

## C-MMACS Foundation Day function

It is a pleasure to attend the C-MMACS Foundation Day function, partly because it is so different from NAL's Foundation Day function. At NAL we have a packed programme (and a packed auditorium); at C-MMACS things are much more relaxed and the function has a very different kind of charm.

This year's C-MMACS Foundation Day function, held on 6 August 2001 in the afternoon, had two special visitors: Dr R A Mashelkar, DG-CSIR, who presided over the meeting, and Dr T S Prahlad, Director, NAL (this must be a surprise, but, strangely enough, Dr Prahlad has always been out of Bangalore on a C-MMACS Foundation Day!). There was a third very special gentleman at the function: Dr K S Yajnik, who delivered this year's C-MMACS Foundation Day lecture, but one cannot think of him as a "visitor" to C-MMACS.

Dr G Prathap, Scientist-in-Charge, C-MMACS, welcomed the gathering. In his brief opening remarks, Dr Prathap talked of the "coming of age" of C-MMACS and the "problems and challenges" which accompany the onset of adolescence (C-MMACS is now 13 years old).

Dr Mashelkar, as always, was marvellously re-assuring. "You are doing wonderful work", he told his C-MMACS colleagues, "and I feel proud to note that you have grown in reputation and stature. Be adventurous and uninhibited like all 13 year olds!". Dr Mashelkar also made the important observation that every country has historically found its own "fuel" to propel itself to greatness: "the Americans had railways, the British had textiles, the Scandanavian countries had milk, and the Gulf countries had oil. India's fuel is going to 'knowledge'".

Dr Yajnik's lecture on *Impact of digital revolution on dynamics of R&D* was thoughtful and illuminating. Starting with a "walk-through" about how the digital revolution began, how analog information started getting digital, how digital information started entering every day life ("I now routinely fiddle around with my digital camera without even realising what a revolution it constitutes in photography"), Dr Yajnik explained how digital information is set to become all-pervasive and how we should prepare ourselves for this imminent eventuality.



[C-MMACS Foundation Day Lecture](#)



[Release of C-MMACS Annual Report](#)



[Read C-MMACS Annual Report](#)  
[List of C-MMACS Foundation Day Lectures](#)

The "impact", Dr Yajnik explained, would change everything: how we structure R&D projects, how we will handle information and knowledge, how the Internet will create knowledge networks ("we will see much closer interaction between distant scientific communities"), how network security will become critical, how we can and should now handle non-linearity, how science and technology will become much more inter-disciplinary and how Indian S&T has a wonderful opportunity to come out of this isolation ("we suffered heavily because of this isolation, and didn't even realise that we were suffering!).

Dr Yajnik ended his narrative by discussing some specific modelling and simulation problems (examples: cataract epidemiology, flows through labyrinths, modelling of biochemical processes in the ocean) which he is looking at after retirement. This must have re-assured his legion of admirers; the "old boy", who was among the first in the country to do computational modelling many decades ago, is still in fine fettle.

The function, which began with a sonorous invocation by Gopal Patra, and also featured the release of the C-MMACS 2001 Annual Report, both in print and on the Web, ended with the vote of thanks by Dr Anand Kumar.

*Srinivas Bhogle*