

39th AIIMS Annual Convocation, New Delhi 21st December, 2011

DIRECTOR'S SPEECH

Honourable Chairperson of the National Advisory Council, Government of India, Smt Sonia Gandhiji, respected President of AIIMS and Minister for Health & Family Welfare, Govt. of India, Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad sahib, Members of Parliament, Excellencies from the Foreign Missions at Delhi, esteemed Members of the Institute, distinguished guests, my esteemed colleagues - the Dean, the Registrar and the faculty, friends from the press, dear students, respected parents, ladies and gentlemen:



On the occasion of the 39th Annual Convocation of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, I extend a very warm welcome to you all.

AIIMS was established in 1956. During its journey over half-a-century, AIIMS has made significant contribution in the field of medical education, research and quality patient care. The institute has not only proved its leadership in many areas but also has established itself as the best service provider.

AIIMS has a manpower of over 10,000 including 625 faculty members, supported by resident doctors, nurses, paramedics, scientists, non-medical officers and staff.

Till date, the institute has produced 4878 specialists (MD / MS / MDS / MHA - 156/2011), 1198 super-specialists (DM/M.Ch-64/2011), 2554 MBBS doctors (62/2011), 871 Ph.Ds. (49/2011) and a large number of postgraduates (M.Sc, M.Biotech) in allied health and basic sciences. The institute has also trained 2388 nurses and paramedical professionals (B.Sc-Hons-88/2011).

These figures of course include the 465 degrees, awarded today in different disciplines and branches of medicine and allied areas. I congratulate all the recipients of their well-deserved degrees and urge them to always uphold the dignity of their institute and the motherland.

AIIMS has been active in sharing its knowledge and expertise through CMEs, conferences and workshops. Under short term training scheme, the institute provided postgraduate training to 50 foreign nationals including 30 WHO fellows. 54 foreign graduates have also undergone elective training at AIIMS during the year. 939 doctors and other health-care professionals from different states underwent training during the

year. They also used the DST funded AIIMS national facility on high resolution Electron Microscopy (EM) for research and education.

The institute is committed to high quality research in patient care and medical sciences, besides education and innovations. Our faculty and scientists are engaged in frontline research in areas like human genomics, molecular medicine, proteomics, structural biology, metabolomics and newer diagnostics through imaging sciences, immunogenetics, cancer-therapy, fetal medicine & neonatology and technology-based innovations including biocompatible implant devices through collaborative bio-design. We have also employed platform based technologies for diagnosis of diseases in pathology and laboratory medicine, besides research in cell biology, vaccine development and biotechnology. These innovations have produced a high quality patient care delivery at the AIIMS.

Our doctors are also doing pioneering work in patient care in areas like cardiothoracic surgery, joint replacement/implant surgery, organ transplant surgeries, cochlear implantation, corneoplasty and intervention procedures in cardiology and neuroradiology. The doctors at our trauma-care centre have conducted trauma-related clinical research for innovations leading to developing a safe practice protocol and guidelines for acute and emergency care medicine.

During the last academic year the faculty and the scientists of the institute have published over 1600 research papers in national and international journals, besides contributing a large number of chapters in books. A large group of young scientists at different positions like research fellows, research associates and 380 Ph.D. students have been engaged in significant research and innovations. Over 480 research projects involving extramural funds of Rs. 55.56 crore are in progress. The institutional funding has also been increased to Rs. 5 crore this year.

Presently, the AIIMS hospitals have a total bed strength of 2424, including day care beds. During the preceding year, the institute attended to 25,54,860 patients in OPD and Casualty, admitted 1,62,267 patients and performed 1,49,365 surgical procedures. The institute has maintained an ideal parameter in patient-care services with an average bed occupancy of over 80%, and average hospital stay of about 6 days. The AIIMS hospitals reported a net death rate of below 3%.

During the year, we have introduced 3 new disciplines with D.M. Course in pulmonary medicine, M.Ch. Course in surgical oncology and M.D. Course in geriatric medicine. Geriatric medicine will soon become a national facility for the elderly, which is being funded by the central government. We recently started work on building a Convergence Centre. This convergence centre will house all modern platform based

state-of-the-art technology for our faculty and students to undertake research. It will indeed become the knowledge hub which will allow us to store and manage our large clinical material and research data for enhancing our capability in research.

We are aware that people have great expectation from the institute. We have tried and succeeded in providing affordable specialised medical care in the country. No wonder, the people, in general, and our patients, in particular, have reposed great trust in us. I, on behalf of my colleagues, would like to assure all those coming to us that we shall never shirk our responsibility. I take this opportunity to thank all my faculty, residents, nurses and other colleagues for their contribution and commitment to nation building activities in the health sciences sector.

I have no hesitation to say that we have lived up to the mandate given to us by the Parliament. Our work and commitment have been eminently endorsed by the public as well as the national leaders. It is, therefore, not surprising that AIIMS has assumed a brand value, which has been recognized by the Government of India as well as the State governments and institutes across the country. The central government's decision to open six AIIMS-like institutes in different States would not only provide quality health care to a much larger population in far-flung parts of the country but also would help us in acquiring valuable data about health parameters of these regions. AIIMS has been entrusted to mentor two of these institutes and I assure you that we will do it successfully.

Our brand value has unfortunately attracted a large patient load which has forced us to compromise on our other priorities. As Dr. Valiathan Committee Report has observed, with the proposed expansion of patient-care facilities and new centres, the institute would become a mega medicity, which may dilute and affect the academic and research activities of the Institute. This is indeed a big challenge for all of us. We have to protect its academic character to maintain its stated objective. The government and the Parliament have to consider this issue carefully and give necessary direction.

We are fully aware that we have to keep pace with the advances in science and technology, particularly in the field of biomedical sciences and to produce affordable solutions of our public health problems. As a public-funded institute we have also to see the cost of technology and the paying capacity of the average patient.

With the support from the government, the institute is about to start its expansion programme for improving its capacity in the present campus. We have recently got the permission from the ministry to start work in the Jhajjar Campus, in Haryana, as per the preliminary plans for both patient care and research.

India is on the move as a growing knowledge-based and technology driven society. The whole world is looking at us. We have to carefully plan for our future generation. It is indeed a huge responsibility to maintain the quality and the pace of growth, which is essential in the health-care sector, including augmentation of public health capabilities to meet the growing public health needs.

On behalf of the faculty, staff, resident doctors, scientists, nurses and students and on my own behalf, I express a deep sense of gratitude to you respected Madam for your august presence on this momentous occasion. We are indeed very happy to have you in our midst today. I am also extremely grateful to the honorable AIIMS President and Minister for Health and Family Welfare for his continuous support and guidance for the future growth of the institute.

At the end, I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

I thank you all for your kind indulgence.

JAI HIND

Professor Ramesh C. Deka,
Director/CEO, AIIMS, New Delhi