## India International Science Festival-2020 concludes with the Valedictory address by the Vice President

## Science should address the pressing needs of the common man: Vice President VP compliments the scientists who made indigenous COVID vaccine possible The pandemic taught us an important lesson that we need to be self-reliant: Vice President IISF has now become a “Science Movement”. Through various thoughtfully planned events, IISF has been deepening engagement between science and our citizens: Dr. Harsh Vardhan IISF is a vibrant expression of science and technology of India which connects the world also. The festival has come a long way and is now attracting global attention. Dr. Harsh Vardhan

**IISF-2020**



The Mega event India International Science Festival-2020 (IISF-2020) concluded this evening  with the valedictory address by the Vice President Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu in the presence of Dr Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Science & Technology, Earth Sciences and Healtrh& family Welfare; Dr. Shekhar C. Mande, Secretary DSIR and DG, CSIR and other dignitaries.

The four days’ event saw the organisation of a vast number of events and a large participation of people and scientists from India and abroad.

In his address,the Vice President expressed happiness over the fact that India is on the verge of releasing its own indigenous COVID vaccine. He also complimented the hard-working scientists who have made this possible.

Observing that false information on the nature of the coronavirus, medication and the vaccine has caused panic and anxiety among the people, Shri Naidu said that this ‘infodemic’ also reinforces the importance of scientific temper in our lives. Emphasizing that a citizen who thinks critically will be immune to such misinformation or fake news, he called for promoting the spirit of inquiry. “It is not vaccines or drugs that can defeat the ‘infodemic’, but a rational outlook among people’, he said.

Expressing the need to promote science education and inculcate the scientific temper from a young age, the Vice President said that children have an inherent curiosity and how we channelize that curiosity is very important. If we encourage them to ask questions and think critically, they will become confident, self-assured, and fearless for the rest of their lives, he said adding that ‘a confident generation means a confident nation!’

The Vice President emphasized that an important lesson taught by this pandemic is that we need to invest and sustain R&D and strive to become self-reliant. Our space programme is a sterling example of how self-reliance can be achieved, he underlined.

([CLICK HERE](https://static.pib.gov.in/WriteReadData/userfiles/10.pdf) for the full speech of the Vice President.)



Addressing on the occasion, Dr. Harsh Vardhan said that the IISF has come a long way and informed, “Essentially, it was ameans of science outreach.Idea was to rework the tried andtested approaches and make themunconventional and sometimessurprising”. He asserted, “We wanted to push in a huge amountof creative energy in finding new waysto link scientists and science-watcherswith audiences”. He noted with pride, “I must say the IISF has now become a “Science Movement”.“Through various thoughtfully plannedevents, IISF has been deepeningengagement between science and ourcitizens”, he said.

The Minister pointed out, “IISF is a vibrant expression of science and technology of India which connects the world also. The festival has come a long way and is now attracting global attention”. Dr. Harsh Vardhan said, “It is unique program because it brings students, teachers, scientists, innovators, artisans, farmers, diplomats, policy makers and even S&T Ministers together to discuss the challenges and solutions”. “It is indeed a matter of great pride forme to look back and reflect on theexponential growth in the scale, sizeand impact of IISF over theyears.”, he added.

Elaborating on the role of science and scientists, Dr. Harsh Vardhan explained with an example, “Vaccines are beingdeveloped with record-breaking speed.SARS-CoV-2 will be one of the mostthoroughly characterized of allpathogens, and the secrets it yields willdeepen our understanding of otherviruses, leaving the world betterprepared to face the next pandemic”. “Ithas all been possible due to exemplaryand collaborative efforts of scientistsacross the world. It has been anextraordinary level of sharing ofscience and its knowledge”, he emphasized.

“This year’s theme for IISF was veryrelevant considering that the entire planetearth has been threatened by theCOVID19 pandemic  which hastaken away a million and a half lives andnegatively impacted the lives of billions’, Dr. Harsh Vardhan informed and added, “In this hour of existential crisis forhumankind, the most appropriate themewas chosen by the Indian scientific community - ‘Science forAatmanirbhar Bharat and GlobalWelfare’”

Dr Harsh Vardhan said, “The staggeringsuccess of India International ScienceFestival 2020 becomes even morespecial considering we are still living inpandemic times”.The Minister said, “IISF2020 has once again showcasedhow science has the strength to breakall barriers, overcome all odds and helpus in all our endeavors”. He said, “It is a fitting reflection of the year thathas passed by – 2020--A year I liketo call, the Year of Science!”.

Congratulating CSIR, team of CSIR-NISTADS, other Organiser Scientific Ministries – Departments and VijnanaBharatifor their hard work and untiring efforts, in organizing this IISF-2020, Dr. Harsh Vardhan expressed his wish, “this journey of the IISF must go on and on. And the next year, we connect more people with the engagement of science, technology, innovation and entrepreneurship”.

This year, there were total 41 Events under 9 broad Verticals. In IISF 2020, five (05) Guinness World Records were also attempted:

1. IISF-2020: Virtual Science Festival (2000 approx. per day at peak hour)
2. Light, Shadow and Time Device Making (5,000 Students)
3. Online Hand Hygiene lesson and Activity (30,000 Students)
4. Applying Protective Masks and Taking an Oath Online (30,000 Students)
5. Nutrition and Health Lesson (35,000 Students)

Dr. Shekhar C. Mande, DG. CSIR, Dr. Ranjana Aggarwal, Director, CSIR\_NISTADS, Dr. Vijay Bhatkar, National President, VIBHA, Shri Jayant Sahsrabudhe, National Organising Secretary, Vibha, secretaries of all departments of M/o S & T, M/o earth Sciences, scientists and international representatives attended the valedictory programme online.



**Source**

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