

OBITUARY



A. Narasinga Rao
(1924 – 2011)

We regret to inform the passing away of Dr. A. Narasinga Rao, former Professor and Head of the Department of Geology, Andhra University in the early hours of 5th January, 2011 at his residence in Visakhapatnam due to cancer in the esophagus. He was one of the Foundation year Members and a Life Fellow of the Geological Society of India.

Narasinga Rao was born on 14-12-1924, had his early education in Pittapuram Raja's College in Kakinada. He was a student of the first batch of B.Sc. (Hons.). Narasinga Rao did his M.Sc. (by research) in Andhra University under Prof. C. Mahadevan on the 'Geology of the Kondavidu Hill Range in Guntur District, A.P.'. He brought out the field setting of the charnockites, mafic granulites, leptynites and the khondalites of a critical area of the Eastern Ghats. Soon he joined the faculty of the Andhra University Geology Department and stayed for three years.

In 1949 Narasinga Rao proceeded to England for Doctoral studies and worked under the guidance of well-known geochemist Prof. W. Webb at the Imperial College of the University of London and took his Ph.D. degree. While in England, he was advised to undertake courses in mining geology. He returned to India in 1952-53 and joined as Lecturer and was promoted as Reader in two years time. He established the Geochemistry Lab with the newly acquired Hilger Optical Spectrograph. During fifties Dr. Rao took active part in planning the classrooms and the laboratories for the new building under the general direction of Prof. C. Mahadevan.

Dr. Rao elaborated the concept of metallogenic epochs and provinces in the Indian context and developed ideas on the mineralogic epochs and provinces and published his observations. He initiated the geochemical studies on the wall-rock alteration in the Kolar Gold Fields, supported by detailed mineralogical studies. He had undertaken a major research project in ore beneficiation involving the separation of apatite from the manganese ores which was sponsored by TUMSAR, a company which operates the Ferro Alloy plant at Garividi in Srikakulam District (now in Vizianagaram Dist.) of A.P. He had undertaken the studies on the eastern margin of the Cuddapah Basin as part of the programme, he assigned selected critical areas for detailed

mapping and laboratory studies to the M.Sc. (by research) students. Dr. Rao took up the studies on the geochemistry and mineralogy of different types of amphibolites of the Nellore Schist Belt. He had also undertaken a detailed study of the geochemistry of the different limestone of the Palnad, Kurnool and Cuddapah basins, involving detailed field studies and determination of major, minor and trace elements.

Dr. Narasinga Rao had wider interests and ample abilities which were exemplified in his activities. His Headship of the Dept. was spread to two spells, one as Reader for the interregnum period between the demise of Prof. C. Mahadevan (1962) and the visiting Professorship and Headship (1962-64) of Prof. C.S. Pichamuthu and later on while as Professor for some more period. Dr. Rao also helped the University administration as Assistant Principal of the A.U. College of Science and Technology while as Reader. Dr. Rao's classroom lectures in geochemistry, mining and mining geology were informative, explanatory and analytical. He motivated the students of Applied Geology to prepare for professional career. He was a Founder Fellow of the A.P. Academy of Sciences which was started in 1962. He was also a Life Member of the Geological Mining and Metallurgical Society of India, Indian Geoscience Association and Mining Engineers Association of England. Prof. Rao contributed articles in Telugu on geology for the Telugu Encyclopedia (Andhra Vignana Sarvaswam).

Dr. Narasinga Rao led an active and fruitful life. After retirement in December 1984 due to superannuation, he spent most of his time looking after the agriculture of the family lands in their native place Gopalapuram in East Godavari District.

He will be remembered for a long time as one of the supporting pillars of the infrastructure of the Andhra University Geology Department which has grown up with years. His death is mourned not only by the members of the bereaved family and relatives but also by a large number of his friends, his former colleagues and students.

T. RAMAMOHANA RAO
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