



Indian Scientists' Delegation Abroad

Current Science (December 1944) briefly noticed the activities of the Indian Scientists' Delegation in the United Kingdom and recorded its arrival in Washington on the 11 December 1944. Recent press messages indicate that the Delegates had completed their eight-weeks' programme in the States and private advice since received expect the Delegation back in India sometime during the third week of this month (February).

An extensive tour for the Delegation had been arranged by the State Department and the Indian Agent-General whereby the members visited the leading American Laboratories of the Industrial Establishments, the Universities and of Government Departments. The general impression of the Delegation may perhaps be best summarised in the words of J. C. Ghosh who, at the conclusion of this countrywide tour, commented as follows to a press

representative at Washington: 'The scientific research laboratories of the United States appear to be the best equipped by men of outstanding ability and high distinction. Fifty years ago, young Americans of great ability were sent in large numbers to scientific laboratories in Western Europe for training and research. To-day, America is outstanding in the field of scientific discovery and the trend is in the other direction. We were particularly impressed with the research laboratories in the United States' industries. Much of the work done there is of a fundamental nature although a considerable portion of the work relate to immediate industrial problems. The equipment in the science laboratories and the men in charge of them and the funds at their disposal are far superior to what we have seen in other parts of the world. As a matter of fact, in no laboratory we visited was the annual expenditure less than five million dollars'.

It is specially gratifying to learn from the leader of the Delegation, Sir S. S. Bhatnagar (who told reporters in New York) that the Mission was 'particularly successful in contacting big business and in seeing the most advanced modern research laboratories in the world' and that they had 'collected information which will be of great interest to Indian industry and Government'....

The successful conclusion of the Mission's visits to the United Kingdom and the United State should not blind one to

the fact that practical results of immediate consequence to Indian science and industry will depend on the action taken by the authorities here after the Delegates return home. The members have had exceptional opportunities of seeing what is being done by two of the leading nations in the world in fostering science. They have also acquired first-hand knowledge of the possibilities of training our own men in the renowned scientific institutions of these two countries. And they do know in great detail the exact requirements of Indian science and the lacunae in our scientific organisation. It is therefore but natural that great hopes should be raised by these visits of the Delegation....

The outlook for Indian science thus appears to be very bright indeed. Public opinion in India was never more keen than to-day in reorganizing the role of science in contributing to the welfare of the country. The money required to finance these schemes is, as the *Manchester Guardian* points out, available. And, in the best traditions of the internationalism of science, the authorities in both the United Kingdom and the United States offer their fullest co-operation in this matter to India. *Current Science* hopes that the visits of our scientific ambassadors abroad will enable Indian science to take the fullest advantage of these propitious circumstances and formulate and translate into action a scheme for the planned development of Indian scientific research.

NEWS

P. Balaram takes over as Director, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore

Padmanabhan Balaram, Professor and Chairman, Division of Biological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore has assumed office as Director of the Institute effective 1 July 2005.

Balaram, 56, graduated from the Fergusson College, Poona University in 1967, following which he received his M Sc degree in Chemistry at Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur in 1969. After his

Ph D degree from Carnegie-Mellon University, Pittsburgh, USA (1972), he was a Research Associate at Harvard University during 1972-73. He joined the Indian Institute of Science as a Lecturer in 1973 and has been a Professor since 1986.

Balaram's interests span structural biology, protein engineering and design. He is a Fellow of the Indian Academy of Sciences, the Indian National Science

Academy and the Third World Academy of Sciences. He has also received several awards including the *Padma Shri*, Government of India (2002).

Balaram is associated with the Editorial Boards of a large number of national and international journals. Most notably, he has been associated with *Current Science* for 17 years and has been the Editor of this journal for over ten years.