

**Text of the address by the President Dr.C.S. Bhaskaran,
delivered at the Annual Convocation on
26th October 2013 at Jodhpur**

Our esteemed Chief Guest of today's function Prof. R. Chidambaram, Principal Scientific Advisor and former Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission, our respected guest of Honor Prof. J.S. Bajaj, Emeritus President and Chairman, Academic Council, National Academy of Medical Sciences (India), an eminent cardiologist and the Past President Dr. S. Padmavati, NAMS Life Time Achievement Awardee, distinguished Members of the Council, Dr. Sanjeev Misra, Director, AIIMS – Jodhpur & the Chairman Organizing Committee, Dr. Sanjay Wadhwa, Hony. Secretary, NAMS and Dr. Kuldeep Singh, Secretary, Organizing Committee, distinguished Fellows & Members, newly elected Fellows and Members, friends, delegates, guests, ladies and gentlemen, I, as the 23rd President of the NAMS extend to you my warm greetings and welcome you all to the 53rd Annual Conference of the National Academy of Medical Sciences (India) being held at All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Jodhpur. We are indeed grateful to you Sir, for having spared your precious time for accepting our invitation to be the Chief Guest of today's function and grace the occasion, in spite of your busy schedule. We thank you for the same and for the support and goodwill.

We are very happy that this conference is being held in this historic

city of Jodhpur, the former capital of Marwar state and presently the second largest city of Rajasthan State. It has become one of the major educational centres of learning and higher studies and research in India. The venue of our conference, the AIIMS - Jodhpur is one of the six newly started All India Institutes of Medical Sciences. This campus under the Directorship of Prof. Sanjeev Misra has provided us an excellent ambience and amenities for this Annual Conference. The Scientific Program of the conference is packed with two symposia, series of orations, award paper presentations coupled with free and poster presentations.

The National Academy of Medical Sciences (India) is established to promote knowledge in the field of medicine and allied disciplines, enhance the quality of professional education, identify the research potential, maintain high standards of professional and ethical practices, encourage medical and biomedical scientists in our country by recognizing their work and stimulate them to pursue research of the highest order, extend its application to the national health priorities, and to actively participate in the planning and formulation of national health programs. Our Academy is recognized by the Government of India as the nodal agency

for Continuing Medical Education for enhancing the knowledge and skills of the medical and paramedical professionals in the country.

It was in the year 1959 the Government of Andhra Pradesh initiated the proposal to establish an Academy of Medical Sciences. The Government of India recognizing the need has established the National Academy of Medical Sciences on par with other National Institutes of India. It was registered in 1961 as "Indian Academy of Medical Sciences" , later changed to "National Academy of Medical Sciences (India)" and inaugurated by the then Prime Minister Late Pandit Jawaharlal Nehruji. The first convocation was held on 8th December 1963 which was addressed by Dr.S. Radhakrishnan, the then President of India. In his convocation address he stated, *"I hope this Medical Academy which represents different sciences with men of achievements in their respective spheres, which offers incentives to men of promise that they can also get their distinctions, will be regarded as something to which all our youngsters will look forward to"*. He further said, *"A Fellowship of the Academy must be a matter of honor and not a matter of maneuvering or intrigue but a manner of straight forward work which is acknowledged as first class in nature. That should be the quality which we should encourage"*. This continues to be the principal directive of the Academy till to day and I hope it will continue for ever.

The Academy has been scrupulously fulfilling its objectives over the past five decades by following the traditions set by our eminent predecessors. In pursuance, every year we recognize outstanding contributions made by our biomedical scientists belonging to various disciplines in medicine and allied sciences and to confer Fellowships and Memberships to nurture and encourage talent, to award Academy Orations for the outstanding contributions in the field of medical education, research and health services and related sciences and Academy Awards to promote scientific advancement in the field of biomedical research and other commendations. These conferments and awards of the Academy has become a brand name for a highly cherished distinction conferred after a rigorous peer review process and it has been our endeavour to keep the excellence as the primary goal. At present we have 3 Hony. Fellows, 822 Fellows, 1685 elected members (MAMS) and 3707 registered members (MNAMS) on the live register of the Academy. This year 30 Fellows and 58 Members were elected.

The Academy has established a Life Time Achievement Award to honor Fellows who have made outstanding contributions to the growth and development of biomedical sciences over the past several decades and we are indeed very happy that Dr. Sivaramakrishna Padmavati, an eminent cardiologist, a very senior Fellow and the Past President of the Academy is conferred with this prestigious award for the year 2011 at this convocation and the Academy is greatly

honored by her gesture in accepting the award and we are grateful to her for the same.

During this Annual Conference we will have the privilege to listen to 10 orations by eminent personalities and 7 paper presentations by the NAMS Awardees and the Golden Jubilee Commemoration Award Lecture by the youngest Fellow of the year. Of these Dr. Janaki Memorial Oration and Dr. S.S. Sidhu Award and Dr. Vinod Kumar Bhargava Award are instituted this year. In addition two other important well structured programs in the fast developing areas of specialization one as CME – Regional Symposium on “Sleep Medicine” and the other as NAMS Scientific Symposium on “Regenerative Medicine” were held yesterday and this morning respectively.

I am happy to inform you that the National Development Council (NDC) had approved the 12th Plan Proposals of the NAMS with a recording that agencies such as NAMS can play useful role in developing programs for continuing medical education in the country. We greatly appreciate the efforts of Prof. Bajaj in ensuring that the role of NAMS is recognized by the NDC. Further steps are being taken to implement the proposals as indicated in the 12th Plan document.

CME Programs:

In order to fulfill the mandate, the Academy is giving top priority to Continuing Medical Education Programs

(CMEs) and organizes them in the form of seminars, symposia and workshops in different specialties in different parts of the country and monitors the programs. All the CME topics are so chosen keeping in view of the national health relevance. We have two types of CME programs, one national/regional/ intramural programs planned and monitored by the NAMS Academic Committee and the other is extramural programs organized by the institutions / medical colleges, screened and reviewed by the NAMS CME Program Committee.

During the year 2012 -13, two intramural CME Programs -viz NAMS-PGI National Symposium on “Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease in Children and Adolescents” and NAMS-NFI National Symposium on “Micronutrient Deficiencies” were organized at PGI, Chandigarh and Nutrition Foundation of India, New Delhi respectively and 18 extramural CME programs were organized by various Medical Institutions in the country.

From this year 2013-14, it is proposed to organize at least 5 National/Regional Symposia /Intramural CMEs and 20 extramural programs every year on identified priority areas in health. So far, 3 Intramural programs viz CMEs on “Spina Bifida”, “Ethics in Clinical Research” and a Symposium on “Sleep Medicine” were held at the All India Institutes of Medical Sciences, Rishikesh, Bhubaneswar and, Jodhpur respectively and 5 proposals are under process. Similarly, 5 extramural CMEs were held

so far this year and 3 are under process. Efforts are being made to get the NAMS CME Programs recognized by State Medical Councils and MCI to award credit hours to the participants attending NAMS CME programs.

We are also taking necessary steps to enhance the Learning Resource Material (LRM) availability through NAMS WEB SITE / Monographs etc., to establish a LRM Library and to streamline the publication of the Annals of the Academy.

Teleconnectivity:

NAMS has made a major effort to improve the outreach of CME program by establishing tele-linkages. The NAMS-PGI centre for Tele-education in the health sciences is the first centre to get connected to the medical colleges in Punjab, Haryana and also to some district hospitals in Punjab and Himachal Pradesh. Encouraged by this successful outcome, this year the NAMS-PGI Symposium was tele-linked with Shimla and Tanda with great success. We are making further efforts to optimally utilize the IT enabled services to increase the out reach of CME programme to more and more medical colleges through the National Knowledge Network.

NAMS-AIIMS Collegium:

The Academy in collaboration with the newly established All India Institutes of Medical Sciences in Jodhpur, Bhopal, Raipur, Patna, Bhubaneswar and

Rishikesh has formed a NAMS-AIIMS collegium to facilitate academic cooperation between the NAMS and AIIMS and to strengthen the academic activities. For the present, it is proposed that each AIIMS will be conducting one symposium/CME during the year on selected topics on the basis of the priority areas as identified in the 12th Five-Year Plan.

Collaboration with Universities:

The NAMS in the year 2007 has signed a MOU with Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar. On similar lines, a MOU had been signed by the Academy with the Central University of Punjab, Bhatinda this year. The efforts are being made to enter into an agreement with other universities for training of middle level scientists in various advanced techniques. It is also contemplated to explore the possibility of developing academic collaboration with Universities of Health Sciences in India in order to evolve holistic and comprehensive strategy for improving the quality of medical education in the country.

During this year, the important developmental activities and achievements with particular reference to a) conceptualization of both the symposia held at this conference b) approval of the 12th Plan NAMS document, c) formation of NAMS-AIIMS Collegium and d) signing up of MOU with Central University of Punjab, Bathinda are entirely due to untiring efforts of Prof. Bajaj, Chairman, NAMS Academic

Council and but for him these would not have been accomplished. We are very grateful to him and in recognition of yeoman services rendered by him to the Academy so far and also appreciating his continuing efforts to strengthen the Academy, the NAMS Council at its last meeting resolved to confer the designation of "Patron" on Prof. J.S Bajaj, as a befitting gesture.

The Academy has also formulated schemes to mentor the post graduates and younger members of the faculty, junior and middle level specialists in different disciplines in various academic institutions by utilizing the expertise of the Emeritus Professors and senior Fellows of the Academy, to award travel fellowship to promote skill up-gradation in emerging technologies and acquire new skills at the chosen centers of excellence, to give Financial Grant for Travel to NAMS awardees to encourage participation of young professionals to present Scientific and Research Papers. Several professionals have already benefited from these programs. The Academy also takes active part in formulating and developing the policy strategies and programs under Health and Family Welfare by participating in the Expert Group meetings and Consultative deliberations of the Government of India.

Presently, most of the medical colleges in our country with few exceptions are finding it difficult to impart right quality and quantity of medical education, the reasons for this being many

and varied, which we need not go into at this juncture. However the need of the hour is get ourselves updated with the latest trends and keep abreast with the modern innovative technological practices and diagnostic methods. Though our Academy is over 50 years old, it is the ideally suited organization now geared up to meet these challenges to fulfill the demands and aspiration of the public at large and the medical profession in particular.

We have just now presented the scrolls to the newly elected Fellows and Members and felicitated Orators and Awardees including the Life Time Achievement Awardee. I on behalf of the Academy and on my own behalf heartily congratulate them for the distinctions conferred on them by the Academy on this memorable occasion.

We are very grateful to Dr. Sanjeev Misra, Director of the Institute and Dr. Kuldeep Singh, Additional Professor & Head Department of Pediatrics, AIIMS, Jodhpur and their team for having worked tirelessly to make this conference a truly memorable one.

Before I close, I would like to acknowledge the guidance, help and co-operation from our past Presidents Prof. J.S.Bajaj, Dr. Snehalata Deshmukh, Dr. P.K. Dave, Dr. Prema Ramachandran, Vice-President Dr. Manorama Berry, Treasurer Dr. Kusum Verma, other Members of the Council, Dr. Sanjay Wadhwa. Hony. Secretary - NAMS, and

all the staff of the Academy.

My special thanks are due to Prof. J.S.Bajaj who gave me the inspiration and direction as a friend, philosopher and guide which enabled me to discharge my functions during this year. Finally I, on behalf of the Academy and on my own behalf, sincerely express our grateful

thanks to our honoured Chief Guest Prof. R. Chidambaram for having spared his precious time and for sharing his wisdom and thoughts with us today, which I am confident will go a long way to strengthen our Academy.

Thank you.