

(1101)

her. Don't build up too many "slack time" into her programme. If it is 7 min & you make 10 min, she will ask 'what is it now' & during the 3 min..."

" Another thing: since you said that you people may hold the launch ~~over~~ for a few or ~~over~~ even several minutes, have alternate ~~pro~~ but pre-planned programmes during those gap times... No last minute ~~a~~ helter-skelter... "

She was also sharing her problem of dealing with NTR also. " Both are most popular leaders in this part... Both wants  
(P.T.O)

(1102)

**Agenda Item 5:**

**Any other matters with the permission of the Chairman.**

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ideally love to land in Sullurupeta  
address a couple of rallies and  
drive down 13 Kms ~~to~~ into the  
islands... especially NTR.. I will  
be finished: all over the two  
sides of the linking roads people  
will gather running before them  
or after them. They will dare the  
marsh & backwaters...

~~Worst~~ Worst thing is that  
your Sriharikota ~~will~~ <sup>does</sup> not have  
any ~~to~~ food supply for them or  
some sort of drinking water...

I will be forced to order  
firing in the stampede that will <sup>30</sup>

(103)

follow as ~~they~~ people would rush into all parts of your Centre - the prohibited area...."

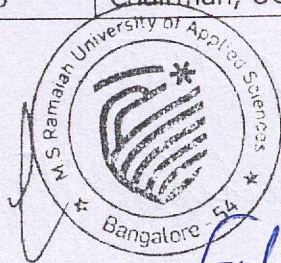
~~"I will decide"~~

"I had decided to over-rule both PMO & CMO - asked them to land into the ~~the~~ island with their helicopter.. CM has to land well before 30 min or earlier than PM's helicopter.. otherwise he had to be blocked...."

~~Police Chief~~

→ She was the ~~system~~ sister of Dr Gopalakrishnan who ~~earlier~~ ~~later~~ ~~did~~ die (I ~~don't~~ don't recall exact dates) the ~~of~~ enquiry into the

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8	Chairman, UGC	(1104)



death of ~~an~~ a young engineer  
falling into autoclave... he had  
violated safety rules in his enthusiasm  
It was not unusual; one ~~mechanic~~  
mechanic had done it for  
Kalam's SLV-3 launch to  
climb up the launch pad when  
the vehicle was loaded & aimed  
to release a stuck - part of  
the umbilical ~~cord~~ Chord...  
Those were earlier ~~days~~  
years of ISRO where enthusiasm

(11057)

Overlook safety... also there were  
no clear codified procedures,  
though ISRO Safety Office was  
set up ~~for~~ with Kurup as  
~~the~~ having addl. responsibility  
as Director ISRO Safety Office in

ISRO HQ, for taking care of  
ESA's strict conditions for APPLE!

I did not know that Sujata Rao  
was his sister... Later she<sup>i</sup> became  
Secretary Health in 2000's....

I learnt a lot of  
practical adaption of VVIP security  
to realities on the ground....

Problems for police  
personnel were much more.

(1106)

difficult... It was 36,000 acres  
of land... Vast sea coast...  
many bushes... Even with a big  
size maps (anamonia prints)  
which we gave, it was difficult  
for them to identify the terrain  
immediately: a vast sandy plain  
littered with similar looking trees  
with the ~~sea~~ road we had got  
done running for several kilometers,  
no easily available land marks.

"Sir we see curves only in the  
maps; when we drive it is all  
straight...."

We need you or one person

(1107)

nominated by you to guide us to the buildings ~~to~~ chosen for PM's visit.

Since you are also making several modules of options, # one of you should be in the front car ~~at~~ during actual visits... Good that they are there for some trial runs...."

⊗ We did this modules because we were told that some times PM may ask for some other items, if she finishes faster a given programme - or if there were "holds" ~~due~~ ~~is~~ ~~during~~ before the actual launch, we need to engage PM with a useful visit...

So I got identified two persons (one acting as a standby to another ~~the~~ ~~di~~\*)

(1108)

**Agenda Item 4:**

**Constitution of Selection Committee for  
selecting a Vice Chancellor for the University**

---

4.1 RUAS letter to CE, GEF (M) with attachment - 05.05.2018

These persons did not have ~~too~~ much of  
launch operations responsibility; they  
were from SHAR; they know the places  
in and out... For doing such things  
I was in touch with Raj Ratnaraj  
Hastings Jeyamani, popularly known  
as Jeyamani Range Director. He was the  
live-wire. During those days SHAR operations  
ran due to him... He & I were the only  
two interfaces for Police.. we could go to  
any location... ~~& even~~ In those days  
without mobiles we were in touch..  
Radio contact phone were sparingly used  
as we did not want radio wave pollution.

(1109)

In fact about 30 min before the launch most areas around the launch pad are declared "Radio Silence" — even cars were not allowed to avoid the radiation EMI from ignition systems etc. ~~Now it is a j~~ Now a days systems are more robust...

We started the drill a week before the visit. I had very little sleep... We had to get into lots of details; not only security & safety; but also cleanliness; tidyness etc. There were many operational rooms in which some tables may be dusty; there may be cobwebs under some ~~cat~~ tables... We were told she was meticulous about them.

(1110)

If there was a dusky table she would go near it & swipe with a finger, we were told.

(We could see that in action; though we had taken all the care, when she came in and was looking at the swath of the Island standip ~~a~~ in a good place with PjSD nearby, the photographer who was clicking the film, alas came to the end of the roll — it was good old days — so he hurriedly ~~out~~ opened a new one pushed it inside & threw the cover away from us as it was open place.

IG walked towards it, bent & took it in her hands and kept it with her and continued her seeing & talking to SD ~~as~~ as if there was no interruption. All, esp. the photographer,

(1111)

shamed. & She did not show any expression of anger etc in her face. It perhaps was a lesson for the ~~prog~~ photographer for his life... Maybe others... Our arrangements inside were so meticulous, she did not any such thing to do in all the places she visited. So our extra care was worth it; also those who cautioned ~~to~~ us about her meticulousness on these matters were ~~to~~ right!)

In addition to the above there were other technical details. What stems to see, etc. It can't be just that she comes into the Mission Control Centre after a general round trip in SHAR. She had to be

(1112)

Shown some important technical facilities and explained. Got a broad idea from SD and started identifying.

The transit times were very important as her time for ~~going~~ coming & going were limited. We had to arrange for a quick "darshan" of her to the SHAR employees' families & also for many employees who won't be allowed to come inside the main operational Centre. Then there was press - not allowed with us & kept out in a separate less security area. They could from there watch the launch, though they won't go to launch pad... We need time for these... Plus there was NTR. At least when meeting SHAR employees

(1113)

and the VVIP's addressing them (NTR & IG only), NTR should have some time allotted...

SD had desired that she should be given a full run down of launch operations T-5 hours to launch; ~~the~~ various technical checks etc through ~~present~~ structured presentation by senior ISRO persons — Director ~~SSA~~ VSSC, Dr. SC Gupta, etc. That was to be at the Mission Control Centre... There was a good written document — cyclostyles with some ~~left~~ colour differences in pages — for ease of reading... That was some solid 45 mins. I had a hunch that she may skip it and

(1114)

therefore mentally prepared to have some modules for it. In that phase, we have to be back well in time, before all car movements are prohibited. ... So I had to work out some options fitting them.

It was nice of SD that he was not interfering with any of them. Otherwise it would have been tough. ... Because we need ~~to do~~ to explain to police chiefs there & run trial runs. I had to keep DC <sup>the</sup> (Sujata) also informed, as she had admin. authority for such visits. We should not end up in fights.

She had given one general advice

"Mr. Rajan whatever you people do remember one thing; don't be overcautious

(1115)

and build too much margins in the time-budget; <sup>a</sup> if a transit time is 10 mins and ~~the~~ visit 10 mins worth, don't provide for 25 mins or 24 min - 2 for transit, two for meeting. Each minute will hang on her. When something is over, she will ask "what next? ... She uses each minute to do something... I don't have to see each trial run myself... Let police do its checkek".

So I had considerable freedom to rework, modules, to fit into ~~over~~ an overall theme of SITAR operations (which includes test facilities like STEX, propellant making facility like SPROB, tracking facilities etc in addition to launch area)

(P.T.)

(1116)

### Agenda Item 3:

### Resignation of University's Vice Chancellor

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- 3.1 Resignation Letter- Dr. S.R Shankapal
- 3.2 Chancellor's acceptance - 31.05.2018
- 3.3 Chancellor's Circular- 05.05.18
- 3.4 Copy of Relieving Letter issued- 31.05.2018

Senior persons from VSSC were very cooperative though they had been put to various inconveniences such as being in hostel (though we took care of their airconditioning) etc. One major problem was Director SHAR (N. Pant). Strictly speaking he should have been in command; but TNS had specially asked me to take care. Col. NP though a good person ~~was~~ had always been indecisive. He would come up with a new idea after some suggestion by him had been accepted.

(1117)

and put into action. This was so even  
in other matters of ~~admi~~ regular administration.  
I recall how the successor <sup>Y.S. Das is his first avatar,</sup> ~~to~~ Skwarner  
used to go bonkers with NP. Sometimes  
he used to call me to his room:  
"Rajan! Come down leaving everything!  
I am going nuts here..."

When I came down, ~~He~~ he will  
show a file "See this, your  
Director SHAR, proposes something  
terrible in amb processes; when pointed  
out, does not come out clearly with  
alternates, ... keeps troubling SD by  
phoning or writing a long letter, ..."

Finally, reluctantly, I wrote a  
lambaa-chowdaa note for MF

(P.T.O)

(1118)

## Agenda Item 2:

### Matters arising from previous Minutes

---

for approval and get it approved  
after some rounds, when orders have  
to be issued, he phones me to stop it...  
Then <sup>comes up</sup> another idea... )

SD wants to be nice  
with his <sup>Centre</sup> Directors... How stupid the  
Dept will look like when we put  
up another note negating the earlier  
note we had argued and come up  
with something else... "What to  
do now?"

We ~~will~~ used to discuss  
for sometime and then would  
find some method to diffuse  
that matter, not issue the order, <sup>18</sup>

(1119)

not taking up the new one;  
going to status quo ante... Then  
KSSA ~~some times~~ wait for time ek  
ek.

When SHAR strike by employees  
were taking place, ~~when things~~ Pant  
was rattled; what could have  
been easily handled by his  
Controller (Chief of Admin - Mr.  
K. A. Varadan) who later became  
Joint Secy in DOS.... He was  
confusing the matter & escalating  
to SD, asking him to come  
down to SHAR... So much  
did he force finally SD  
came down to Chennai - SKW

(120)

**Agenda Item 1:**

**Draft Minutes of the previous meeting.**

---

told SD not to go SHAR and stay in the ~~GP~~ Madras C.H. I called Pant to C.H. leaving Varadan to handle the striking employees ~~who~~ one of whom threatened to go on hunger strike — all the pass due to weak handling by NP & not allowing Varadan, a seasoned IAS officer to handle . . . The wives of the employees were made the front cordon with chilli powder in their hands . . .

(1121)

Since hunger strike had started, police could have been brought in to save the person & take him to hospital ... & disperse the crowd... They were not that militant type of employees / workers...

"SKW used to tell me" What should have been handled by a Section officer, Pant saab is making Secy DOS to come..."

NP came with ~~Re~~ Jayanain & a couple of others and went on telling same things... will past 10 p.m.: Nothing concrete.

(1122)

SKW was biting his teeth & sitting there..... He could not ~~and~~ ~~and~~ smoke too....

I was sitting & reading "Hindu" newspaper (which I normally do not read, but on occasions when I am in airport / Madras G.H. etc) ... occasionally raising my head... The discussions went on

circular; SD totally foxed; spoke very little..... Finally ~~it was~~ nothing was decided and SD would have decided to leave it to SKW ~~I~~ to solve.

He decides not to go to SHAR and all dispersed..... SD went to his room to rest... SKW caught hold of me told

(1123)

me "Rajan, come with me outside,  
let us have some fresh air".

We came out, he had his  
"puff" and we walked for a

while. Then SKW came to  
GH office, asked them to open

it to talk on a hot line

there to SHAR; got connected

to Varadan who was sleeping

(just going to bed I think)

He gave him a mouthful

"Varadan & it is unbecoming

of an IAS officer to give  
a draft for your Director such

useless rambling long letter

to be given to ~~Secretary~~ Secretary DOS.

(1124)

Was there any substance or solution? ... Just because your Director wants, you give ...

This is a matter which can be handled by your Admn. Officer ..."

Later he told him not to get pumped by his Director & ~~a~~ solution can be got if he handled it ... It was different later ...

~~SKW~~ On the whole episode SKW used when it was going to such a pass as SD was giving a long rope to NP in handling the situation. ~~SKW~~ SKW used to tell me: "Rajin: I don't understand your scientific boxes. Seaypas gives

(1125)

in fluctuating suggestions by Director SHAR  
One day tough; then another day to  
surrender... Either they should  
decide to lift up the pants and  
be ready to face the situation or  
~~let the~~ decide to let the pants  
down totally... It ~~is gett~~ is  
maddening..." He was a very  
seasoned Officer; he had been  
in Police also some time. Very polished  
person; I think a British wife...  
SD had specially selected him  
from Karnataka Cadre...

I am not very sure whether  
this even was before 1983 IG visit  
or later... I think it was later  
Varadan was not there when IG

(1126)

visit. I think it was Swaminathan who was Controller SHAR.

However I had linked up all of them together ~~because~~ to describe NP's personality; otherwise nice person... but totally indecisive even on technical matters. I had good relations with him; we mostly spoke in Hindi between ourselves, sometimes even when others were there.

For NP it was also an added relief as he did not have ~~any~~ any body in VSSC, or SHAR to talk in Hindi.

Converser, S.C.G normally did not. They only spoke in English... Others used Tamil, & Malayalam in plenty... In SHAR some Telugu also. I used Tamil, Hindi & English

(1127)

NP's such flip-flop, on-off, or go to something else of discussions, suggestions, were well known within ISRO. He was lucky man, who was very useful for YP to ~~enter~~ ~~into~~ establish in SATC after pushing out KRR, BSR - ~~AG~~ A senior

Communication person !! So  
(when YS Rao, <sup>the pioneer of SHAR</sup> was unfortunately when pushed out SHAR) YP

~~a~~ managed to send him to as Director - though there were others in VSSC ~~who~~ senior enough who would have better fitted! I

had started realising the importance of "Luck" in career, rather than pure index of performance, which itself

(128)

was changing from time to time though couched in assessment of parameters ~~like~~ with 5 or 10 point scales. Annual Confidential reports ~~are~~ with so many columns & rows are really ~~to~~ a fun to watch and what actually happens in promotions, and more importantly positions as Project Engg, Proj Manager & PD, Group Director, Director etc! ---

Coming back to the ICG visit to SHAR, big problem that would come & NP was that almost once in ~~hour~~ he would come up with a new suggestion: "Aore Rajan, in the mission control centre, we can open up the other door also so that people can move in out

(1129)

easily." I had to explain to him that police wanted a tight security and did not desire any <sup>multiple</sup> access doors. They would seal the additional doors & post a person there... The single entry point was easy to monitor for them..." Actually in general briefing given to NP & others in SHAR by police, they had mentioned this and then chose a pathway which was accepted generally as a desirable option!...

Similarly on some of the technical visits etc etc. Some times NP would go and tell some of the senior SHAR persons ~~also~~ such ideas. After all he was Director!

(1130)

In some cases it was causing problems as the staff were ~~not~~ confused as to what directions to follow. Some left the clean up operations, we had described above, as they were trying to work out options for NP's suggestions (for them directions!!). NP was even going ~~to~~ to SD to suggest new new things! That was his method of getting involved. The days & clock were ticking - we had to be ready 'spic & span' for the visit... Do trial runs to firm up transit times; clear timing as to how much time Poy would spend in a place. (the usual ISRO

(1131)

to show, more & more had to be curbed! We had make it very clear!); security dull by police; they may have queries/points of clarifications & requests for changes; ... then calls to local Admin (Gopalaswami was the Sr. Ad. offcr I think) from local MLA, politicians from ruling party etc to find a place for them to meet P.M. etc. ... He would be given advice as to how to host them.. preparing <sup>separate</sup> place for them to sit when they come, even after our discouraging... "Sir we cannot

(1132)

Say anything... The VVIP visit area is restricted by space, distance etc... We suggest you don't come...

if you come we will put in an area away from the Mission Control Centre;

the Guest of Honour where VVIP will stay is also cordoned off.

... But we would pass on

of your message to PMO staff

who will accompany VVIP; if they call you to see her we

will immediately take you... etc"

At the same time we had to think of methods of keeping them happy while waiting, as the

(1133)

admin of SHAR can't afford  
to get them displeased!...

So finally I had to  
tell SD rather bluntly... "Sir  
we are now working in terms of  
hours... security issues are very  
tight... also to keep the visit  
areas clean; removing unnecessary  
tables / furniture... lot of work  
... supervision... If you or  
Director SHAR or others try to  
go and tell them in the field  
something even in a way of  
suggestion, the work will be  
delayed... Already some such

(1134)

Things are taking place...

My request is that let you & all of you seniors give any suggestions you have, to me

to me only. We will try our

level best if it is feasible

to execute. If not, we won't.

We can't even come & tell the reasons as we have limited time

We don't want any faux pas.

~~That~~ That way SD was gracious to accept that position and did not

let anybody to come & tell him on PM's logiotics. Of course, it was a

big burden & responsibility; at my age

(1135)

then, I did not understand the full enormity of that responsibility. How TNS gave that responsibility to me, I don't understand.

Of course, over a period just as Y. S. Das did, TNS also started ~~giving~~ trusting my capability on many items & virtually delegating them to me. Others also fortunately cooperates with me; of course ~~many~~ most of them loved ISRO (way back then, I am not sure now) and wanted it to perform well in front of PM.

Even though ~~it~~ this duty was only for about a week, I ~~so~~ had to work literally day & night with only about 3-4 hours of step sleep. In many places, I had to give oral

(1136)

Such as "See the cobwebs under the table; see the dust there etc" to more important thing about the displays etc. Also to monitor other items of security check...

Seeing this I had to be careful to have a 'redundancy' for me. So I asked K. Radhakrishnan (who had joined ISRO HQ and was promising ~~for~~ person with desire to "grow up in organisation") to just follow me and take notes of all what was said, when we had to come back to check etc (based on what the work was & when they said it would be ready) I had told him too: "In case I am down with some thing or get tied

(1137)

up with something unforeseen, pl.  
pick up the threads..."

Such a situation did not  
arise. But it was a safe precaution.  
Perhaps a good lesson for KR who  
later became Chairman ISRO...

As days the Day approached  
I think around T-3 days, the number  
of police men increased tremendously; different  
groups came in; Some to check for  
hidden bombs; etc. They all literally  
came in hordes! Open the drawers,  
even the flooring spaces where the  
computer cables were routed. Our  
technical personnel were disturbed;  
Some did not like it (understandably)  
(P.T.O.)

- (1137)
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(1138)

Sometime cleaned up spaces were disturbed by their boots! I used to quickly go around some of these areas. Sometimes to guide their offices --- To tell them what those things were.. ~~I~~ Ideally they would want everything emptied out! ... Sometimes we had to argue out to keep the way we need etc etc. ...

Ecology the Mission Control Centre & the technology of technical complexes that may be visited by my

(1139)

changed totally... ~~Too~~ A large number of police personnel ~~to~~ cordoning off that area... & They would look at some bushes nearby, whether they are hide outs! They also had nice places to sit & also to attend to nature's calls (as it was all sand — nice clean sand) a luxury they would not have when they have to do these duties in metropolises, cities, towns etc.

Around the technical facilities there was no problem, but around the Mission Control Centre where PM was to spend most of the time, there were some ~~concerns~~ too. Already a few hundred ~~people~~ SHAR employees used to sit there regularly...

(1140)

There will ~~be~~ be some extra peak loads during launches. So the toilet facilities were designed to cater to these. But with hundreds of police personnel with round-the-clock origin around this Centre, a sudden new problem cropped up! As we entered the main door to take the VVIP to the stair case, we started getting some urine smell.

Cushing through the door!  
To It was a shocker! Wherefrom it came. Were people peeing around the <sup>small</sup> garbages around or somewhere in other side....

Finally we tracked it. The

(1141)

source of the foul smell!

It was from ~~at~~ ~~dirty~~ a men's  
~~was~~ <sup>ISRO</sup> urinal place to accomodate  
more people who would come during  
launch phase operation. They can  
use & then go to other areas of  
the Mission Control Centre (MCC).

It was near the gate. But  
~~it was~~ they would have never  
envisaged so many times more  
numba of people.

bully bootes policemen  
spoiling the floor there was not  
a problem as VVIP's or accompanying  
persons won't go there; there were  
places inside. But it is the urine

~~to~~ (1142)

load - almost incessant - use  
which causes the problem. Even  
if we stop ~~it~~ its usage 2-3 hours  
before VVIP's arrival won't help...  
Total stoppage may ~~not~~ cause  
operational problem for the police  
men and also for the regular ISRO  
operational personnel. They will  
have to rush upstairs in MCC  
where VVIP's had to ~~sit~~ visit & sit.  
That area was highly restricted  
for use by others through special  
passes - for security reasons!  
Some experiments were done ~~it~~ by  
using big exhaust fans - not much  
use - also terribly noisy.

(1143)

Final conclusion was to request Police Personnel to reduce usage there — not stop it. Every day two or three times a thorough wash and ~~spray~~ <sup>wash</sup> with pleasant smelling solutions so that the urine smell is blocked out. In addition, a person was kept there ~~to~~ with a bucket full of phenyl solution with nice smell; he had to pour it into the urinals & other places every 30 minutes... Thank God it happened a couple of days before... ~~Couple~~ Completely unforeseen (by us), not even raised by any body, in so

(1144)

discussions!! We checked for two days... no problem. Strong smell of phenyl also did not come as it was chosen rightly....

On the day of VVIP visit any way no body will use it till VVIP ~~is~~ leaves, more due to security considerations.... locking out such rooms which can serve as convenient hideouts was part of the drill....

~~But~~ Having succeeded in getting ~~to~~ both PM & CM to use ~~the~~ (especially the later to use the helipad in SHAR), Sujata DC was telling ~~to~~ me ~~the~~ about the

19 (1145)

trouble she was having in  
coordinating the timings between  
the <sup>Indian</sup> Air force <sup>IAF</sup> (PM's helicopters) and  
CM's / the State Govt (CM's helicopter).

IAF won't give details to State Govt etc  
except saying NO for many things; too  
many restrictions to land on the same  
pad as PM etc. So another place was  
found for him.... It was her headache...

We were also going to give CM a good  
reception if he came well before PM,  
transit time from PM helipad & his  
helipad was a constraint... Sujata  
used to tell me how she took some  
unilateral decision when they were dilly

(1146)

dallying and just communicate what is to be done by them! ... She said as usual PMO would keep <sup>us</sup> hanging about who will ~~acc~~ actually accompany PM; some round number like 20-25 is what they will say ...

To me she gave me a piece of advice: when actual list comes, there will be a car allocation based on some protocol; of the PMO members, sometimes it fluctuates; sometimes the demand will be for ~~one~~ one-car-for-one-person in PMO; for others we may make two etc. To me her advice was: "Once the convoy procession starts, ~~do~~ you don't worry about which car is allotted to you. Jump into any car available; only thing take care is not to get your fingers

(1147)

Chopped as every one will be in a hurry to slam the door closed!"

I followed her advice; in reality the written <sup>seat</sup> car allotment was floated by PMO officials, like any thing, which could have caused confusion if one searches for one's allotted car.

A day before VVIP's arrival. The Chief of the Police officer ~~operating~~ ~~the~~ in charge of the whole security operations (I am poor in remembering the ranks of Police officers; for Army persons I learnt due to our work with them for <sup>sahit</sup> applications — I cannot identify from the Stars even now!) had developed an excellent rapport with me. We went through all the drills of <sup>the VVIP</sup> visits.

(1148)

and reviewed possible contingencies  
that ~~the~~ had <sup>been</sup> planned. Also the additional  
modules of visit, in case VVIP wanted  
to see more - ... He was very satisfied  
and wanted to relax a bit. So we  
both went to MCC and he wanted  
to relieve himself in <sup>reserved</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>restroom</sup>  
there... not the one I had described.  
It is somewhat inside... closed with  
limited number...

He gave me his nice  
looking compact suit case in my  
hand... "Keep this carefully; hold  
on to it till I come out. Don't go  
off!"... I would have done so  
just for his asking; he took the  
suit case back and opened & showed me.

(149)

I was literally shaken; so many compact guns!! well kept... He closed it & gave back to me!

If he had not shown me, it would have been easy. I held on to it so tightly... It appeared to me so heavy!!... He came

after some time... washed his hands.

"Yes Mr. Rajan I am taking it back" and took it like a feather!!...

~~Later I am~~

Much later I came to know that he was PV Narasimha Rao's son-in-law (~~PVM~~ (PVM/R was at that time in dog-house of Congress Party...))

In between I would go

(1150)

daily to SD, brief him about what was going on without getting into the nitty-gritty I have given above. If he had anything about technical items or other, I would listen. He was concentrating on launch readiness and as to what he would say to Pym when he took her to the facilities.

That Morning came: all else was fine. We had a list from Pym. Fortunately RG, SG & Children were left out; ~~it~~ it was generally talked that SG was sub well, Fera or something... One relief for us is terms of protocol...

Then comes a great problem... the helicopter & carrying cry ~~it~~ was

(1151)

not sighted at the appointed time!!

~~Prob~~ Main problem for Sujatha.

Trouble was that CM had changed the program as he wanted to have a darshan at Tirupati, which was so close to ~~the~~ SHAR and then come... So there was a delay...

the prohibited time for using the airspace of SHAR was ticking...

The CM's pilot or his office did not listen to Sujata ~~DC~~ DC to

have a trial flight ~~before~~ the earlier evening at least... He thought he

knew ~~SH~~ Sriharikota well... He would not have imagined the huge forest of 36,000 acres ~~with~~ ~~it~~ having a

(1152)

few spots of buildings.... tension  
tension.... a few more minutes  
later the air space will be closed;  
so the function will be without CM;  
the matter would take serious  
political colour.. Will IAF &

VVIP security allow afterwards?!  
There was no message from the  
pilot..... All finger crosses... Then  
somebody came up with the message  
that some helicopter was landing  
in the ~~school~~ SHAR school ground.

~~It~~ Actually not meant as helipad;  
nor we had made special  
check up in the area except  
for the general visit of the police

(1153)

in that area.....

One side ~~z~~ hope & relief that it might possibly be CM & the worry of his not coming or coming late after air-space cordon was over!

But it was to be confirmed... It was

time when all the general movements of cars had been restricted except for critical operational running to be authorized by Jeyamani (Range Director)..

I think he himself rushed and received the CM & brought to the PM reception area.....! (Or was he taken to the MCC area to wait for her, I am not sure). Any way one

(1154)

one big headache (potentially big political bomb ~~at~~ in which ISRO would have caught was over!)... .

PM was received by SD & party <sup>ISRO</sup>.

The Convoy started.... There was a good spot ~~for~~ prior prepared from which she could get a good overview of SHAR. SD was explaining to her.... That is where the photography incidence which I have described a little earlier took place.

Then a few visits as planned I was moving around <sup>close</sup> to the places she would go — being the talking to SD & to others we had planned before. But I was with my ghola always ready to help to SD in case something

(1/55)

else was asked or needed. . . .

Fast forward (I don't

→ remember the details of exact facilities visited. . . they will be in ISRO / SHAR

→ ~~are~~ archives — had they been maintained!

Then she came into MCC.

→ The entrance point did not have any foul smell nor other strong smells.

Then after a quick description of what was in MCC by SD as she went along. . .

→ Then she was seated in her seat in the MCC. I think there was a quick introduction of the seniors by SD. Some limited (critical) discussions of PMO were also seated. Of course, the doctor / ~~exit~~ security chief etc. SD by her side.

(1156)

I was also seated behind SD to answer any queries...

SD explained the programme laid out for her: a series of small presentations by the Senior Scientists ISRO about the sequence of launch, critical operation etc for about 45mins before the ~~launcher~~ actual launch...

He showed her the document prepared ~~for~~ for launch - available

to all in MCC & other ISRO operation persons. That was ~~the~~ THE OPERATIONS MANUAL to be followed; cyclostyled

version with some colour inserts to aid quick reference... Even as SD

was explaining, IG was going through that document placed before

(1157)

As I noticed, she was looking at each page; but rather a speedy look... Then she turned to SD

"Prof. Dharwan, I have quickly looked at the document ~~for~~ which gives the time sequence of all the operations... I don't need any further presentations on these... I note that there is a complete

RADIO SILENCE at T-30 min...

We have some 45 mins for it now.

~~Do~~ Do you want me to sit here for presentations? I would rather go out and see more of SHAR facilities & the island...."

She got up to go out... SD ~~was~~

(1158)

→ had no other option... It is where  
his techno-professionalism over took  
him by having 45 min presentation!  
Gentle suggestions earlier to reduce  
~~it was~~ it, ~~was~~ were not accepted as  
so many & senior persons desired  
to show their face to PM & say a  
few words!!...

But now all gone! & we  
had ~~to~~ envisaged such possibilities.  
Sujata's ~~to~~ warning that every minute  
hangs on her, worked here! How can  
she idle for 45 min, monotonous  
presentations. She had no desire  
for such micro-details!...

Just needed to be

(1159)

I was quick~~ed~~ to my feet and  
told the ~~few~~ perplexed SD about  
the options which we had worked out...  
"STEX plus this is so much time...  
etc." ~~There~~ finally ~~at~~ they will add  
to 45 min... or 40 min etc. I had  
them by heart.. ~~SD was too~~  
SD found it too difficult to  
~~act~~ ~~rep~~ respond and to decide  
on which options, though he knew  
about these options earlier..

IG could not wait even  
for those few tens of seconds..

"Well you two argue it  
out.. I am going out!.. She found

(1168)

her way out going past SD & walked  
to the door of the room. SD had  
not told anything... Her key security  
persons jumped up & went near  
her, as she started walking out.

I had no other option except  
to rush behind ~~to~~ guide to answer  
to any question she had & also  
~~to take her~~ to guide her towards  
the car... Let others incl. SD  
follow... On the top of mind was  
the police force to be in the  
convoy... The police chief had  
told me that he would relax for  
those 45 minutes — not of  
course a nap, but he would

(1169)

walking in ~~long~~ lounge ground floor.

Fortunately I saw him going towards the same ~~Latin~~ restroom

which I had described before. PM

was ahead of me, walking speedily

towards the steps to go down...

~~I signed~~ I hand signed him to

walk back to the convoy...

He quickly rushed to alert

the convoy to be ready... Any way

her car, a few around it would

be at the done door, as also

the front car...

She turned to me and

asked some thing. In my hurry

I said "Yes Sir" ... quickly

corrected "Yes Madam..." She might

(1170)

have laughed inside her... It is  
a man's world... \* \*

In all my drafts I used  
to help draft for sending to her  
for speeches or India's papers for  
UN, etc, I had started writing  
→ "humankind" instead "mankind"  
— as much possible gender neutral...

It had been accepted in P.M. during  
1970's & later by her... I had a  
a great deep sense of women's equality derived from  
Subrahmanya Bharathi \* \*

She really walked ~~very~~ fast.  
I was going behind with my ghola.

She came & stood near her car.

I was in trouble. What to do? SD couldn't  
run that fast; he was asthmatic.

She understood my dilemma & said

"Don't worry; let P.J. Dhawan come

(1171)

and we will wait!"

Cars were on alert all ready for people to come & for

PM & SD to be seated in a car... I had to ~~take~~ take decision where we ~~was~~ were going! So gave a

voice command to the two ISRO persons who were in the front car ~~to the front~~ with police. They had instructions not to move out! They ~~was~~ were our key guides... All cars will follow them!

SD arrived & quickly told him our first destination... & Both sat... I had to

rush and take any ~~car~~ car... Remember Sajata. She also got into

~~110~~ (1172)

the car somewhere. The convoy went to  
the first place of the module... Since  
SD knew in and out of the places  
in SHAR facilities there was no problem.  
The facility personnel were announced  
about PM's arrival by wireless. They  
were ready....

Visit went well as per our  
scheduled time... I had alerted the  
police & our ISRO guides about the  
next stops....

All went ~~not~~ well. We  
came back to MCC about 10 minutes  
before Radio Silence... She settled  
& told SD ~~to~~ that she wanted to  
go up the terrace & watch the  
launch....

(1173)

Already there were plans for our own operational personnel to be there to see the launch through normal eyes...

SD was ~~telling~~ trying to explain her as to how we can see all that on CCTV along with all other technical parameters...

She said clearly (I could hear it all as I was sitting next behind them to assist SD)

"Pragyan, if I have to see the launch ~~by~~ through CCTV I would have done it from Delhi.

Why come all the way... I am going to the terrace... You can

(1174)

decide where you will be for  
looking at all those technical  
parameters ... "

So it was settled. &

That gave some time for the  
police also to review the security  
aspects at the terrace / <sup>(or open balcony)</sup> MOCC from  
where she would watch the launch;  
~~The~~ the placement of key security  
staff etc. ~~So they were wai~~ So ←

all were waiting to seeing the T-30min  
activities of launch. Hoping there would  
be no hold... no glitches etc. Many  
would be praying...

A little bit about my interactions  
with NTR, & MOS (SAT) Shivraj Patil and

(1175)

and others.

~~#~~ Shivraj Pahl as usual was calm & quiet. He was in his spotless white ~~the~~ pant & shirt & even shoes. I made a quick PR with all of them.

NTR ~~tot~~ was ebullient & happy. He said to me: "I prayed for all of you~~s~~ at Tirupati today morning. You are all good people; nice emotional people committed to the job... ~~#~~ There will be a definite success!" I still remember his using the word "emotional" — I don't know what exactly he meant; maybe "kind hearted", as everyone was very nice to him & the guests.

(1176)

Each of them like NTR, MOS (SET) etc  
~~had a perso~~ and a few others  
from PMO had somebody attached  
to them to meet their needs or  
for some help or to answer some  
questions ~~or~~ themselves or through  
somebody - - - -

About 10 minutes before  
launch IG, SD et al moved  
to the open space. I also went  
There were a couple of displays misc  
(simple red - LED) based ones  
available there) showing some  
vital parameters of the functioning  
of the stage ... \* No nice graphs  
of expected & actual as shown beautifully  
in national ~~live~~ TV newscasts @ 2018 along

(1177)

for each launch. It is seen in the whole world.

For 1983 SLV-3 D2 launch no such thing... Even DD did not show live... They took ~~some~~ some shots to show later.....

Project Director was Ved Prakash Sandlas, who was in SLV-3 ~~to~~ team earlier when Kalam was PD. After the first successful launch SLV-3 E02 he took over. One launch afterwards was successful - so - so type.

→ SD was somewhat tense. He showed IGA the direction of launch pad and how it will take off.

(1178)

NTR was ebullient... Other big mgs  
of ISRO; PMO officials - - - -

SLV-3 D2 took off; a  
rocket / LV flight is always magnificent.  
For us in 1983, it was great... it  
was "our" achievement from the Indian  
soil....

After some <sup>in fact for tens of seconds,</sup> time / that fiery  
sight goes away, more taken over  
by the plumes.... That ~~is~~ was the  
most tense period... what was happening?

IG did not interrupt SD or  
any body... There is a photo at home  
where I am showing IG the direction  
Shivraj Pahl is there; I am ~~at~~ with  
my photo....

(1179)

IG remembers the timing it looks; she guesses that it was the time to launch the satellite; she would remember what she saw in the manuals kept in MOC.

She looked at me & asked me "~~Is it~~" "Has it injected the satellite?..." "

SD had told us not to be euphonic immediately after the injection; he wanted to be ~~sure~~ sure <sup>by</sup> catching the signal of the satellite (Rohini) from at least Andaman's ... it would be out of sight of SHAR by then ...

So a dilemma...

"Madam ... PoyDhawan-..." "

(1180)

She interjected: not  
"I know, he would tell me till  
it is fully confirmed for him...  
From what you know from these  
displays, what is it?"

She could have sensed the  
relief in the faces of many there...  
I was also relieved to see that  
 ~~$\Delta V$  (and~~ velocity given & the  
angle ~~was~~ were both very good...  
So the satellite would have been  
placed successfully in the orbit...

I was in a dilemma. She  
had pre-empted my having to  
refer to SD. She was not interested  
in the detailed technicalities of

(1181)

of orbit etc. I was reminded, in a flash,  
of the problem which Amb. <sup>D.P.</sup> Dhan  
had with SD during Aryabhata  
launch! ... "Saab boliye  
~~apna~~ satellite ~~ka~~ kaam  
karta hai ~~kyaa~~ yaa nahin!"

I said "Madam: from  
the indication of final velocity  
and the angle at injection,  
it is almost certain that the  
satellite has been launched  
successfully in orbit... But  
we can confirm it after  
signals..."

I was to "signals ~~are~~ from

(1182)

the satellite are received ~~in~~ from  
our Andamans ~~a~~ telemetry station..."

She would have heard it  
from SD several times!

For her what I said was  
enough. She started looking  
for Ved Prakash Sandhas  
the Proj. Dir. ...; shook hands  
with him "Congratulations!"

She started beaming with all  
congratulating them.. She was  
careful not to congratulate SD  
yet! Because she had to  
respect his sense of correctness  
to inform PM & the public  
about the success of the launch!!

(1183)

I think by the time some  
sweets started ~~arr~~ coming. SD  
could not stop those things  
nor did he try to! He was  
very relieved....

In that happiness, I  
was about to tell all & I G  
that it was my birthday..

17<sup>th</sup> April 1983 (Many may  
not know as <sup>my DOB</sup> ~~it was~~ in

official records was 10 - 4 - 1943  
whereas actual was 17 - 4 - 1944)

I completed 39 years. She would  
have probably made a special  
greetings for me! But I averted

(184)

myself as the occasion to  
celebrate on that day was  
something else.... After some time  
as Andaman's confirmation had  
come SD was ready to take  
her for the public meeting  
we had lined up as a  
~~matter~~ regular programme. She  
did not hurry SD on that....

In the meanwhile we  
had her autographs on the  
SLV-3 D2 small hand book.

Here, NTR, Shivraj Pahl, SD etc  
I have it still ~~we~~ with me,...

(1185)

as memories — just I have  
some artifacts from SLV-3 E02  
the first successful launch of India  
in 1980. (That is the disarming  
caps of the vehicle with red tape etc.)  
Even ~~the~~ <sup>my</sup> badges.)

In the single minded  
attention to this critical task of  
having a successful visit of PM, I  
had ~~not~~ taken only very little breakfast  
that day — lunches / dinners the earlier  
days were only on a survival mode.

On that after the relief of launch success,  
hunger pangs came — a mild headache  
too. Still we were on the job till  
she took off from SHAR.

Even many employees of SHAR

(1186)

had not seen her even at a reasonable distance; also NTR. Many employees from SHAR were from AP.... Then, of course, the families of the employees who stayed in the Island itself (only a smaller percentage stayed in Surlumpetta. It was easier for ISRO to build L & moneys all quarters, a school & 50-bed hospital ck at the Island itself. It was, in those days @ 1983, a luxury which any Indian employee ~~with~~ would look for.

But all of them ~~to~~ would love to see their PM IG & NTR also in some close proximity; ~~we had therefore~~

To put them along with Press persons to seated in a large hall away from MOC, would have been a problem as lot of single minded attention <sup>was</sup> to be given to media as well who were not allowed to go near launch pad even

(1187)

before launch. They had to see from the open — they would have a good sight.

So we had arranged for a gathering place for the employees & relatives in a place close to MOC itself and ~~can~~. Cordoned off with barbed wires. They had all been requested ~~not~~ to be disciplined & watch as PM would come near the barbed wire, warn for all by walking around; not to jump around or try to pass on ~~or~~ something for autograph etc. Then PM & CM were to address them all from ~~at~~ a small table-shift podium built inside. Just for PM & CM to sit & stand up & talk.....

When we said after ~~at~~ all the quick briefing by SD to IC(PM)

(1188)

of launch parameters etc, she was itching to go out & reach the general ~~pe~~ crowd there . . . . She moved out fast . . . ~~So I had~~ She did not wait for SD etc. That was over!!

So I had to run behind her; that was my duty. We were also instructed that ~~who~~ I had to hold an umbrella had to be held for her . . .

Even as she came out of MOC, I could hear her telling her security men "You all keep away and don't circle me! ~~from~~ Let me see people & let them see me! . . ." So the police personnel ~~to~~ who were running to circle her, had to stop . . . ~~was~~ and walk slowly behind her . . . I went in pace with her. As there was none to hold an umbrella —

(1189)

— it was scorching summer heat  
~~and~~ close to ~~around~~ noon; also  
the ~~seas~~ sea-shore sand reflecting  
the heat <sup>sun</sup> flight upward, — it self  
very hot. — I could see her  
fair skin reddening very much and  
some small perspiration drops also  
appeared. So I tried to cover  
her with the ~~an~~ umbrella; it won't  
of course cover her sight or visibility  
of her....

She told me; "Give away  
that umbrella... I don't need it...  
These fellows may say ~~that~~ to  
you to hold; but give it off..."

I tried to explain... "Madam  
it is very hot now!..."

Then she looked at me  
and smiled: "See; people born in

(1190)

India should ~~not~~ be afraid  
of heat! . . . . ."

That clinched it. I  
gave off the umbrella away to  
a nearby police man. . . In ~~the~~  
a way & it was good for me;  
holding it and keep pace with her  
near the barbed fence would have  
been difficult! . . . . I had my  
thick black hair & beard! Both  
will absorb lot of heat! . . . I was  
used to it. . . .

She was all in ~~smiles~~ smiles  
and waving to people. . . would have  
covered many persons. . . My role was  
limited except when I had to  
answer some question from her &  
also to keep time. . . .

(1191)

She was going closer & closer to the fence, with the possibility of some one attempting to touch her ... Police from ~~the~~ behind was on tenterhooks ... they don't like such situations, though this group was a better "screened" ones" from ISRO employees & their families ... still ... police can't take chance ... But police knew she won't listen ... I was also 'on alert' to see that nobody does that ...

Finally it happened! One young boy managed to push into the gap of the bare fence to touch her feet ... Police had to rush ... ~~But~~ IG realised that she was crossing the limits

(1192)

of ~~safe~~ security & also ~~safely~~ safety  
of the crowd... Some may get  
injured, if there was a stampede...

So she turned back  
& waved to them & started ~~walk~~  
fast to go towards the podium....  
In the overall lots of persons had  
an opportunity to have ~~a~~ a close look  
at her...

She was there in the podium  
which was inside the fence, just outside  
of the MOC. To join her was NTR.

A mike was there for talk. Just  
two of them; SD & some <sup>senior</sup> officials ~~were~~  
had some chairs to sit behind the podium

We were all standing.. security  
as alert as ever... The audience, made  
of S I T A R employees & families were

(1193)

were eager to listen to both of them.  
Even without mobiles all of them  
would have got the success story  
of SLV-3D2....

NTR spoke in Chast~~er~~  
Telugu in thundering voice. I  
could understand some of it..  
He was invoking the Telugu pride;  
this great Centre being in Andhra  
Pradesh & making India proud...  
Since most of the employees were  
from AP, or understood Telugu, the  
crowd was applauding him and  
were captured by him... Being a  
consummate politician by ~~them~~ them  
IG wanted to understand what he  
said... He signalled to R. Rajamani

(1194)

then JS ~~to her~~ in PMO. ~~IAS~~  
officer of Andhra cadre... Tall almost  
6' or more. She signalled to him  
through eye ~~cont~~ contact. He moved  
& stood behind her. Since she was  
seated he almost bent into ~~two~~  
~~halves~~ ~~that~~ a half and ~~we~~  
could see <sup>that</sup> he started giving real  
time translation... That would have  
been for about ~~30~~ 20 minutes.

NTR sat down fully satisfied....

We could see him beaming

Then IG took the <sup>stage</sup> ~~near~~ mike  
for talking... I don't remember all  
details. Hope ~~to~~ some audio record  
is available in PMO; I doubt about ISRO.  
She starts to charm the ~~crowd~~ crowd.

(1195)

She spoke in English.

Her theme was simple: She emphasised many points of the greatness of Andhra Pradesh but also adding all these items coming from different parts of India, made India ~~to~~ strong & proud. Naturally she congratulated scientists, engineers, technicians & admin staff. (~~In ISRO~~ Drafts from ISRO, including press releases ~~was~~ used to contain all these categories & not limit to "scientists" alone), in those days. I don't know how it is today.)

She also got many applauses. She too would have been

(1196)

~~As~~ very happy... She was also taking with her the news of success.

Then the convoy moved toward the admin block a few kms away from MOC... Security wise less relaxed area where ~~the~~ Press was ~~set~~ seated, all eagerly waiting for her ~~to~~ "fire" questions...

Had it been a failure they would have had "feast", asking all embarrassing questions: the role of a reporter in such cases ~~is~~ was (is) difficult; most of them wanted success. But news wise success ~~did~~ did (does) not make a great story!!!

So the Press conference was just a walk over for her.. The

(1197)

only sticky points they started raising was about their mtb being allowed to go inside and see the launch pad etc & Mission Control Centre (MCC)

It was easy for her... "Yes you all should have been there... Firstly ~~it~~ we have just started launching... ~~mtb~~ mtb enough place even for many ISRO engineers/technicians who made some part of another... You got to see from a space... I also saw the same from a small terrace ~~out~~ about in MCC... Soon we will expand facilities to have press/medica to come in..."

(1198)

Then about the overdoing of security by our agencies ...

"Madam PM, why should the photography prohibited in airports ... etc type questions."

She disarmed all of them

"Good question, I am also asking the same question ... why prohibit photography in the regular airport ... See these persons sitting in the front (She points out to Cab Seay, Pinapal Seeyl PM etc) ... They tell me NO! ... Big NO! ... Any way we will keep asking that question ..."

Handwritten note on the right margin: "Class conflict more than anything else"

(1199)

Then was the time to depart.. Was seen ~~of~~ off to the helipad ..

So a great event was over without any untoward incidents or launch delay... And a success!

We were all relieved. I did not tell anybody not even PM/SD about my birth day on that day ..

Later during his Rashtrapati days Kalam had told me that ~~is~~ he felt about the fact that ISRO did not invite him ~~beac~~ for this SLV-3D2 launch when PM was present .. I did not respond.

(1200)

In one sense it appears to be an ~~an~~ omission. I ~~don't~~ don't recall any special discussion on the invites.

I don't recall my involvement in it. ~~Or~~ I am sure SD would have thought about it. If I recall even

BP was not invited. It was restricted to operational ISRO personnel; it was not like the current practice of ~~the~~ the launches being a great occasion for "ISRO 'senior' family" get together.

Also Kalam was rewarded exceedingly well for SLV-3 F02 success. He got directly Padma Bhushan, a fact that helped him to get Bharat Ratna as normally they don't "jump" the Padma