

Nuclear Energy Programme

INDIA has been harnessing nuclear energy for the peace, prosperity and welfare of the people of the country. Towards this objective, it has launched a phased programme for establishing a strong base for generation of safe and economical power, using our mineral resources of uranium and thorium, and for extending non-electricity applications in agriculture, medicine and industry through the use of radioisotopes produced in indigenously designed research reactors.

Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), the premier multi-disciplinary R&D Centre for DAE followed by other major centres like Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research at Kalpakkam devoted to fast reactor technology, the Variable Energy Cyclotron Centre at Calcutta, the Centre for Advanced Technology at Indore devoted to lasers and accelerators and other aided institutions.

The research and development carried out in various research centres have generated core technologies and complementary technologies in the areas of nuclear power generation, including fast breeder reactors and for non-electricity application of nuclear energy.

As a result of this, the Nuclear Power Corporation (NPCIL) has acquired capability to design, construct, operate and maintain Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors

(PHWR). It is operating a nuclear power programme with an installed capacity of about 2000 MWe consisting of two Boiling Water Reactors, eight PHWRs. NPCIL also has an indigenous design of 500 MWe PHWR and construction of such units is expected to start shortly at Tarapur.

The Fast Breeder Test Reactor has operated well at 10 MW power using a partial core of a new indigenously developed fuel. The utilisation of thorium is also important for the country and beginnings have been made in this direction.

The excellent R & D base created by BARC has led to the creation of industrial facilities/plants for various parts of the nuclear fuel cycle and associated areas like uranium mining and milling, production of heavy water, fuel fabrication, reprocessing and waste management. In all

these activities, safety and environmental protection have been dominant concerns.

The fields where such spin-off benefits have occurred are also diverse, and include industry, agriculture, health care, human resource development and non-destructive testing techniques.

The research reactors in Trombay like Dhruva and CIRUS produce a wide variety of radioisotopes, which have applications in medicine, industry, agriculture, food preservation and water management.

In the field of agriculture, the services cover crop improvement programmes and fertilizer-and-pesticide related studies. Among the improved crop varieties, some varieties of groundnut and black gram are very popular amongst farmers of Maharashtra.

A radiation-induced mutant of black gram (URAD) produced by BARC accounts for 90 per cent of the cultivation of this pulse in Maharashtra. Similarly, Trombay produced groundnut varieties used in Maharashtra account for 11 per cent of the national production. The banana plant variety produced through tissue culture and the development of a photosensitive mutant of Sesbania rostrata as a green manure are a few of the other major developments.

India has established irradiation technology for the preservation and hygienisation and hygienisation of perishable foods in their natural form by gamma radiation. Recently, the irradiation of foodstuffs like spices, potatoes and onion has been approved by the Government for internal consumption and

that of seafood, onions and spices for export purposes.

The Board of Radiation and Isotope Technology (BRIT) which was formed to commercialise the use of isotopes has been supplying radiopharmaceuticals, labelled compounds and radio immunoassay (RIA) kits to over 400 medical institutions for

early diagnosis and treatment of disease including cancer.

The Radiation Medicine Centre of BARC and the Tata Memorial Centre have been playing a pioneering and catalytic role in fostering research and technology in combating cancer in the country.

The Indian nuclear energy programme has many dimensions. This is an area where the world recognises

India as a "developed" country rather than as "developing" one. The tremendous expertise and technical resources available have already had an impact on the economic and social sectors of the country, including many related to rural areas. It is our endeavour to push forward these spin-off benefits for rapid national development in the coming years.

Folk Culture of India



As the dancers throw up their hands towards the sky, the drums beat louder and exuberance transcends human imagination. The colour and vibrancy of such a dance is descriptive of almost any part of India. Travel into the dense forests on the upper reaches of the Himalayas in Arunachal Pradesh or sit by the rocks and boulders of Bastar in Madhya Pradesh, hold your breath as you watch it in Tamil Nadu or join the fun in Gujarat, folk dances are captivating and infectious in their vigour and spontaneity.

Of course it needs no explanation to support the statement that every region or small community in India has its own dance from Devised and choreographed to suit local practices and lore, this form of joyous expression is unrestricted both in participation and content. Yet, one can discern a common rhythm through all the folk dances of India!

Folk dances can be broadly classified into the occupational dances, seasonal dances, martial, devotional and ritualistic dances. Generally every society has a share of all these types of dances, with some overlapping, which becomes inevitable. For example the dance at a wedding may be both ritualistic as well as devotional. A pre-harvest dance will be both seasonal and occupational. It may even be ritualistic. But the essence of

the matter is that folk dances too have their significance greater than a sheerly impulsive jig!

They also have an important role to play in communication and functioning as records of history. Take the Aids, the largest tribe in the state of Arunachal Pradesh, for instance, relate the story of their ancestors. A careful record of the songs can reveal their entire history. The same is true of the Kunbi songs and dances in Goa. The oldest settlers in Goa, the Kunbis, tell the tradition of their land in their songs. The best example is the Gigi Pada dance of Karnataka. It involves a question and answer session between the men's and women's teams too.

Occupational dances generally depict the entire process of harvest or hunting as the occupation of the people may be. In Nagaland, for instance, the dancers in leaps and jumps are forever simulating a hunt and how they capture the wild animal. It is said therefore that even a child will be able to defend himself from a wild animal because he has seen the dance. On the other hand in Tamil Nadu the dance describes the process of harvesting.

On a full moon night in the month of February-March, when spring is just there, go to Manipur and you will be thrilled to see the dance called Bhasanta Ras celebrating the season. As the

gentle swaying captivates you, switch to another scene in the South. In Kerala, particularly at the end of March, the Velakali dance is performed. Hear the war cry as it finds men performing this martial art with swords and shields; they are telling the story of the victory of good over evil.

If it is a story that you want to hear then you could go to Maharashtra and watch the Powda or the Dasavata. Powda is a term which means narration of a story in glorious terms and sure enough it is the story of a hero that is told to you.

Dasavata is the story of the great epic Mahabharata. Yakshagana of Karnataka tells of mythological stories just as burra kaatha of Andhra Pradesh.

Watch closely as the tribe of Arunachal tells a story. The earth and sky were lovers and they loved earth other very much. Of them was born their son, a bison. The bison (Mithun in local parlance) got so jealous that he tossed the two apart. And each time the earth rose to join her lover, the sun came shining out and the shy maiden stopped short. That is how mountains came into existence.

Another fantastic similarity one finds is in the content of the stories. Even though folk dances belong entirely to the people and not to the scholastic tradition, one finds the exchanges of ideas between different parts of India has been constant and at all levels. Take one epic like the

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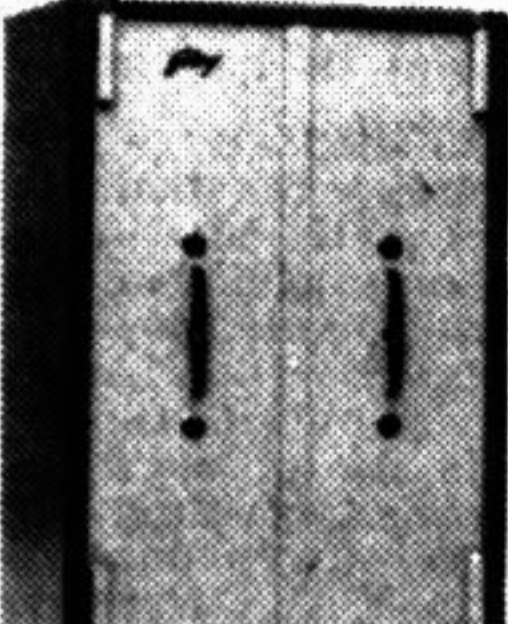
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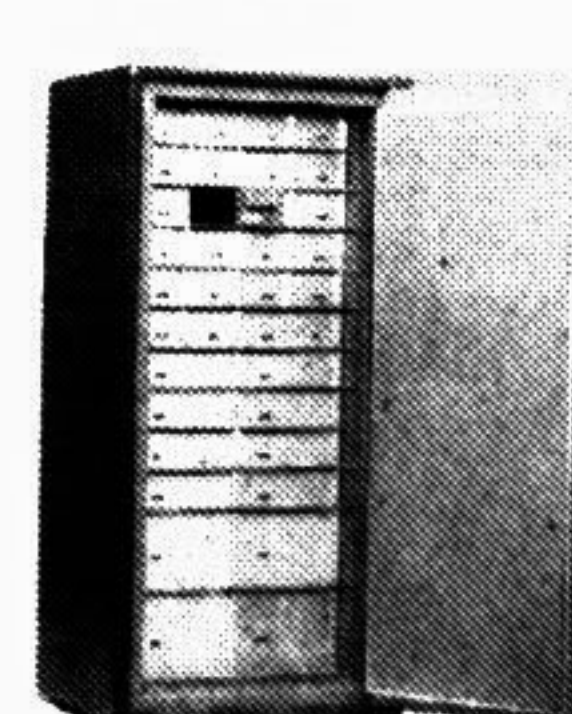
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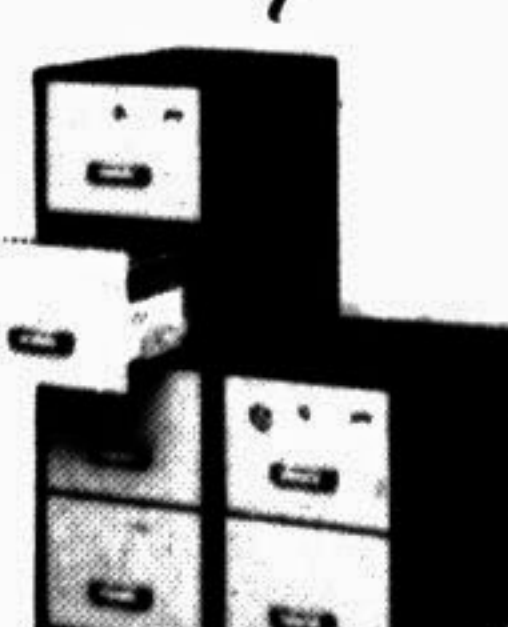
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