

To give science a push, a short film on Nobel star

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FOR those, particularly born after 1983, who may not be aware that astrophysicist S Chandrasekhar is not the only Physics Nobel winner in the family, the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) has produced a documentary, *Chandra: In Quest of Perspectives, on the life and works of the astrophysicist*.

The famous C V Raman, who won the Physics Nobel in 1930, was Prof S Chandrasekhar's un-

cle and more than 50 years later, the nephew went on to win the 1983 Physics Nobel for key discoveries that decoded how stars collapse. He also set the Chandrasekhar Limit, mass 1.44 times that of the sun. His work showed that a star higher than the limit continues to collapse beyond what is called the white dwarf to become neutron stars or black holes following a supernova explosion.

The documentary, an initiative to popularise science, to be aired on Doordarshan at 9.30am on October 19, is part of the cen-



S Chandrasekhar poses before CV Raman's portrait

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tenary celebrations highlighting Prof S Chandrasekhar's contribution to physics and mathematics in general and astrophysics in particular, Dr V S Rao, Registrar of IISER informed *The Indian Express*.

The film has been made by award-winning documentary filmmaker Nandan Kudhyadi, an FTII graduate with more than 65 documentaries to his credit, with scientist Jayant Narlikar as the main consultant. For Kudhyadi, making of the documentary kindled memories of a meeting he had with Chandrasekhar in 1984.

"Chandrasekhar, Narlikar and others were being interviewed by the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) and it was a rare moment," recalls Kudhyadi who had filmed that interview.

In 1987, I was pleasantly surprised when the Nobel laureate congratulated me for my documentary on mathematical genius Srinivasa Ramanujan, Kudhyadi said. "During the centenary celebrations, I felt I had to make this documentary and extensive research had to be undertaken. I visited locations like Chicago, Yerkes, Cambridge, London, Ban-

galore, Chennai and Pune," says Kudhyadi. The documentary promises a visual treat, besides inspirational talks by luminaries like Roger Penrose, Martin Rees, Kip Thorne, Abhay Ashtekar, besides Narlikar. IISER is an autonomous research institutes set up by the HRD Ministry in the city with the primary goal of integrate high-quality research with undergraduate teaching to improve science education in India and enhance number and quality of future academic as well as industrial researchers in the country.