



PEOPLE, PLACES & EVENTS

SOOD ELECTED TO THE ROYAL SOCIETY

Indian experimental physicist **Ajay Kumar Sood**, elected to TWAS in 2001 and currently serving as the Academy's Secretary General, has been elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of London, 10 July 2015.

The Royal Society, founded in 1660, is one of the most prestigious scientific institutions in the world with about 1,600 distinguished fellows from all over the world.

Sood, a physicist from the department of physics at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore, India, is an expert in quantum and soft condensed matter, fields where his input, originality and dynamism have left a mark.

He has served as the president of the Indian Academy of Sciences (2010-12) and the vice-president of Indian National Science Academy. For his scientific contributions he has received the Padma Shri (2013), the fourth highest civilian award in the Republic of India, as well as the prestigious TWAS Prize in Physics (2000).



OBAMA HONOURS TWAS FELLOW

Cato Thomas Laurencin, elected a TWAS Fellow in 2006, has been honoured by US President Barack Obama with the National Medal of Technology and Innovation. Laurencin is an expert in shoulder and knee surgery, currently engaging in research in tissue engineering, biomaterials science, nanotechnology



and stem cell science as well as in the emerging field of regenerative engineering.

He earned his PhD in biochemical engineering/biotechnology from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and serves as designated university professor at the University of Connecticut. In addition, Laurencin is the founding director of the Institute for Regenerative Engineering and of the Raymond and Beverly Sackler Center for Biomedical, Biological, Physical and Engineering Sciences at UConn Health.

The National Medal of Technology and Innovation is among the highest honours awarded to acknowledge special achievements and outstanding contributions to America's competitiveness. It was created in 1980 and is administered by the US Department of Commerce's Patent and Trademark Office.

DASGUPTA WINS THE BLUE PLANET PRIZE AND THE TYLER PRIZE

Sir Partha Dasgupta, an illustrious economist elected to TWAS in 2001, is the recipient of the 2015 Blue Planet Prize, an international environmental award sponsored by the Asahi Glass Foundation. He has also been awarded the 2016 Tyler Prize for Environmental Achievement.

Through new insights and techniques of analysis, Dasgupta has unified two areas of economics that have always been addressed separately: environmental and resource economics and the economics

of poverty and development. His innovative perspective has given prominence to wealth and nature, which should be considered essential components of a country's gross domestic product (GDP).

A native of India, Dasgupta holds a PhD in economics from the University of Cambridge (1968). He is fellow of the British Academy and the Royal Society, and a Foreign Member of the US National Academy of Sciences, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the American Philosophical Society.

Dasgupta shared the Blue Planet Prize with Jeffrey Sachs, the director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University and the adviser to the UN Secretary-General on the Millennium Development Goals.

C.N.R. RAO RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS RECOGNITIONS

C.N.R. Rao, a founding member and past president of TWAS, has received three prestigious honours in 2015.

He is the first Indian scientist ever elected as Corresponding Member of the Australian Academy of Sciences, sharing this title with professor Jill Banfield, an earth scientist at the University of California (Berkeley). For his contributions to science and to Indo-Japanese science cooperation, Rao has been conferred Japan's highest civilian award, the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star, by the Emperor of Japan.

In addition, he has been named an honorary member of the Nepal Academy of Science and Technology.



Rao, a fellow of the Royal Society, is an international authority in the field of solid state and materials chemistry. He is currently national research professor and president of the Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research in Bangalore, India. He has also served as the chief science adviser to the prime minister of India.

GUO HUADONG WINS PRZEWALSKI MEDAL

The Russian Geographical Society has awarded **Guo Huadong** the Nikolai Mikhailovich Przewalski Gold Medal, named after a renowned explorer and naturalist.

Guo, elected to TWAS in 2012, is a professor and founding director general of the Chinese Academy of Sciences [CAS] Institute of Remote Sensing and Digital Earth. He has been honoured for his scientific achievements in the field of radar remote sensing, digital Earth science, and space technology for global change research.

Guo serves as president of the International Society for Digital Earth, past-president of the ICSU Committee on Data for Science and Technology (CODATA), director of the International Center on Space Technologies for Natural and Cultural Heritage under the auspices of UNESCO, director of the CAS-TWAS Centre of Excellence on Space Technology for Disaster Mitigation, and editor-in-chief of the International Journal of Digital Earth.

RAGHAVENDRA GADAKAR WINS AWARDS

Raghavendra Gadagkar, the president of the Indian National Science Academy and a 2000 TWAS Fellow, has received the German Cross of the Order of Merit, Germany's highest civilian

honour, for his scientific contributions in the field of behavioural ecology and sociobiology.

Gadagkar, who works at the Centre for Ecological Sciences, Bangalore [India] has also received the prestigious A.V. Rama

Rao Technology Award 2014, instituted by the Indian Institute of Chemical Technology, Hyderabad, India. He is decorated also for his efforts to consolidate scientific cooperation between India and Germany, with the Max Planck Institute for Chemical Ecology in Jena, the German Zoological Society in Halle and the universities of Freiburg and Offenburg.

Gadagkar's studies have examined the evolution of eusociality in insects, focusing on wasp species *Ropalidia marginata* as a model system. He is a member of the German Academy of Sciences Leopoldina and a foreign associate of the National Academy of Sciences, USA.

LOUNSBERRY FOUNDATION SUPPORTS TWAS

TWAS's South-South Fellowship Programme has received financial support from the **Richard Lounsberry Foundation**. The grant (about USD60,000) will cover travel expenses, visa fees and other costs associated with the TWAS fellowship programmes. The Foundation, named for the late American businessman Richard Lounsberry, supports projects in science and technology policy; science and mathematics education; historical studies and contemporary assessments of trends in the physical and biomedical sciences; and establishing infrastructure for research projects. TWAS's South-South Fellowship Programme is the largest PhD and Postdoctoral research fellowships programme in the world. The



fellowships gives talented researchers the opportunity to develop their skills and build their careers by studying and working in top-class laboratories in TWAS partner countries.

Each year TWAS offers some 600 fellowships, and a current goal is to reach 1,000 fellowships per year.

PAKISTAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES WELCOMES ANWAR NASIM

The Pakistan Academy of Sciences [PAS] in Islamabad has elected **Anwar Nasim**, a 1987 TWAS Fellow, as its new president. Nasim is a former science adviser to the secretariat of COMSTECH [the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation's Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation].

Nasim, known for his efforts to promote the socio-economic development of Pakistan and Islamic countries, is a molecular geneticist skilled in DNA repair mechanisms. He will serve as the PAS president until 2017.

He earned his PhD in biochemical genetics at the University of Edinburgh, UK,

and is chairman of the task force on biosafety and biosecurity constituted by Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. PAS currently has 67 Pakistani fellows and 17 foreign fellows.



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