

## **S. Jaipal Reddy Confers the National Award for Women's Development Through Application of Science & Technology**



Union Minister for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences Shri S.Jaipal Reddy today(March 8, 2013) conferred National Award for Women's Development through Application of Science & Technology at a glittering function held in New Delhi to mark the International Women's Day. He also inaugurated a National Conference on 'Women's Health and Nutrition – A Community Based Approach' on this occasion.

On this occasion the National Award for Women Development through Application of Science and Technology for the year 2011 in the institutional criteria was conferred to Dangoria Charitable Trust, Hyderabad and the National Award for Women Development through Application of Science and Technology for the year 2011 in the institutional criteria was conferred to M S Swaminathan Research Foundation, Chennai. Praising the awardees, Shri Reddy said The mainstay of the efforts of the organizations have been the firm belief that science and technology is a key to economic empowerment at the grass roots and that generic technologies have to be adapted for use through grass root level innovations which keep in view both the financial and social constraints of rural women. They are those rare institutions that have successfully made the journey from experiment and innovation in a research laboratory to applications in the field.

Shri Reddy said technologies, products, processes and development models have tremendous capacity to address the

problems facing rural women both in the farm and non-farm sectors. The need of the hour is to usher in a nutrition revolution so that people have nutritious food and a balanced diet. India is among countries with the high incidence of malnutrition in children in the world- 40-50%. There is rampant malnutrition even among adults (over 30%). Micronutrient deficiencies, particularly, iron, iodine, vitamin A and B-complex are also common. Over 50% of children and women suffer from iron-deficiency anaemia which contributes to morbidity, mortality and low productivity. Malnutrition has complex aetiology, dietary deficiency being an important factor. Unsafe drinking water and environment, poor health care out reach, and low literacy in women also contribute. In a country which has large regional disparities it is essential to develop location specific models of intervention in the health sector through a participatory approach to tackle communicable and non – communicable diseases. The minister hoped that conceptualization of such programmes would be an outcome of this conference.

The minister said the Department of Science and Technology has been spearheading several pioneering initiatives with an aim to bring gender parity in science and implementing a programme, 'DISHA' . DISHA is designed to provide an integrated enabling and supportive framework for gender mainstreaming of Women in Science, Technology and Innovation. This would be achieved by providing appropriate avenues to gainfully engage them in various S&T activities thereby enabling them to utilize their knowledge, skills and capacities for larger societal and national goals.

Shri Reddy said although we are a traditional country, over the years women as important human resource have overcome the traditional mindsets and have excelled in professions like medicine and other areas of sciences. He said the Department of Science and Technology has been spearheading several pioneering initiatives with an aim to bring gender parity in science and implementing a programme, 'DISHA' . DISHA is

designed to provide an integrated enabling and supportive framework for gender mainstreaming of Women in Science, Technology and Innovation. This would be achieved by providing appropriate avenues to gainfully engage them in various S&T activities thereby enabling them to utilize their knowledge, skills and capacities for larger societal and national goals. Also, DST has pioneered several gender initiatives. The National Award for Women's Development through Application of Science & Technology has been instituted in the year 2000 to recognize the contributions of individuals / institutions who have worked at the grassroot level for women's development through application of science and technology.

The minister summed up with the quote that "Technological Interventions and People's Empowerment is a continuing process for economic development of any country, which has to be encouraged and nurtured at every step, and obstructions coming in its way have to be avoided at any cost".