

Prof. C.V.Sundaram

C.V.Sundaram, Distinguished Metallurgist and former Director of the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic research, Kalpakkam, passed away in the early hours of 15th August 2008. He is fondly remembered by his family members, peers, collaborators and a large number of his younger colleagues whom he mentored, in his lifetime.

Prof. C.V.Sundaram was born on 7th November 1929 in Ottappalam, Kerala. He had his early training in chemistry and metallurgy. He commenced his research work in chemical metallurgy under the supervision of Prof. Brahma Prakash, at Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore in 1952. He joined Department of Atomic Energy in 1956. Prof. C.V. Sundaram was a major architect in ushering an era of production of rare, reactive and refractory metals, such as zirconium, beryllium, titanium and tantalum, utilising indigenous resources and expertise. His research contributions led to the establishment of a production plant for nuclear grade materials such as zirconium sponge, niobium and tantalum metal products at Nuclear Fuel Complex, Hyderabad. In 1982, he was invited to assume leadership of the Fast Breeder Reactor Programme of India as the Director of Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR) at Kalpakkam, at a crucial stage when the construction of the Fast Breeder Test Reactor (FBTR) was nearing completion. Through his dedication, hard work and inspiring leadership, he led the team of scientists and engineers in IGCAR towards the successful criticality of FBTR in October 1985. The glorious success of the FBTR program today owes a lot to the leadership and guidance of Prof. Sundaram in the crucial years. Prof. Sundaram was also closely associated with the development of the Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (500 MW(e)), currently under construction at Kalpakkam. R & D work programme was defined during his tenure as Director of IGCAR. Subsequent to his retirement from DAE in 1989, he served as a consultant to the Nuclear Fuel Complex, and was subsequently a Homi Bhabha visiting Professor and then a Honorary Visiting Professor at the National Institute of Advanced Studies at Bangalore till July 2001.

Prof. Sundaram was a recipient of several prestigious awards including the National Metallurgists' Day award (1970), Platinum Jubilee Alumnus Award of Indian Institute of Science (1985), INS Homi Bhabha Life Time Achievement Award of

Indian Nuclear Society (2001) and Life Time Achievement Award from Ministry of Steel and Mines, Government of India (2006). He was also an Elected fellow of Indian National Science Academy, Indian National Academy of Engineering and Indian Academy of Sciences. He served with distinction as the Chief Editor of the Transactions of the Indian Institute of Metals and President of the Indian Institute of Metals and President of the Indian Nuclear Society. For his outstanding scientific and technological achievements, Government of India honoured Prof. C.V. Sundaram with the Sanjay Gandhi Award for Science and Technology in the field of energy (1985) and Padma Bhushan Award (1986).

Prof. C.V. Sundaram pursued his career as an opportunity to serve science and fulfill himself. He was inspired by the thoughts of several leaders such as Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi. He was a humble and compassionate human being and an articulate speaker and writer. He was always keen to foster talent and develop new leaders for the future. He had his entire education, training and a major portion of his research in India. He had genuine pride in things that are Indian and was very keen to promote frontiers in science and technology in India. In his passing away, India has lost one of her worthy sons, who was a true leader in science and technology and more important a par excellence human being.