

STAR OF MYSORE Friday 28th January 1994

Laugh and the world laughs with you

Manager: "Leave me your address and we'll call you when we need an old stenographer".

Applicant: "Old stenographer ? I'm a young one !"

Manager: "Never mind. By the time we call you, you'll be an old one !"

STAR OF MYSORE

"We believe comment is free, but facts are sacred"

EDITOR: K. B. GANAPATHY

Mysore, Friday 28th January 1994

CFTRI affairs

There was a time when the Central Food Technological Research Institute was very much a part of the social life of Mysore. Hardly a month went by without some function being held in CFTRI. Dr. Subrahmaniam, who set it up all, Dr. Parpia, who built up a whole cadre of scientists and Dr. B. L. Amla, who made CFTRI popular both in industry and the public, raised the institution to new heights. However, since the last two years, CFTRI seems to have lost its sheen. This is quite a dispassionate and objective observation, bereft of any prejudices.

The research work being done in our universities and institutions are now under a focus because the common man would like to know what their contribution has been to the social weal. The vast network under the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research is under pressure to find its own resources. Viewed from this angle, the CFTRI had made substantial contribution to the development of food industry.

Perhaps not many readers are aware that the Amul Baby Food, now a best seller, was developed in collaboration with CFTRI. Eminent scientists like Dr. Parpia and Dr. Amla continue to be in demand here and abroad for consultation in developing new processes. Quite often, courses were conducted in the CFTRI which had the active participation and funding from the industry.

Some circles in CFTRI allege that political lobbying brought in a director last time whose only interest seemed to be getting a seat in the medical college for his son ! There was nothing else to tempt this temporary assistant professor in an American university to return to India. He never bothered to meet the press during his tenure and was least caring about encouraging public participation in the activities of the CFTRI.

There is no doubt whatsoever that the scientists in the CFTRI are now a disillusioned lot. They wonder if they must work under 'imported' directors while able seniors languish here. At least two senior scientists preferred voluntary retirement recently rather than work with the new director of the CFTRI. The third one in seniority was persuaded by colleagues not to abandon ship.

It seems the scientists have been unhappy with the out-of-turn promotions under the guise of merit recognition. What it amounted to was psychophancy and was close to nepotism. Not a single achievement was notched up during the last two years as proof of scientific commitment. It seems the CSIR has set up a "search committee" now to find a new director, ignoring the claims of those who have spent their lifetime with the CFTRI. We must get over this weakness for going in search for men to fill senior positions while talent is available within the country.

It is said that Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao, who is supposed to be directly linked to the affairs of the CSIR, has been informed of the situation and one must hope for a wise decision.

Editor's Bottom Line

In some countries, human rights have been left out of the plans and the UN personnel have stood by—silently—while serious human rights violations were taking place. That must not be allowed to continue. — Amnesty International in TOI.

POWER LUNCH BUFFET

Voice Of The Reader

Dr. Bhowmick of CFTRI: A clarification

Sir

Please refer to the news report appeared in your esteemed newspaper on (SOM dt.

A foreigner laments

Sir,

I want to bring to the notice of civil rights groups of Mysore, through your esteemed columns, certain important points.

I am in India, on a project between, the IIT, Madras and University of Reine about "Public Health Engineering in Metropolis".

Your country formulates efficient and effective plans, but does not stick on to it. The problem is same everywhere including Mysore.

Jan. 19), under the caption "Dr. Bhowmik resigns as CFTRI chief".

The Executive Committees of CFTRI Scientific Workers' Association (CFTRI-SWA) and CFTRI Employees' Union (CFTRIEU) have not authorised any spokesman to make statements to the press on their behalf. The document quoted in the newspaper report has been misused by vested interests.

In view of the above, we request you to publish a rejoinder to this effect.

— K. Udayasankar (President),
K.K. Bhat (Secretary), CFTRI-SWA
— S. Siddaiah (Vice-President),
N. Suresh Prasad (Gen. Secy.),
CFTRIEU.

Mysore
20.1.94

Note: There was no rejoinder with this letter. -Ed.

SCIENTIFIC WORKERS' ASSOCIATION, CFTRI BRANCH
and
CFTRI EMPLOYEES' UNION

Date : 20.01.94

NOTICE

It is for the kind information of the members as well as other staff members that the SWA and Union are not responsible for the publication of the Press Reports appeared in Star of Mysore dated 19th January 1994 and Deccan Herald dated 20th January 1994, and have not been issued to the Press either by CFTRI-SWA or CFTRIEU. It is further informed that the letter mentioned in the Newspapers (which is around one month old) was specifically addressed to DGCSIR; but under no circumstances intended to be released to the Press, as the SWA/Union felt that this is purely an internal matter and has nothing to do with the Press. Besides, the contents of the letter have been wrongly quoted.

The Executive Committees of CFTRI-SWA and CFTRIEU have seized of the matter and are investigating into this.

K. Udayasankar
(K. Udayasankar)
President, CFTRI-SWA

K.K. Bhat
(K.K. Bhat)
Secretary, CFTRI-SWA

S. Siddaiah
(S. Siddaiah)
Vice-President, CFTRIEU

N. Suresh Prasad
(N. Suresh Prasad)
General Secretary, CFTRIEU

Copy to: 1. Director-General, CSIR
2. Hon'ble President, CSIR

Bhowmik quits CFTRI

1994 SoM

By A Staff Reporter

Mysore, January 19: Dr. S R Bhowmik, director of CFTRI has tendered his resignation and the same has been accepted by the CSIR.

According to CFTRI sources, Bhowmik had put in his paper due to personal reasons as early as December last. The notification from CSIR accepting his resignation came through last week and the vacancy had been advertised, said the sources.

Bhowmik assumed charge as the institute's director in July 1991. He will be relieved of his duties on March 3 next.

Before joining the CFTRI, Bhowmik had spent long years at the Clemsom University and the Ohio State University (both in America) and had gained vast experience in food technology.

Dr Bhowmik's successor will be designated shortly, according to sources. Meanwhile, a spokesman for the local branch of the

scientific workers association alleged that the CSIR has again appointed "a search committee" to find a successor to Dr Bhowmik. He said bringing in a 'so-called expert' from outside the CFTRI would not be in the best interests of the institute.

The spokesman said the association would urge the CSIR and the central government not to bring in 'outsiders' with no background of the CFTRI or the Indian conditions, he said.

REMANO CM DEBELS DELECT SOLUTION

Abracadabra



Unscientific thoughts about CFTRI

Lot of disconcerting, if not bad, news has been emanating from the premier research institute, The Central Food Technological Research Institute (CFTRI) of late. All was well with CFTRI ever since it was established till **Dr. B. L. Amla** left as its head. The downward slide started thereafter and worse happened with the present incumbent **Dr. S. R. Bhowmik** who has since resigned for reasons said to be only personal rather than professional or is it the other way round? No one can say. May be both.

No scientific research institute can do any good work where nepotism and favouritism are rampant; where merit and healthy traditions are sacrificed or given a go by. This is exactly what happened to the CFTRI when **Dr. Amla** retired.

rumoured that his intention in somehow wanting to get back to India, using Bengali connection at CSIR, was to get a medical seat for his son. Unfortunately for him, it is said, he couldn't get it. So considering that he, in his family, was the only person with a Green Card while all others are American citizens, he decided to go back where he really belonged.

One Senior Deputy Director who should have succeeded **Dr. Amla**, **Dr. Poti** resigned in sheer disgust and now is better off for that as Professor of Industrial Technology at the University of Science, Malaysia. **Dr. Poti** was a foremost Food Technologist who would have fitted well into the slot as Director of CFTRI. But alas, that can never happen in our country where we are used

CFTRI comes under the jurisdiction of CSIR which set up a committee to search and find out a suitable candidate when Dr. Amla retired. At that time CSIR was headed by a Bengali and he set up a committee of five members of which three were Bengalis, including himself. **Ha, blood is thicker than water; individual bigger than the CFTRI and self-interest greater than the nation's interest.** So this committee went ahead with its search for the right person (?) without advertising for the post or announcing it. And that was how Dr. Bhowmik, who was in no way qualified to head the CFTRI got the job.

His only two qualifications were that he was from the US and a Bengali ! Naturally Dr. Bhowmik found his chair too big and was literally struggling to handle about 400 scientists and other personnel with about 20 subjects of research and development. He was only an Associate Professor in some US University, it is alleged, and naturally CFTRI was too big a challenge for him. That is why it is

to putting wrong people in right places and right people in wrong places.

There was one Dr. P.V. Raju who lost his chance, retired under unhappy circumstances. Now there is Dr. M. M. Krishnaiah with about four years to retire who is anathema to Dr. Bhowmik. It is said just to spite Dr. Krishnaiah and to deprive him of his chances another person who was earlier deputed to IIT as professor was called back. But then following Dr. Bhowmik's decision to quit, that person preferred to rush back to IIT. Wise !

Now it appears CSIR has set up a 'Search Committee' to find a successor to Dr. Bhowmik ignoring the claims of those who have spent their life time, like Dr. M.M. Krishnaiah and ignoring the rules under which seniority of a person too should be considered.

Looking at these happenings one is left wondering if CFTRI is becoming a white elephant and a centre for scientific politicking !

This is democracy, so there must be politics even in CFTRI. — PUCK