

PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

PRESENTATION OF L. RAMA RAO AWARD TO DR. S.K. BISWAS



The L. Rama Rao Award for the year 1994 was presented to Dr. S.K. Biswas. In presenting the Award to Dr. Biswas, the President said:

Professor L. Rama Rao Award is one of the earliest awards instituted by the Geological Society of India in honour of Prof. L. Rama Rao, eminent Palaeontologist and former editor of the Journal of the Geological Society of India. It is awarded once every two years to a geologist who has made significant contributions in the field of Stratigraphy and Palaeontology. The Council has chosen Dr. Sanjib Kumar Biswas, this year for this honour.

Dr. Biswas is a product of the Calcutta University and has had a distinguished career securing the first division in all the examinations. The University conferred the degree of D.Sc. on him in 1979 for his thesis 'Structural and Stratigraphic Evolution of the Mesozoic Basin of Kutch, Gujarat'.

His work is mainly in the field of petroleum exploration, as a member of the Oil and Natural Gas Commission. He has just retired from service after serving the organisation for nearly 37 years. His special field is stratigraphy and tectonics. He was the first to apply the international code of stratigraphic nomenclature and evolve a systematic chronostratigraphic classification for the Tertiary of India. He is an authority on the Geology of Kutch, having created a complete stratigraphic framework of the Mesozoic and Tertiary rocks of Kutch. This is his most significant contribution to Indian stratigraphy. He has also made significant contribution to the stratigraphy of the Cretaceous formations of Western India in which is included the Deccan Volcanic episode.

He is however best known to a larger circle of earth scientists through his exposition of the different stages of the evolution of the western continental margin of India. His writings on the subject published in internationally reputed journals are widely quoted. These studies have greatly helped in the exploration of hydrocarbon resources.

I first came to know Dr. Biswas through his writings. As editor of the Journal, I used to continuously pester him with requests for articles for the Journal and for reviewing papers stratigraphy and palaeontology. I have also been pressing him for writing a text book on the 'Petroleum Resources of India'. Till recently he was fully preoccupied with the tremendous responsibility of producing more and more oil for the country. His health too has not been quite good for sometime. Even in his retirement he is quite busy attending to various assignments. I do hope he will now be able to synthesize the knowledge gained through four decades of sustained studies and present it to the larger group of earth scientists who are in need of enlightenment on the subject.

I have great pleasure in handing him the L. Rama Rao Award for 1994 which the Council of the Society has decided to confer on him and wish him many more years of fruitful service.

In the absence of Dr. S.K. Biswas, the award was received by Sr. S.V. Srikantia.

Dr. S.K. Biswas made the following reply:

The best reward for a scientist is the recognition of his work, the acceptance of his work as a significant contribution to science. Today is a proud moment for me when I am honoured by the Geological Society of India with the prestigious L. Rama Rao award in recognition of my life time work on the geology of India. I am indeed grateful to Dr. B.P. Radhakrishna for his words of appreciation. He has always been a source of inspiration to me and his words of advice I valued most. I shall be following his suggestion of writing a text book on the Petroleum Geology of India synthesizing the knowledge gained from my lifelong work on various sedimentary basins of India. I am grateful to the fellows of the Society who considered me worthy of this honour of joining the select band of geologists who received this special distinction. I thank them all.

During my long career as a professional geologist I mostly worked in the basins of Western India. Later, I focussed my attention on the mega-tectonics and the evolution of the Indian sub-continent. During this stage my contribution was mainly on the structure and tectonics of the Indian Continental margins and the associated offshore shelf-slope basins, particularly in the Western continental margin. My work on the sedimentary basins of India in connection with the petroleum exploration culminated in evolving a genetic classification of the basins of India within the framework of global tectonics. A map of the sedimentary basins of India on 1:2,000,000 scale has been published with explanatory notes by the K.D.M. Institute of Petroleum Exploration (ONGCL), Dehradun. A paper on this, which is my latest, has been published in the proceedings of the second seminar on the Petroliferous Basins of India, vol. III (Indian Petroleum Publishers, Dehradun). Besides, it is gratifying to note that KDMIPE has been able to finally publish the memoir on the Geology of Kutch in two volumes which I had written in 1972 based on 15 years of continuous field work in that area. Though written much earlier, the volumes contain a wealth of data which will be useful to students and researchers. Hopefully with the blessings of Dr. Radhakrishna and your good wishes, I shall be able to complete the book on Petroleum Geology under the banner of the Geological Society of India.

I thank you all once again for the distinction you have bestowed on me.