

OBITUARY

Prof. Hemshankar Roy- A Polymath

In order to pay respect to the departed soul an online memorial meeting will be held on May 15, 2023 at 8 pm.

You are requested to join the online memorial meet and also share the link with all who may wish to join to share their regard for the departed soul.

<https://meet.google.com/vuo-ssga-ukn>



A great material scientist, teacher, a polymath -above all a great mind HS Ray breathed his last in the morning hours on 28 April after a brief illness at Kolkata. As vice-president of IAPQR he enthusiastically initiated several activities and would monitor even the smallest of details to ensure flawless execution. It is unbelievable that such a lively person can leave us all of a sudden,

Born on June 19, 1940 in Jabalpur, India. Hemshankar spent his childhood, schooling and initial college at his ancestral place Bhagalpur, Bihar. He ranked second in his school leaving board examination.

He received his Bachelor of Technology with honours degree from the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, West Bengal, India in 1962, then his degree of Master of Applied Science, University of Toronto, 1963 and his Doctor of Philosophy, from the same university in 1966. He joined the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur as a lecturer in 1970 and continued as assistant professor till 1980. In between he spent at Pilkington Brothers Ltd., Lathom, England, (1977-1979) initially as senior technologist and then as a manager, R & D. He was extremely happy when he got the opportunity of teaching at his alma mater IIT, Kharagpur as a professor in 1980 where he also carried out the responsibility of Dean,

Student Affairs. To all students he was manna from heaven because of devising several plans for their welfare.

“A new sky horizon opened in my life’- that is what Ray said when took over charge of a laboratory of Council of Scientific & Industrial Research(CSIR), Regional Research Laboratory (now Institute of Mineral & Materials Technology(IMMT), Bhubaneswar, Orissa as its Director departing the academic arena of work so far in 1990 and joining the technology application world. To him it was a ‘A great opportunity to interact with industries and face their real life problems.’ He steered the R&D activities for ten years. During his tenure as Director RRL he served as consultant to Research and Development, Steel Authority of India Ltd, Ranchi, (1985-1989), and Metallurgical and Engineering Consultants (India). Ranchi,(1993-1994).The staff of IMMT will remember him for his leading from the front in rescue operation in the worst disaster with storm/ rain in 1999, October at Bhubaneswar, He has been listed as a noteworthy laboratory administrator; researcher by Marquis Who's Who.

Finally he anchored himself at Central Glass & Ceramic Research Institute (CGCRI) at Kolkata when he joined there as Emeritus Scientist of CSIR in 2000 and continued for five years and thereafter three more years as Emeritus Scientist of AICTE. After these assignments he taught at Bengal Engineering College, Sibpur for a brief spell as an adjunct professor.

Among the awards he received National Metallurgist Day award of Govt. of India, 1984, Kamani Gold Medal, Indian Institute of Metals, 1979, G.D Birla award, Indian Institute of Metals 1991, Silver Jubilee Research award IIT, Kharagpur and Distinguished Alumnus Award IIT, Kharagpur 2014 are a few noteworthy ones.

A prolific reader and writer, he was proficient in articles of different genres, be they related to science or otherwise. Writing 500 technical papers and 24 books including four on management science and six on other topics goes to his credit and the last book published a couple of months before titled ‘Mind Your Mind’. His tender attributes made him so humane. A story writer, singer, esraj, tabla player, painter and an amateur sorcerer coupled with his research work he deserved to be called a true polymath. He knew the magical trick –how to endear people with ease whoever came in touch with him. By his passing away IAPQR is deprived of his guidance and becomes much weaker in vigour: but the losses to the society are manifold, as it loses a human being who has been a beacon of hope and inspiration to many. Society loses a Man, a human being.