



**N S Satya Murthy (1936–1984)**

## **Dr N. S. Satya Murthy**

Dr N. S. Satya Murthy died suddenly of a heart attack on October 8, 1984 just as he was coming in to work on that fateful morning. He was then 48 years of age and was holding the position of Associate Director of the Physics Group at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre.

Born on February 5th, 1936, Satya Murthy belonged to an age group which witnessed the very rapid development of science in India after independence. He grew with it and contributed to it in ample measure. On completion of his M.Sc. degree in Physics from Bangalore University he joined the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre through its Training School which was started in 1957. He started his research work in neutron scattering under the guidance of P. K. Iyengar as one of his first colleagues at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre. His contributions to neutron diffraction have been described in an article which was written by him for delivering the Presidential Address of the Physics Section of the Indian Science Congress to be held in January 1985 at Lucknow. Unfortunately, he did not live to give this talk. This article is reproduced at the end of this issue.

Neutron diffraction was not the only area which Satya Murthy concerned himself with. The need for study of elementary excitations in regions of momentum-energy transfer space which could not be accessed by neutrons led him to augment and introduce other experimental techniques. These included Compton profile spectroscopy, Mössbauer spectroscopy, electron spectroscopy, etc. He took special interest in developing low temperature physics and cryogenics activities at Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, involving both basic and applied programmes. A programme of developing super-conducting materials and magnets initiated by him resulted in development of Nb-Ti wires and magnets upto several Teslas. In parallel, activities for carrying out low temperature D.C. resistivity, magnetic susceptibility, electron tunnelling spectroscopy were initiated. In more recent times he was deeply involved in the setting up of the Centre for Advanced Technologies at Indore.

Satya Murthy was always interested in the broader development of science as an integral part of society. This led him to take active part on various activities like organisation of the Nuclear Physics and Solid State Physics Symposium of the Department of Atomic Energy, and the Indian Physics Association. It was due to his efforts that the Indian Physics Association started organising topical seminars and took the steps towards bringing out monographs on various branches of physics. He served as the General Secretary of the Indian Physics Association on more than one occasion.

On a personal level Satya Murthy was a charming conversationalist with widespread knowledge on a vast variety of subjects. This was indeed one of the reasons for his being able to inspire a number of people.

He was a Fellow of the Indian Academy of Sciences and the Indian National Science Academy. He was the Vice-President of the Magnetic Society of India and the President-elect of the Physics Section of the Indian Science Congress for 1985 at the time of his demise. He was awarded the Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Award for Physics in 1980. He was a member of the editorial board of this journal. The large circle of his friends and colleagues miss him deeply.

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Bulletin of Materials Science