

## **Independence Day Speech by Director, AIIMS (15<sup>th</sup> August, 2011)**

Friends,

Today the nation celebrates the 65<sup>th</sup> Independence Day. On this occasion, I wish you and your family members health and happiness. We are privileged to be proud citizens of this sovereign republic. Let us join the nation to pay our homage to all those great souls who struggled and sacrificed to get us freedom.



We are indeed grateful to the founding fathers of our democracy. Despite all the challenges, India has emerged as a nation of global importance. We are fortunate to have a stable economy, adequate food for our people and enough funds to drive our growth. India's growth story is a matter of critical appreciation all over the world.

India's growth story also includes ambitious plans in the fields of education and health. The quality of education and health care available to its citizens are best parameters to judge the economic progress of a nation. Considering the importance attached to these two sectors by our government, we can have the satisfaction that we are in the right direction.

The establishment of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences was a cherished dream of Pandit Nehru. AIIMS was expected to be a shining star in the field of medical education and tertiary care in this part of the world. We are indeed very fortunate to be part of this mission. Over the last 64 years the institute has not only received due recognition in the field of medical education, research and patient care but also has succeeded in establishing itself as a brand in patient care. Needless to say that this brings more responsibility, greater expectation and greater accountability. It is now on our shoulders to take forward this mission. As per the mandate given to us, we are not here merely to perform a job but to excel others and serve as a model for other institutes in the region. Therefore, whatever we do as part of our duty we must remember the objective. This is an unavoidable responsibility for all us being part of AIIMS.

Patient care is one thing that makes us vulnerable in the eyes of the public. This is one area where we get a quick appreciation or a quick reproach depending on the quality of service we

provide. I would request the faculty, resident doctors, nurses and the entire paramedical staff and all those associated with care delivery to be sensitive in this matter. It would bring blessings for yourself personally and goodwill for the institute.

We need to improve our research capability. Patient care may bring us local appreciation but quality research is the key to international recognition.

Although AIIMS faculty and scientists lead in research publications compared to other medical colleges in the country, we have had limited achievements in the field of research in the global context. Fortunately this situation is changing fast. In the last 2 years, our faculty have succeeded in bringing substantial international research grants in areas like structural biology, protein molecule research, viral hepatitis, neonatology, eye care, bio-design, cardio-neurosciences and cancer research. Hopefully, these projects would lead to impressive results.

There is also a need to review our thrust areas, which have been taken up by our research council. It would require due planning and strategy how to position ourselves in global context, given the limitation of infrastructure and fund. As we all know research is a time-consuming, serious and meticulous job. Therefore, we must undertake projects which are relevant and satisfying. In this context I am happy to announce that the intramural research budget allocation at AIIMS has been increased up to Rs. 5 crore from 50 lakh and an individual project could be of Rs. 5 lakhs. It is a big offer to the faculty. I would appeal to my young faculty colleagues to write good research projects now to get intramural research grants from the institute itself. I believe, in the 12<sup>th</sup> 5-year plan period, there would be more budget allocation for technology driven medical research in India and our faculty and scientists should take full advantage.

Cleanliness is another area which is very significant in a hospital environment. It is not difficult to maintain proper cleanliness if members of the faculty and hospital administrators keep a watch and colleagues in the sanitation department work out a supervision protocol. A clean hospital and clean service areas not only make everyone happy but also send a good message about the work culture of the place.

Renovation and beautification work of the frontage of the Institute are almost over. Other areas under renovation should be operational soon. I would urge the Engineering Service

Department to have proper coordination with the hospital administration and the clinicians so as to cause minimum disruption in patient care services.

To address the parking problem the Institute is constructing a parking area at the Masjid Math side. The work on various specialty centres, hostels and faculty quarters is in progress and the Engineering Department is actively pursuing to complete necessary formalities. Soon we are going to have a Convergence Centre which shall be housed in the building coming up near Biophysics Department. The Foundation stone was laid by the Minister/President, AIIMS yesterday. This centre would have facility to build and maintain a data base of our Research and clinical experience as well as to serve as a knowledge hub.

A sizeable section of people visiting the institute are senior citizens who also include retired faculty and staff members. They have been part of our family and they deserve our best personal consideration. I would particularly urge the establishment and finance sections to facilitate their work so that they are not required to make repeated visits.

A new batch of MBBS students and resident doctors have joined the institute and we must ensure that they enjoy the campus life. For an institute, this is a very satisfying time every year when we add fresh blood to our system and look forward that they grow and contribute to the institute as responsible members. The resident doctors are an important group in patient care service. I commend their contribution. However, we need to be more professional and sensitive in service delivery.

We are a large joint family. Individually we are expected to do our duty wherever we are. But as a large family we have certain advantages over others. It is well known that large companies perform better than their smaller counterparts. The basic principle on which organizations grow and excel is: coordination in work and convergence of purpose.

Once again I wish you all a very happy Independence day.

Jai Hind

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