Colloquium

Learning to Govern Research: An anecdotal narrative

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"Governance" is a system that provides a framework for managing organisations, agencies and the stakeholders. Governance of systems that are engaged in linear processes delivering values to stakeholders through a set of defined decision paths is somewhat stabilised worldwide in democracies. Governance needed for dealing with systems of research which rely on nonlinear processes and paths does pose challenges. Most creative scientists trained in nonlinear paths of science do face challenges in governance functions. Socio cultural setting does bear significant influence on the performance of governance systems in any decision-making environment. Hence governance needed for research in the socio-cultural setting of India is likely to be special.

A laboratory scientist engaged in research for seeking truth and for the beauty of knowledge working as an individual may be adept at the non-linear thinking and unique approaches to searching for new knowledge. When such a person is called upon to play the governance role in their own institutions or at national level, adaptation to the job requirement becomes essential.

Transiting from the roles of a scientist to Director of national laboratory and from a director of CSIR laboratory to Secretary to the Government of India demanded large adaptational step. There were many valuable lessons to be learnt on governance of research. It is proposed to share the lessons learnt on governance of research through an anecdotal narration of personality changes and professional approaches embraced.

Five core principles on governance of research and five lessons for life at the helm of governance of research learnt from their practice on ground would be shared. A working model of governance suited to the Indian socio-cultural context of India would be narrated as an anecdotal story.

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3:00 PM (Tea / Coffee 2.45 PM)

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