

## Govt puts focus on leveraging more on S&T

06 November 2019 | News

### Dr. Harsh Vardhan emphasises on the need to harness the soft prowess of science and technology



The Union Minister for Science and Technology, Earth Sciences and Health and Family Welfare, Dr. Harsh Vardhan has said that India shares a common past and goal with many of its close neighbours and other partner countries that has served to forge an unbreakable association with India.

Addressing delegates from various countries in Kolkata during the Overseas Ministers and Diplomats Conclave as part of the India International Science Festival (IISF), Dr. Harsh Vardhan emphasised on the need to harness the soft prowess of science and technology as an important pillar of the cooperation in the knowledge economy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

He said that the present government led by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi strongly believes that science and technology is the bedrock upon which the country relies for its knowledge power, enterprises rely for their success, and the people rely for a better life. This government is therefore fully committed to promote science with a human face that serves the common man and promotes equitable and sustainable development of the country, he said.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan said that need of the hour is to leverage more on science and technology to bridge disparities between urban and rural sections with focus on affordable technologies for inclusive development and economic growth. He mentioned that the Ministries of Science and Technology and Earth Sciences are actively cooperating with 44 countries world over.

Emphasising on capacity building in the academic research arena, he said that for creating an ecosystem of fundamental research as a pathway for technology development and innovation, R&D and academic institutions need to be more globally connected to understand and incorporate the best practices. He emphasised that it can enable the country to leapfrog by avoiding pitfalls and making best use of the collective learning and experiences.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan said that with international and bilateral collaborations, India has now started to address together societal grand challenges using the tools of technology and innovation. He enumerated that the scientists are collaborating internationally in wide fields ranging from basic sciences to mega science discovery programmes, trying to invent new

vaccines for Zika, TB, Malaria and Dengue, inventing new smart material solutions for clean energy and climate change mitigation, trying to improve crop productivity, studying the water cycle and weather forecasting including monsoon forecasting and natural disaster prediction and management as well as developing Artificial Intelligence based solutions, among others.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan said that the Conclave has provided an opportunity to hear from our distinguished guests how they are making the science and technology an effective tool for socio-economic development of their respective countries. He said that it will help everyone to charter a road map of cooperation for their countries and with India on a bilateral level that can foster research and education in this area.