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Nano science, tech should focus on masses: Ansari

Bangalore, Dec 13

Vice-President M Hamid Ansari on Saturday called for focusing on what nano science and technology could do for the masses of India, and to improve agricultural output and basic amenities.

Speaking at the second "Bangalore Nano 2008" conference, Ansari noted that globally, the majority of existing nano technology related products are tailored to developed country consumer needs.

"The challenge is to focus on what nano science and technology can do for the masses of India", he said.

"With a significant portion of our population dependent on agriculture, we must ask if nano technological applications can improve the efficiencies and output in that sector? In a developing country context, can the new technologies help in the provision of basic amenities such as clean energy, clean drinking water, affordable health care and low cost housing", the Vice-President said.

Noting that in an era of free

markets and business enterprise, technology development is increasingly becoming a company-driven process, Ansari said: "We need technology development that is bottom-up driven rather than top-down driven".

All stakeholders, especially common people, must have a greater say in the development of nanotechnology, he added.

Ansari said promoting basic research and incubating applications and technology development should go hand in hand with research on addressing environment, health, and safety concerns related to the use of nanotechnology.

"In fact, it would be helpful if a code of conduct for nanoscience and nanotechnologies research could be evolved", he said.

The Vice-President said nanotechnologies encompass a wide array of sectors ranging from aerospace to pharmaceuticals, national defence to miniature art and, as such, the societal impact of such technologies would be many times that of information technology or biotechnology.

Bangalore to get Rs 100 crore nano science, tech institute

Bangalore would host a Rs 100 crore institute for nano science and technology on a 14-acre campus. Speaking at the second "Bangalore Nano 2008" conference, Prof C N R Rao, Chairman of Scientific Advisory Council to the Prime Minister, said work on the institute would begin in a couple of months.

Officials said the full-fledged institute would focus on research and training in the field of nanotechnology.

Karnataka's home minister V S Acharya, standing in for Chief Minister B S Yeddyurappa who is away in the US, said Bangalore is one of the three places selected for such institutes; the other two being Kolkata and Mohali. After strides in IT and BT, Karnataka has "warmly hugged nano science and technology", Acharya said.

On the occasion of Bangalore Nano, the Karnataka government made a proclamation to declare Bangalore as the "Nanocity of India".

The Bangalore Nano Declaration, released on the occasion, said in this pursuit, Government of Karnataka would take every possible measure to encourage the Research & Development of Nanoscience and Nanotechnology, create opportunities for the commercialisation of nanoscience and facilitate development of small, medium and large scale industry committed to nano technology. *PTI*

"We need to be prepared to deal with the transformative and even disruptive outcomes of such technologies in our society and face up to the legal and moral dilemmas they may cause",

Ansari said.

He also said that realising and exploiting the full potential offered by nanotechnology depends on intensive and broad-based collaborative research,