

Dr George Joseph Awarded India's Civilian Award and Premier Remote Sensing Award

Dr George Joseph, President, ISPRS Technical Commission-I has been awarded the Government of India's civilian honour - PADMA BHUSHAN. The award was bestowed on Dr George by HE K R Narayanan, President of India at an Investiture Ceremony held at New Delhi on March 25, 1999. The Padma Bhushan was awarded in recognition of Dr George's contribution to the development of the Indian EO programme - specifically his leadership and vision in the development of the imaging payloads for the IRS series of satellites and the INSAT VHRR.

In a parallel development, the Indian Society of Remote Sensing, the premier professional body of about 1800 members for furthering the technology and applications of remote sensing in India and a Member of ISPRS, awarded the prestigious BHASKARA award in recognition of Dr George Joseph's outstanding lifetime contributions for the development of remote sensing technology and applications. The Bhaskara Award, the highest award of the Society, was bestowed on Dr George at the ISRS Annual Convention held in Bangalore in January, 1999.

Dr George Joseph, born in 1938, started his research career at Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Bombay and was awarded the Doctorate degree by the University of Bombay in 1971 for his research on "A search for energetic neutrons during solar flares". Right from the early days of his career, Dr George Joseph developed engineering skills and capabilities that resulted in his designing and guiding the development of some of the world's best imaging sensors.

At the Space Applications Centre, Ahmedabad, where he was invited to join in 1973, Dr George Joseph has organised one of the world's best groups in the area of sensor development for remote sensing. He has been responsible for conception, design and fabrication of the imaging sensor payloads for various Indian Remote Sensing Satellites (IRS) and the VHRR meteorological payloads for various Indian National Satellite System (INSAT). He is rightfully considered as the PIONEER of imaging sensors in India.

As Director of the Space Applications Centre, his co-ordination and guidance of the data products and image processing activities for IRS satellites, applications development - particularly in the areas of agriculture, water resources, coastal, urban, forest etc., have contributed in a major way towards the operational use of the remote sensing technology in the country. Presently, as ISRO Distinguished Professor, Dr George Joseph is actively associated in shaping and guiding EO programmes of ISRO.

Dr George Joseph is an example of the best talents in the world of high technology, specifically in remote sensing - which is substantially proven from the excellent quality images from IRS and the very useful images from VHRR that the global user community utilises.

As President of ISPRS-TC-1, Dr George has been active in ISPRS and has steered the activities of the Commission by organising a series of activities, including a very

successful International Symposium on "Earth Observation for Sustainable Development" at Bangalore in February, 1998.

It is in recognition of his outstanding contributions to electro optical sensor development and for his distinguished achievements in furthering the remote sensing utilisation in the country that 2 major awards have been conferred on Dr George Joseph.