



IISc Alumni

Newsletter of IISc Alumni Association

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Article from IISc Distinguished Alumnus - Dr. N. Seshagiri

NIC - NATIONAL INFORMATICS (INTEGRATION) CENTRE

(Dr. N. Seshagiri is an alumnus of IISc and is a former Director General of National Informatic centre. He has been a pioneer in implementing several e-governance projects through NIC across India. He obtained his Ph.D. in 1964. The President of India awarded to him Padma Bhushan in 2005.)



Sometime in the mid nineties, Mr.P. Chidambaram casually advised us to change the name 'NIC'. He explained that to him NIC only meant 'National Integration Council'. Soon thereafter, I got an opportunity to be present, as an official observer, in one of the annual meetings of the other NIC. My inference was that, that NIC cannot bring about national integration all by itself. It certainly needs the support of many organizations like our NIC.

The over three thousand scientific and technical officers of NIC came from almost all states & union territories of India. Meticulous recruitment on merits displayed its statistical side - our distribution curve was more or less matching the population proportion of regions. It proved that merited people can come from anywhere in India. This proved so in the gender ratio also, matching the ratio of the numbers recruited with the ratio of those who applied for the jobs.

Having started in 1976 as an organization for servicing the Information needs of the Central Government, NIC spread to all states and UTs by popular invitation. The states were so enthusiastic that every state Government signed an MOU with NIC that respected the respective roles of the Central & State Governments. At NIC, we trained our officers to not only serve like 'Karma Yogis' but also be sincerely & honestly non-partisan and serve with equal zeal whomsoever the people of the state elected to represent them. We religiously believed that we should serve only as facilitators. It was no surprise that the state governments, irrespective of which party was in power, patronized NIC as if it was their own. In AP, NTR's government with Shri Chandrababu Naidu as FM, gave away a six storey building in a prime location in Hyderabad in just under a week. In Orissa, Mr. Biju Patnaik donated to NIC a huge building built for a Government office. In Maharashtra, Chief Minister Mr.Vasant Dada Patil decided to rename the sprawling 'Udyog Bhawan' in Pune as 'NIC Bhawan'. At New Delhi, the then PM Shri Rajiv Gandhi personally took initiative to allocate an eight storey building originally built for a special security force and Shri. V.P. Singh, his FM, sanctioned Rs.150 crores for setting up of NICNET, all within fifteen days without short-circuiting any of the rules of the Government. In UP, the Government doubled our human resources at all the NIC District Centres at their own cost and provided

State Government living quarters to all our officers. Mr. Devi Lal, then CM of Haryana, personally involved himself with NIC officers in the design of our model Agriculture Information System, which was later on implemented in many other states also. Such instances can be cited virtually for all the states. They were all convinced about the growing importance of IT even by mid eighties. They were equally convinced about the apolitical, technical and sincere service mindset of the officers and staff of NIC.

In addition to the Quality of Service, NIC never underestimated the need for quantity - India is a big and diverse country. We were not interested in just demonstrating our commitment to IT and to the country. With its HQ at Delhi, full fledged centres in each of the state capitals, a district NIC centre in each of the over 580 districts in the country, replete with computers, satellite earth stations and highly qualified manpower, and several thousands of nodes in public development banks, public sector units, public utilities, the Supreme Court, all the High Courts, over 350 district courts, NICNET is generally regarded as the most extensive Government network in the world. Having developed over ten thousand software packages, big and small, and several thousand databases, NIC assisted with State and National budgets, online coverage of Lok-Sabha and Assembly elections, computerization of land records, treasury accounting, agri-marketing, passport offices, public distribution services to mention a very few. NIC's corporate arm, NIC Services Inc. (NICS), earns more revenue than the annual budget of NIC.

Yet, as a principle, we were not to be prima-donnas. If any state wanted us to be so, at anytime, we were ready to serve. We cherished our N+1 status. We also never hesitated to abnegate, if the circumstances called us to do so. If local initiative in the state or genuine private innovations flowered, we had learnt to recede however difficult that was emotionally, and migrate to greener pastures of service.

The National Integration role of NIC spans from Information to Technology to National and State Administration to its own ethnic composition. In retrospect, NIC deserves its name on more than one score. Yes, we are prepared to rename NIC, in spirit, to 'National Integration Centre'.

Thanks a heap Mr. Chidambaram, for the valuable suggestion.

N SESHAGIRI

President's Desk

Dear colleagues,

As your association moves forward with more and more activities, Indian Institute of Science is also exhibiting their whole hearted participation by supporting many of the activities and events. I would like to acknowledge their support with the grateful thanks. For the first time, the IISc. Alumni Association and IIT Alumni have come together in conducting a grand Musical Evening on June 23, 2012 at J.N.Tata Auditorium, IISc and Indian Institute of Science generously supported it. This is a good beginning for fostering the Friendship and Association with IIT Alumni.

The Knowledge Exchange Programme launched by the IISc. Alumni Association is serving its purpose quite well and judging by the response we receive from the students and sponsors, namely, DRDO. Your association is facilitating many of the reunion of many batches of different Departments.

I await a good interaction with you all during the forthcoming Annual General Body Meeting on August 11, 2012, followed by the Presentation of Distinguished Alumnus Award-2012. Your suggestion and participation will go a long way to augment our activities.

V Babu Sathian

Editorial

Dear reader,

The invited article by Dr. N. Seshagiri plays a new impetus in the implementation of computer network based information system for the state and central governments.

IISCAA has been conducting the Popular Science Lecture Series. Dr. K. Radhakrishnan gave the inaugural lecture on 3rd April 2010 and without a break twenty five lectures have been delivered. Over 3,000 audience got benefitted. The Silver Jubilee lecture by the eminent scientist Prof. C.N.R. Rao on 12th May 2012, "2011-celebration of science" was most invigorating and interesting.

Prof. C.N.R. Rao described lucidly the major contributions of scientists hundred years ago, who won the noble prizes and enlightened us why 2011 is important - the greatest year in the history of science. He elaborated on the golden age of science, how science has changed over the years giving birth to new disciplines.

Inspired by Michael Faraday, Prof. Rao admitted, "If I were asked to pick only one name in science, all science put together, the greatest science of all times, I would pick Faraday, nobody else in the experimental science. No one could make as many as discoveries in one's life as Michael Faraday, who single handed wrote 451 papers and would write record book every day".

What is really bothering humanity? It is energy and environment, no other problem. Prof. Rao emphasized the new ways of obtaining hydrogen through 'Artificial Photosynthesis'. Hydrogen energy is going to be the major thing in India.

Water is the only source of energy and environment. Water will be the coal of the future. If you want to run all cars and aeroplanes, it is by hydrogen. No pollution. All cars to run on water should become a Reality!

Prof. Rao urged the scientists to work on hydrogen energy and related problems. Water is the only one which can solve energy and environment problems.

H K Anasuya Devi

Fragrance of Samanway 2012

(IISc Alumni Association gets closer to the student community. Samanway 2012 event was sponsored by IISCAA)



Students' Council of Indian Institute of Science organized first of its kind National students Conference on 'Connecting Science and Society' SAMANWAY 2012 held during 3rd to 4th March 2012 at Faculty Hall, IISc, Bangalore, India.

The objective of the conference was to provide a unique forum in India, for the interchange of ideas among researchers/students from research Institutes all over the country, with the intention of covering various research areas that have an impact on the society. The genesis of SAMANWAY lies at the realization of a need for bringing research students working in areas that have a direct bearing on the betterment of society together, the creation of conducive atmosphere to present and exchange ideas, to bring a coherent synergy towards the common greater goal of creating scientific value that benefits society at large.

Papers for oral presentation as well as posters for the exhibition were invited from young researchers from scientific institutions across the country under the following themes, which arguably represents the ways in which Scientists can bring smile to the face of Twenty first century Indian Society. Farming for transforming, Good health, better society, Save environment, save future & Structuring the infrastructure. Few more topics touching various fields were covered in the Interdisciplinary theme 'Technology and Society'. The keynote addresses set the tone for each session and the works presented by students in each session were interesting and innovative. Eminent speakers and experts across the country and IISc Professors addressed the delegates. Around 200 students and researchers spanning a variety of fields in



Science and Technology from various institutes across the country participated in the conference.

They have presented their state-of-the-art research work that can deliver solutions to existing and anticipated problems. There were brainstorming deliberations with an attempt to answer some of the questions posed by the societal demand to the scientific community. A vibrant panel discussion was held in the concluding session of 'Samanway 2012' on the central theme of the conference 'Connecting Science and Society'. We hope that researchers, educators, managers, and policymakers will be able to utilize the outcomes of these workshops, to develop their activities and action plans in the near future.

The conference succeeded in its noble purpose to bring students from various institutes in one platform and in advocating a need and feasibility for society centric scientific research. The passion and enthusiasm shown by the participants were awesome and the dynamic conference environment was successful in increasing their confidence level. The conference was dedicated in memory of great visionaries Swami Vivekananda, Sir M Vishweshwaraiah, Acharya Prafulla Chandra Ray and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya on the occasion of their 150th birth anniversary. The support of the IISc Alumni Association towards conference organization is highly appreciated.

Hope "Samanway 2012" will be the torch bearer for a future grand initiative for making science work more need fully for our own society in national perspective. Long live the concept of Science with great human value and ethical standard.

Popular IIScAA Science Forum - Lecture series celebrates Silver Jubilee



The Twenty Fifth Lecture (May 12, 2012)

Topic : 2011 – Celebration of Science

Speaker : Prof. C. N. R. Rao, National Research Professor, Linus Pauling Research Professor & Honorary President Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research, Bangalore

Moderator : Prof. N. Balakrishnan

Abstract: Dr. Rao talked about why 2011 was important in science as several important discoveries converged 100 years back in 1911 and the celebration of International Year of Chemistry in 2011.



The Twenty Fourth Lecture (April 21, 2012)

Topic : Micro / Nano Air Vehicles and its Sensors

Speaker : Lt. Gen. (Dr.) V. J. Sundaram, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd.), Advisor (Micro & Nano Systems), National Design and Research Forum, Bangalore

Moderator : Prof. B. Dattaguru

Abstract : Dr. Sundaram discussed Mini, Micro, Nano Air vehicles and their applications in Disaster Management, Commercial and Defence arena. Additionally he discussed bio-sensors, their application in defence, medicine and food quality control.



The Twenty Third Lecture (March 17, 2012)

Topic : Global Navigational Satellite Systems – an Indian Perspective

Speaker : Dr. Surendra Pal, Prof. Satish Dhawan Professor & Senior Adviser, Satellite Navigation (ISRO), ISRO Satellite Centre, Bangalore

Moderator : Prof. P. R. Mahapatra

Abstract: Dr. Pal talked about Global Navigation Satellite System, GPS and how navigational systems have evolved over a long period of time.

H R Parthasarathy

Awards and Recognitions

ALUMNI:

Prof. Chanchal Uberoi – Press release of album combining science and Indian Classical Music-Ragas across Space music album in Record Label-Stardust Records, Seattle. 2012
 Dr. Shyam Vasudev Rao - 3nethra was selected as one of the three innovation under the DST L&M Growth to showcase it to U.S. Secretary of state Hillary Clinton in Delhi. 2012
 Prof. Dr (Mrs) R. Vasanthakumari : Plasticon Award from Plastindia Foundation; National award from Dept of Chemicals and Petrochemicals, 2012
 Ms. Rashmi KV : Winners of the Facebook, 2012

FACULTIES:

Prof. B.N. Raghunandan - Alumni Award of Excellence in Research in Engineering 2012.
 Prof. H.S. Savithri - Excellence in Research and Technology award 2011 (Indian Science Congress Association, Kolkata)
 Prof. Utpal Tatu - Srinivasaya Memorial Award, 2011

STUDENTS:

- Dr. Ritesh Kumar - K. V. Giri medal for best Ph D thesis 2011.
- Ms Rani Pallavi - Marie Curie Fellowship
- Ms Pragyan Acharya - Khorana Fellowship
- Ms. Nishana. M - Perumal Award 2012
- Ms. Shweta Chaubey - Perumal Award 2012
- Ms. Meetali Singh - Perumal Award 2012
- Mr.Govind Kamath - Shri.G.B.Meemamsi Award for the year 2012.

IIScAA Activities

Dear Member,

The activities of IIScAA during the period March to May 2012 are summarized below :

Shri. V. Babu Sathian, President, IIScAA, paid the Floral Tributes on the occasion of Founder's Day on March 3, 2012.



Prof. E. S Dwarakadasa, Ex-President, IIScAA, joined us as our Advisor.

IIScAA is in the process of redesigning the official website (www.iiscalumni.com). Any suggestions for improvement are most welcome.

IIScAA sponsored the following Programme / Conference :

- IISc Students' Council Conference - "Samanway 2012 : National Conference Connecting Science and Society" held during March 3 & 4, 2012 at the Faculty Hall, IISc.
- Musical Programme "Alapana" organized by the Percussive Arts Centre, Bangalore , an initiative of few IISc alumni , on 26th March 2012 at NIAS Auditorium.

Social Networking



IIScAA organized the Alumni Network Meet on Sunday, April 29, 2012 at the Main Guest House Lawns of IISc. About 80 members with spouse participated in the Meet. Shri. V. Bangarusamy, IIScAA Member, Sponsored this Meet.



IIScAA has enrolled 24 members during the period – 1st March 2012 till 31st May 2012. As on today, the number of alumni enrolled to IIScAA is : 8881

L N Satapathy

Membership

Membership information, the fee details and ID card application can be downloaded from <http://www.iiscalumni.com/about-us/membership.htm>
Please send your application to the General Secretary ,
Alumni Association, IISc, Bangalore - 560 012

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