

*A Homage :*

## **Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam**

I had the unique privilege of meeting the two great scientists who pioneered the Space and Missile Technology in the country and brought India to the 5-6 Super Nations of the World. It was on 28 March, 1981 at the Investiture Ceremony of Padma Awards at the Rashtrapati Bhavan when Prof. Satish Dhawan was conferred Padma Vibhushan. *The citation of Dr. Satish Dhawan made a special reference to the significant role he had played in building up the scientific and technological capability in the country in the field of space research and led a multi-disciplinary team of Indian scientists with eminent success.*

Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam was a recipient of Padma Bhushan. *His citation highlighted a major contribution for the development of the first Indian Satellite Launch Vehicle SLV-3.*

I consider that it was my good fortune that I received Padma Shri at the same Investiture Ceremony and had the unique privilege of meeting these two great scientists of our country.

*A highly gifted research and development engineer, Shri Abdul Kalam has made outstanding contributions to the National Space Programme and also to many institutions connected with aviation and advanced technologies.*

*Further development of Missile project was established with indigenous design capability for the guided missile systems, which were as good or better than missile systems in the world.*

He was recipient of Bharat Ratna in 1997.

It was during the tenure of my Presidentship when he was elected Fellow of the National Academy of Medical Sciences in the field of Bio-Medical Engineering. I had the privilege to invite him to deliver a lecture in the Scientific Programme of 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference of NAMS held on 19 March, 1994 at Tata Memorial Hospital, Bombay. The invitation was extended because of the fact that I was impressed by the development of low-weight (about 400 gm.) caliper instead of 4 Kg. which was being used for young polio affected children which he had developed as a spin-off of technology using the light material developed for the cones of missiles. Most remarkably the cost of lower weight caliper was about 1/4<sup>th</sup> of those which were being used earlier.

Immediately after following his lecture at Bombay on 19 March, 1994, I requested him to submit his bio-data for election as Fellow of the National Academy of Medical Sciences. He submitted his nomination on 31 March, 1994 and was elected a Fellow of the Academy in the discipline of Bio-Medical Engineering.

It was my privilege that we met several times in the Planning Commission in the year 1993-94 to discuss the medical application of missile technologies.

Even after becoming the President of India in 2002 and subsequently his major interest remained in the teaching, research and welfare of the children.

His death on 27 July, 2015 was at the time when he was delivering a lecture to the young students at the Indian Institute of Management, Shillong, continuing his mission of inspiring young minds.



( Prof. J.S. Bajaj )