

## **Foundation Day**

27<sup>th</sup> November 2009

The theme of the Foundation Day event was '**IIT Kanpur's Contributions to Society**'. The chief guest for the function was the well-known personality Prof. Yash Pal, National Mahatma Gandhi Fellow and former chairman, UGC. He shared the dais with Prof. M. Anandkrishnan, Chairman, Board of Governors, and Prof. Sanjay G. Dhande, Director, IITK.

The traditional opening ceremony of lighting the lamp was followed by a Saraswati Vandana sung by Mrs. Pragya Khandekar with Mr. Devanand Pathak on the violin. The first address of the day was by Prof. Dhande. He highlighted the defining moments of IITK's history spanning five decades. For him the two essential criteria for an Institute's success are the human spirit and thought process, both unique assets of mind cultivated by the IITK system of education. Further elaborating the success achieved by the Institute, Prof. Sanjeev K. Aggarwal, Dean Resource and Planning, made a presentation highlighting the contribution of the Institute to society. Since its inception the Institute has been disseminating seeds of knowledge. It has played a major role in nation building, serving local communities and underprivileged sections, developing technologies and facilities and an Indian academic system.

Prof. Yash Pal spoke with much fervor about the renovation and rejuvenation of higher education in India and the need for the IITs to make a mark in all fields. He said that rather than setting up new IITs it was necessary to strengthen the existing ones. In fact there was need for strong post-graduate and doctoral programs that can produce high quality teachers for academic institutions. He also talked about the faults in our existing educational system which has killed the innate curiosity that exists during childhood. Our minds are conditioned to the extent of losing their luster.

After Prof. Yash Pal's talk Mr. Irshad Mirza, Chairman, Mirza Tanneries was felicitated for his work. Prof. Manindra Agrawal gave the vote of thanks.

Later in the evening a cultural program was held featuring the world renowned flautist Pt. Hariprasad Chaurasia and his group. He was accompanied by Pt. Subhankar Banerjee on the tabla, Ms. Debopriya Ranadive on the flute and Ms. Amrita Upriti on the tanpura. Pt. Chaurasia started his recital with the festive raaga Madhuvanti, an introductory alap followed by Jod, Gat and khyal. Rhythm and music flowed from his flute. On special request from the audience, he played raagas Malkauns and

Hansadhwani-drut alap followed by the famous bandish "Laagi lagan" in Adha teen taal in madhya laya. He concluded his program with a dhun in raaga Pahadi.