

Editorial

S Mahadevan, Chief Editor

Among all the commemorative days that are observed by us, my own favourite is the National Science Day, observed on February 28, with the view to celebrate science in general and remember the great Indian scientists past and present. In my own Institute, the celebrations took the form of observing the day as Open Day, by providing an opportunity to the public to appreciate the work that goes on in the Institute. As bulk of the work carried out at the Institute is publicly funded, it is most appropriate that the public is made aware of how the Institute spends tax-payers' money in pursuing scientific research.



Email:
mahim@mrkg.iisc.ernet.in

The most enthusiastic among the visitors were children who arrived in large numbers. Their excitement was palpable. With shining eyes they darted from one department to another, listening to explanations of scientific principles and watching displays. One of the most gratifying sights was that of children occupying every seat in the famous Faculty Hall of the Institute, eagerly watching scientific demonstrations. I hope that we can sustain the curiosity and excitement generated by these demonstrations so that one day they will occupy the same seats in the capacity as faculty of the Institute.

Though the birth of what we call modern science took place in the west, science today is truly an international activity in which many Indian scientists have made significant contributions. There are efforts in some quarters to brand modern science as western and reject it in favour of 'Indian Science', a product of misplaced patriotism. In this context, the words of V V Raman, who concludes his outstanding series on the scientific enterprise, are most appropriate; "The results of modern science have not arisen from the utterances of revered authorities, nor do they rely on sacred texts. They are periodically subjected to revision, re-formulation, or even rejection. To cling to ancient visions in the context of science or to justify them in the framework and jargon of modern science is unwarranted and futile..... We may hope that with greater scientific awakening and spread of general scientific knowledge, enlightened worldviews will seep into the minds of the populace and eventually dissipate the darkness and distortions of anachronistic worldviews".

