

Mahamaheem's Speech for the Inauguration of Science Expo-2010 on 28th January, 2010 at Lucknow

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a matter of great pleasure for me to attend this inauguration function of Science Expo-2010 and I welcome you all in this historic city of Lucknow.

Both Science and Technology have profoundly influenced human civilization and in fact have been an integral part of the human society. Science has provided us remarkable insights into the world we live to in. Without it many of the things we take for granted would be unthinkable.

In the more than half century since Independence, India has been committed to the task of promoting the spread of science. The Scientific Policy Resolution of 1958 and the Technology Policy Statement of 1983 enunciated the principles on which the growth of science and technology in India has been based over the past several decades. These policies have emphasized on self-reliance, as also sustainable and equitable development.

In fact Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, our first Prime Minister realized the significance of establishing strong foundation of Science and Technology and was

instrumental in setting up of several scientific labs and institutions and public sector undertakings of eminence immediately after independence. He always spoke of the scientific temper by which he meant an attitude of enquiry and analytical approach that leads to rational thinking and the pursuit of truth without prejudice. This approach, according to Nehruji which ultimately helps in nation building through public awareness and public decision making.

Science and technology have had unprecedented impact on economic growth and social development. There are deep concerns in society about these. The

ongoing globalization and the intensely competitive environment have a significant impact on the production and services sectors. Knowledge has become a source of economic might and power. But at the same time, this has led to increased restrictions on sharing of knowledge, to new norms of intellectual property rights, and to global trade and technology control regimes. Scientific and technological developments today also have deep ethical, legal and social implications. Issues like human cloning are being keenly debated between scientists and social thinkers.

Our society has now become a “Knowledge-based Society”. A knowledge-based society is an innovative and life-long learning society, which possesses a community of scholars, researchers, engineers, technicians, research networks, and firms engaged in research and in production of high-technology goods etc. It forms a national innovation-production system, which is integrated into international networks of knowledge production, diffusion, utilization, and protection. Its communication and information technological tools make vast amounts of human knowledge easily accessible. The fast development of the Information

Technology has led to a change in the way we work and live. Knowledge is used to empower and enrich people culturally and materially, and to build a sustainable society. This new society presents great opportunities: it can mean new employment possibilities, more fulfilling jobs, new tools for education and training, easier access to public services, increased inclusion of disadvantaged people or regions.

We all recognize that Science and Technology are an integral part of our lives, yet many young people specially the children, who are the future of nation, don't see 'Science' as an interesting subject. The persistent

fall in the number of students taking up Science & Research as a career is indeed a matter of concern. In order to arrest the trend of decreasing interest in science especially amongst young students, we have to come out with new programme and initiatives through which we can inform and inspire the public at large and students in particular, about the fascinating thrills and benefits of choosing a scientific career. As India continues its quest to construct the world's most competitive knowledge-based economy, the demand for top research talent is set to grow massively. If more young people do not join the ranks of the scientific community, this shortfall will

become even greater and therefore there is an urgent need to attract young talents into science streams.

I am happy that Regional Science City, functioning under the aegis of National Council of Science Museums (NCSM), Ministry of Culture, Government of India has been actively involved in popularization of science and technology in the state of Uttar Pradesh. The Science Expo-2010 being organized at the Science City involving a number of scientific labs and institutions of Lucknow are participating is indeed a well planned attempt to take the message of scientific research of these institutions to common masses and specially to the children.

It is hoped that the Science Expo-2010 will provide an opportunity for the visiting public, specially to the students, to come closer to the values of scientific research. The interaction of practicing scientists and volunteers of these institutions with the public will definitely motivate them to understand and appreciate the contribution these scientific institutions are making towards the society.

I wish the Science Expo-2010 a grand success.

Thank You - Namaskar