



Zaheer Science Foundation

The Foundation

BACKGROUND

Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of Independent India was keen to develop the nation on the basis of modern knowledge-based science and technology. Therefore, he decided that the First Science Policy Resolution passed by the Parliament on March 4, 1958 should not remain merely on paper but it should form a basis for intensive discussion with scientists and educationists of the country so as to work out plans and programmes. For this purpose, a Conference of Scientists, technologists and educationists was convened in August, 1963 by the then Ministry of Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs. The Conference was inaugurated by Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru who sat throughout the Conference and interacted in the discussions. This Conference was attended by eminent scientists and educationists like Prof. S.N. Bose, Dr. C.D. Deshmukh, Dr. J.B.S. Haldane, Prof. P.C. Mahalanobis, Dr. D.S. Kothari and Dr. S. Husain Zaheer. The Science Policy Resolution was further reviewed in two more Conferences of Scientists, Technologists and Educationists in 1967 and 1970, respectively. The Third Conference in November, 1970, which was inaugurated by the then Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi took note of the fact that the broad objective of the Scientific Policy Resolution was to benefit the people of the country with the acquisition and application of scientific knowledge.

In this background, Zaheer Science Foundation was established in 1970 as an NGO to help the Government Departments in the promotion of scientific research and educational reform activities. It was named after Late Dr. S. Husain Zaheer, who had played a great role in the Freedom struggle and was a close associate of Pandit Nehru. He served as Director General of CSIR during 1961-66. He had a long association with the scientific system of the country in various capacities and contributed substantially and significantly to the growth of industrial research in India. He is remembered by the scientific community for the five year performance assessment scheme (flexible complementing scheme) to provide incentives to scientists for their innovative activities, and abolition of hierarchy among scientists.

Dr. Zaheer felt that the types of Conferences held in 1963, 1967 and 1970 as mentioned above should be continued to consider various issues of development of the country and for this purpose an independent organization might be set up which could make useful recommendations, some of which might be accepted by the Government and would help in the promotion of socio-economic development of the country on the basis of science and technology keeping in view the latest global trends in knowledge based areas. The inspiration for starting the Foundation came from the perception that there was a gap in the area of interaction between science and society and the Foundation could greatly help in promoting scientific attitude and temper.

The initiative of naming the Foundation as Zaheer Science Foundation and the honour of being its first Chairman belonged to the late Dr. A. Ramaswamy Mudaliar who was also the Founder President of the Council of Scientific and

Industrial Research. Thereafter, the following served as Chairman of Zaheer Science Foundation:-

Dr. S. Husain Zaheer
Prof. Nurul Hasan
Shri P.N. Haksar
Prof. R.C. Mehrotra
Dr. A.R. Kidwai

The Foundation was registered as a Society under the Societies' Registration Act of 1860.

MISSION

With the above perception, the aims and objectives of the Foundation have been defined as follows:-

- To give awards, scholarships, fellowships and grants to individuals/teams of scientists, technologists and organizations with regard to specific projects with a view to promote scientific, industrial, economic and social research of significance to:-
 - ▶ - Industrial and economic development;
 - ▶- Promotion of peace through science and technology;
 - ▶- Improvement in the working conditions of the scientific community;
 - ▶- Creation and development of scientific temper;
 - ▶- Socio-scientific and socio-economic studies in the developing countries.
- To promote scientific and technological exchange of information, experience and advanced training between India and other countries, especially the developing countries.
- To organize lectures, symposia, seminars and publish periodicals, books, journals and magazines relating to the objectives of the Foundation.
- To promote any other activity incidental to the above objectives (but not involving the carrying on of any activity for profit) as the Governing Council may from time to time determine.
- To conduct research on science, technology and development studies supported by National and International Funding Agencies.

ORGANISATION OF THE FOUNDATION

The Governing Council of the Foundation which is the supreme body for the management of all the affairs and funds of the Foundation consists of not less than five and not more than ten members inclusive of Chairman, the maximum number of members being as follows:

- Five members to be elected by the Members of the Foundation;
- Five eminent persons having special knowledge or practical experience in science, technology, industry or social and economic affairs to be coopted by the elected members of the Governing Council.

Membership consists of the following categories:

- Individuals and
- Corporate Members.

The fee for membership (for life) is Rs. 500/- and for corporate members Rs. 5,000/-.

PRESENT CHAIRMAN -

Dr. A.R. Kidwai, Formerly Governor of Haryana, Bihar & West Bengal and Chairman UPSC.

PROPOSED TWO INSTITUTIONS UNDER ZAHEER SCIENCE FOUNDATION

To expand the activities of Zaheer Science Foundation and enlist participation of more scientists and educationists steps are being taken in setting up the following two Institutions under the auspices of Zaheer Science Foundation:

- Conference of Scientists and Educationists;
- Forum of Scientists and Technologists in India.

The above two Institutions should be set up with their own rules and regulations and for this purpose necessary amendments be incorporated in the Memorandum of the Association and Rules and Regulations of Zaheer Science Foundation.

Achievements of the Foundation

Over the years, the Foundation has functioned as per its mandate and contributed to the advancement of Science and Technology. The activities of the Foundation have mostly consisted of the organization of lectures on subjects pertaining to science and society and making research awards to younger scientists. The Foundation has also interacted with other scientific and socio-scientific organizations in the area of science and society. Over the last few years the Foundation has been concentrating on the following aspects:

- The development of a scientific and rational approach to social, economic and political problems and opposition to obscurantist and outdated traditions and practices.
- Efforts and policies for self-reliance in scientific, industrial and economic spheres.

The Foundation is now to play a greater role in the context of globalization of world economy and India's emergence as a Centre for knowledge and knowledge based industries.

THE ANNUAL ZAHEER SCIENCE FOUNDATION LECTURE

The Foundation organizes an annual lecture by an eminent scientist in the areas of 'Science Policy'. Amongst others, the following have contributed to this program.

Prof. Abdus Salam, Nobel Laureate, F.R.S., Director, Institute of Advanced Physics Research, Trieste, Italy.

Dr. Maurice Goldsmith, Director, International Science Policy Foundation, London.

Prof. Alan Mackay, F.R.S., Head, Crystallography, Birkbeck College, University of London, London.

Dr. Staffard Beers who was associated with planning in Chile under President Salvador Allende.

Since 1988 the Zaheer Science Foundation has taken advantage of the annual sessions of the Indian Science Congress for this activity to reach a wider spectrum of scientists. Renowned scientists have delivered lectures during the Science Congress sessions.

Dr. C.N.R. Rao, F.R.S., on "Super-Conductivity" in 1988 at Bangalore.

Dr. A.P. Mitra, F.R.S. on "Scientific Research and National Development" in 1989 at Madurai.

Prof. Obaid Siddiqi, F.R.S., on "Science, Society, Government and Politics Some Remarks on the Ideas of Jawaharlal Nehru" in 1990 at Cochin.

Prof. Yash Pal on "Science and Societal Disasters" in 1991 at Indore.

OTHER LECTURES

Dr. S. Chandrasekhar, F.R.S., on "Science and Aesthetics".

Dr. K.T. Achaya on "The origins of Indian Foods".

Dr. Abid Hussain on "A New Paradigm on Science and Technology".

Dr. D.S. Bhakuni on "Some Aspects of Bio-Synthesis of Alkaloids".

Dr. G. Thyagarajan, Report on the "Meeting of Ministers of Science and Technology of Commonwealth Countries" at Malta in November, 1990.

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The Zaheer Science Foundation was invited by the Scientific Secretary to the Commonwealth Science Council, London to prepare a

report on "The Role and Responsibilities of the State for Development and Application of Science and Technology" for presentation at the meeting of the Ministers of Science and Technology of Commonwealth Countries held at Malta in November, 1990.

INTERACTION WITH SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COUNCIL TO THE PRIME MINISTER

At the invitation of the Chairman, Scientific Advisory Council to the Prime Minister, Prof. C.N.R. Rao, F.R.S., the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library and the Zaheer Science Foundation jointly organized a discussion on the paper entitled "An Approach to a Perspective Plan for 2001 A.D.: Role of Science and Technology" prepared by the Council. The seminar was well attended by scientists, social scientists and economists from all walks of life. The discussion was initiated by Prof. C.N.R. Rao. Later, a report was prepared in the form of a document and submitted to the Council. The recommendations made in the final report were suitably incorporated in the final version of the Council's paper.

FORUM DISCUSSIONS

Symposium on "Emerging Trends in India's Agricultural and Industrial Policies and their implications for Self-reliance and indigenous Technology".

The Government of India under the then Prime Minister, Shri V.P. Singh had proposed reorienting the country's agricultural and industrial policies. The draft of the agricultural policy by the Ministry of Industry was prepared by the respective Ministries. The Nehru Memorial Museum and Library and the Zaheer Science Foundation jointly invited members of the Planning Commission, Scientists, Economists and Social Scientists to an open forum discussion on August 9, 1990 on agricultural and industrial policies. Prof. C.H. Hanumantha Rao initiated the discussion on agricultural policy and Dr. Arun Ghosh, Member, Planning Commission on industrial policy. The meeting was presided over by Shri P.N. Haskar, former Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission. A report on the meeting was widely circulated.

INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

Symposium on "Current Trends in Chemical Research"

In cooperation with Delhi University and other organizations, the Zaheer Science Foundation co-sponsored a seminar on 'Current Trends in Chemical Research'. The seminar was attended by chemical researchers of repute from India and abroad.

AWARDS AND AWARDEES

The Zaheer Science Foundation finances the following research awards:

Dr. S. Husain Zaheer Award for research in the area of Oils, Paints and Surface coating--The Foundation makes a grant of Rs. 5000/- annually to the Oil

Technologists Association of India for an award for the best research work in the above area.

Dr. S. Husain Zaheer Young Scientist Award in Organic Chemistry-- The award instituted by the Governing Council of the Foundation, is administered by the Director, Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (IICT), Hyderabad. For the year 1990, the award was given to Dr. J.S. Yadav at a function held at IICT, Hyderabad on February 1, 1991.

Dr. S. Husain Zaheer Young Scientist Award in the area of Science and Society, Social Implications of Science, Science and Industry-- The award instituted by the Governing Council of the Foundation is administered by the Director, National Institute of Science, Technology and Development Studies (NISTADS), CSIR New Delhi.

Since 1991 most of the work on awards has been shifted to other associated organizations creating a gap in such activities of ZSF. It is now proposed to activate this work directly from the Foundation's office at 4, Udyan Marg, New Delhi.

UNESCO Sponsored International Conferences

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON "SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY POLICY: FUTURE CHALLENGES IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBALIZATION DURING 7-10 MARCH 2005,

The Conference was organized by the Zaheer Science Foundation and held under the auspices of Regional Council for Science Technology and Development and Co-sponsored by UNESCO, Indo-US S&T Forum, CSIR, Department of Science & Technology, Department of Biotechnology and Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

The Conference was inaugurated by Shri Kapil Sibal, the then Minister of State for Science & Technology, and chaired by Dr. A.R. Kidwai, Chairman, Zaheer Science Foundation and the then Governor of Haryana. The keynote address was given by Dr. R.A. Mashelkar, the then Director General of CSIR and addressed by Shri P.G. Narayanan, Chairman, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science and Technology.

One of the important features of the Conference was special interactive session of Parliamentarians and Scientists participating in the Conference. This session was chaired by Shri P.G. Narayanan addressed by Shri Saifuddin Soz, and Shri S.K. Bansal, Member of Parliament, Mrs. Paola Tiihonen, Chairman, Committee for Future, Finland and Dr. A.R. Kidwai. The introductory remarks and objectives of the Conference were given by Dr. Mohsin U Khan, Scientist, NISTADS, CSIR and Convener of the Conference. The concluding remarks were given by Dr. R.A. Mashelkar.

The participants discussed cooperation in the area of Science Policy to face future challenges in this new era of globalization. They recognized the need of closer cooperation between Parliamentarians and Policy Makers, Scientists,

Industries (Public and Private) and the Media at all levels from sub-national to International.

SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON "CAPACITY BUILDING IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY; POLICY PERSPECTIVE, OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBALIZATION" DURING 27-29 NOVEMBER, 2007.

The Conference was initiated by South Asia and Southeast Asian Scientists sponsored by UNESCO and organized by Zaheer Science Foundation and supported by NISTADS, CSIR and other organizations, at Indian National Science Academy.

The inaugural session was addressed by Dr. A.R. Kidwai, Prof. Bhalachandra, Member, Planning Commission, Dr. A.W. Khan, Assistant Director General, UNESCO, Dr. Abid Hussain, former Ambassador to US and Dr. Mustafa El-Tayeb. The themes of the Conference were Technology Transfer; Science and Technology Policy; Agriculture and Food Processing; Digital Divide, Medicine and Medical Care and Higher Technical Education. The keynote speakers from India were Dr. M.S. Swaminathan, Chairman, M.S. Swaminathan Foundation, Dr. Kasturirangan (Space Scientist), Member, Rajya Sabha, Dr. Mangla Rai, Director General, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), Prof. M.G.K. Menon, FRS and Former Minister of Science & Technology and Dr. Goverdhan Mehta, FRS and President ICSU. Among foreign delegates, Dr. Mustafa El-Tayeb, Director, ISESCO, Iran also gave keynote address. The Valedictory address was given by Shri Pranab Mukherjee, the then Minister of External Affairs.

Future Roadmap of Zaheer Science Foundation

The globalization of economy has thrown open new opportunities for the people world over to participate in the developmental activities and attain prosperity in all walks of life. The developing countries have opportunities to

improve their socio-economic condition while the advanced countries who are prospering on the basis of knowledge and technology have the opportunities of cooperation of the skilled and unskilled manpower, resources and raw materials for utilisation of the technology developed by them for increasing production and well being of the people of developing countries. This cooperation will benefit both the advanced countries and developing nations for their mutual advantage and benefit.

In this context, countries like India with vast natural resources, excellent agro-climatic conditions and manpower can take full advantage of globalization of economy for all round development of the nation and prosperity of the people. India can thus acquire leadership position in many areas of production, research and development specially in the fields of medicine, agriculture and industries because of the availability of the skilled manpower and favourable agro-climatic conditions. This thrusts great responsibility on the Government of India and the people at large to utilize the opportunities available in various directions.

Viewed against the above background, Zaheer Science Foundation can play an important role in helping India to achieve its great objectives by holding Conferences, Seminars and discussions with experts, both of the country and abroad. India has the largest genomic source for plant materials and can also be the genomic source for research on new drugs because of variety of diseases not prevalent elsewhere. Zaheer Science Foundation should have an Information Centre, which will project before the world the scope of collaboration of the advanced countries with India for maximum utilization of such unique opportunities. This will ensure cooperation in areas of activity which require direction and efforts of the Government of India and the people and draw their attention towards the need for mobilization of efforts and activities for expediting development of the country in collaboration with other countries. This is a job which Government alone cannot do and requires joint and cooperative ventures with the participation of intellectuals, educationists, scientists and industrialists.

Thus, the mission and vision of Zaheer Science Foundation has acquired a great importance to take full advantage of the globalization of the world economy for making India a great country.