2001

PRESENTS THE

Historians say the years leading up to a new millennium are peculiar indeed. These are periods rich in potential for prophets, mystics and millenarians. Much of their mass-appeal derives from the collective sense of uncertainty and anxiety that the change-over inspires.

In the field of science, however, much of the future is shaped and indeed revealed in the present perfect; and although specific landmarks and particular inventions are hard to predict with any degree of certainty, the broad shape of things to come can, we believe, be discerned here and now.

So. Inspired by a bit of futuristic fervour, at 2001 we decided to indulge in some fast-forwarding, to plan a tryst with destiny as it were. And we sought the help of a distinguished panel of experts, to pilot us into the future

FUTURE



Prof. J.V. NARLIKAR, noted astrophysicist, cosmologist, science-fiction writer, stormed into limelight with the Hoyle-Narlikar theory of gravitation in 1964. Presently he is the Director of the Inter University Centre for Astronomy & Astrophysics, Pune.

Improved technology may alter the picture of AD 2025

1 THE answer is yes if we are able to control our population growth so that it does not exceed 900 million. Otherwise the answer is no . The gains from science and technology are wiped out by a population that has grown too large.

2 I am optimistic that AIDS may have been conquered by 2001. I have no guess on the second question.

3 REMOTE sensing, improved communication and ability to bring education to masses which are in remote inaccessible places will help. These are the benefits available from space technology.

4 NO, but we may notice trends towards that state; that is, fewer people going abroad.

5 I am not an expert on this subject.

6 I don't foresee any significant change. But improved technology may alter the picture by 2025 by bringing in fusion and solar energy in a big way.

7 OPTIMISTIC if we are able to limit our population growth. Pessimistic otherwise. Opinion makers in all religions should come out strongly in favour of population control.