

PM addresses diamond jubilee function, lays foundation stone of IISER

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New Delhi: For [the Prime Minister](#), Dr. Manmohan Singh, it has truly been an education day today.

Starting his day with addressing the nation about the historic implementation of education as a fundamental right of children, he went on addressing the Diamond Jubilee celebrations of the National Chemical Laboratory (NCL) in Pune today and laid the foundation stone of the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER).

The NCL is one of the first [research laboratories](#) conceived by the Council for Scientific and [Industrial Research](#) (CSIR).

"Sixty years is a significant milestone in the lifespan of any institution. The NCL has had a lineage of distinguished leaders who have guided its destiny with great distinction. With its tradition of excellence in scientific research, it has nurtured some of the best minds in India," said the PM in his addressing speech.

Several scientists of this institution have been elected to distinguished academies of sciences, both in India and overseas.

The laboratory contributed to the emergence of Indian pesticides industry, which was critical to the success of the Green Revolution.

Post-1970, the research conducted at the NCL gave birth to the Indian generic drug industry, a forerunner to the vibrant Indian pharmaceutical industry of today.

More recently, the laboratory has contributed to the growth of the petrochemicals, polymers and fine chemicals industry.

"With its world class facilities, it is my hope that the National Chemical Laboratory will sustain this culture of excellence and continue to explore the boundaries of frontier science," exclaimed the PM.

He felt that our scientific laboratories must align their priorities closely to the national needs by contributing to the creation of wealth in our society.

"It is our scientific capabilities that will determine our ability to overcome challenges which lie ahead in areas such as climate change, clean energy, environment friendly technologies, water management, affordable healthcare, food security, and biotechnology," he said.

The government has declared 2010-2020 as the "Decade of Innovations" and the PM feels that the spirit of innovation needs to be instilled in the young minds so that they could find solutions in a variety of areas to achieve the goal of inclusive and sustainable growth.

"The solutions must be found in a timely manner, and must then move out of the laboratory quickly and gain wider acceptance," he said.

He also announced that a proposal to establish a CSIR Innovation Complex in this campus in a public-private partnership mode is under consideration.

The PM, while laying the foundation stone of the new campus of the IISER, Pune enumerated its charter, which is, "To create world class institutions for undergraduate as well as postgraduate education in science with an intellectually alive atmosphere for research. In these institutions, education will be totally integrated with the state-of-the art research."

He appreciated the progress made by the institute since its inception in the year 2006, with more than 300 undergraduate and PhD students but shared his concerns for students not taking up science in sufficient numbers after the 10+2 stage for which he harped upon the need to, "Improve the quality of teaching of science in our schools, focus on faculty development, increase our expenditure on [science and technology](#) from the current low level of about 1 % of our GDP, and further strengthen academia-industry interface."

"Our competitive advantage in the [research and development](#) sector maybe lost unless we ensure that the country produces, on a continuing basis an adequate number of competent and motivated young people who could lead our [national laboratories](#), science agencies and knowledge based industries," he said.