

## **Science as a Means for Emancipation**

Speech of His Excellency Shri Murlidhar C. Bhandare, Governor of Odisha at the Valedictory Session of the 99<sup>th</sup> Indian Science Congress at KIIT University Bhubaneswar on 07.01.2012 at 5.30 P.M.

It is indeed a matter of great pleasure for me to address this impressive gathering of eminent scientists and technologists from across the country on this valedictory session of the 99<sup>th</sup> Indian Science Congress being held at KIIT University in collaboration with NISER, Bhubaneswar. Like all good things coming to an end, 99<sup>th</sup> Indian Science Congress is coming to an end today. It is a great honour for me to be both at the inauguration and closing of this mega scientific event of the country. At the outset, I extend my good wishes to all the distinguished delegates who have come from different parts of the country and abroad to participate in this Science Congress. I am sure they must have enjoyed their stay in this beautiful Temple City of Bhubaneswar and as they return back they will have their bag full of fond memories. The wonderful time they have spent here will surely re-energize their spirit and commitment to work for the advancement and promotion of science in India in particular and world in general which is of course one of the main objectives of the Indian Science Congress Association.

It is heartening that Indian Science Congress Association since its inception in the year 1914 has grown significantly over the years into a strong fraternity drawing members from different disciplines and is now recognized as the premier scientific organization of India. The journey of Indian Science Congress from its first meeting on January 15-17, 1914 at the premises of the Asiatic Society, Calcutta till date has been quite spectacular and eventful as it helped in achieving significant breakthroughs in different fields of science to make India a leading nation in scientific and

technological advancement in the world. The vision of our successive Prime Ministers from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehruji to Dr. Manmohan Singhji has benefited the Science Congress to a great extent to work with renewed spirit in post independent period and spearhead its noble objectives and mission for the progress and development of India through science and technology.

It is a great honour for the State of Odisha to host this prestigious event after a gap of 34 years. The occasion is also memorable as it coincides with the celebration of the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of UNESCO Kalinga Prize which was instituted by legendary late Biju Patnaikji, former Chief Minister of Odisha, Founder-President of Kalinga Foundation Trust and a great son of the soil. This award started by Biju babu identifies Odisha at the global level for its endeavour towards popularization of science.

This 99<sup>th</sup> Indian Science Congress is unique as for the first time a Women Science Congress was held alongside Children Science Congress, Science Communicators Meet, and Science Film Festival. Our Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singhji outlined an ambitious plan to change the face of Indian Science and exhorted our scientists to work for the good of society. Our former President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalamji ignited young minds towards science in the Children's Science Congress and Women's Science Congress which was attended by some great women of contemporary India deliberated extensively on several key issues. India's ambassador to U.S., Ms. Nirupama Raoji herself a successful woman in her own right wanted more and more women to become scientist and for this she stressed the need for conducive environment. Even Union Minister of State, HRD, Ms. D. Purandeswariji echoed the same concern and urged women to show determination and commitment to become scientist. I commend the effort of Assistant Director General, UNESCO, Dr. G. Kalonji for

spearheading UNESCO's mission of mobilizing science knowledge and policy for sustainable development. Prof. Geetha Baliji as the President of Indian Science Congress Association has been simply outstanding the way she led from the front in giving this Science Congress a new direction with her strong advocacy for inclusive innovation in science and technology and role of women. Visitors especially students have had a great time having live interactions with the scientists and getting glimpse of the technological might of the Defence Research & Development Organisation in strategic sector of national security. The Science Congress has surely provided the excitement of scientific challenges to the young creative minds. I am happy to note that India Pride Exhibition and the Odisha Mandap were big attractions for visitors of all age. I commend the steps taken to make 99<sup>th</sup> Indian Science Congress a grand success and truly memorable. We all are proud of KIIT, NISER and Dr. Achyuta Samantaji, the founder of KIIT for taking all pains to make it happen with elegance and style at Bhubaneswar which is fast becoming a prime centre in the pursuit of scientific knowledge and quality education.

On the subject of science my mind immediately goes to the rich legacy and tradition of scientific pursuit in our country. Starting from Aryabhatta to Srinivasa Ramanujam, C. V. Raman, Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose to APJ Abdul Kalam, India has many renowned as well as promising scientists and similarly, the State of Odisha has renowned scientists like Samanta Chandra Sekhar, Dr. Prana Krushna Parija to name a few who have international fame for their outstanding work and achievement.

Our first Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehruji saw science not just as a tool for economic development but also as a means for the emancipation of humankind. He had said, "Science alone can solve the

problems of hunger and poverty, insanitation and illiteracy, of superstition and deadening customs and traditions and of vast resources running to waste and of a rich country inhabited by starving people.”

The ultimate objective of any scientific pursuit is to improve quality of life of the people. Our scientists have explored science and technology and put those to use in various areas of development. It is an irony that despite tremendous progress of science and technology we still have a sizeable section who struggle to meet basic needs like food, shelter and healthcare. Modern research has therefore, to be done to address these pressing problems.

The science that we work with today must have the innovativeness, foresight and the vision to guide the technology that we would be developing which would make science a boon for mankind and not a tool for destruction and disaster. 21<sup>st</sup> Century is about the management of all knowledge and information and our scientists have to bring value addition to that knowledge for the benefit of mankind.

I would like to congratulate our scientists for their outstanding work and hope they will continue to work with dedication and commitment for India's progress and development and while expanding the frontiers of science and technology they must also provide a new vision for humanity. I also take this opportunity to congratulate the award winners of national level Essay and Quiz competitions held on the occasion of this 99<sup>th</sup> Indian Science Congress and I am sure this success will give inspiration to their spirit and take up science for benefit of society. I am happy to present the Pride of India awards to the proud recipients on this occasion as well and expect they will continue to showcase the pride of India. I am sure, the deliberations at this Indian Science Congress will provide good feedbacks to the next Indian Science Congress as it celebrates its centenary.

With these words, I have great pleasure to be with you all this evening and wish Indian Science Congress Association all success in its endeavours towards advancement of scientific knowledge and popularization of science.

Jai Hind