

were also plans to attract publishers to the scanning of their out-of-print but in copyright book titles. Copyright concerns and publishers may prove the biggest hurdle and these would be increasingly known in the years to come.

People in both developed and developing countries have much to look forward to in this concept of 'Universal Library'. The spirit of sharing and better times ahead for many fund-starved institutions in India, where library facilities

are greatly inadequate, would be facilitated.

Nirupa Sen

## Kalam addresses Space summit at the Indian Science Congress

It was a first that a Space summit was held in the history of the Science Congress. There was representation at the summit, part of the Indian Science Congress held in Bangalore, from many foreign space agencies including those from United States of America, France, Thailand and China. It was a first in that any President of India had not only attended the Space summit special session but also delivered the Space summit address titled 'Vision for the global space community: Prosperous, happy and secure planet Earth'. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, who had himself been a part of the Indian Space Research Organization had some suggestions for the global space community. He highlighted his dream of alleviating the pain and problems faced by people in this country and those facing similar problems elsewhere. One solution he felt strongly about was the use of space technology in addressing the problems of social relevance towards national developmental goals. Science and technological inputs are vital to a country's development. Efficient utilization of the existing knowledge leads to wealth

generation and this is where space technological tools play a vital role. Kalam said that 'space technology integrated with information and communication technologies would spearhead our march towards a knowledge society'.

Kalam reiterated that 'it is only international cooperation that can yield shared benefits beyond expendable launch vehicles and spacecraft in areas such as tele-education, connectivity for community development, etc.' He cited that global space market trends would show a decline in business volumes from the current US\$ 32 billion per year to US\$ 16 billion per year by 2010. The Indian concept of hyper plane, a fully reusable system, is an innovation in rocketry providing a payload fraction of 15%, drastically reducing the launch cost to 1/50 of the current cost elsewhere, he added. Hence he felt it was an opportune time for countries to join with India to launch major universal missions. A global effort was needed, said Kalam, for demonstrating low cost access to space. By building an integrated joint global strength, opportunities for attaining the

full potential of space research and building of a joint consortium of space industry could be plausible in the future.

Finally, Kalam asked the Space summit to address itself for initiating a movement towards a Common Minimum Global Space Mission with a 50-year perspective for international cooperation to tackle issues concerning impending human crisis for energy, water and minerals. This could be in the form of an International Space Force made up of all space-faring nations of the world willing to participate and contribute to protect world space assets, said Kalam. India having considerable infrastructure and experience in the use of space for sustainable economic development could lead from the front to establish a consortium of space agencies for future global missions.

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## SciDev.Net completes one year

The SciDev.Net website has just completed one year of its formation. During the year 2002 several useful initiatives were undertaken by the organizers of this website. David Dickson, Director, SciDev.Net has stated that 'We would like more people to know about SciDev.Net and, in particular, about the free, weekly e-mail alert that we offer as a way of keeping up to date with new material on the website

(including the access that we provide to selected articles from *Nature* and *Science*)'.

The following excerpted text gives some details: 'The Science and Development Network (SciDev.Net) is an organization that promotes the communication of information about science and technology relevant to the needs of developing countries. Our main activity is running a web-

site <http://www.scidev.net> that provides a regularly updated source of news, views and information on topics ranging from climate change and genetically modified crops to intellectual property and the ethics of medical research.

SciDev.Net was set-up with the support of journals *Nature* and *Science*, both of which allow us to provide free access to selected articles each week. One impo-