

MEGHNAD SAHA: THE FIRST INDIAN WHO DREAMT OF ‘BIG SCIENCE’ IN INDIA

KAUSHIK GHOSH

Ph.D Scholar, Department of History, Visva-Bharati, West Bengal, India

ABSTRACT

Meghnad Saha who discovered the ‘Ionization Theory’, was not only a greatest scientist of the twentieth century, but also a great thinker. Saha, who believed in ‘Social function of Science’, started co-operating with Nehru, Bose and other national leaders for the post-independence India in 1930s. He was the first Indian scientist who advocated the need of searching alternative sources of energy for the future national reconstruction and industrialization. He started a ‘Cyclotron Laboratory’ at Calcutta University by the help of Nehru and others. It was the first practical step towards the initiation of ‘Big Science’ in India. Saha was the first man of science, who aimed at starting ‘Big Science’ in India. But due to his differences with Nehru and Bhabha after 1945, he was sidelined from the atomic energy development programme of India, as well as, from the National Planning Commission.

KEYWORDS: Social Function of Science, Cyclotron, Big Science, Nehru, National Planning, Atomic Energy, Institute of Nuclear Physics & Atomic Energy Commission.