

Science Reporter

DEFENCE PREPAREDNESS

In the May 2012 editorial, the successful launch of Agni-V has been extolled. It is now necessary to provide finishing touches by increasing the reliability, accuracy and range of this plus 5000 km ballistic missile. Along with abetting belligerent Pakistan, China is steadily maintaining a hostile stance. With an increased range, this ICBM can target its entire area.

Close on the heels of this spectacular performance by DRDO, ISRO successfully launched the indigenous Radar Imaging Satellite (RISAT), which undoubtedly will play a key role in keeping an eye on the untoward activity of any enemy from hundreds of kilometres away. Though our adversary is well ahead of us in terms of defence preparedness, it will now have to think twice before indulging in any bravado for recently DRDO's Chief Dr. V.K. Saraswat announced that a ballistic missile defence shield is in place. With all these developments it can be safely asserted that the gap between the two Asian giants is closing. This augurs well for the security of the country.

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UN Sung HEROES

I read with interest the article **Unsung Heroes in the History of Science** (May 2012). I am glad the authors mentioned Dr. Yellapragada Subbarao, the miracle man of drugs. Dr. P.M. Bhargava, former Director of CCMB, in a glowing tribute to Dr. Yellapragada wrote:



"Most of the famous scientists around the world are known only for one major discovery that has had a lasting impact on our lives. Rarely, extremely rarely, a person comes on the world scene and transforms science and our lives by making a large number of major discoveries in and otherwise makes important contributions to – more than one basic field and does not only not get a Nobel Prize but does not get to be known by name to most people, including scientists around the world."

I would like to inform that we have instituted an annual award in the name of Dr. Yellapragada Subbarao.

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PRAISEWORTHY MAY ISSUE

The cover story of the May issue **Last Transit of Venus in the 21st Century** was indeed very informative and appealing. It is really inspiring to know that



Jeremiah Horrocks could discover such astronomical facts at an age less than 22 years!

The book review of *Biography of Kalpana Chawla* was also very well written. I was also very surprised to read the article **Human Beings: On Way to Extinction?**, but later realized it could be true.

Finally, I would like to suggest *Science Reporter* to make the feature *What's New* a regular column.

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PROTECT NATURE

This is with reference to **Human Beings: On Way to Extinction** by Jayaditya Purkayastha published in the May issue. The author rightly pointed out the



cause of the threats to human existence on earth. It is true that our conservation-strategy is wrong. We conserve the tigers, rhinoceros, crocodiles and large, higher vertebrates only. Ignoring the conservation of numerable invertebrates it is almost meaningless for long-term benefits. In our food-web-structure an ameba is also essential for higher animal-existence.

Purakayastha clearly discussed about the process of human reproduction. He concluded that sexual pleasure is no longer necessary for the human race. Is it true? Sigmund Freud proved that sex is the vital force in human life. Only our libido can save us. Nowadays few people want to establish themselves and escape from family-burden to build their career and make money, delaying their age of marriage. They prefer to choose their jobs rather than their life-partner. So, the author's fear is not baseless.

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The amazing article **Human Beings: On Way to Extinction?** by Jayaditya Purkayastha describes the evolution and possible extinction of humans. Yes, we humans do not respect nature. The mode and the theory explained in the article has great logic and it may be true. The conservation of nature is very necessary but no one is interested in it. Humans should know their responsibility and try to lend a hand to protect nature. If we neglect it, our future generations will cope with it and finally there extinction of Homo sapiens could be a possibility.

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HAVE YOUR SAY

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