

Independence day 15th August, 2011

N. Sathyamurthy

My dear students, colleagues and friends:

My heartiest Independence day greetings to all of you. It is a day for all of us in the entire Nation to rejoice. Rejoice our freedom and do what we can to safeguard it. We at IISER Mohali have a special reason to rejoice. Four years ago, when I addressed a small number of you, we had no place of our own. But we had dreams in our eyes. Dreams of building our own IISER Mohali campus. That dream has come true. But our real dream is much larger. That dream is to build the best academic institution in the whole world. It will take years for the dream to come true. For that we must make sure that we do all the right things right in the beginning. This institute has been built on trust. The Government of India trusted me to get IISER Mohali started. The Punjab government gave us land in record time. Everybody down the line has been extremely helpful and has participated in the Institution building. The parents trusted us and left their wards in our hands. The faculty trusted us in starting their career at IISER Mohali. We trusted the CPWD to build the campus for us. We trusted the government to support us and help us in our institution building. To a large extent, much of the trust has been rightly placed. In a day or two, the Parliament will pass our bill. By the end of the

Academic year, our first batch will graduate. That will be the first set of birds to fly out of the IISER Mohali nest.

The faculty and staff of IISER Mohali have a difficult job to do. To not only build hostels, classrooms and research labs, but to teach the students, mentor them, shape the young minds and challenge them and turn them into scientists, scientists that the Nation can be proud of. The students have only one job to do. That is, to study, to do research and become outstanding scientists and do IISER Mohali and the Nation proud.

So many people have participated in the Institution building. It is difficult to name each one of them individually and

Flag hoisting by Prof. N.sathyamurthy



thank them. I want to thank all of them for everything that they have done in the last four years. That includes everybody, the watchman, the safaiwala, the driver, the staff, the faculty and the students.

Today is the occasion to recall the sacrifices made by our forefathers in getting us the freedom. The best way we can pay tribute to them is to guard our freedom. Ponder over the factors that led us to lose the freedom we had in this country. Democracy was known in India much before the west came to know about it. You can trace it back to the Cholas in the South and the Mauryas in the north. We in India have one basic problem. We get bogged down in petty things. We trust outsiders more than we trust ourselves.

I appeal to the students and the faculty to make full use of what you have got. One of the students wrote to me a few months ago stating that I am a liar because I did not keep my promises. Because I did not keep my promise of bringing you to our campus soon enough. Because I did not keep my promise of building a big enough library. Because I did not keep my promise of getting you enough number of computers. Because I did not get you unlimited wi-fi access round the clock. The list of allegations is long. I am not going into all of them.



Tree plantation on August 15, 2011

We the faculty, staff and students of IISER Mohali have been trying to do our best and we will continue to strive hard to build a great institution. If each one of us does our best, the rest will follow automatically. We must trust ourselves. We must trust our students. We must trust our faculty. We must trust our staff. We must trust the system. Yes, there would be aberrations. We must take corrective measures. We must learn from our mistakes and move on.

Before I close, I want to congratulate all the prize winners today. The CNR Rao foundation prize has a special significance. Professor Rao is an outstanding scientist, who has done the Nation proud. At the age of 78, he works harder than any one of us. He publishes more papers than any one of us. His commitment to Science is beyond question. I would like the prize winners to emulate him and become an outstanding scientist. The other Academic Excellence Prize winners are no less. They are not in their first year of the BS-MS programme. That is all. They have done well in the subsequent years. I want to wish each one of you all the best.

I want to thank each one of you assembled here for being with us on this august occasion. We are going to plant several trees today. Two years ago, we planted about 350 trees. Most of them have survived, thanks to Shri Praveen Srivastava and his team. This year, we have Dr. Bilga and his team, who have been working hard for the last several days to help us plant trees today. I request each one of you to participate in this exercise. Planting the trees is the first job and perhaps the easiest. To look after them and to make sure that they all survive is much more difficult. Please adopt a tree and look after it during your stay at IISER Mohali. You can come back years later and show your children and the grand children that you looked after it and it is yielding fruits and flowers that day. Use the trees as your role model. For the little we give them, they give a lot in return. Each one of you must give as much as possible to the Nation. Then India will emerge as No. 1 in the comity of Nations and you will be proud to have contributed your bit.

I wish you all the best.

Jai Hind!

Aug. 15, 2011

N. Sathyamurthy

Director, IISER Mohali,