



## **World Science Day: huge global disparity exists in science-related fields**

Speakers at inaugural ceremony of the World Science Day (WSD) said that developing countries generally spend well below one percent of their gross domestic product (GDP) on scientific research, whereas rich countries devote between two percent and three percent. The number of scientists per million populations in the developing countries is 10 to 30 times less than in developed countries.

They expressed these views while addressing the inaugural ceremony of the WSD celebrations here at Comstech organised by Pakistan Science Foundation (PSF), Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST) and Unesco to mark the WSD on Wednesday. Addressing on the occasion, Federal Minister for Science and Technology Mir Changez Khan Jamali said there was huge global disparity in terms of trained human resource in science related fields.

"Most scientific potential is still concentrated in a limited number of countries, which, as a result, are holding for themselves the keys to further developments especially in advanced fields," said Changez.

The Minister further said profound inequalities continued to divide peoples and the future itself sometimes seemed full of contradiction, uncertainty and doubt. Nations were closer to each other than ever before, and humankind had enormous resources with which to improve the living conditions of all, but the prevailing imbalances and inequalities were giving rise to deep unease, he added.

He said the theme for 2012 'Science for global sustainability: inter-connectedness, collaboration, transformation' throws light on globally interconnected and interdependent economic, social, cultural and political systems. Unesco Islamabad Director Dr Kozue Kay Nagata said WSD this year's theme was very relevant to Pakistan, which had very good potential in terms of human resource. She said Pakistan needed a broad base of scientific knowledge and it should pay attention to an increased allocation of budget for science and technology to get the benefits of science.

The Unesco Director said PSF was key partner of Unesco in natural sciences, Man and Biosphere (MAB) as well as Museum upgradation programmes. She called for using science for the benefit of mankind not for war, and also threw light on some hot issues of disaster management, environmental degradation etc.

PSF Chairman Professor Dr Manzoor H Soomro said about 44 percent of Pakistan's population did not have access to health facilities, 50 percent were without safe drinking water and 66 percent were deprived of basic sanitation facilities. Pakistan was 121 in the world on health expenditure per capita and 95th in respect of percentage of population with access to safe drinking water, he maintained.

The Chairman said PSF planned to develop a future road map, which would be in line with the Planning Commission's Vision 2030 and the new Science Technology & Innovation Policy both of which stress on knowledge and inventiveness as key drivers of future progress.