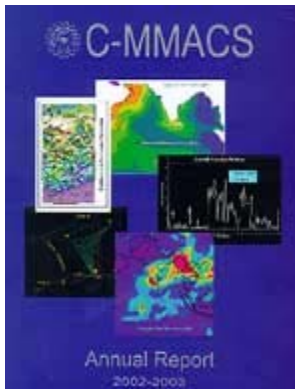


C-MMACS turns 15



The C-MMACS Foundation Day function is a special event. It is always celebrated on 15 July ("because C-MMACS was actually founded on 15 July 1988") and things are deliberately kept very simple. There is a brief welcome speech by the Scientist-in-Charge (Dr Gangan Prathap, since April 2000), an equally brief presidential address (usually by the NAL Director; in his address on Tuesday, Dr B R Pai complimented C-MMACS for "carving a very special niche in mathematical modelling and computer simulation" and for "venturing into areas that others have still not got into" and advised C-MMACS to ensure that undirected research remains well supported) and then the day's main event: the C-MMACS Foundation Day Lecture.

This year's Foundation Day Lecture (eighth in the series), was delivered by Prof V B Kaujalgi of the Indian Institute of Management (and an old friend of C-MMACS right from its inception). Prof Kaujalgi spoke on *Performance and Evaluation of R&D Institutes*.

The lecture was thoughtful and enjoyable. "All exercises relating to performance evaluation are difficult, and evaluating the performance of R&D labs is arguably the most difficult", he said. Prof Kaujalgi indicated six factors that would be critical in such an evaluation: good R&D planning, identification of market needs, effective technology transfer to the industry, selection of proper financial criteria for evaluating R&D worth, good 'man management' and good team work. The most likely reasons why evaluation systems fail, he explained, are: too much emphasis on internal measurements and the absence of an appropriate 'quali-quantitative' index to measure performance.

Prof Kaujalgi's lecture was laced with wise, pragmatic and witty observations. Samplers: "There are two big buzzwords in management today: 'strategic planning' and 'people management'; everything else seems to revolve around these two factors". "I don't mind saying this at C-MMACS: the mathematical abilities of management experts is rather limited". "All these rankings of colleges and management schools that you read in magazines are not above suspicion; many are commercial and very controversial". "The innovative output of an institute is directly proportional to its quantum of basic research".

Prof Kaujalgi ended his lecture with a SWOT analysis of C-MMACS. After the lecture the other events followed in quick succession: release of the C-MMACS annual report for 2002-03, presentation of shawls to the chief guest and president and the vote of thanks by Dr P Goswami. As always, it was wonderful to meet Prof V K Gaur, Dr K S Yajnik and other elders at the function.