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Inauguration of 30th International Nathiagali Summer College

Pakistan determined to achieve progress through science and technology: President Musharraf



President General Pervez Musharraf addressing the inaugural session of 30th International Nathiagali Summer College (sitting L to R) Dr. Riazuddin, D.G. (NCP), Mr. Parvez Butt, Chairman, PAEC, Professor K.R. Sreenivasan, Director, ASICTP, Trieste, Italy and Dr. Masud Ahmad, Member (Physical Sciences), PAEC

President General Pervez Musharraf held out Pakistan's resolve to promotion of science and technology, saying accelerated economic growth achieved through modern knowledge would help reduce poverty as well as curb the malaise of extremism in the long-term perspective.

Addressing the inaugural session of the 30th International Nathiagali Summer College on June 28, 2005, organized by Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission, and National Centre for Physics, the President said that advancement in the fields of science and technology is directly related to progress of the society and economic development of the nation.

"The spin-off of scientific and technological development is immense as it leads to much higher growth and brings about a rapid improvement in the quality of life. Therefore, encouraging scientific and technological development is in line with our commitment to transmitting the benefits of economic gains to common man" he added.

Dilating on the enormous socio-economic benefits of fast paced development, President Musharraf pointed out that "when a nation grows economically, it contributes

to poverty alleviation, which eventually helps in countering extremism and terrorism".

He also enumerated a series of initiatives taken in the last six years for bolstering science and technology and said the annual budgetary allocations for science and technology have been enhanced manifold up from a mere Rs. 150 million in 1999 to Rs. 12 billion this year.

Likewise, he informed the international gathering, per annum spending on higher education has witnessed a phenomenal increase from Rs. 500 million to Rs. 10 billion during the period.

In this context, he referred to Pakistan's commitment to keeping pace with scientific advancements at the higher level and cited the Australian and New Zealand governments' agreeing to offer 700 fully funded scholarships for Pakistani students in various disciplines up to the Ph.D. level.

"That will be a great leap forward in Pakistan's quest to catch up with the industrialized world and go for still higher economic growth through expertise in different fields".

Continuing, the President said Pakistan is

set to provide clean drinking water to its entire populace by 2008 and said this has been possible due to indigenous success in devising inexpensive purification plants.

Responding to PAEC Chairman Parvez Butt's call for top-level efforts in securing the advanced countries' cooperation for making peaceful use of nuclear technology, the President said he would take up the matter as the country needs nuclear energy to meet its growing energy requirements.

He referred to the KANUPP, CHASNUPP and Chashma-2 power plants and said Pakistan has to be futuristic in fulfilling its energy requirements in both industrial and agricultural fields.

In his address, the President also pinpointed the difference that science and technology makes in the progress of nations and observed that the Muslim world despite possessing huge natural resources lags behind the technologically advanced nations, who have very little to bank on in terms of natural wealth.

He renewed his call for consistent focus on science and technology as a way forward for the Muslims, recalling that it was on

account of their rejection of modern knowledge that they had to face a decline in spite of guiding the Western countries in the fields of science, medicine, mathematics and chemistry etc.

The President lauded the PAEC's services in the field of defence, energy, agriculture and industry.

In his welcome address, Chairman, PAEC, Parvez Butt appealed to the President to use his international stature for getting the Western nations' assistance in making use of the nuclear technology for energy production.

He said "because of the mitigation of greenhouse gases, the advantages of nuclear power anywhere are enjoyed by the world everywhere. The Planning Commission has recommended, and you and the Government have approved the plan to increase nuclear electricity generation to 8800 Mwe by the year 2030. Yet, as of now, most of the world denies us access to this clean source of electricity. Sir, we have a request to make to you. Could you in your meetings with the leaders of the West, emphasize that we, like may other countries,

desperately need nuclear power for the greater good of all, and that, we have the experience and expertise to operate these plants safely. The western industry would be welcome to come and join hands with PAEC and set up, even as joint ventures, nuclear power plants in designated zones, the boundaries of which are specially secured to the satisfaction of all concerned".

Mr. Butt stated that "Many countries which had gone against nuclear power, are now coming back to accept nuclear power as an economical, clean and safe source of electricity".

We in Pakistan started work on our first nuclear power plant back in 1965. The fact that the plant, KANUPP, is still operating is a tribute to its manpower. Our second nuclear plant CHASNUPP Unit-1 has shown consistent improvement in its first four years of operation achieving an availability factor of 96.7%. The work on CHSNUPP-2 is proceeding very smoothly, Chairman, PAEC informed.

Pakistan, he said, needs international cooperation for generation of up to 8800 MW of energy by the year 2030.

"PAEC is very active in collaboration with many international organizations. With the IAEA, we are now, all set to be the highest recipient of its technical assistance programme due to recognition by IAEA of our excellent utilization of the assistance. With CERN, we signed a contract to supply manufactured equipment worth as much as 10 million dollars over the next few years. We have collaborative training programme with Abdus Salam Institute at Trieste. PAEC is amongst the founding members of the UNESCO funded SAESAME Project in Jordan", Butt told.

Prof. Sreenivasan, Director, Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics, paid tributes to President Musharraf's unprecedented focus on promotion of science and technology in Pakistan, saying his policies have steered the country to an optimistic stage.

Dr. Riazuddin, Director, National Centre for Physics, informed the gathering about Pakistan's seminal contribution to encouraging learning in science through continued holding of Summer Colleges for the last 30 years.

Prize Distribution of National Physics Talent Contest Winners to represent Pakistan at International Physics Olympiad in Spain

Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission has been at the forefront of grooming scientific talent and holding of National Physics Talent Contest to popularize science and attracting the bright youth to scientific careers is one of the many such initiatives.

This was stated by Dr. Ishfaq Ahmad, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister on Strategic Programme on the eve of awarding prizes to 5 winners of 9th National Physics Talent Contest who will represent Pakistan in 36th International Physics Olympiad being held in Spain from 13th July 2005.

This award ceremony was part of the Salam Memorial Session, a permanent feature of International Nathiagali Summer Colleges dedicated to Dr. Abdus Salam on whose vision this college was started by PAEC in 1976.

Dr. Ishfaq also delivered a lecture in connection with celebration being observed globally as "2005 World Year of Physics". This festivity is being observed with special reference to the centenary of Einstein's Theory of Relativity propounded in 1905 which revolutionized the scientific world.

In his welcome address, Mr. Parvez Butt, Chairman, PAEC informed that the Commission, apart from organizing National Talent Contest, has now undertaken another such activity of selecting young scholars on a countrywide competition for their participation in Nobel Laureates Meeting which is held every year in Lindau, Germany.

Parvez Butt said that winners of previous Physics Contests represented Pakistan in International Physics Olympiads which



Winners of 9th National Physics Talent Contest with Dr. Abdullah Sadiq (from left 4th) Mr. Parvez Butt, Chairman, PAEC, Dr. Ishfaq Ahmad, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister, Prof. K.R. Sreenivasan, Director, ASICTP, Trieste, Italy

were held at Turkey, Taiwan and Indonesia where they made excellent mark and won medals of appreciations.

The highlight of the event was the presence of Professor K.R. Sreenivasan, Director, Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics, Trieste, Italy who gave a presentation about his Centre. He paid glowing tributes to Dr. Abdul Salam for his contributions to the promotion of science in developing countries.

Professor Riazuddin, Director General, National Centre for Physics dealt at length

with the engagements and achievements of Dr. Abdus Salam at various scientific forum in the world.

The winners of 2005 National Physics Talent Contest organized on countrywide series of tests and practical aptitude tests, include: Asim Nawaz, and Nabilur Rehman Shami, both from St. Michael School Karachi, Sheraz Qayyum, Aitcheson College Lahore, Syed Ali Abbas Rizvi, Sadiq Public School, Bahawalpur and Tariq Daud Bahria College Islamabad.