

more people than ever before. It is also the same technologies that pose threats to the very life support systems of our planet. And some of these threats, such as the depletion of the ozone layer or sea level rise could be quite immediate and cataclysmic.

Indeed, the real war of today and tomorrow is the invisible war between technology, global economics and dominance on one side and people, community, ecology and marginalization on the other.

While every individual has some opinion, whatever depth of knowledge it might be based on, concerning economic, social and political topics, the technology-related issues are largely left to 'experts'. And since most experts 'know more and more about less and less - until they know everything about nothing', this is quite a dangerous position for society to find itself in.

It is for this reason that we have a crucial need for scientists who have the deepest understanding of the technical details of these issues, not only for their intrinsic scientific interest but also for helping societal policy makers come to considered judgments on how they need

to be dealt with. Above all, they must be available to identify the opportunities and benefits offered by the technologies and the dangers they could lead to. Such scientists must therefore be able to go beyond the detailed knowledge of the laboratory and into an understanding of the wider context within which the results of their science will operate. And they must have the courage to speak the truth as they see it, however inconvenient it may be for those who have to act on their advice.

Despite its huge size, the Indian scientific community has not produced or nurtured enough practitioners of this type - ones who fearlessly and objectively can provide the bridge between pure science and policy making. Such policy-science bridges are urgently needed.

It is doubly a tragedy, then, that one of India's foremost policy-science bridges passed away, leaving behind a major void in this fundamental, vital sphere of national concern.

Satish Dhawan brought India into the space age, creating one of the strongest and most successful ventures set up in independent India, the Indian Space

Research Organization. An extraordinary scientist, researcher, teacher, manager and builder of leaders, his was the quiet and self-effacing route: it would be impossible to enumerate or even identify the full impact of this gentle intellectual giant on either science or policy in our country. Suffice it to say it was enormous, comparable to that of any scientist, past or present. Dhawan's intellectual interests ranged from rocket propulsion to the flight of birds, from efficient management systems to the process of learning. He was supremely a humanist-scientist, and even above that, a wonderful, generous human being.

He was a friend - a most supportive friend - who always made one feel bigger than one is. He was a fighter - a most valiant fighter - for a better world. We will miss him dearly.

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A poster session would also be held for workers in the field.

Registration fee: Rs 250.00 by Demand Draft in favour of Society for Information and Development a/c SDTC payable at Bangalore.

Last date for registration: 28 February 2002.

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