

Dr B R Ambedkar's birthday celebrations



The bright morning of 20 April 2005 ushered in the function to mark Dr B R Ambedkar's birthday celebrations in NAL. This function is eagerly expected for at least two reasons: we salute a great son of India and we have the opportunity to hear a lecture from an eminent person.

The function opened with Dr M R Nayak, Adv (M&A), paying rich tributes to Dr B R Ambedkar; he then invited the dignitaries on to the dais.

Dr A R Upadhya, Director, NAL gave a brief life sketch of Dr B R Ambedkar and described him as the greatest son of India. Recalling that it was 13 years since NAL has started the tradition of inviting eminent persons to deliver the Dr B R Ambedkar birthday lecture, Dr Upadhya introduced this year's chief guest: Mr A Krishnappa, MLA, Karnataka, and formerly Minister of State for Horticulture in Mr Veerappa Moily's Cabinet and again Minister for Animal Husbandry and Sugar in Mr S M Krishna's Cabinet. Describing Mr Krishnappa as a well-known educationist, NAL's Director also listed his many awards -- including *Indira Priyadarshini award* for 2000, *Vikas Shiromani Award* from Indian Institute of Economics, New Delhi and *Jawaharlal Nehru Excellence Award 2003* from Indian Institute of Economic Studies, New Delhi for best social work and social commitment..

Mr A Krishnappa then lit the lamp in front of Dr B R Ambedkar's portrait.

Mr Krishnappa opened his lecture by paying a special tribute to NAL: while Dr Ambedkar worked for the social betterment of the mankind, NAL's scientists were working for the betterment of the modern facilities for mankind. Dr Ambedkar, he added, was a social scientist apart from being a pioneer in so many other fields.



Recalling the social conditions prevailing during Dr Ambedkar's formative years, and his fight against a system dominated by caste, religion and regional considerations, Mr Krishnappa observed that a few small groups held all the resources for their own enjoyment and benefit while others were almost treated like bonded labourers.

Mr Krishnappa said when our country achieved freedom, great leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and others thought and decided that Dr Ambedkar was the right person to formulate a suitable Constitution for our country. He said Dr Ambedkar had no time for elaborate preparations, but, because of his brilliant mind, forethought and a deep commitment for social justice, Dr Ambedkar wrote the Constitution of India. Even today a lot of countries in the world are adopting the Indian constitution. "Even after 57 years our Constitution is considered to be the best in the world! Would there ever be another Ambedkar?", he wondered.

Mr Krishnappa reminded that all those born in this country are equal shareholders for opportunities and resources. He said you would know the capacity of a person only when

you give him an opportunity. He said that when we overcome the influence of caste, creed, religion and regional considerations, no other country can challenge India.

Mr Krishnappa was happy to see students among the audience (meritorious SC/ST students) and urged them to excel in their studies, because they were the future of our country. He said he was very happy to be among the scientists without whom there can be no progress. He proudly said that through his association with the educational institutions he has 10,000 students. He said they are his valuable assets. He said we must use the human resource more effectively. He gave a wonderful slogan on this occasion "Share and Care" for all. He urged everyone to put India on the world map and realize the vision of Dr B R Ambedkar's great India.

Mr Krishnappa and Dr A R Upadhya distributed the awards for meritorious SC/ST students of Karnataka, and meritorious children of NAL SC/ST staff members.

Dr Upadhya also presented a memento to Mr Krishnappa.

Mr R Rajendran, President of NAL SC/ST Employees Welfare Association proposed the vote of thanks.

K Anantha Rao
