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CITY

We don't want to blast our way into nuke club: President

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Bangalore, July 28: India's objective is not to "blast our way into the nuclear-club" but to awaken the peoples of the world and work together with all nations to liquidate the immense stockpile of weapons of mass destruction stored in the cellars of such an exclusive club, President of India K R Narayanan said here on Tuesday.

Inaugurating the birth centenary celebrations of Dr K S Krishnan, the eminent scientist who jointly authored the paper on the Raman effect with C V Raman, organised by the National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS), the President said he believed that India's nuclear weapon capability demonstrated recently, would act as a catalytic agent in the international effort to eliminate nuclear weapons "from the face of the earth".

Referring to a statement made by Jawaharlal Nehru in Bombay on June 26, 1946 on the dangerous implications of the use of the atom bomb on Japan by the United States, the President said that "India had



NAMASTE: President K R Narayanan is flanked by Governor Khurshed Alam Khan and nuclear physicist Raja Ramanna during the birth centenary celebrations of Prof K S Krishnan, in Bangalore on Tuesday.—Express

declared its nuclear option, by implication, even before Independence." *Though the peaceful objective of India's scientific development has been declared again and again, if "India is threatened, she will inevitably try to defend herself by all means at her disposal" he added.*

For "twenty-four long years after India demonstrated its nuclear capability" it refrained from weaponising this capability, pleading in the meanwhile, for some substantial progress towards nuclear disarmament by the great powers. "But our pleadings went unheeded. On the other hand the powers

were only refining and sophistication the destructive capacity of their vast nuclear weapon arsenals, instead of making any genuine efforts to reduce and eliminate these weapons," he said.

He said Indian scientists had achieved startling successes "despite all manner of embargoes by the advanced nations".

"Those who impose these embargoes on India do not seem to remember that some of the fundamental discoveries in Mathematics and Geometry were the contributions of the Indian civilisation and that even in modern times, Indian scientists have made important contributions to the advancement of science".

Indian scientists including Dr Krishnan have been "passionately devoted to peace", he said. In fact, it was Krishnan, who unknown to Gandhiji, first took the initiative to recommend the Nobel Peace Prize for the Father of our Nation. At the time Krishnan was professor of physics at Allahabad. A friend of the scientist, who was on the Nobel Committee had asked for a note on Gandhiji. The note prepared by a

"British Quaker friend of India" Horace Alexander, was sent to C Rajagopalachari, who in turn sent it to Krishnan in a letter of Feb 21, 1947, to be forwarded to the Nobel Committee. The note said of Gandhiji that he tried to show "that even the weak, when armed with Right, need not be quelled by insolent Might".

However, Gandhiji was passed over, and the demands for his inclusion the following year did not fructify since he was assassinated just "two days before the deadline for the nomination". The prize was not awarded that year and the Committee said that there was "no suitable living candidate".

Gandhiji's concept of peace through non-violence was "perhaps too revolutionary for the Western minds to accept" the President added.

■ RAMAN-KRISHNAN EFFECT: Referring to the view that C V Raman's Nobel Prize winning discovery should have been called the Raman-Krishnan Effect, since it was jointly authored, he said that in his Nobel lecture Raman himself had acknowledged

Krishnan's contribution.

In his presidential address, Karnataka Governor Khurshed Alam Khan said that Krishnan was not only an eminent physicist but also a great scholar in Tamil. He was among those people who had given India a "strong base in scientific research".

Referring to NIAS, he said it was conceived by JRD Tata to nurture a broad base of scholars and managers to "tackle the complex problems facing contemporary India".

Chief Minister J H Patel who was unable to come, in his message described Dr Krishnan as a "pioneer in the development of nuclear sciences in the country".

Earlier, noted scientist and Member of Parliament Dr Raja Ramanna gave credit to Krishnan as the scientist who persuaded Homi Bhabha to go in for heavy water natural uranium reactors, instead of the enriched uranium reactors to which the latter was inclined. This, at a time when India had no enriched uranium of its own. Today, we have it in "surplus and sell it to other countries" he added.