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“I am truly delighted to be here today in this great State of Orissa. On this auspicious occasion, I convey my best wishes to the people of Orissa. I am particularly delighted that my first visit to your State is associated with the dedication to the nation of the Talcher Super Thermal Power Station. The foundation stone for this project was laid by our beloved leader, Shri Rajiv Gandhi. Today, while dedicating this project to the nation, we pay tribute to Rajivji’s memory, we salute his leadership and his vision which was at once modern and forward looking.

This power station is a symbol of development. It will herald a new era of development for Orissa. Rajiv Gandhi had great affection for the people of Orissa. He was deeply committed to your welfare and progress. This project is a fulfillment of his dream of a new Orissa. Standing here, one is reminded of the great traditions of trade and commerce of the brave people of Kalinga through the centuries. They traveled to many countries across the seas and spread Indian culture and influence all over south-east Asia. Kalinga desa was one of the most vibrant parts of India – economically and culturally.

Today, we need to remind ourselves of that proud heritage and recapture the dynamism and enterprise that characterized that period of Orissa’s glorious history. Orissa needs to develop rapidly if it is not to be left behind in the race for progress and prosperity. It has enormous potential. It is a storehouse of natural resources – mineral and forest. It has a long coastline. These need to be exploited for the benefit of the people of the state; for creating more jobs; for generating more incomes.

I sincerely hope there will be more such new projects coming up in your State in the near future. I promise you that the Central Government will do whatever is needed to take Orissa

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[+] forward. With a capacity of 3,000 MW, this is the largest power station in the country today. It is a matter of pride for NTPC, for the workers in Talcher and for the state as a whole. I hope that very soon, we will have more such stations coming up across the country. We are working for the establishment of ultra mega-projects of 4000 MW capacity each. Preparatory work on these is going on at a fast pace. I hope some of the projects will come up in Orissa as well.

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[+] Electricity is the basic infrastructure for all forms of industrialization or mechanization. Our country continues to face a shortage of power in many regions. While we have been increasing investment, demand continues to outpace supply. We had the same worry 20 years ago. Since then many Governments have come and gone, both at the center and in States, and much investment has been made. Since then we have made many changes in policy and have tried to attract private investment. Yet, despite all our efforts, supply continues to lag behind demand. We cannot continue to tolerate this state of affairs? We need a paradigm shift in our energy policies and in our planning for the power sector. Our Government recognizes that we need urgent reform in the power sector and we need massive investment. I assure you that we are committed to both these objectives.

I urge all our political parties to take a long term view of our development prospects and the needs of our people and take bold and forward-looking decisions in the power sector. The Planning Commission has estimated that by the year 2030, electricity generation capacity would need to go up from our current level of 131,000 MW to more than 800,000 MW. This is a gigantic task. We have to widen and diversify our choices and strategies. We have to develop all sources of energy including oil, gas, coal, hydel, solar and biogas and nuclear. Even coal is not as abundant as is generally believed. I am told that in 25 years time, our coal requirement will cross 1.7 billion tonnes per annum! It may be as much in short supply as oil is now. Thus, we must use our energy resources optimally and efficiently. We need to make the sector efficient, competitive, commercially viable and attractive for investment and safe for environmental management.

I must compliment the National Thermal Power Corporation for showing a marked improvement in performance over the years. NTPC produces power at a very competitive rate. I am told that the synchronization of the 500 MW unit in the second phase of the Talcher Project was done in a record period of 38 months. I compliment the staff and workers of NTPC for their valiant efforts. You are all truly the builders of the nation as Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru believed. I believe this station has

state-of-the-art technology for high efficiency and low emission levels. We must reach out for new clean coal technologies, since coal-based power generation will remain a priority area for us.

I am aware that your growth has been constrained by lack of availability of good quality coal. We have taken several steps to increase both production and productivity in the coal sector. We have also speeded up the procedure for allotment of coal blocks for captive consumption of power plants. I am expecting a massive surge in investment in captive coal mines so that power producers do not suffer due to shortage of coal. Orissa has several locational advantages in thermal power that it must make better use of. You have access to both domestic and imported coal. Both these can fuel the engine of development in Orissa. You have the potential to become the 'power-house' of India. I hope you will make the best use of your natural and manmade advantages and push forward with determination.

At the same time, Orissa continues to be one of the most backward states in the country on many parameters. It needs massive investment in human development, in infrastructure, in social development and in agriculture and rural development. More than 4,500 villages are still not connected by a road. Over 9,000 habitations are not yet electrified. Almost 5,000 villages do not have a single telephone. Large parts of the state are not irrigated. This is the development deficit that we need to overcome. Through the Bharat Nirman programme, we will support the state government of Orissa to provide road and telephone connectivity in each village; to ensure complete electrification of the state; to add another 3 lakh hectares under irrigation. This will cost a lot of money. I assure the people of Orissa that funds will not be a constraint for their development.

We will invest massively for Orissa's development. 19 districts of the state are covered under the Rural Employment Guarantee Act. More will be covered in the years to come. This is a vital source of income for the rural poor and I am told that 20 lakh families have registered under this programme. Over 50 lakh children are being given a meal at school under the National Mid Day Meal programme. Under the National Rural Health Mission, over 30,000 ASHAs are being taken for health work. And I repeat, we will ensure that no stone is left unturned for the development of the state; for ridding the state of chronic poverty, ignorance and disease. It is my earnest request to the state government that they utilize the funds provided for the maximum benefit of the people of Orissa.

On the industrial front too, the state is on our priority list. The Indian Oil Corporation has begun work on a 15 million tonne oil refinery at Paradip. We are working hard to see that it is commissioned by 2010. Associated with this, we are working to develop a petrochemical complex around the refinery. The total expected investment here will be almost Rs 29,000 crore in the next few years. Paradip and its neighbourhood has the potential of becoming a major industrial zone of the country. Its completion is our commitment to the people of Orissa.

I am also aware that there is considerable concern among some people in your state whose lives and livelihoods have been threatened by new projects. I urge the State government and the concerned investors to show greater commitment to the welfare of all sections of society, especially those displaced by development works. I am sure as new investment comes to Orissa, new opportunities will increase. However, in the transition no section of society should feel threatened by development.

We must take adequate precaution to compensate those who may be negatively impacted by changes in the transition period. As I had announced during my Independence Day speech, our Government will come forward with a comprehensive National Rehabilitation Policy so that displacement does not lead to impoverishment and those who lose their land benefit from subsequent economic development.

With these words, I compliment all those associated with this project for their good work. I hope NTPC will continue to remain at the forefront of our country's economic development. I have been informed by Shindeji, NTPC has decided to give an incentive of Rs.51 lakh for the workers in this unit as bonus. I hope the Talcher project will be yet another harbinger of progress for Orissa. I hereby dedicate the Talcher Super Thermal Power Plant to the people of Orissa. I wish the people of Orissa a great future of progress and prosperity."

**ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱରରେ ଏନ୍‌ଆଇଏସ୍‌ଆର୍ ପ୍ରାପନ ଗୋଷ୍ଠୀ ଅବସରରେ**

"I am truly delighted to be here in Bhubaneshwar today at the Institute of Physics. I have great affection and regard for the people of Orissa whose contribution to the history, culture and economy of our nation are second to none. I am particularly delighted that my first visit to this State is associated with the announcement of the establishment of the National Institute of Science Education and Research. This is the fulfillment of a

promise to the people of Orissa. Our Government is genuinely committed to the development of Orissa and to the educational empowerment of the people of Orissa. The National Institute of Science Education and Research will be a symbol of that commitment.

I share the concern being expressed by many of our scientists that our best minds are not turning to science, and those who do, do not remain in science. I am told that less than 3% of school children want to pursue a career in science. We must find ways of making these disciplines more attractive to children. We have to improve the quality of teaching of science and mathematics at the school level. Countries like China and South Korea are far ahead of us in investing in science and technology. We need to do much more in this vital area if we have to keep pace with the evolving global economy of the future.

We have to take urgent steps to prevent scientifically talented persons from moving away from careers in scientific research and development. This is happening at the 10+2 level and at the B.Tech. level. Most of our universities are performing sub-optimally. They lack good infrastructure and suffer from acute faculty shortage. There is not enough interaction between our academia and industry. Many technologies developed for our rural areas have not been delivered properly. We will need to address these on a war footing.

I am also concerned about the regional imbalance in science teaching and the development of science and technology in India. There was a time when the East was at the forefront. Today the East is lagging behind the South and the West. We need to redress this regional imbalance. It is to meet these challenges that we will be setting up the National Institute of Science Education and Research in Bhubaneswar.

As India moves up the technology ladder and improves its relative competitive status in the global domain, the need for capable innovative scientists will increase. Our higher education programs should empower young science students to engage not only in advanced research but also in domains which facilitate translation of research results into development of new technologies and their commercial deployment. This requires acquisition of necessary experimental skills and familiarity with the realities of practical world.

There is a strong synergy between research and higher education. Co-existence of both leads to higher excellence in both. It provides opportunities for students to be exposed to excitements in scientific research and benefit from teachers

who are themselves engaged in expanding the horizons of knowledge. Such participation in teaching also benefits researchers by way of greater clarity of thought and availability of students to broaden support to research activity.

The National Institute of Science Education and Research will facilitate this synergy between research and higher education. The major strength of Institute of Physics is a strong emphasis on the quality of the faculty and its present pre-doctoral and doctoral programs are among the best in the country. The faculty is composed of all world-renowned scientists who are also established teachers. Association with the Institute of Physics will enable the National Institute of Science Education and Research to draw upon this outstanding tradition and expand it further to cater to a much larger pool of science students. NISER will be at par with the IISER being established in other places but will operate under the umbrella of DAE. It will undertake integrated 5-year Masters courses in core and emerging branches of science to provide world-class education to students after the 10+2 stage. It can also include an integrated M.Sc.–Ph.D. after graduation level.

The emphasis of education at NISER will be to generate scientific trained manpower of a very high quality which could directly find placement across the country. Greater emphasis will be on branches of science relevant to the Department of Atomic Energy and also catering to the better exploitation and utilization of Orissa's regional natural resources. Orissa's mineral and marine resources will be taken into consideration in designing training programs of students here.

While working within the DAE family and awarding degrees under the Homi Bhabha National Institute [HBNI], which is already a Deemed University for post-graduate studies, NISER will be an institute at par with the best in the country in terms of facilities and faculty. It will have a research to teaching load as practiced in the best universities in the world. This will ensure world class education and also attract the best researchers. It will have world-class experimental facilities in all the current and emerging branches of science including physics, chemistry, modern biology and environmental sciences. We will provide enough resources to DAE to convert this into reality within a very short time frame.

In order to attract bright young students to this integrated course, it is proposed to make the course challenging on a world-class level, give reasonable stipend to the students and also allow them time for research activities even during their student days. There will be campus interviews and placements at both research centers and in industry in order to make the

course more attractive to the students in the present competitive environment of market forces which drives them to IT-related jobs.

I am told that this project will be quickly completed in two phases. In Phase-I, additional courses will be started immediately in 3 or 4 selected subjects like physics, mathematics, chemistry and biology with existing faculty and new faculty. In Phase-II, 200 acres of land will be acquired around Bhubaneswar and activities expanded on a larger scale. When completed, I am confident that the National Institute of Science Education and Research will become a Mecca for science just as TIFR and IISc are today.

With our recent unprecedented economic growth, I am optimistic that India will become a 'developed country' in the not too distant future. In this process, Science & Technology will continue to play a major role. Since independence, there has been a great deal of progress in our S&T system. This is evident from the success of the mission-oriented S&T agencies, like the family of DAE institutions, that have made our nation proud.

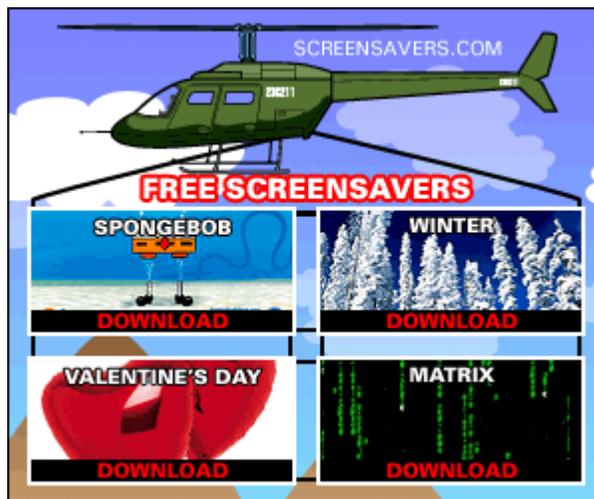
However, I am aware that we must increase our expenditure on Science & Technology. India's expenditure on S&T is about 1% of our GDP. This is half of what developed countries are devoting to S & T. The Government is committed to increasing R&D funding. For the last few years, we have been allocating larger budgets for R&D. For example, last year, we increased it by 20%. We shall strive to reach the target of 2% in the 11th Plan. But I also expect the private sector to do more in this area. We also need more public- private partnership in R&D in all areas of S&T.

One way of making careers in science and technology attractive would be to improve remuneration and ensure the integrity of selection processes. It is well known that the initial starting salary for scientists with a PhD in India is often lower than those of Engineers, Doctors and Management graduates. It is obvious that if talented young people are to be retained in science, scientists have to be treated differently than other Government employees in service and salary matters.

The Government will be happy to provide career support for students talented in science for a reasonable period, including into their initial employment years, to attract such students to scientific research. There is also a need to develop a more productive interface between the National Laboratories and the University system. Proximate national laboratories could supplement the faculty both for undergraduate and post-

graduate courses in universities and colleges. Private sector enterprises should also be able to create centres for their product innovation and development in proximate national laboratories and universities.

I would like to reaffirm our my commitment to the growth and modernization of Indian science and technology institutions. The establishment of the National Institute of Science Education and Research in Bhubaneswar is one more symbol of this commitment. I hope this institution will emerge as a center of creative teaching and research and contribute to our national development. Orissa has produced many great scientists of India such as Jogesh Chandra Pati. I hope this institution will produce many more in the years to come. I wish you all the best in all your endeavours."



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