

Prof Dr Vikas Bhatia on various aspects of AIIMS Bibinagar in an educational website



All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Bibinagar (AIIMS Bibinagar) was set up under the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY) initiative. It is one of the six AIIMS that started operation in 2019.

Shiksha spoke to the Executive Director of AIIMS Bibinagar, Prof. (Dr.) Vikas Bhatia. Here are the excerpts from the interview:

Q. What are the challenges and opportunities of heading an institution like AIIMS? What are your priority areas?

A. The biggest challenge is to establish a new institution because AIIMS, Bibinagar, Hyderabad is an Institution of National Importance that is to be developed along the lines of AIIMS, New Delhi and to build up an institution of such repute is always a big challenge. In the beginning, we have to establish the academic environment, develop academic courses, we have to admit students and start areas of research. In the hospital, people have a lot of expectations from an institution like AIIMS where they

feel that best of the health care facilities are available to the people. So, to fulfil their dreams and aspirations we see these as a big challenge that the quality of the health care must be of high standards, all specialities and super specialities services need to be well functional. It is also about having the state of art services and taking the technologies along with that so that people feel that this institution is different from the existing medical institution and other hospitals.

The opportunity is given to me to develop these things, we can have lots of innovations, lifetime aspirations, dreams and plannings which we have always in mind we can execute and to provide the best health care particularly to the underprivileged population. It is very satisfying to serve the people who are looking forward to us. The opportunity is also to create the name of the organisation globally and bring excellence in health care. I see these challenges converting into opportunities and fulfilling the dreams and expectations of the people of the region.

The mandate of AIIMS is to run the institution with the highest level of quality medical education and medical care. We have been given a lot of flexibility being an autonomous institution so we can always bring in newer areas of research. AIIMS, Bibinagar's priority will be to do more research on public health area and should implement more modern-day technologies in the system so that people don't have to wait for long and the capacity of the system should be enhanced not only of our institution but also to build up the capacity of other institution.

Q. How did the academic activities of AIIMS, Bibinagar got affected due to the pandemic?

A. All over the world Covid has led down to lockdowns. When I joined AIIMS, Bibinagar, the students were at home as it was the peak of the Covid in 2020, during the first wave. We continued with online classes and we came out with innovative ways of teaching the students. We continued with online evaluation and online exams but as soon as the situation improved we called these students back and we ensured that first, we should finish all practicals because medical courses have a lot of practicals that can only be done in labs. Then we cut down on holidays and also the number of teaching hours increased to minimise the academic loss. The students were affected as they were at the home for a long time, their mental health was affected, so we made arrangements on the campus so that students can play, watch movies and organised a few cultural programs so that the students can come back to the normal life. Now, the classes are going on, they all are vaccinated, we have trained them to refrain from going to crowded places and follow all Covid protocols. They all have completed their professional exams and have entered the next level.

Q. The National Medical Commission (NMC) is intending to replace NEET-PG, FMGE and MBBS finals with National Exit Exam (NeXT), how do you see this and what changes will it bring?

A. Medical education has been reviewed by the top medical education groups and people and it needs to be renewed from time to time as a lot of changes happen in this field. So, if we want to adopt as per the situation, medical education needs to align with the changes in public health and the upcoming technologies. A lot of students during their MBBS focus more on preparing for postgraduate courses

instead of learning skills to develop into a good MBBS doctor, they focus more on coaching centres and all. So, considering all these the expert groups have restructured the process. I have attended many counselling sessions at AIIMS, New Delhi and seen that during NEET when students have to appear for multiple exams, they rush from here and there wasting time and money, so logistically all these are very painful and stressful for students and parents. Now, we have this uniform standard exam and that's helpful which students can do peacefully. So, these reforms have been taken place and we are sure that they will be helpful.

Q. The Centre has approved a 27% OBC reservation in AIQ for MBBS/BDS admission from the current academic year 2021-22, how will it impact the seat matrix?

A. We are the national institution and follow the guidelines issued by the Government Of India and whatever directions are given by the highest level we have to oblige by them. The decision is taken to accommodate all the communities, we will go by that and counselling will be done as per the directions. Once the students are admitted to AIIMS, Bibinagar they will be given equal opportunities to learn and grow.

Q. Several states are increasing the number of medical colleges, how does this will impact the admissions and seat allocation process?

A. The country needs more doctors and nurses and the Covid has also given a very clear message to all of us. The health system needs to be strengthened and to overcome the shortage of doctors, we need more medical colleges. The government is saying repeatedly on different forums that each district must have a government medical college and at least one AIIMS at all state levels. More doctors and nurses are right now the need of the country. Health care is the most essential service required by any country at present. So to reduce that gap, we need to have more doctors and hence the decision to have more medical colleges are appropriate.

Q. What would you like to say about the nationwide strike of resident doctors due to delay in NEET PG 2021 counselling?

A. We doctors at Covid times are overstressed. Also, whenever any change in the system or newer ways of admissions come there are some initial hiccups. All the challenges coming out will be dealt by the government very soon. The situation will be fine in days to come and admission that has been delayed will also be streamlined with time. Doctors are conducting meetings with the concerned authorities, they must have discussed all these. The strikes definitely affect the health services and it will be streamlined soon.

Source Link: <https://www.shiksha.com/news/more-doctors-nurses-are-need-of-the-country-says-aiims-bibinagar-director-blogId-78323>