and improved ambience, the library has higher student footfall than in preceding years. The GIS and Graphics Labs have also been expanded to increase their capacity. We recently inaugurated an outdoor student activity area just behind this Open Air Theatre, which is now the hub for all student activities.

As we all know, training and Placements are a core metrics of evaluation of any institute. I am pleased to share that the Training and Placement Cell at the School of Planning and Architecture, Bhopal plays a pivotal role in strengthening the interface between academia and industry. During this academic year, SPA Bhopal students secured training opportunities with reputed national and international organizations. The Institute's growing network of accomplished alumni in leadership roles across India and abroad strengthens placement outcomes. This year too, the placement drive attracted new and old recruiters and resulted in more than 100 job offers.

I take pride in stating that we celebrated our Seventy-Seventh Republic Day and Eightieth Independence Day. We conducted the Swachhata Pakhwada, The Hindi Pakhwada, The Anti Ragging Week and the 11th International Yoga Day. I am delighted to inform you that we continued with the publication of our Hindi Magazine SAMVAD, and Hindi News Letter SPANDAN during the year.

In spite of our many achievements, some tasks still remain unfinished. We would like to Introduce new programmes such as the Master of Infrastructure Planning and Management

Airport Design, Planning and Management, soon. Another mandate is to Increase the cross-disciplinary research and innovation activities through the Innovation Foundation which has been set up as a Section 8 company. Campus development activities will continue, to enhance the quality of spaces both inside and outside the buildings.

On this occasion of Thirteenth Convocation of SPA Bhopal, I once again extend my heartiest congratulations and best wishes to all our graduands and proud parents. I wish you all the very best for a bright future and for all your future endeavours in life.

JAI HIND!