

## Responsibility of scientists to dispel rumors on technologies: DG ICMR

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"We need agencies such as Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) and National Research Development (NRDC) to bridge gap between research and laboratories," opined Dr Soumya Swaminathan, DG, ICMR. She was addressing the gathering at the Thomson Reuters Research Excellence - India Citation Awards 2015 presentation event held on September, 18 in New Delhi.

"Political leadership supports scientists. Prime minister has himself advised breaking of silos. He asked us to identify challenges of malnutrition through various programmes including creation of grand challenges. Earlier there used to be lack of coordination between various ministries but now 10-12 ministries that concern science in India, are working closely," mentioned the ICMR chief while talking about government policy.

Dr Swaminathan urged the scientists to communicate more. She said, "Scientists cannot just do science but it is equally their responsibility to spread awareness. They must learn more to communicate with media and general public. Lots of misconceptions about technology and its products are floated from time to time creating a huge wedge between reality and myth. Our responsibility is to put in place the scientific facts and dispel rumors."

The ICMR DG also emphasized on broadening scientific horizons. "The use of space technology and satellites can be used to make differences in lives of people," she concluded.

Dr Swaminathan has recently joined the ICMR as DG and secretary, Department of Health Research (ministry of health and family welfare) with effect from August 17, 2015. She brings with her, the vast experience in health research and research administration. Prior to this assignment, Dr Soumya Swaminathan was director, National Institute for Research in Tuberculosis (NIRT) in Chennai since 2012.