

# **AGRASRI**

## **Decennial Activity Report**

### **2002-2012**



Published by :  
**Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India**

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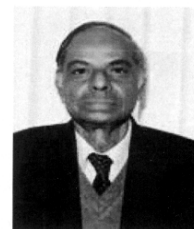


सत्यमेव जयते  
डॉ. सी. रंगराजन  
Dr. C. RANGARAJAN



CH/ EAC/ 2011/ 1370  
अध्यक्ष

प्रधानमंत्री की आर्थिक सलाहकार परिषद्  
विज्ञान भवन सौध 'ई' हाल  
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CHAIRMAN  
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Vigyan Bhavan Annexe, 'E' Hall  
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November 11, 2011

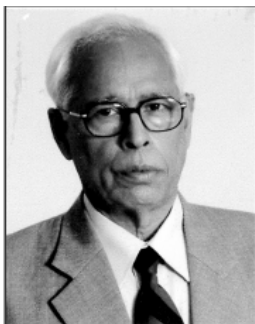
### Message

I am happy to know that the Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) is completing ten years. India's growth depends upon what happens at the ground level. Empowering the vulnerable sections including women is extremely important. We also need to strengthen local government institutions. AGRASRI has been actively involved in organizing seminars and workshops to strengthen Mahila Shakti and Yuva Shakti. I congratulate AGRASRI on the commendable work that it has done in the last ten years and wish them continued success in the next decade.

C Rangarajan

(C. Rangarajan)

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सत्यमेव जयते



GOVERNOR  
JAMMU & KASHMIR

RAJ BHAVAN  
JAMMU-180001

I am happy to learn that the Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI), Tirupati, is bringing out a Decennial Activity Report 2001-2011 on the occasion of the forthcoming 10<sup>th</sup> Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture.

Organisations like AGRASRI can play a truly important role in supplementing governmental efforts to strengthen Panchayati Raj Institutions and securing increasing empowerment of women.

I wish Dr. D. Sundar Ram, Director, AGRASRI, high success in all his endeavours.

( N. N. Vohra )

15<sup>th</sup> February, 2012  
Jammu.



सलमान खुरशीद, सांसद  
SALMAN KHURSHID, M.P.



D.O.No. 611 MLJ/VIP/2012

मंत्री  
विधि एवं न्याय  
भारत सरकार  
MINISTER OF LAW & JUSTICE  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

2<sup>nd</sup> February, 2012.

**MESSAGE**

I am very happy to learn that the Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India, Tirupati has completed its 10 years; journey of strengthening the Panchayati Raj institutions and women's participation in delivering good governance at the grassroots level.

It is a matter of great satisfaction that the Academy has an outstanding record of training, research and consultancy in the field of panchayati raj, rural development, women empowerment, capacity building and training, national integration and good governance besides propagating the ideals and vision of late Shri Rajiv Gandhiji towards self-sufficient "Village Republics".

My greetings to the Academy and best wishes for success in its future endeavours.

  
(SALMAN KHURSHID)

**Dr. D. Sundar Ram,**  
Director & Member-Secretary,  
2-3-375/D, Venkataramana Layout,  
Near LIC Office,  
**Tirupati (A.P.) – 517 507.**

**CHAIRPERSON**

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NEW DELHI-110 002  
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E-mail : [chairperson-ncw@nic.in](mailto:chairperson-ncw@nic.in)



## MESSAGE

I have great pleasure in conveying best wishes on the above happy occasion of the above Federation and I am privileged to associate myself with the efforts of this great organization on this glorious occasion.

Mamlo Shree

(Mamta Sharma)

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प्रेमा करियप्पा, पूर्व सांसद  
अध्यक्ष  
PREMA CARIAPPA, Ex. M.P.  
Chairperson



केंद्रीय समाज कल्याण बोर्ड  
डा. दुर्गाबाई देशमुख समाज कल्याण भवन  
बी-12, कुतुब इन्स्टीट्यूशनल एरिया, नई दिल्ली -110603  
**CENTRAL SOCIAL WELFARE BOARD**  
Dr. Durgabai Deshmukh Samaj Kalyan Bhavan  
B-12, Qutub Institutional Area, New Delhi-110603  
D.O.No.F.6-2/SW/08-09  
Dated: 17<sup>th</sup> February, 2012

**MESSAGE**

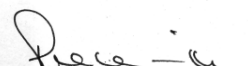
I am honoured to be invited to contribute my thoughts for the Decennial Activity Report of AGRASRI. In a short span of 10 years, AGRASRI has made many strides in capacity building and training for elected representatives of Panchayati Raj institutions.

Mahatma Gandhi's dream of the village republics of India was given shape by Shri Rajiv Gandhi who piloted the Panchayati Raj Bill through Parliament. This was a unique event in the history of our nation and it has paved the way for the creation of self sufficient mini democracies all over the country and at the same time given the women's movement tremendous impetus by inducting lakhs of women into local self governance at the grassroots.

It is very heartening to note that AGRASRI is marching steadily towards its goal of strengthening local self governance through empowerment of panchayat members and at the same time it is also a premier institute for research and advocacy of the democratic process at the village level.

Please accept my heartiest felicitations on the presentation of your Decennial Activity Report 2001-2011. I am confident that AGRASRI will surge forward in the future also to serve the nation.

Jai Hind.

  
(PREMA CARIAPPA)

**Shri D.Sundar Ram,**  
**Director**  
**Academy of Grassroots Studies**  
**And Research of India,**  
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डा. आर. चिदम्बरम्  
भारत सरकार के प्रमुख वैज्ञानिक सलाहकार  
एवम्  
डी.ए.इ. - होमी भाभा प्रोफेसर  
**Dr. R. Chidambaram**  
Principal Scientific Adviser to the Govt. of India  
&  
DAE - Homi Bhabha Professor



सत्यमेव जयते

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rajachid@nic.in

### Message

*I am very pleased that the Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) is bringing out a Decennial Activity Report 2001-2011. AGRASRI has, over the last 10 years, made significant contributions in the sectors of Panchayati Raj, rural Development, Women Empowerment and Good Governance . It has provided training in research and consultancy in the fields of Panchayati Raj, Rural Development and allied themes over the last decade. The Academy has also instituted various awards in different categories, related to its core activities*

*The Decennial Activity report, I am sure, would highlight the achievements of the Academy and also reflect upon its future course of activities.*

*I extend my best wishes to AGRASRI for continued fruitful contributions towards rural upliftment.*

*R. Chidambaram*  
(R. Chidambaram)  
16<sup>th</sup> March 2012

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## ***Genesis of Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI)***

Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI), Tirupati, was founded by social activist couple *Dr. D. Sundar Ram* and *Mrs. D. Bharathi Sundar*. It came in to existence on 2 October, 2001, which was registered under the Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860, Vide Regd. No.293 of 2001, as autonomous, independent, non-political, non-profit and Professional Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO), being headquartered at Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh. The motto of AGRASRI is *Gram Swaraj through Grassroots Democracy*.

The Academy was formally inaugurated by the champion of decentralisation movement *Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar*, the then Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) and CWC Member, on 20 August, 2002 at Tirupati. It is founded to provide an environment suitable for the study and promotion of academic research, training, policy advocacy and networking in grassroots democratic institutions for self-sufficient *Village Republics*.

The primary object of the academy is to develop a sound and efficient grassroots democratic system in India for achieving the Gandhian dream of *Gram Swaraj*. This is a unique Academy in the field of Grassroots Studies and Governance in India. It provides a bridge between the elected representatives of Panchayati Raj, Nagar Palika Institutions, academicians, researchers, administrators and others working in the field, under the nurture of *Dr. D. Sundar Ram* and *Mrs. D. Bharathi Sundar*, Founder and Co-founder of the Academy.

The Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India is a good fortunate to have a distinguished policy makers and scholars, as source of inspiration and support, for implementing its aims and objects for fulfilling the Gandhian dream *Gram Swaraj through Grassroots Democracy*.

*Dr. C. Rangarajan*, Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to Prime Minister of India, New Delhi, is the *Hon. Visitor* of the Academy. *Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar*, Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) and Former Union Minister for Panchayati Raj, Govt. of India, New Delhi, is the *Hon. Chief Patron*.

## ❖❖❖❖❖❖ AGRASRI Decennial Activity Report : 2002-2012 ❖❖❖❖❖❖

*Dr. Subhash C. Kashyap*, eminent Constitutional expert and Former Secretary-General of Lok Sabha, New Delhi, is the *Hon. Chairman* of the Board of Governors of the Academy, while *Shri Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer*, eminent jurist and Former Judge of Supreme Court of India, is the *Chairman of the Hon. Board of Advisors*. Several distinguished policy makers, administrators and scholars have been associated with the Academy, as Members of its Board of Governors and Executive Council, and as distinguished fellows, visiting senior fellows, visiting fellows and guest faculty.

The main aim of the Founders of the Academy was that the organisation should not only stimulate a proper study of panchayati raj administration but also train directly a number of elected representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions, Self-Help Group (SHG) Members and Social activists in the discipline, art and practice of administration for good governance at the grassroots in contemporary India.

In pursuance of the aims and objectives of the AGRASRI towards strengthening grassroots democratic Institutions as self-sufficient Village Republics in India, a number of academic and research activities have been organised since its inception, include *Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture* and *Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Outstanding Leadership*, *Mahila Shakti*, *Yuva Shakti*, *Best District*, *Best Taluk* and *Best Gram Panchayat National Awards*, besides *Chittoor Zilla Visishta Ratna Centenary Award* conferment programmes. The Academy has an outstanding record of training, research and consultancy in the field of panchayati raj, rural development, women empowerment, capacity building and training, good governance, environment and sustainable development, micro-planning, rural applied technology, and allied areas, since its inception.

### ❖ **Vision of the Academy**

The Vision of Academy is to enhance the people's participation in development programmes and sound management of rural local self-governments through grassroots democracy and process of democratic decentralisation in the form of statutory Panchayati Raj Institutions, as self sufficient Village Republics in India.

The major research thrust of Academy is in the areas of Grassroots Governance (Panchayati Raj), Urban Governance (Nagar Palikas), Women Empowerment, Socio-economic Development and allied subjects. The Academy shall strive to open new vistas of development dialogue between the micro and macro approaches on the

grassroots democracy support initiatives for generating new ideas and dissemination of its knowledge for fulfilling people's aspirations for genuine Village Republics in India, through research, training, advocacy and consultancy.

### ❖ **Mission of the Academy**

Academy's mission is to :

- a) Cater the needs of elected representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions, Municipal bodies and administrative personnel of Panchayati Raj Institutions and Nagar Palika administration;
- b) Bridge the communication gap between the officials and non-officials of the Panchayati Raj and Nagar Palika Institutions;
- c) Conduct innovative study and research on contemporary political and socio-economic issues and problems in an inter-disciplinary perspective and to make available its findings and recommendations to the key policy makers at the helm of affairs for an appropriate action;
- d) Open a new vistas of the Academy's programmes to various professional organisations in India and abroad for strengthening grassroots democratic theories and ideas; and
- e) Build regional, national and international networks, with organisations working on grassroots studies and research.

### ❖ **Aims and Objectives of the Academy**

The Academy aims to:

- i) To promote and conduct research on a multi-dimensional facets of the human development in rural India;
- ii) To organise and facilitate conferences, seminars, colloquiums, special lectures, symposia and round-table meetings on grassroots studies and contemporary issues for the dissemination of knowledge from the innovative study and research at the micro and macro level;
- iii) To organise and conduct a Post-Graduate Diploma Courses in Panchayati Raj and Rural Management, leading to P.G. Diploma in Grassroots Governance and Public Affairs Management;

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- iv) To undertake development studies and research projects sponsored by the Central and State Governments, International Agencies and Foundations;
- v) To organise and conduct Capacity Building & Training Programmes, Workshops, Orientation and Refresher Courses for the elected representatives and functionaries of Panchayati Raj and Municipal bodies to create knowledge base, develop skills and understanding of the various dimensions of rural and urban transformation;
- vi) To offer consultancy services to the local, state and union Governments of India and other funding agencies/organisations;
- vii) To publish research works of high standard in the form of books, monographs, working papers, occasional papers, reports, pamphlets and other literature on Panchayati Raj and Grassroots Governance;
- viii) To bring out a research journal, namely, *The Grassroots Governance Journal* (Bi-annual in English), for the advancement of knowledge in Panchayati Raj, Rural Development, Women Empowerment, Social Development and to encourage on developmental problems of grassroots democratic institutions; and
- ix) To organise the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture every year on 20<sup>th</sup> August and confer the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Outstanding Leadership, Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Mahila Shakthi, Yuva Shakthi, Best District, Best Taluk and Best Gram Panchayat National Awards to the distinguished personalities and elected representatives of PRI's, in recognition of their laudable contributions and services, for strengthening grassroots democratic institutions in India.



## Management of AGRASRI

The Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) is governed by (a) General Body, (b) Board of Governors and (c) Executive Council. The Academy is ably guided and supported by the Hon. Board of Advisors, Research Monitoring Committee and Organising Committee, in academic matters concerning education, training, research and consultancy.

Hon. Visitor

*Dr. C. Rangarajan* is the Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to Prime Minister of India, New Delhi. He has earlier been the Governor of Reserve Bank of India; Governor of Andhra Pradesh; Chairman of the 12<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission of India. He received Padma Vibhushan Award from the President of India.

Hon. Chief Patron

*Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar* is Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), New Delhi. He has earlier been the Union Minister for Petroleum & Natural Gas, Panchayati Raj, Youth Affairs & Sports and Development of North - East Region, Govt. of India. He received the Best Parliamentarian Award from the President of India.

### ❖ Board of Governors

The AGRASRI policy is determined by a 9 Member-Board of Governors. *Dr. Subhash C. Kashyap*, a well-known Constitutional expert and Former Secretary-General of Indian Parliament (Lok Sabha), New Delhi, is the *Chairman* of the Board of Governors. It comprises of the Chairman, Director and Member-Secretary, and Seven other Members.

The following is the composition of the Board of Governors of AGRASRI for the years 2011-2013:

### Chairman, Board of Governors

*Dr. Subhash C. Kashyap* is President of the Citizenship Development Society and of Rashtriya Jagriti Sansthan (Institute of National Awakening), Honorary Research Professor at the Centre for Policy Research, Advocate in the Supreme Court of India and Honorary Editor of the monthly South Asia Politics. He is widely known as an eminent expert in constitutional law and parliamentary affairs and author of many prestigious works. He has served as a Member of the Governing Board of the Indian Council of Social Science Research, New Delhi.

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Previously, Dr. Kashyap was Constitutional Adviser to the Government of India on PRI Laws and was a Member of the National Commission on the Review of the Working of the Constitution and Chairman of its Drafting Committee (2000-2002). Earlier, he headed the CIDP at IPU in Geneva and took voluntary retirement from the position of Secretary-General, Parliament of India (Lok Sabha). He has travelled extensively over the world and received awards and honours in India and abroad.

❖ **Members, Board of Governors**

*Dr (Mrs) Manju Sharma* is President of the Indian Institute of Advanced Research, Gandhinagar (Gujarat). Dr (Mrs) Manju Sharma is a distinguished biologist, nationally and internationally recognised for her monumental contributions in promotion of science and technology, in particular the emerging field of biotechnology. With her vision, dedication and sustained efforts she is largely responsible for the rapid progress of biotechnology research, application and commercialisation in the country.

Dr (Mrs) Manju Sharma has played a pivotal role in taking up the cause of women in science and application of science and technology for the benefit of women, disadvantaged people and rural areas. She has served as the Secretary, Department of Bio-Technology, Government of India, New Delhi; President, Indian Science Congress Association. She received the *Padma Bhushan* award from the President of India.

*Professor Jagat S.Mehta, IFS (Retd.)*, is Trustee, Vidya Bhavan Society, Udaipur (Rajasthan). He was the Foreign Secretary, Government of India from 1976-79. After retirement his primary interest has been in volunteerism for social and economic development. He has interspersed these commitments with spells in academia, including as Associate at Harvard, Fellow at Woodrow Wilson Centre and Tom Slick Professor of Peace in Austin (Texas) in 1983. His predecessors in this chair included Nobel Laureates Gunner and Alva Myrdal.

Dr. Jagat S Mehta was the President of Seva Mandir from 1985 to 1994. As Foreign Secretary of the Government of India, he has been a part of special negotiating assignments and special missions on behalf of the government. He has participated in Commonwealth Conferences, Afro-Asian conferences and been a Member of state and governmental delegations. On 26 January, 2002, he was awarded the *Padma Bhushan* by the President of India.

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*Professor K.C. Sivaramakrishnan, IAS (Retd.),* is the Chairman, Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi. After joining the Indian Administrative Service in 1958 and holding various assignments in West Bengal, served as Secretary and Chief Executive of the Calcutta Metropolitan Development Authority. In 1988, he became Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development and was personally involved in the legislation to amend Constitution to provide a framework for decentralisation and empowerment of rural and urban local bodies. Eventually 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Amendments became part of the Constitution of India.

After retirement from Indian Administrative Service in 1992, he joined the World Bank as Senior Advisor, Urban Management. Since his return in 1996, has been associated with the Centre for Policy Research and the Institute of Social Sciences.

*Dr. S.S. Meenakshi Sundaram, IAS (Retd.),* is Visiting Professor at the National Institute of Advanced Studies and Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bangalore. He joined the Karnataka cadre of Indian Administrative Service in 1968 and subsequently became the Secretary to Government of India, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Department during 1986-89. As Joint Secretary in charge of Panchayati Raj in the Ministry of Rural Development, Govt. of India, he was part of the team piloting the Constitution 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment Bill which introduced the system of local governance in India during 1992-93.

He has worked as Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister of Karnataka during 1995-96 and as Joint Secretary to three Prime Ministers of India during 1996-99. He was also an Adviser in the Planning Commission. Before retiring as Member (Finance) in the Space Commission and the Atomic Energy Commission in 2004, he was Secretary to the Government of India in the Ministries of Rural Development and Disinvestment.

*Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy* is the Chairman, Andhra Pradesh State Local Bodies Empowerment Forum, Hyderabad. He has earlier been the Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) and Member of Legislative Assembly (Andhra Pradesh), President of the Panchayati Samithi and Gram Panchayat, Andhra Pradesh. He is actively associated with many Panchayati Raj bodies and Non-Governmental Organisations. He is a strong supporter of devolution of powers to the Panchayati Raj Institutions as per the provisions of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act.

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*Shri Venkatrao Ghorpade* is President, Sai Human and Integrated Rural Development Institute Foundation (SHIRDI Foundation), Bangalore. He has earlier been the President of the District Panchayat, Bellary, Karnataka and Director, Corporation Bank, Mangalore. He is a prolific writer, expert and researcher on Local Self-Government Institutions.

*Mrs. D. Bharathi Sundar* is Co-founder of Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI); and Rajiv Rural Development Foundation (RRDF), Tirupati. She is an Editorial Assistant of the Grassroots Governors Journal since 2003 onwards. She is the backbone to the AGRASRI and assisting its Founder for all innovative programmes and activities.

**Member-Secretary, Board of Governors**

*Dr. D. Sundar Ram* is Founder Director of Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI); Secretary-General of Rajiv Rural Development Foundation (RRDF); Editor, The Grassroots Governance Journal (TGGJ), Tirupati and Consulting Editor, The American Biographical Institute, Raliegh, North Carolina, United States of America. He has earlier been an Associate Professor in Public Administration and Political Science at Acharya Nagarjuna University Affiliated PG College, Guntur, Andhra Pradesh; UGC Research Associate (Post-Doctoral Fellow) in Political Science, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati; Parliamentary Fellow at the Institute of Constitutional and Parliamentary Studies, New Delhi. He is the Chief Organiser of the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture and Convenor, Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Awards Jury, headed by *Dr. Subhash C. Kashyap*, Former Secretary-General of Lok Sabha, New Delhi.

Dr. D. Sundar Ram is a prolific writer, author, researcher and analyst. He has written extensively on Indian governance and polity, parliamentary studies, electoral reforms, democratic decentralisation, federalism and state politics, with over 20 books, 150 research papers and 30 talks in All India Radio to his credit. He is a Member in many professional bodies and organisations of national repute. He visited Pakistan and participated in the Indo-Norway Seminar on Local Governance, in 2007, as one of the Members of the Indian Delegation, led by *Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar*, the then Union Minister for Panchayati Raj and Development of North-East Region, Govt. of India. He is a Resource Person at various State Institutes of Rural Development and research organisations.

### ❖ Executive Council

The management and administration of the organisation is vested by 9-Member Executive Council. *Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy*, Former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), New Delhi, is the *President* of the Executive Council for the Year 2011-2013. *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Director & Member-Secretary is the principal executive and is responsible for the management and administration of AGRASRI and its sister organisations.

The following is the composition of the Executive Council of AGRASRI for the years 2011-2013:

1. *Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy* (President)

Former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) and Chairman, Andhra Pradesh State Local Bodies Empowerment Forum, 272/A, MLA Colony, Road No. 12, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad. He has earlier been the Member of Legislative Assembly, Andhra Pradesh and Panchayati Samithi President and Sarpanch, Dubbaka Gram Panchayat, Medak District, Andhra Pradesh.

2. *Dr. R.A. Padmanabha Rao* (Vice-President)

Former Deputy Director-General, Doordarshan, B-408, Saikrupa Residency, BSP Colony, Moti Nagar, Hyderabad. He has earlier been the Director, All India Radio, New Delhi.

3. *Dr. D. Sundar Ram* (Founder and General Secretary)

Former Reader in Public Administration; UGC Research Associate in Political Science, Acharya Nagarjuna University, and Sri Venkateswara University, 2-3-375/D, Venkataramana Layout, Near LIC Office, Tirupati, A.P.

4. *Shri V. Ramaiah* (Treasurer)

Andhra Bank (Retd.), Tirupati. 13-6-701, Peddakapu Layout, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh. He is the Chairman, Peddakapu Layout Residents Welfare Society, Tirupati.

5. *Professor A. Ranga Reddy* (E.C. Member)

Chairman, Indian Institute of Public Administration, Local Branch, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh. He has earlier been Professor of Economics at Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati.

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6. *Professor M. Krishnaiah* (E.C. Member)

Professor of Physics (Retd.), Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh. He has earlier been Co-ordinator of the SVU-ISRO MST Radar Centre, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati.

7. *Prof. M. Sudharsan Reddy* (E.C. Member)

Professor of Law (Retd.), Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh. He is Guest Faculty of many Law Colleges, located in Tirupati.

8. *Shri R. Sampath Kumar* (E.C. Member)

Manager (Retd.), Andhra Bank, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh. He is the President of the Andhra Bank Pensioners Welfare Union, Tirupati.

9. *Mrs. D. Bharathi Sundar* (Co-founder and E.C. Member)

Social Activist and Co-founder, Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) and Rajiv Rural Development Foundation, (RRDF), Tirupati. 2-3-375/D, Venkataramana Layout, Near LIC Office, Tirupati, A.P.

❖ **Hon. Board of Advisors**

For advising the Board of Governors and the Executive Council in the formulation of planning and development of its multifarious research and academic programmes, the AGRASRI has constituted the Hon. Board of Advisors, consisting of leading experts and specialists, under the stewardship of eminent jurist and former Judge of Supreme Court of India *Shri Justice V. R. Krishna Iyer*.

The following is the composition of Hon. Board of Advisors of AGRASRI for the years 2011-2013:

1. *Shri Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer* (Chairman)

Eminent Jurist and Former Judge, Supreme Court of India, now based in Kochi, Kerala. # Satgamaya, M.G. Road, Ernakulam, Kochi, Kerala. He received *Padma Vibhushan* award from the President of India.

2. *Dr (Mrs) V. Mohini Giri* (Member)

Chairperson, Guild of Service and Member, National Integration Council, New Delhi. She has earlier been the Chairperson, National Commission for Women, Govt. of India, New Delhi. She received Padma Bhushan Award from President of India.

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3. *Dr. Jaya Arunachalam* (Member)

President, Working Women's Forum, leading Non-Governmental Organisation, # 55, Bhimasena Garden Road, Mylapore, Chennai, Tamil Nadu. She received *Padma Shri* Award from the President of India.

4. *Professor M. Aslam* (Member)

Vice-Chancellor, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi.

5. *Dr. Rajesh Tandon* (Member)

President, Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA), a leading Non-Governmental Organisation, 42, Tukhlakabad Institutional Area, New Delhi.

6. *Dr. Asghar Ali Engineer* (Member)

Chairman, Centre for Study of Society and Secularism, 602 & 603 New Silver Star, Prabhat Colony Rd., Behind BEST Bus Depot, Santacruz (E), Mumbai. He is the recipient of the Rights Livelihoods Award and National Integration Award.

❖ **Research Advisory Committee**

The Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India, has constituted the *Research Monitoring Committee*, with the following experts and scholars for the years 2011-2013:

Chairman

1. *Prof. P.C. Mathur*, President, Indian Network for Rajasthan Studies, Jaipur, Rajasthan and General Secretary & Treasurer, New Public Administration Society of India.

Member-Secretary

2. *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Director, Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh.

Members

3. *Prof. S.P.Jain*, Chairman, Society for Good Governance & Sustainable Development, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.
4. *Prof. G. Palanithurai*, Rajiv Gandhi Chair for Panchayati Raj Studies, Gandhigram Rural University, Gandhigram, Tamil Nadu.

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5. *Prof. Ranbir Singh*, Senior Consultant, Haryana Institute of Rural Development, Nilokheri, District Karnal, Haryana.
6. *Prof. D. Rajasekhar*, Professor, Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bangalore.
7. *Prof. M. Kunhaman*, Professor, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Rural Campus, Tuljapur, Maharashtra
8. *Prof. Yatindra Singh Sisodia*, Professor, M.P. Institute of Social Science Research, Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh.
9. *Prof. M. Gopinath Reddy*, Professor, Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh.

❖ **Organising Committee**

The Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India, has constituted the Organising Committee, with the following experts and scholars for the years 2011-2013:

**Chairman**

1. *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Founder Director, AGRASRI, Tirupati, A.P.

**Organising Secretary**

2. *Mrs. D. Bharathi Sundar*, Co-founder & Joint Director, AGRASRI, Tirupati.

**Members**

3. *Dr.R.A.Padmanabha Rao*, Deputy Director-General(Retd), Doordarshan, New Delhi.
4. *Prof. A. Ranga Reddy*, Chairman, IIPA Local Branch, Tirupati, A.P.
5. *Prof. M. Krishnaiah*, Professor of Physics (Retd.), S.V.University, Tirupati, A.P.
6. *Prof. M. Sudharsan Reddy*, Professor of Law (Retd.), S.V. University, Tirupati.
7. *Shri V. Ramaiah*, Treasurer, AGRASRI, Tirupati, A.P.
8. *Shri R. Sampath Kumar*, Manager (Retd.), Andhra Bank, Tirupati, A.P.
9. *Shri S. Chandrasekhar*, Chandra Graphics, 94-A, Old Maternity Hospital Road, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh.



## Faculty of AGRASRI

### ❖ Distinguished Fellows

The Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India, is fortunately to have the following reputed scholars and researchers, as *Distinguished Fellows*, for the years 2011-2013.

1. *Dr. R.A. Mashelkar*

CSIR Bhatnagar Fellow at the National Chemical Laboratory, Government of India, Pune (Maharashtra). He has earlier been the Director-General of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, New Delhi. He is associated with many reputed research organisations in India and abroad. He received *Padma Bhushan* award from the President of India.

2. *Professor Kirit S. Parikh*

Former Member, Planning Commission, Government of India, New Delhi. He has earlier been the Member, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister of India and Director & Vice-Chancellor, Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Studies, Mumbai. He received *Padma Bhushan* award from the President of India.

3. *Professor B.K.Chandra Sekhar*

Former Chairman, Karnataka Legislative Council and Minister for Secondary Education, Information Technology, Govt. of Karnataka, Bangalore.

4. *Professor N. Radhakrishnan*

Chairman, Indian Council of Gandhian Studies, New Delhi. He has earlier been the Director, Gandhi Smruthi Darshan, New Delhi. He received *Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavana Award* from the Prime Minister of India.

5. *Professor R. Ramamurthi*

Chairman, Network of Indian Universities on Cultural and Biological Diversity, Tirupati. He has earlier been the General President, Indian Science Congress and Vice-Chancellor of Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh.

### ❖ Senior Visiting Fellows

The following Scholars and experts have been associated with the Academy as *Senior Visiting Fellows*, for the Years 2011-2013:

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1. *Dr.T.H. Chowdary*

Chairman, Pragna, Hyderabad. He has earlier been the Chairman and Managing Director of Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited and Information Technology Advisor to the Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad.

2. *Dr B.P. Syam Roy, IAS (Retd.)*

Former Special Secretary, Development and Planning Dept., Govt. of West Bengal, Kolkata.

3. *Prof. Yatindra Singh Sisodia*

Professor, Madhya Pradesh Institute of Social Science Research, Ujjain, M.P

4. *Shri K. Karunakar Patnaik, IAS (Retd.)*

Regional Co-ordinator, Institute of Social Sciences, Bhubaneswar. He has earlier been the Director, Panchayati Raj Department, Govt. of Odisha, Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

5. *Shri Venkatrao Ghorpade*

President, SHIRDI Foundation, Bangalore. He has earlier been the President, District Panchayat, Bellary, Karnataka.

❖ **Visiting Fellows**

The following Scholars and experts have been associated with the Academy as *Visiting Fellows*, for the Years 2011-2013:

1. *Shri R. Dileep Reddy*

Former State Information Commissioner (RTI), Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, A.P.

2. *Dr. M. Devendra Babu*

Associate Professor, Centre for Decentralisation and Development, Institute for Economic and Social Change, Bangalore.

3. *Dr. K. Gireesan*

Head, Panchayati Raj Institutions and Youth Affairs Division (PRIYA), Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development (Deemed University), Sriperambudur, Tamil Nadu.

4. *Dr. Amal Mandal*

Associate Professor in Political Science, Tufanganj College, Tufanganj, Cooch Behar, West Bengal.

❖ **Guest Faculty**

The Academy is having the following Guest Faculty for its multi-faceted research, training and orientation programmes for the Years 2011-2013:

1. *Dr. D. Sundar Ram (Director)*

Founder of Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI); Rajiv Rural Development Foundation (RRDF); Editor, The Grassroots Governance Journal (TGGJ), Tirupati. He has earlier been an Associate Professor and Research Associate in Political Science and Public Administration at Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur and Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati (A.P).

2. *Dr. V. Rajgopal*

Chairman, Society for Hunger Elimination (SHE), Tirupati. He has earlier been the Director, Central Plantation and Crops Research Institute, Govt. of India, Kasargod, Kerala.

3. *Professor K. M. Naidu*

Professor of Economics (Retd.), Sri Venkateswara University, and Past- President, Indian Institute of Public Administration Tirupati Local Branch, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh.

4. *Dr. P.V. Sessa Reddy*

District Panchayat Officer, Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh.

5. *Dr. V. Hari Naidu*

President, District Sarpanchs Association, Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh.

6. *Dr. D. Sudhakar*

Reader in Commerce, Govt. Degree College, Sri Kalahasthi, Chittoor Dist., A.P

7. *Dr. V. Suresh (Research Assistant)*

Researcher in Political Science & Public Administration, Tirupati.

8. *Mr. N. Anil Kumar (Computer Supervisor)*

M.Tech., Post Graduate and Ph.D. Scholar in S.V. University Engineering College, Tirupati

9. *Shri S. Chandra Sekhar (Computer Operator / Designer)*

Chandra Graphics, 99-A, Old Maternity Hospital Road, Tirupati, AP.

## Academic Activities organised by AGRASRI 2002-2012

i. **National Seminar on ‘Panchayati Raj Institutions in India: Real Powers and Responsibilities’, 20 August, 2002.**

In commemorate the 58<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary celebrations of Bharat Ratna Shri Rajiv Gandhi and the *First Bharat Ratna Shri Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture*, the Academy has organised the National Seminar on ‘Panchayati Raj Institutions in India - Real Powers and Responsibilities’, organised by AGRASRI on August 20, 2002 in Hotel Bliss, Tirupati.

*Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar*, Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) and CWC Member, was the Chief Guest and inaugurated the National Seminar. In his inaugural address, *Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar* lamented that unless the 3-Fs, viz., functions, functionaries and funds were transferred to the Panchayati Raj Institutions, the devolution of powers, the central theme of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment, would merely remain on paper and would be non-existent in reality. He wanted exercise of caution in the distribution of the subjects even among the 3-tiers and even favoured the creation of cadre-Panchayati Raj Service - independent of the bureaucratic District Collector. To mark the occasion, a Commemorative Souvenir on Rajiv Gandhi’s Vision of Panchayati Raj was released by *Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar*.

*Dr. K. Keshava Rao*, Former Minister for Higher Education, Government of Andhra Pradesh, in his address observed that the Panchayati Raj is the premier socio-economic instrument to manage the affairs of the Indian rural society in conformity with the hopes, aspirations and expectations of the people of the country for their overall development.

The inaugural session was presided over by *Professor K.M. Chetty*, General Secretary of the International Congress for Social Philosophy and Professor of Philosophy at Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati. In his Presidential address, *Professor K.M. Chetty* touched upon some of the important aspects of the functioning of the Panchayati Raj Institutions and emphasised that the shortcomings in the grassroots democratic institutions have to be removed for socio-economic betterment of the Indian rural poor.

*Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Director of AGRASRI, in his welcome address, highlighted the relevance of the topic in the context of the completion of one decade of the

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enactment of 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendments. While discussing the good governance concept at the grassroots level, he reviewed the existing real powers and responsibilities of the PRI's and summarised its experience, inadequacies and challenges, as well as the requirements and vision of the future.

The National Seminar was structured through 3 technical sessions. They were: (i) Democracy and Governance at the Grassroots level- Role of Governmental and Non-Governmental Organisations, (ii) Panchayati Raj and Rural Development in India- An Instrument for Social Change, and (iii) Women in Democratic Decentralisation and Electoral Participation-Myths and Realities. These sessions were chaired by *Late Prof. G. Raghava Reddy, Prof. A. Ranga Reddy and Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, respectively. Presentations were made by *Prof.K.Venkata Reddy, Late Prof. G.Raghava Reddy, Professor A. Ranga Reddy, Prof. K. Veeram Reddy, Prof. (Mrs.) Sriranjani Subba Rao, Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, in 3 technical sessions.

In the Valedictory Session, *Prof. K. Venkata Reddy*, Former Vice-Chancellor of Sri Krishnadevaraya University, Anantapur, presided. *Dr. K. Keshava Rao*, Former Minister for Higher Education and Chairman of the Rajiv Gandhi Technology Mission, Government of Andhra Pradesh, delivered the Valedictory Address, followed by summary of proceedings of the National Seminar by *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Director of AGRASRI.

The National Seminar was attended by a large number of academics, administrators, representatives of PRI's, NGO's, media persons and other concerned citizens of India. *Dr.D. Sundar Ram*, Director of AGRASRI, Co-ordinate the National Seminar.

**ii. Round-Table Meeting on 'Shri Rajiv Gandhi and National Integration', 21 May, 2005.**

In synchronising the 14<sup>th</sup> death anniversary of Shri Rajiv Gandhi and Anti-Terrorism day, the Academy, in association with the Rajiv Rural Development Foundation, organised One-day *Round-Table Meeting on Shri Rajiv Gandhi and National Integration* on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2005 at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati.

Speaking at a Round-Table Meeting, the Chief Guest *Dr. Agarala Easwara Reddi*, former Speaker of Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly and Vice-President of the Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi, said that the former Prime

Minister of India Shri Rajiv Gandhi showed a keen interest in understanding the needs and aspirations of the rural people and hence he was instrumental in setting up the Panchayati Raj system in India. Remembering his association with Shri Rajiv Gandhi, *Dr. Easwara Reddi* opined that the late Rajiv Gandhi cut across party lines to gather public opinion on various welfare programmes. Elaborating the present day policy framework, *Dr. Easwara Reddi* lamented that the current crop of politicians are not concerned about rural development. Policies framed by the various state Governments are citi-centric and focus on villages only during the time of elections.

*Shri K. Rami Reddy IAS (Retd)*, Former Chairman, Andhra Pradesh State Irrigation Development Corporation Limited, Hyderabad, presided over the round-table meeting. The panel of speakers in the round-table meeting *Professor P.V. Arunachalam*, Former Vice- Chancellor of Dravidian University, Kuppam (AP); *Professor K.M. Chetty*, Professor of Philosophy; *Professor (Mrs) V. Hemalatha Devi*, Professor of Law, Sri Venkateswara University; *Shri UVSR Anjaneyulu*, Station Director, Tirupati Doordarshan Kendra; *Shri M. Nagaraju*, Bureau Chief, Vartha, Tirupati Edition, dwelt at length on Rajiv Gandhi's significant contributions towards the unity and integrity of India.

Earlier *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Founder Director of AGRASRI welcomed the dignitaries, participants and explained the objects of the round-table meeting. *Professor A. Ranga Reddy*, Professor of Economics at Sri Venkateswara University and Vice-President of AGRASRI proposed a vote of thanks.

**iii. Regional Workshop on 'Capacity Building and Good Governance for Sarpanchs of Rayalaseema Region in Andhra Pradesh', 6 and 7 February, 2006.**

The Academy has organised 2-day Regional Workshop on 'Capacity Building and Good Governance for Gram Panchayat Sarpanches of Rayalaseema Region of AP' during 6-7 February, 2006 in Tirupati at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati. The workshop, attended among others by 30 selected Gram Panchayat Sarpanches chosen from the four Rayalaseema districts of Chittoor, Kadapa, Anantapur and Kurnool, which was sponsored by the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) Southern Regional Centre, Hyderabad.

*Shri B. Karunakar Reddy*, the then Chairman of the Tirupati Urban Development Authority, inaugurated the Workshop. He said that the role of Sarpanches in the

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development of Villages is vital and they should be guiding force behind various welfare activities taken up for the progress of village panchayats. Highlighting the significant contributions of the Indian Villages in the national development, he felt that only when the Villages are economically stable, the economic condition of the entire nation will be strong. Later, he released the Workshop material published by AGRASRI.

*Prof. A Ranga Reddy*, Professor of Economics at Sri Venkateswara University and Vice-President of AGRASRI presided over the Inaugural Session of the Workshop. Earlier, *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Co-ordinator of the Workshop outlined the aims and objectives of the programme, with two-day academic schedule. In various interactive sessions, some of the important aspects that will be discussed in the Workshop are Village Administration, Capacity Building in Rural Areas - An Analysis, Micro-Planning: Advantages and Limitations, Implementation of Health Programmes at Rural Level: Problems and Emerging Challenges, Women Empowerment, Village Secretariat and its Role in Village Development, Role of Gram Panchayat in Environment Protection and Implementation of Right to Information Act etc.

Participating in the proceedings of the Workshop, the Sarpanches regretted that the so called Grama Sabhas had become a mere formality with hardly any voice or say for the Sarpanches concerned in the selection of schemes and beneficiaries. At the end of the meet, the following resolutions were adopted unanimously by the Sarpanches: (i) The village plans should be prepared at the grassroots level only, with an active participation and involvement of the citizens of concerned villages; (ii) Immediate transfer of funds, functions and functionaries to the Gram Panchayats relating to 29 subjects as per the 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitution Amendment; (iii) Developmental works should be completed as per the resolutions of the concerned gram panchayat; (iv) Autonomous status should be provided to the gram panchayats in all respects as per the 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitution Amendment in letter and in spirit; (v) Cheque power of the Gram Panchayat Sarpanch should be continued up to the completion of their elected tenure and (vi) Grama Sabha decisions in respect of village development should be honoured by all organs of the govt. with out any modifications and alternations.

**iv. National Seminar on ‘Panchayati Raj Institutions after 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment: A New Deal for Rural India’, 19 and 20 August, 2006.**

The Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) has organised 2-day National Seminar on ‘Panchayati Raj Institutions after 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitution

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*Amendment: A New Deal for Rural India*’ at Tirupati during 19-20 August, 2006. The Seminar was sponsored by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India, New Delhi.

The National Seminar was inaugurated by *Shri M.V.Rajasekharan*, Hon’ble the then Union Minister of State for Planning and Ex.Officio Member, Planning Commission of India, New Delhi, on 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2006 at 10.30 a.m. in Hotel Bliss (Darbar Hall), Tirupati, with an address. After Inaugurating the National Seminar, *Shri M.V. Rajasekharan* observes that the draft approach paper on the Eleventh Five Year plan was keen on making the panchayati raj bodies the fulcrum of all rural development programmes by devolving more powers and funds to them as envisaged by what he called the historic 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Amendments to the Constitution of India. Examining the implementation of the two amendments in letter and spirit, *Shri Rajasekharan* asserted that the United Progressive Alliance has drawn up several ambitious plans in this regard with the ‘participation’ of the people as envisioned by Shri Rajiv Gandhi, the author of these amendments on Panchayati Raj and Nagar Palika Institutions.

Explaining the nominal role of planning exercise in bureaucratic dominated administrative set-up, the Planning Minister was unhappy that not many states have set up the District Planning Boards and said that the Planning Commission of India has now made them mandatory for the purpose of achieving micro and macro level planning through taluk and village committees and gram sabhas. While evaluating the new schemes launched by the UPA led Government at the centre for economic development of rural areas, *Shri Rajasekharan* said that the plan envisaged an expenditure of a whopping Rs.1.74 lakh crores in the next four years as never before to completely change the face of rural India.

Realising the involvement of the Non-Governmental Organisations in the process of development in the country side, the Planning Minister opines that no government effort is likely to succeed without the full involvement of the people. Therefore, every segment of our society, whether individuals, cooperatives, corporate entities or civil society organisations, will have to subscribe to a shared vision of our economic and social future, showing a great national integrity, and work in concert to make that vision a reality. The Eleventh Plan represents an opportunity in evolving such consensus. *Shri M.V.Balakrishnan Master*, the then President of the Kasargod District Panchayat,



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Kerala and *Shri M.A.Khadar*, the then President of Thirurangadi Block Panchayat, Malappuram District, Kerala and *Smt. Lakshamma*, the then President, Bellandur Gram Panchayat, Bangalore Rural District, Karnataka were participated in the inaugural session of the seminar as Guests of Honour.

The Inaugural Session of the National Seminar was presided by *Professor G. Palanithurai*, Rajiv Gandhi Chair for the Panchayati Raj Studies, Gandhigram Rural Institute- Deemed University, Gandhigram (Tamil Nadu) and President of AGRASRI. In his Presidential address, *Professor Palanithurai* provides an overview of intricacies and hurdles in the working of the Panchayati Raj Institutions, after the enactment of 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment Act, 1992. Highlighting the achievements and failures of the grassroots democratic institutions in India, *Professor Palanithurai* feels that unless the panchayati raj bodies assert their rightful space provided for them by the two Constitutional Amendments, the marginalised persons whom they seek to serve would continue to languish.

Earlier, *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Seminar Director and Founder of the Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) welcomed the dignitaries, seminar delegates, participants and gathering and outlined the objectives of the two days meet. *Professor A.Ranga Reddy*, Professor of Economics at Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati and Vice-President of AGRASRI proposed a vote of thanks. The National Seminar was attended by a large number of reputed experts and specialists on Panchayati Raj, Rural Development and Grassroots Governance, reserarchers academics, administrators, representatives of PRI's, NGO's, media persons and Self-Help Group leaders. *Dr.Dr. Sundar Ram*, Founder Director of AGRASRI, co-ordinated the national seminar proceedings.

v. **Special Lecture Programme on 'Relevance of Satyagraha in the Cyber Age', 25 November, 2006.**

To commemorate the Centenary Celebrations of Satyagraha, the Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) has organised a Special Lecture on 'Relevance of Satyagraha in the Cyber Age' at Economics Department Seminar Hall, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2006.

Delivering the Special Lecture, *Professor N. Radhakrishnan*, Chairman of the Indian Council of Gandhian Studies, New Delhi, said that it was the duty of every citizen to establish a state as conceived by father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi.

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Explaining the objectives of the Satyagraha movement, *Professor Radhakrishnan* said that the core of Satyagraha was action, which means we have to go beyond ritual and have honest introspection and serious restructuring of our National priorities to achieve the social, economic and cultural goals Mahatma Gandhi lived and die for. Expressing concern over the existing examination oriented education system, shrinking vocational avenues and high competition for higher education and job opportunities, *Professor Radhakrishnan* said that the ultimate aim of education was to produce good human beings.

*Dr. Agarala Easwara Reddi*, Former Speaker of A.P. Legislative Assembly, Hyderabad, participated in the programme as Guest of Honour. *Dr. R. A. Padmanabha Rao*, Former Deputy Director-General of Doordarshan, New Delhi, presided over the programme. Earlier *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Founder-Director of AGRASRI welcomed the gathering and outlined the objectives of the programme during Centenary Celebrations of Satyagraha. *Dr. (Mrs.) C. Sheela Reddy*, Assistant Professor in Political Science and Public Administration, S.V. University, Tirupati, proposed a vote of thanks. A large number of academics, researchers, NGO and Media representatives, and School children were participated in the programme.

**vi. National Panchayati Raj Day Celebrations and Workshop on ‘Role & Status of Panchayati Raj Institutions after 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment: Need for Second Generation Reforms’, 24 April, 2007.**

As part of the National Panchayati Raj Day Celebrations, the Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India has organised one-day Workshop on the aforesaid theme on 24<sup>th</sup> April, 2007 at Hotel Bliss (Darbar Hall), Tirupati.

*Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy*, Former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) and Chairman, Andhra Pradesh State Local Bodies Empowerment Forum, Hyderabad, has Inaugurated the Workshop. After Inaugurating the Workshop, *Shri Ramachandra Reddy* said that both the Government and bureaucracy lacked the political will to devolve powers and funds to the PRI's and had also developed a phobia towards them. Highlighting the step mother treatment towards PRI's, *Shri Ramachandra Reddy* pointed out that in the Panchayat Raj Act the phrase, ‘subject to the condition’, is mentioned at 135 places, which only proved how cautious the Government and bureaucracy were in releasing PR bodies from their clutches.

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*Dr. Jayaprakash Narayana, IAS(Retd.),* the then Member of the Second Administrative Reforms Commission, Government of India and National Co-ordinator, Lok Satta has delivered a Key-Note Address in the Workshop. Stressing the need for strengthening the Panchayati Raj Institutions, *Dr. Jayaprakash Narayana* said that though the then Prime Minister of India Shri Atal Behari Vajpajee and Smt. Sonia Gandhi, as the Leader of Opposition, had agreed in principle for 'another Constitutional Amendment' to further strengthen the PR bodies, it was yet to see the light of the day. Regretting the present functioning of PR system, *Dr. Jayaprakash Narayana* opines that in the PR administration, powers remained vested in some hands and the responsibilities with others resulting in total disruption of system.

*Shri K. Rami Reddy, IAS (Retd.),* President of Tirupati Elders Forum, presided over the Workshop proceedings. Earlier, *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Founder-Director of AGRASRI welcomed and explained the objects of Workshop. *Dr. R. A. Padmanabha Rao*, Former Deputy Director-General of Doordarshan, New Delhi, proposed a vote of thanks. Many elected representatives of the PRI's, Self-Help Group Members interacted with the Chief Guest *Dr. Jayaprakash Narayana* and received a detailed feed back from him about the future of PRI's in India.

**vii. National Conference on 'Role of Panchayati Raj Institutions after 60 Years of Independent India: A Vision of the Future', 19 and 20 August, 2007.**

The Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) has organised 2-day National Conference on 'Role of Panchayati Raj Institutions After 60 Years of Independent India : Vision of the Future' in Hotel Bliss, Tirupati (AP) during 19 and 20 August, 2007. The Conference was sponsored by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India, New Delhi.

The National Conference was inaugurated by *Dr. A. Chakrapani*, Hon'ble Chairman of the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Council, Hyderabad, on 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2007 at 10.30 a.m. in Hotel Bliss (Darbar Hall), Tirupati. After Inaugurating the National Conference, *Dr. Chakrapani* has regretted that despite the lofty ideals with which the then Prime Minister late Shri Rajiv Gandhi brought out the historic 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendments to ensure devolution of more powers and funds to local bodies, they still remained a distant dream. Examining the implementation of the provisions of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment, especially the devolution of powers to the Panchayati Raj Institutions, *Dr. Chakrapani* said that they must be included in

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the Constitutional Schedule so that they become mandatory and insulated against judicial or any other external intervention. Realising the role of people in the development of Village Panchayats, *Dr. Chakrapani* opines that the Gandhian dream of Gram Swaraj has fully realised only when the powers have delegated to Panchayati Raj Institutions. They should be given powers of 'Nyaya Panchayat' to the Village Panchayat with right to appeal to the civil and criminal court. Some minimum police powers must also be given for the Village Panchayat for maintaining peace and tranquility in rural areas. Its involvement and report to local police station once in a week will establish a better link between the people and State of police and helps to reduce law and order problems in rural areas. Government officials should act like facilitators in the system but not masters for power, decision making and implementing the programmes in the Village Panchayats.

While evaluating the real picture of the Panchayati Raj Institutions in contemporary India, *Dr. Chakrapani* suggests that the Functional Committees consisting among all caste groups may be formed at the village level providing sufficient funds basing on the population, reservation policy for women and scheduled caste, scheduled tribes, Backward Communities be continued further. Training for women to develop leadership and administrative skills, promoting participation of community and NGO's encouraging nonparty basis elections to Panchayati Raj Institutions to avoid the interference of politicians in the functioning, elected representatives, particularly at the Village Panchayat level be given need based regular training are some of the important ingredients to strengthen the Panchayati Raj Institutions.

The Inaugural Session of the National Conference was presided by *Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy*, Former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) and Chairman of the Andhra Pradesh Local Bodies Empowerment Forum, Hyderabad. In his presidential address, *Shri Ramachandra Reddy* has regretted that despite the fact that the 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitution Amendment clearly specified that 29 subjects be transferred to the Panchayati Raj Institutions; vested interests in the Government and the bureaucracy were thwarting it.

The Guest of Honour *Shri R. Dileep Reddy*, the then State Information Commissioner (RTI), Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, said that the achievement of 8 per cent or even 9 per cent growth rate in the GDP could be misleading numerically and would not mean anything to people at the lowest strata of the society

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in real terms. Praising the outcome of the new economic reforms in India, *Shri Dileep Reddy* opines that the growth in the GDP or in the development sector should be reflected by a corresponding improvement in the living standards of the country's ordinary populace. Examining the intricacies and hurdles in the working of the Panchayati Raj Institutions, *Shri Dileep Reddy* regretted that political system and the bureaucracy have failed in providing the Panchayati Raj Institutions with the 3 F's – Functions, Funds and Functionaries.

The Special Guest *Shri Manoranjan Bhaktha*, 8-time Member of Parliament from Andaman & Nicobar Islands, said that the stumbling block in the transfer of 3 F's to the Panchayati Raj Institutions was nothing but the political will and added that so long as it was not created, nothing could be possibly done to achieve it.

The Special Invitee *Professor Julian Swindel*, Principal Lecturer in GIS and Digital Education, Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester, United Kingdom, said that his country was fast losing its moorings in the rural and farm sectors and that his country has a lot to learn from the Indian experience with its grassroots institutions.

Earlier, *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Conference Director and Founder-Director of Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) welcomed the dignitaries, delegates, elites, participants, elected representatives of PRIs and NGO functionaries and outlined the objectives of the 2-day Conference. *Prof. A. Ranga Reddy*, Professor of Economics at Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati and Vice- President of AGRASRI proposed a vote of thanks.

To wish the National Conference a grand success, the eminent policy makers of India, include *Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil*, Her Excellency, the President of Indian Republic; *Dr. Bal Ram Jakhar*, His Excellency, the then Governor of Madhya Pradesh; *Shri T.N. Chaturvedi*, His Excellency, the then Governor of Karnataka; *Shri R.L. Bhatia*, His Excellency, the then Governor of Kerala, *Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar*, Hon'ble the then Union Minister for Panchayati Raj, Youth Affairs & Sports and DoNER; *Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh*, Hon'ble the then Union Minister for Rural Development; *Shri Sontosh Mohandeb*, the then Hon'ble Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises; *Dr. Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy*, the then Hon'ble Chief Minister of A.P; *Shri Virbhadra Singh*, the then Hon'ble Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh; *Dr. M.S. Swaminathan*, Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha); and *Prof. Sukhadeo Thorat*, the then Chairman of the University Grants Commission, and a host of others.

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For an academic point of view, the National Conference theme was divided into 5 Technical Sessions, namely, i) *Devolution of 3 F's - Functions, Functionaries and Finances-to PRI's: A Myth or Reality*; ii) *Panchayati Raj and Right to Information Act: A Way Forward for Transparent Administration*; iii) *Capacity Building and Decentralised Governance: Strategies and Challenges*; iv) *Panchayati Mahila Shakthi and Yuva Shakthi Abhiyan: From Unrent to Prosperity* ; and v) *Role of Panchayati Raj Institutions towards Good Governance in India: A Vision of the Future*, under the Chairmanship of senior academics, with support of Rapporteurs respectively. Under the aforesaid Panels/ Technical Sessions, 33 papers were presented and 10 extempore speeches delivered by the policy makers, social scientists, elected representatives of PRI's, NGO functionaries, administrators and social activists, researchers, and PG students on various themes of the National Conference during 19 and 20 August, 2007.

The Valedictory Session of the National Conference was held on 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2007 at 3.00 p.m. in Hotel Bliss, Tirupati. *Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy*, Former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) and Chairman of the Andhra Pradesh Local Bodies Empowerment Forum, Hyderabad (Andhra Pradesh), presided over the Valedictory Session.

*Dr. Agarala Easwara Reddi*, former Speaker of Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly, Hyderabad (Andhra Pradesh) has participated in the Valedictory Session of the Conference, as a distinguished Chief Guest and delivered the Valedictory Address. Following a comprehensive review of the experience of our Panchayati Raj Institutions over a period of Six decades, particularly after an enactment of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act, *Dr. Easwara Reddi* outlines that if sufficient powers and finances are devolved, the grassroots democratic institutions would get strength to become an effective instrumentalities of socio-economic change in contemporary India. Stressing the need for Second Generation Reforms, *Dr. Easwara Reddi* gave a clarion call to all State Governments to bring an appropriate reforms and initiatives for strengthening the Panchayati Raj Institutions with sufficient functions, functionaries and finances. It is hoped that under the changed scenario, the grassroots democratic institutions would be able to tackle rural development problems and fulfill the desires and aspirations of the people in rural India, at the time of 60 Years of Independence.

Tracing roots of concern for good governance in India, *Dr. Easwara Reddi* advocates that devolution of powers, responsibilities and resources to local self-

government institutions promotes good governance and better service delivery. Devolution of powers deepens democracy and enhances the legitimacy of political system for promoting peace and prosperity in plural societies like India. However, the attainment of good governance depends on the development of local self-government capacity and capabilities. Discussing basic components of democratic decentralisation and service delivery system in India, *Dr. Easwara Reddi* maintains that devolution is considered to be the most effective form of decentralisation and involves transfer of functions or decision-making authority to legally incorporated local self-governments. In continuous process of devolution of powers, the issue of decentralised governance assumes greater significance because a lot depends on the efficacy of governance to implement the targeted poverty alleviation programmes and managing the economy.

In his Presidential address, *Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy* regretted that though as many as 29 subjects were ordered to be transferred to the Panchayati Raj Institutions under the 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitution Amendment Act nearly 15 years ago, they still remained on paper and attributed it to the lack of political will and far-mind in the bureaucracy to devolve the powers. Surveying the several constraints in the devolution of powers to the Panchayati Raj Institutions, *Shri Ramachandra Reddy* demanded the scrapping of District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) and vesting all powers with the Zilla Parishad, Taluk Panchayat Chairpersons and Sarpanches of Gram Panchayats down the ladder for effective rural self-governance in India.

Earlier, *Prof. A. Ranga Reddy*, Professor of Economics at Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati (Andhra Pradesh), welcomed the dignitaries, delegates and participants of the Conference. *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Director of the Conference and Founder of AGRASRI proposed a vote of thanks to all the concerned individuals and authorities for extending their academic expertise and financial support, for two-days National Conference at Tirupati.

**viii. National Conference on ‘Empowerment of Women in Parliament and Local Self-Government Institutions in India: Role, Status, Participation and Decision-Making’, 19 & 20 August, 2008**

The Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) has organised a 2-day National Conference on ‘Empowerment of Women in Parliament and Local Self-Government Institutions in India: Role, Status, Participation and Decision-Making’ in Hotel Bliss, Tirupati (AP) during 19 and 20 August, 2008. The Conference

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was sponsored by the National Commission for Women, Government of India, New Delhi.

The National Conference was Inaugurated by *Smt. Prema Cariappa*, Chairperson, Central Social Welfare Board, Government of India on 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2008 at 10.30 a.m. in Hotel Bliss (Darbar Hall), Tirupati. After Inaugurating the National Conference, *Smt. Prema Cariappa* has said that the political empowerment of women alone would ensure participation of women in decision-making and shaping India's future. While evaluating the real picture of the women political empowerment in contemporary India, *Smt. Prema Cariappa* emphasises that it is necessary that women should be part of the decision-making process of the nation and further she argues that political empowerment is essential for gender justice and equitable society. Expressing concern over the delay in the passing of the Women's Reservation Bill in the Parliament, *Smt. Prema Cariappa* outlines that the very legitimacy of every decision taken without the consensus of women is questionable because it was taken by only 50 per cent of the population, which belongs to men.

Praising the initiatives and reforms by the policy makers towards the 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitution Amendment, *Smt. Prema Cariappa* said that the credit for 10 lakh women getting elected to the Panchayati Raj bodies every year in the country should go to the former Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi. Discussing the radical transformation of Indian society through women participation, *Smt. Prema Cariappa* feels that women must be given a chance not because they were necessarily better than male politicians but because they cannot do any worse. Explaining the salient features and contributions of the Central Social Welfare Board for the Women empowerment and development, *Smt. Prema Cariappa* has called upon women to stand united and fight for their rights.

The Inaugural Session of the National Conference was presided by *Shri R. Dileep Reddy*, the then State Information Commissioner (RTI), Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad. In his presidential address, *Shri R. Dileep Reddy* has said that unless all of political parties unanimously decide to provide 33 per cent reservation to women in Parliament and State Legislatures, there would be no meeting point on the issue. Praising the leading role played by the Women elected representatives in PRI's, *Shri Dileep Reddy* outlines that contrary to fears that the elected women would be rubber stamp leaders, the success stories that have arisen from PRI's are impressive and he



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said that a government financed study in recent times, based on filed work has found that a full two-third of elected women leaders are actively engaged in learning ropes and exercising power.

Speaking in the Conference, the Special Invitee *Smt. Rajinitai Satav*, the then Chairperson of the Maharashtra State Commission for Women, has stressed the need for political reservation in Parliament and State Legislatures in proportion to population of the women. Highlighting the women's contributions in Information Technology, Trade and Commerce, *Smt. Rajinitai Satav* make a clarion call to the women community for their active participation in governance and polity and fight for due share on par with men.

Another Special Invitee *Smt. K. Ramadevi*, the then Chairperson of the Andhra Pradesh State Social Welfare Board, has pointed out that the commitment and dedication by women community alone would helpful in achieving the political empowerment at all levels. Surveying different hurdles and problems in achieving women political empowerment in India, *Smt. Ramadevi* said that 'unless we go out and make effort, we cannot achieve it so come forward to achieve what is ours'.

Earlier, the Conference Organising Secretary and Founder Director of AGRASRI *Dr. D. Sundar Ram* welcomed the dignitaries, delegates, resource persons, participants and outlined the objectives and outcomes of the Conference. *Professor A. Ranga Reddy*, Professor of Economics (Retd.), Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati, proposed a vote of thanks.

The National Conference theme was divided into 4 Sub-themes/Panels, namely: 1) Women Empowerment in Parliament and Local Self-Government Institutions since India's Independence: A Symbol of Power or Powerless, 2) Gender Equity and Emerging Pattern of Leadership of Women in Indian Polity and Governance: Searching for Alternatives, 3) Grassroots Movements and Local Governance in India: Performance and Participation of Women in Decision-Making and 4) Reservation of Seats for Women in Indian Parliament and State Legislative Bodies: Future Vision and Action Plan. Under the aforesaid Panels/Technical Sessions, 26 papers/abstracts were presented, include 4 papers in absentia and 18 extempore speeches delivered by the policy makers, senior social scientists, elected representatives of PRI's, NGO functionaries, administrators, social activists, researchers, and PG students on various themes of the National Conference during 19 and 20 August, 2008.

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The Valedictory Session of the National Conference was held on 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2008 at 2.30 p.m. in Hotel Bliss, Tirupati. *Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy*, Former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) and Chairman of Andhra Pradesh Local Bodies Empowerment Forum, Hyderabad, presided over the Valedictory Session.

*Padma Shri Dr. Jaya Arunachalam*, President, Working Women's Forum, Chennai, has participated in the Valedictory Session of the Conference, as a distinguished Chief Guest and delivered the Valedictory Address. Following a comprehensive review of the initiatives and efforts made by various International Organisations and Institutions like United Nations Organisation, *Dr. Jaya Arunachalam* believes that the Indian Government too under the dynamic leadership of Smt. Indira Gandhi enacted two landmark social legislations in favour of poor rural women workers at the grassroots. Having been the champion of the poor and vulnerable, Smt. Indira Gandhi further took up the challenge of the feudals and the rural rich by enacting these two legislations, i.e. Minimum Wages Act and Equal Remuneration Act. But at the enforcement level it is still very weak both due to the complacency of the bureaucracy and the strong-rooted feudal forces who stand in the way as great impediments at the grassroots.

Stressing the need for passing of the Women's Reservation Bill for 33 per cent seats in the Parliament and State Legislative bodies, *Dr. Jaya Arunachalam* pleads that as this gender bias goes on unabatedly despite India achieving 61 years of Independence, it is time to think of corrective mechanism i.e, a policy on reservation for women so that they should take care of atrocities and establish gender justice. Tracing roots of concern for gender equity in India, *Dr. Jaya Arunachalam* opines that women today are at crossroads and in a minority everywhere. Despite being one half the human kind in an independent nation where many social legislations are in favour of them along with the constitutional guarantee assuring them equality of sexes that was assured quite late in many other countries, women feel today that they are nowhere in the National Agenda in all fields. However, we can't forget the historic Constitutional Amendments in the local bodies governance through 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Amendment Acts in favour of women. No doubt it is landmark event and as a result we see today few women panchayat leaders who not only are accomplishing well but also are awarded for their excellence in their governance.

In his Presidential address, *Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy*, Former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), Hyderabad, regretted that though the women

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representing half of the population and equal status in work force in India, they still being neglected and receive a step mother treatment in all respects even in so called modern society. Surveying the several constraints and impediments in the Women's Reservation Bill, *Shri Ramachandra Reddy* explores that due to lack of political will and apprehensions about women dominance in political arena, the empowerment of women is a distance dream and unfinished agenda in India.

Earlier, *Dr. R.A. Padmanabha Rao*, Former Deputy Director-General of Doordarshan, New Delhi and Vice-President of AGRASRI welcomed the dignitaries, delegates and participants of the Conference. *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Director of the Conference and Founder of AGRASRI proposed a Vote of Thanks to all the concerned individuals and authorities for extending their academic expertise and financial support, for organising two-day National Conference at Tirupati.

Further, the recommendations of the National Conference have formulated by the respective Chairpersons of the Technical Sessions, with an active involvement of the delegates, women elected representatives of PRI's, NGO functionaries, scholars and participants and placed the same before the august gathering of the Conference for their suggestions and approval. After a thorough discussion and feed back, the Conference delegates and participants adopted 14 point recommendations, known as '*Tirupati Declaration on Women Political Empowerment*', for strengthening the Women Empowerment in Indian polity and governance from Gram Sabha to Lok Sabha further at the time of the 62 Years of India's Independence for delivering good governance at the grassroots.

**ix. National Colloquium on 'Grassroots Level Planning and Local Government Institutions in India: Policy Initiatives and People's Participation since 1992', 19 and 20 August, 2009.**

The Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) has organised 2-day National Colloquium on '*Grassroots Level Planning and Local Government Institutions in India: Policy Initiatives and People's Participation since 1992*', during 19 and 20 August, 2009 at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh, as part of the 8<sup>th</sup> Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture and Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Outstanding Leadership, Mahila Shakti, Yuva Shakti, Best District, Best Taluk and Best Gram Panchayat Awards conferment ceremony, in collaboration with the Rajiv Rural Development Foundation, Tirupati. The Colloquium was sponsored by the

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*National Commission for Women, Government of India, New Delhi.*

The National Colloquium was inaugurated by *Shri A. N. Tiwari, IAS (Retd.)*, the then Chief Information Commissioner (RTI), Government of India, New Delhi, on 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2009 at Hotel Bliss (Darbar Hall), Tirupati, with an address. *Dr. S.S. Meenakshi Sundaram, IAS (Retd)*, Former Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, New Delhi, has delivered a Key-Note Address, with *Dr. Tripuraneni Hanuman Chowdary*, Chairman of Pragna Bharati, Hyderabad (Andhra Pradesh), in the Chair.

In his Inaugural Address, *Shri A. N. Tiwari, IAS (Retd.)*, the then Chief Information Commissioner (RTI), Govt. of India, New Delhi, has said that the transparency guarantee as an instrumental freedom is a key element in creating conditions of active participation by people in planning their own lives and the development of the areas in which they dwell. There is a certain opacity which associates with all institutional arrangements no matter how good these arrangements are or how wide-spread is their reach. The very structure of these institutions engenders alienation which frequently derogates from willing and extensive participation by people in local self governance. While evaluating the real picture of the local governance system in contemporary India, *Shri A.N. Tiwari* emphasises that Sixteen years after the 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act, we have to ask ourselves if the norms on the basis of which that amendment was made have been translated into welfare-enhancing action. In other words, has more democracy and higher decentralisation led to higher accountability and higher welfare. I think the answer will be a mixed bag.

Discussing the radical transformation of rural India through people's participation, *Shri A.N. Tiwari* feels that in the context of the local self government, a major source of distrust is promise-breaking, incompetence and antagonism of the bureaucratic elements towards those they are expected to serve. Citizens trust such institutions only to the extent they believe it will act in their interest, that its procedures are fair and that the systems reciprocate the trust people repose in them. Trust results when the procedures of governance are fair, verifiable, open, predictable and transparent. Perception that an institution is untrustworthy is a function not only of its failure to fulfill promises, but also evidence that those who form part of the self governing institutions themselves distrust those from whom they demand cooperation

and compliance. Trust begets trust. A citizenry that is trusted by the system, in its turn, reposes its trust in the system.

Exploring various hurdles and loopholes in the existing system of local governance, *Shri A.N. Tiwari* argues that to engage the local people meaningfully with the Panchayati Raj Institutions, it is imperative that these work in a transparent and non-bureaucratic manner. The RTI Act, which vests power in the ordinary citizen to seek answers from public authorities local, provincial as well as central, can become an instrument of ushering in transparency in all functions of the local self governing institutions. It is now empirically proven that a mere presence of an electoral process for creation of these institutions is not sufficient condition for generating the trust necessary to engage the local populations. Much more needs to be done. For effective deliver of services to the people at the grassroots, *Shri A.N. Tiwari* concludes that the networks of citizens voluntarily engaging to promote specific interests can be a powerful means of trustful relationship between the local institutions and the people. The State will need to periodically intervene to remove the obstacles to this two-way transaction between the people and the local governments. The formality of these institutions is a serious handicap. It would be necessary to build informal networks of contact between these institutions and the people they serve. It is better remembered that citizens trust government when governance is trustworthy. Poor trust leads to poor governance and a vicious circle of mistrust then follows affecting all stake-holders.

Delivering a Key-Note Address in the Colloquium, *Dr. S.S. Meenakshi Sundaram, IAS (Retd.)*, Former Secretary to Government of India, Ministry of Rural Development, New Delhi, has stressed that the decentralisation of power was possible only with people's participation and for that to happen strengthening the structure of democracy from the grassroots level was paramount. Highlighting the sorry state of devolution of powers to the local government institutions in India, *Dr. Meenakshi Sundaram* feels that today the situation was not in the true spirit of democracy. In a village, a 'pradhan' or 'sarpanch' had become a mere figurative head with no participation in decision-making and unfortunately, the gram sabhas were not being organised in the true spirit, as per the provisions of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act.

Projecting the hurdles in the implementation of various rural developmental schemes and programmes, *Dr. Meenakshi Sundaram* argues that the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (NREGP) was basically formulated to help village development with the participation of villagers. The entire village would decide upon

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what was necessary for development of the village and propose the plan at the gram sabha and once it was approved, it would be taken up under NREGP. However, it is not happening. If it happens, the real purpose of NREGP is served. Emphasising on thinking of the solution of any problem instead of worrying about it, *Dr. Meenakshi Sundaram* make a clarion call that decentralisation was a sure way to development of the country, if it was done in the true spirit.

In his Presidential Address, *Dr. Tripuraneni Hanuman Chowdary*, Chairman, Pragna Bharati, Hyderabad (Andhra Pradesh) and former Chairman and Managing Director of Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited, feels that the NREGS for giving wages to unemployed farm workers at their doorstep instead of taking them to places where works existed or where they could create national assets.

Earlier, the Colloquium Organising Secretary and Founder Director of AGRASRI, *Dr. D. Sundar Ram* welcomed the dignitaries, delegates, resource persons, participants and outlined the objectives and outcomes of the Colloquium proceedings. *Dr. R. A. Padmanabha Rao*, Former Deputy Director-General of Doordarshan and Vice-President of AGRASRI proposed a Vote of Thanks.

The National Colloquium theme was divided into 4 Sub-themes/Panels, namely: 1) Grassroots Level Planning in India through People's Participation: Policy Initiatives and Pro-active Measures of the Union and State Governments since 1992, 2) Role of Rural and Urban Local Bodies in Efficiency of Local Service Delivery: A Way Forward for Inclusive Growth, 3) Financial Autonomy of the Rural and Urban Local Bodies in India: Need for Fiscal Decentralisation and 4) Transparency, Accountability and Enhancement of Capacity in Local Government Institutions for Human Development: Action Plan for Future Vision. Under the aforesaid Panels/Technical Sessions, 24 papers/abstracts were presented, include 2 papers in absentia and 13 extempore speeches delivered by senior policy makers, social scientists, panchayati raj experts, elected representatives of PRI's, administrators, social activists, researchers, NGO functionaries and grassroots women leaders on various themes of the National Colloquium during 19 and 20 August, 2009.

The Valedictory Session of the National Colloquium was held on 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2009 at 3.15 p.m. at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati. *Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy*, Former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) and Chairman of the Andhra Pradesh Local Bodies Empowerment Forum, Hyderabad (Andhra Pradesh), presided over the Valedictory Session.

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*Shri Venkatrao Ghorpade*, Chairman, SHIRDI Foundation, Bangalore and Former President, Bellary Zilla Parishad, Bellary (Karnataka), has participated in the Valedictory Session of the Colloquium, as a distinguished Chief Guest and delivered the Valedictory Address. Following a comprehensive review of the initiatives and efforts made by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj towards decentralised planning and devolution of powers to the Panchayati Raj Institutions, *Shri Venkatrao Ghorpade* feels that the certain immediate steps need to be taken to provide institutional support by the Centre and State governments in order to strengthen local governance in the PRIs (Panchayat Raj Institutions), and take forward the process of decentralisation to ultimately move towards self-governance. Since, this is a process, and cannot be done through a single Amendment to the Constitution, one has to constantly keep looking at this subject, make periodic reviews followed by necessary Amendments and changes in guidelines from time to time.

Stressing the need for setting-up of the Ombudsman machinery in Panchayati Raj administration, *Shri Venkatrao Ghorpade* advocates that it is necessary to constitute a 3-member Ombudsman Committee consisting of the DC/ZP-CEO/ SP to look into all routine legal issues related to development, implementation of Govt. schemes, devolution and application of PRI funds etc. so that the judiciary at the taluk level (and District level), which is already over burdened, need not come in the way of speedy implementation of various schemes. A 3-member Ombudsman Committee should be empowered to resolve such development related issues at the district level.

Maintaining an uniform data base on Panchayati Raj related schemes and administration, right from gram panchayat level to national level, *Shri Venkatrao Ghorpade* concludes that there is a need to evolve a standardised data base throughout the State for uniform data collection and generation starting from the village going up to the Gram Panchayat level and linking it further to Taluk Panchayat, Zilla Panchayat, and finally to the State. Wikipedia software platform may be considered for such a wide spread common data base, which could even be linked to the national level where every State knows what is happening in different States of the country. This will avoid a lot of repeatability and overlapping of information being generated by different Govt. departments, which are invariably inconsistent with each other in terms of accuracy and reach.

In his Presidential address, *Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy*, Former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), Hyderabad, regretted that though the Planning

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Commission of India and Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj made all efforts for decentralised planning process in India, many State Governments still far behind to take appropriate steps and measures particularly the constitution of District Planning Committees. Surveying the several constraints and impediments in the grassroots level planning, *Shri Ramachandra Reddy* explores that due to lack of people's participation and non-cooperation attitude of official machinery, the decentralised planning is perhaps a distance dream and unfinished agenda in India, during the 11<sup>th</sup> plan period.

Earlier, *Dr. R.A. Padmanabha Rao*, Former Deputy Director-General of Doordarshan, New Delhi and Vice-President of AGRASRI, welcomed the dignitaries, delegates and participants of the Colloquium. *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Director of the Conference and Founder of AGRASRI proposed a Vote of Thanks to all the concerned individuals and authorities for extending their academic expertise and financial support, for organising two-day National Colloquium at Tirupati.

Further, the recommendations of the National Colloquium have formulated by the respective Chairpersons of the Technical Sessions, with an active involvement of the delegates, elected representatives of PRI's, NGO functionaries, scholars and participants and placed the same before the august gathering of the Colloquium for their suggestions and approval. After a thorough discussion and feed back, the Colloquium delegates and participants adopted 13 point recommendations, known as '*AGRASRI Declaration on Grassroots Planning and People's Participation in Local Governance*' for taking appropriate steps and initiatives in strengthening the grassroots level planning and people's participation in decision-making, as per the guidelines of the 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan period, by the policy makers.

**x. Regional Workshop on 'Grassroots Women Leadership' in A.P., 22, 23 and 24 November, 2009.**

The Academy has organised 3-day Regional Workshop on '*Grassroots Women Leadership*' in A.P., during 22, 23 and 24 November, 2009 at RASS Conference Hall, Tirupati, as part of its 8<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day Lecture. The Regional Workshop was sponsored by the National Commission for Women, Govt. of India, New Delhi.

*Prof (Mrs) G. Sarojamma*, the then Vice-Chancellor, Sri Padmavathi Mahila Visvavidyalayam, Tirupati, inaugurated 3-day Regional Workshop on 22 November,



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2009. In her Inaugural Address, *Prof (Smt) G. Sarojamma* has said that the women are capable of leading the society on the right path, given a chance. The very fact that two key constitutional posts in the Indian public life and polity – President of India (Smt. Pratibha Patil) and Speaker of Lok Sabha (Smt. Meira Kumar) – are being held by women bear ample testimony to the phenomenon to show how women have to take the centre-stage in the contemporary Indian society.

While evaluating the real picture of the women empowerment in the male dominant political system in contemporary India, *Prof (Mrs) Sarojamma* pleaded that for more women-related studies, especially on factors which would improve the socio-economic status of women with special focus on rural womenfolk. Discussing the radical transformation of women, *Prof (Mrs) Sarojamma* feels that the women are playing key-role in decision-making process in political, economic and administrative fields, as successful policy makers.

Exploring various hurdles and loopholes in the existing political women empowerment, *Prof (Smt) Sarojamma* argues that the women needs a full support from the male community, since women established as harbinger of the overall development of society, particularly at the grassroots level. For effective capacity building of women at the local government institutions, *Prof (Mrs) Sarojamma* concludes that the Government and Non-Governmental Organisations shall design more and more orientation programmes for men exclusively to promote trustful relationship and partnership between men and women in decision-making process.

Presiding over the Inaugural Session of the Regional Workshop, *Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy*, Former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), advocates that the first and foremost basic reform that needs to be brought in immediately is the passage of women reservation bill by the Parliament, which provide an ample opportunity for women in decision-making process. This is the enhancement of the political participation of women in legislative institutions in proportion to their population in India. Highlighting the capacity building of the women representatives for delivering good governance in local self-government institutions, *Shri Ramachandra Reddy* feels that the women elected representatives are more capable and service oriented than male elected representatives, in delivering less corrupt governance? Explaining the problems and hurdles being faced by the women elected representatives at the local level, *Shri Ramachandra Reddy* opines that the women should participate

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actively in the decision-making process at the grassroots level and avail the occasion in full swing with spontaneous and voluntary manner for fulfilling the aspirations and wishes of the people as role model women representative and leader. During interaction with the delegates of the regional workshop, *Shri Ramachandra Reddy* has hinted some tips to the women elected representatives of PRI's, how to prove their metal as successful women leaders.

Earlier, the Regional Workshop Co-ordinator and Founder Director of AGRASRI, *Dr. D. Sundar Ram* welcomed the dignitaries, delegates, resource persons, participants and outlined the objectives and outcomes of the Workshop proceedings. *Dr. R. A. Padmanabha Rao*, Former Deputy Director-General of Doordarshan and Vice-President of AGRASRI, proposed a Vote of Thanks.

*Smt. K. Shantha Reddy*, Former Member, National Commission for Women, Government of India, New Delhi, has delivered the Valedictory Address on 24<sup>th</sup> November, 2009. While delivering the Valedictory Address, *Smt. K. Shantha Reddy*, Former Member, National Commission for Women, Govt. of India, New Delhi, said that if the grassroots women leaders succeeded in delivering good governance and services to the people at the grassroots level, the people will repose their faith on them, as true representatives. Emphasising the significant role of women in nation's progress and development, *Smt. Shantha Reddy* advocates that the elected representatives of women would emulate the basic requisites such as people's participation, transparency, professionalism in the formulation of policies, as role model women leader. Explaining the hurdles towards women empowerment in India, *Smt. Shantha Reddy* regretted that the successive governments were not serious about the commitment and promises made in bringing out the legislation for 33 per cent reservations in Parliament and State legislatures.

*Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy*, Former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), Hyderabad, presided over the Valedictory Session, as President.

Earlier, *Dr. R. A. Padmanabha Rao*, Former Deputy Director-General of Doordarshan and Vice-President of AGRASRI, welcomed the distinguished dignitaries and delegates of the Regional Workshop. *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Founder-Director of Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI), proposed a Vote of Thanks.

Apart from the Inaugural, Valedictory Sessions, and Field Visit at M.R. Palli Gram Panchayat, the Regional Workshop has widely discussed the theme in 9 Technical

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Sessions on various themes and issues, during 22, 23 and 24 November, 2009, namely, i) Leadership Abilities of Women Elected Representatives in Local Bodies: Achievements and Emerging Challenges; ii) Implementing Laws in the Protection of Women from Atrocities: Utilisation and Women's Initiatives; iii) Good Governance in Rural India: Role and Responsibilities of Women; iv) Participation of Women from Village Level to National Level: Available Circumstances for the Enhancement of Women Leadership; v) Participation of Women in Local Self-Government Institutions in India: Role in Nation's Progress and Development; vi) Role of Women in Village Development: Efforts and Contributions of Self-Help Groups; vii) Representation of Women in Indian Parliament and State Legislatures: Future Partnership of Women in Contemporary India; viii) Emerging Challenges in Women Empowerment: Future of Women in Contemporary India; ix) Empowerment of Women in India: Perceptions of All Party Women Delegates.

After 3-day deliberations and feedback of delegates in 9 Technical Sessions, the Regional Workshop has adopted 6 Recommendations unanimously. The copies of the Recommendations of the Regional Workshop has forwarded to the policy makers at the helm of affairs, by the Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India, for taking an appropriate steps and initiatives in strengthening the women empowerment and participation at all levels of political institutions.

**xi. Workshop for 'Training of Trainer's (ToT's)', 1 March, 2010.**

The Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India has organised one-day Workshop for Training of Trainer's (ToT's) on 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2010 at RASS Conference Hall, Tirupati, in joint collaboration with the AMR- Andhra Pradesh Academy of Rural Development (APARD), Govt. of Andhra Pradesh. The AGRASRI has recognised as Nodal Agency, by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Govt. of India as well as AMR- Andhra Pradesh Academy of Rural Development (APARD), Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, for organising Capacity Building and Training programmes in 2 Phases, for nearly 16,000 elected representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions in Chittoor District, namely Saparchs, Upa-Sarpanchs, Ward Members and MPTC Members, under the Backward Region Grant Fund scheme. For the completion of this massive capacity building and training programmes, the AGRASRI has selected a high profiled contingent with 48 ToT's, including 16 Executive Officers (PR & RD), panchayati raj experts, NGO's and Social Workers.

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The Workshop has discussed the strategies and action plan for the First Phase of the capacity building and training programmes for the Sarpanchs and MPTC Members in Chittoor district, in a comprehensive manner, with *Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy*, Chairman, AP State Local Bodies Empowerment Forum, Hyderabad, as Chief Guest. *Dr. V. Hari Naidu*, President, Chittoor District Sarpanchs Association, *Shri Gundluri Venkataramana*, Vice-President, AP State MPTC's Association, and *Shri K. Viswanatha Reddy*, Manager, District Training Centre, Chittoor, were participated in the Workshop as Guests of Honour.

As Chief Organiser of the Capacity Building & Training Programmes, *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Founder-Director of AGRASRI, Co-ordinated the proceedings of the Workshop and allocated the assignments and responsibilities to the 48 ToT's with plan of action.

**xii. Workshop for 'Training of Trainer's (ToT's)', 10 and 11 May, 2010.**

In the Second phase of action plan for the Capacity Building and Training Programmes for Upa-Sarpanchs and Ward Members of Gram Panchayats in Chittoor District, the Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI), in joint collaboration with the AMR-Andhra Pradesh Academy of Rural Development (APARD), Hyderabad, has organised 2-day Workshop for Training of Trainer's, at Youth Hostel, Tirupati, during 10 and 11 May, 2010.

Participating in the Training of Trainer's (ToT's) programme, *Shri T. Nagaraju*, the then District Panchayat Officer of Chittoor opines that if the gram panchayats can identify the most essential and required public issues and availability of funds, the people at grassroots getting benefited out of a wise and planned policy decisions. In delivering good governance at the grassroots level, the systematic and vigorous capacity building and training is a pre-requisite.

*Shri S. Viswanatha Reddy*, District Training Centre Manager, Zilla Praja Parishad, Chittoor has inaugurated the 2-day Workshop for the ToT's. Evaluating the present set-up of the gram panchayat system in Andhra Pradesh state, he said that the elected representatives of panchayati raj institutions must earn the skills and knowledge for effective implementation of various govt. welfare schemes. The grassroots level leaders can emerge as next alternate leaders, if they can prove their metal through capacity building training and acquiring up-date knowledge and techniques in the village administration only.

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*Dr. V. Hari Naidu*, President, Chittoor District Sarpanchs' Association, said that the ward members are playing a vital role in village administration, since they are the majority group in the gram panchayats. Praising the various innovative methods and programmes initiated by the governments at the centre and states, for strengthening the capacity building abilities of PRI elected representatives, he suggests that the NGO's and social activists should take a leading role and more partnership with the government.

Explaining the agenda of the capacity building training for the 1380 Upa-Sarpanchs and 11,749 Ward Members of Village Panchayats in Chittoor district, *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Founder-Director of AGRASRI and Chief Organiser of the Capacity Building and Training Programmes in Chittoor District, emphasised that the Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj should prepare a road map for regular and systematic schedule with appropriate budgetary allocations under the BRGF scheme. Indeed, the continuity of the capacity building training for the elected representatives of PRI's alone yielding the fruits at the grassroots in terms of good governance and public service delivery. However, the delivery of good governance is depending upon the capabilities and skills of the policy makers.

*Smt. N. Rajeswari*, Faculty Member at the Extension Training Centre of APARD, Sri Kalahasthi and 48 ToT's were participated in the programme.

In the second day, the 48 ToT's, divided into 16 Teams, have presented their view points and approaches for sensitising the Gram Panchayat Ward Members in Chittoor District. The strategies, approaches and logistics towards the Capacity Building and Training Programmes for Upa-Sarpanchs and Ward Members in 214 batches, as role model, were discussed at length by the organisers and 48 ToT's, with necessary inputs and suggestions by the District Panchayat Officer, Chittoor, District Training Centre Manager, Zilla Praja Parishad, Chittoor and Faculty Member of the Extension Training Centre, Sri Kalahasthi.

**xiii. Round-Table Meeting on '*Terrorism in India: Emerging Challenges and Threats*', 21 May, 2010.**

The Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI), has organised one-day Round-Table Meeting on *Terrorism in India: Emerging Challenges and Threats*, on 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2010 at RASS Conference Hall, Tirupati, on the eve of the 19<sup>th</sup>

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Death Anniversary of Shri Rajiv Gandhi and Anti-Terrorism Day Celebrations. The Round-Table Meeting was Inaugurated by *Shri M.K. Singh, IPS*, Chief Vigilance and Security Officer, Tirumala - Tirupati Devasthanams, with address. In his inaugural address, *Shri M.K. Singh* observed that the public in western countries voluntarily providing all the relevant information and details in response to the investigating agencies, pertaining to the terrorists or anti-social elements and become the partners in punishing those culprits. Explaining the security system at Tirumala temple, *Shri M.K. Singh* said that the TTD administration has providing round the clock vigilance with latest technological gadgets and other allied security instruments and this is the only temple in the world having such a vigilant security personnel.

The Chief Guest *Dr. Agarala Easwara Reddi*, Former Speaker of Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly, praised the head and heart of Shri Rajiv Gandhi as a visionary of self-sufficient India, for innovative schemes like betterment of slum areas, pensions for freedom fighters, reservations for women in local bodies, protection of environment and new education policy.

Remembering enriched services and valuable contributions of Shri Rajiv Gandhiji to the nation as Seventh Prime Minister, *Professor K. Rathnaiah*, the then Rector, Sri Venkateswara University said that the Rajiv Gandhi was a pioneer in administrative reforms and laid the strong foundations for 21<sup>st</sup> century India.

*Professor A. Ranga Reddy*, President, Indian Institute of Public Administration Tirupati Chapter presided over the Inaugural Session.

*Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Founder-Director, Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) explained the objects of the Round-Table Meeting.

Later, a Panel of Speakers, *Dr. R. A. Padmanabha Rao*, Deputy Director-General (Retd.), Doordarshan, *Shri D. Prasanna Kumar*, State Convenor, Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Sangathan, *Shri A. Malleswara Rao*, Director I/c, All India Radio, and *Lt. C. Prakash Babu*, Associate NCC Officer, SV Junior College discussed at length the Rajiv Gandhi's contributions and services to the nation in various sectors.

At the beginning of the Round-Table Meeting, the 29 Andhra Battalion NCC cadets organised an impressive Anti-Terrorism Rally from SV Junior College campus to RASS building, enrooted through Balaji Colony, West Chuch, MR Palli circle, AIR By-pass road, under the supervision of Subedar Major Basheer.

xiv. National Convention on '*50 Per cent Reservations for Women in Rural and Urban Local Bodies: A Way Forward for Inclusive Growth in Contemporary India*', 20 and 21 August, 2010.

The Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) has organised 2-day National Convention on '*50 Per cent Reservations for Women in Rural and Urban Local Bodies in India: A Way Forward for Inclusive Growth*', during 20 and 21 August, 2010 at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh, as part of the 66<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary Celebrations of Shri Rajiv Gandhi, in collaboration with the Rajiv Rural Development Foundation, Tirupati. The National Convention was sponsored by the *National Commission for Women*, Government of India, New Delhi.

The National Convention was inaugurated by *Dr. Agarala Eswara Reddi*, Former Speaker of Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly, Hyderabad, on 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2010 at 10.30 a.m. at Hotel Bliss (Darbar Hall), Tirupati, with an address.

In his Inaugural Address, *Dr. Agarala Easwar Reddi*, Former Speaker of Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly, Hyderabad, has said that the 73<sup>rd</sup> and the 74<sup>th</sup> Amendments to the Indian Constitution gave impetus to revive the PR institutions giving due representation to women. The DWCRA programme that was started as a sub-programme of Integrated Rural Development Programme in 1982 heralded in all round development and empowerment of women for inclusive growth. Along with economic empowerment, it has resulted in political empowerment of women in India. Projecting the hurdles in the finalisation of women reservation bill, the former Speaker of Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly *Dr. Easwara Reddi* opines that all most all political parties are very seriously understood that if the women are enter into the political arena, the male dominance would be minimised at no time. At the end of his inaugural address, *Dr. Easwara Reddi* made a clarion call that the women will fight unitedly in fulfilling their demands for political empowerment across the nation irrespective of political affiliation and put an end to the impasse on long pending women reservation bill.

*Smt. K. Shanta Reddy*, Former Member, National Commission for Women, New Delhi, has delivered a Key-Note Address. In her Key-Note Address, *Smt. K. Shanta Reddy*, said that the women are capable to prove their metal while performing their duties and responsibilities in all respects as non-corrupt and duty minded, compare with men, for inclusive growth in contemporary India. Citing the examples of holding

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the key constitutional positions by women like Smt. Prathibha Patil, Smt. Meira Kumar, Smt. Sonia Gandhi, Smt. Sushma Swaraj, she opines that if women were politically empowered they would be able to participate in planning, execution and implementation of developmental and welfare schemes and it leads to inclusive growth in India, for emerging as one of the powerful nation in the world in 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

In her Special Invitee's Address, *Smt. Sarada Devi*, the Additional Joint Collector & Chief Executive Officer, Zilla Parishad, Chittoor District of Andhra Pradesh, argues that today we see that a few women elected panchayati raj representatives who not only are accomplishing well but also are awarded their excellence in their governance at the grassroots. For effective delivery of services to the people at the grassroots, *Smt. Sarada Devi* feels that the more and more involvement and participation of women in decision-making process at all levels is the need of hour and the Civil Society Organisations, Women Organisations and SHG Organisations would sensitise the women about the various efforts and measures provided by the respective governments towards women political empowerment in India.

Presiding over the Inaugural Session of the Convention, *Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy*, Former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), Hyderabad, opines that the active participation of women in decision-making demonstrates the transparency and accountability in local governance as the women elected representatives are free from the corruption and mismanagement of day-to-day administration at the grassroots, compare with male elected representatives.

Earlier, the Convention Director and Founder-Director of AGRASRI, *Dr. D. Sundar Ram* welcomed the dignitaries, delegates, resource persons and participants and outlined the objectives and outcomes of the National Convention proceedings in detail. *Dr. R. A. Padmanabha Rao*, Former Deputy Director-General of Doordarshan and Vice-President of AGRASRI, proposed a Vote of Thanks.

After the Inaugural Session, the National Convention theme was divided in to 4 Sub themes/Panel, namely i) Fifty Per cent Reservation of Seats for Women in Rural and Urban Local Bodies in India: Prospect and Retrospect, ii) Role and Participation of Women Elected Representatives in Public Service Delivery at Local Governance: A Way Forward for Inclusive Growth, iii) Political Participation of Women in Contemporary India: Need for 50 Per cent Reservations of Seats in Parliament and State Legislatures, and iv) Constraints and Emerging Challenges to the Women



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Empowerment: Road Map for Equitable Representation of Women in Political Institutions. In 4 Technical Sessions, 24 papers/abstracts were presented, include 3 papers in absentia and 13 extempore speeches delivered by senior policy makers, social scientists and panchayati raj experts, women elected representatives of PRI's, administrators, social activists, researchers, NGO functionaries and grassroots women leaders during 20 and 21 August, 2010.

The Valedictory Session of the National Colloquium was held on 21<sup>st</sup> August, 2010 at 3.15 p.m. at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati. *Prof. A. Ranga Reddy*, Chairman, Indian Institute of Public Administration Local Branch, Tirupati (Andhra Pradesh), presided over the Valedictory Session.

*Dr. P.V. Sesha Reddy*, the then Dist. Panchayat Officer, Chittoor, has delivered Valedictory Address at the National Convention. *Smt. Smt. Nelly Rodriguez*, Chairperson, Goa Panchayati Mahila Shakti Abhiyan, Goa, has participated in the Valedictory Session, as Guest of Honour.

Following a comprehensive review of the initiatives and efforts made by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj towards women empowerment through the Panchayati Raj Institutions, *Dr. P.V. Sesha Reddy* feels that the issue of women political empowerment has become a matter of international concern while gaining prominence in national development efforts. While discussing the concept of women and development at the national level, *Dr. Sesha Reddy* opines that it is more important that whatever percentage of reservation given to women in local bodies must be implemented to the last letter and spirit. Fifty per cent of reservations for women were necessary but at the same time, one should understand that women cannot become mere proxy for men. Examining the performance of women elected representatives at the grassroots level, *Dr. Sesha Reddy* postulates that let us get facts straight. It is true that for several years now, 33 per cent reservation for women in local bodies is being implemented. But, unfortunately, how many women are actually discharging their duties, once getting elected? In Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh, there are 1,381 village panchayats and elections were held for 1,371 in 2006, in which 521 women got elected. But unfortunately, hardly 3 per cent of those women are discharging their duties effectively. Under this backdrop, there is an urgent need for educating women on their rights and duties and need for independently discharging their duties and upholding the trust reposed in them by the people.

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Delivering the Guest of Honour's address, *Smt. Nelly Rodriguez*, Chairperson of Goa Panchayati Mahila Shakti Abhiyan, Goa, portrays that in the first stint, our powers were almost nil. We have to take legal course of action to get what is rightfully ours and see that 33 per cent reservation is implemented. Discussing the broad contours of women empowerment through political institutions, *Smt. Nelly Rodriguez* reveals that being a leader is no different from being a home maker. Effective time management and dedicated efforts to see the implementation of schemes is what matters. In my own case, for the next two terms, I contested on an open seat and won with resounding majority. Your effort pays and you have to believe in your self.

In his Presidential address, *Professor A. Ranga Reddy*, Chairman, Indian Institute of Public Administration Local Branch, Tirupati (Andhra Pradesh), explores that enhanced percentage of reservation for women was welcome. Development of the society was possible only when women were encouraged in every field and gender equality was achieved. Like any family, women can professionally manage the society with confidence and commitment.

Earlier, *Dr. R.A. Padmanabha Rao*, Former Deputy Director-General of Doordarshan, New Delhi and Vice-President of AGRASRI, welcomed the dignitaries, delegates and participants of the Convention. *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Director of the Conference and Founder of AGRASRI proposed a Vote of Thanks to all the concerned individuals and authorities for extending their academic expertise and financial support, for organising 2-day National Convention in Tirupati, on the theme.

At the end of the National Convention, the recommendations have formulated by the respective Chairpersons of the Technical Sessions, with an active involvement of the delegates, elected representatives of PRI's, NGO functionaries, scholars and participants and placed the same before the august gathering of the Convention for their suggestions and approval. After a thorough discussion and feed back, the Convention delegates and participants adopted 9 point recommendations, known as '*AGRASRI Declaration on 50 Per cent Reservations for Women in Rural and Urban Local Bodies in India*', for taking appropriate steps and initiatives in strengthening the women participation in decision-making, as policy makers.

**xv. Review and Analysis Workshop on 'Capacity Building & Training Programmes for PRI's Representatives in Chittoor District', 24 October, 2010.**

The Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India has organised one-day Review and Analysis Workshop on Capacity Building and Training Programmes,

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on 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2010 at RASS Conference Hall, Tirupati, which were imparted in 2 phases - 20 March-7 April, 2010 and 13 September-21 October, 2010 respectively- for Sarpanchs, MPTC Members, Upa-Sarpanchs and Ward Members of Gram Panchayats in Chittoor District. The Review and Analysis Workshop was jointly organised by the AGRASRI, in collaboration with the AMR- Andhra Pradesh Academy of Rural Development (APARD), Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, in formulating a road map for effective and role model training district in Andhra Pradesh.

Speaking at the Inauguration of Review and Analysis Workshop, *Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy*, Former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), opines that the people's participation and transparency in grassroots governance is yielding a good results and solving many problems at the rural areas.

Emphasising the Gram Sabha and its relevance as per the 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act, *Shri S. Ramachandra Reddy* argues that the selection of the beneficiaries would be finalised through Gram Sabha resolutions only. He further elaborated that for attaining an overall development of rural India, the Panchayati Raj Institutions should transform as Local Self Governments in all respects, said *Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy*.

The District Panchayat Officer, Chittoor, *Dr. P. V. Sessa Reddy*, who attended the Workshop as Chief Guest, stresses the need for partnership of the Government, elected representatives and Non-Governmental Organisations for strengthening the Panchayati Raj system for delivering good governance at the grassroots. Analysing the Capacity Building and Training Programmes for Gram Panchayat Sarpanchs, Upa-Sarpanchs and Ward Members and MPTC Members in Chittoor District which concluded recently, he said that the efforts of different units of the District Administration and AGRASRI had showed a successful experiment and established as front runner role model training district in the State.

*Shri S. Viswanath Reddy*, District Training Centre Manager, Zilla Praja Parishad, Chittoor, observes that the grassroots level leadership and capabilities of the elected representatives alone solve the problems of gram panchayats in all respects.

*Dr.V. Hari Naidu*, President, Chittoor District Sarpanchs Association, suggests that the elected representatives of gram panchayats should aware about their rights and duties and formulate their plans and vision for overall development of their

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respective gram panchayats. Regarding the financial administration, he advocates that the Sarpanchs would incur the expenditure as per the availability of resources.

*Dr. R. A. Padmanabha Rao*, Former Deputy Director-General of Doordarshan, who presided over the Workshop, said that the people always repose their faith on people friendly leaders and promoting those good leaders at the appropriate time, for better positions.

*Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Founder-Director of AGRASRI and Chief Organiser of the programme, explained the strategies, field level experiments, experiences and perceptions of the officials and non-officials in 65 Mandals of Chittoor District at the Capacity Building and Training Programmes, held during September 13-October 21, 2010. As Chief Organiser of the programme, *Dr. Sundar Ram* opines that the Chittoor District elected representatives of PRI's are very sensitive and their attendance in larger percentage (72 %) indicates the sensitivity of their keen interest in enhancing their capacity building in delivering good governance at the grassroots level. However, the ultimate message of the majority participants of the Capacity Building & Training programmes in Chittoor District was that the 3F's-Functions, Functionaries and Finances should be devolved to PRI's immediately by the State Government, as per the 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act.

In post-lunch sessions, the 48 Training of Trainers (ToT's), who drafted for the Capacity Building and Training Programmes for 16,000 Gram Panchayat Sarpanchs, Upa-Sarpanchs and Ward Members and MPTC Members in Chittoor District, shared their perceptions and impressions of the participants during the training programmes.

At the end of the Workshop, the following recommendations were formulated and forwarded the same to the concerned policy makers at the helm of affairs for taking an appropriate action: i) Comprehensive and time-bound capacity building and training programmes have to be designed especially for gram panchayat elected representatives, so that their constitutional duties and responsibilities should compel as elected members of PRI's ii) Providing honorarium to all gram panchayat elected Ward Members on par with the Sarpanchs and MPTC Members, besides protocol recognition, iii) Issuing identity cards to all gram panchayat elected Ward Members by the Government, iv) Considering the full-pledged majoritarian system, instead of quorum system in general body meetings of the gram panchayats for avoiding the dominance of the Sarpanchs as well as implementing the people's participation concept

in decision-making process, v) Organising the capacity building and training programmes for the gram panchayat elected representatives at their respective gram panchayats only, instead of Mandal headquarters, vi) Providing the full pledged material and information to all elected representatives of gram panchayats towards panchayati raj acts, GO's, government welfare schemes in a regular manner, for understanding the system in all respects, vii) Streamlining the Gram Sabha meetings and its decisions in a transparent manner, viii) Organising the exposure visits to the gram panchayat elected representatives to learn best practices and experiences in neighboring panchayats/states by the Government, ix) Implement the Rule of Law in respect of the elected representatives of gram panchayats irrespective of caste, creed and sex, while discharging their duties and responsibilities.

**xvi. Round-Table Meeting on 'Panchayati Raj Institutions in Chittoor District: Future Plans and Implementation', 24 April, 2011.**

Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI), Tirupati-based Non-Governmental Professional Organisation, has organised one-day Round-Table Meeting on 'Panchayati Raj Institutions in Chittoor District: Future Plans and Implementation', on the eve of the National Panchayati Raj Day Celebrations at Youth Hostel Conference Hall, Tirupati, on 24 April, 2011. *Shri S. Viswanatha Reddy*, Former Chief Executive Officer, Zilla Praja Parishad, Nellore, inaugurated the Round-Table Meeting.

In his Inaugural address, *Shri S. Viswanatha Reddy* said that the respective governments at the centre and states have been concentrated much on the welfare of the Panchayati Raj Institutions, after the enactment of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act in 1992. However, he regretted that the Andhra Pradesh state is far behind in implementing the provisions of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act in letter and spirit, while comparing with other states like Kerala, Karnataka, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh and Tripura.

Speaking at the Round-Table Meeting, the Chief Guest *Dr. P.V. Sessa Reddy*, District Panchayat Officer of Chittoor opines that today the policy makers at the helm of affairs realised that the progress and development of the nation as one of the most advanced nation in the world is depending on well structured panchayats at one level and public service delivery capacity of elected representatives at another level. Praising the role of PRI's in national development, *Dr. Sessa Reddy* asserts that the sub continent

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of India is a chain of gram panchayats. The sustainable development is possible only through Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI's), as these institutions are closer to the people.

*Dr. R. Ramana Prasad*, Mandal Parishad Development Officer, V. Kota, *Dr. G. Venkata Narayana*, Mandal Parishad Development Officer, Pakala, participated in the Round-Table Meeting, as Special Invitees. *Dr. V. Hari Naidu*, President of the Chittoor District Panchayat Sarpanchs Association, presided the inaugural session.

Earlier, *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Founder-Director of AGRASRI, explained the significance of the National Panchayati Raj Day Celebrations and objects of the Round-Table Meet.

In 2-Technical Sessions, panel of speakers, comprising Extension Officers (PR & RD), panchayati secretaries, experts and NGO representatives, discussed the significance of gram sabha, grassroots planning, resource mobilisation, devolution of powers, infrastructure facilities, public service delivery, women empowerment in PRI's and other issues at length. At the end of the Round-Table meet, the participants formulated 6 recommendations in strengthening the panchayati raj system for delivering good governance at the grassroots, with special reference to Chittoor District of Andhra Pradesh.

**xvii. Symposium on ‘Tentacles of Global Terrorism: Emerging Threats to Indian Unity and Integrity’, 21 May, 2011.**

In checking the terrorist menace and vulnerable targets around the globe in general and India in particular, a comprehensive preventive security measures and coherent counter-terrorism strategy, is need of the hour across the globe, in achieving sustainable development and inclusive growth, lament the speakers at the Symposium on ‘Tentacles of Global Terrorism- Emerging Threats to Indian Unity and Integrity’, which was organised by the Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI), a Tirupati-based Non-Governmental Professional Organisation, in joint collaboration with the Rajiv Rural Development (RRDF), on the eve of the 20<sup>th</sup> Death Anniversary of Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi and Anti-Terrorism Day celebrations, at Youth Hostel Conference Hall, Tirupati on 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2011.

After paying homage to Shri Rajiv Gandhi, who himself a victim of terrorism, *Prof. R. Ramamurthi*, Former Vice-Chancellor of Sri Venkateswara University and Past-General President of the Indian Science Congress, said that considering the

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diverse range of vulnerable targets, innovative solutions through use of technology and citizen participation would make early warning system and counter-terror processes that much alert and efficient. Synthesising the operational capabilities for countering terrorism in contemporary times, *Prof. Ramamurthi* advocates that the people and the security sector have to realise that a paradigm shift is taking place that requires recognising the role of the society in developing an inclusive security system and application of principles and processes of security sector's governance, with special reference to India.

Praising Shri Rajiv Gandhi's innovative and historic steps towards Panchayati Raj and Nagar Palika Institutions through 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendments, *Dr. P.V. Sessa Reddy*, District Panchayat Officer, Chittoor, opines that the dreams and vision of Shri Rajiv Gandhi has transformed into action and yielding abundant fruits in local governance system in the vast populated nation of the world.

The symposium session was presided over by *Shri A. Malleswara Rao*, Station Director, All India Radio, Tirupati.

Earlier, *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Founder-Director of AGRASRI, outlines the concept of the symposium and explained the sequence of terrorist activities across the globe as well as in India. The 29 Andhra Battalion of NCC cadets has made an impressive rally, with anti-terrorism slogans from SPW College grounds to the Youth Hostel, venue of the symposium.

**xviii. National Workshop on 'Grama Sabha in India: Role and Significance in Decision-making at the Grassroots', 20 August, 2011.**

The Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India has organised One-day National Workshop on the aforesaid captioned theme on the eve of the 67<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of Shri Rajiv Gandhi on 20 August, 2011 at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, in joint collaboration with the Rajiv Rural Development Foundation, Tirupati.

The National Workshop was inaugurated by *Dr. Agarala Easwara Reddi*, Former Speaker of A.P. Legislative Assembly, with address. *Dr. P.C. Rayulu*, Chairman, Taskforce (Food), Southern Zone, Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Govt. of India, participated in the National Workshop as Guest of Honour. *Dr. B.P. Syam Roy*, IAS (*Retd.*), Former Special Secretary, Development and Planning, Govt. of West Bengal, has delivered a Key-Note Address in the Workshop.

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In his inaugural speech, *Dr. Easwara Reddi* said grama sabhas provide a strong foundation for decentralised rural administration and opines that it is not only provides the required powers to the elected representatives but also makes them accountable for their actions.

*Dr. P.C. Rayulu* said that only an efficient and transparent public service delivery system through the grama sabhas holds the key to root out the corruption, in the field of rural administration, especially in the implementation of NREGA programme.

Describing Grama Sabhas as a powerful instrument in the task of human development at the grassroots level, *Dr. B.P. Syam Roy* said that it had the built-in capacity to pave the way for widening the access, enlargement of choices, enhancement of capabilities and promoting the spirit of participation in the area of rural self government.

*Dr. R.A. Padmanabha Rao*, Former Deputy Director-General of Doordarshan, presided over the Inaugural Session of the National Workshop.

Earlier, *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Founder-Director of AGRASRI, outlined the aims and objectives of the National Workshop and announced the names of the recipients of 'Rajiv Gandhi Best Panchayat Awards' in 3 categories at the District, Taluk and Gram Panchayat levels.

The National Workshop theme was divided into 4 Sub-themes/Technical Sessions, namely, a) Empowered People and Transparent Panchayats through Grama Sabha: Policy Initiatives and Pro-active Measures by Govt. of India, b) Role and Significance of Grama Sabha in Decision-making at the Grassroots: The Experiences of various Models in Indian States, c) Formulation of Village Plans through People's Participation and Grama Sabha : Constraints and Emerging Challenges, and d) Grama Sabha in India: An Instrument for Human Development at the Grassroots- Action Plan for Future Vision.

In 4 Sub-themes/Technical Sessions, *Prof. M. Gopinath Reddy*, Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Hyderabad; *Prof. N. Sivanna*, Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bangalore; *Dr. K. Gireesan*, Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development, Sriperumbudur; *Dr. M. Devendra Babu*, Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bangalore; *Dr. E. Venkatesu*, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad; *Dr. R.A. Padmanabha Rao*, Former Deputy Director-General of Doordarshan, New



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Delhi; *Dr.B.P. Syam Roy, IAS(Retd.)*, Former Special Secretary, Development and Planning, Govt. of West Bengal, Kolkata; *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India, Tirupati; *Shri T.N. Kandamuthan*, President, District Panchayat, Palakkad (Kerala); *Shri T.S. Majeed*, Secretary, District Panchayat, Palakkad (Kerala); *Smt. Sunitatai Gaikwad*, President, Shri Rampur Taluk Panchayat, Ahmednagar District (Maharashtra); *Smt. Deva Deevena Kumari*, Sarpanch, Jegurupadu Gram Panchayat, East Godavari District (Andhra Pradesh), were presented papers/opinions on the functioning of Grama Sabha Institution.

At the end of the National Workshop, the resource persons and delegates formulated 12 key recommendations on the Grama Sabha Institution for the attention of the policy makers at the helm of affairs.

The following is the AGRASRI Workshop Recommendations: i) to resolve that Gram Sabhas should be in fact given powers and functions in accordance with the article 243 A of the Constitution to enable them to make elected panchayats answerable to the people, keeping in view the spirit the first round table of State Panchayati Raj Ministers held at Kolkata in 2004; ii) to strengthen the institution of Gram Sabha in the non - Scheduled Areas on the lines of the Gram Sabhas organised in the Scheduled Areas where these are principal institutions for decision-making concerning people's lives and livelihoods; iii) to make mandatory that the Gram Sabha role and participation in planning and implementation and performance review of various welfare schemes like Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (MGNREGP), National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), Sarva Sikha Abhiyan (SSA), Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) etc., at the gram panchayat level; iv) to given a serious thought that the Mahila Gram Sabha, as role model, as is being done at the Shri Rampur Taluk Panchayat Villages in Maharashtra; v) to implement a 'Recall', as a method in Gram Sabhas for erring Sarpanches and other elected representatives of Gram Panchayat, as a mandatory, for delivering good governance at the grassroots; vi) to adopt Gram Sabha as oath taking forum for the elected representatives of Gram Panchayat; vii) to make the institutional linkage between the programmes and schemes of the Intermediate Panchayat and Zilla Panchayat meant for Gram Sabha area also to be put in place for consultation with the Gram Sabha; viii) to discuss the gender related issues and the social responsibility issues at the Gram Sabha and its decisions socially monitored by the

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Gram Sabha; ix) to take steps for legislation on Gram Sabha at a meeting of the Gram Sabha held in keeping with the time schedule for the Annual Plan exercise by the Gram Panchayat, with intimation of kind of schemes being taken up its location and its fund content; x) to monitor concurrently during the implementation process of all schemes should go on at the Gram Sabha level; xi) to convene a special meeting of the Gram Sabha by the Gram Panchayat, with more than 50% of the electorate to address to any emergent issues (like epidemic etc)-provided that such meetings cannot be convened for more than once in any financial year; and xii) to associate furtherance of the status of the Human Development, the Gram Sabha needs to be identifying the requirements on areas of access, on enlargement of choice, on enhancing capabilities and increasing participation.

**xix. Regional Workshop on ‘Political Participation of Women in Decision-making for Inclusive Growth in India : Policy Initiatives and Implementation’, 25 and 26 November, 2011.**

The Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) has organized 2-day Regional Workshop on the aforesaid theme, on 25 and 26 November, 2011 at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, to mark the Decennial celebrations of AGRASRI. The Regional Workshop was inaugurated by *Padma Bhushan Dr V. Shanta*, Chairperson, Cancer Institute (WIA), Chennai, with address. *Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy*, Former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), Hyderabad, presided over the inaugural session of the Regional Workshop. *Smt. K. Santha Reddy*, Former Member, National Commission for Women, Govt. of India delivered a Key-Note Address, as part of the 10<sup>th</sup> AGRASRI Foundation Day Lecture on the theme of the Regional Workshop.

Earlier, *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Founder-Director of AGRASRI welcomes the dignitaries and delegates and outlined the objectives of the Regional Workshop. *Dr. R.A. Padmanabha Rao*, Former Deputy Director-General of Doordarshan, New Delhi, proposed a Vote of Thanks.

The Regional Workshop was attended by a large number of women policy makers, scholars, political party representatives, administrators, researchers, elected representatives of PRI's, NGO's, Self-Help Group leaders and grassroots level activists.

## Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture Programmes



The Academy has instituted the *Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture* in the year 2002, in recognition of the Seventh Prime Minister of India Shri Rajiv Gandhi's significant contributions and services to the nation in general and Panchayati Raj Institutions in particular, as constitutional bodies. The main objective of the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture is to perpetuate the memory of Shri Rajiv Gandhi's significant contributions and services rendered to the nation, as visionary of modern India.

The Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture is being organised every year on 20 August, i.e., the birthday of Shri Rajiv Gandhi, at Tirupati by the Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India, in association with the Rajiv Rural Development Foundation, Tirupati

### **a. First Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture, 20 August, 2002.**

In pursuance of the aims and objectives of the AGRASRI, the First Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture was organised on 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2002 in Hotel Bliss, Tirupati. *Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar*, Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) and Member, Task Force on Panchayati Raj, Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, New Delhi, has delivered the First Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture. The theme of the memorial lecture was '*Panchayati Raj in India - An Instrument of Grassroots Development*'.

In his lecture, *Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar* observed that when we use the expression local self-governance, we have limited it for two purposes. The first purpose is for the preparation of plans for economic development and social justice planning and second, it is for the implementation of programmes of economic development and social justice. While discussing PRI's role in economic development, he remarked that either Panchayati Raj will be truly grassroots institution or it will remain a subject of seminar? However, he urged that what we need to do is to get it instituted at the grassroots.

*Dr. K. Keshava Rao*, Former Minister for Higher Education and Chairman of the Rajiv Gandhi Technology Mission, Government of Andhra Pradesh, presided with an address.

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Earlier, *Prof. A. Ranga Reddy*, Professor of Economics at Sri Venkateswara University and Vice-President of AGRASRI, welcomed the dignitaries and participants, followed by an overview of the objectives and very purpose of the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture by *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Director of AGRASRI.

The Memorial Lecture was attended by a large number of policy makers, academics, administrators, elites, representatives of PRI's and Nagar Palikas, media persons and social activists.

**b. Second Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture, 25 August, 2003.**

The Second Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture was organised by AGRASRI on 25<sup>th</sup> August, 2003 in Tirupati at Hotel Bliss. *Shri Shivraj V. Patil*, the then Deputy Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha has delivered the Second Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture with the theme '*Rajiv Gandhi and Modern India - Dreams and Vision*'.

In his maiden lecture, *Shri Shivraj V. Patil* observed that 'if it was Jawaharlal Nehru who laid the foundation stone for building the modern India, it was Rajiv Gandhi, who boldly took up some policy changes brushing aside skepticism from some within the party which eventually made India transform into what it is today'. While praising the significant achievements of Rajiv Gandhi with a holistic approach, balanced and vision, *Shri Shivraj V. Patil* observed that 'Rajiv Gandhi's dream was to strengthen the local bodies and the Constitution was amended under his tenure as Prime Minister of India. But his dream has not been fulfilled and the villages did not achieve self-sufficiency'.

*Dr. Agarala Eswara Reddi*, Former Speaker of Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly, Hyderabad, in his address, stressed the need for giving more powers and funds to the local bodies for overall development of rural areas.

*Shri Suresh Keshwani*, Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), New Delhi and *Shri K. Satyanarayana Raju*, Former Minister for Forests and Environment, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, participated in the programme as *Special Invitees*. *Shri K. Rami Reddy*, IAS (Retd.), Former Chairman, A.P. State Irrigation Development Corporation Ltd., Hyderabad, presided over the programme.

Earlier, *Prof. A. Ranga Reddy*, Professor of Economics at Sri Venkateswara University, welcomed the distinguished gathering while *Dr.D.Sundar Ram*, Director of AGRASRI, emphasised the need for improving the environment for good governance

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at the grassroots level following the completion of one decade of the enactment of 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendments. *Shri M. Sudarshana Reddy*, Assistant Professor in Law at S.V. University, proposed a vote of thanks.

A large number of delegates and participants, including intellectuals, policy makers, bureaucrats, academics, representatives of PRI's and Nagar Palikas, social activists and media persons attended the programme.

**c. Third Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture, 20 August, 2004.**

The Third Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture was organised by AGRASRI on 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2004 in Tirupati at Hotel Bliss, in association with the Rajiv Rural Development Foundation.

*Padma Shri Dr. Turlapaty Kutumba Rao*, eminent Journalist, has delivered the Third Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture with the theme *Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi - A Visionary of Modern India*.

In his extempore lecture, *Dr. Kutumba Rao* opined that Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi, as the youngest Prime Minister of India laid a strong foundation for the country to emerge as a powerful democratic nation to reckon with and motivated the future policy makers of the nation. While exploring the revolutionary changes brought out by Rajiv Gandhi in Indian administrative system, *Dr. Kutumba Rao* complimented that Rajiv Gandhi was an instrumental in reducing age limit to cast the vote to 18 Years and also in creating a separate Human Resource Development Ministry in the Union Cabinet. Later *Dr. Kutumba Rao* released the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Shastiabhipoorthi Commemorative Volume to mark the occasion.

*Shri B. Karunakar Reddy*, the then Chairman, Tirupati Urban Development Authority (TUDA), released the June, 2004 issue of The Grassroots Governance Journal, which is being published by AGRASRI.

*Shri K. Rami Reddy, IAS (Retd)*, former Chairman, Andhra Pradesh State Irrigation Development Corporation Ltd., Hyderabad, presided over the programme.

Earlier, *Prof. A. Ranga Reddy*, Professor of Economics at Sri Venkateswara University, welcomed the distinguished gathering while *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Director & Member- Secretary of AGRASRI explained objects of the Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture programme. *Dr. K. Venkata Narayana Raju*, Joint Director of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University Study Centre, Tirupati, proposed a vote of thanks.

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The Third Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture was attended by a large number of academics, administrators, representatives of PRIS, NGO's, media persons and concerned citizens of Tirupati.

**d. Fourth Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture, 23 September, 2005.**

The Fourth Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture was organised by AGRASRI on 23 September 2005 in Tirupati at Hotel Bliss (Darbara Hall), in association with the Rajiv Rural Development Foundation.

In his Chief Guest's address, *Shri T.N. Chaturvedi*, His Excellency, the then Governor of Karnataka, has under scored the need for a scientist to have social sensitivity in order to tune his discoveries to suit the aspirations of the common man. He said that an ivory tower approach would not help the scientific community achieve the goal of meeting the requirements of society. Lauding the country's initiatives on the space front, *Shri T.N. Chaturvedi* said the space technology and atmospheric sciences had been of immense use to society in providing valuable inputs like soil conditions and weather forecasting to enable determination of a suitable agriculture pattern. Further, he also maintained that none needed be skeptical of India's technical know-how, as the country was capable of meeting all exigencies.

Delivering the Fourth Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture on 'Space Technology for Poverty Alleviation and Sustainable Development' by *Padma Bhushan Professor U.R. Rao*, the Chairman of PRL Council, Indian Space Research rganisation (ISRO), enlisted the advances made by the country in the area of space that had a direct bearing on various facets of society. While praising the significant achievements of contemporary India in all sectors, he feels that 'we are on road to development, which is true, but in comparison to other developing nations, what is the rate of our progress? Unfortunately it is not much encouraging. There is still need to provide minimum basic facilities to the scores of people below poverty line and the fruits of development should reach them'.

Comparing the development with neighboring China, *Professor U.R. Rao* said that literary was key to development and in the country over 40 per cent of the population are illiterates and especially it is more pronounced in the rural areas. Further, he said that 'even the drinking water problem has become a major concern and in the States of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, the high levels of fluoride is

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leading the several health disorders while arsenic content in water has become a problem in Bengal'. On the occasion, *Professor Rao* said that visionary leadership of Shri Rajiv Gandhi has propelled the nation into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century as technical force to be reckoned with. In this connection, he explained the strides being made by Edusat in the field of education, Tele Medicine in bringing succour to the needy, e-commerce in bringing good returns even to the small traders and the e-Governance initiatives aimed at providing better facilities for citizens. He felt that the science and technology would have no relevance if they were not brought to the reach of the society. Summing up, he said that the space technology had succeeded in providing the over age Indian a window to the outside world.

Earlier, *Shri T.N. Chaturvedi*, His Excellency, the then Governor of Karnataka, conferred the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Outstanding Leadership Award on *Padma Bhushan Professor U.R. Rao*, in recognition of his exemplary contributions and services to the Indian Space Research Programmes, as Chairman of ISRO. Former Union Minister for Information & Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs, *Shri P. Upendra* released copies of the first and second Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lectures, which were delivered by *Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar* and *Shri Shivraj V. Patil* in the years 2002 and 2003 respectively.

*Professor D. Narayana Rao*, the then Director of the National Atmospheric Research Laboratory (NARL), presided over the function. *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Director of AGRASRI welcomed the dignitaries, while *Dr. S. Vijaya Bhaskara Rao*, Associate Professor of Physics, S.V. University, proposed a vote of thanks.

**e. Fifth Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture, 20 August, 2006.**

The Fifth Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture was organised by AGRASRI on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2006 in Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, in association with Rajiv Rural Development Foundation. *Padma Vibhushan Dr. M.S. Swaminathan*, the then Chairman, National Commission on Farmers, Government of India and World renowned Agricultural Scientist, has delivered the Fifth Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture on 'Indian Farmers in 21<sup>st</sup> Century : Mission and Vision' Surveying the pros and cons of Agriculture production and farmers situation in India, *Dr. M.S. Swaminathan* explores that the draft National Policy for farmers put on the Government Website is already under debate and it broadly provided 24 policy prescriptions to ensure the livelihood security of the farmers. Expressing the anguish towards the adverse leading to increasing rural indebtedness and farmers suicides, *Dr. Swaminathan* made a clarion

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call for a symphony of approach between the governments, NGOs, panchayats and agricultural universities to achieve what he described as an 'ever-green revolution'. Concerning the observance of the agricultural year 2006-07 as the year of farmers to restore their faith in farming, *Dr. Swaminathan* pointed out that the recommendations of the national policy were simple and affordable provided there was a change 'in our mindset to look at farmers as partners in development that looking at them as small beneficiaries of Government programmes'.

Finding a solutions and alternative approaches for a sustainable development, *Dr. M.S. Swaminathan* suggested that the Government of India provided that there was vast untapped reservoir of dryland farming technologies and we can see a drastic rise in the productivity and production of crops in these areas if farm families are supported by credit, insurance, fair price and assured markets, akin to what had happened in the 80s when former Prime Minister of India Shri Rajiv Gandhi launched a technology mission in oilseeds. While evaluating the government policy of imports of pulses and oilseeds, *Dr. Swaminathan* argues that the imports of crops of importance to the income security of farm families in rainfed areas implies generating more unemployment and misery in such areas. The mindset where the term 'consumers' applies only to the politically powerful urban population and ignores the 70 per cent of the population living in rural India, who are both farmers and consumers, will have to be destroyed if our country is to achieve 'purna swaraj'.

Earlier, *Shri Rameshwar Thakur*, His Excellency, the then Governor of Orissa and Andhra Pradesh, conferred the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Outstanding Leadership Award-2006 on *Dr. M.S. Swaminathan*, in recognition of his contributions to Agriculture and Sustainable Development. Similarly, the Governor also conferred the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Best District Panchayat Award on *Shri M.V. Balakrishnan Master*, the then President of Kasargod District Panchayat, Kerala. Two others namely, *Shri M.A. Khadar*, the then President of Thirurangadi Block Panchayat, Malappuram District, Kerala, received the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Best Taluk Panchayat Award and *Smt. Lakshamma*, the then President of Bellandur Gram Panchayat, Bangalore Rural District, Karnataka, was awarded the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Best Gram Panchayat Award. Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Guest *Shri Rameshwar Thakur*, His Excellency, the then Governor of Orissa and Andhra Pradesh, recalled his association with Shri Rajiv Gandhi and described him as a visionary, who was determined to change the fate of his country people for better livelihood. Tracing



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roots of concern for good governance at the grassroots level, *Shri Rameshwar Thakur* said that the then Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi had adopted a strategy of promoting the institutions of civil society, especially the non-governmental and community based organisations as active partners in the acceleration of development process.

Examining the perspectives and initiatives of Shri Rajiv Gandhi in respect of economic growth and democratic decentralisation in rural India, *Shri Rameshwar Thakur* reveals that the economic and technological transition of rural India has to accompany a multi-faceted political transformation. This transformation will foster decentralisation and devolution of power to local bodies, including financial devolution and financial responsibility, increasing direct participation of people in setting grassroots priorities for distribution of resources, building and managing local projects and greater efficiency, transparency and accountability in government agencies at all levels.

To make India stronger in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and for all round development of the nation, the Chief Guest *Shri Rameshwar Thakur* feels that the E.governance has the potential, if fully harnessed and rightly utilised, to radically improve the speed, convenience, quality and transparency of public administrative services, while enhancing the ability of individual citizens to express and exercise their democratic rights. This will create the knowledge base and the capacity in the rural areas to achieve food for all, health for all, and jobs for all. Only then rural India will be locally strong enough to face the global challenges.

*Prof. G. Palanithurai*, Rajiv Gandhi Chair for Panchayati Raj Studies, Gandhigram Rural University, Gandhigram(Tamil Nadu) and President of AGRASRI, presided over the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture and Awards presentation function.

*Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Founder-Director of AGRASRI, extends a warm welcome to the dignitaries and award designates and outlined the aims and objectives of the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture and Awards Programme. *Prof. A. Ranga Reddy*, Professor of Economics at Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati and Vice-President of AGRASRI proposed a vote of thanks.

**f. Sixth Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture, 20 August, 2007.**

*The Sixth Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture and Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Outstanding Leadership and Best District, Taluk and Gram Panchayat Awards* presentation programmes were organised by the Academy of Grassroots Studies and

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Research of India (AGRASRI), on 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2007 at 4.30 p.m., as part of the 63<sup>rd</sup> Birth Anniversary Celebrations of Shri Rajiv Gandhi, the Seventh Prime Minister of India and an architect of modern panchayati raj system.

*Shri R.L. Bhatia*, His Excellency, the then Governor of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala) has participated in the programme, as a distinguished Chief Guest. *Padma Bhushan Dr. R.A. Mashelkar*, the then President of the Indian National Science Academy, New Delhi and former Director-General of CSIR, New Delhi has delivered the Sixth Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture and received the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Outstanding Leadership Award for the Year-2007, in recognition of his meritorious services and contributions in the field of Science & Technology. *Shri R. Chidambaram*, the then Adhyaksha, Zilla Parishad, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Port Blair, received the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Best District Panchayat Award, while *Shri S. Ramalingam*, the then Chairman, Thiruvidadimarudhur Block Panchayat of Thanjavur District (Tamil Nadu) and *Shri K. Rajamouli*, Sarpanch, Gangadevipalli Gram Panchayat of Warangal District (Andhra Pradesh) were received the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Best Taluk Panchayat and Best Gram Panchayat Awards respectively.

*Prof.B.S. Bhargava*, Senior Fellow at the Institute of Social Sciences, Bangalore, presided over the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture and Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Outstanding Leadership and Best Panchayat Awards presentation function.

*Padma Bhushan Dr. R.A. Mashelkar*, the then President of the Indian National Science Academy (INSA) and CSIR Bhatnagar Fellow at the National Chemical Laboratory, Pune (Maharashtra), has delivered the Sixth Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture on '*Synthesising New Indian Knowledge and Innovation Systems*'. Tracing roots of concern for the commitment and determination of late Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi towards Science and Technology policy in 21<sup>st</sup> Century India, *Dr. Mashelkar* opines that handsome and charming with a steely determination and vision to see that India enters the 21<sup>st</sup> Century with head held high with pride of achievement, Shri Rajiv Gandhi, as a person who blended beautifully three qualities of innovation, compassion and passion. Recollecting his memories with late Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi, *Dr. Mashelkar*, who was a Member of Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) at that time reveals that it was Rajiv Gandhi's dream to see that rural India does not suffer for lack of water and quoted the Rajiv Gandhi's own words that 'I have a dream equivalent to John F. Kennedy's dream to take a man on the moon and that

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equivalent dream is to take drinking water to 1,86,000 Villages'. This is how the water mission began, which was a forerunner for a number of other missions that followed. His commitment to Science & Technology was total.

Praising the Shri Rajiv Gandhi's innovative initiatives and commitment to India's forward march and its subsequent significant growth and development in various fields, *Dr. Mashelkar* feels that India has changed dramatically after it opened up in 1991. The changes have been particularly spectacular in the last five years or so. I wish he was alive today. He would have loved to see the emergence of knowledge economy, which he championed, when he sowed the seeds of information and telecommunication revolution. After all C-DOT and C-DAC were his creations. He would have enjoyed India's march towards becoming a true knowledge society. In its true integrative culture, India has opportunity of creating new knowledge systems.

Emphasising the need for more focused research in Universities and Institutes, *Dr. Mashelkar*, who is also President of Global Research Alliance, a network of publicly funded R & D Institutes from Asia-Pacific, Europe and USA, with over 60,000 scientists, outlines that the indigenous knowledge system must be sustained through active support to the societies that are keepers of this knowledge, be they villagers or tribes, their ways of life, their languages, their social organisation and the environment in which they live. We need innovative ways of preventing the erosion of such knowledge, which usually vanishes with people. Equally importantly, we need an in-depth analysis of the parallelism of insights between the indigenous knowledge systems, on the other hand, and certain areas of modern science concerned with fundamental aspects, on the other. Our university education and research needs to shift the search light on this important issue, which it has neglected so far. Finding a solutions and alternative approaches for using traditional knowledge digital library to demonstrate our power to the rest of the World, *Dr. Mashelkar* believes that India has to show the way to synthesise a new Indian knowledge and Innovative Systems, which has the confluence of the old and the new, the traditional and the modern and those who work in modern laboratories and those, who work in laboratories of life.

Earlier, the Chief Guest Shri *R.L. Bhatia*, His Excellency, the then Governor of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala), conferred the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Outstanding Leadership Award on *Padma Bhushan Dr.R.A. Mashelkar*, CSIR Bhatnagar Fellow at National Chemical Laboratory, Pune (Maharashtra) in recognition of his outstanding contributions and services to Science & Technology. Similarly, the

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Governor of Kerala also conferred the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Best District Panchayat Award on *Shri R. Chidambaram*, the then Adhyaksha, Zilla Parishad of Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Two other recipients *Shri S. Ramalingam*, the then Chairman of Thiruvaidaimarudhur Block Panchayat, Thanjavur District (Tamil Nadu) and *Shri K. Rajamouli*, the then Sarpanch of Gangadevipalli Gram Panchayat, Warangal District (Andhra Pradesh) also received the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Best Taluk and Best Gram Panchayat Awards from the Governor of Kerala respectively.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Guest *Shri R.L. Bhatia*, opines that Shri Rajiv Gandhi as one of the finest Prime Ministers of India who aspired a lot, dreamt a lot about making India strong, modern and self-reliant. India was at the threshold of a transition in several spheres when his life was snatched away leaving many glorious dreams unfulfilled. Surveying the perspectives and initiatives of Shri Rajiv Gandhi in respect of human development, *Shri Bhatia* outlines that it was indeed Shri Rajiv Gandhi who set afoot India's modernisation process, equipping our country for its historic launch in to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. It was his insight and initiative that enabled us to be a major partner in the technological revolution sweeping the World over. It was Rajivji's far-reaching steps that led to the decentralisation of power through the Panchayati Raj. It was again Rajivji who realised the immense potential of computerisation and took initiative for harnessing it for the rapid progress of our country. In every sense, Shri Rajiv Gandhi was an architect of modern India. Praising the uncompromised determination, zeal and sacrifice to the national unity and integrity, *Shri Bhatia* asserts that Shri Rajiv Gandhi has always stressed on the relevance and significance of National, and urged that it should be cultivated at the grassroots level. Different faiths and beliefs coexist in our country in perfect harmony. In spite of varied customs and lifestyles, we share a deep-rooted spirit of oneness cutting across rigid barriers of region, language or religion. He firmly held that only on such a firm foundation of National Integration can India build up its strong and stable future.

Complimenting the lofty values of Shri Rajiv Gandhi, who preached and practiced in public life, *Shri Bhatia* feels that it is our bounden duty to strive for the realisation of the hopes and aspirations for which he lived and sacrificed his life. What is so unique about Shri Rajiv Gandhi was that he could instill a profound sense of confidence among the youth on the creation of a better tomorrow for the entire nation. He has often reminded us that no religion worth its name would ever promote enmity, hatred or intolerance. He reiterated that the social fabric of India is woven with the strands

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of mutual love, trust and respect. It was not as a mere slogan he held aloft the message of National Integration, but as the very life-breath of every Indian.

Earlier, the Chief Guest *Shri R.L. Bhatia*, His Excellency, the then Governor of Kerala, released the National Conference Special Souvenir and 5 research publications of *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, namely i) Panchayati Raj Reforms in India : Power to the People at the Grassroots; ii) Dynamics of Grassroots Governance in India : Dreams and Realities; iii) Panchayati Raj and Empowering People : New Agenda for Rural India: Essays in Honour of Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar; iv) Federal System and Coalition Government in India: Conflicts and Consensus in Centre-State Relations; and v) Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi: A Visionary of Modern India, published by the Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India, in association with Kanishka Publishers, Distributors, New Delhi, to mark the occasion. The first copies of these publications were received by *Mrs. D. Bharathi Sundar*, Co-founder and Joint Director, AGRASRI.

*Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Founder-Director, Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) extends a warm welcome to the distinguished dignitaries and Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi awards recipients and outlined the aims and objectives of the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture and Awards programme. *Professor A. Ranga Reddy*, Professor of Economics at Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati and Vice-President of AGRASRI, proposed a vote of thanks.

**g. Seventh Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture, 20 August, 2008.**

The Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) has organised the Seventh Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture and Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Outstanding Leadership and Best District, Taluk and Gram Panchayat Awards conferment programmes on 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2008 at Hotel Bliss (Darbar Hall), Tirupati, at 4.30 p.m., as part of the 64<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary Celebrations of Shri Rajiv Gandhi, the Seventh Prime Minister of India and an architect of modern panchayati raj system.

*Padma Vibhushan Dr. C. Rangarajan*, Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister of India, New Delhi has delivered the Seventh Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture and received the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Outstanding Leadership Award for the Year-2008, in recognition of his meritorious services and contributions in the field of Economic reforms.

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*Professor C. Ratnam*, the then Vice-Chancellor of S.V. University, Tirupati (Andhra Pradesh), presided over the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture and Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Outstanding Leadership and Best Panchayat Awards presentation function.

*Padma Vibhushan Dr. C. Rangarajan*, Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to Prime Minister of India has delivered the Seventh Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture on '*Financial Inclusion in India: Need for Institutional Changes*'. Espousing the contributions and services to the nation, *Dr. Rangarajan* said that the late Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi will go down in history for two reasons: First, he gave a new orientation to politics in our country. He recognised the importance of technology and gave to technology development a major thrust. The various technology missions that he initiated have brought about significant changes in Indian economy. Second, he gave Constitutional recognition to the third-tier of government in our country. The Village Panchayats and Municipalities acquired a new status because of the Constitutional amendments introduced by him.

Pleading for the launch of National Rural Financial Inclusion Plan as per the recommendations of the Committee on Financial Inclusion, *Dr. Rangarajan* said that the semi-urban and rural branches of commercial banks and Regional Rural Banks should aim to cover a minimum of 250 new cultivator and non-cultivator house-holds per branch per annum. Extending a scope of activities of the organised financial system to the vulnerable groups like farmers, include rural masses and low income groups, *Dr. Rangarajan* advocates that what is required now is not creating new institutions for extending their out-reach but finding ways and means to effect improvements within the existing formal credit delivery mechanism and evolve new models for extending out-reach. In a broad sense, we need to address issues on the supply side as well as demand side. Strengthening the credit delivery system in rural areas of Commercial Banks, Regional Rural Banks and Micro-finance Institutions,

*Dr. Rangarajan* proposed the following seven useful approaches: First, a critical factor required for providing credit to marginal and sub-marginal farmers as well as other small borrowers is the empathy of the bank officers. Secondly, rural branches must go beyond providing credit and extend a helping hand in terms of advice on a wide variety of matters relating to agriculture and other allied activities. Thirdly, in districts where the population per branch is much higher than the national average, commercial banks may be encouraged to open branches. Fourthly, there is need for

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the simplification of the procedures in relation to granting of loans to small borrowers. Fifthly, the SHG bank linkage scheme has proved to be an effective way of providing credit to very small borrowers. This needs to be further strengthened. Sixthly, adoption of the Joint Liability Groups (JLGs) concept could be another effective method for purveying credit to small farmers, marginal farmers, tenant farmers, etc. and thereby reduce their dependence on informal sources of credit. Finally, the business facilitator and correspondent model needs to be effectively implemented.

Supporting the financial inclusion plan in India, that for the micro credit finance movement to gather momentum, *Dr. Rangarajan* opines it is necessary that all the various legal forms of micro-finance institutions should be encouraged. Each legal form has its own special advantages. However, it needs to be noted even the most successful micro-finance institutions in the corporate sector depend to a large extent on funding by the banks. Thus, the banks will continue to play a key role either directly or indirectly in micro-finance. Looking at the picture as a whole, *Dr. Rangarajan* concludes that two initiatives that will bring about a significant surge forward of the micro-finance sector will be the growth of the bank-SHG linkage programme and the induction of individuals as business correspondents. The two will constitute the main pillars of the future development of bank related micro-finance, even as other forms of micro-finance institutions will continue to grow. The goal of making a significant progress towards financial inclusion seems attainable.

The Chief Guest *Dr. C. Rangarajan*, Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to Prime Minister of India, conferred the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Best District Panchayat Award on *Smt. Amarben P. Merani*, the then President, Surendra Nagar District Panchayat (Gujarat State), in recognition of her contributions and services to the Surendra Nagar District Panchayat. Two other recipients *Smt. Shakuntala Meena*, the then Pradhan, Sapotra Panchayati Samithi of Karauli District (Rajasthan State) and *Smt. R. Malarvizhi*, the then President of Manakkudi Gram Panchayat, Mayiladuthurai Taluk of Nagapattinam District (Tamil Nadu) also received the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Best Taluk and Best Gram Panchayat Awards from the former Governor of Andhra Pradesh respectively.

*Dr. C. Rangarajan* also released the National Conference Special Souvenir and 2 research publications of Dr. D. Sundar Ram, namely i) *Role of Panchayati Raj Institutions in 60 Years of Independent India: Vision of the Future*, and ii) *Quest for Political Stability in India: Essays on Governance, Democracy and Development*, published by the

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Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India, in association with Kanishka Publishers, Distributors, New Delhi, to mark the occasion of 64<sup>th</sup> Birth Annivesary Celebrations of Shri Rajiv Gandhi. The first copies of these publications were received by *Dr(Mrs) Haripriya Rangarajan*, eminent educationist and Social Activist and *Mrs. D. Bharathi Sundar*, Co-founder and Joint Director, Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India(AGRASRI),Tirupati.

Earlier, *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Founder-Director of Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) extends a warm welcome to the distinguished dignitaries and recipients of the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi awards and outlined the aims and objectives of the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture and Awards programme. *Dr. D.Krishnamoorthy*, Associate Professor in Econometrics at Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati, proposed a vote of thanks.

The proceedings of the National Conference and Seventh Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture were given a wide publicity by the National News Papers like The Hindu, The New Indian Express, The Times of India, Deccan Chronicle and vernacular News Papers like Eenadu, Andhra Jyothi, Andhra Prabha, Andhra Bhoomi, Shakshi, Vaartha, Surya, Praja Shakthi and Visalandhra. A summary of 2-days National Conference on Women empowerment was broadcasted by the All India Radio, Kadapa Kendra, as Report for 10 minutes slot. The Electronic media like Doordharshan, ETV, Maa TV, Gemini TV, Citi Cable TV and SCV Cable TV were also telecasted the two-day proceedings of the National Conference.

**h. Eighth Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture, 20 August, 2009.**

The Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) has organised the Eighth Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture and Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Outstanding Leadership, Mahila Shakti, Yuva Shakti, Best District, Best Taluk and Best Gram Panchayat Awards conferment programmes on 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2009 at 4.30 p.m., as part of the 65<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary Celebrations of Shri Rajiv Gandhi, the Seventh Prime Minister of India and an architect of modern panchayati raj system.

*Padma Vibhushan Dr. G. Madhavan Nair*, the then Chairman, Indian Space Commission and Chairman, Indian Space Research Organisation and Secretary, Department of Space, Government of India, Bangalore, has delivered the Eighth Bharat



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Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture and received the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Outstanding Leadership Award for the Year-2009, in recognition of his meritorious services and contributions in Space Technology Applications.

*Shri S. Ramachandra Reddy*, Former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) and President of AGRASRI, presided over the 8<sup>th</sup> Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture and Awards presentation function.

*Padma Vibhushan Dr. G. Madhavan Nair*, the then Chairman, Indian Space Commission and Chairman, Indian Space Research Organisation and Secretary, Department of Space, Government of India, Bangalore, has delivered the Eighth Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture on '*Space Technology Applications for Rural Development in India*'. Before delivering a Lecture, *Dr. Agarala Eswara Reddi*, Former Speaker of Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly, has conferred the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Outstanding Leadership Award for the year 2009 on *Dr. G. Madhavan Nair*, by in recognition of his outstanding leadership abilities and signal achievements and innovations in Indian Space Technology experiments.

Recalling the services of Shri Rajiv Gandhi to the nation in various fields, especially science and technology, *Dr. G. Madhavan Nair* said that the late Prime Minister introduced India to modern science and technology and gave immense boost to space programmes leading eventually to a situation where India has nine IRS satellites operating in orbit. For the first time, satellite images were used to prepare groundwater prospect maps, at detailed scale, for finding drinking water in villages, which eventually became an integral part of the Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission, aiming to provide safe drinking water in all needy villages and habitations of the country.

Praising the visionary outlook and uncompromised determination, *Dr. Madhavan Nair* asserts that Rajiv Gandhi had a lot of concerns for the Indian farmers. He wished that the yield in the drought prone areas is as important as the yield in non-irrigated and rain fed areas. He wanted to ensure that water resources are used efficiently. He paid more attention to the irrigation projects and minor irrigation systems. He emphasised on introducing the modern methods in irrigation. In view of the scarcity of water and rainfall, he wanted to improve the weather forecasting system for accurate planning and decisions.

Surveying the deep perspectives and initiatives of Shri Rajiv Gandhi in respect of sustainable development and allied areas, *Dr. Madhavan Nair* outlines that Rajiv Gandhi was especially concerned about the deteriorating environment. He believed that the

destruction of the environment would lead to a vicious cycle of poverty and displacement. Today, when we hear the concerns raised by the entire world community and the programmes initiated across the world to protect the environment, we are astonished and surmised to know what a visionary he was! Rajiv Gandhi introduced India to modern science and technology, which he considered as the very essence of development. He said, '*Freedom and racism cannot co-exist. Science and poverty cannot co-exist.*' He wanted Indian industry to develop to its fullest capacity. He laid great emphasis on the Green revolution and Yellow revolution which he looked upon as being extremely important for development of agriculture.

Utilising space technology applications and programmes for speedy development in India, *Dr. Madhavan Nair* illustrates that the ISRO had undertaken several projects that focused on development of humanity through sophisticated satellite-based communication. Right from the inception of utilising space programmes for development, the experiments like Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE), Kheda Communications Project (KCP), Jhabua Development Communications Project (JDCP), Training and Development Communication Channel (TDCC) have been carried out. We started with the basic premise that television communication would facilitate rural development, and we demonstrated the impact of television broadcast and interactive programmes on the rural society. We have many more programmes using space based inputs in the years to come for planning and development. At the behest of the Planning Commission of India, ISRO is launching a National Mission - '*Space based Information Support for Decentralised Planning*'. It would provide ICT enabled geo-spatial platform involving local bodies to carry out developmental activities under Panchayati Raj in a decentralised, speedy and transparent manner. The Mission aims to harness the space technology and the information systems at the local bodies to create information base and provide services. We also focus on capacity building at Panchayat level to use these space based inputs. We are sure, that if the human resources at Panchayat level are enriched with the knowledge of using space based inputs, many issues related to land use or reclamation of wastelands, agriculture, horticulture, infrastructure development, water harvesting, etc., specific to the local environment can be solved.

Emphasising the need for adopting rural-oriented approach with bench-mark results, *Dr. Madhavan Nair* has expressed optimism that the future is bright and full of promise. Let us carry the spirit of our former Primer Minister Bharat Ratna Sri Rajiv

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Gandhi with our insatiable desire to know, explore and understand. The Indian space community would continue to harness the space technology to evolve new programmes and avenues towards transforming rural India.

Later, *Dr. G. Madhavan Nair*, the then Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation, Government of India, Bangalore, conferred the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Mahila Shakti and Yuva Shakti Awards on *Padma Shri Dr. Jaya Arunachalam*, President, Working Women's Forum, Chennai (Tamil Nadu) and *Smt. Neelima Khetan*, Chief Executive Officer, Seva Mandir, Udaipur (Rajasthan), in recognitions of their worthy contributions and services in women and youth empowerment.

The Chief Guest *Dr. G. Mahavan Nair* has also conferred the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Best District, Best Taluk and Best Gram Panchayat Awards on 3 outstanding elected representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions, namely, *Smt. Vaisali K. Abane*, President, Zilla Parishad, Pune (Maharashtra); *Shri M. Rama Goud Samala*, President of Velpur Mandal Praja Parishad, Nizamabad District (Andhra Pradesh) and *Shri K. Narayanan*, President of Karivellur-Peralam Gram Panchayat, Thaliparamba Taluk of Kannur District (Kerala), in recognition of their contributions and services to their own Panchayats, as role model Panchayat.

The Space Scientist *Dr. G. Madhavan Nair* also released the National Colloquium and Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture Special Souvenir, and a research publication of *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, namely, *Women Empowerment in Political Institutions: An Indian Perspective*, published by the Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India, to mark the occasion of 65<sup>th</sup> Birth Annivesary Celebrations of Shri Rajiv Gandhi. The first copies of these publications were received by *Smt. G. Madhavan Nair*.

Earlier, *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Founder-Director of Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) extends a warm welcome to the distinguished dignitaries and recipients of the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi awards and outlined the aims and objectives of the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture and Awards programme.

*Dr. R. A. Padmanabha Rao*, Former Deputy Director-General of Doordarshan and Vice-President of AGRASRI, proposed a Vote of Thanks.

The proceedings of the National Colloquium and 8<sup>th</sup> Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture were given a wide publicity by the National News Papers like The

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Hindu, The New Indian Express, The Times of India, Deccan Chronicle and vernacular News Papers like Eenadu, Andhra Jyothi, Andhra Prabha, Andhra Bhoomi, Shakshi, Vaartha, Surya, Praja Shakthi and Visalandhra, besides Tamil Newspapers.

A summary of two-days National Colloquium on Grassroots Planning was broadcasted by the All India Radio, Tirupati Kendra, as Report for 15 minutes slot. The Electronic media like Doordharshan, ETV, Maa TV, Gemini TV, HM TV, Sakshi TV, TV 5, TV 9, Citi Cable TV and SCV Cable TV were also telecasted the two-day proceedings of the National Colloquium.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture and Awards conferment programme concluded with the National Anthem by the students of Cambridge Public School, Tirupati.

**i. Ninth Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture, 8 March, 2011.**

The Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India has organised the 9<sup>th</sup> Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture and conferment of the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Outstanding Leadership Award programme on 8 March, 2011 at India International Centre Annex Auditorium, New Delhi.

*Padma Bhushan Dr (Mrs) V. Mohini Giri*, Chairperson, Guild of Service and Member, National Integration Council, New Delhi, has delivered the 9<sup>th</sup> Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture on '*Rajiv Gandhi and Panchayati Raj: Role of Women in Decision-making in Local Governance*' and received the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Outstanding Leadership Award for the Year-2010, in recognition of her meritorious services and contributions in Women Empowerment and Human Development.

*Dr. Subhash C. Kashyap*, Former Secretary-General of Lok Sabha and Chairman of AGRASRI Board of Governors, presided over the 9<sup>th</sup> Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture and Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Outstanding Leadership Award conferment function.

Recalling the initiatives of Shri Rajiv Gandhi towards women empowerment, especially in local government institutions, *Dr (Mrs) V.Mohini Giri* has called for a conscious effort by the government and other concerned stakeholders to make the 33% reservation provided for women in the Panchayat Raj institutions become more meaningful and effective.

Praising the visionary outlook and uncompromised determination, *Dr. V. Mohini Giri* asserts that Rajiv Gandhi had a lot of concerns for the women empowerment in

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Panchayati Raj. She said that though the 33 per cent reservation was being extended to the women in the PR bodies over the years, it needed supplementary efforts to ensure their real participation in decision-making. She however, said that the political empowerment of women through the amendment bill had indeed dispelled myths shrouding the very concept, such as the general belief that the women would be passive and disinterested in political institutions, that only the well-to-do and the upper strata women, that too mostly the wards of the politicians would enjoy its benefits using their 'political connectivity'.

Surveying the deep perspectives and initiatives of Shri Rajiv Gandhi in respect of women empowerment and panchayati raj governance, *Dr. V. Mohini Giri* outlines that more importantly it had also dispelled the misgivings that the women elected to the PR bodies under the quota would only be 'proxies' or 'name-sakes' for their husbands or their back-seat drivers, in decision-making and functional participation.

The Chief Guest *Shri Murlidhar C. Bhandare*, His Excellency, the then Governor of Orissa, said that all efforts should be made to ensure basic education and healthcare for women belonging to the lower strata of the society. A strong votary of women's rights, *Shri Murlidhar C. Bhandare* has stated that in the present day knowledge society educated women were no less capable than men.

*Shri Salman Khurshid*, Hon'ble the then Union Minister for Water Resources and Minority Affairs, Govt. of India, has expressed optimism that the future is bright and full of promise with bench-mark results, as the Women's Reservation Bill would be passed in Parliament at the earliest.

Later, *Shri Murlidhar C. Bhandare*, His Excellency, the Governor of Orissa and *Shri Salman Khurshid*, Hon'ble the then Union Minister for Water Resources and Minority Affairs, Govt. of India, jointly conferred the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Outstanding Leadership Award on *Padma Bhushan Dr (Mrs) V. Mohini Giri*.

The AGRASRI website ([www.agrasri.org.in](http://www.agrasri.org.in)) and research publication namely, *Political Transformation in India: Redesigning for Good Governance (set in 2 Vols.)* were also launched by the Chief Guest *Shri Murlidhar C. Bhandare*, His Excellency, the Governor of Orissa and Special Guest *Shri Salman Khurshid*, Hon'ble the then Union Minister for Water Resources and Minority Affairs, Govt. of India. The first copies of these publications were received by *Dr (Mrs) V. Mohini Giri*.

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Earlier, *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Founder and Director of Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) extends a warm welcome to the distinguished dignitaries and outlined the aims and objectives of the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture and Awards programme.

**j. Tenth Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture, 29 February, 2012.**

The Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) has organised the 10<sup>th</sup> Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture and Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Outstanding Leadership National Award conferment programmes on 29<sup>th</sup> February, 2012 at Hotel Bliss (Darbar Hall), Tirupati, at 10.30 a.m., as part of the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations of AGRASRI.

*Padma Vibhushan Dr. R.Chidambaram*, Principal Scientific Advisor to the Govt. of India, New Delhi and the then Chancellor of the University of Hyderabad, has delivered the Tenth Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture on '*Energy Technologies and Energy Security*'.

*Professor D. Narayana Rao*, Director (Research), SRM University, Chennai, presided over the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture and Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Outstanding Leadership National Award conferment function.

Earlier, *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Founder-Director of Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) and Chief Organiser of the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture and National Awards extends a warm welcome to the distinguished dignitaries and outlined the aims and objectives of the programme. *Prof. S. Vijaya Bhaskar Rao*, Professor of Physics, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati, proposed a vote of thanks.

The 10<sup>th</sup> Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture was attended by a large number of academics, administrators, researchers, representatives of PRI's, NGO's, media persons and elite of Tirupati. The programme was concluded with the National Anthem by the students of Cambridge Public School, Tirupati.



## **Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi National Awards** (*Roll of Honour in 6 Categories*)

In recognition of Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi's laudable contributions and significant services to the nation in general and Women, Youth and Panchayati Raj Institutions in particular, as Seventh Prime Minister of India, the Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India has instituted the following National Awards (*established year of the respective award is in parenthesis*), in association with the Rajiv Rural Development Foundation, Tirupati. The Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Awards in 6 categories would be conferred on the Jury selected nominees by the Chief Guest (Hon'ble Governor/Union Minister/Speaker) every year on the birth day of Shri Rajiv Gandhi, i.e., 20 August, at Tirupati, in a Special Function.

### **Name of the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi National Award and Established Year**

- Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Outstanding Leadership National Award (2005)
- Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Best District Panchayat National Award (2005)
- Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Best Taluk Panchayat National Award (2005)
- Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Best Gram Panchayat National Award (2005)
- Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Mahila Shakti National Award (2008)
- Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Yuva Shakti National Award (2008)

Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi National Awards Jury, consisting of eminent scholars and experts, headed by *Dr. Subhash C. Kashyap*, Chairman, Board of Governors of AGRASRI and Former Secretary-General of Lok Sabha, New Delhi, would select and finalise the recipients of the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi National Awards in the afore said categories, purely based on merit and tract record of the nominees, in their respective fields. The Screening Committee would assist the Jury in finalisation of the suitable candidates at all India level, for the National Awards, with *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Director of AGRASRI, as Convenor of the Jury.

The following is the composition of the *Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi National Awards Jury*:

- 1) *Dr. Subhash C. Kashyap* (Chairman), New Delhi; 2) Padma Bhushan Dr. (Mrs.) V. Mohini Giri, New Delhi; 3) *Padma Shri Dr (Mrs) Jaya Arunachalam*, Chennai; 4) *Shri Venkatarao Y. Ghorpade*, Bangalore; 5) *Professor M. Aslam*, New Delhi;

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6) *Professor G. Palanithurai*, Gandhigram; 7) *Professor P.C. Mathur*, Jaipur; 8) *Shri K. K. Patnaik, IAS (Retd.)*, Bhubaneswar, and 9) *Dr. D. Sundar Ram* (Convenor), Tirupati.

❖ **Roll of Honour**

The following is the List of Recipients of the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi National Awards in 6 categories from 2005 to 2011:

❖ **Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Outstanding Leadership Awards: 2005-2012.**

1. *Padma Bhushan Professor U.R. Rao*, Chairman, PRL Council, Indian Space Research Organisation, Department of Space, Government of India, Bangalore, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 23 September, 2005.  
*Chief Guest: Shri T.N. Chaturvedi*, His Excellency, the then Governor of Karnataka, Bangalore.
2. *Padma Vibhushan Professor M.S. Swaminathan*, Chairman, M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, Chennai, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2006.  
*Chief Guest: Shri Rameshwar Thakur*, His Excellency, the then Governor of Orissa and Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad.
3. *Padma Bhushan Dr. R.A. Mashelkar*, the then President, Indian National Science Academy and CSIR Bhatnagar Fellow, National Chemical Laboratory, Pune, Maharashtra, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2007.  
*Chief Guest: Shri R.L. Bhatia*, His Excellency, the then Governor of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram.
4. *Padma Vibhushan Dr. C. Rangarajan*, Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to Prime Minister of India, New Delhi, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2008.  
*Chief Guest: Shri N.D. Tiwari*, His Excellency, the then Governor of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad.
5. *Padma Vibhushan Dr. G. Madhavan Nair*, the then Chairman, ISRO, Department of Space, Govt. of India, Bangalore, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2009.  
*Chief Guest: Smt. Prabha Rau*, Her Excellency, the then Governor of Himachal Pradesh, Shimla.
6. *Padma Bhushan Dr (Mrs) V. Mohini Giri*, Chairperson, Guild of Service and Member, National Integration Council, New Delhi, at India International Annex Centre Auditorium New Delhi, on 8 March, 2011.



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*Chief Guest: Shri Murlidhar C. Bhandare*, His Excellency, the Governor of Orissa, Bhubaneswar.

*Special Guest: Shri Salman Khurshid*, Hon'ble Union Minister for Water Resources and Minority Affairs, Govt. of India, New Delhi.

7. *Padma Vibhushan Dr. R. Chidambaram*, Principal Scientific Advisor to Govt. of India, New Delhi, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 29 February, 2012.

*Chief Guest: Dr. Agarala Easwara Reddi*, Former Speaker of Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly, Hyderabad.

8. *Dr. Bal Ram Jakhar*, Former Speaker of Lok Sabha, Former Governor of Madhya Pradesh and Former Union Minister for Agriculture, Govt. of India, New Delhi.  
*Chief Guest : Shri Shivraj V. Patil*, His Excellency, the Governor of Punjab, Chandigarh.

*Guest of Honour : Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar*, Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) and Former Union Minister for Panchayati Raj, Govt. of India, New Delhi.

❖ **Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Mahila Shakti National Award: 2009-2012.**

1. *Padma Shri Dr. Jaya Arunachalam*, President, Working Women's Forum, Chennai, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2009.

*Chief Guest: Smt. Prabha Rau*, Her Excellency, the then Governor of H.P., Shimla.

2. *Padma Bhushan Dr (Mrs) Manju Sharma*, President, Indian Institute of Advanced Research, Gandhinagar (Gujarat) and Former Secretary to Government of India, (Department of Bio-Technology), New Delhi, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2010.

*Chief Guest: Prof. B.K. Chandrasekhar*, Former Chairman, Karnataka Legislative Council, Bangalore.

3. *Padma Bhushan Dr. V. Shanta*, Chairperson, Cancer Institute, Chennai, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 25 November, 2011.

*Chief Guest: Prof. R. Ramamurthi*, Past-General President, Indian Science Congress and Former Vice-Chancellor of Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati.

4. *Padma Shri Smt. Nomita Chandy*, Secretary, ASHRAYA, Bangalore, at Indian Institute of Public Administration Conference Hall, New Delhi, on 20 August, 2012.  
*Chief Guest : Shri Shivraj V. Patil*, His Excellency, the Governor of Punjab, Chandigarh.

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*Guest of Honour : Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar, Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) and Former Union Minister for Panchayati Raj, Govt. of India, New Delhi.*

❖ **Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Yuva Shakti National Award: 2009-2012.**

1. *Smt. Neelima Khetan, Chief Executive Officer, Seva Mandir, Udaipur, Rajasthan, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2009.*

*Chief Guest: Smt. Prabha Rau, Her Excellency, the then Governor of H.P., Shimla.*

2. *Dr. Rahul Mirchandani, Executive Director, Aries Agro Limited, Mumbai, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2010.*

*Chief Guest: Prof. B.K. Chandrasekhar, Former Chairman, Karnataka Legislative Council, Bangalore.*

3. *Shri Manoj Kumar Mandelia, Founder and CEO Canopus India. Kharagpur, West Bengal, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 25 November, 2011.*

*Chief Guest : Prof. R. Ramamurthi, Past-General President, Indian Science Congress and Former Vice-Chancellor of Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati.*

4. *Dr. D. Uday Kumar, Designer of Indian Rupee Symbol and Asst. Professor, Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati, on 20 August, 2012.*

*Chief Guest: Shri Shivraj V. Patil, His Excellency, the Governor of Punjab, Chandigarh.*

*Guest of Honour: Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar, Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) and Former Union Minister for Panchayati Raj, Govt. of India, New Delhi.*

❖ **Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Best District Panchayat National Awards: 2005-2012.**

1. *Shri Pathuri Nagabushanam, the then President, Zilla Parishad, Guntur, Andhra Pradesh, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2005.*

*Chief Guest: Shri K.S.R. Murthy, IAS (Retd.), Former Secretary to Govt. of India, New Delhi.*

2. *Shri M.V. Balakrishnan Master, the then President, District Panchayat, Kasargod, Kerala, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2006.*

*Chief Guest: Shri Rameshwar Thakur, His Excellency, the then Governor of Orissa and Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad.*

3. *Shri R.Chidambaram, the then President, Zilla Parishad, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Port Blair, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2007.*

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*Chief Guest: Shri R.L. Bhatia*, HE, the then Governor of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram.

4. *Smt. Amarben P. Merani*, President, District Panchayat, Surendra Nagar, Gujarat, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2008.

*Chief Guest: Shri N.D.Tiwari*, His Excellency, the then Governor of A.P., Hyderabad.

5. *Smt. Vaishali K. Abane*, President, Zilla Parishad, Pune, Maharashtra, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2009.

*Chief Guest: Smt. Prabha Rau*, Her Excellency, the then Governor of H.P., Shimla.

6. *Shri Uday Sankar Sarkar*, Sabhadhipathi, Zilla Panchayat, Bardhaman, West Bengal, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2010.

*Chief Guest: Prof. B.K. Chandrasekhar*, Former Chairman, Karnataka Legislative Council, Bangalore.

7. *Shri T.N. Kandamuthan*, President, District Panchayat, Palakkad, Kerala, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2011.

*Chief Guest : Dr. Agarala Easwara Reddi*, Former Speaker of Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly, Hyderabad.

8. *Shri B.M.Rai*, Adhyaksha, South District Zilla Panchayat, Namchi, Sikkim, on 20 August, 2012.

*Chief Guest : Shri Shivraj V. Patil*, His Excellency, the Governor of Punjab, Chandigarh.

*Guest of Honour : Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar*, Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) and Former Union Minister for Panchayati Raj, Govt. of India, New Delhi.

❖ **Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Best Taluk Panchayat National Awards: 2005-2012.**

1. *Shri B. Obul Reddy*, the then President, Mandal Praja Parishad, Putaparthi, Anantapur District, Andhra Pradesh, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2005.

*Chief Guest: Shri K.S.R. Murthy, IAS (Retd.)*, Former Secretary to Govt of India, New Delhi.

2. *Shri M.A. Khadar*, the then President, Block Panchayat, Thirurangadi, Malappuram District, Kerala, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2006.

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*Chief Guest: Shri Rameshwar Thakur*, His Excellency, the then Governor of Orissa and Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad.

3. *Shri S. Ramalingam*, Chairman, Block Panchayat Union, Thiruvudaimaruthur, Thanjavur District, Tamil Nadu), at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2007.

*Chief Guest: Shri R.L. Bhatia*, HE, the then Governor of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram.

4. *Smt. Shakuntala Meena*, Pradhan, Panchayati Samithi, Sapotra, Karauli District, Rajasthan, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2008.

*Chief Guest: Shri N.D.Tiwari*, His Excellency, the then Governor of A.P., Hyderabad.

5. *Shri M. Rama Goud Samala*, President, Mandal Praja Parishad, Velpur, Nizamabad District, Andhra Pradesh, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2009.

*Chief Guest: Smt. Prabha Rau*, Her Excellency, the then Governor of H.P., Shimla.

6. *Shri P.P. Muhammedkutty Master*, President, Block Panchayat, Pazhayannur, Trichur District, Kerala, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2010.

*Chief Guest: Prof. B.K. Chandrasekhar*, Former Chairman, Karnataka Legislative Council, Bangalore.

7. *Smt. Sunitatai Gaikwad*, President, Taluk Panchayat, Srirampur, Ahmednagar District, Maharashtra, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2011.

*Chief Guest : Dr. Agarala Easwara Reddi*, Former Speaker of Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly, Hyderabad.

8. *Shri M. Kunhammad Master*, President, Perambra Block Panchayat, Perambra, Kozhikode District, Kerala, on 20 August, 2012.

*Chief Guest: Shri Shivraj V. Patil*, His Excellency, the Governor of Punjab, Chandigarh.

*Guest of Honour: Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar*, Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) and Former Union Minister for Panchayati Raj, Govt. of India, New Delhi.

❖ **Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Best Gram Panchayat National Awards: 2005-2012.**

1. *Shri V. Panduranga Rao*, the then Sarpanch, Alagadapa Gram Panchayat, Miryalaguda Mandal, Nalgonda District, Andhra Pradesh, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2005.

*Chief Guest: Shri K.S.R. Murthy, IAS (Retd.)*, Former Secretary to Govt of India, New Delhi.

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2. *Smt. Lakshamma*, the then President, Bellandur Gram Panchayat, Bangalore Rural District, Karnataka, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2006.  
*Chief Guest: Shri Rameshwar Thakur*, His Excellency, the then Governor of Orissa and Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad.
3. *Shri K. Rajamouli*, Sarpanch, Gangadevi Palli Gram Panchayat, Geesukonda Mandal, Warangal District, Andhra Pradesh, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2007.  
*Chief Guest: Shri R.L. Bhatia*, HE, the then Governor of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram.
4. *Smt. R. Malarvizhi*, President, Manakkudi Gram Panchayat, Mayiladuthurai Taluk, Nagapattinam District, Tamil Nadu, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2008.  
*Chief Guest: Shri N.D.Tiwari*, His Excellency, the then Governor of A.P., Hyderabad.
5. *Shri K. Narayanan*, President, Karivellur-Peralam Gram Panchayat, Thaliparamba Taluk, Kannur District, Kerala, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2009.  
*Chief Guest: Smt. Prabha Rau*, Her Excellency, the then Governor of H.P., Shimla.
6. *Smt. Lingammal Shanmugam*, President, Odenthurai Gram Panchayat, Oomapalayam Block, Coimbatore District, Kerala, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2010.  
*Chief Guest: Prof. B.K. Chandrasekhar*, Former Chairman, Karnataka Legislative Council, Bangalore.
7. *Smt. Deva Deevena Kumari*, Sarpanch, Jegurupadu Gram Panchayat, Kadium Mandal, East Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, on 20 August, 2011.  
*Chief Guest : Dr. Agarala Easwara Reddi*, Former Speaker of Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly, Hyderabad.
8. *Shri Himanshu N. Patel*, Sarpanch, Punsari Gram Panchayat, Talod Taluk, Sabarkantha District, Gujarat, on 20 August, 2012.  
*Chief Guest: Shri Shivraj V. Patil*, His Excellency, the Governor of Punjab, Chandigarh.  
*Guest of Honour: Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar*, Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) and Former Union Minister for Panchayati Raj, Govt. of India, New Delhi.

## AGRASRI Foundation Day Lecture Programmes

The Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) has instituted its Foundation Day Lecture Programme in the year 2006 to mark the completion of 5 years of its existence. The AGRASRI has decided to organise its Foundation Day Lecture programme every year in the month of November, with Regional Workshop/Round-Table/Convention on a theme of contemporary relevance.

### **a. Fifth AGRASRI Foundation Day Lecture, 1 November, 2006.**

To mark the completion of five years of its existence, the Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) has organised One day Workshop on 'Good Governance in India – Right to Information as an Instrument' and 5<sup>th</sup> AGRASRI Foundation Day Lecture Programme on 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2006 in Hotel Bliss, Tirupati. *Sri R. Dileep Reddy*, the then State Information Commissioner (RTI), Govt. of A.P., Hyderabad, has participated in the programme as Chief Guest.

In the Foundation Day Lecture, *Sri Dileep Reddy* lamented that there is every need for creating awareness about Right to Information Act among people to ensure transparency and accountability in functioning of the government and bureaucracy. In his maiden lecture, *Sri Dileep Reddy* observed that RTI is a revolutionary act and social organisations also need to take the initiative and educate the people about the advantages of the act.

*Shri S. Ramachandra Reddy*, Former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) has participated in the workshop as Guest of Honour. In the workshop, nearly 18 Departmental heads of various Central as well as State Government of A.P. were participated and outlined the ongoing welfare activities and people friendly programmes, for achieving good governance.

Earlier *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Founder-Director of AGRASRI welcomed the distinguished gathering and outlined the objectives of the workshop and foundation day lecture. *Smt. D. Bharathi*, Co-founder of AGRASRI proposed a vote of thanks.

### **b. Sixth AGRASRI Foundation Day Lecture, 26 November, 2007.**

The Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India has organised One-day Round Table Meeting on the theme 'New Development Agenda in Andhra Pradesh: Implementation and Emerging Challenges' on 26<sup>th</sup> November, 2007 to mark the occasion

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of its Sixth Foundation Day Lecture programme at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati. *Dr. G. Kuthuhalamma*, Hon'ble the then Deputy Speaker of Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly, Hyderabad, has participated in the Foundation Day Lecture programme, as Chief Guest.

In the Sixth AGRASRI Foundation Day Lecture on '*Role of Legislators in Social Development: A Review*', *Dr. Kuthuhalamma* opines that the contemporary political situation disturbing the very vital foundations of the parliamentary democracy and the pandemonium and personal abuse against each others in the legislative institutions are the glaring examples of the present state of affairs in our legislative bodies. In respect of the status and position of the Panchayati Raj Institutions in contemporary India, the Deputy Speaker of AP Legislative Assembly said that there was no denying the fact that there were gaps in what the G.O.s said and what was actually being delivered on the field, especially with regard to the devolution of funds, functionaries and finances and so on.

Praising the previous old system of Panchayati Raj, *Dr. Kuthuhalamma* feels that the Sarpanches used to play a predominant role in the village affairs and said that the entire Panchayati Raj system has now lost its sheen as they merely played an ornamental role with no powers and funds; leave alone the teeth to govern the villages. She also regretted that there is no healthy debate in our Legislative bodies these days with both the ruling and the opposition groups wasting their time in their game for one-upmanship. Our founding fathers of the Constitution envisioned a high dignity and decorum in the Legislative bodies as instruments of public grievances and welfare of the people, but in contemporary times the discussions in these bodies not at all reflect the aspirations and expectations of the people.

Participating in the Round-Table Meeting, *Shri Chennamaneni Rajeswara Rao*, veteran freedom fighter and the then Vice-President of the Telugu Desam Legislature Party said that there was no point in beating the chest over the negative role of the bureaucracy because the elected representatives were to blame themselves for the present state of affairs in the administrative system. Expressing the anguish towards the present maladministration, *Shri Rajeswara Rao* pointed out that since the bureaucracy dominates the scene in day-to-day affairs of the administration right from the Centre to the grassroots, the elected representatives are puppets in their hands while discharging their role as policy makers, and compromised on their moral and ethical values without any regard whatsoever for the Constitution, democratic principles, rule of law, social justice and so on.

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*Dr. Agarala Easwara Reddy*, Former Speaker of Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly, said that the devolution of powers to the Panchayati Raj Institutions should be transferred immediately by the State Government, as per the 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitution Amendment Act and allocate 50 per cent of special funds other than regular funds to all the Gram Panchayats directly for procuring long pending infrastructure facilities.

*Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy*, Former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), who presided over the Round-Table Meeting regretted that though as many as 29 subjects were ordered to be transferred to the Panchayati Raj bodies under the 11<sup>th</sup> Schedule of the Constitution and 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment Act nearly 15 years ago, they still remained on paper and attributed it to the lack of political will and fair-mind in the bureaucracy to devolve the powers. He demanded that the Union Government should take steps in creating the Local Governments List, on par with the existing Union List, State List and Concurrent List of the Constitution of India, for effective local self-governance. *Shri Bathyala Chengalrayudu*, Member of Legislative Council of Andhra Pradesh suggested that all the Gram Panchayat offices should declare as Gram Sachivalayas, for autonomous and independent administration at the villages. Earlier, *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Founder-Director, Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI), welcomed the participants and explained the objects of the Round-Table meeting.

In the post-lunch session, the Round-Table meet discussed at length on the following sub-themes: a) Rural Development Programmes in Andhra Pradesh: Review; b) Role of Panchayati Raj Institutions in Social Transformation: An Observation; c) Agriculture and Irrigation Projects in Andhra Pradesh: Implementation and Experiments; d) Infrastructure Facilities in Andhra Pradesh State: Problems and Alternative Solutions and e) Role of NGOs and People's participation in Development Schemes: The Andhra Pradesh Experience. *Professor K.M. Naidu*, the then President, Indian Institute of Public Administration Tirupati Local Branch, presided the technical sessions with *Shri Ch. Rajeswara Rao*, the then Vice-President, Telugu Desam Legislature Party in AP Assembly and *Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy*, Former Rajya Sabha Member, as Chief Guest and Guest of Honour. *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Founder-Director of AGRASRI, coordinated the proceedings.

**c. Seventh AGRASRI Foundation Day Lecture, 22 November, 2008.**

The Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) has organised its 7<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day Lecture programme and One-day Round-Table Meeting on '*Telugu as an Official Language in Andhra Pradesh: Emerging Challenges*



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and Problems in its Implementation', on 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2008 at TTD-SVETA Bhavan, Tirupati.

*Shri A.B.K. Prasad*, the then Chairman, Andhra Pradesh Official Language Commission, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, has delivered the Seventh AGRASRI Foundation Day Lecture on '*Classical Status for Telugu Language : An Overview*'. Explaining the origin of the Telugu language and its usage by the rulers and administrators over a period of time, *Shri Prasad* lamented that unless all the stakeholders actively involves themselves in the task, mere rhetoric would in no way help Telugu sustain its position and stay afloat among the top Indian languages. It was in this context, *Shri Prasad* suggested that Universities should come forward to institute Chairs on Telugu Studies, as there should be no dearth of funds for the task, as Rs. 100 crore would be available to Andhra Pradesh in the wake of the classical language status conferred on Telugu.

Discussing the measures for effective implementation of Telugu as the official language in Andhra Pradesh state, *Shri Prasad* has regretted that despite all-round efforts, implementation of Telugu as the official language in administration and as the medium of instruction in the educational institutions has left much to be desired. *Shri Bhuman*, Director of SVETA, Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams, Tirupati, presided over the AGRASRI Seventh Foundation Day Lecture programme.

*Padma Shri Dr.Turlapaty Kutumba Rao*, Member, Kendriya Sahitya Academy, who played a crucial role securing the classical language status, delivered a Key-Note Address in the Round-Table Meeting. Participating as Chief Guest, *Dr. Kutumba Rao* described the mother tongue as the eye while English was only the spectacle which by itself would not provide vision. Expressing concern over the attitude and approach of the present younger generation, *Dr. Kutumba Rao* lamented that the immediate fallout of it was alienation of students from Telugu language, even if it was their mother tongue. Under these circumstances, *Dr.Kutumba Rao* suggested that Telugu should be developed as a public administration language and efforts should be made to see that the official language of the State is strictly implemented in every office and official procedure.

*Prof. S. Sudarsana Sarma*, Vice-Chancellor of Sri Venkateswara Vedic University, Tirupati, has participated in the Round-Table Meeting, as Guest of Honour. Emphasising the need for more focused research in Universities and Institutes, *Professor Sarma* suggested that the language experts and scholars should bring out

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multi-volume dictionaries, volumes, books and other literature on the abundant knowledgeable and sweet language telugu, for future generations.

Earlier, *Dr. D. Sudar Ram*, Founder Director of AGRASRI welcomed and explained activities and programmes of the Academy over a period of 7 years. *Smt. D. Bharathi*, Co-founder and Joint Director of AGRASRI proposed a vote of thanks.

In the post-lunch session, the Round-Table Meeting discussed various strategies and plan of action for effective implementation of Telugu, as an official language from Secretariat to Panchayat level in Andhra Pradesh. *Dr. R.A. Padmanabha Rao*, Former Deputy Director-General of Doordarshan, New Delhi and Vice-President of AGRASRI and *Shri Guttikonda Subba Rao*, President, Krishna District Writer's Association, Machilipatnam, were presided over the two post-lunch Technical Sessions. Among the other speakers were *Prof. K.J. Krishnamoorthy*, Professor of Oriental Language(Retd.), S.V.University,Tirupati, *Dr. G.V.Purnachand*, General-Secretary, Krishna District Writer's Association, Vijayawada, *Dr. Sakam Nagaraja*, President, Telugu Bhashodyama Samithi, Tirupati, *Dr. P. Chenchu Subbaiah*, Former Secretary, TTD Dharma Prachara Parishad, Tirupati, *Shri C. Sailakumar*, Chief Editor, Saptagiri Magazine, TTD, Tirupati, *Shri Kota Purushotham*, President, Abyudaya Rachayitala Sangam, Tirupati, *Shri A. Malleswara Rao*, Programme Executive, All India Radio, Kadapa. A large number of Telugu literary persons, press and electronic media, faculty and students of Sri Venkateswara University, S.V. Music College and Members of AGRASRI were attended the Technical Sessions and shared their views on the future course of Telugu language.

**d. Eighth AGRASRI Foundation Day Lecture, 22 November, 2009.**

As part of the 8<sup>th</sup> AGRASRI Foundation Day, the Academy has organised its Foundation Day Lecture on the above captioned theme on 22 November, 2009, at RASS Conference Hall, Tirupati. *Smt. Kuchipudi Vijaya*, Chairperson, Andhra Pradesh State Panchayati Mahila Shakti and Yuva Shakti Abhiyan, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, has delivered the 8<sup>th</sup> AGRASRI Foundation Day Lecture. *Smt. Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy*, Former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), Hyderabad, presided over the programme.

Delivering the 8<sup>th</sup> AGRASRI Foundation Day Lecture, *Smt. K. Vijaya*, Chairperson, Andhra Pradesh State Panchayati Mahila Shakti and Yuva Shakti Abhiyan, has stressed that the credit of providing reservation to women in local self-government bodies goes to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar first and Shri Rajiv Gandhi next, who was instrumental in bringing the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendments to the Constitution of India.

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Highlighting a key-role played by Sarpanch in gram panchayat administration, *Smt. Vijaya* feels that the women elected Sarpanchs are delivering good governance, transparent and less corrupt administration, compare with male elected representatives of panchayati raj institutions in India. Projecting the on-going hurdles in implementation of reservations for women in state and union legislatures, *Smt. Vijaya* argues that the women would inculcate the leadership qualities right from gram panchayat level as trusted leaders and utilise the opportunity being provided by the successive Governments. If women can succeed in questioning the male political authority and fulfil the responsibilities with people's participation, the sky is only the limit to the women empowerment.

Presiding over the programme, *Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy*, Chairman, Andhra Pradesh Local Bodies Empowerment Forum and former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), feels that successive governments at the centre have been prolonged the Women's Reservations Bill, purely based on gender bias at one level and apprehensions that if women are allowing in state and central legislatures, they may grow as parallel power structures to the male at another level.

Earlier, Founder-Director of AGRASRI, *Dr. D. Sundar Ram* welcomed the dignitaries and participants and outlined the objectives of the AGRASRI Foundation Day Lecture. *Dr. R.A. Padmanabha Rao*, Former Deputy Director-General of Doordarshan and Vice-President of AGRASRI, proposed a Vote of Thanks.

**e. Ninth AGRASRI Foundation Day Lecture, 20 August, 2010.**

As part of the 9<sup>th</sup> AGRASRI Foundation Day, the Academy has organised its Foundation Day Lecture on '*Role of Women in Panchayati Raj Institutions in India: Continuity and Change in Social Development*' on 20 August, 2010, at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati. *Prof. B.K. Chandrasekhar*, Former Chairman, Karnataka State Legislative Council, Bangalore, has delivered the 9<sup>th</sup> AGRASRI Foundation Day Lecture. *Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy*, Former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), Hyderabad, presided over the programme.

Delivering the 9<sup>th</sup> AGRASRI Foundation Day Lecture, *Professor B.K. Chandrasekhar*, Former Chairman, Karnataka Legislative Council, Bangalore, has illustrates that the Self-Help Group Movement in India is a necessary and, indeed, vital supplement to the political empowerment of women through our local bodies as the movement economically empowers women both as individuals and as groups. The combination of economic empowerment through the Self-Help Groups and

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political and social empowerment through the institutions of local self-government is changing the face of rural India. Utilising the potential of women capacities for inclusive growth, *Prof. B.K. Chandrasekhar* feels that the Government and Non-Governmental Organisations will put together their efforts for special training and sensitisation programmes for women right from the Grama Sabha to Lok Sabha and see that the overall improvement of their administrative skills and capabilities at the crucial juncture of 50 per cent Reservations for Women in Rural and Urban Local Bodies by the Govt. of India.

Presiding over the programme, *Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy*, Former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), emphasises that the opportunity would be utilised in all respects by the women and improve their administrative skills and capabilities as grassroots policy makers for delivering good governance.

Earlier, *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Founder-Director of AGRASRI, welcomed the dignitaries and invitees and outlined the objectives of the AGRASRI Foundation Day Lecture Programme.

*Dr. R.A. Padmanabha Rao*, Former Deputy Director-General of Doordarshan, New Delhi, proposed a vote of thanks.

**f. Tenth AGRASRI Foundation Day Lecture, 25 November, 2011.**

On the eve of the Decennial Celebrations of the Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India, the AGRASRI has organised its 10<sup>th</sup> *Foundation Day Lecture Programme* and 2-day Regional Workshop on ‘*Political Participation of Women in Decision-making for Inclusive Growth in India: Policy Initiatives and Implementation*’, on 25 and 26 November, 2011 at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati.

*Padma Bhushan Dr. V. Shanta*, Chairperson, Cancer Institute (WIA), Chennai, has delivered the 10<sup>th</sup> AGRASRI Foundation Day Lecture on ‘*Cancer in India : Emerging Challenges and Remedies*’. *Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy*, Former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) presided over the Inaugural Session of the Regional Workshop.

Earlier, *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Founder Director of AGRASRI, welcome to the dignitaries and invitees and outlined the objectives of the AGRASRI Foundation Day Lecture Programme and Regional Workshop.

*Smt. D. Bharathi Sundar*, Co-founder and Joint Director of AGRASRI, proposed a vote of thanks.



## Chittoor Zilla Visishta Ratna Centenary Award : 1911-2011

The Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) has organised 2-day Seminar '100 Years of Chittoor District: Birth Place of Many Legendary Personalities', on 1 and 2 April, 2011, at Tirupati, to mark the Centenary Celebrations of Chittoor District of Andhra Pradesh. The Seminar was inaugurated by *Shri G.V. Srinatha Reddy*, Former Chairman, Zilla Praja Parishad of Chittoor and Ex.MLA, with address. *Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy*, Former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), Hyderabad, presided over the inaugural session of the Seminar. *Dr. V. Sundara Naidu*, Chairman and Managing Director, VSN Hatcheries Pvt. Ltd., Chittoor, participated as Guest of Honour. *Prof. P.V. Arunachalam*, Former Vice-Chancellor of Dravidian University, Kuppam, delivered a Key-Note Address.

Earlier, *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Founder-Director of AGRASRI welcomed the dignitaries and delegates and outlined the objectives of the Seminar. *Dr. R.A. Padmanabha Rao*, Former Deputy Director-General of Doordarshan, New Delhi, proposed a Vote of Thanks.

In 4-Technical Sessions of the Seminar, held on 1 and 2 April, 2011, *Prof. H.S. Brahmananda*, Professor of Telugu (Retd.), Sri Krishnadevaraya University, Anantapur; *Prof. K. Sarvothamma Rao*, Professor of Telugu (Retd.), Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati; *Prof (Mrs) Kattamanchi Mahalakshmi*, Professor of Telugu (Retd.), Dravidian University, Kuppam; *Prof. Rani Sadasivamurthi*, Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth, Tirupati; *Prof. M. Krishnaiah*, Professor of Physics (Retd.), Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati; *Shri A. Malleswara Rao*, Station Director, All India Radio, Tirupati; *Dr. V. Hari Naidu*, President, District Sarpanchs Association, Chittoor; *Dr. V. Govinda Reddy*, Zonal Director (Retd.), Nehru Yuvak Kendra, Hyderabad; *Dr. P.V. Sessa Reddy*, District Panchayat Officer, Chittoor; *Shri S. Krishna Reddy*, Head Master (Retd.), Sri Venkateswara High School, Tirupati and *Shri M.Krishnamurthy*, DTDC Courier Franchisee, Tirupati and a host of intellectuals and scholars were presented their papers on the glory and pride of the Chittoor District, as birth place of many legendary personalities, besides its rich cultural heritage.

At the end of the Seminar, the Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India, has conferred the *Chittoor Zilla Visishta Ratna Award* on *Shri N.P. Chengalraya*

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*Naidu*, First President of District Board and Former Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha), on 2 April, 2011, in recognition of his meritorious contributions and services to the citizens of Chittoor District, in many capacities. *Dr. Agarala Easwara Reddi*, Former Speaker of Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly, Hyderabad, participated in the Award conferment programme, as Chief Guest. *Shri N.P. Venkateswara Choudary*, Former MLA, Chittoor and *Dr. G. Munirathnam*, General Secretary, RASS, Tirupati, were participated in the event, as Guests of Honour. *Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy*, Former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) presided over the programme. A special Souvenir on the Centenary Celebrations of Chittoor District, Published by AGRASRI was also released at the function to mark the occasion.

Earlier, *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Founder-Director of AGRASRI welcomed the dignitaries and invitees and outlined the objectives of the Chittoor Zilla Visishta Ratna Award programme. *Dr. R.A. Padmanabha Rao*, Former Deputy Director-General of Doordarshan, New Delhi proposed a Vote of Thanks.

A large number of Citizens of Chittoor District, including intellectuals, policy makers, bureaucrats, academics, people's representatives, social activists, literary fans, NGO's and media representatives attended the programme.

A summary of 2-days Seminar on Chittoor District Centenary Celebrations was broadcasted by the All India Radio, Tirupati Kendra, as 2 Reports for 30 minutes slot. The Electronic media like Doordharshan, ETV, Citi Cable TV and SCV Cable TV were also telecasted the two-day proceedings of the Seminar.

#### Roll of Honour

The following is the list of recipients of the Chittoor District Centenary Visishta Ratna Award from 2011 - 2012.

- 1) *Shri N.P. Chengalraya Naidu*, former Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha), Former MLA and MLC and First District Board Chairman, Chittoor, 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2011.

Chief Guest : *Dr. Agarala Eswara Reddi*, Former Speaker of A.P. Legislative Assembly, Hyderabad.

- 2) *Dr. Agarala Eswara Reddi*, Former Speaker of A.P. Legislative Assembly, Hyderabad, 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012.

Chief Guest : *Smt. Galla Aruna Kumari*, Hon'ble the then Minister for Mines and Geology, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad.

## Major Programmes of AGRASRI : 2002-2012



### PHOTO ALBUM

#### Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar

the then Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) and CWC Member lighting the lamp to mark the Inauguration of the Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2002 in Tirupati

**Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar**  
delivering the *First Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture* on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2002 in Tirupati under the aegis of Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India, Tirupati



**Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar** releasing the Special Commemorative Souvenir on *Rajiv Gandhi's Vision of Panchayat Raj* on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2002 in Tirupati

**Dr. K. Kesava Rao**  
former Minister for Higher Education, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh receiving the first copy of the Commemorative Souvenir from **Sri Mani Shankar Aiyar**.

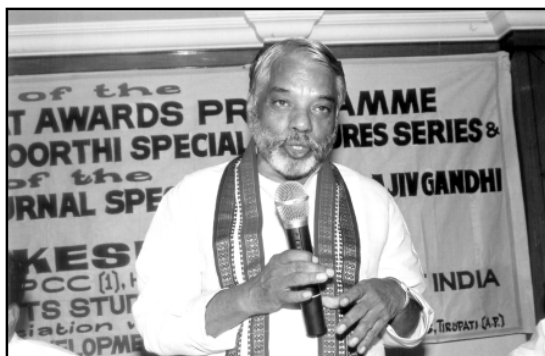
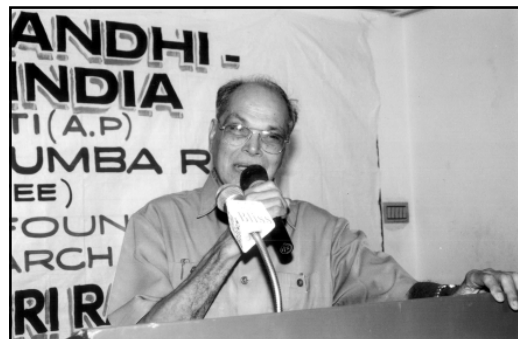


**Shri Shivraj V. Patil**, the then Deputy Leader of Congress Parliamentary Party in Lok Sabha delivering the *Second Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture* on 25<sup>th</sup> August 2003 in Tirupati, under the aegis of Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India, Tirupati



**Shri Shivraj V. Patil**, launching the new research journal, namely, *The Grassroots Governance Journal* on 25<sup>th</sup> August 2003 in Tirupati, being published by Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India.

**Padma Shri Dr. Turlapaty Kutumba Rao**, eminent Journalist delivering the *Third Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture* on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2004 in Tirupati



**Dr. K. Keshava Rao**, the then President of Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee (I) delivering a Special Lecture on Sri Rajiv Gandhi and Panchayati Raj, after launching the Bharat Ratna Gandhi Awards, held on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2005 in Tirupati.





**Dr. K. Keshava Rao**, the then President of Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee (I) releasing *The Grassroots Governance Journal Special Issue on Sri Rajiv Gandhi - A Visionary of Self-reliant India* on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2005 in Tirupati.

**Dr. Agalara Easwara Reddi**, Former Speaker of A.P. Legislative Assembly and Vice-President of IIPA, New Delhi, delivering Chief Guests' address at *Round-Table Meeting on Sri Rajiv Gandhi and National Integration*, held on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2005 in Tirupati, under the aegis of AGRASRI.



**Shri K.S.R. Murthy**, IAS(Retd.), Former Secretary to Government of India, conferring the *Bharata Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Best District Panchayat Award* to **Shri P. Nagabhushanam**, the then President, Guntur Zilla Parishad, Guntur on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2005 in Tirupati

**Shri T.N. Chaturvedi**, IAS(Retd.), His Excellency, the then Governor of Karnataka, delivering Chief Guest's address in the *Fourth Bharata Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture Programme*, held on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2005 in Tirupati



**Shri T.N. Chaturvedi, IAS(Retd.),**  
His Excellency, the then Governor of Karnataka,  
conferring the *Bharata Ratna Rajiv Gandhi*  
*Outstanding Leadership Award* to **Padma Bhushan**  
**Professor U.R. Rao**, Chairman, PRL Council,  
ISRO, Bangalore, on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2005 in  
Tirupati



**Padma Bhushan Professor U.R. Rao**,  
Chairman, PRL Council, ISRO, Bangalore,  
delivering the *Fourth Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi*  
*Memorial Lecture on Space Technology for*  
*Poverty Alleviation and Sustainable Development*,  
held on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2005 in Tirupati

**Shri P. Upendra**, Former Union Minister for  
Information & Broadcasting and Parliamentary  
Affairs, Govt. of India, launching the **Grama**  
**Sabha**, a new monthly Telugu magazine  
being published by AGRASRI,  
on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2005 in Tirupati



**Shri M.V. Rajasekharan**, the then Hon'ble  
Union Minister of State for Planning and Ex-Officio  
Member of Planning Commission delivering  
Inaugural address at the National Seminar on  
'*Panchayati Raj Institutions after 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitution*  
*Amendment - A New Deal for Rural India*' held on  
19<sup>th</sup> August, 2006, in Tirupati.

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**Padma Vibhushan Professor M.S. Swaminathan**, the then Chairman of the National Commission on Farmers, Govt. of India and Chairman of the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, Chennai delivering the *Fifth Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture* held on 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2006 in Tirupati.



**Shri Rameshwar Thakur**, His Excellency, the then Governor of Orissa and Andhra Pradesh, releasing the First Anniversary Special Issue of the **Grama Sabha** Monthly Telugu Magazine on 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2006 in Tirupati.

**Shri R. Dileep Reddy**, State Information Commissioner (RTI), Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, delivering the *Fifth AGRASRI Foundation Day Lecture* on 'Good Governance in India - Right to Information as an Instrument' held on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2006 in Tirupati.



**Professor N. Radhakrishnan**, Chairman of the Indian Council for Gandhian Studies, New Delhi delivering a *Special Lecture* on 'Relevance of Satyagraha in the Cyber Age' on the eve of Centenary Celebrations of Satyagraha held on 25<sup>th</sup> November, 2006 at Sri Venkateswara University Campus, Tirupati.

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**Dr. Jayaprakash Narayana, IAS (Retd.),** National Co-ordinator of Lok Satta and the then Member, National Advisory Council, Government of India delivering a *Key-Note address* at the National Panchayati Raj Day Celebrations in Tirupati held on 24<sup>th</sup> April, 2007.

**Dr. D. Sundar Ram**, Founder & Director of AGRASRI, accompanied with *Shri Chowdhury Parvez Ellahi*, Hon'ble the then Chief Minister of Punjab Province (Pakistan) and *Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar*, Hon'ble the then Union Minister for Panchayati Raj, Government of India, during Indo-Pak Delegation Visit in Lahore on 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 2007.

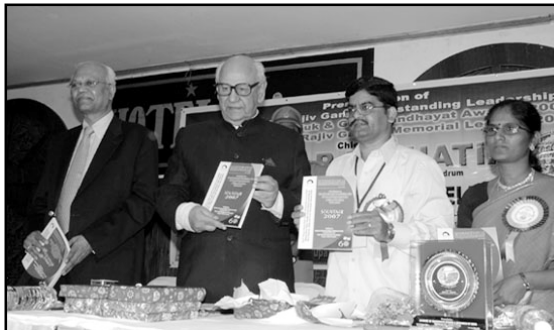


**Dr. A. Chakrapani**, Hon'ble Chairman, Andhra Pradesh Legislative Council, Hyderabad, delivering the Inaugural address at the National Conference on '*Role of Panchyati Raj Institutions after 60 Years of Independent India : A Vision of the Future*', held on 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2007 in Tirupati.

**Dr. A. Chakrapani**, Hon'ble Chairman, Andhra Pradesh Legislative Council, Hyderabad, releasing *The Grassroots Governance Journal*, June 2007 issue at the National Conference on '*Role of Panchyati Raj Institutions after 60 Years of Independent India : A Vision of the Future*', held on 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2007 in Tirupati.



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**Shri R.L. Bhatia**, His Excellency, the then Governor of Kerala, releasing the Special Souvenir at the National Conference on 'Role of Panchyati Raj Institutions after 60 Years of Independent India: A Vision of the Future', held on 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2007 in Tirupati.

**Shri R.L. Bhatia**, His Excellency, the then Governor of Kerala, conferring the *Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Outstanding Leadership Award 2007* on **Dr.R.A.Mashelkar**, the then President of Indian National Science Academy and CSIR Bhatnagar Fellow, National Chemical Laboratory, Pune on 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2007 in Tirupati.



**Shri R.L. Bhatia**, His Excellency, the then Governor of Kerala, delivering the *Chief Guest's address* at the 6<sup>th</sup> *Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture Programme* held on 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2007 in Tirupati, under the aegis of Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India.

**Shri R.L. Bhatia**, His Excellency, the then Governor of Kerala, releasing a book entitled '*Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi : A Visionary of Modern India*' published by **Dr. D. Sundar Ram**, Founder and Director of AGRASRI on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2007 in Tirupati



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**Shri R.L. Bhatia**, His Excellency, the then Governor of Kerala, appreciating and complimenting **Dr. D. Sundar Ram's** efforts in organising the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture and Awards programmes, under the aegis of Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India, on 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2007 in Tirupati,

**Dr. D. Sundar Ram**, Founder Director of AGRASRI presenting The Grassroots Governance Journal and a set of Publications to Norway Minister for Local Government and Regional Development, *Mrs. Magnhild Meltveit Kleppa*, at a Indo-Norway Symposium on *Experiences of Local Self-Government : India and Norway* held in Vigyan Bhavan New Delhi on 29 October 2007. The then Union Panchayati Raj Minister *Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar* introduced him to Norway Minister.



**Dr. G. Kuthuhamma**, the then Hon'ble Deputy Speaker of Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly, Hyderabad, delivering the *Sixth AGRASRI Foundation Lecture* on 'Role of Legislators in Social Development : A Perspective' held on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2007 in Tirupati.

**Shri Ch. Rajeswar Rao**, the then Deputy Leader of Telugu Desam Legislature Party in A.P. Assembly delivering the Guest of Honour's Address at the AGRASRI Round Table Meeting on *New Development Agenda in Andhra Pradesh : Implementation and Emerging Challenges*, held on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2007 at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati.



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**Smt. Prema Cariappa**, Chairperson, Central Social Welfare Board, Govt. of India, New Delhi delivering an Inaugural address at the National Conference on 'Empowerment of Women in Parliament and Local Self Government Institutions in India : Role, Status, Participation and Decision - making', held on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2008 at Hotel Bliss (Darbar Hall), Tirupati.

**Smt. Rajinitai Satav**, the then Chairperson, Maharashtra State Commission for Women, Mumbai, delivering the Special Invitee's address at the National Conference on 'Empowerment of Women in Parliament and Local Self Government Institutions in India : Role, Status, Participation and Decision - making', held on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2008 at Hotel Bliss (Darbar Hall), Tirupati.



**Padma Vibhushan Dr. C. Rangarajan**, Chairman of the Economic Advisory Council to Prime Minister of India, lighting the lamp to mark the 64<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversaries Celebrations of Shri Rajiv Gandhi held on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2008 at Hotel Bliss (Darbar Hall), under the aegis of Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India, Tirupati.

**Padma Vibhushan Dr. C. Rangarajan**, delivering the 7<sup>th</sup> Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture on 'Financial Inclusion in India : Need for Institutional Changes' on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2008 at Hotel Bliss (Darbar Hall), under the aegis of Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India, Tirupati.



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*Padma Vibhushan Dr. C. Rangarajan, conferring the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Best District Panchayat Award on Smt. Amarben Punjabhai Merani, President, District Panchayat, Surendra Nagar, Gujarat, on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2008 at Hotel Bliss (Darbar Hall), under the aegis of Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India, Tirupati.*

*Padma Vibhushan Dr. C. Rangarajan, conferring the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Best Taluk Panchayat Award on Smt. Shakuntala Meena, Pradhan, Sapotra Panchayat Samithi, Karauli District, Rajasthan, on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2008 at Hotel Bliss (Darbar Hall), under the aegis of Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India, Tirupati.*



*Padma Vibhushan Dr. C. Rangarajan, conferring the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Best Gram Panchayat Award on Smt. R. Malarvizhi, President, Manakkudi Gram Panchayat, Mayiladuturai Taluk, Nagapattinam District, Tamil Nadu, on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2008 at Hotel Bliss (Darbar Hall), under the aegis of Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India, Tirupati.*

*Padma Vibhushan Dr. C. Rangarajan, releasing the AGRASRI Director Dr. D.Sundar Ram's book on 'Quest for Political Stability in India : Essays on Governance, Democracy and Development' on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2008 at Hotel Bliss (Darbar Hall), Tirupati.*





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*Padma Vibhushan Dr. C. Rangarajan, releasing the AGRASRI bi-annual research journal namely 'The Grassroots Governance Journal' (June 2008) on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2008 at Hotel Bliss (Darbar Hall), Tirupati.*

*Padma Shri Dr. (Smt.) Jaya Arunachalam, President, Working Women's Forum, Chennai, delivering the Valedictory Address at the National Conference on 'Empowerment of Women in Parliament and Local Self Government Institutions in India : Role, Status, Participation and Decision-making', held on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2008 at Hotel Bliss (Darbar Hall), Tirupati.*



*Prof. G. Sarojamma, Vice-Chancellor, Sri Padmavathi Mahila Viswavidyalayam, Tirupati delivering the Inaugural Address at the 3-day Regional Workshop on 'Grassroots Women Leadership in Andhra Pradesh', held on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2009 at RASS Conference Hall, Tirupati, under the aegis of AGRASRI.*

*Smt. K. Santha Reddy, Former Member, National Commission for Women, New Delhi, delivering the Valedictory Address at the 3-day Regional Workshop on 'Grassroots Women Leadership in Andhra Pradesh', held on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2009 at RASS Conference Hall, Tirupati, under the aegis of AGRASRI.*



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**Smt. K. Vijaya**, Chairperson, Andhra Pradesh Panchayati Mahila Shakti Abhiyan, Hyderabad, delivering the 8<sup>th</sup> AGRASRI Foundation Day Lecture on 'Reservations for Women in Panchayati Raj Institutions : An Instrument for Social Development', held on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2009 at RASS Conference Hall, Tirupati, under the aegis of AGRASRI.

**Dr. G. Munirathnam**, President, Akhil Bharath Rachanatmak Samaj, New Delhi, delivering Guest of Honour's address at the 8<sup>th</sup> AGRASRI Foundation Day Lecture Programme held on, 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2009 at RASS Conference Hall, Tirupati, under the aegis of AGRASRI.



**Smt. N. Vijaya Lakshmi**, State Vice-President, Telugu Desam Party Mahila Vibhagam, Hyderabad, delivering the Special Invitee's Address at the 3-day Regional Workshop on 'Grassroots Women Leadership in Andhra Pradesh', held on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2009 at RASS Conference Hall, Tirupati, under the aegis of AGRASRI.

**Shri S. Ramachandra Reddy**, Former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), New Delhi, delivering the President's Address at the 3-day Regional Workshop on 'Grassroots Women Leadership in Andhra Pradesh', held on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2009 at RASS Conference Hall, Tirupati, under the aegis of AGRASRI.



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**Shri A.N. Tiwari, IAS (Retd.)**, Central Information Commissioner (RTI), Govt. of India, New Delhi, lighting the lamp to mark the Inauguration of the National Colloquium on '*Grassroots Level Planning and Local Government Institutions in India : Policy Initiatives and People's Participation Since 1992*', held on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2009 at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati, under the aegis of AGRASRI.

*Padma Vibhushan Dr. G. Madhavan Nair*, the then Chairman of ISRO, Bangalore, delivering the 8<sup>th</sup> Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture on '*Space Technology Applications for Rural Development*' held on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2009 at Hotel Bliss (Darbar Hall), under the aegis of AGRASRI, Tirupati.



**Dr. Agarala Eswara Reddi**, Former Speaker of Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly, conferring the *Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Outstanding Leadership Award* on **Padma Vibhushan Dr. G. Madhavan Nair**, on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2009 at Hotel Bliss (Darbar Hall), under the aegis of Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India, Tirupati.

*Padma Vibhushan Dr. G. Madhavan Nair*, the then Chairman of ISRO, Bangalore, releasing the AGRASRI Research Publication on *Women Empowerment in Political Institutions : An Indian Perspective* on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2009 at Hotel Bliss (Darbar Hall), Tirupati.



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**Dr. D. Sundar Ram**, Founder Director of AGRASRI interacting with *Padma Bhushan Prof. U.R. Rao*, Chairman, PRL Council, ISRO, Bangalore, at ISRO Head Quarters, Bangalore on 29<sup>th</sup> June , 2010.

**Dr. D. Sundar Ram**, Founder Director of AGRASRI interacting with *Padma Vibhushan Dr. G. Madhavan Nair*, Former Chairman, ISRO, on 29<sup>th</sup> June, 2010 at ISRO Head Quarters, Bangalore.



**Dr. D. Sundar Ram**, Founder Director of AGRASRI with **Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar**, Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), **Dr. Suman Bery**, Member, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister of India and other dignitaries during *International Round Table on Decentralised Governance*, held at the Institute of Social and Economic Change, Bangalore, on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2010.

**Dr. D. Sundar Ram**, Founder Director of AGRASRI and **Prof. G. Palanithurai** of Gandhigram Rural University interacting with **Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar**, Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), during *International Round Table on Decentralised Governance*, held at the Institute of Social and Economic Change, Bangalore, on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2010.

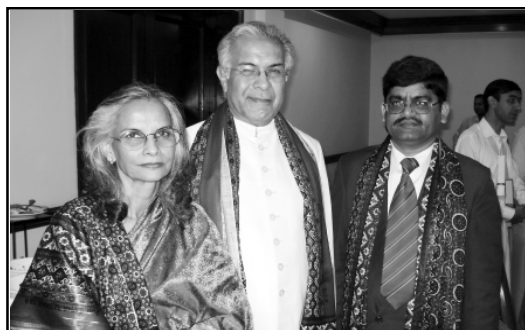


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**Dr. D. Sundar Ram**, Founder Director of AGRASRI interacting with **Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar**, Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), during *International Round Table on Decentralised Governance*, held at the Institute of Social and Economic Change, Bangalore, on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2010.

**Dr. D. Sundar Ram**, Founder Director of AGRASRI interacting with **Prof. L.C. Jain**, Former Member, Planning Commission of India and Indian High Commissioner to South Africa, during Indo-Pak delegation Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2007 in Lahore.



**Dr. D. Sundar Ram**, Founder Director of AGRASRI with **Shri Wajahat Habibullah**, Chief Information Commissioner (RTI), Govt. of India and **Mrs. Wajahat Habibullah**, during Indo-Pak delegation State Dinner in Lahore on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2007.

**Dr. D. Sundar Ram**, Founder Director of AGRASRI, interacting with **Padma Vibhushan Prof. M.S. Swaminathan**, World renowned Agricultural Scientist, during 5<sup>th</sup> *Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture Programme* held at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati on 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2006, under the aegies of AGRASRI, Tirupati



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**Dr. D. Sundar Ram**, Founder Director of AGRASRI, interacting with the Gram Panchayat Sarpanchs and MPTC Members at the Capacity Building and Training Programme held at Irala MPDO's meeting hall on 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2010, under BRGF Scheme, in joint collaboration with the AP Academy of Rural Development, Govt. of AP, Hyderabad.

**Shri R. Dileep Reddy**, State Information Commissioner (RTI), Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, interacting with Gram Panchayat Sarpanchs and MPTC Members, during Capacity Building and Training Programme, held on 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2010 at Irala MPDO's Meeting Hall.



**Dr. Agarala Eswara Reddi**, Former Speaker of AP Legislative Assembly; **Shri M.K. Singh**, IPS, Chief Vigilance & Security Officer, TTD; **Prof. K. Rathnaiah**, Rector, Sri Venkateswara University; **Dr. D. Sundar Ram**, Director of AGRASRI, Paying Tributes to Shri Rajiv Gandhi on his 19<sup>th</sup> Death Anniversary Celebrations, held on 20 August 2010 at RASS Conference Hall, Tirupati.

**Dr. D. Sundar Ram**, Founder Director of AGRASRI speaking at the Anti - Terrorism Day Work Shop held on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2010 at RASS Conference Hall, Tirupati, organised on the eve of 19<sup>th</sup> Death Anniversary Celebrations of Shri Rajiv Gandhi, under the aegis of AGRASRI.



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NCC - Andhra Batalian 29 organising Anti-Terrorism Day Rally on 21 May 2010 at Tirupati on the eve of 19<sup>th</sup> Death Anniversary of Shri Rajiv Gandhi by AGRASRI and RRDF, Tirupati

**Prof. B.K. Chandrasekhar**, Former Chairman of Karnataka Legislative Council, Bangalore, conferring the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Mahila Shakti Award for the Year 2010 on **Padma Bhusan Dr (Mrs) Manju Sharma**, Former Secretary, Dept. of Bio-technology, Govt. of India, on 20 August, 2010 at Hotel Bliss, Tirupati



**Padma Bhusan Dr (Mrs) V. Mohini Giri**, Chairperson, Guild of Service and Member, National Integration Council, New Delhi, delivering the 9<sup>th</sup> Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2011 at India International Centre Annex Auditorium, New Delhi, under the aegis of AGRASRI and RRDF, Tirupati

**Dr. Subhash C. Kashyap**, Former Secretary General of Lok Sabha and Chairman of AGRASRI delivering the Presidential Address at the 9<sup>th</sup> Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture programme held on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2011 at India International Centre Annex Auditorium, New Delhi, under the aegis of AGRASRI and RRDF, Tirupati



## **Capacity Building and Training Programmes for Elected Representatives of PRI's**

The Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) is officially recognised as *Nodal Agency/Technical Support Institute*, by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Govt. of India, New Delhi, under the BRGF component Capacity Building and Training, in the Year 2010. In implementing the scheme, the Academy has successfully completed a series of Capacity Building & Training Programmes for 16,000 plus elected representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions (Sarpanchs, MPTC Members and Ward Members) in Chittoor District, in joint collaboration with AMR- Andhra Pradesh Academy of Rural Development (APARD), Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad.

### **a. Sarpanchs & MPTC Members Capacity Building & Training Programmes**

The Capacity Building & Training Programmes for nearly 2,300 Sarpanchs and MPTC Members in Chittoor District, organised in 65 Batches by AGRASRI, in joint collaboration with APARD, Hyderabad, during 10 March - 7 April, 2010:

### **b. Gram Panchayat Upa-Sarpanch and Ward Members Capacity Building & Training Programmes**

The Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India has successfully organised the Capacity Building & Training programmes, for nearly 13,170 Upa-Sarpanchs and Ward Members of Gram Panchayats in Chittoor District in 214 Batches, from September 13 to October 21, 2010, in joint collaboration with APARD, Hyderabad.

For more details visit the Academy Website : [www.agrasri.org.in](http://www.agrasri.org.in)

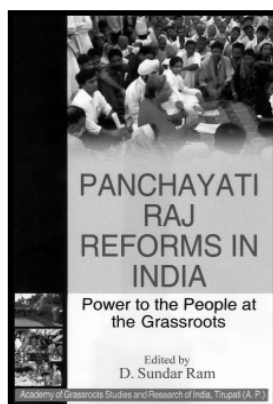


## Research Publications of AGRASRI

Apart from regular publication of *The Grassroots Governance Journal* (Bi-annual in English), the Academy has published a good number of books, occasional papers, working papers and souvenirs, since its inception.

The following is the list of latest research books, brought out by the Academy:

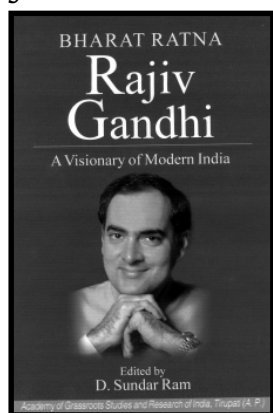
### ❖ Research Books



1. *Panchayati Raj Reforms in India : Power to the People at the Grassroots*, D. Sundar Ram (Editor), Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India and Kanishka Publishers, Distributors, New Delhi, 2007, 327 pages, ISBN: 81-7391-925-9, Foreword by Shri M.V. Rajasekharan, Hon'ble Union Minister for Planning, Govt. of India, New Delhi.

#### Summary of the Book

*The 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendments aimed at the empowerment of Panchayati Raj Institutions were a progressive step towards democratic decentralisation, generating considerable hopes that these would result in the realisation of Gandhiji's dream of Gram Swaraj. The Sixteen Chapters in this Volume by a distinguished group of scholars and experts provide an overview of the changing role of the Panchayati Raj Institutions in India at the grassroots level, in the process of decentralisation and devolution of powers. Examining the administrative and political lacunae in the functioning of the Institutions of Self-government, this Volume explores a real insight into the issue of major haunting dilemmas of the grassroots democratic institutions in contemporary India.*



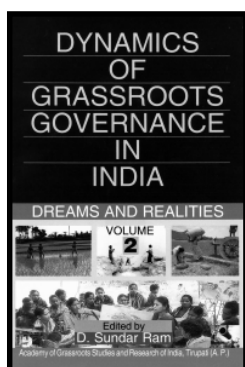
2. *Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi: A Visionary of Modern India*, D. Sundar Ram (Editor), Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India and Kanishka Publishers, Distributors, New Delhi, 2007, 253 pages, ISBN: 81-7391-926-7, Foreword by Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar, Hon'ble Union Minister for Panchayati Raj and Development of North-East India, Govt. of India, New Delhi.

#### Summary of the Book

*Energetic, young and charismatic leader Shri Rajiv Gandhi have taken India to her glorious future and into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century had*

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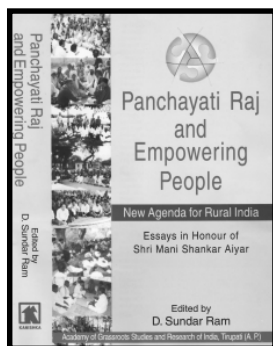
his dreams. Rajiv Gandhi has carved for himself an unforgettable place in the history of contemporary India. The Twenty-five Chapters in the book are written by the distinguished parliamentarians, policy makers, jurists, civil servants, administrators, academics and researchers. The amount of articles and reminiscences that has been disseminated through this excellent book is testify to the accomplishments of Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi – as a policy maker, a politician, a visionary, a reformer, a secularist and a humanist. This lucid and comprehensive book explores the ideals and vision of Shri Rajiv Gandhi towards self-reliant modern India.



3. *Dynamics of Grassroots Governance in India: Dreams and Realities, Set in 2 Volumes*, D. Sundar Ram (Editor), Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India and Kanishka Publishers, Distributors, New Delhi, 2007, 261+314 pages, ISBN: 81-7391-931-3, Foreword by Professor M.S. Swaminathan, Chairman, National Commission on Farmers, Govt. of India, New Delhi.

*Summary of the Book*

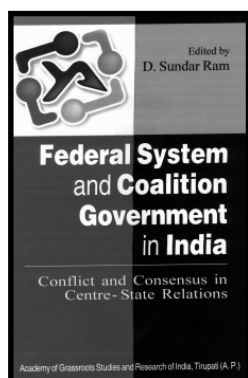
This important Volume (set in 2 parts) constitutes a significant contribution to the on-going search for alternatives to the dilemmas of the grassroots democratic institutions over last several years. A distinguished panel of authors review the strength and weaknesses of the existing Panchayati Raj Institutions- whether it serves the basic needs and aspirations of the people at the grassroots level or have become obsolete and, if so, whether a systematic change is required. Providing an analytical description of the dynamics of the grassroots institutions with Indian experience, these 2 volumes provide a important insights and analytical tools to the debate on the good governance at the grassroots level and draws attention to various unresolved issues and dilemmas. These timely volumes seek to examine the dilemmas and realities of the rural people towards good governance objectively and dispassionately.



4. *Panchayati Raj and Empowering People : New Agenda for Rural India – Essays in Honour of Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar*, D. Sundar Ram (Editor), Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India and Kanishka Publishers, Distributors, New Delhi, 2007, 472 pages, ISBN: 81-7391-927-5, Foreword by Shri Inder Kumar Gujral, Former Prime Minister of India, New Delhi.

### Summary of the Book

*The present Volume aims at looking the implementation of various provisions of 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act of 1992 from the standpoint of devolution of powers to the Panchayati Raj Institutions by the respective State Governments and draw out a new deal for rural India in the context of second generation of Panchayati Raj reforms. The Thirty-one Chapters in the Festschrift Volume in Honour of Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar- written by distinguished panel of policy makers, administrators and scholars – highlight the major problems being faced by the Panchayati Raj Institutions in respect of 3 F's – Functions, Finances and Functionaries and the solutions of the same are given in a comprehensive way. This Volume provides a timely and comprehensive review of the policy perspectives with analyses of the implementation of the provisions of 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act, in letter and spirit for empowering people at the grassroots.*

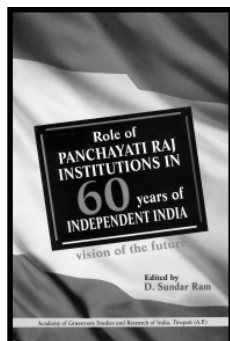


5. *Federal System and Coalition Government in India: Conflicts and Consensus in Centre-State Relations*, D. Sundar Ram (Editor), Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India and Kanishka Publishers, Distributors, New Delhi, 2007, 342pages, ISBN: 81-7391-928-3, Foreword by Shri T.N. Chaturvedi, Governor of Karnataka, Bangalore.

### Summary of the Book

*The dynamics of federalism, in the context of the Indian scenario has invariably been the major focus of attention in any discussion of Indian polity and governance in contemporary times. The Sixteen Chapters in the present Volume are written by outstanding authorities on the subject 'Federalism and Coalition Politics'. These Chapters record the experiences and thinking of these authorities on some of the newer issues that confront the federal system in India, under new dispensation of coalition era. This Volume explores the various facets of the dynamics of federalism, good governance, role of governor, demand for state autonomy and peripheral topics. It is in this context that the present Volume focuses on the need to carry out a futuristic introspection of Centre-State relations in the context of a new era of coalition politics and governance at the centre and suggest the ways and mean to evolve a mechanism for a healthy Union-State relations in India.*

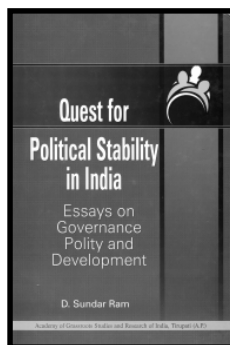
6. *Role of Panchayati Raj Institutions in 60 Years of Independent India: Vision of the Future*, D. Sundar Ram (Editor), Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India



and Kanishka Publishers, Distributors, New Delhi, 2008, 414 pages, ISBN: 81-8457-087-8.

*Summary of the Book*

*The Panchayati Raj Institutions have a great role to play for the development of the national programmes, for providing economic development and social justice to the rural people of India. The present Volume aims at looking the pros and cons of the working of the Panchayati Raj Institutions over a period of Six decades of India's Independence and 15 Years of the gazeting and entry into force of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment (Part IX- The Panchayats) of the Constitution and draw out a blue print for the vision in the context of further reforms and delivering a good governance at the grassroots. The Twenty-five Chapters in the present Volume by distinguished policy makers, scientists, administrators and scholars provide a comprehensive review of the initiatives of various governments at the federal as well as state levels in bringing out a revolutionary panchayati raj reforms, through 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act of 1992 and various State Panchayati Raj Acts, for transformation of rural India. The distinguished panel of contributors of the Volume identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the Panchayati Raj Institutions over a period of 60 Years of Independent India and suggests a holistic reforms package for efficient functioning of the grassroots democratic institutions for delivering good governance.*



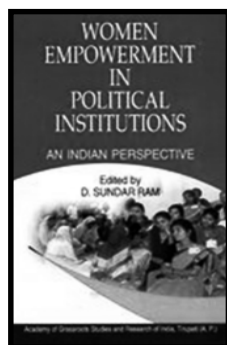
7. *Quest for Political Stability in India: Essays on Governance, Polity and Development*, D. Sundar Ram, Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India and Kanishka Publishers, Distributors, New Delhi, 2008, 190 pages, ISBN: 81-8457-090-8.

*Summary of the Book*

*The political events in India since 1989 have exposed the instability inherent in the parliamentary form of government when it comes to dealing with coalitions. It is well recognised fact that the effective political stability is an essential requisite for the successful functioning of federal government based on parliamentary democracy. Unfortunately, the credibility of coalition government in contemporary India has suffered a grievous blow in the last 15 years or so with the murky politics. In the context of fluid political situation prevailed in India after 1996 Lok Sabha elections, general question about the stability of coalition government is being raised. Providing a comprehensive overview of the working of the*

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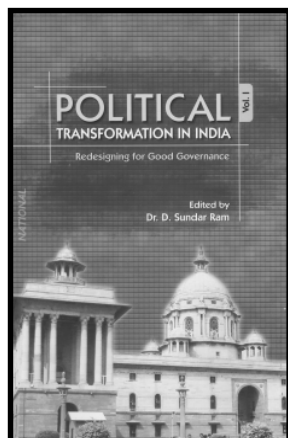
political system in an era of coalitions with Indian experience, the present book focuses on the quest for political stability in a holistic perspective. The book also deals with the pre-requisites of development agenda like good governance, healthy polity and inclusive growth and development in a realistic manner.



8. *Empowerment of Women in Political Institutions: An Indian Perspective*, D. Sundar Ram (Editor), Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India and Kanishka Publishers, Distributors, New Delhi, 2009, 278 pages, ISBN: 81-8457-161-5.

*Summary of the Book*

This book is a collection of fourteen original essays presented by prominent policy makers, academicians, researchers, social workers and women activists at the National Conference on 'Empowerment of Women in Parliament and Local Self-Government Institutions in India: Role, Status, Participation and Decision-Making', held at Tirupati, which was organised by the Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India, Tirupati and sponsored by the National Commission for Women, Govt. of India, New Delhi. The present book aims at looking the pros and cons of the empowerment of women in Indian polity and governance and draw out a blue print for the vision and perspectives of various political parties towards the reservation of seats for women in Indian Parliament and State Legislatures in proportionate to their population. This valuable book brings together a range of perspectives concerning the causes of and solutions to the problem of women political empowerment in India. The focus is not simply on describing challenging situations or the un-met needs of women in political arena, but also to offer examples of positive solutions and successful initiatives on behalf of Indian women.



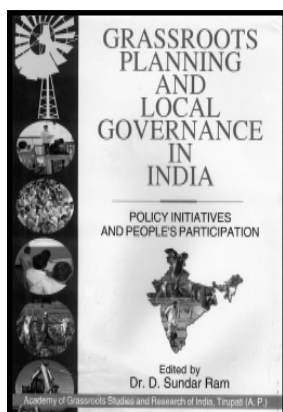
9. *Political Transformation in India: Redesigning for Good Governance*, 2 Volumes, D. Sundar Ram (Editor), Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India and National Publishing House, Jaipur, 2010, 304 & 352 pages, ISBN: 81-8018-028-X, Foreword by Justice Shri M.N. Venkatachaliah, Former Chief Justice of India, New Delhi.

*Summary of the Book*

Today, it is a widely accepted fact that India is a successful democratic nation in the Third World countries, with a full-fledged parliamentary system. One of the dominant debates

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concerning India in developing nations relates to the functioning of democratic institutions in improving human development. However, our hopes and dreams lie shattered, though our nation committed from the very beginning to carry forward political freedom to economic emancipation of the masses, the dispossessed and the down-trodden. This major task concerning the largest segment of the populace in our democracy has remained unfulfilled in these 60 years since the foundation of our republic. The Forty-nine Chapters in the 2-part Volume contributed by a distinguished and eminent policy-makers, parliamentarians, jurists, administrators, civil servants, diplomats, economists, scientists, constitutional experts, political scientists, social activists and academics, highlight the major problems and challenges India has faced in its growth and development over a period of Six decades of experience and experimentation as a unique parliamentary democratic nation.



10. *Grassroots Planning and Local Governance in India: Policy Initiatives and People's Participation*, D. Sundar Ram (Editor), Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India and Kanishka Publishers, Distributors, New Delhi, 2010. 394 pages. ISBN: 978-81-8457-241-4.

*Summary of the Book*

The 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Amendments to the Constitution gave constitutional status to local self-governments and provided a new, more politically underpinned, universalised platform for decentralised planning from below. As a result of decentralisation, local bodies have become responsible for a number of services to be delivered to the people at the grassroots level. With the responsibilities of rural and urban local government institutions expanding and with their role and reach poised for further enlargement in the foreseeable future, there is a need of hour to formulate a grassroots level planning. The plan for each local government should expect people's priorities in the context of local needs and should be broadly consistent with state policy and priorities. The present Volume aims to map the spectrum of new vision for inspiring journey into the future of Panchayati Raj and Nagar Palika Institutions, with more powers and functions. This Volume is a collection of 23 original essays presented by prominent policy makers, academicians, researchers, administrators, social activists and planners at the National Colloquium, held under the aegis of Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India, in August 2009, in Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh.

11. *Reservations for Women in Rural and Urban Local Bodies in India: Equal Partners in Decision-Making Process*, D. Sundar Ram (Editor), Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India and Kanishka Publishers, Distributors, New Delhi, 2012. 222 pages. ISBN: 978-81-8457-325-1.

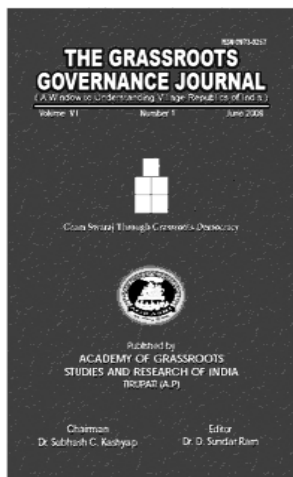
*Summary of the Book*

Women empowerment in local governance is increasingly being recognised as an important requisite for the fulfillment of inclusive growth and sustainable development in contemporary India. Provision of 50 per cent of reservation for women in rural and urban local bodies is a right step to empower them politically. It is true that the enhancement of reservation for women in rural and urban local bodies would ensure their increased representation and participation. Today, we see that a few women elected representatives of local self-government institutions, who not only are accomplishing well but also are awarded their excellence in their governance in India. However, it is true that gender sensitive grassroots governance under the existing system of Panchayati Raj is possible only if women gain 'voice' and 'rights'. Women are capable of leading the society on the right path, given a chance. Thus, if women were politically empowered they would be able to participate in the planning, execution and implementation of developmental schemes. The present volume is a collection of 12 original essays presented at the 2-day National Convention, held in August, 2010 in Tirupati, organized by the Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India, Tirupati, and sponsored by the National Commission for Women, Govt. of India, New Delhi.

12. *Grama Sabha Institution in India: Role and Significance in Decision-making at the Grassroots*, D. Sundar Ram (Editor), Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India and Kanishka Publishers, Distributors, New Delhi, 2012.
13. *Human Rights and Duties Education in 21<sup>st</sup> Century: The Indian Experience*, D. Sundar Ram (Editor), Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India and National Publishing House, Jaipur, 2012. Foreword by Justice Shri V.R. Krishna Iyer, Former Judge, Supreme Court of India, New Delhi.
14. *Development Paradox in Rural India: Inclusive Growth through Inclusive Governance*, D. Sundar Ram (Editor), Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India and Kanishka Publishers, Distributors, New Delhi, 2012.

## ✦ Research Journal

**The Grassroots Governance Journal (ISSN:0973-0257)**



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The annual subscription of the journal is Rs. 640/- for Institutions and Rs. 540/- for Individuals. The subscription amount should be made by Demand Draft/Cheque drawn in favour of AGRASRI, Tirupati, payable at Tirupati, in any nationalised bank. For more details, please contact *Dr. D. Sundar Ram*, Editor, The Grassroots Governance Journal, # Plot No.11, Sri Venkata Sai Nilayam, Thummalagunta, S.V. University P.O. Tirupati-517502, A.P. Telefax: 0877-2244777 E.mail: drsundarram@ gmail.com Website: www.agrasri.org.in

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The Academy has successfully published the following issues of The Grassroots Governance Journal since 2003 onwards:

1. *The Grassroots Governance Journal*, Vol.1, No.1, January-June, 2003, Pp.1-128.
2. *The Grassroots Governance Journal*, Vol.1, No.2, July-December, 2003, Pp.129-257.
3. *The Grassroots Governance Journal*, Vol.2, No.1, January-June, 2004, Pp. 1-153.



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4. *The Grassroots Governance Journal*, Vol.2, No.2, July-December, 2004, 154-327.
5. *The Grassroots Governance Journal*, Vol.3, No.1, January-June, 2005, Pp.1-118.
6. *The Grassroots Governance Journal*, Vol.3, No.2, July-December, 2005, Pp.119-290.
7. *The Grassroots Governance Journal*, Vol.4, No.1, January-June, 2006, Pp.1-156.
8. *The Grassroots Governance Journal*, Vol.4, No.2, July-December, 2006, Pp.157-355.
9. *The Grassroots Governance Journal*, Vol.5, No.1, January-June, 2007, Pp.1-140.
10. *The Grassroots Governance Journal*, Vol.5, No.2, July-December, 2007, Pp.141-404.
11. *The Grassroots Governance Journal*, Vol.6, No.1, January-June, 2008, Pp.1-164.
12. *The Grassroots Governance Journal*, Vol.6, No.2, July-December, 2008, Pp.165-293.
13. *The Grassroots Governance Journal*, Vol.7, No.1&2, January-December, 2009, Pp.1-187.
14. *The Grassroots Governance Journal*, Vol.8, No.1&2, January-December, 2010, 1-132.
15. *The Grassroots Governance Journal*, Vol.9, No.1&2, January-December, 2011, 1-154.
16. *The Grassroots Governance Journal*, Vol.10, No.1, January-June, 2012, 1-136.
17. *The Grassroots Governance Journal*, Vol.10, No.2, July-December, 2012, 136-210.

❖ **Occasional Papers**

The Academy has published the speeches and lectures of some distinguished policy makers as *Occasional Papers* from time to time, for immense benefit of the Members of AGRASRI and researchers.

The following is the list of some selected *Occasional Papers*, published by the Academy since its inception:

1. Panchayati Raj in India: An Institution for Grassroots Development (*Text of the First Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture, held on 20 August, 2002*).  
Mani Shankar Aiyar
2. Rajiv Gandhi and Modern India: Dreams and Vision (*Text of the Second Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture, held on 25 August, 2003*).  
Shivraj V. Patil
3. Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi: A Visionary for 21<sup>st</sup> Century India (*Text of the Third Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture held on 20 August, 2004*).  
Turlapaty Kutumba Rao
4. Democratic Decentralisation and 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act: The Indian Experience (*Text of Chief Guest's Address at the Inauguration of Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Awards programme, held on 19 January, 2005*).  
K. Keshava Rao

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5. Space Technology for Poverty Alleviation and Sustainable Development (*Text of the Fourth Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture, held on 23 September, 2005*).  
U.R. Rao
6. Social Sensitivity of Scientific Community in India: Approach and Requirements (*Text of Chief Guest's Address at the Fourth Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture programme, held on 23 September, 2005*).  
T.N. Chaturvedi
7. Indian Farmers in 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Mission and Vision (*Text of the Fifth Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture, held on 20 August, 2006*)  
M.S. Swaminathan
8. Panchayati Raj Institutions in India: Shri Rajiv Gandhi's Vision (*Text of Chief Guest's Address at the Fifth Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture Programme, held on 20 August, 2006*).  
Rameshwar Thakur
9. Panchayati Raj Institutions in Contemporary India: Future Agenda (*Text of Inaugural Address at the National Conference on PRI's after 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act, held on 19 August, 2006*).  
M.V. Rajasekharan
10. Good Governance and Right to Information Act: An Instrument of the People (*Text of the Fifth AGRASRI Foundation Day Lecture, held on 1 November, 2006*).  
R. Dileep Reddy
11. Re-invent Gandhi's Satyagraha for India without Hunger and Violence (*Text of the Special Lecture on Relevance of Satyagraha in the Cyber Age, held on 25 November, 2006*).  
N. Radhakrishnan
12. Whither the Local Self-Government Institutions in India? (*Text of the Key-Note Address at the Workshop on PRI's after 15 Years of 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act: Need for Second Generation Reforms, held on 24 April, 2007*).  
N. Jayaprakash Narayana, IAS (Retd.)
13. Panchayati Raj Institutions in India: An Instrument of Participatory Democracy (*Text of Inaugural Address at the National Conference on Role of PRI's in 60 Years of Independent India, held on 19 August, 2007*).  
A. Chakrapani

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14. Synthesising New Indian Knowledge and Innovation Systems (*Text of the Sixth Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture, held on 20 August, 2007*).  
R.A. Mashelkar
15. Rajiv Gandhi: An Architect of Modern India (*Text of Chief Guest's Address at the Sixth Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture programme, held on 20 August, 2007*).  
R.L. Bhatia
16. Role of Legislators in Social Development: A Perspective (*Text of the Sixth AGRASRI Foundation Day Lecture, held on 26 November, 2007*).  
G. Kuthuhallamma
17. Women Representation in Indian Political Institutions: Role, Status, Participation and Decision- Making (*Text of Inaugural Address at the National Conference on Empowerment of Women in Parliament and Local Self-Government Institutions in India, held on 19 August, 2008*).  
Prema Cariappa
18. Towards Social Transformation in India: Quantitative Indicators of Women Empowerment (*Text of Valedictory Address at the National Conference on Empowerment of Women in Parliament and Local Self-Government Institutions in India held on 20 August, 2008*).  
Jaya Arunachalam
19. Financial Inclusion in India: Need for Institutional Changes (*Text of Seventh Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture, held on 20 August, 2008*).  
C. Rangarajan
20. Classical Status for Telugu Language: Problems and Emerging Challenges in its Implementation (*Text of the Seventh AGRASRI Foundation Day Lecture, held on 22 November, 2008*).  
A.B.K. Prasad
21. Panchayati Raj Institutions and Right to Information Act in India: A Way Forward for Good Governance (*Text of the Inaugural Address of the 2-day National Colloquium on Grassroots Level Planning and Local Government Institutions in India: Policy Initiatives and People's Participation since 1992, held on 19 August, 2009*).  
A.N. Tiwari, IAS (Retd.)

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22. Grassroots Planning in India: Need for Strategy for Sustainable Development (*Text of the Key-Note Address of the 2-day National Colloquium on Grassroots Level Planning and Local Government Institutions in India: Policy Initiatives and People's Participation since 1992, held on 19 August, 2009*)  
S.S. Meenakshi Sundaram, IAS (Retd.)
23. Space Technology Applications for Rural Development in India (*Text of the 8<sup>th</sup> Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture, held on 20 August, 2009*).  
G. Madhavan Nair
24. Fifty Percent Reservations for Women in Local Self-Government Institutions of India: A Way Forward for Inclusive Growth (*Text of the 8<sup>th</sup> AGRASRI Foundation Day Lecture, held on 22 November, 2009*).  
K. Vijaya
25. Role of Women Scientists in National Development (*Text of the Special Address, held on 20 August, 2010*).  
Manju Sharma
26. Reservations for Women in Political Institutions in India: Empowerment or Disempowerment (*Text of the 9<sup>th</sup> AGRASRI Foundation Day Lecture, held on 20 August, 2010*).  
B.K. Chandrasekhar
27. Rajiv Gandhi and Panchayati Raj in India: Role of Women in Decision-making in Local Governance (*Text of the 9<sup>th</sup> Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture, held on 8 March, 2011*).  
V. Mohini Giri
28. Energy Security and Energy Technologies in India (*Text of the 10<sup>th</sup> Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture, held on 29 February, 2012*).  
R. Chidambaram
29. Sixty Years Working of Indian Parliament : A Temple of Democracy (*Text of the 11<sup>th</sup> Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture, held on 20 August, 2012*).  
Bal Ram Jakhar

❖ **Working Papers**

The Academy has published the research works of some senior academics and experts as *Working Papers* from time to time, through its Bi-annual journal, namely,

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*The Grassroots Governance Journal*, on various themes such as good governance, panchayati raj, rural development, women empowerment, capacity building, skill development, micro-planning, grama sabha, public service delivery, decentralisation, people's participation, local finances and leadership at the grassroots for immense benefit of the elected representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions, Self-Help Group Members and policy makers.

For a complete list of Working Papers of the Academy (134 Nos), please see the website of AGRASRI : [www.agrasri.org.in](http://www.agrasri.org.in)

**List of Distinguished Policy Makers, Scholars Visited to  
AGRASRI : 2002-2011** (*Visited Dates are in Parenthesis*)

The Academy is to have good fortunate to invite many distinguished policy makers, civil servants, parliamentarians, legislators, elected representatives of PRI's, academics and researchers for its various programmes, as Chief Guests, Guests of Honour and Resource Persons.

The following is the list of some selected dignitaries and academics, who visited the Academy since its inception:

1. **Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar**, *IFS (Retd)*, Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) and CWC Member, New Delhi (20 August, 2002 and 20 August 2012).
2. **Shri V.Narayanaswamy**, Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), New Delhi (20 August, 2002).
3. **Prof. K. Venkata Reddy**, Former Vice-Chancellor, Sri Krishna Devaraya University, Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh (20 August, 2002).
4. **Shri Shivraj V. Patil**, Hon'ble Deputy Leader, Congress (I) Parliamentary Party in Lok Sabha and Speaker of Tenth Lok Sabha, New Delhi (25 August, 2003 and 20 August, 2012).
5. **Shri Suresh A. Keswani**, Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), New Delhi (25 August, 2003).
6. **Shri K. Satyanarayana Raju**, Former Minister for Forests and Environment, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad (25 August, 2003).
7. **Padma Shri Dr. Turlapaty Kutumba Rao**, Eminent Journalist and Guinness Book Felicitatee, Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh (20 August, 2004).
8. **Shri B. Karunakar Reddy**, Chairman, Tirupati Urban Development Authority, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh (20 August, 2004).
9. **Dr. K. Keshava Rao**, President, Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee(I), Hyderabad (19 January, 2005).
10. **Shri N. Kiran Kumar Reddy**, Hon'ble Chief Whip, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad (19 January, 2005).
11. **Dr. P. Ramachandra Reddy**, Hon'ble Member of Legislative Assembly (Piler), Hyderabad (19 January, 2005).

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12. **Shri M. Venkataramana**, Hon'ble Member of Legislative Assembly (Tirupati), Hyderabad (19 January, 2005).
13. **Dr. Agarala Easwara Reddi**, Former Speaker of Legislative Assembly, Hyderabad (21 May, 2005).
14. **Prof. P.V. Arunachalam**, Former Vice-Chancellor, Dravidian University, Kuppam, Andhra Pradesh (21 May, 2005).
15. **Shri K.S.R. Murthy**, *IAS(Retd.)*, Former Secretary to Government of India, New Delhi (20 August, 2005).
16. **Shri P. Nagabhushanam**, Chairman, Guntur Zilla Parishad, Guntur, Andhra Pradesh (20 August, 2005).
17. **Padma Bhushan Prof.U.R. Rao**, Chairman, PRL Council and former Chairman, Indian Space Research Organisation, Govt. of India, Bangalore (23 September, 2005).
18. **Late Shri P. Upendra**, Former Union Cabinet Minister for Information & Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs, Govt. of India, New Delhi (23 September, 2005).
19. **Shri T.N. Chaturvedi**, His Excellency, the Governor of Karnataka, Bangalore and Chairman, Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi (23 September, 2005).
20. **Shri M.V. Rajasekharan**, Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Planning, Government of India, New Delhi (19 August, 2006).
22. **Smt. D. Jyothi Reddy**, Chairperson, Kadapa Zilla Parishad, Kadapa, Andhra Pradesh (19 August, 2006).
23. **Smt. T. Kavitha**, Chairperson, Anantapur Zilla Parishad, Andhra Pradesh (19 August, 2006).
24. **Padma Vibhushan Prof.M.S. Swaminathan**, Chairman, National Commission of Farmers, Govt. of India, New Delhi (20 August, 2006).
25. **Shri Rameshwar Thakur**, His Excellency, the Governor of Orissa and Andhra Pradesh, Bhubaneswar (20 August, 2006).
26. **Shri M.V. Balakrishnan Master**, President, Kasargod District Panchayat, Kasargod, Kerala (20 August, 2006).

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27. **Dr. V.Rajgopal**, Former Director, Central Plantation and Crops Research Institute, Govt.of India, Kasargod, Kerala (20 August, 2006).
28. **Shri S. Ramachandra Reddy**, Former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), Hyderabad (1November, 2006).
29. **Shri R. Dileep Reddy**, State Information Commissioner (RTI), Govt. of Andhra Pradesh (1 November, 2006).
30. **Prof. N. Radhakrishnan**, Chairman, Indian Council of Gandhian Studies, New Delhi (25 November, 2006).
31. **Dr.Jayaprakash Narayana**, *IAS(Retd)*, Member, Second Administrative Reforms Commission, Govt. of India and National President, Lok Satta Party, Hyderabad (24 April, 2007).
32. **Dr. A. Chakrapani**, Hon'ble Chairman, Andhra Pradesh Legislative Council, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad (19 August, 2007).
33. **Shri Manoranjan Bhaktha**, Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha), Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Port Blair (19 August, 2007).
34. **Smt. Shanta Laxman Singh**, Chairperson, Andaman and Nicobar Islands State Social Welfare Board, Port Blair (19 August, 2007).
35. **Padma Bhushan Dr. R. A. Mashelkar**, CSIR Bhatnagar Fellow, National Chemical Laboratory, Pune and President, Indian National Science Academy and former Director-General, Council for Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR), New Delhi (20 August, 2007).
36. **Shri R.L. Bhatia**, His Excellency, the Governor of Kerala, Raj Bhavan, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala (20 August, 2007).
37. **Shri R. Chidambaram**, Adhyaksha, Andaman & Nicobar Islands Zilla Parishad, Port Blair (20 August, 2007).
38. **Shri Chennamaneni Rajeswara Rao**, Hon'ble Member of Legislative Assembly (Sirsilla) and Vice-President, Telugu Desam Legislature Party, Hyderabad (26 November, 2007).
39. **Shri B. Chengalrayudu**, Hon'ble Member of Legislative Council, Hyderabad (26 November, 2007).
40. **Dr (Mrs) G. Kuthuhamma**, Hon'ble Deputy Speaker, Andhra Pradesh Legislative Council, Hyderabad (26 November, 2007).



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41. **Smt. Prema Cariappa**, Chairperson, Central Social Welfare Board, Government of India, New Delhi (19 August, 2008).
42. **Smt. Rajinitai Satav**, Chairperson, Maharashtra State Commission for Women, Govt. of Maharashtra, Mumbai (19 August, 2008).
43. **Smt. Karumanchi Ramadevi**, Chairperson, Andhra Pradesh State Social Welfare Board, Hyderabad (19 August, 2008).
44. **Shri Kumara Prasad**, Secretary, Andhra Pradesh State Social Welfare Board, Hyderabad (19 August, 2008).
45. **Smt. Amarben P. Merani**, President, Surendra Nagar District Panchayat, Surendra Nagar, Gujarat (20 August, 2008).
46. **Padma Shri (Smt) Dr. Jaya Arunachalam**, President, Working Women's Forum, Chennai (20 August, 2008).
47. **Late Professor C. Ratnam**, Vice-Chancellor, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh (20 August, 2008).
48. **Shri Jesingbhai K. Chavda**, Chairman, Executive Council, District Panchayat, Surendra Nagar, Gujarat (20 August, 2008).
49. **Shri S.B. Raval**, IAS, Chairman, District Rural Development Agency and District Development Officer, Surendra Nagar, Gujarat (20 August, 2008).
50. **Dr (Smt) Haripirya Rangarajan**, Eminent Educationist and Social Activist, New Delhi (20 August, 2008).
51. **Padma Vibhushan Dr. C. Rangarajan**, Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to Prime Minister of India and Former Governor of Andhra Pradesh and Reserve Bank of India, New Delhi (20 August, 2008).
52. **Dr. A.B.K. Prasad**, Chairman, Andhra Pradesh State Official Language Commission, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad (22 November, 2008).
53. **Prof.S.Sudarsan Sarma**, Vice-Chancellor, Sri Venkateswara Vedic University, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh (22 November, 2008).
54. **Shri A.N. Tiwari**, IAS (Retd.), Central Information Commissioner (RTI), Government of India, New Delhi (19 August, 2009).
55. **Dr. S. S. Meenakshi Sundaram**, IAS (Retd.), Former Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, New Delhi (19 August, 2009).

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56. **Dr. T. H. Chowdary**, Chairman, Pragna Bharati, Secunderabad, Andhra Pradesh (19 August, 2009).
57. **Shri Venkatarao Ghorpade**, Former President, Bellary Zilla Parishad, Bellary, Karnataka (20 August, 2009).
58. **Smt. Neelima Khetan**, Chief Executive Officer, Seva Mandir, Udaipur, Rajasthan (20 August, 2009)
59. **Prof. A. Jayaraman**, Director, National Atmospheric Research Laboratory, Indian Space Research Organisation, Govt. of India, Gadanki, Chittoor District, Andhra Pradesh (20 August, 2009).
60. **Dr. V.S. Hegde**, Scientific Secretary, Indian Space Research Organisation, Department of Space, Govt. of India, Bangalore (20 August, 2009).
61. **Padma Vibhushan Dr. G. Madhavan Nair**, Chairman, Indian Space Commission; Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Secretary, Dept. of Space, Government of India, Bangalore (20 August, 2009).
62. **Prof (Mrs) G. Sarojamma**, Vice-Chancellor, S.P Mahila Visvavidyalayam, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh (22 November, 2009).
63. **Smt. Kuchipudi Vijaya**, Chairperson, A.P. State Panchayati Mahila and Yuva Shakthi Ahbiyan & Zilla Parishad, Guntur, Andhra Pradesh (22 November, 2009).
64. **Smt. K. Shantha Reddy**, Former Member, National Commission for Women and National Commission for Minorities, Govt. of India, New Delhi (24 November, 2009).
65. **Shri T. Nagaraju**, District Panchayat Officer, Chittoor (10 May, 2010).
66. **Shri K. Viswanatha Reddy**, Former Chief Executive Officer, Zilla Praja Parishad, Nellore (10 May 2010).
67. **Prof. K. Rathnaiah**, Rector, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh (21 May, 2010).
68. **Shri M.K. Singh**, IPS, Chief Vigilance and Security Officer, Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh (21 May, 2010).
69. **Smt. K. Sarada Devi**, Additional Joint Collector, Chittoor (20 August, 2010).
70. **Padma Bhushan Dr (Mrs) Manju Sharma**, Former Secretary, Department of Bio-Technology, Govt. of India, New Delhi (20 August, 2010).

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71. **Prof. B.K. Chandrasekhar**, Former Chairman, Karnataka Legislative Council, Bangalore (20 August, 2010).
72. **Smt. Nelly Rodrigues**, Chairperson, Goa Panchayati Mahila and Yuva Shakti Abhiyan, Goa (21 August, 2010).
73. **Shri V. Seshadri, IAS**, Collector and District Magistrate, Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh (18 September, 2010).
74. **Dr. P.V. Sesha Reddy**, District Panchayat Officer, Chittoor (24 October, 2010).
75. **Dr. Subhash C. Kashyap**, Former Secretary-General of Lok Sabha, New Delhi (8 March, 2011 & 20 August 2012).
76. **Padma Bhushan Dr (Mrs) V. Mohini Giri**, Chairperson, Guild of Service, New Delhi (8 March, 2011).
77. **Dr (Mrs) Padma Seth**, Former Member, National Commission for Women, New Delhi (8 March, 2011).
78. **Shri Rajan, IFS (Retd.)**, Former Indian Ambassador to Nepal, New Delhi (8 March, 2011).
79. **Dr. B.B. Dutta**, Former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), New Delhi (8 March, 2011).
80. **Shri Salman Khurshid**, Hon'ble Union Minister for Water Resources and Minority Affairs, Govt. of India, New Delhi (8 March, 2011).
81. **Shri Murlidhar C. Bhandare**, His Excellency, the Governor of Orissa, Bhubaneswar, Orissa (8 March, 2011).
82. **Dr. V. Sundara Naidu**, Chairman and Managing Director, VSN Hatcheries Pvt. Ltd., Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh (1 April, 2011).
83. **Shri G.V. Srinadha Reddy**, Former Chairman, Zilla Praja Parishad, Chittoor and Former MLA, Piler, Andhra Pradesh (1 April, 2011).
84. **Shri N.P. Chengalraya Naidu**, Former Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha), Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh (2 April, 2011).
85. **Shri N.P. Venkateswara Chowdary**, Former MLA, Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh (2 April, 2011).
86. **Prof. R. Ramamurthi**, Past-General President, Indian Science Congress and Former Vice-Chancellor, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati , Andhra Pradesh (21 May, 2011).

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87. **Shri A. Malleswara Rao**, Station Director, All India Radio, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh (21 May, 2011).
88. **Dr. P.C. Rayulu**, Chairman, Taskforce (Food), South Zone-II, Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Govt. of India, New Delhi (20 August, 2011).
89. **Shri T.N. Kandanathan**, President, District Panchayat, Palakkad, Kerala (20 August, 2011).
90. **Shri T.S. Majeed**, Secretary, District Panchayat, Palakkad, Kerala (20 August, 2011).
91. **Dr. B.P. Syam Roy**, *IAS (Retd.)*, Former Special Secretary, Development and Planning, Government of West Bengal, Kolkata.
92. **Padma Bhushan Dr. V. Shanta**, Chairperson, Cancer Institute (WIA), Chennai and Recipient of Magsaysay Award (25 November, 2011).
93. **Padma Vibhushan Dr. R. Chidambaram**, Principal Scientific Adviser to the Govt. of India, New Delhi and Chancellor, University of Hyderabad (29 February, 2012).
94. **Dr. Bal Ram Jakhar**, Former Speaker of Lok Sabha, Former Governor of Madhya Pradesh and former Union Minister for Agriculture, Govt. of India, New Delhi (20 August, 2012).

## Impressions / Testimonials / Credentials on AGRASRI by Distinguished Policy Makers and Scholars

The Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI), has received many laurels and appreciations from the distinguished policy makers and eminent scholars, in recognition of its multi-dimensional activities and programmes at the grassroots level with in a short span of time.

The following are some of the Impressions / Testimonials / Credentials on AGRASRI by distinguished policy makers, administrators, jurists and scholars:

1. The publication of The Grassroots Governance Journal is highly commendable initiative and I wish all success in this noble task.

- *Padma Vibhushan* **Dr. Manmohan Singh**

Hon'ble the then Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha, New Delhi, September 19, 2003.

2. I am glad that the Inaugural issue of The Grassroots Governance Journal is doing well in all respects.

- **Shri Inder Kumar Gujral**

Former Prime Minister of India, New Delhi, October 21, 2003.

3. I have gone through with interest the CV and Progress Report of AGRASRI and am appreciative of your efforts. The Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture along with presentation of the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Outstanding and Best Panchayat Awards every year is an imaginative initiative. I found my visit to your foundation sometime back quite satisfactory. I should congratulate you for your industrious application in editing and bringing out a number of publications on subjects of public significance..... AGRASRI merits all commendations for taking the initiative.

- *Padma Vibhushan* **Shri T.N. Chaturvedi**

His Excellency, the then Governor of Karnataka, Bangalore and  
Chairman, Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi, March 12, 2007.

4. All the best for your future activities. Excellently organised Rajiv Gandhi Birthday function. Wish you all success.

- **Shri Rameshwar Thakur**

His Excellency, the then Governor of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, August 20, 2006.

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5. I am very happy to be here and attend the function of presentation of awards. They are doing great job. I wish them a bright success.

- **Shri R. L. Bhatia**

His Excellency, the then Governor of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, August 20, 2007.

6. I compliment the initiatives of the Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India, in association with the Rajiv Rural Development Foundation, in reminding the country at large of the services rendered by Rajiv Gandhi during his short span of life and wish the organisations the very best in their endeavours in the service of the country.

- **Shri Somnath Chatterjee**

Hon'ble the then Speaker of Lok Sabha, New Delhi, August 16, 2004.

7. I appreciate the efforts of the Foundation for empowerment and strengthening Panchayati Raj Institutions, value based administrative reforms and systematic furthering of issues on rural India.

- **Shri Arjun Singh**

Hon'ble the then Union Minister for HRD, Govt. of India, New Delhi, July 25, 2005.

8. I have known Dr. Sundar Ram since the establishment of the Academy and have been deeply impressed by the way in which the Academy has grown from very humble beginnings to its present significant status in the academic community which is playing such a key role of advocacy in the development of Panchayati Raj in the country.

- **Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar**

Hon'ble the then Union Minister for Panchayati Raj, Youth Affairs & Sports and Development of North-East Region, Govt. of India, New Delhi, February 27, 2007.

9. I hope that The Grassroots Governance Journal would go a long way so as to create an intellectual environment which would develop grassroots democratic institutions in contemporary rural India.

- **Shri Rabi Ray**

Former Speaker of Lok Sabha, New Delhi, October 23, 2003.

10. I was glad to learn from your letter and the useful activities being undertaken by the Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India. The area of grassroots

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democracy and gram swaraj is indeed extremely important, and not enough NGOs are directing their attention towards this.... My good wishes will be with you and your colleagues for the success of your efforts.

- *Padma Vibhushan* **Dr. Karan Sing**

Hon'ble Deputy Leader, Congress (I) Parliamentary Party (Rajya Sabha),  
New Delhi, January 14, 2002.

11. I have gone through the Special issue of the Grassroots Governance Journal on Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi – A Visionary of Self-reliant India and found that it both interesting and informative.

- *Padma Vibhushan* **Dr. Mohan Dhar**

Former Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission,  
Govt. of India, New Delhi, February 25, 2005.

12. I am indeed very happy to participate of the Academy which has taken a lot of interest bring Panchayati Raj Institution's representatives from different states in the region. A very well structured programme. I am sure the participants would benefit great deal with such programmes. Similar programmes must be organised elsewhere not only to build awareness among the members of Panchayati Raj Institutions but also among the researchers and all academicians. I wish the Academy all the success.

- **Shri M.V. Rajasekharan**

Hon'ble the then Union Minister of State for Planning,  
Govt. of India, New Delhi, August 19, 2006.

13. I have gone through the Inaugural issue of The Grassroots Governance Journal. It contains informative and educative articles from eminent persons from different walks of life. I hope that apart from articles, the journal will play a constructive role in providing information to the people about the policies, programmes and activities of the Government for the welfare of the people at the grassroots level.

- **Shri Justice K. Jayachandra Reddy**

Former Chairman, Indian Law Commission, New Delhi,

14. I have known Dr. D. Sundar Ram, Founder and Director of the Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI) since the last several years.

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Dr. D. Sundar Ram and Mrs. D. Bharathi, Co-founder of AGRASRI are both very active scientists as well as social activists. They are being trying their best to empower the women and men members of panchayats. In addition to their advocacy and publication activities, Dr. Sundar Ram and Mrs. Bharathi have also established the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture and Best Panchayat Awards Corpus Fund. I had the privilege of delivering the Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture in the year 2006. The work of Dr. Sundar Ram and Mrs. Bharathi in the interest of strengthening the democratic structure of governance is commendable.

- *Padma Vibhushan* **Professor M.S. Swaminathan**

Chairman, M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, Chennai, March 9, 007.

15. Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India has been regularly organising Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lectures every year by eminent scholars and outstanding leaders of the country to propogate the ideas and values of our late Prime Minister with a view to build a strong next generation leadership. In spite of lack of funds, Dr. Sundar Ram has been spearheading this activity in addition to carrying out valuable research in grassroots governance at the village panchayat level..... AGRASRI as well as Dr. Sundar Ram and his co-workers deserve to be encouraged not only to carry out but also expand their activities and fulfil Rajiv Gandhi's dreams of transforming India.

- *Padma Bhushan* **Professor U. R. Rao**

Chairman, PRL Governing Council, ISRO, Govt. of India, Bangalore, April 11, 2007.

16. It was a great privilege to receive this great honour bestowed by this great Academy. The movement for 'decentralised governance' that has been landed is bound to succeed.

- *Padma Bhushan* **Dr. R. A. Mashelkar**

CSIR Bhatnagar Fellow, NCL, Pune & Former DG, CSRI, New Delhi, August 20, 2007.

17. It was a great pleasure to participate in the convention organised by AGRASRI which has played an important role in bringing about a significant transformation in the rural areas. I congratulate Dr. Sundar Ram and his colleagues.

- *Padma Vibhushan* **Dr. C. Rangarajan**

Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to Prime Minister of India,  
New Delhi, August 20, 2008.



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18. As the Chief Organiser of Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Lecture and Awards programme every year, Dr. Sundar Ram has given enough evidence of his administrative abilities. I am confident that Dr. D. Sundar Ram's zeal and enthusiasm for propagating the ideals and vision of Shri Rajiv Gandhi towards Self-sufficient Village Republics will be widely appreciated and encouraged.

- **Dr. Subhash C. Kashyap**

Former Secretary-General of Lok Sabha, New Delhi, February 25, 2009.

19. I feel happy that this country's democracy needs the kind of work AGRASRI is undertaking.....In many ways, I discover how thorough lectures and seminars you have made Panchayati Raj a truly powerful democratic feature of our public life. Surely, We, the people of India can truly lead the backbone of our democracy only through village regeneration. I deeply appreciate your work in this behalf and I request you to militantly make Panchayati Raj a major mission of your work and tell the people of India to awake arise and develop through unity and fraternity, Bharat Mahan.

- *Padma Vibhushan* **Shri Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer**

Former Judge, Supreme Court of India, New Delhi, February 26, 2009.

20. I enjoyed the award function and thankful to Rajiv Gandhi Rural Development Foundation and Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India at Tirupati for the nice gesture. I am impressed by the performance and activities targeted towards improving the quality of people especially targeted to the rural people. May god bless you to excel.

- *Padma Vibhushan* **Dr.G. Madhavan Nair**

Chairman, Indian Space Research Organisation,  
Deptt. of Space, Government of India, Bangalore, August 20, 2009.

## Recognitions and Rewards to AGRASRI


- ❖ In recognition of sincere efforts and industrious work nature of the Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India, many funding organisations and institutions, including the **Ministry of Panchayati Raj, National Commission for Women, Indian Council of Social Science Research and Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development**, Government of India, New Delhi and **Andhra Pradesh Academy of Rural Development**, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, extending their financial support and sponsorship to the multi-level activities and programmes of AGRASRI since its inception, on the areas Panchayati Raj, Rural Development, Women Empowerment, Good Governance, Capacity Building and Grassroots Democracy and other related themes.
- ❖ In recognition of research contributions and services to the Panchayati Raj Institutions in India, the Founder-Director of AGRASRI **Dr. D. Sundar Ram**, has officially appointed as **one of the Members of the Indo-Pak Delegation** and visited Pakistan, led by **Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar**, the then Hon'ble Union Minister for Panchayati Raj, Govt. of India, in the year 2007.
- ❖ In recognition of research contributions and services to the Panchayati Raj Institutions in India, the Founder-Director of AGRASRI **Dr. D. Sundar Ram**, has officially appointed as **one of the Members of the Indo-Norway Delegation** and participated in the Indo-Norway Symposium, led by **Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar**, the then Hon'ble Union Minister for Panchayati Raj, Govt. of India, in the year 2007.
- ❖ In recognition of commendable contributions and services to the rural society, the Founder-Director of AGRASRI **Dr. D. Sundar Ram** has appointed as **one of the Consulting Editors** of the American Biographical Institute, Raleigh, North Carolina, United State of America.
- ❖ In recognition of enriched contributions to the Rural Development sector, the Founder-Director of AGRASRI **Dr. D. Sundar Ram's** CV has included in the 2003/2004 Edition of ***The Contemporary Whos' Who***, published by the American Biographical Institute, Raleigh, North Carolina, United States of America.
- ❖ In recognition of academic contributions on Panchayati Raj and allied subjects, the Founder-Director of AGRASRI **Dr. D. Sundar Ram**, has officially appointed

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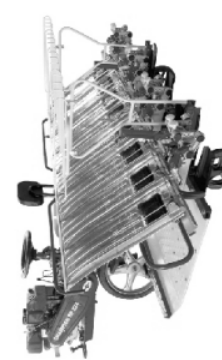
as one of the Members of the Core Committee on Panchayati Raj Mahila Shakti and Yuva Shakti Abhiyan, Rajiv Gandhi National Institute for Youth Development, Govt. of India, Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu, 2007.

- ❖ In recognition of organisational work and innovative programmes on Panchayati Raj, the AGRASRI has recognised as **Nodal Agency/Technical Support Institute** for the Capacity Building & Training Programmes for the elected representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions, by the **Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Govt. of India, New Delhi** and **Andhra Pradesh Academy of Rural Development (APARD)**, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, in the Year 2010.
- ❖ Member, **District Monitoring Committee for the Programmes and Advertisements Telecast by Cable TV Channels** (Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India), Tirupati Revenue Division, 2010-2012.


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