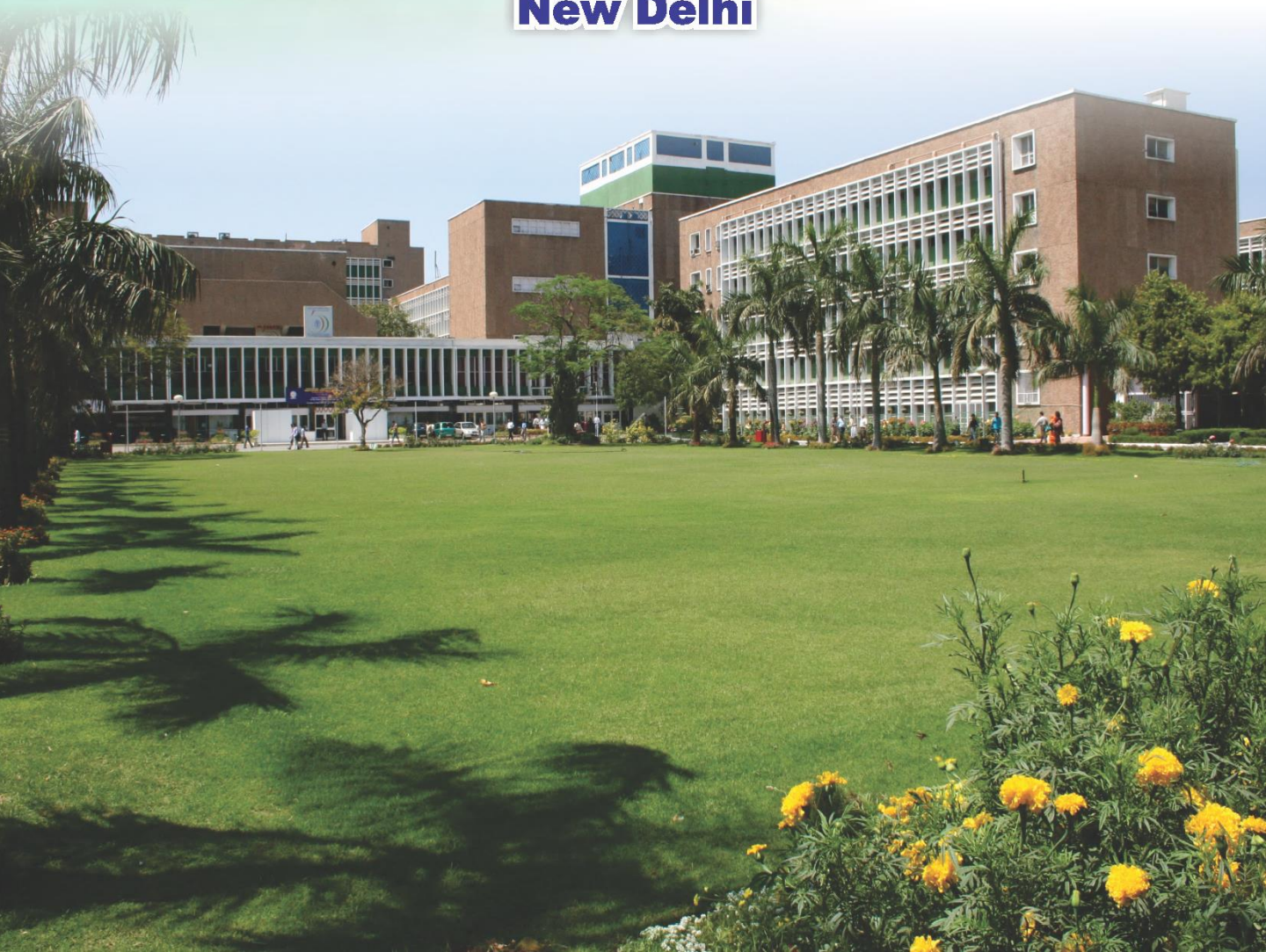


**67th Independence Day Celebration  
at AIIMS  
15-08-2013  
Director's Speech**



शरीरमाद्यं खलु धर्मसाधनम्

**All India Institute of Medical Sciences  
New Delhi**





प्रो. आर.सी. डेका, निदेशक  
Prof.R.C. Deka, Director



**Friends,**

Greetings to you all on the occasion of the 67th Independence Day celebration of our nation. It is a great day in our history. It is also a great day for all those men and women across the world, who aspired for freedom. Mahatma Gandhi, our father of the nation, while leading the freedom struggle, laid a path which became a model for many nations to follow. In this struggle, Gandhiji not only gave a new model of political leadership to the world but also gave a new message to the entire humanity through use of Satyagraha and non-violence in a political struggle.

No wonder, in a rare tribute to Gandhiji, Albert Einstein had said, "Generations to come, it may well be, will scarce believe that such a man as this one ever in flesh and blood walked upon this Earth."

On this glorious occasion, I would request you to join me in paying our respectful homage to all those great souls who made sacrifices during the freedom movement. We are also grateful to our founding fathers who gave us a democratic nation with a vision and road map to be proud of.

All India Institute of Medical Sciences is part of that great vision to provide leadership in the field of medical education, research and patient-care in the country. AIIMS is 57 years old. It is time for introspection.

In a free nation we have the choice to pursue our chosen vocation and to exploit our potential to the fullest extent. At the same time we have the onerous responsibility of being accountable to our country, to the society around us, the profession we are in and to the people we are mandated to serve. Freedom is like wealth. You have to earn it, preserve it and enjoy it with diligence.

We have chosen a profession whose hallmark is hard work with intelligent application and dedication. A doctor or any health-care professional has a very special identity in the society. We deal with human lives—the most precious thing in the god's creation. Once we remember this our job becomes easier as the sense of service flows with a spontaneity that not only elevates your spirit but also adds a new meaning and clarity to the purpose and this purpose with passion bring prosperity. Needless to say that this is the most satisfying experience in our profession and each one of us realizes it at the end of the day.

I take this opportunity to congratulate and welcome the new batch of MBBS students to our big family. I am sure the freshers would get used to the campus life and the academic environment. As the head of the family I assure them all support.

As you are aware, the Government of India has undertaken a massive plan of establishing 6 new AIIMS in a bid to address the quality health care delivery in backward States. Most of them have started functioning though partially. They would take few more years to be fully functional. In developing these institutes and similar other centres, one of the major challenges faced by the government is inadequate availability of manpower – be it specialists or technicians. It is pertinent to mention here that one of the major objectives behind establishment of AIIMS in 1956 was to train teachers and other manpower in the health sector. AIIMS certainly took the leadership but the mandate of making the country self-sufficient in the field of postgraduate medical education has remained a huge challenge. We realize this more and more as new medical colleges, both in private and government sector, open in a big way across the country. Needless to emphasize that quality medical teachers are the backbone of health-care programme in any country, and more so in India where a large section of the population has absolutely no access to health care.

On the other hand, we are lucky to be keeping abreast with technology and innovation. Is it possible to substitute manpower with technology?

As is evident, practice of medicine and health-care delivery in India have clearly segregated the population into 'haves' and 'have-nots'. This is a big challenge both for the government and the health-care professionals. In big cities and urban centres, we see concentration of hospitals, medical colleges and specialists. The hospitals in cities are so good that they attract patients from other countries, which has encouraged the governments and the entrepreneurs to promote 'medical tourism'. Unfortunately, the entire rural population in the country is a deprived lot as far as health care delivery is concerned. There are no doctors, no hospitals. They have also no means to come to the hospitals in the cities.

This dichotomy is a serious challenge to our development as a whole. The Central Government's ambitious programme "National Rural Health Mission" is meant to address this challenge but it is unlikely to make a dent as long as doctors and other health-delivery professionals keep away from villages.

The other issue is the cost of innovation and technology in health care and their affordability. A large section of the population even in urban areas cannot afford the technology-based medicine.

These are the issues that bother every thinking Indian but there is no substitute for a good doctor. If we have good doctors around the problem is half solved.

Infrastructure development is a continuous process. When I took over as the Director, certain projects were planned and implemented. I am grateful to the Government of India and the Hon'ble President of AIIMS for their support for these projects. The construction work of the Convergence Block, underground tunnel from main campus to the trauma centre and the hostel complex for the students and junior doctors are likely to be completed in next 6 months. The Convergence Block should be put to good use with the knowledge centre in it.

An outreach OPD facility in the Jhajjar complex, at Badsha Village in Haryana, has already been started for out patient care. I must thank all those who are providing services to the rural community there. The renovated areas in the AIIMS campus have given a different look to the hospital and other areas of utility. I am sure this provides proper ambience both for patients and doctors. The



plan for construction of residential quarters in Ayurvigyan Nagar campus is being finalized and the CPWD has been asked to undertake the work. The new residential quarters will certainly bring cheers to all those waiting for accommodation.

I am happy to say that research activities among the faculty, scientists and also the resident doctors have significantly increased during last 4 years. A quest for quality research has been visible through a large number of publications from relevant research projects. The AIIMS research excellence award that was introduced last year for the best original research publication has been under assessment stage for this year. Soon it will be declared as to who will be the successful awardees. Those selected will be recognized with cash prizes on the Institute Foundation day on 25th of September.

Our intramural research grants to young faculty have been significantly enhanced. Many faculty have undertaken new research projects through this scheme and we have recently assessed a number of projects presented by faculty candidates both from basic and clinical departments for awarding such research grants. I am sure, new assistant professors and other young colleagues will find it useful and undertake new projects.

The senior faculty have been successful in bringing more international research grants in frontier and cutting edge areas of biomedical sciences. I understand the new projects involve areas like structural biology, viral hepatitis, immunology, biotechnology, neonatology, fetal medicine, diabetes, cardiology and neurosciences including stroke. The mental health, substance use and alcohol are another area of concern and I am happy to say that psychiatry department and National Drug Dependence Treatment Centre at Ghaziabad is doing impressive work.

Epidemiological studies in community and cancer including breast, cervix, oral cavity cancer and medical Oncology related to various blood cancer and its therapeutics are few other areas in which the faculty is intensely engaged at the AIIMS. I would like to congratulate all my colleagues on their achievements. Hopefully, these projects would lead to impressive results and benefit our people.

The personality and academic enrichment programme for MBBS students, introduced last year, has shown results and we have done that programme this year also. I hope the students would benefit from this initiative.

At the end, I wish you all health and happiness on this joyous occasion of Independence day.

**JAI HIND**

New Delhi  
15th August, 2013

**Professor Ramesh C. Deka**  
Director & CEO,  
AIIMS , New Delhi



शरीरमाद्यं खलु धर्मसाधनम्

**अखिल भारतीय आयुर्विज्ञान संस्थान**  
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