

The Preamble

Slowly but steadily the students of life sciences departments of South Campus are creating a niche and an identity for themselves through an annual scientific cum cultural festival to commemorate the National Science Day on February 28. An “idea”, a “concept” that nucleated in 2011, thanks to a group of enterprising and enthusiastic students, – to assemble teachers and students of the campus on a single platform – has crystallized into a soulful event that we all fondly look forward to from the moment the curtain drops on the evening of the programme. Simply called the “National Science Day Symposium (NSDS)”, the two-day compact event, has since then remained an event of the students, by the students, for the students. The year 2015 marks a landmark in the short but significant life of NSDS in that it has reached its fifth year!

In its own way, NSDS has given a new meaning to National Science Day celebrations. It has infused life into scientific activities on the campus. It has brightened the already shining student force on the campus. It has created a common platform for the diverse life sciences research on campus, allowing students and teachers to share their discoveries and deliberate on scientific issues. It has allowed us to share the ecstasy and agony that

invariably accompany research at the highest level. It has given us a reason and it has forced everyone to step out of the confines of a small world we fondly called “laboratory”. It has allowed students to wander into other departments, to interact scientifically and to widen their horizon of scientific quest and knowledge. The fruits of such an exercise are sure to explode in terms of more collaborations, camaraderie, scientific relationship and tolerance, sense of justice and compassion and better understanding of biology in general. NSDS will surely help forge many a bonds, create memories to cherish, induce healthy competition and above all an element of fun that will go a long way in every student growing up into a respectable and responsible citizen of the country.

While a festival on a larger scale runs the risk of losing relevance and compromise on quality, NSDS has been able to maintain very high standards in all respects. This has been exemplified by the key note lectures NSDS has been able to provide. Luminaries like Dr. G.P. Talwar, Dr. Manju Sharma and Dr. K. Vijayaraghavan have enthralled us in the last few years with their wisdom, vision and high quality oration. They have provided food for thought and sparks of excellence. NSDS 2015 will witness yet another impactful lecture by an eminent scientist and able administrator Dr. S.K. Sarin, Director, Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences, New

Delhi. NSDS 2015 has also achieved a boost with the plenary lecture being hosted and organized by INSA-TWAS India Chapter. The INSA-TWAS association has surely added a distinction to NSDS 2015.

The key note lecture will be followed by exciting talks by faculties, one from each of the five life sciences department. Students eagerly wait for these talks, which provide a peek into the research activities of the respective labs. This opportunity allows M.Sc. students to decide whether they would be willing to take up Ph.D. positions in these labs. Two students from each department also get an opportunity to share the platform along with faculties. This is an eagerly awaited event since the oral presentations are assessed and prizes awarded. NSDS is not all about talks though and a repertoire of other events adds to its aura. Poster presentations by students represent the landscape of life science research in the campus. Team events like quiz competitions are immensely popular and commands full house. The novelty of NSDSs also lies in the “idea” presentations, which is a fiercely competed team event as well, with each team coming out with a novel concept in science. These presentations are awesome and provide an insight into the fertile brains of students. Awards in each of these events promote healthy competition and helps sustain high quality. Cultural programme at the end of the final day adds

color, vibrancy and dynamism to the NSDS. It has the ability to stir up our souls after year long slogging in the labs. It provides an avenue for talents to flourish and a snapshot of our cultural strength. NSDS 2015 has added excitement to all the events by announcing “Champions Trophy” for the department of the year. This brings more cheer to the whole programme. In addition, realizing how CPR can be a life- saving exercise, NSDS 2015 has arranged for CPR training for one and all to be conducted by FORTIS hospital. An e- abstract book will capture the event in all its hues, with students competing to win the coveted cover page design. NSDS 2015 thus leaves no stone unturned to make this a memorable event.

It needs no mention that an event of such magnitude needs help and support from all quarters. The event would not have survived without the generous financial, infrastructural and moral support from the administration. The Director of South Campus, Prof. Umesh Rai and Vice- Chancellor Prof. Dinesh Singh have been magnanimous in their support to NSDS. The finance and academic sections have helped in all possible ways. We are sure we will receive help from all other staff of South Campus including security on those days of the event. Prof. J.P. Khurana conceived the idea of INSA-TWAS key note lecture and his help as Dean, FIAS has been phenomenal. All heads of the departments and

teachers have been instrumental to NSDS success. Financial support has also been provided by students themselves in terms of contributions. Several corporate establishments came forward with generous support as well and their help is appreciated.

It is dreamt that NSDS from South Campus will create a brand value of its own, much like the IIT Delhi or DU college fests, but with a difference, with a more academic flavour for pure pursuit of science and higher learning. It is hoped that NSDS will quench the thirst for knowledge and help develop leadership and management skills for the future generation of the country. May NSDS survive the test of time – let this landmark (5th year) be the beginning of many more milestones to achieve.

Prof. Suman Kundu Faculty Coordinator, Department of Biochemistry

Dr. Yogender Pal Khasa Faculty Coordinator, Department of Microbiology

Dr. Saurabh Raghuvanshi Faculty Coordinator, Department of Plant Molecular Biology

Dr. Surajit Sarkar Faculty Coordinator, Department of Genetics