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From the Editor's desk

Dear readers Greetings from KAVAKA

The landscape of Indian Mycology has been profoundly shaped by the remarkable contributions of one of its greatest luminaries, Late Professor Chirayathumadom Venkatachalaier Subramanian (C.V.S. as he was affectionately called). His name resonates with excellence in the study of fungi, particularly taxonomy, ecology, and diversity, earning him global repute and respect. As we reflect on his contributions in this issue of KAVAKA, the official journal of the Mycological Society of India, it becomes essential to recount his life and legacy as a source of inspiration for all researchers in the field.

Prof. Subramanian's career is a reflection of perseverance and intellectual curiosity. Born in Kerala, in 1924, he embarked on a journey that transformed fungal taxonomy in India. His meticulous research and pioneering insights expanded the horizons of mycology, particularly in understanding hyphomycetes. His monographs and taxonomic revisions have stood the test of time, serving as references for mycologists worldwide, even today. Among his many achievements, Prof. Subramanian's role in establishing and nurturing institutions dedicated to fungal research merits special mention. As the Director of the Centre for Advanced Study in Botany, University of Madras, he built a strong foundation for research that continues to deliver significant outputs. His efforts to institutionalize fungal studies in India also bore fruit in the establishment of the Mycological Society of India in 1973, further ensuring a platform for collaboration and innovation. KAVAKA, the journal launched under his stewardship, remains a relevant scientific forum for fungal research to this day. Prof. Subramanian's academic prowess was matched by his ability to mentor and inspire young scientists. His students, fanned out across the globe, uphold his legacy by promoting a deeper understanding of fungal biodiversity and its ecological significance.

Given the magnanimous mycologist he was, it is only to be expected that his extraordinary contributions in his domain were recognized internationally. Prof. Subramanian was awarded the prestigious Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize in 1965 for his contributions to the taxonomy of *Fungi imperfecti*, and his work on soil mycology and soil-borne plant diseases. Apart from that, he became the first Indian mycologist to receive the UNESCO Kalinga Prize for the 'Popularization of Science' in 1990. Such accolades underscore not only his scientific brilliance but also his efforts to bring mycology into the public consciousness.

As we honour C.V.S.'s centennial, his groundbreaking achievements in mycology is a powerful reminder for us to build upon his remarkable foundation. The trail of his contributions to science serves as a template for the scientific community, urging us to explore uncharted territories in fungal biology with the same passion, rigor, and dedication. The field of mycology owes much of its stature in India to his invincible spirit, and his memory continues to inspire new waves of scientific quest.

As we dedicate this issue of KAVAKA to Prof. Subramanian, we honour a visionary who not only shaped the trajectory of fungal research in India but also laid the groundwork for its global relevance. As we leaf through the pages of this journal, may we follow in his footsteps and find in his legacy the motivation to delve deeper, question persistently, and strive resolutely.

27 November 2024

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