

OBITUARY



**Shivaram Viswanathan
(1927-2016)**

Prof. Shivaram Viswanathan, who passed away on the 7th of Jan. 2016 due to age related ailments, was a person of varied interests in the field of Earth Sciences. He was born in Tirunelveli on 19 November 1927 and had his early schooling in his home town and joined the B.Sc. (Hons.) course, then considered equivalent to MA, as one of the early students of Prof. T.N. Muthuswamy at the Presidency College, Chennai. The second author (TMM) had the privilege of being his classmate and a close associate. After his graduation, Viswanathan had a stint in mineral prospecting and made some successful attempts in locating shell beds for the lime and limestone industry. Later he was selected for Madras Educational Subordinate Service (MESS) and served as a faculty member in the Geology Department of Presidency College, his alma mater and in the Govt. Engineering College, Kakinada. He was awarded the M.Sc. degree (by research) for his thesis on “Geology of the crystalline complex of Sankaridurg and its neighborhood” by the Madras University in 1958. He continued his services in the MESS and shifted to the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay in the year 1964 as a faculty member in the Civil Engineering Department. He, along with his senior colleague, the late Prof. A. Parthasarathy, nucleated and developed a postgraduate section for the M.Sc. course in Applied Geology in the Institute which has trained a large number of earth science graduates till date.

Prof. Viswanathan was the first doctorate degree holder in geology from IIT Bombay paving the way for several others to follow. He had interests in several fields of earth sciences, though much of his research work centered on mineralogy, igneous petrology (Deccan Traps) and structural geology. In 1973 Prof. Viswanathan was selected for postdoctoral work at the Moscow Geological and prospecting Institute (known as ‘EMGREE’ – MGPI). He has to his credit the translation of some seven Russian

books on topics of applied geology to English. He returned to IITB in 1976 and his contribution to the development of the Center of Studies on Resources Engineering (CSRE) with which he was associated as the Chief Project Engineer for several years, is noteworthy and received appreciation from several contemporary geoscientists. Though Prof. Viswanathan superannuated from IIT Bombay in 1985, his interest in Geology persisted till his very end. Many faculty members and research scholars regularly consulted him in their research activities. Several scholars, particularly those who worked on petrochemistry, met him at his residence and sought his guidance while formulating their theses and papers for publication. Prof. Viswanathan has attended several international conferences and has many publications to his credit in both national and international journals.

Prof. Viswanathan, apart from being a renowned geoscientist, was a Carnatic musician. He excelled in rendering vocal as well as Veena recitals on many occasions. He was a close associate of Veena Master Chittibabu and have a few recordings jointly with him. He has to his credit a few compositions meant for introducing beginners to Carnatic music. He had several distinguished maestros as his close friends with whom he participated in musical renderings.

In his demise, the geologic community in general and those in IIT Bombay campus, in particular, have lost a great friend, philosopher and guide. Prof. Viswanathan is survived by his wife Lalitha, his son Prof. Sundar Viswanathan of IITB, daughter-in-law Shetal, daughter Geetha, son-in-law Raghu and grandsons Nikhil and Rishabh.

*IIT, Hyderabad
Ex Director, AMD*

D. CHANDRASEKHARAM,
T.M. MAHADEVAN