

Life Profile of Professor O.P. Varma

- Born on 10th October 1924.
- B.Sc. and M.Sc. (Geology) from Banaras Hindu University in 1950 and 1952, respectively.
- Moved to Royal School of Mines, London, in 1955 for a research degree after a brief stint with a mining company.
- In 1958, did his Ph.D. and DIC in Mining Geology from London University and DIC from Imperial College of Science & Technology, London.
- On return from London, joined Indian School of Mines, now IIT, directly as Senior Lecturer in 1959.
- Also, served as Founder Reader in Applied Geology with the Rajasthan University from October 1962 to March 1965 to nurture the newly-started course in M.Tech Applied Geology.
- Came back to ISM in 1965 through UPSC as Professor of Mining Geology to become ever the erstwhile youngest Professor of Geology in India; he held this post until his superannuation in December 1984.
- In addition to his normal duties as a Professor, he had been the Dean of Students for two years and HOD, Department of Applied Geology, from 1979 to 1982, besides sharing several other responsibilities in extra-curricular calendar of the Institution.
- Within a broad field of Economic Geology with specialization in mineral exploration, mining geology, and ore-microscopy, in ISM Professor O.P. Varma introduced and organised several post-graduate full-time and part-time courses in these and other areas. He is specially credited for having introduced, *first time*, in India a full-fluged curricula for M.Tech. Mineral Exploration course since the beginning of 1976-77 session, which bears his imprint from those days until now.
- Also introduced M.Tech Engineering Geology and M.Phil during his Headship of the Department of Applied Geology.

- Teaching has been his forte and his accomplishments in teaching have been recognized by the UGC in the award of the **National Lecturer in Mining Geology for the year 1977-78.**
- His specialized expertise and contributions in the field of economic geology was also recognized by the UGC's Visiting Committee in recommending ISM as Advanced Research Centre in Ore Geology.
- Professor Varma has made strong and definite choices – he could have been one of the so-many Indians, who migrated to developed countries for allurements of high bucks, but – with a deep sense of national feeling to serve his Motherland, he has always spurned going abroad for employment, and instead found a niche for himself in the Indian society till date.
- He is, otherwise, very widely travelled person, both in India and abroad. His prestigious, both in-service and in professional career, study awards and foreign travels include:-
 1. Nomination by INSA as a member of Indian delegation to the Int. Geochem. Congress, Moscow, July 20-25, 1971.
 2. Visit to USSR as a visiting Professor under Cultural Exchange Programme, 1971-72.
 3. Deputation by ISM to participate in the 26th Session of the International Geological Congress, Paris, July 7-17, 1980.
 4. Three weeks study programme in mining geology in Royal School of Mines, London, and Colorado School of Mines, USA. - 1980
 5. Fellowship Award, as a Visiting Professor in 1981, this time under National Science Foundation of USA.

Even after retirement his participation has been much sought in international programmes.

1. He visited Institute of Chinese Academy of Science, Changsha, China, in 1988 under invitation of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.
2. Travelled to Pakistan in 1992 to take part in GEOSAS-I.

3. Participated in GEOSAS-II, Colombo, Sri Lanka, in 1995.
4. Invited to participate in the 33rd Session of International Geological Congress, OSLO, Norway in 2008.
5. Also, participation in the 35th Int. Geol. Cong. from Aug. 26 to Sept. 4, Cape Town, South Africa, is pre-eminently positive.

Distinctions & Awards

In the discharge of his duties, he has always been guided by the rich traditions and academic excellence of the Institution, which he has served with singular devotion throughout his professional career. In recognition of his outstanding services, he was honoured by ISM with: -

- Distinguished Academic Service Award (1987).
- Prestigious Basant Samman – 2007 from ISM
- Felicitations from MGMI, (Delhi chapter) in 2006 in recognition of valuable contributions to mining and mineral industry.
- President, Geology and Geography Section, ISCA, for the year, 1985-86.
- President, Indian Geological Congress for the Year 1998-99.
- **Life Time Achievement Awardee** from SAAEG (2010) and
- **IME Journal Golden Jubilee Life-Time Achievements Award-2014**

New challenges and Accomplishments

Since 1986, Professor Varma has been nurturing the Indian Geological Congress (IGC), which had been, prior to his taking over its affairs in total disarray. He accepted the challenge of revamping & revitalizing this society in 1986 and ever since he has with single-minded devotion and remarkable deftness advanced its overall working. As a result, today, it is an Institution of earth scientists of national and international renown.

- Professor Varma's life-long academic contributions by now over 6 decades have advanced earth science development, integrated with his strong editing and writing aptitude, consistently throughout his professional career. Besides having produced several quality Ph.D.s, he has contributed innumerable papers, and has massively written, reports, editorials, short-notes, etc., in various journals. To his credit are nearly 10 thematic volumes of IGC, which he has edited over the last 30 years, while quite a few are under process. He also serves as Editor of IGC's

biannual Journal and its various other publications; Vols. up to 7(1&2) whose 1000 copies per issue are printed shows national-wide presence.

- Although crossed 90, he is in great demand for special lectures in different institutions and forums. He is a terrific writer too.
- With his rare qualities of a good teacher and consummate mentor, which signal his amiable feelings towards his students and others, make them responsive too.
- In the field of medical geology, he initiated the first event of this discipline in 2004 & has since with remarkable sustainability continued to offer and perform the programmes/projects as given in the attachment. Prof. Varma is to steer more actively events of medical geology in India in liaison with the Int. Medical Geology Association office-bearers at the 35th Session of the Int. Geological Congress at Cape Town for which he has been delegated by the Executive Council of the Ind. Geol. Congress.

The Core Group of office-bearers of the Indian Geological Congress has, vide circular No., dated, has expressed substantials, which reads as follows.

- His professional career spanning over six and a half decades is marked by unmatched connectivity and continuity in the service of geosciences – no missing link at all.

Medical Geology-Related Events Conceived, Initiated & Implemented by Prof. O.P. Varma since 2000 AD

Under the aegis of Indian Geological Congress

1. Varma, O.P. (ed.), 2004. DST-Sponsored Brain Storming Session on “*Herbo-mineral Pharmaceutical Products: Problems and Prospects*”, December 7 and 8, 2004, organised by Ind. Geol. Cong. and Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi, Extended Abstract, 132 p.
2. Varma, O.P., 2004. Traditional Indian Systems of Medicine, Our Invaluable Heritage: A Review, pp. 1-18. In: DST-Sponsored Brain Storming Session on “*Herbo-mineral Pharmaceutical Products: Problems and Prospects*”, December 7 and 8, 2004, organised by Ind. Geol. Cong. and Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi.

3. Varma, O.P. & Rajani, M. (eds.), 2006. Pre-Workshop Proceedings of the two-day national workshop on “*Ayurvedic medicines and practices: Focus of Bhasmas,*” organized by Ind. Geol. Cong. and PERD, Ahmedabad, November 13 and 14, 2006, Abstracts and Papers Vol., 157p.
4. Varma, O.P., 2006. Extrapolation of ancient minerals specific inputs to corresponding Bhasmas: A predicament of the modern world of Ayurveda. In: Pre-Workshop Proceedings of the two-day national workshop on “*Ayurvedic medicines and practices: Focus of Bhasmas,*” November 13 and 14, 2006, Organized by IGC and PERD, Ahmedabad, 157p.
5. Varma, O.P., 2009. Diversification of Geology in Medical Geology – A Health Care Curriculum of Futurity. Jour. Ind. Geol. Congress, Vol. 1(2), pp. 99-112.
6. Role of geosciences in health issues (2013). Theme discussed in the 18th Convention, Ind. Geol. Cong., Bhopal, April 27-29, in association with M.P. Council of Science & Technology, Bhopal.
7. Natural geo-materials of traditional systems of medicine-Interdisciplinary approach to enhance growth & development of the related pharmacopoeia & pharmaceuticals (2014). Theme debated at the 19th Convention of the Ind. Geol. Cong., Nov. 27-29, 2015, Rajiv Gandhi University, Itanagar (Arunachal Pradesh).
8. 20th Convention programme is in the offing. It will have a theme on medical geology for discussions.
9. All these publications & programmes were supplemented by self through: (1) keynote addresses at various fora in Mumbai, Kolkata, BHU/Varanasi, Ahmedabad & Jamnagar in Gujarat (2) Specially invited lectures from BHU’s Rasa Shastra Deptt. & PERD, Ahmedabad.
10. Ind. Geol. Cong. 14th Professor Jhingran Memorial Lecture. 2011 by A. Hannah Rachel Vasanthi on “*Revitalization of Herbo-Mineral Drugs Using Geological Materials and Processes*”, 28 pp., organised by the Deptt. of Rasa Shastra, BHU, Varanasi, Oct. 14, 2011.
11. Successful guidance of doctoral research programme-2005 in Medical Geology after superannuation from Indian School of Mines.

The Core Group of office-bearers have to say as follows about Prof. O.P. Varma

- a) That Prof. Varma’s entire work is original in the field of geosciences – learning, teaching, research & service for the growth & advancement of the discipline of

geosciences. It is unique in terms of duration, excellence, and direction/diversification and implementation of inventive programmes. Perhaps no other Indian geoscientist has done that for over 6-decades. His devotion & dedication continues unabated even when he has crossed 90.

- b) Prof. Varma has done the entire work in India & never accepted any employment abroad even when the experts in his area of specialization were in great demand in foreign lands in 1950s/1960s. The nominee being the first Indian Ph.D. in mining geology from Royal School of Mines, straight came back to his Motherland without wasting even a single day outside the country.
- c) Planning, initiation, implementation and dissemination of the results from his services to the growth & development of Ind. Geol. Cong. have been primarily by him.
- d) He continues to work during the available time at his disposal to achieve academic excellence in whatever area he engages himself, almost for the last 30 years as the principal task performer for IGC activities. Introduction of several activities & events, including publication of the Journal & special thematic volumes and organization of a bizarre scientific activities across the country, are a few specific ones to his credit for the last more than one decade. He is ever in demand for lectures on specialized topics, which he always honours.

Planned out projects, receiving Immediate attention for implementation

- 20th Convention of Indian Geological Congress from Jan. 13-15, 2017 at Nagpur under the aegis of Mineral Exploration Corporation Ltd.,

Theme to be debated: *“Make in India: Challenges and Opportunities for Domestic Iron and Steel Industry and Its Innate Mineral-raw Materials”.*

- Publication of Journal Ind. Geol. Cong., Vol. 8(1).
- Publication of *“A Petrographic Atlas of Pyroclastic rocks: Tectonic Settings and Age” – Dr. Naresh Chandra Ghose*
- Panel discussion on *“Monsoon rains – cloudburst – landslides – floods”*, Department of Geology, Delhi University, Delhi; end of Nov. 2016, on a brochure titled *“Disaster Management with Special Reference to Landslides in Indian Himalaya – A.K. Pachauri”* will form the basis of the discussion.

