



PM renames Centre for Advanced Technology in the memory of Dr. Raja Ramanna

December 17, 2005, Indore



"It gives me great pleasure to participate in this function to rename the Centre for Advanced Technology of the Department of Atomic Energy as the Raja Ramanna Centre for Advanced Technology. It is also an honour for me to dedicate the Synchrotron Radiation Source, Indus-2 to the nation today.

As Pandit Nehru said, scientific institutions are the temples of modern India and play a key role in the gigantic task of national development and nation building. India's atomic energy programme has been recognized in the country and the world over, as a shining example of self-reliance and outstanding achievement. "

This programme has benefited from the dedication of legendary scientists such as Dr. Homi Bhabha, Dr. Homi Sethna and stalwarts such as Dr. P.K. Iyengar, Dr. M.R. Srinivasan, Dr. R. Chidambaram and Dr. Kakodkar, the present Chairman of the Commission.

Dr. Raja Ramanna was a shining star in this galaxy of outstanding scientists. An illustrious son of India, he served the country in various capacities including as Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission and as Minister of State for Defence, Dr. Ramanna was a polymath. He mastered the frontiers of science; at the same time, he was an authority on India's scriptures like the Gita and Upanishads; also an accomplished pianist and deeply knowledgeable about both Western and Indian classical music. He was also a leader with exceptional qualities who inspired generations of scientists. The BARC Training School, which he helped to found in 1957, was a turning point in the development of the DAE. Dr. Raja Ramanna was a charming man blessed with great spontaneity. It was my privilege and pleasure to have known him personally.

Dr. Ramanna was associated with key milestones in India's nuclear programme. He was involved with building the country's first research reactor Apsara. At his initiative, the construction of the Variable Energy Cyclotron was taken up in Kolkata. He also gave impetus to the fast reactor programme in the country in the 70's and 80's. As the Director of BARC, he was the leader of the team, which conducted India's first peaceful nuclear test in 1974. Between 1978 and 1981 he was Scientific Adviser to Raksha Mantri.

Dr. Ramanna was instrumental in setting up this Centre for Advanced Technology in 1984. This Centre was established with a view to mastering advanced technology, especially in the areas of lasers and accelerators. The progress achieved by the Centre vindicates Dr. Ramanna's vision, by contributing to the nation's needs as well as placing India on the international nuclear map. The Centre has played a pivotal role in delivering very high quality components and substances for the world's biggest particle accelerator, the Large Hadron Collider, being set up by CERN in Geneva.

The scientific and technological abilities of our scientists match the best the world over. This gives us the confidence to pursue increased exchanges with the outside world with India as an equal partner with the most advanced countries in the world. Just last week, India joined a select group of countries participating in ITER – the International Thermo Nuclear Experimental Reactor project and I congratulate the DAE for this achievement.

I am optimistic that through constructive dialogue with the international community, we will soon be part of the mainstream with full civilian nuclear cooperation between India and international partners. Our non-proliferation track record and our scientific credentials will only add to India's weight in international cooperative endeavours to harness all the applications of nuclear energy, for the country's social and economic development, for meeting our growing energy needs, and for the greater glory of global scientific advancement as a whole. In this journey of excellence, this Centre, the Raja Ramanna Centre for Advanced Technology, will have a critical role to play.

Let me take this opportunity to convey to you – the members of the DAE family – the deep appreciation and gratitude of the nation for your commitment and your scientific accomplishments. You have our full and unstinted support for your endeavours."