



NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION FOR DEFENCE

25 & 26 February 1986



Seated from l to r are : Shri VK Rangra, Convener, Shri SS Murthy, Director, DESIDOC, Dr VS Arunachalam, SA to RM, Dr K Subrahmanyam, Director, IDSA and Shri SL Bansal, CCR&D at the inauguration of NACSID

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION FOR DEFENCE

This national conference was organised by Defence Scientific Information & Documentation Centre (DESIDOC), Delhi on 25 & 26 February 1986 at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi. The conference was co-sponsored by Aeronautical Research & Development Board, Bharat Electronics Limited, Bharat Heavy Electrical Limited, Department of Electronics, Department of Scientific & Industrial Research, and Oil & Natural Gas Commission. The two-day conference was attended by about 175 delegates representing DRDO Labs/Estts, defence departments, CSIR laboratories, public & private sector undertakings, universities, IITs and other scientific institutions. About 60 papers were presented in six technical

sessions including theme papers read by renowned specialists namely Air Vice Marshal S Krishnaswamy, Air HQrs, New Delhi; Gp Capt R Gopalaswami, VSM, Office of the SA to RM, New Delhi; Shri TS Rajagopalan, Scientist-in-Charge, INSDOC, New Delhi; Shri R Thiagarajan, Jt Adviser, Dept of Science & Technology, New Delhi; Prof S Parthasarathy, Institute of Information Studies, Madras; and Shri SS Murthy, Director, DESIDOC, Delhi.

Dr VS Arunachalam, Scientific Adviser to Raksha Mantri and Secretary, Department of Defence Research & Development, inaugurated the conference and called upon the infor-

mation scientists to link up the information in various disciplines as this was the critical need of the hour. He also opened an exhibition on information products and information services, which was arranged specially on the occasion. Dr K Subrahmanyam, Director, Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses, presided over the inaugural session. Shri SL Bansal, Chief Controller, Research & Development addressed the information scientists and spoke about the increasing demand of information and its role in defence. Earlier, Shri SS Murthy, Director, DESIDOC, and the Chairman of the organising committee expressed the need and objective of the conference and the role played by DESIDOC.

This was the first national conference on scientific information for defence in which the specialists from three work environments — the Defence Services, the R&D and other technical institutions and the information profession — met to discuss the common problems of handling, processing and utilizing the information, and to know their views on improving and modernising scientific information in the subject field of defence interest.

A cultural programme was also arranged on 25 February 1986 in which celebrated artists gave their performance at Mavalankar Auditorium, New Delhi.



Shri Satish Babbar a renowned singer and a view of the audience on the eve of the Conference at Mavalankar Hall

INAUGURAL ADDRESS*

We always talk about information, as it may be when we deal with weapons and explosion. But while talking about explosion of information as power, we are recognising the fact that the information is going to be the raw material for the present industrial revolution, as mechanical power had been the base for the first industrial revolution. All information is not knowledge, some may have



Dr VS Arunachalam

to be sifted, some may have to be processed, some of it abandoned, if knowledge has to progress. This is a job easier said than done. But we also know of stories that even geniuses like Ramanujam were having difficulties without proper information. If we have to handle

a large amount of information, sifting becomes inevitable and instead of literature we should learn to transfer information, which should be brief, concise and should not be misleading.

Thanks to Prof SR Ranganathan and his colleagues, who did some classic and original work in this direction overwhelmed by the kind of information explosion we are witnessing. Perhaps what we can do is to use some of the facilities provided by the latest technology. One accepts that cross fertilization of the interests is the key note of science. This actually underlines the major difficulty that how do we use information and how do we ask for keywords and how do we have it disseminated properly?

The interaction between a research scientist and an information scientist is a must. We know that science moves fast and the scientist has a big job but it is also a fact that information scientist has a big role to play. He has to continuously update himself. This is a game where computers can help him. There is human system working as an interpreter. It is possible that we might be turning atleast fastest information as knowledge. But there are some unique, I should say peculiar features which make the job of an information scientist somewhat more difficult.

Most of this information is inter-disciplinary in character and is dispersed in a number of subject areas. Often scientific journals are

**Excerpted from the Inaugural Address given by Dr VS Arunachalam SA to RM and Secretary Dept. of DR&D at the National Conference on Scientific Information for Defence on 25 Feb '85 at Vigyan Bhavan.*

littered with abandoned projects. Unless we learnt to link up, we would not be able to say which is feasible and which are the things that have been abandoned. The moment some thing appears in print, we think it is real but it might be one that was abandoned years back and they may be covering their losses by publishing some papers. We have another problem in very critical area where there are no publications available at all. It is in this context that the documentation has a major role to play in defence science. I just see that scientific

information for defence provides unique opportunity and challenges. More than that it can benefit enormously by interacting with a scientific information group in other areas. What is available today in civilian field can have greater implication in defence.

I think a constant interaction and an awareness is essential and I expect that National Conference of this kind would provide such an opportunity.