



# THE TIMES OF INDIA

## Networking is key to a fruitful career: Nilekani

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Bangalore:** The key to a successful career is collaborating and building a large and diverse network in one's chosen field, Nandan Nilekani, chairman, Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), said on Thursday.

"Our civilization is in a sweet spot now; we need to build things collaboratively. If the 20th century was about hierarchy, the 21st is about networking," Nilekani said, addressing the third annual convocation of Jain University.

He said a network brings different people together — lawyers, economists, engineers and scientists. "And when that happens, you get insights and ideas. You get to see new opportunities on the horizon before other people do," he added.

Recalling the character of Rancho in the Bollywood blockbuster 3 Idiots, Nandan said graduates should decide their own destiny and not fall prey to peer pressure. "By the time I graduated from college in 1978, our economy wasn't doing well. Many of my batchmates were preparing to leave the country and were taking the GMAT and GRE. It seemed a smart move, considering India's economic condition. I found the option intriguing, but finally decided it wasn't for me. I stayed here and



**MOMENT OF JOY:** Students celebrate at the Jain University convocation

“As a student, I wasn't an overachiever. In college, I discovered that academic excellence and competition were less important to me than to most people. No matter what your passion is — academic or otherwise — the point of it has to be more than beating others. Focusing on beating everyone else gets in the way of what you want to do. You must fight your own insecurities before you worry about the competitor

**Nandan Nilekani** | CHAIRMAN, UIDAI

worked for Patni Computer Systems where I met NR Narayana Murthy. If I had followed my friends, I'm sure I would've had a decent enough life and a 9-to-5 job, but not a fulfilling career.”

Citing his own example, Nandan advised graduates to take collaborative risks in life. "When we started Infosys, there were seven of us. It

would have been impossible for novices like us to start a company (individually) in the environment we were in and make it a success. Instead, the seven of us pooled in resources and each of us focused on what we were best at. Murthy was a great engineer and mentor and I was good at marketing and handling clients," he said.