

Text of the address by the Chief Guest His Excellence Dr. Aziz Qureshi, Governor of Uttrakhand, delivered at the 54th Annual Convocation on 18th October 2014, at Rishikesh

It gives me immense pleasure and honour to inaugurate the 54th Annual Conference of the National Academy of Medical Sciences (India)-NAMSCON 2014 -being held from 17th October to 19th October, 2014 here at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Rishikesh. I hope that under the auspices of this unique organization, the medical fraternity will be benefited by three days of scientific deliberations by eminent national faculty.

Such conferences provide a platform for in-depth orations and deliberations by renowned academicians on various topics of interest in the present scenario including talks on diseases, health education and Bio Medical research. There are poster presentations and awards orations to encourage the young participants. A host of other related academic activities would help the participants to enrich their minds.

I congratulate Professor (Dr.) Raj Kumar, Director who steered this nascent Institution towards success. The future I hope would see a transformation of this nascent Institution to one of the finest Institutions not only in providing health services but also as an excellent research centre. The National Academy of Medical Sciences (India) is also a unique institution which fosters and utilizes academic excellence as its resource to meet medical and social goals. It was registered as the "**Indian Academy of Medical Sciences**" on 21st April, 1961 under Societies Registrations Act XXI of 1860. It was inaugurated at New Delhi on 19th December, 1961 by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India. The Academy encourages and sponsors nation-wide CME Programmes, Symposia and Workshops. Over the years the Academy has recognized the outstanding achievements made by the Indian scientists in the field of Medicine and allied sciences and conferred Fellowship as well as Membership to selected persons.

The health scenario in India is fraught with inequalities in various aspects including the provision and distribution of services, the location of Medical colleges and tertiary care centres, which are mostly confined to urban or semi urban areas, the population to health providers ration, to speak of just a few. Keeping in view such concerns, and with the aim of correcting regional imbalances in quality tertiary level healthcare in the country, and attaining self sufficiency in graduate and postgraduate medical education and training, 6 new AIIMS were opened by the Government of India in underserved areas of the country. The state of Uttrakhand by virtue of its topography has been a place where such services were lacking and All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Rishikesh has been established in a bid to cater for people residing in far flung areas of Uttrakhand and adjoining regions of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Himchal Pradesh, besides the rest of the country.

The All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Rishikesh has been evolving wonderfully over the past few years. Apart from providing health care to the public the Institute is also providing health education. The Institute is imparting undergraduate medical education since September 2012 with the third batch of MBBS students and second batch of BSc. Nursing have been inducted this year. AIIMS, Rishikesh is also running OPD successfully since 23rd May, 2013. The IPD was started on 30 December, 2013. From what I have been told it is and would bring together in one place, educational facilities and medical facilities of the highest order in all branches of health care activity. AIIMS, Rishikesh is aiming not only to impart services but to enhance academic activities for undergraduate and post graduate students and clinicians, create awareness and knowledge regarding prevalent diseases and generate resources which can be used in dealing with them in future. I am sure that this conference will go a long way in helping it fulfil these aims.

The symposium held yesterday on "Harmful Effects of Alcohol consumption: Need for evidence-based national policy" has, I am sure, provided significant information to participants about the prevalence of alcohol consumption in different parts of the country, and various causative factors leading to alcohol use and related disorders. The symposium emphasized the need to counsel the patients with alcohol-related problems and motivate their families to ensure continuity of health care. Discussions were held on the need for strategies to ensure inter-departmental government coordination between health and other social sector such as education, Ministry of Social Justice and

Empowerment, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, and Ministry of Human Resources Development.

All of the session of this conference, I am confident, will enhance the knowledge of those attending and would also serve to make them aware of the latest techniques, studies and interventions going on in the medical field.

I congratulate, heartily, the fellows and members, selected as per Regulations of the Academy or nominations proposed and seconded by Fellows of the Academy, Honorary Fellows elected by the Council of the Academy for their most distinguished service to the cause of Indian Science and Foreign Fellows, foreign scientists elected on the basis of distinguished contributions to science and technology and links with Indian Science.

I wish success to Professor (Dr.) Raj Kumar, Director, his Administrative staff and Faculty members in all in their endeavour to serve the State. I also extend my warm greetings and felicitations to the organizers and delegates of the conference.

Thank you

Jai Hind