

**ADDRESS BY DIRECTOR GENERAL, CSIR ON THE OCCASION OF NCL
DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS**

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Hon'ble Prime Minister of India and President-CSIR—Dr. Man Mohan Singhji; Hon'ble Minister of Science and Technology and Vice President CSIR, Shri Prithviraj Chavanji; Hon'ble Minister Smt. K. Purandeswariji; Hon'ble Governor of Maharashtra, Shri Sankaranarayanaji; respected Dr. R.A. Mashelkar; Dr. K.N. Ganesh; Director, IISER; Dr. Sivaram; distinguished Guests; young Scientists and members of my CSIR family.

Today on the occasion of Diamond Jubilee Celebrations of National Chemical Laboratory, Sir, we are honoured to have you amongst us. It is my singular privilege to welcome you to this iconic laboratory of CSIR- the place of many a path-breaking scientific accomplishments. Dr. Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar - the Founder Director of CSIR, and Dr. J.W. McBain, the first Director of NCL would have been proud of what NCL has achieved and symbolizes today.

I have always been struck by the vision of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who, even in the early days of India's Independence, put his faith in national development using scientific and technological route and it was this faith that led to the inauguration of NCL at his hands in 1950. It is testimony to the expectations of - the then, a new nation and also to its commitment with respect to Science and Technology. Today, while celebrating 60 glorious years of NCL, I am reminded of what Pandit Nehru once said. *"Time is not measured by passing of years but by what one does, what one feels, and what one achieves"*. Sixty years down the road, I feel proud, as DG-CSIR, to say that NCL has more than fulfilled our nation's expectations.

NCL's milestones of progress stand out brightly. The decades spanning the 50s to the 70s were dedicated to Self-Reliance. NCL technologies laid the foundation of the Pesticide Industry; formed the backbone of the Bulk Chemicals Industry and laid the base of the Polymer Industry in India.

Sir, Government policy is ingrained in enabling Scientists to deliver for the nation. In the 70s, the government took a decision that allowed process patent over products patents for drugs in India. CSIR Institutes led by NCL, Indian Institute of Chemical Technology and Central Drug Research Institute wrote luminous chapters in the history of generic drug development. Today India is globally recognized for generic drugs which deliver affordable health to all. This step not

only laid a new paradigm of working on innovative, efficient and economic manufacturing technologies but gave our country a leadership position. I am tempted to say, to quote Sir William Bragg, "*The important thing in science is not so much to obtain new facts or procedures or products as to discover new ways of thinking or working about them.*" It was this approach that enabled NCL to break that glass ceiling and consequentially the monopoly of multi-national cartels in catalysts production and supply.

NCL of today has enviable leadership position. It enjoys enormous credibility and goodwill. It is the nation's knowledge storehouse in clean-coal technology, agrochemicals, specialty chemicals, organic synthesis and polymer chemistry & membranes. For NCL, excellence is not a skill, but an attitude, and we in CSIR are proud of that attitude.

In keeping with CSIR's tradition of anticipating the future and preparing for it, in December 2006, Dr. Sivaram and I, as Director, IGIB designed the futuristic NCL-IGIB Joint Research Initiative; interfacing Chemistry with Biology with the support of the then DG, CSIR, Dr. R. A. Mashelkar. Today, it is a model programme in the CSIR system. NCL has also embarked on the development of fuel cell technology and is a key player in CSIR's Solar Mission Project.

Under the proactive leadership of our Hon'ble Minister and your astute guidance Sir, CSIR is taking giant strides towards fulfilling your vision. We are putting in our best efforts to deliver a new CSIR. NCL has already become the first CSIR laboratory to have spin-off companies in this new CSIR venture.

On the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee of NCL, I wish NCL the every best to undertake its journey towards its Platinum Jubilee and to put India in a leadership position in Green Chemistry, Solar Energy research and at the interface of Chemistry & Biology.

While concluding, I am privileged to quote from one of your speeches, wherein you have said, I quote, "*My top most priority is to deal with India's massive social and economic problems, so that chronic poverty, ignorance and disease can be conquered in a reasonably short period of time*" Unquote. Sir, CSIR of today knows that route to solve these problems is through appropriate applications of science and technology and we in CSIR are fully committed to live with and deliver your expectations.

Hon'ble Prime Minister, Sir, I thank you once again, for being present here today. Your presence symbolizes the government's commitment towards Science. We are proud to have you as President of CSIR.

Thank you all!