

### Sehgal wins Kalinga prize

For the second time since its inception in 1951, UNESCO's Kalinga prize for popularization of science has been awarded to an Indian. The 1991 prize has been awarded to Narendra K. Sehgal, who is head of the secretariat of the National Council for Science and Technology Communication (NCSTC) in New Delhi. Sehgal shares the award with Radu Iftimovici of Romania. Jagjit Singh had been awarded the 1963 prize.

Sehgal, a nuclear physicist, has pursued research in theoretical particle physics at the Somali National Univer-

sity's College of Education in Mogadishu (Somalia), and was a visiting scientist at the Space Applications Centre in Ahmedabad. In 1982 he joined the Department of Science and Technology, where he is in charge of the secretariat of NCSTC and of the Government of India's science communication and popularization programme. He founded a quarterly journal, *Scientific Opinion*, to promote serious discussion of issues relating to science, technology, education, society and development. He wrote several articles on developments in Indian science, technology and education in the journal *Nature* during the period 1974-1976.

Sehgal has played a key role in recent S&T popularization efforts in India. One example of his work is the highly commended 13-part radio serial 'Method of Science', broadcast from June to October 1989 on most All India Radio stations in all major Indian languages. Wall charts and kits were provided before and during the broadcasts to 140,000 children in the 10-14-years age group. Another of his achievements has been the linking of thirtysix voluntary and other agencies throughout India in a voluntary association called the 'NCSTC-Network', designed to coordinate national science popularization programmes.

---

### US environment awards to Indian scientists

Two US-based Indian scientists, K. S. Bawa and Ashok Gadgil, have bagged the prestigious \$150,000 Pew research grant for 1991. The Pew Scholars Program in Conservation and Environment, set up in 1988, is one of America's largest funding agencies for work on environment-related problems. Each year, from among 60 nominees, the programme offers grants to 10 scientists.

K. S. Bawa, of the Department of Biology, University of Massachusetts, Boston, is well known for his work on

the reproductive biology of tree species of the tropical forests of Central America. He intends to use the grant to focus his efforts on the continuing loss of biodiversity in the tropical forests of South India, as, according to him, this area is 'almost completely neglected in global biodiversity preservation efforts'.

Ashok Gadgil of the Applied Science Division at the Lawrence-Berkely Laboratory in California is well known for his view that the root cause of loss of biodiversity is inefficient handling of

natural energy resources. He was instrumental in designing and implementing the energy-efficient lighting system in Bombay. He plans to use his Pew Grant in studying whether such large-scale energy-efficient projects can be extended in other developing countries such as Mexico and Brazil.

The Pew grants, according to Jon Jensen, associate director of the Pew Scholar Program, are 'intentionally flexible, encouraging environment scholars to follow new paths and to take creative risks'.

---

### US automotive medicine award to IIT don

The Association for the Advancement of Automotive Medicine (AAAM), an international multidisciplinary professional organization devoted to traffic injury control based on Illinois, USA, presented Dinesh Mohan of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Delhi with its 1991 award of merit at its 25th annual conference in Toronto, Canada, in October. AAAM paid tribute to Mohan for his contribution to traffic-

injury control in developing countries and to understanding the special needs of the vulnerable road user.

Dinesh Mohan is State Bank professor for prevention and control of injuries, and also head, WHO Collaborating Centre for Research and Training in Safety Technology, at the Centre for Biomedical Engineering of IIT Delhi. His research includes human tolerance biomechanics, epidemiological studies in

injury and disability control, agricultural injuries, road-traffic injuries, biomechanical considerations in helmet design, rehabilitation aids for the disabled, and childhood injuries. During the last several years he has given his attention to the plight of the vulnerable road user, namely two-wheeled-vehicle users and pedestrians. He conceived the idea of an international conference on this topic. This was held in January 1991 in New Delhi.

---