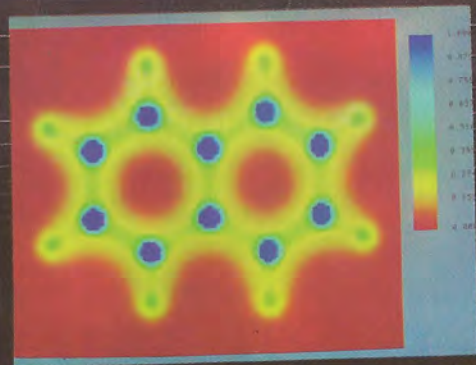
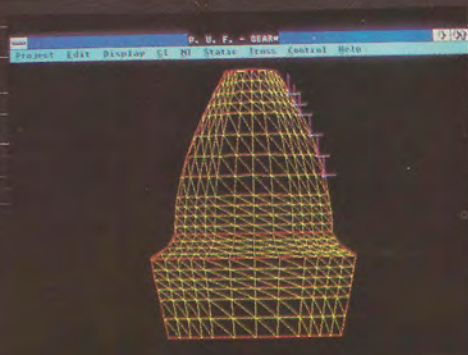
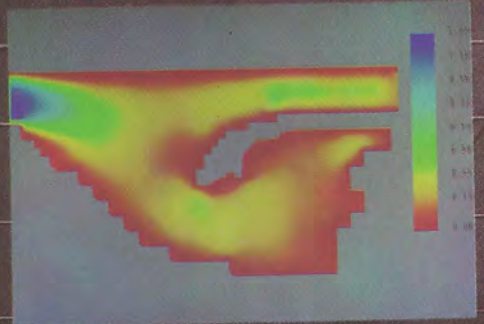
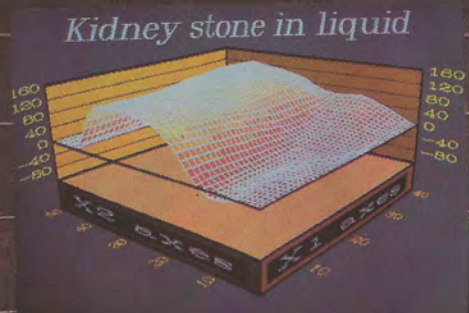


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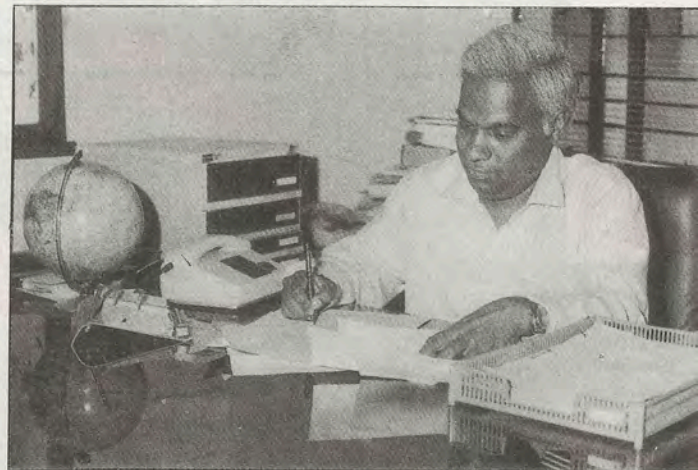
New Ideas for I.D.E

Innovative strategies and ideas make Initial Data Entry into computers faster, easier, and more accurate. **PAGE 9**

Prestigious IEEE fellowship for Prof. Patnaik

Prof. L.M. Patnaik of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, is the only Indian among 244 scientists and engineers worldwide to be awarded the IEEE fellowship in 1992.

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PARAM: Why an idea alone is not enough

Every engineer nurturing an idea, a pet project, or a dream, has something to learn from the making of PARAM. Based on an interview with Sam Pitroda **PAGE 21**

PARAM: Why an idea alone is not enough

Every engineer nurturing an idea, a pet project, or a dream, has something to learn from the making of PARAM.

Based on an interview with SAM PITRODA



It all started off when India was refused the sale of a supercomputer.

It made me think. We are a nation of 870 million people, we may not have sufficient velocity, but our sheer mass gives us enough momentum to move forward. India as a nation cannot be ignored by the world.

That was when we decided, on the spot, that India should build a supercomputer.

The current trend in supercomputing showed that the world was increasingly moving towards parallel processing.

Within our reach

A traditional supercomputer is difficult to design and produce and has complex packaging.

A parallel processor, on the other hand, uses standard components known to us and which are easily available. More importantly, this was in sync with the

trend in the rest of the world, and lots of our talent pool had some experience in using parallel processors in their respective fields in physics or whatever, during their studies abroad. So these factors gave us confidence — a parallel processing based supercomputer was within our reach.

We requested, and got, commitment from the top, and commitment from the science and industry council, as well as from potential users of the end product.

We then set ourselves a goal of three years. Why three? Because five would have been too much and would not have motivated people enough, and two

It all started off when India was refused the sale of a supercomputer.

we cannot give our best to the country. On the other hand it is cowardly to simply walk away. And in India there are lots of challenges — it is much more exciting to beat the odds here.

More than ideas

Another thing we must realise is that just having ideas is not enough. Ways must be found for its facilitation and implementation. For this it is also important to find people, a support system, who

can help in implementing, marketing, packaging, and bringing the idea to the people. This kind of an approach is sadly lacking in our country. We need these kind of people who will take exciting technologies and ideas from the engineering community and bring them into the world.

People tend to take criticism of their unviable ideas personally, as criticisms of themselves. It is better to move on to another idea and soon the goal will be achieved.

Finally, when most people think your idea is some kind of a gig, is wild, and when everybody thinks you are mad, you know you are on the right track. Just go underground and complete your job. ■

years would have been too short for people to consider realistic. For assembling the team we just placed ads in India and abroad, and soon we received a huge deluge of response. Selecting a hundred people from the applications was not easy, since each applicant was so well-qualified for the job. People also wrote to us, we invited Indians abroad to visit us, and we invited and visited members of the international research community in this field.

Giving it your best shot

The making of PARAM showed us that the future lies in using Indian talent to the maximum, in doing what we do best. Doing anything else is a soft option in which we'll find that

Sam Pitroda is Advisor to the Prime Minister on the Technology Missions