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PSLV-C25 Mars Orbiter Mission Spacecraft — Mangalyan, successfully launched from Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh, on November 5. Photo: IANS

Indian Orbiter on course to encounter Mars

■ GURU NANAK BIRTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATED AT WHITE HOUSE

■ INDIAN ECONOMY GROWS 4.8 PERCENT IN Q2

■ BHARAT RATNA TO SCIENTIST C.N.R. RAO

Basic science research getting its due: C.N.R. Rao

Basic science research is getting its due now, said eminent scientist C.N.R. Rao on being conferred the nation's highest civilian award Bharat Ratna by the Government on November 16.

"I spoke to the Prime Minister (Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh) and thanked him for the honor. I feel basic science is getting its due now," Rao said.

Expressing profound happiness for being chosen for the prestigious award, Rao said more students should earnestly take up science research.

"I credit my family and thousands of my students for this award. I am also happy that batting maestro Sachin Tendulkar has also been conferred with the award, Rao added.

"India's future is linked with science. More investments will enable the youth to look at science as an important area



Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah with Bharat Ratna awardee and eminent scientist CNR Rao at his residence in Bangalore

of work for a great future," Rao said a day after he was conferred the country's highest civilian award.

"In the last 8-10 years, India has

done a lot of good things in science. Five new institutes of science have been set up in Bhopal, Chandigarh, Kolkata, Pune and Thiruvananthapuram. They are going to be centers of excellence for future science. The government is also investing about ₹100 billion in setting up massive computer centers in Bangalore, Hyderabad, Mumbai and other cities as we are as good as the U.S. or China in computers," Rao pointed out.

On technology overtaking science, Rao said unlike in the olden days, technology was developing faster than modern science and the time gap between research and innovation has shortened, especially in nanotechnology where research was turning into technology in a year.

Rao has served the country for many decades and published over 1,600 scientific papers till date.

Pioneering Indian astronomer welcomes India's telescope quest

Indian-origin astronomer in Texas, who was one of the first humans to glimpse the Universe's most distant galaxy, is hopeful about the future of science in India and about India pitching in to build the world's largest telescope.

"I am optimistic about the future of science and education in India," Goan-born Vithal Tilvi told *IANS*, adding that investing in these spheres always reaped prosperity.

A post-doctoral research associate at Texas A&M University, Tilvi also lauded the Indian government's initiative to invest, along with Canada, Japan, China and the U.S., in large facilities like the world's largest optical and infra-red telescope that spans 30 metres.



Vithal Tilvi

Tilvi was part of a team headed by noted astronomer Steven Finkelstein which sighted the new galaxy z8_GND_5296. They caught sight of it in infra-red light, after its light bounced off the orbiting Hubble Space telescope and a Hawaiian observatory after travelling 13.1 billion years. The implications of this discovery are huge, says the astronomer.

"Apart from making a world record as the most-distant galaxy in the universe humankind has ever seen, such galaxies give us a glimpse of the universe when it was young. Because light takes some finite amount of time to travel, we are seeing this galaxy as it was 13 billion years ago," Tilvi said.

Indian scientist Anil Rajvanshi gets Florida varsity award

Distinguished Indian agricultural scientist Anil K. Rajvanshi has been selected for the Distinguished Alumnus Award of the University of Florida, one of America's leading universities.



Anil Rajvanshi

Rajvanshi, Director of the Nimbkar Agricultural Research Institute (NARI) at Phaltan, Maharashtra, is the first Indian to receive the award.

This is the highest recognition for the university alumni, for making "a positive difference in their communities".

Rajvanshi has been given this award for his pioneering work in rural development done at NARI since 1981. Rajvanshi will receive the award from the UF President at the commencement convocation on May 3 next year in Gainesville, Florida.

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