

Welcome Address — Annual Scientific Meeting of the Aero Medical Society of India, Dec 1978

AIR VICE MARSHAL A SEN, PHS*

AIR Chief Marshal Latif, distinguished guests, Fellows and Members of the Society, ladies and gentlemen:

On behalf of the Aero Medical Society, I extend a warm welcome to you to our 21st annual meeting. We are indeed deeply grateful to Air Chief Marshal Latif, Chief of the Air Staff, to have very kindly consented to be with us today and inaugurate this meeting, in spite of his very heavy schedule.

Air Chief Marshal Latif is a distinguished flier and his keen interest in aero-medical research is indeed too well known to us and has been a source of great encouragement to us. His far-reaching vision in stimulating timely research on subjects in aviation medicine is in fact now of topical and relevant interest to us. I would like to mention in particular the research in the vibration field which is being now conducted at Institute of Aviation Medicine, Bangalore. The outcome of this research will be invaluable at this juncture in the more recent tactics of high speed low level penetration by strike aircrafts.

It is now for 26 years that the Society has tried to fulfil the aeromedical requirements of the service and civil aviation in the evaluation of the flier and the flying equipment. It has also been engaged in aeromedical research and development for promotion of flight safety. We are also proud of the fact that the Society has attracted members from our neighbours — Nepal, Sri Lanka and other foreign countries. The achievements reflect the continuous efforts of the members as well as the unflinching support received from you, Sir, and your predecessors.

The Institute of Aviation Medicine, Bangalore is the centre of our activity. It continues to broaden the infrastructure of aviation medicine which is a vital need for our future requirements. The contribution by it in the field of aviation medicine has in fact crossed the international barrier in that we have trained medical officers from Zambia, Afghanistan and Iraq as Aviation Medicine Specialists. Our research is closely associated with the national aircraft industry and civil aviation. It is a matter of satisfaction that we have been able to place aviation medicine on a firm base in the academic field by earning due recognition by the Government and the scientific community. We have a Diploma and MD in Aviation Medicine from Bangalore University, the courses being conducted at the Institute of Aviation Medicine. Till now 29 doctors including 2 from foreign countries have obtained the Diploma from this Institute.

I may however admit that we are yet to catch up with contemporary technological advances made in this field in some other countries particularly the Western countries. Whilst our scientists have striven hard to bridge this gap by studies of available literature, it is essential that some of our research workers get an opportunity to discuss with colleagues working on similar problems elsewhere, which, I feel, will go a long way in our ability to advise more effectively on the problems of combat aviation and aircraft industry.

The Society has existed basically on the contributions from its members and generous help by well wishers from time to time. This year we are fortunate to have been given an *ad hoc* grant of

* Director of Medical Services (Air) and President — Aero Medical Society of India, Air HQ, New Delhi-110 011.

Rs. 50,000 and a recurring grant of Rs. 15,000 by the Aeronautics R&D Board. I would like to thank my predecessor Lt Gen DN Gupta, DMS (Army) for seeking the grant and to the Scientific Adviser to Raksha Mantri for approving it. The Society is grateful for this help which will not only consolidate our financial base to make it self-sufficient but will also help in fulfilling one of our long felt need of publishing a Text Book on "Aviation Medicine." We also hope to substantially improve the quality and presentation of our journal.

It is our privilege that Dr Ramanna, Scientific

Adviser to Raksha Mantri, has kindly consented to deliver the Air Marshal Subroto Mukerjee Memorial Oration. The Society is grateful to him for sparing his valuable time for this purpose and I am sure all of us will greatly benefit by his talk.

The programme of the scientific sessions covers a wide range of aeromedical subjects which are of topical interest. I welcome you all to participate in our deliberations.

I now request the Chief of the Air Staff to kindly inaugurate the meeting.