



Speech of
Hon'ble Governor of Andhra Pradesh
Sri Biswa Bhusan Harichandan

at

**The inauguration of A.P. Science Congress – 2019 on the
theme 'Science for Developing Areas' at 11.30AM on
November 28, 2019 at Dr. B.R. Ambedkar University,
Srikakulam**

I am delighted to be here on the campus of Dr BR Ambedkar Open University in Srikakulam for the inauguration of the AP Science Congress-2019. Science owes much to the vision of our early nation builders who gave it a prominent place in our development and planning processes.

We live in a golden age of technological, medical, scientific and social progress. Twenty years ago, the internet was a creaky machine for geeks. Now we can not imagine life without it. We are on the verge of medical breakthroughs that would have seemed like magic only half a century ago. Cloned organs, stem-cell therapies to repair our very DNA. Life expectancy is improving by five hours a day. And, surely immortality, or something like that, is just around the corner. All because of the research in science.

I congratulate the organisers on choosing 'Science for Developing Areas' as the theme for this congress. It was 100 years ago that Madame Marie Curie, one of the most outstanding scientists of the 20th century, won her first Nobel Prize. Marie Curie blazed a trail for women in the world of science.

But her work also exemplified her belief that science should, in the end, contribute to tangible social good. She helped set up X-ray stations during the First World War and established the Curie Foundation which became a major force for the treatment of the dreaded disease of cancer.

I am confident that the commitment of our Government to give a boost to the science and technology sector in the State of Andhra Pradesh, will certainly pay dividends. Several steps towards this end have already been initiated while Research and Development (R and D) has been growing at a high speed because of the vision of the Centre as well as the State Governments.

As part of encouraging research in this sector, a number of schemes to rejuvenate research and scientific excellence in universities are being funded, besides introducing a large number of scholarships. There is also some evidence that these efforts are beginning to produce results.

Over the past few years, the number of scientific publications by the scientists has increased considerably and our country has been moving to higher positions with respect to the number of publications in peer-valued journals.

The university research system is also showing signs of rejuvenation. No doubt, things are changing but we can not be satisfied with what has been achieved. We need to do much more to change the face of Indian science. We must strengthen the supply chain of the science sector.

While it is true that science and engineering continue to attract some of our best students, many of them later opt for other careers because of relatively poorer prospects in science. Thus, we must also make scientific output more relevant to our stage of development. Science is often pre-occupied with problems of the rich, ignoring the enormous and in many ways more challenging problems of the poor and the under-privileged.

There are certain objectives we must try to achieve in this sector. First, we must ensure a major increase in investment in Research and Development, including by industry and strategic sectors. Second, we must ensure creation of a new innovation ecosystem.

Third, we must achieve greater alignment of the science and technology

sector with the inclusive development needs of our nation. Fourth, we must expand basic science infrastructure and encourage greater research collaboration among universities and national laboratories.

Finally, we must enlarge the reach of international collaboration. I sincerely believe that Public Sector Undertakings, particularly those in the energy sector will also play a major role in this expansion.

While research generates new knowledge, we need innovation to use this knowledge creatively and productively for social benefit. It is important that we explore and rejuvenate traditional knowledge systems in areas such as agriculture, architecture, handicrafts and textiles.

An occasion like this will help us answer the fundamental question of what is the role of science in a country like ours. There is no simple answer. But for a country grappling with the challenges of development, the over-riding objective of a comprehensive and well-considered policy for science and innovation should be to support the national objective of faster, sustainable and inclusive development.

Identified as the biggest environmental issue in history, climate change is undeniably happening and affecting everyone right now. Although what most people see is an increase in their energy bills, in the long term, climate change can negatively impact the food supply.

There are still some uncertainties and there always will be in understanding a complex system like Earth's climate. Nevertheless, there is a strong, credible body of evidence, based on multiple lines of research, documenting that climate is changing and that these changes are in large part caused by human activities.

While much remains to be learned, the core phenomenon, scientific questions and hypotheses have been examined thoroughly and have stood firm in the face of serious scientific debate and careful evaluation of alternative explanations.

There is much that the scientific community can do to achieve these objectives. Research should be directed to providing frugal solutions to our chronic problems of providing food, energy and water security to our people.

Science should help us understand how to give practical meaning to the concept of sustainable development and green growth. Science should help us shift our mindsets from the allocation of resources to their more efficient use.

I would urge the scientific community to pool their knowledge and wisdom to contribute to the success of critical national missions. Several initiatives have already been taken. Increasing food production and nutritional security are critically important and our agricultural scientists should therefore work towards scientific breakthroughs that can enable a second green revolution to become a living reality.

In the final analysis, the pursuit of science is a process of unlocking the human mind. It is an exploration of the mystery, beauty and method in the universe by stretching the frontiers of our imagination. We need to invoke the power of science in every sphere of our economy and way of life.

In the conclusion, let me quote Isaac Asimov who said "There is a single light of science and to brighten it anywhere is to brighten it everywhere."

I am happy to know that the AP Academy of Sciences has been taking good initiative to promote scientific outlook among the researchers, teachers and students of various educational institutions in Andhra Pradesh. I take this opportunity to appreciate their efforts.

A.P. Science Congress 2019 is a flag ship event and is expected to create a common platform for all those who work for the scientific advancement of the Nation. I appreciate the efforts of all the team members behind organizing this event, especially Prof. Koonam Ramji, Vice Chancellor of this University.

I wish the A.P. Science Congress – 2019, a grand success.

Thanking you all

Jai Hind