

SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA, SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE ON THE OCCASION OF THE 6TH FOUNDATION DAY & 3RD CONVOCATION CEREMONY AT ILBS

New Delhi : January 14, 2016

It is indeed a very happy occasion for me to be present amidst you on the Sixth Foundation Day of this prestigious Institute as also its 3rd Convocation ceremony. The institution was established in January, 2010 and in this short time with its dedicated team it has acquired its place in the front ranking institutions of the country.

2. The Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences was set up as an autonomous, super-specialty, medical and research Institute by the Government of Delhi with the objective of providing a comprehensive healthcare facility for diagnosis and treatment, including a center for advanced research, in the field of liver and biliary diseases. It is the first NABH and NABL accredited autonomous institute in the Government sector undertaking highly skilled and complicated surgeries, including liver and renal transplants, besides offering post-doctoral teaching & research in frontier areas.

3. The Institute provides first-rate medical care for patients with diseases of the liver, gall bladder, pancreas and associated organs of co-morbidity, such as the kidney and urinary system, not only to the people of India but also to people from other countries. It serves as a model for health care by amalgamating both academic skills and clinical acumen.

4. The liver is one of the vital organs of the human body. It is, in a sense, our metabolic factory and master regulator since everything we ingest first goes to the intestines and then the liver. The bacteria in our gut, sense, process and modulate our life. It is, therefore, a matter of great concern that liver diseases today are as common, if not more, than heart diseases. They constitute a huge burden on our country, but sadly, public awareness and associated treatment and research facilities in respect of these are not quite as optimal. Hepatitis, alcohol usage and obesity injure the liver the most, sometimes irreparably. The increasing number of lives lost to liver disease and the growing need for liver transplantation in our country are ready pointers to the increasing incidence of liver disease in our population.

5. The Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences (ILBS), in its short span of six years, has given hope to millions of people by providing state-of-the-art patient care services at affordable cost, including advanced and dedicated research in the field of liver and biliary diseases. I am told that ILBS treated more than 87,000 patients last year. It goes to the Institute's credit that it has established a successful liver and kidney transplant program and has undertaken 283 liver transplants and 85 renal transplants till date with remarkable success. I hope the Institute remains a role model and develops the best clinical protocols and operational systems in specialized liver care in line with global standards.

6. I am happy that the Institute has taken a lead in undertaking organ donation programs and running awareness campaigns. While it has already started renal transplant services, it also intends to move forward on organ banking and developing a national referral and advanced liver and gall bladder cancer center. A facility of this kind is an imperative given that liver cancers constitute the second most common cause of cancer related deaths in the world as per the WHO release of 2014. It is heartening to note that ILBS has already been designated as a WHO Collaborating Centre on Viral Hepatitis and Liver Diseases. To add to the sense of accomplishment, the World Gastroenterology Organization (WGO) has set-up its second training center for liver diseases at the Institute.

7. The Institute has also made rapid strides on the academic front introducing first of its kind, post-doctoral courses. It has demonstrated its commitment to promoting frontline research by introducing Ph.D courses and Short Term Training Programs (PDCC) for aspiring and eligible medical and research scholars. Innovative courses such as DNB (Nephrology) and M.Sc (Nursing) are being introduced in the Institute for aspiring renal doctors and nursing students.

8. It is a matter of great delight and satisfaction that the Institute is organizing its third convocation today. The entire team at ILBS needs to be complimented for being able to train so many specialists in the niche area of liver diseases. I am told that the late Dr. A P J Abdul Kalam, former President of India, was the first Chancellor of the ILBS. Needless to say, his vision for India and his spirit of optimism would continue to remain a source of eternal inspiration for students and faculty.

9. I compliment the Director, Dr. Sarin and his team for realizing the vision of the Government of Delhi and creating a world class institute in the area of liver and biliary sciences. I am sure the institute shall usher in a new era in delivering quality public health services in the country.

10. I wish the Institute and all of you the very best for your future endeavours. I am sure that you will keep the flag flying high and make every Indian proud of your clinical and academic attainments.

Thank you.

Jai Hind!!