

India: National Science Day celebrated countrywide on February 28th 2016

National Science Day or *Rashtrya Vigyan Diwas* is celebrated in India on 28th February, with events continuing till 29th February, each year to celebrate the discovery of the Raman Effect by the famous Indian physicist, Sir Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman, on 28th of February 1928, for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1930.

It is a day that is celebrated every year with immense excitement at the Giant Metrewave Radio Telescope at Khodad, which is a the world's most famous telescope operating at low radio frequencies, by the National Centre for Radio Astrophysics under the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research. Department of Science and Technology presents awards every year at this event to recognize the efforts of individuals, government bodies and non-government bodies in popularizing science in the country.

Many scientific activities and programs are conducted that encourage the participation of scientists as well as students from schools and colleges. This celebration has provided a platform for new and young scientists to focus on and boost their career in the science profession. This is an initiative aiming to inculcate a scientific temper in the young minds and to make aware the general public so that take pride in the scientific achievements of the nation.

While the theme of the launch year, 1999, was 'Our Changing Earth', the theme of last year was 'Science for Nation Building'. The Department of Science and Technology recently released the theme for this year as 'Make in India: S&T Driven Innovations'.

The National Science Day is now celebrated with great enthusiasm as a science festival in India where students of schools and colleges, scientists and general public come together to take part in various events. The highlights of this event are:

- Students exhibit and demonstrate their science projects, at the end of which prizes are given for the best entries in different age groups.
- Programmes are organized to enable students to interact with well-known scientists and engineers.
- Radio-TV talk shows are held.
- Virtual tours and open houses are organized.
- Informative science movies are exhibited.
- A grand science exhibition is organized during the day to showcase science models by designed by the students.

- Students are engaged in enthralling events like watching the night sky and witnessing live projects.
- Quiz competitions, lectures, public debates, poster making and many more fun activities are also organized.

The Minister of Science and Technology also gives a message through his speech on this day every year to the students, scientists and general public of the nation to congratulate their efforts and encourage further innovation. The previous year, he laid emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) encouraging the youth to tap the vast potential available in these fields.

Hordes of people attend the National Science Day celebrations to participate in the events and witness the new projects and latest researches of various institutes that are displayed for the public. The National science Day is not only a fun and exciting event for the students but also a learning experience for them, along with an active participation from their parents and the general public.