

Dr. G. P. Phondke

Dr. G.P. Phondke alias Bal Phondke completed his Ph. D. in Biophysics from the University of London in 1967. He remained the head of Radio biology division at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Mumbai for 23 years.

He is a prolific writer and an excellent orator with a mission to popularize science. He is a distinguished scientist and educator with a career spanning more than 50 years. He has devoted his writing skills to converting primary research level science to popular science.

More than 60 books written by him have been published so far along with thousands of articles. Constant experimentation aimed at 'reaching the man in the street with the message of science' involved employing different formats including literary essays, skits, letters to a reader and story format employing established cultural icons. Science fiction format has also been tried with more than 150 short stories and a novelette has been published so far. Over the last ten years' regular weekly columns have been published in at least two newspapers per year. He has also played a key role in designing radio and television shows for the purpose of science popularization.

Dr. Phondke has worked as the Editor of Science Today magazine (Times of India Publ.), Science Editor of Times of India, and Chief Editor of CSIR Research Journal. He has participated in numerous international meetings devoted to science and science communication and has lectured extensively, particularly in the semi-urban and rural areas of Maharashtra. He has been member of many advisory committees and governing boards at the state and national level. His work has been recognized and honoured by many awards. He is the recipient of National Award for Science Popularisation from NCSTC of DST, Indira Gandhi award for science popularisation from INSA and Dr B C Deb science popularisation award from the Indian National Science Congress besides several others.

Theme Meeting Secretariat
SUHAS B NAIK-SATAM
General Secretary and Convener

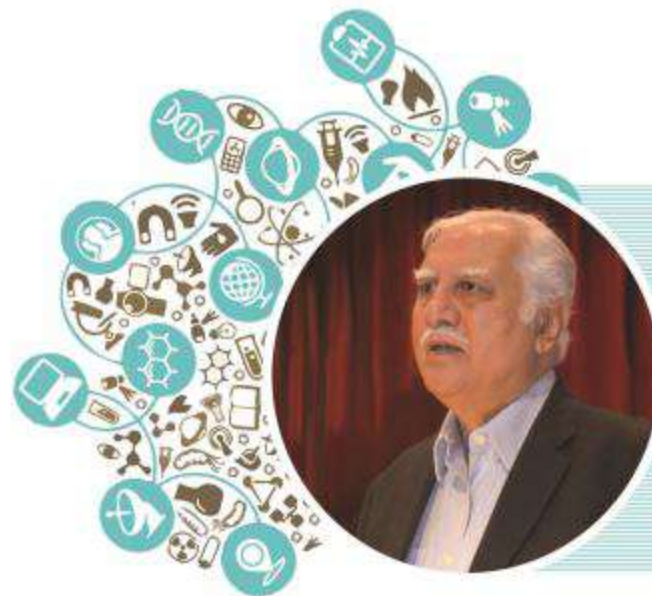
Nehru Science Centre
National Council of Science Museums
Ministry of culture, Govt. of India
Dr. E Moses Road, Worli,
Mumbai 400 018
E Mail: ncsc1997@gmail.com

jointly organised by



Venue:

At the Auditorium Nehru Science Centre, Dr. E. Moses Road, Worli, Mumbai 400018



A theme meeting on "Recent trends in Science Communication"

a tribute to
Dr. G.P. Phondke alias Bal Phondke

jointly organised by
Nehru Science Centre, Mumbai,
National Council of Science Museums (NCSC)
National Centre for Science Communicators (NCSC)

Date: **November 22nd, 2019**

Time: **9:30 am to 2:00 pm**

Venue:

At the Auditorium **Nehru Science Centre**,
National Council of Science Museums, Ministry of culture, Govt. of India
Dr. E. Moses Road, Worli, Mumbai - 400018



“Recent trends in science communication”

Science communication is an art, which can simplify the relatively complex and abstract scientific subjects and scientific research news to make it easily comprehensible by the general public including students. In the modern world of knowledge society in which, we are surrounded by a plethora of applications of science and technological tools that has made the society to be inextricably linked with science and technology, the need for science communication has become of paramount importance more so since science is the prime mover of economic development. Hence, it becomes imperative for science communicators in India to look at where we stand today in this field and to try and understand the way forward, keeping in mind what is happening globally in the field of science communication. It is with this objective in mind that the organisers, NSCM and NCSC, have joined hands to organise a one-day workshop “Recent Trends in Science Communication” as a tribute to one of the doyens in science communication in India, Dr Bal Phondke, who has spent over more than 50 long years in this area and continues to be very active even today.

Organisers

Nehru Science Centre (NSC), Mumbai which was opened by the then Hon Prime Minister of India, Shri Rajiv Gandhi in 1985, is a constituent unit of the National Council of Science Museums (NCSM), an autonomous scientific institution, under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. The NCSM has a network of 25 science museums/centres spread across the country and the Nehru Science Centre, Mumbai is its western zone head office with four satellite science centre in Nagpur, Bhopal, Dharampur (Gujrat) and Panjim (Goa). NSCM is visited by more than 8,00,000 visitors annually.

National Centre for Science Communicators (NCSC) established in January 1997, provides a collective platform to its members and other stakeholders to accentuate the development of science communication in India. The Centre also provides opportunities for science communicators to explore and express their talents and creativity for better understanding of science and recognises and rewards such talents. Its members include science communicators from varied fields of communication - print media, television, radio, Planetaria, Science centre's etc.

Need for qualitative science communication It is true that science communication activities take a back seat in most of the scientific research institutes in India with most scientists and academicians of science not too keen on this relatively less important aspect of science. But then in developing countries like India where most scientific research happens with public funding it becomes important for the practitioners of science to lay equal importance to science communication as much as they lay stress on quality and quantity of scientific research.

In the absence of active, let alone proactive; involvement of scientists in science communication, the quality of the works of some of the science communicators do not stand up-to the exacting standards of science communication that is warranted. Vanity publishers pass off silly stuff as sober science which is quickly 'cut-pasted', and quack hand-waving opinions are paraded as good science. This is detrimental to science because what reaches the common man may not be 'true' science.

The bulk of current sci-com in India is infotainment. This is science writing that informs non-specialist target audience about novel scientific discoveries in an entertaining fashion. The recipe consists of giving the reader a historical background of the scientific study, a summary of its applications, highlights of its implications often laced with the opinions of an available expert. The fact checker is dysfunctional, thus marketing the researcher. Critical science communication transcends this and focuses on providing a balanced assessment of the work with a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) of work.

The purpose of the theme meeting “Recent trends in science communication”, planned on November 22, 2019, is a tribute to Dr. G.P. Phondke alias Bal Phondke to highlight his contributions towards public understanding of science. He will be completing 81 years on April 22, 2020. He is one of the most well-known faces of Indian science and is a prolific writer, an excellent orator with a mission to popularize science, a distinguished scientist and science communicator/educator. The meeting will be held at the Auditorium of Nehru Science Centre, Dr. E. Moses Road, Worli, Mumbai 400018.

The theme meeting will have three sessions that will focus on the following topics followed by felicitation function;

The Print Media -

- Reporting Science in Newspapers
- Popular Science magazine
- Popular Science Articles and on Social Media platforms

The Electronic Media -

- Science on the Radio
- Science through TV and Films
- Digital communications

Interactive Science Communication -

- Science Museums
- Planetaria
- Creative expression of Science through art, poetry, music, folk media etc.

Each session will have three presentations followed by an open discussion in which all the delegates will be able to participate. This unique format would allow a complete cross-fertilisation of ideas and impart a detailed discussion of problems and offer possible solutions across the whole spectrum. Rapporteurs will closely monitor each session and will prepare exhaustive reports.

It is anticipated that about 250 Researchers, Educationists, Science Communicators and Students will participate in this meeting. Students pursuing science and engineering studies will derive special benefits in being exposed to the success stories of indigenous developments, which may inspire them in research and innovation in their future career.

The admission to the conference is through invitation on behalf of the organising committee. We have the pleasure of inviting you as a delegate to the conference. In case you are not able to attend the conference you may please depute your associate.

Kindly confirm your participation by filling the registration form and return it on or before 30 October 2019 to Mr. Suhas Naik-Satam, General Secretary, National Centre for Science Communicators on an e-mail to ncsc1997@gmail.com. Your participation will greatly enrich the academic programme of this festival.

With kind regards,

Yours Sincerely

SUHAS B NAIK-SATAM,
General Secretary, NCSC and Convener

Organising Council

- A P JAYARAMAN, Chairman, NCSC
- A P DESHPANDE, Immediate past Chairman, NCSC
- SHIVAPRASAD KHENED, Director, NSC, Mumbai
- G P KOTHIYAL, Vice-Chairman, NCSC
- KISHOR KULKARNI, General Secretary, NCSC
- PARESH VAIDYA, Treasurer, NCSC
- PARUL R SHETH, Executive Committee Member, NCSC
- UMESH KUMAR RUSTAGI, Curator 'F' & Head, Education Cell, NSC, Mumbai
- RUPESH GAIKAWAD, Executive Committee Member, NCSC
- SUHAS B NAIK-SATAM, General Secretary, NCSC and Convener