

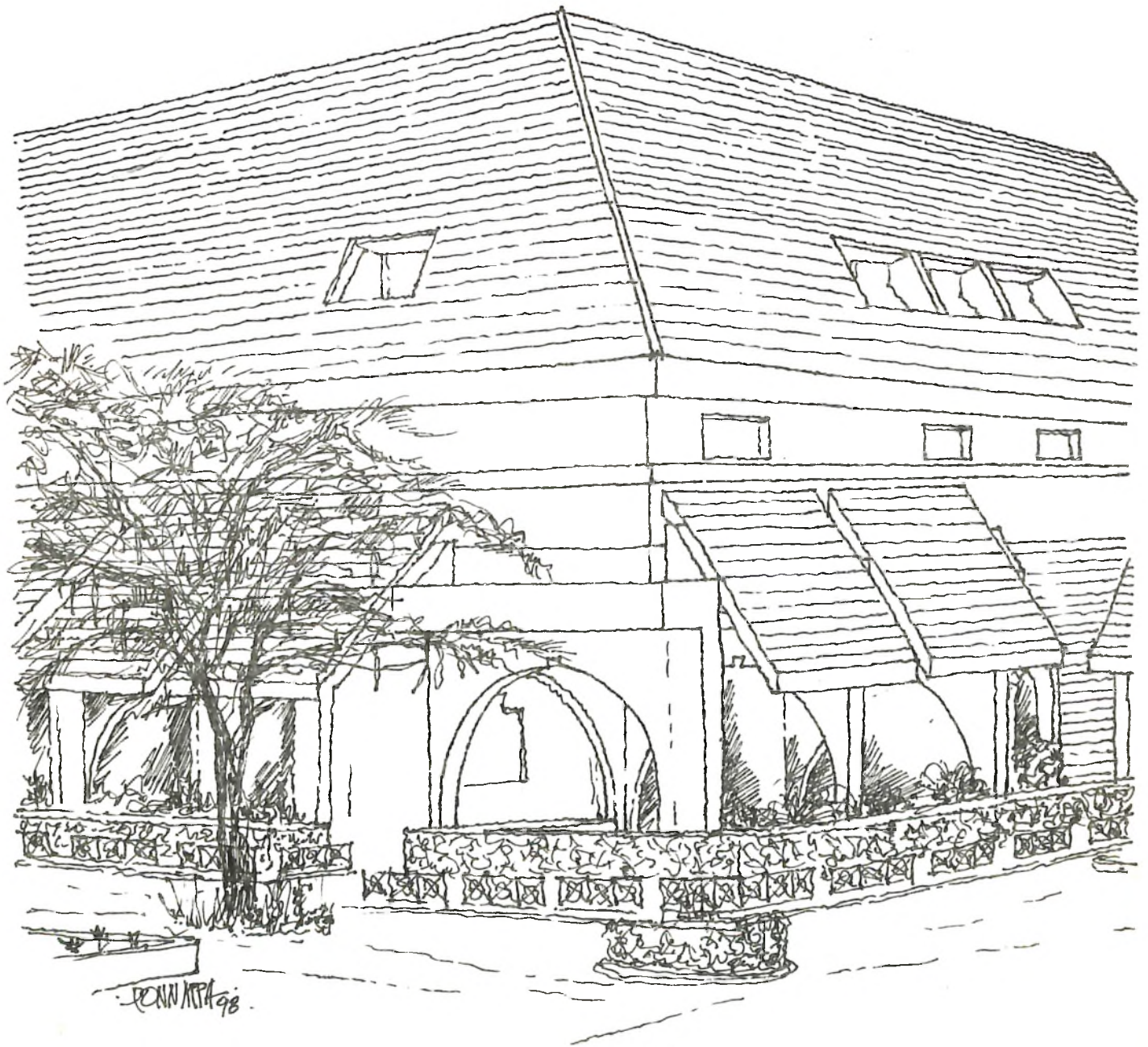


# NIAS NEWS

A NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED STUDIES  
BANGALORE

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## Editors' Note

A year has rolled by, and here it is – the fourth and final issue, this year, of the *NIAS NEWS* in its new format as a quarterly window into the activities of the National Institute of Advanced Studies. Coming to think of it, this is also the last issue of the journal this millennium! We will, of course, continue to bring you newsworthy information that will allow you to be aware of the research being conducted in our Institute as well as the many other activities that we organise every month. Come rain or shine or the new millennium! As always, we welcome you to write to us if you would like to participate in any of the upcoming events being organised at the Institute, or if you have any suggestions regarding the contents of the newsletter.

Anindya Sinha, Hamsa Kalyani and A Devaraju, Editors  
*October 1999*

## From the Director's Desk

During the last two years we have organised at NIAS a series of round table meetings on a variety of issues that are of current concern in the country. Two of these meetings have been on energy: on 10 March 1998 we had a round table on *Energy for the future*, and on 18 June 1999 on *Renewable energy for rural development*. These studies have been carried out as part of a collaborative project with Carnegie Mellon University. Several NIAS reports have come out summarizing the studies carried out on this project. During the last quarter we had a report on the *Biomass Option*, and in this quarter we have reports on *Advanced Coal Technologies* and *Distribution of Electrical Power*. I am just back from an Indo-US meeting that was held at Warwick during 24-26 September on *Electrical Power Issues*. It was attended by a team of ten Indian experts assembled by NIAS (including Prof Rajagopal, Dr A Ramachandran, Prof D P Sen Gupta and myself from NIAS), and a similar number assembled by Carnegie Mellon in the US. We met on neutral ground, so to speak, and had very interesting discussions on a variety of issues, in particular exploring the links between policy and technology. It should be obvious that the most attractive technology options available should influence energy policies in the country, and that the policies adopted will tend to promote certain technologies! In spite of its 'obviousness' to many of us, however, if we look at policies being actually followed, in particular in the energy sector in India, it is clear that the two do not appear to be linked! I hope that the very stimulating discussions that took place at Warwick will lead us to intelligent and well-informed policies in India that will take us towards solving the perennial problem of shortage that we have been plagued with for decades.

Following the series of suicides among farmers in North Karnataka reported early last year, a team of two of our faculty members, Dr A R Vasavi and Dr P K Shetty, visited the area to make an independent assessment of the nature of the agrarian distress experienced in that area, the likely causes and possible solutions. The results of these studies are now out as two reports from the Institute. They examine respectively the social and ecological dimensions of the crisis that occurred in North Karnataka. While these studies do not necessarily reflect the views of the Institute, I do hope that they will serve to illuminate the genesis of such crises and on how we might be able to prevent their recurrence.

The April Newsletter carried a report on an International Symposium on *Science and Society: A New Social Contract*, which was organised at NIAS in preparation for the UNESCO World Conference on Science. I had the privilege of attending this World Conference, which was held at Budapest during 26 June-1 July, as a delegate from India. I am very pleased to be able to report that the detailed document that was prepared at NIAS for this Conference, and the *Bangalore Communique* that was drafted after extensive and vigorous debate at the Bangalore meeting, had been widely read by delegates to the Budapest meeting. It was gratifying that virtually all the recommendations made at Bangalore were incorporated in some form or the other in the two documents that emerged from Budapest, namely the *Draft Declaration on Science and the Use of Scientific Knowledge* and *Draft Science Agenda – Framework for Action*. It may be significant that one exception was a suggestion we made about sustainable consumption!

I took the opportunity of being in the neighbourhood to visit the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis in Vienna, to discuss the possibilities of collaborative projects between our two Institutes, which have rather similar objectives in many ways.

Dr K Kasturirangan, Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organization, has just informed us that ISRO will endow a chair at NIAS, in particular for the pursuit of policy studies related to science and technology. On behalf of NIAS I want to thank Dr Kasturirangan for this endowment, which will greatly help us to strengthen our work in a key area of research at NIAS.

I am happy to acknowledge a gift, from Prof Satish Dhawan, of issues of the well-known and highly regarded journal *Daedalus* (going back to 1972), published by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. This journal is particularly relevant to the sort of work we carry out at this Institute, and will bring strength to our collection of journals.

I am also happy to acknowledge a gift of Rs.10,000 from Dr S R Valluri towards the Institute's programmes.

**R Narasimha**

## Doctoral Programme in NIAS

NIAS is a unique institution that conducts advanced research in multidisciplinary areas that bridge the gap between the natural sciences, technology and the social sciences. Complementing its research programmes, NIAS also offers courses in different areas of research, development and policy for different groups of professionals including teachers, bureaucrats, and executives.

One constraint that NIAS has functioned under so far has been the lack of a doctoral programme whereby young students are trained in the research areas that the institute has traditionally been interested in. There is, however, an urgent need for such a programme for two principal reasons. First, the unique multidisciplinary academic culture that NIAS has so carefully been building up over the past years has to be nurtured and not allowed to dissipate with the passage of time. This would require that young, talented, and committed students are identified and absorbed into the organisation — they would then serve as torchbearers into the future. Second, much of the research being conducted in the institute, being of an interdisciplinary nature, requires cooperation

between a number of specialists. Large groups such as these would definitely benefit from young researchers of different disciplines who can actively contribute to the progress of the group in their respective areas of expertise.

It must also be noted that there has been, in recent times, increasing awareness and interest in issues relating to the interfaces between the natural sciences, technology and the social sciences among young Indian graduate students. Many of them, in fact, are becoming increasingly attracted to pursuing a research career in these interdisciplinary areas. Very few opportunities, however, exist for such students, who have dared to think differently, to pursue a career of their choice within the country. In collaboration with MAHE, an innovative leader among institutions imparting higher education in the basic and applied sciences in the country, NIAS has, therefore, begun a doctoral programme that would specifically award doctoral degrees to students interested to pursue independent research in the areas that NIAS specialises in. For more information, please contact Anindya Sinha ([asinha@nias.iisc.ernet.in](mailto:asinha@nias.iisc.ernet.in)).

**Anindya Sinha**

## Research Programmes

*The principal areas of research that faculty members of the Institute are currently involved in include consciousness studies, environmental toxicology, epigraphy, gender studies, international and strategic studies, mathematical modelling in non-traditional areas, philosophy of science, primate cognition, sociology and social anthropology, and theory of numbers.*

*In addition, a new project was initiated during the period from July to September, 1999:*

### **OF IDEAS AND INSTITUTIONS: CONTRIBUTIONS OF D.D. KOSAMBI TO GENETICS**

**M G Narasimhan**

Philosophy of Science Unit

This project, funded by the Centre for Human Genetics, Bangalore, proposes to explore the nature and significance of D.D. Kosambi's contributions to genetics. Prof Kosambi's work was concerned with gene linkage and recombination, areas of fundamental importance in classical genetics – both general and human. The project is expected to be completed in about six months.

## Important Events

*Complementing its research programmes, NIAS organises a variety of seminars, workshops, and academic courses each year. Some of the important events that were organised during the period from July to September 1999 included:*

### **MEETING ON “PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN POLITICS IN INDIA”**

**9 July, 1999**

This south regional meeting was organised by the Gender Studies Unit, with support from the International Women's Rights Action Watch – Asia-Pacific, to present and discuss the draft baseline report on “Participation of Women in Politics in India”. This report has been developed in the framework of the CEDAW (Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women) on Monitoring the Fulfillment of State Obligations towards Women's Equality.

**N Shantha Mohan**

### **THIRD IFS COURSE ON “CULTURE, ECONOMICS AND ENVIRONMENT IN DIPLOMACY”**

**19 – 24 July, 1999**

This course for the fifteen probationers of Indian Foreign Service, 1998 batch, organised with Sangeetha Menon as the course coordinator, aimed to apprise these young officers of the recent trends in three broad issues – culture, economics and environment – and explore their influence and importance in diplomacy.

Some of the speakers at the course were Sanjay Baru, S R Rao, Francois Gautier, S Goonatilake, T N Madan, U R Ananatumurthy, and Madhav Gadgil. Some of the topics that were covered included Issues in Economic Diplomacy, Indian Cultural Monuments Abroad, Cultural Self-perceptions in India, The Nature of South Asian Knowledge Systems, Asian Cultures in Globalising Economy, Fundamentalisms and Literatures of India. There were two panel discussions. The panel on "Indian Art in a Changing World" explored the changing trends in Indian classical music, classical dance, theatre and cinema, especially as perceived in the West. The panelists were Aditi Upadhya, Shuba V Rajagopal, P R Prasanna and Asish Rajadhyaksha. The panelists for "Globalisation: Economics, Environment and Culture" were D M Nanjundappa, M N Srinivas and J Srinivasan. The valedictory address was delivered by K Raghunath, Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, on "Kargil and Beyond".

In addition to the lectures and panel discussions there were project presentations by the participants on the main theme of the course. A collection of selected reading material, entitled "Culture, Economics and Environment in Diplomacy" was also published by NIAS on this occasion.

**Sangeetha Menon**

### **WORKSHOP ON WOMEN IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: EXPLORING SOUTH ASIAN INITIATIVES**

**29 – 30 July, 1999**

This was a follow-on meeting to the International Workshop on South Asian Women in International Security: Building Co-operative Networks that NIAS hosted in July 1998. The plan was drawn then for a collaborative network with the Participants in the region. A report on the first meeting about different views and perceptions held by the participants was written by the chair of the Workshop, Dr Deepa Ollapally, and circulated among the forty-five Participants. The main objective of the follow-on meeting was to take the initiative begun in 1998 and

advance it further with a smaller core group of leading experts. The papers and proceedings of these meetings will be published shortly as a volume.

**Deepa Ollapally**

### **PREPARATORY MEETING ON THE CEDAW CONVENTION**

**6 – 7 August, 1999**

This country meeting was organised by the Gender Studies Unit, with support from the International Women's Rights Action Watch – Asia-Pacific, to primarily discuss three baseline reports on "Participation of Women in Politics"; "Rights of Women in Marriage" and "Women in Armed Conflict Situation". This meeting also served to identify organisations and individuals who would prepare reports on these and other issues and articles of the CEDAW Convention, all of which would finally lead to the preparation of the Alternative Report to the Government.

**N Shantha Mohan**

## **V**isits

Prof Thomas Ahrens, Department of Geology and Planetary Sciences, California Institute of Technology, U.S.A., visited the Institute earlier this year on 26 February.

Dr Susan Evans, from the Department of Educational Psychology, University of Arizona, Sierra Vista, U.S.A., visited the Philosophy of Science Unit on 16 July and had discussions with the members of the unit.

Mr K Subramanyam, Convenor, National Security Advisory Board, visited the Institute on 30 August and had extensive discussions with the Director and other faculty of the Institute.

Mr Mark Larsen, Director, Information Sciences in South Asia, United States Information Services, visited the Institute on 8 September and held discussions with the faculty on matters pertaining to the research being conducted at the Institute and the ways in which USIS could provide information services and library support to such research activities.

the new information technologies, with particular emphasis on the technological, cultural, economic and political issues involved. While at the Institute, he proposes to continue his efforts to define practices and policies that could employ the current advancements in information and communication technologies to increase societal equity and strengthen cultural diversity.

## New Academic Members at NIAS

### **Prabhakar G Vaidya**

*Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee Visiting Professor*

Prof Vaidya holds a Ph.D. from the Institute of Sound and Vibrations Research of the University of Southampton in England. He has worked at Lockheed and Boeing, been a faculty fellow at NASA and been on the faculties of Purdue and Washington State Universities in U.S.A.

His research interests have varied from acoustics and noise control to nonlinear dynamics, nonlinear signal processing, chaos, and cryptography. He has also worked in mathematical modelling of biological systems, especially cancer and cardiac dynamics. At NIAS he plans to continue his biological modelling work and collaborate with Dr Sangeetha Menon on the NIAS manuscript archiving project. He is looking for further collaborations at NIAS, especially on any “nontraditional “ applications of mathematics.

### **Kenneth Keniston**

*Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee Visiting Professor*

Prof Keniston, Director, MIT India Program and Andrew Mellon Professor of Human Development at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, U.S.A., will be a visiting professor at the Institute between 14 September and 17 December, 1999.

Prof Keniston’s primary research interests lie in the areas of human and social consequences of

### **M D Madhusudan**

*Research Scholar*

Mr Madhusudan proposes to investigate the nature of certain kinds of human intervention – livestock grazing, hunting, timber collection, and harvesting of minor forest produce – on the wildlife communities of tropical deciduous forests of southern Karnataka, particularly the Bhadra Tiger Reserve and the Bandipur National Park. One of the major problems that these reserves face is that of extensive grazing by livestock maintained by some of the people living within these reserves. India, in fact, has the world’s largest livestock population, and two-thirds of Indian wildlife protected areas have livestock grazing within their boundaries. The impacts, if any, of these livestock populations on resident wildlife and their habitat are, however, poorly known. This project will primarily attempt to evaluate the effect of cattle grazing on plant biomass and community composition, which influence wildlife use of the area. The related issue of human-wildlife conflict generated by livestock killing by tigers and leopards will also be studied. The information that would be generated from this project, in combination with the results that should emerge from the proposed investigations into the other kinds of human impacts, should assist in the development of management strategies for our wildlife reserves and help in the resolution of human-wildlife conflicts.

With a Master’s degree in Wildlife Science from the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun (the degree being awarded by the Saurashtra University, Rajkot), Mr Madhusudan has now registered for a doctoral degree in the NIAS – MAHE Doctoral Programme under the guidance of Dr Anindya Sinha.

## Distinctions

**R Narasimha** was elected Foreign Honorary Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, U.S.A.

**P K Shetty** was nominated a consultant to the World Wide Fund for Nature, Bangalore Chapter.

**M N Srinivas** delivered the First Golden Jubilee Lecture at the Delhi School of Economics on 20 September, entitled "Caste: A Systemic Change?".

## Courses Taught

**M G Narasimhan** taught a module on "Science, Technology and Development in Post-Independence India" at a programme, entitled, "A Semester in South India", for graduate students of the University of Iowa, U.S.A. at Mysore, on 1 – 2 September.

**A R Vasavi** developed and conducted a three-week course for first-year MBA students on "Social Transformation in India" at the Indian Institute of Management, Kozhikode, between 5 to 13 July and 6 to 13 September.

## Students Guided

**P K Shetty** guided the dissertation work of two M.Sc students, the theses of which have been submitted to Bangalore University.

Ms Mariam Sabitha's thesis is entitled "Influence of environmental factors on human diseases in the Malnad region of Karnataka", while that of Ms J. Anitha's is called "Comparative analysis of the issues associated with cotton cultivation in Andhra Pradesh".

## Meetings Attended

**Arvind Kumar** delivered a talk on "The prospects for nuclear disarmament in the new millennium" in a seminar organised by the American Studies Research Centre, Hyderabad, during 5 – 6 April, 1999.

**Arvind Kumar** participated in a workshop on "Cleansing the electoral system" organised by the Institute For Social and Economic Change, Bangalore, on 23 August, 1999.

**Arvind Kumar** participated in a conference on "South Asia facing the new millennium" organised by the Regional Centre For Strategic Studies, Colombo, Sri Lanka, during 21 – 23 September, 1999.

**Sangeetha Menon** presented a paper entitled "The 'bhakta' and the mind of the 'bhakta' in the Narada Bhakti Sutras and the Bhagavad Gita" at the International Vedanta Conference on Theistic Systems and Bhakti Traditions, at the Osmania University, Hyderabad, during 9 – 12 August, 1999.

**N Shantha Mohan** presented a paper entitled "From political participation to armed conflict: Findings on the role of women in India" at a regional workshop on 'Women in international security: Exploring south Asian initiatives' at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, 29 – 30 July, 1999.

**N Shantha Mohan** participated in a national seminar on 'Costs and wastage in primary education' at the Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bangalore, 11 – 13 August, 1999.

**N Shantha Mohan** presented a paper on "Conducive environment for women at the workplace" at the All-India Conference on The Supreme Court Judgement on the



Implementation of the Guidelines to Prevent Sexual Harassment at the Workplace, organised by the National Institute of Public Administration, Bangalore, on 3 September, 1999.

**Asha Ramesh** participated in an international conference on "Governance and Civil Society" organised by the Johns Hopkins University and the Bangalore Consultancy Office, at Bangalore, 5 – 8 July, 1999.

**Asha Ramesh** was invited as a resource person to *Gram Vikas* to conduct a two-day gender-sensitisation programme for the field organisers working in 116 villages of Mulbagal taluka and the women leaders of 186 self-help groups that this NGO has organised, 12 – 13 July, 1999.

**Asha Ramesh** participated in a two-day meeting on "Women and Security in South Asia", organised by the International and Strategic Studies Unit, National Institute of Advanced Studies, 29 – 30 July, 1999.

**Asha Ramesh** contributed to the issue of political participation of women at the Preparatory Meeting on the CEDAW Convention, organised by the Gender Studies Unit, NIAS, 5 – 6 August, 1999.

**Asha Ramesh** attended a national workshop on "Costs and Wastage in Primary Education", organised by the Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bangalore, 11 – 13 August, 1999.

**Asha Ramesh** attended the "Truth Commission on Unnatural Deaths", organised by *Vimochana* and the National Law School of India University, Bangalore, in which the parents and relatives of over 50 dowry-death victims deposed in front of a seven-member jury of eminent jurists and social activists, on 15 – 17 August, 1999.

**Asha Ramesh** was invited as a resource person to *Grama* to conduct two-day gender-sensitisation programmes for its staff working in four districts of Karnataka, namely, Chitradurga, Karwar, Hassan and Tumkur, 27 – 28 August, 1999.

**P K Shetty** presented a paper on "Towards environment-friendly agriculture – A means to achieve socio-economic progress" at a meeting organised by *Parivarthan* (a movement for socio-economic change) at the Bharathiya Vidya Bhavan, Bangalore, on 20 August, 1999.

**Anindya Sinha** presented a paper entitled "Tactical deception in wild bonnet macaques: Evidence of intentionality?" at the 26<sup>th</sup> International Ethological Congress, Bangalore, 2 – 9 August, 1999.

**B V Sreekantan** attended the 26<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Cosmic Rays at Salt Lake City, U.S.A., 16 – 26 August, 1999.

## Publications

### NIAS PUBLICATIONS

*Copies of the below-mentioned NIAS publications can be purchased from the Institute. Please contact the Controller, NIAS, for more details.*

### I. NIAS REPORTS

R6-99 Ecological crisis and agrarian distress in Bidar  
*P K Shetty*

R7-99 Scientific explanations and consciousness  
*B V Sreekantan*

R8-99 Advanced coal technologies for power generation  
*A K Kolar and V M K Sastri*  
*Department of Mechanical Engineering,*  
*Indian Institute of Technology, Chennai*

R9-99 Distribution of electrical power

*D P Sengupta*

## II. NIAS LECTURES

L4-99 Understanding the 'what' and 'where' of consciousness: Revisiting the *Bhagavad Gita* to ask a few more questions

*Sangeetha Menon*

## PAPERS

Kumar, A. 1999. Book review - India's nuclear deterrent: Pokhran II and beyond, by Amitabh Mattoo (ed.). Har Anand, New Delhi. *South Asian Survey* 6(1).

Narasimha, R. 1999. Rocketing from the Galaxy Bazaar. *Nature* 400: 123 (Millennium Essay).

Sinha, A. 1999. Tactical deception in wild bonnet macaques: Evidence of intentionality. *Advances in Ethology* 34: 103. Abstract at the 26<sup>th</sup> International Ethological Conference, Bangalore, India, August 1999.

Subramanian, K A and Sinha, A 1999. Social relationships influence decision-making during group fission in wild bonnet macaques. *Advances in Ethology* 34: 142. Abstract at the 26<sup>th</sup> International Ethological Conference, Bangalore, India, August 1999.

Vasavi, A R 1999. Agrarian distress in Bidar: State, market and suicides. *Economic and Political Weekly* 34(32): 2263-2268.

Vasavi, A R 1999. Agricultural rituals: Rationality of rituals for regeneration. *Honeybee* 19(2): 6-7.

## ARTICLES

Antony, P Development dialogue. Book review – A manual of culturally adapted social marketing: Health and population, by T. Scarlett Epstein (ed.), Sage Publishing, New Delhi, 1999. *Deccan Herald*, 12 September, 1999.

Devaraju, A Memories of a committed teacher (A tribute to late Dr S Radhakrishnan). *The Hindu*, 31 August, 1999.

Kumar, A Comments on “ After Kargil, the question arises – what have the nuclear tests succeeded to deter?”. *Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies website* ([www.ipcs.org](http://www.ipcs.org)).

## Associates' Programme

*The Institute maintains a strong outreach with its Associates Programme. The Associates of the Institute include prominent personalities from widely different backgrounds in the media, arts, policy-making and academia. Associates are invited to a monthly evening lecture series and other important events, and constitute a strong base of ongoing outside support and interactions.*

*The Associates Programmes during the period from July to September, 1999, included the following events:*

30 July *Sarasa*: A concert of baroque music

Violin	:	BRIAN BROOKS
Recorder	:	REBECCA PROSSER
Cello	:	TIMOTHY MERTON
Harpsichord	:	MAGGIE COLE

The ensemble *Sarasa* was founded by a group of musicians of U.S.A. in response to a concert that they performed in the infamous Sing Sing Correctional Facility in 1997. It was formed to bring music not only to regular concert audiences but also to those who do not have easy access to live music and little opportunity to interact with musicians. The name of the ensemble, derived from the Sanskrit words *saraswathi* and *rasa*, was chosen to reflect the group's aims. This includes the presentation of music of the western classical tradition within the wider context of the music of the world.

For this particular concert, the ensemble played compositions from the works of Bach, Handel, Cavalli, Geminiani, Telemann, Scarlatti and others.

27 August The 15<sup>th</sup> centenary of the *Aryabhatiya*  
BALACHANDRA RAO  
National College, Bangalore

R K KOCHHAR  
National Institute of Science, Technology and  
Development Studies, New Delhi

*There was also a special public lecture organised during this period, as part of the Third IFS Course:*

24 July Kargil and beyond  
K RAGHUNATH  
Foreign Secretary,  
Government of India, New Delhi

## Wednesday Discussion Meetings

*The members of the Institute meet every Wednesday morning for informal academic discussions after a talk delivered by a member of the faculty. Wednesday meetings also serve as a forum for invited guest speakers to deliver a lecture on a subject of their choice. The discussions then continue over the high tea that follows these talks!*

*The Wednesday Discussion Meetings during the period from July to September, 1999, have included:*

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 7 July    | The <i>Bhagavad Gita</i> : Perennial friend, philosopher and guide<br>C V SUNDARAM   |
| 14 July   | The universe in the light of modern physics and astronomy<br>B V SREEKANTAN  |
| 28 July   | Verses for the brave: Selections from the <i>Yogavaasishtha</i><br>RODDAM NARASIMHA  |
| 11 August | Readings from Anton Chekov<br>M G NARASIMHAN   |
| 18 August | Mathematical modelling of pathogenesis<br>PRABHAKAR G VAIDYA   |
| 24 August | Empirical approach to the theory of fundamental particles<br>RAJA RAMANNA  |
| 25 August | Food for thought: Behavioural strategies adopted by wild bonnet monkeys to reduce social tension when provisioned by tourists<br>ANINDYA SINHA |

- 1 September Nuclear infrastructure: China, India and Pakistan  
S RAJAGOPAL
- 8 September Tall claims and realities: A preliminary analysis of the election manifestos, 1999  
PIUSH ANTONY
- 15 September *The beti and bahu*: Issues at stake in Bellary  
PIUSH ANTONY

*Guest speakers at the Institute during this period were:*

- 16 July A western approach to eastern mysticism  
SUE EVANS  
Department of Educational Psychology, University of Arizona, Sierra Vista, U.S.A.
- 4 August Road safety and the vulnerable sections of society  
M N REDDY, IPS  
Bangalore
- 16 July New applications of Brahmagupta's number theories  
E R SURYANARAYAN  
Department of Mathematics, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, U.S.A.
- 22 September Frontiers of ignorance: The objective logic of the mind  
POSINA VENKATA RAYUDU  
Harvard Medical School, Boston, U.S.A.
- 29 September The beauty and danger of asteroids  
TOM GEHRELS  
Department of Astronomy, University of Arizona, Tucson, U.S.A.

## Upcoming Events

**The First NIAS Course for the Indian Space Research Organisation** will be held at NIAS between 4 to 9 October, 1999. The general theme of the course will be "The Indian Space Enterprise: Foreseeing the Future". This course is directed towards a group of senior engineers and scientists from the Indian Space Research Organisation who have been identified as potentially constituting its future leadership. The purpose of the course is, in general, to help in shaping the orientation and planning skills needed by this group, and, in particular, to offer a view of the broader horizons to which the goals of the Indian space programme may be set as we enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The contact person for this programme is Dr Anindya Sinha ([asinha@nias.iisc.ernet.in](mailto:asinha@nias.iisc.ernet.in)).

A National Conference on CEDAW will be held in New Delhi between 13 to 15 November, 1999, to present and discuss the various articles of CEDAW which would then be fed into the Alternative Report to the Government. Those interested in contributing and/or participating in the process may please contact Dr N Shantha Mohan ([shantham@nias.iisc.ernet.in](mailto:shantham@nias.iisc.ernet.in)).

**The First NIAS Course for IAS Officers**, a week-long programme for twenty-five IAS officers, will be held between 13 to 18 December, 1999. The theme of the training programme will be "Issues in Sustainable Development". The contact person for this course is its coordinator, Prof S Rajagopal ([rajgopal139@hotmail.com](mailto:rajgopal139@hotmail.com)).

**The XIV NIAS Course for Senior Executives** will be held for a duration of three weeks between 3 to 22 January, 2000. The contact person for this event is the Controller of the Institute, Major-General M K Paul (Retd) ([mgp@nias.iisc.ernet.in](mailto:mgp@nias.iisc.ernet.in)).

# An Appeal for Funds

*Building and sustaining the intellectual and social foundations of a transforming civilisation*

## About NIAS

India has several fine institutions, in the natural sciences, in engineering and technology, and in the social sciences. But these institutions harbour different cultures, and, indeed, are often worlds unto themselves. And there are too few bridges between and among them. The most interesting and challenging problems of the coming century probably lie in the interfaces between these cultures and disciplines – interfaces that are studied far too little in our country. It is in these no-man’s lands that I believe the future of NIAS lies – in subjects that do not belong to the tidy little pigeon-holes that the current knowledge system of the world has created – artificially, and for technical or bureaucratic convenience, not because that is the way the world operates. How to build these bridges, how to bring different intellectual and social communities together, and how to look at the future of our nation and the world with the greatest possible intellectual integrity as well as public and social confidence – it is the pursuit of these aims that NIAS is taking up as its mission.

If we have to achieve these goals it is necessary for us to bring together the best in the natural and social sciences. The late JRD Tata, who conceived of this institution, saw the great need

in India to form a new kind of leader – he envisioned an institution that could harness creativity and commitment, mathematics and management. With my distinguished colleagues on the faculty of NIAS, and the eminent persons we count among our Associates, I am hopeful that we can carve a unique niche for ourselves in the public and intellectual life of this country and the world, moving in the direction that our founders so clearly saw as essential for the future health of our nation.

## The Appeal

The pursuit of our goals demands a measure of autonomy. We need financial support from diverse sources to ensure and sustain that autonomy. The early generosity of the House of Tatas and the Government of Karnataka has given us some splendid facilities. We now need to build on this foundation, diversify our sources of income and carry out programmes that are sensitive, at one and the same time, to public and national needs as well as to the demands of uncompromising intellectual rigour.

We solicit your contributions to help us to realise our goals. Bequests can be made to the NIAS Endowment Fund in the manner described below.

R Narasimha  
Director, NIAS, and  
Chairman, NIAS Endowment Committee

# How to make contributions to the NIAS Endowment Fund

All contributions made to NIAS or its Endowment Fund are tax-deductible under Section 35, Subsections (i) and (ii) of the Indian Income Tax Act of 1961.

NIAS is registered under the Foreign Contributions (Regulation) Act, 1976, and is entitled to receive contributions from abroad directly (Register number 094420614, Account No. 0100005000200, State Bank of India, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore 560 012). Contributions must be made by cheques drawn in favour of the National Institute of Advanced Studies; the cheques may be sent directly to NIAS, or credited to the State Bank of India account mentioned above with independent intimation to NIAS.

The Institute welcomes contributions of any amount. Typical sums and the purposes for which they can be used and the forms in which acknowledgements can be made are shown below.

1. *Books*  
Can be donated as books or as funds to be utilised for purchase of books  
Every book donated or purchased out of donation funds will carry a label indicating the name of the donor
2. *Objects of art* (paintings, sculpture etc.)  
Rs 10,000/- and above  
Will carry a small plaque indicating the name of the donor
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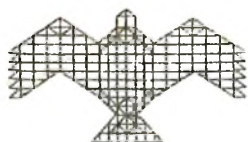
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The National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS) was conceived and initiated by the late Mr J R D Tata, who sought to create an institution which would conduct advanced research in multidisciplinary areas, and also serve as a forum to bring together administrators and managers from industry and government, leaders in public affairs, eminent individuals in different walks of life, and the academic community in the natural and social sciences. The intention has thus been to nurture a broad base of scholars, managers and leaders who may contribute to tackling the complex problems facing contemporary India in a more informed and effective manner.

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