

## Rajagopala Chidambaram



**Rajagopala Chidambaram**, a leading experimental Physicist in India, was born on 12 November 1936. He did his B. Sc. And M. Sc. from the University of Madras and obtained his Ph. D. from Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. He was awarded the Martin Fisher medal for the best thesis submitted during 1961-62.

Dr. Chidambaram is one of India's distinguished experimental Physicists and the research groups established by him in Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) in the fields of High Pressure Physics and Neutron Crystallography are among the best in the world. Dr. Chidambaram played a leading role in the design and execution of the Peaceful Nuclear Explosion experiment at Pokhran in 1974 and also led the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) team, which designed the nuclear devices and carried out the Pokhran tests in May 1998 in cooperation with the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

Dr. Chidambaram initiated research on Neutron Crystallography with research reactors in India in 1962 and on High Pressure Physics in 1967 and established excellent groups in these fields. All his research work has been carried out in India. He has contributed to many aspects of the Indian Nuclear Programme. He played a leading role in the design and execution of the Peaceful Nuclear Explosion Experiment at Pokhran in 1974 and also led the DAE team, which designed the nuclear devices and carried out the Pokhran-II tests in May 1998 in co-operation with the DRDO.

Dr. Chidambaram received many awards and honours. He is a fellow of all the major Science Academies in India and also of the Third World Academy of Sciences, Trieste (Italy). Dr. Chidambaram was Chairman of the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) during 1994-95). He was till recently Vice-President of the International Union of Crystallography. He is presently DAE Homi Bhabha Chair Professor at BARC. He is also Honorary Visiting Professor in the Department of Physics of Banaras Hindu University. He has taken over the

Chairmanship of the Council and the Governing Body of the Technology Information, Forecasting and Assessment Council (TIFAC). He has recently been appointed as the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India.

Dr. Chidambaram won the Distinguished Alumnus Award of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore in 1991, the Second Jawaharlal Nehru Birth Centenary International Visiting Fellowship by the Indian National Science Academy in 1992, the C. V. Raman Birth Centenary Award of the Indian Science Congress Association in 1995, the Distinguished Materials Scientist of the Year award of the Materials Research Society of India (MRSI) for 1996, the R. D. Birla award of the Indian Physics Association (1996), the Lokmanya Tilak award (1998), the H. K. Firodia award for Excellence in Science & Technology (1998), the Vigyan Seva Rathnam award from the Sankaracharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam (1999), the Veer Memorial award (1999). Dr. Chidambaram was awarded Padma Vibhushan in 1999 by the Government of India. He has over 200 research publication to his credit. Dr. Chidambaram gave the 37<sup>th</sup> convocation address in Indian Statistical Institute on 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2003. and the topic of his talk was "The need for coherent synergy".

*Article by: Rajkumar Roychoudhury, Professor, Physics and Applied Mathematics Unit, Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata, India.*