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Noted nuclear physicist Raja Ramanna (extreme right) with IISc Director G. Padmanabhan (second from left) and Prof K.B. Akhilesh (extreme left) at the inauguration of the golden jubilee celebrations of the department of management studies at the Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore on Friday.

India can do fantastic things, says Ramanna

Science Correspondent

BANGALORE: Former Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) Chairman Raja Ramanna said on Friday that the testing of hydrogen bomb and other nuclear devices, especially the sub-kilo-ton ones this week demonstrated that India could explode smaller devices that could become weapons-grade.

"We no longer need to quote our ancient literature to feel proud. I am elated that our scientists have not only got the material, but have made those devices and exploded them," he said, speaking at the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the department of management studies at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc).

Referring to the sense of 'pride and excitement' in the people, he said, "The domestic reaction to the nuclear explosions has proved that the country stands united, cutting across all regional boundaries. We were a great country and we are a great country."

"It has also demonstrated that blasts such as those that rocked Coimbatore could not solve the country's problems and relatively other important things were happening in the country."

"The country is capable of doing fantastic things only if our management system is made faster and more sensitive."

Citing examples of two different, but efficient systems of management, he said Homi Jahangir Bhabha and Vikram Sarabhai managed BARC (Bhabha Atomic Research Centre) and VSSC (Vikram

Sarabhai Space Centre), respectively, and competed internationally. It was imperative that science be kept away from politics, he observed.

On sanctions he said, "If anybody has experienced embargoes it is the AEC, way back in the '60s. But the industry responded tremendously and we took up indigenisation. Despite the initial hurdles, quality products have been developed and delivered to the atomic programme." In the backdrop of sanctions, unless the countrymen came together, India would face problems.

Lamenting the fall in the number of students taking up basic science research, especially in physics, Dr Ramanna said major national events should trigger enthusiasm among the younger generation to take up basic research that would do the country proud.

Director, IISc, Prof G. Padmanabhan said it had become quite clear that the country would not get any technological advantage following the liberalisation programme as was anticipated. "The country can only get the technology for "making potato chips and Coco Cola".

Referring to basic drug exports from the country, Prof Padmanabhan said these would dry up at a later stage unless the country developed its own molecular derivatives to manufacture drugs. Any amount of tinkering of the already available drugs for exports would only meet with cold feet under the strict patent regimes.

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Nuclear test: Raja Ramanna criticises West

BANGALORE: Eminent nuclear scientist, Dr Raja Ramanna, on Saturday came down heavily against countries who criticised India for conducting nuclear tests and imposed sanctions against it, saying they cannot digest the fact that the nation achieved "a complicated task which was complicated for themselves".

"They are trying to throw mud on us," Dr Ramanna, who played a key role in the 1974 Pokhran nuclear tests, said here referring to the international fallout of the tests.

On the five tests, he said: "They were carried out with so much sophistication and it was nicely done."

Complimenting the scientists, he said they have done a wonderful job — technologically — under the circumstances that exist.

Dr Ramanna also had a dig at politicians trying to gain mileage out of the blasts, saying: "Politicians should not wash their dirty linen in public. They should wash them in their own houses. They are wobbling at low level."

Speaking at a book release function organised by the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, of which he is the vice-chairman, he said the western world had contempt for India. — PTI