

Salute to Dr APJ Abdul Kalam: An Evolved and Enlightened Soul

■ By Shivraj Singh Chouhan

SOME people are great beyond words. Dr APJ Abdul Kalam was one such person. In the history of modern India, July 27, 2015 would be remembered for departure of Dr Kalam, a Pragya Purush of India's Rishi Parampara for his heavenly abode after enlightening and immensely benefitting the country by his knowledge, wisdom, scientific excellence and qualities of head and heart.

A man of many parts, Dr Kalam embodied Indian values in true sense. He was a scientist par excellence, original thinker, serious spiritual seeker, poet, connoisseur of music, inspiring orator, able administrator, all rolled into one. Above all, he was full of human sensitivities.

A special hallmark of great people is that they are always grateful to those from whom they have learnt something. Dr Kalam never forgot to pay obeisance to his primary school teacher Shiv Subramaniam and his Science Guru Prof Satish Dhawan at any public forum. He studied the Quran and the Gita with same respect and faith. Known as Missile Man, Dr Kalam is credited with having developed Agni and Prithvi missiles



Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan with Dr APJ Abdul Kalam during a function organised to inaugurate Atal Jyoti Abhiyan in April, 2013. (File Photo)

with indigenous technology. He was closely associated with India's space programme and the Pokhran explosion.

However, this man of immense wisdom was not limited to this. He was gifted with an exceptional foresight and vision for all-round development of India. He not only dreamt of seeing India as a fully developed nation by year 2020,

but also presented an outline for this in the shape of Vision-2020. Great institutions like ISRO and DRDO owe a lot to him for their excellence. Dr Kalam wanted villages to have urban facilities. For this, he conceptualised Provision of Urban Amenities in Rural Areas (PURA). His books infused a new zeal and self-confidence among youths and aroused in them a resolve to do

something worthwhile for the nation. I had the privilege to welcome the great evolved soul during his visits to different parts of Madhya Pradesh. The 11 points suggested by him for all-round development of Madhya Pradesh helped a great deal in making it the fastest growing state of the country. Whenever I met Dr Kalam, his simplicity and humility impressed me the most. He was an alter ego of former Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee. They shared a unique chemistry. During the regime of Vajpayeeji, Dr Kalam was conferred with country's highest civilian honour Bharat Ratna. He adorned the highest office in the land as President of world's largest democracy. This was a tribute of a grateful nation to his greatness. However, I believe that he was above all honours, awards and offices. I would endeavor to take a suitable step in near future to perpetuate the memories of Dr Kalam in Madhya Pradesh for posterity. I offer reverential salutes to Dr Kalam, who dedicated all his life to the nation, on behalf of the people of Madhya Pradesh and on my own behalf.

(Writer is Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh)