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Addressing the first Indira Gandhi Oration instituted in memory of former prime minister, Indira Gandhi at the North Eastern Indira Gandhi Regional Institute of Health and Medical Sciences (NEIGRIHMS), Shillong on April 02, 2013, Ghulam Nabi Azad said, "We are dealing with a complex health environment, persistent communicable diseases, increasing non-communicable diseases and emerging infections in our country. The last four years have been historic times for the Indian Healthcare in terms of not only several reforms have been brought in all aspects of health-care delivery systems but also concrete achievements appreciated the world over."

Azad said India has earned international acclaim for containing polio, with the longest polio-free period ever since eradication efforts were launched. India has been taken off the list of countries with endemic transmission of wild poliovirus. There have been significant reduction in new HIV cases by 57%.

Speaking further on Universal Immunization Programme (UIP), he said, "Hepatitis-B vaccine has been included in the UIP. Japanese Encephalitis vaccination is now being undertaken in 175 identified districts, with 62 new districts being added to the existing 113 in 19 states. Pentavalent Vaccine containing DPT, Hepatitis-B and Hib vaccines was started in two states of Kerala and Tamil Nadu from December 2011. Six more states i.e., Haryana, Goa, J&K, Karnataka, Gujarat and Puducherry were included in December, 2012 for expansion of the programme."

"To overcome the shortage of healthcare executives, government of India has sanctioned 269 nursing schools in the last two years, mostly in remote, inaccessible and under-served districts. With an estimated outlay of Rs. 2,030 crores, these institutions will give about 20,000 additional nurses annually. To give a boost to para-medical education and scale up the availability of para-medics, a National Institute of Paramedical Sciences (NIPS) at Delhi and 8 Regional Institutes are being established. A total of 10,760 paramedic professionals are expected to be trained annually when these institutes of excellence are fully functional", informed the minister.