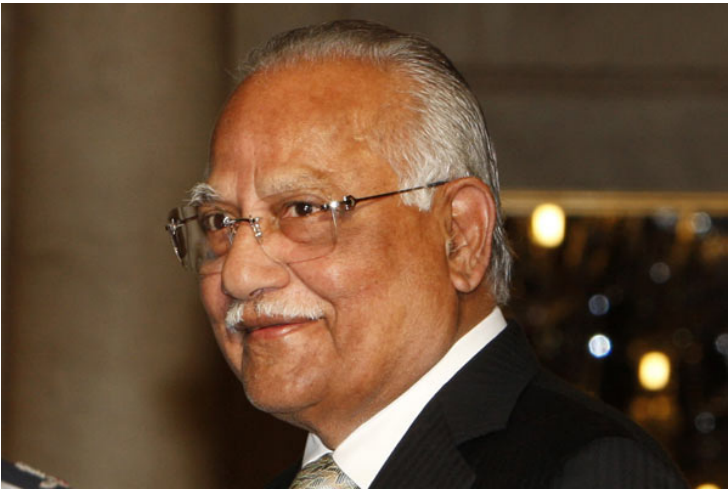


## “Increase in healthcare access is our major priority”

04 March 2014 | Interviews | By Rahul Koul Koul

### “Increase in healthcare access is our major priority”



The recipient of Padma Vibhushan in 2010, Dr Reddy spoke to the BioSpectrum on the sidelines of an event to mark the launch of Healthcare Alliance that is being spearheaded by Apollo along with the Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI) and network of other stakeholders.

#### **Q: What do you think is required to drive the healthcare?**

There are three things in healthcare. First is quality which certainly is very important and basic parameter. Then second is the cost benefit and this is where we require innovation. Finally the third is access to people. Earlier it would have been said that how do we reach out but now due to technological interventions, this has become much easier. Today technology will take us everywhere. With the National Knowledge Centre (NKN), one note will be available for every 6000 people.

#### **Q: How important is the technology to fulfill the healthcare needs?**

In one week's time, we were able to put up 130 tele-medicine centres in a district in Andhra Pradesh. This is what technology is going to give us. This is the health revolution. With the use of existing telecom facilities, we can reach out to more and more people in need. Suppose a person is having a heart attack, he doesn't need to be rushed to hospital for saving his life. The help must be available immediately and the day is not far, that will happen in India. The health workers can carry the basic skills and instruments required to save lives in their area. Believe me, we will be in a position where we will not only deliver the healthcare to our people but also across the world.

#### **Q: How do you plan to reach out to neglected populations in rural India?**

I come from a rural background and my village is among the most backward regions without even proper drinking water facilities. I completely understand this and we are working to contribute in a unique way to improve the accessibility.

**Q: What efforts are you putting to increase the telemedicine coverage in India?**

First of all you must give us the credit for setting up Apollo. The first telemedicine centre was set up in India during the visit of former US president, Mr Bill Clinton's visit to India when he inaugurated it and connected my village to the Apollo centres across India. Today of course there are hundreds of telemedicine centres.

**Q: Are you trying to replicate the western model here?**

There is no question of following the west. What is right for Indians is right for the rest of the world. We are driven by this motto. I remember being lauded by one of presidents of the US when I was speaking at the World Health Organization's meeting, for speaking about the cost effective affordable medicine. He infact mentioned that rest of the world must learn from India about creating cheap yet quality health products for its huge population.