



XXVI ANNUAL MEETING OF THE AERO MEDICAL SOCIETY OF INDIA

Presidential Address

AIR VICE MARSHAL MULK RAJ PVSM AVSM PHS DMS (AIR)

Air Marshal Katre, distinguished Members of the audience, Ladies and Gentlemen,



It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to the 26th Annual Meeting of the Aero Medical Society of India. I am grateful to Air Marshal Katre currently Chairman of Hindustan Aeronautics Limit-

ed to have consented to be with us today and inaugurate the Session. Air Marshal Katre has always taken a very keen interest in the affairs of the Society from its very inception. From the early days in the Squadron over 35 years ago Air Marshal Katre has always taken great interest in promoting flight safety. During his long service in the Air Force, he has been responsible for the close involvement of the Medical Profession in furthering the aims of the Society which is primarily to keep the flier in a fit and operational condition to ensure success of the mission. Since these are the very aims of the society it is most appropriate he should be with us this morning. In his new assignment as Chairman of HAL, the interaction between HAL and the Aeromedical Specialists has grown further.

The Aeromedical Society of India was formed in the year 1952 with the aim of promoting the science and art of Aviation Medicine in this country. Since then we have made great strides in this field. The growth of this science has been nurtured by the Institute of Aviation Medicine which is the premier body for training and research in this discipline in India. Over the years, the Institute of Aviation Medicine has grown exponentially and so has the Society. It is affiliated to the Bangalore University for post-graduate diploma and degree courses in Aviation Medicine. The Institute trains doctors and aircrew both from military as well as civil aviation. In addition, it offers facilities for training of doctors from friendly foreign countries. The Institute is equipped with all modern simulators and has been carrying out research projects related both to military and civil aviation in India. The facilities which are available at the Institute of Aviation Medicine for simulating various aeromedical stresses

include the human centrifuge, disorientation simulator, the explosive decompression chamber and climatic chambers. The latest addition to the research facilities at the Institute of Aviation Medicine will include the fabrication and construction of a decelerator for exposing human subjects to short duration high magnitude acceleration loads. This will be the first of its type in the country and will be of considerable utility to designers of safety equipment for aircrew.

The Institute has been working in close collaboration with the Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd, Bangalore in the design and development of various indigenous aircraft. In fact, one of the prime considerations which dictated the location of Institute of Aviation Medicine at Bangalore was to be in close proximity with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited. The data generated by Aero Medical specialists at the Institute of Aviation Medicine, have been of considerable benefit to the designers and engineers in cockpit layout, instrument design and seat configuration.

As you are aware, the Government has recently sanctioned the project for the design and development of the Light Combat Aircraft which will be the mainstay of the Air Force in the 90's. I am glad to report that the Defence Ministry has nominated the Institute as the prime organisation for human engineering and related aero-medical activities for this project. This will further help in establishing closer links with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited to our mutual advantage.

As you are aware, Indian cosmonauts are in Russia undergoing training for the joint-Soviet Space Flight scheduled for 1984. Indian Aero-medical specialists were actively involved in the initial stages for the screening and selection of our cosmonauts. Over the past one year, our specialists have been working in close collaboration with their Soviet counterparts in formulating and designing of the bio-medical experiments to be carried out in space. We have developed considerable knowhow and confidence in this field and should be able to initiate such programmes on our own in the not too distant future. It would, therefore, be appropriate to state that we have entered the age of space medicine and we may have to re-designate the Society as the Aero Space Medical Association.

The Aero-Medical Society meets annually and during these meetings, the results of the research activities carried out by the members in the field of aviation medicine during the preceding year, is presented. Various symposia of topical interest are also conducted during these meetings. We have a symposium on 'Civil Aviation Medicine' with active participation of doctors from Indian Airlines and Air India. These meetings help to bring civil and military aviation specialists together for exchange of ideas, since there is enormous scope for combined work in this field.

The Air Marshal Subroto Mukerji Memorial Oration is delivered by an eminent scientist every year. Dr. Srinivas, a leading Neurologist, will deliver the oration this year. The topic of his oration is 'Episodic Unconsciousness'. This problem particularly in relation to aviation environment and its attendant hazards of sudden incapacitation in the air is well known to aero-medical specialists. It, therefore, is of considerable significance to us as it involves flight safety. I am sure the oration by Dr. Srinivas will help us to understand this problem better.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Director General Armed Forces Medical Services, who has found time to be present here this morning.

I would now request you, Sir, to kindly inaugurate the meeting.

