

Kota Harinarayana visits NU School of Engineering and Technology, Dimapur

The Nagaland University was privileged to have Kota Harinarayana (KH) amidst its students and faculty on March, 17, 2008 at the newly established NU :School of Engineering & Technology (NUSET).

The noted aerospace engineer who has attained an iconic status in our country for leading a team of scientists and engineers to design and fabricate India's first light combat vehicle (LCA) in a record time and in a most cost effective manner and who was also the Vice Chancellor of Central University of Hyderabad came to NU Dimapur to participate in Executive Council Meeting of Nagaland University which was held at Dimapur on March 18, 2008.

Not to miss the opportunity of his presence in Nagaland, the NU, V.C. Prof. K. Kannan invited him to deliver a lecture which he did on the topic "India : Past, Present and Future". Prof. Kota Harinarayana is a natural teacher and simplifying complex things is his forte. Speaking spontaneously and with intermittent humour, he delivered a scintillating lecture.

He began by revealing to the packed audience of students of B. Tech and Teachers in the auditorium of NUSET that India which in the past has been the cradle of civilization was actually a very rich land upto the 17th century. It is the British who impoverished it. The country continued to be poor until the fateful year of 1991 when the New Industrial Policy formulated by Dr. Manmohan Singh, the then finance minister in the P.V. Narasinha Rao Govt., was launched and at one stroke the then prevalent Licence-Permit-Quota (LPQ) Raj was abolished. As a result, the Indian Economy was unshackled from LPQ regime and was linked with the Global Economy. Since then the economy in our country has not looked back and we've witnessed a 9.5% rate of growth of GDP. Indian workforce is in demand everywhere – in manufacturing sector, health services, Science & Technology, Engineering, Management & Financial sector, Aviation, Space Technology, Entertainment Industry, Literary field, to name a few. It is this highly skilled workforce which has launched Nano (the small car), light combat vehicle (LCA) and enabled India to sell Insat Remote satellite to advanced and developing countries of the world.

From India of past and present the learned speaker moved on to the India of Future. The India of Future, he confidently held, *can only be better*. Fifty four percent (54%) of our population is below 30 years of age. Since the ancient times, the country abounds in creative energy and it is gifted with synthesizing diverse ideas. (Chinese Ambassador: India invaded our minds 3000 years ago through the spread of Buddhism). He recommended the SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity & Threat) Analysis for individuals as well as for nations in order to maximize their potentials. Identify your areas of strength and concentrate on them, he advised. Citing the case of one such area of strength of country viz. **aerospace engineering**, he enumerated a number of world class achievements which the scientists & engineers have been able to gift to the nation. These are, high speed aircrafts, small aircrafts, noise free & pollution free air carriers and last but not the least, the light combat Aircraft (LCA) which has been most sought after air vehicle in the world. The wisdom of successive GOI in investing in aerospace and space technology, has given some spin-off achievements, viz the Airdeccan Airliner grew out of the operationalization of the concept of cost-effectiveness in aerospace science. Similarly, out of INSAT programme, has come about the commercialization of the satellite launching programme by India e.g. we have launched an Italian Satellite at the lowest possible cost. Engineers, in order to succeed must innovate. Innovation is the key to developments of new products. In order to innovate, an engineer must take risks and must not be afraid of failures. Observe a child while he/she is learning to walk. He rises, falls, rises again, falls again until he learns walking. So should it be with an engineer. He exhorted the students of engineering to think big and aim high and never settle for small things in life. Never stop dreaming, he concluded. The lecture was spellbinding and was followed by prolonged applause. After initial hesitation, a flurry of questions followed which the honourable speaker loved to answer. The NU, V.C. Prof. K. Kannan proposed a vote of thanks and remarked that many a times, 'eccentricity' in an individual, is a hallmark of his creativity.

(Compiled by Prof. D.P. Sharma : Editor NU Newsletter).