

## **Sad Demise of Founder Director of Space Applications Centre, Prof. Yashpal**



As the Founder Director of the Space Applications Centre, Ahmedabad in 1973, Prof. Yashpal built the centre into an Internationally Recognised Institution of Excellence in the field of applications of Space Technology for the benefit of mankind. Under his overall direction, Space Applications Centre was involved in the novel Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) which was aimed at providing a system test of Direct Television Broadcast Technology for disseminating educational and developmental programmes for rural population. SITE was Largest Mass Communications Experiment ever carried out in the World.

He made significant contributions in the areas of Cosmic-rays, High-energy Physics, Astrophysics, Education, communication and development and has published a large number of papers in national and international journals.

Prof. Pal was a Fellow of the Indian Academy of Sciences and the Indian National Science Academy. He was the President of the Indian Physics Association; Chairman, National Council of Science Museums; Member, Electronics Commission; Council Member of several academic and scientific organisations such as Film and Television Institute of India, Indian Institute of Mass Communication Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology and the Indian Council of Scientific and Industrial Research. He was also a member of the Senior Advisory Board of the Princeton-based Space Studies Institute.

After completing his Masters degree in Physics at the Punjab University in 1949, Prof. Pal joined the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research. He obtained his Ph.D. degree in Physics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1958. He has been a Visiting Professor at several universities and institutions including the Niels Bohr Institute, Copenhagen, University of Maryland and California Institute of Technology.

A scientist of international repute, Pal was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1976 and India's second highest civilian honour, the Padma Vibhushan, in 2013. In 1980 the Marconi International Fellowship Council awarded him the prestigious Marconi International Fellowship Award to recognize wise and humane leadership in applying modern communications technology to meet the needs of isolated rural villagers in India. He was given recognition by the Academy of Sciences of the German Democratic Republic and the University of Sofia.