

Scientists gathered to Commemorate the Birth Anniversary of Dr. S. Ramachandran

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A gathering of eminent researchers, students, scientists and bureaucrats were present in the auditorium of National Institute of Immunology (NII) on 9th September 2016th evening to commemorate the birth anniversary of Late Dr S. Ramachandran, Founder Secretary of DBT.

The function kick started with welcome speech of present Secretary DBT Professor K. VijayRaghavan. In his opening sentence Prof. Raghavan said that the Department of Biotechnology is really well known today this is just because of initial efforts by Dr S. Ramachandran. If he would not have been there Biotechnology would just have ended up as small section of some other department. Today Department of Biotechnology is a huge department and we owe this to Dr S Ramachandran.

He then added that with no much ado we should go ahead to Dr T. Ramasami, Former Secretary, DST and Dr Manju Sharma, Former Secretary, DBT to hear their lectures.

In his lecture Dr T. Ramasami said in details about the life and working of S Ramachandran. Details of his lecture are as below:

S Ramachandran was born on 9th September 1934. He joined the Government (Department of Science and Technology) in later part of his professional career after leading Public Sector Enterprises and turning one of them located in challenging industrial environment around. He was part of the planning of DBT.

He was the founding Secretary of the Department of Biotechnology and led from the front. He seeded several schemes and programs, which have grown into fruit yielding and shadow giving trees. He nursed a nursery out of which came saplings of vitality in Biotechnology space.

He joined an ongoing journey in the world of leather and directed it with enlightened vision to a point of glory. Where he went, he carried with him the wand of a master.

T Ramasami share a part of his journey in the land of leather

- He (S Ramachandran) was then the Secretary of Department of Biotechnology. CSIR had appointed him as The Chairman of the Research Council of Central Leather Research Institute, where Dr Ramasami was working as a scientist. They met then for the first time and their journey together began into the world of knowledge.
- Many milestones were crossed, land marks were passed, one of the two alighted, but the journey of togetherness continues.
- Leather could be viewed as a biological material preserved and processed for high end use with applications of chemicals and engineering techniques.

Dr Ramachandran was the longest serving Chairman of Research Council of Central Leather Research Institute. He was the Chairman for five full terms spanning over three five year plan periods. CLRI launched six major initiatives

- To borrow from World Bank and service
- Indian Leather 2010: A Forecasting Exercise
- Leather Technology Mission and Vision Beyond Mission
- National Leather Development Programme
- New Millennium Indian Technology Leadership Initiative
- Modernization of Leather Industry through Integrated Leather Program
- In 1995, CLRI set to emerge as the Global Leader in research by 2005.
 - It did by way of 37% share of publications and 7.5% share of patents of the world. It was rated to be 120 times more effective for dollar spent by a professional study of international group
- In 1997, CLRI delivered “Do Ecology” technology solutions
 - It helped to save 2.5 lakh jobs, Rs 6000 crore turn over
- In 2000, completed successfully Leather Technology Mission
 - 1st example of Technology Mission by a CSIR Laboratory
- In 2001, launched NMITLI on bioprocessing of Leather
 - It opened a new breakthrough in Global space
 - Several patents and papers have emerged.

In the words of Dr T Ramasami, “Dr. S. Ramachandran was a composer, a conductor and a coach.

The functions of all three involve making others deliver value beyond themselves through the art of persuasion, science of logic and philosophy of life. Dr S. Ramachandran played a master of all three functions and placed himself in core of several hearts including mine for ever. His deeds are immortal. A star in the horizon is named after him; immortalizing the name.”

Then Dr Manju Sharma was called upon the stage to deliver her first lecture on S Ramachandran. She began her lecture by adding that she was happy to see all present in the auditorium those who had started their work with Dr S Ramachandran. She said that S Ramachandran believed in the philosophy that Science and Technology is important for changes in India. He met the then PM of India and persuaded for the establishment of a separate department of Biotechnology and institutes related to it. Dr S Ramachandran was very much concerned about the societal developments in her words. She further added that he was very hard working and good human

being. He emphasized to develop projects that gave results. She also expressed that she always felt extremely happy to work with him. He was very considerate person as official said Dr Manju Sharma.

Dr S Ramachandran selected scientist very carefully. Though his hardworking we were able to see a separate department of Biotechnology in 1986 for the integrated development of biotechnology. He was instrumental in setting up institutes like NII, New Delhi, June, 1981 (DST), NFATCC, PUNE, 1988 and ICGEB, NEW DELHI, 1988.

His mission mode projects were Cattle herd improvement - implemented by National Dairy Development Board through which World's first IVF buffalo calf born at NDRI, Karnal PRATHAM.

Within 3 years more than 300 calves were born. Vaccine action program was also very important project started by him. IVCOL and BIBCOL were established with Russian Collaboration.

Tissue culture facilities were taken care of by establishing tissue culture facilities at TERI, New Delhi and NCL, Pune. Dr Manju Sharma also shared that Dr Ramachandran always worked in consultation with rest of the people.

She concluded her lecture by saying, "He nurtured many of us; guided and encouraged to accelerate the growth of biotechnology in the country. On this important day we all remember the great man and pay our Homage to him."

At the end of the function Prof. K. VijayRaghavan felicitated Mrs S Ramachandran, guest of honour Dr T Ramasami and former Secretary Dr Manju Sharma with shawl.