

**ANNUAL DAY FUNCTION, INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE EDUCATION
AND RESEARCH, PUNE**

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Professor Yash Pal, Dr. K.N. Ganesh, Professor G. Swarup, Dr.R.A. Mashelkar, distinguished faculty of IISER, young students, ladies and gentleman,

This auditorium has not heard the sounds of clap with a decibel such as what I am hearing today. This tells us the power of the youth! The reason why some of us wanted IISER close to NCL was to make NCL feel younger!

Two years is but a fleeting moment in the life of an institution. I recall with nostalgia, the modest beginnings of IISER on a wet day in August 2006 and all the events in the preceding six months of hectic preparation and hard work. They were heady days – exciting and expectant.

Yet two years is also a momentous period – when cultures are created, traditions are built, rules are made and an institution begins to develop a distinctive character. Just like in the biological process, the character of a human being is shaped in the first few years of his life, whereas, his competence evolves throughout his life time. This is also true in the growth of an institution.

So make sure that things are done right in the first few years. Believe me, what you create now, cannot be undone in the future, both good and bad.

IISER, Pune was borne out of a dream – to create an educational institution with a difference. As some one who has been part of this dream since 2003, all of us have great expectations from IISER. IISER is expected to pioneer science education in myriad ways. Firstly, IISER is supposed to teach science as it is practiced – in a borderless fashion. Science finds its strength in the unity of its disciplines. I am, therefore, happy to hear that a theoretical physicist has coffee with a biologist. When such an occurrence happened in 1953 in Cambridge, the outcome was one of the most momentous discoveries of our times! I am also happy to hear that the curriculum of IISER is continuously evolving and not frozen into a firm mould. Secondly IISER must bring the joy of learning science to students. Learning of science must move out of text books – from pedagogy to practice. I do hope IISER has no examinations and no

equations or formulae to memorize. Thirdly, learning of science must be related to every day life and the problems of this universe. Lastly, science must open up career opportunities and options. Students must understand that science exists to serve industry and society. The connection between science, society and industry and their subtle interdependence must become clear to students. I do hope IISER-Pune, invites distinguished scientists from industry as guest faculty and colloquium speakers to share with students the excitement of converting knowledge into wealth.

IISER was physically borne out of the womb of NCL. NCL and IISER share a common gene – a passion for excellence, freedom to explore frontiers of science, uncompromising adherence to ethical principles and a desire to translate science into applications. Together, NCL and IISER can reach new heights of excellence bringing great glory to Indian Science and technology in the years to come.

I wish IISER-Pune very well and any many happy returns of the day!