

## When Raja Ramanna said no to Saddam

LONDON: The veteran nuclear scientist Dr Raja Ramanna, who died aged 78 following a heart attack, was approached by Saddam Hussein in 1978 to help build an Iraqi nuclear bomb.

The offer came while Ramanna was in Baghdad for a week as Saddam's personal guest. He was given a tour of the capital and Iraq's main nuclear facility at Tuwaitha. At the end of the trip, Saddam invited the scientist to his office

and told him: "You have done enough for your country; don't go back. Stay here and take over our nuclear programme. I will pay you whatever you want."

Ramanna was shocked and scared by the Iraqi proposal. He reportedly could not sleep that night, worried that he might never see his homeland again. He took the next flight out, never to return to Iraq.

The Guardian