

Speech by the President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee at the Inauguration of the Unified Campus of Bose Institute

Kolkata: June 29, 2017

1. It is indeed a privilege for me to be present on the occasion of inauguration of the unified campus of the prestigious Bose Institute. Almost a century ago, J.C. Bose, dedicated this Institute, the first of its kind in the country fully devoted towards scientific research, to the service of the nation. He made a profound proclamation, which I quote: *“I dedicate today this Institute – not merely a Laboratory but a Temple”* (unquote).
2. In his inaugural speech, Jagadish Chandra Bose had set the goal of this Institute (and I quote): *“to pursue further and fuller investigation of the many and ever-opening problems of Life and Non-Life ...to associate the advancement of knowledge with the widest possible civic and public diffusion of it; and this without any academic limitations...And here will assemble all those who would seek oneness amidst the manifold”* (unquote). Searching for this oneness was one of the greatest contributions of Indian civilization. These were indeed prophetic words coming from the man whose works were the harbinger of the pursuit of seamless science and interdisciplinary scientific research, not only in this country but in the world. And in this endeavour, J.C. Bose was ardently supported and inspired by some of the greatest personalities like Rabindra Nath Tagore, Swami Vivekanandra, Sister Nivedita, Mahatma Gandhi and Gokhale, to name a few. In fact, the establishment of Bose Institute can rightly be termed as one of the earliest manifestations of India’s quest to establish the nation’s self-esteem as an equal to the colonizing west.
3. However, due to growing research activities of the Institute, campuses at many other locations were opened from time to time. At present, the research activities of Bose Institute are spread over the original campus (at Acharya Prafulla Chandra Road) as well as the Centenary Campus (at Kankurgachi) along with a small building at Salt Lake. I have been informed that there are also a few experimental field stations at Falta, Madhyamgram, Shyamnagar and Darjeeling.

Friends:

4. Over the years, an acute need was felt to bring together all scientists working in different campuses within a unified single campus. This was considered imperative to satisfy the rigorous requirements of adequate infrastructural support for advanced research laboratories. It was also felt necessary to foster closer interactions and fruitful exchange of ideas among scientists working in this Institute on a range of cutting-edge research fields in Biological, Physical and Environmental Sciences. I remember the project of a Unified Campus was launched with the laying of the foundation stone on 2 June, 2012 by Dr. Manmohan Singh, the then Prime Minister of India and I had the privilege of being present there as the then Finance Minister. And it gives me immense happiness to be a part of the culmination of this project and to finally inaugurate the Unified Campus of Bose Institute today.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

5. Today, with the inauguration of this new campus, Bose Institute is embarking upon a fresh phase in its journey, more so befitting as the Institute celebrates its Centenary this year. I am told that a series of international conferences, visits and lectures by eminent scientists including Nobel laureates are planned to celebrate this milestone. At the same time, the institute also seeks to chart a new course with the launching of a number of new Research and Social Outreach Programmes. Taking into account the projected expansion of the Institute, this campus is expected to serve its needs for many more years.
6. But this has not been an easy journey. Scientists at the Bose Institute have been striving for the past hundred years to redeem the vision set forth by its illustrious founder. I am extremely proud to mention two of the most noteworthy contributions emanating from the Bose Institute: The pioneering of cosmic ray and nuclear physics research in India by Prof. D.M. Bose whose work paved the way for the Nobel prize winning discovery of a new elementary particle called pi meson; and the seminal work unravelling the mechanism of the action of cholera toxin by Dr. S.N. De, which was nominated for the Nobel prize more than once. I have no doubt many more such path-breaking discoveries, inventions and innovations will go on in this research institute.

Friends:

7. It is also most appropriate that in order to honour the historic legacy of Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose, the Institute is launching in its centenary year two cutting-edge inter-disciplinary Research Programmes in Synthetic and System Biology, and in Complex Systems that would aim to become leading Research Programmes in these areas in the world. Furthermore, since Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose was passionately committed to promoting public awareness of science, the Bose Institute has launched this year a project to create the History of Indian Science Galleries by renovating and expanding the J.C. Bose Museum housed in the original campus of this Institute. I am happy to know that in order to realize the dream of J.C. Bose for elevating the Institute to the level of University, the Bose Institute has taken the initiative towards converting itself to a deemed-to-be university in post-graduate science disciplines.

Friends:

8. Before I conclude, I would like to mention that given the constraint of available land in a densely populated metropolis like Kolkata, striking a proper balance between aesthetics and requirements of a modern Scientific Research Institute at the International level is indeed a formidable task. And for successfully attempting to accomplish this feat, I congratulate all those involved in this massive project, including the management of Bose Institute.
9. In the coming years, I wish Bose Institute to scale much greater heights in the pursuit of scientific accomplishments, and create the atmosphere where searching for oneness amidst diversity will be the central and focal point. Best of luck for your future endeavours!

Thank You

Jai Hind!
