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Explosion of knowledge and information, based on breathtaking advancement in the field of science and technology, has bestowed on man powers enviable even for gods. It has helped man conquer space and time. Now he has unraveled many mysteries of nature and life and Is ready to face new challenges and move forward In the realm of the unknown and the undiscovered. In India there has been a long and distinct tradition of scientific research and technological advancement since ancient times.

Since independence, we have accelerated our speed and efforts in this field and have established many research laboratories, institutions of higher learning and technical education. The results have been such as would make nobody's heart swell with pride, confidence and a sense of fulfillment. The best, however, is yet to come. The central and state governments, various public and private sector establishments are engaged in scientific research and technological development to take the nation on the path of rapid development, growth and prosperity.

There are about 200 research laboratories spread all over the country. The Institutions of higher learning, and universities, the modern temples of learning, are all committed to take the country forward. They are well equipped and staffed to secure for the people of the nation all the blessings and benefits that can accrue from the calculation and application of scientific knowledge and technology. But there Is no room for complacency, for In this field only the sky is the limit and we are yet a developing country. Our technology policy is comprehensive and well thought out.

It aims at developing indigenous technology to ensure efficient absorption and adoption of imported technology suitable to national priorities and availability of resources. Its main objective is attainment of technical competence and self- reliance, leading to reduction in vulnerability in strategic and critical areas. With a view to strengthening our economy and industrial development, our government has introduced many structural reforms through adoption of a new industrial policy which has an Important bearing on the programmer of development pertaining to science and technology.

Consequently, technology has become our mainstay enterprise and now we have built a strong and reliable Infrastructure for research, training and development In science and technology. In the field of agriculture, our scientific and technological researches have enabled us to be self-reliant and self-sufficient in food grains. Today, we can withstand droughts and natural calamities with much greater confidence than ever before. Now, we are in a position to export food grains, etc. And are on the threshold of white and blue revolutions.

Thanks to our agricultural scientists and farmers, always ready to imbibe new technologies, we have many varieties of hybrid seeds, crop- protection technologies, balanced farming practices and better water and irrigation management techniques. Similarly in the field of Industrial research, we have achieved many milestones and India Is emerging as a major industrial power of the world. The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (SIR), with Its network of research laboratories and Institutions, has been chiefly Instrumental In our major achievements In scientific and Industrial research.

We have now Joined the exclusive club of six advanced nations by developing our own super computer at the Centre for Commission, set up in 1948, is engaged in valuable nuclear research for peaceful purposes. The executive agency for implementing atomic energy programmer is the Department of Atomic Energy. The Bah Atomic Research Centre, Tramway, near Iambi is the biggest single scientific establishment in the country, directing nuclear research. Now, we have five research reactors, including Cirrus, Dharma, Czarina and Purina.

We have carried out two underground nuclear tests at Pockmark in Restaurants. This is a remarkable achievement by our nuclear scientists, which has enabled us to become one of the selected few countries of the world to have done it. India is also the first developing country, and one of the seven countries of the world to master fast breeding technology. Research in breeder technology is currently going on at Nadir Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research at Kalmia, Achaean.

The successful launching of Polar Space Launching Vehicle (SSL- C)-2), in October 1994, marked Indian's entry into the league of the world's major space powers. In the INSTANT-2 series of satellites, launched first in 1992, India has shown its ability to fabricate complex systems comparable to anything made anywhere in the world. Our previous launches of the SSL-3 and the SSL were merely stepping stones to what will be the workhorses of the business, the SSL, which can launch one tone satellite into orbit of up to 1000 km, and the Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle, which can take 2. Tone satellite to orbits 36, 000 km away. Indian's space programmer rocketed to greater heights with the successful launch of the second Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSL-DO) in May, 2003. As has been rightly observed, the challenge before Indian Space Research Organization (SIRS) is to maintain the momentum of the programmer by integrating it with other missions. The most obvious ones are related to military communication and reconnaissance. Our success on Antarctica peaks volumes of our scientific genius and technological wisdom in the field.

So far, 13 scientific expeditions by our oceanographers, scientists and technicians have been to Antarctica and we have two permanent stations on the icy continent. In the field of defense also our achievements have been quite laudable. The successful production of such missiles as Primitive and Nag testify to the high capabilities and achievements of our scientists. We have also been successful in producing opt-electronic fire control and night-vision devices required for our indigenous tanks. The HAL at Bangor has already produced Advanced Light Helicopter (ALL).

Obviously, technology has been used effectively as a tool and instrument of national development and yet much remains to be achieved in order to make its benefits reach the masses. Scientists in the country will have to strive hard to take technological developments to people's doorsteps. Therefore, they cannot rest on their laurels, but should remember the famous and inspiring lines of the poet Robert Frost: The woods are lovely, dark and deep, But I have promises to keep, And miles to go before I sleep, And miles to go before I sleep.