

## OBITUARY



**Ramchandra Bhalchandra Gupte**  
(1919-2005)

Prof. Ramchandra Bhalchandra Gupte, one of the pioneering teachers of Engineering geology in the country breathed his last on 12.10.2005. Dr. Gupte was born in July, 1919 in a very respectable family of Pune, to a father whose name has gone into history as one who had contributed greatly towards the country's freedom movement and as one who had the rare distinction of serving in the august body of the Constituent Assembly of India.

Dr. Gupte took his M.Sc (Geology) degree by research under the supervision of Prof. K.V. Kelkar in 1942. The dissertation title was "The Intertrappean Beds of Upparhatti, in Karnataka State". After a brief stint as Demonstrator in the Ferguson College, Pune he joined Geological Survey of India and worked in his initial years in prestigious Hirakud dam project. Dr. Gupte's contributions in the field of Engineering Geology are immaculate and unparalleled. Taking inspiration from stalwarts like Dr. J.B. Auden and Shri V.S. Krishnaswamy, he pioneered and rationalized field studies and research in Engineering Geology to a point, to which GSI's clearance became statutory for the Government to pass any project proposal. His landmark contributions in the field of seismology and seismic studies are considered as the most authentic by the Earth Science community. He was an ardent supporter of field studies and data. Concepts based on innumerable field findings were dear to him and he was against conjectures made on assumptions ignoring field data. Later he joined Technical Education Department of the Government of Bombay in 1948, and thereafter he worked as lecturer in Geology in Government Engineering colleges at Ahmedabad, Nagpur and Pune. He became the Professor and Head of Geology, Government College of Engineering, in 1966.

Dr. Gupte had carried out extensive research work on the Deccan Traps, initially guided by Dr. J.B. Auden and other senior colleague Dr. L.V. Agashe under whom he completed his PhD thesis on "Dykes in Deccan Traps around Karjat, Neral and Badlapur". He taught several generations of engineering graduates who in turn elevated Maharashtra as a highly developed State in the generation of electricity and management of water resources. Though basically of academic nature, results of his research later found immediate application in engineering geological investigations and groundwater exploration. The research work carried out by Dr. Gupte along with his colleagues in the field of Engineering Geology helped save crores of rupees by the Govt. of Maharashtra on a number of civil engineering projects by way of receiving focused technical advice on many complicated problems. The contributions towards the work on Navagam Dam, Jalsindhi Dam and the third line tunneling work in the Bor Ghat Section of South Central Railway, are a few to name. Even after superannuation in 1977, Dr. Gupte was a source of inspiration to scores of contemporary scientists and a whole new generation of researchers. His services were also utilized by M/s Tata Consulting Engineers (T.C.E) in Cambodia. Prof. Gupte was a Life Fellow of the Geological Society of India.

The sad demise of Dr. Gupte has left a deep void in the Earth Science community of the country.

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