

## OBITUARY



**Syed Mahmood Naqvi**  
(1941-2009)

We deeply regret to inform that Dr. Syed Mahmood Naqvi, an eminent Earth Scientist well known to the Indian and International Earth science community, a life member, formerly Secretary and currently Vice President of the Geological Society of India, breathed his last on September 4, 2009. During a distinguished research career of nearly 45 years, Dr. Naqvi contributed immensely to our understanding of the origin and evolution of Earth's continental crust through his illuminating research on the Archaean Dharwar Craton, southern India and other terranes of the Indian sub-continent. By establishing a school of research in Geochemistry and creating state-of-the-art facilities at the National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI), Dr. Naqvi has made an enduring impact on the progress of Earth sciences in India.

Dr. Naqvi was born in Amroha, Uttar Pradesh on August 28, 1941. He obtained his B.Sc., (1962) and M.Sc., Geology (1964) from the Aligarh Muslim University. His professional career at the NGRI commenced with a Junior Scientific Assistant position in 1964. His initial assignment was with a team of Geophysicists engaged in the preparation of Gravity Map of India. He was awarded a Ph.D. degree from the Aligarh Muslim University (1972) for his intensive studies on the structure, petrology, geochemistry, gravity field and tectonics of the central part of the Chitradurga Schist Belt, Dharwar Craton under the guidance and blessings from Prof. F. Ahmad, Prof. Harinarain, Dr. M.N. Qureshi and Dr. B.P. Radhakrishna. His professional career at the NGRI culminated at the highest level - the Acting Director during 2001. After superannuation in 2003, he continued his research as CSIR Emeritus and INSA Senior Scientist at the NGRI.

Dr. Naqvi's outstanding scientific contributions include:

(i) the recognition and early description of oldest crustal nucleus in Dharwar craton around the Holenarsipur schist belt (ii) the importance of horizontal and plume tectonics in the Meso- and Neo-Archaean (iii) the identification, petrogenetic and tectonic characterization of a variety of rock types from the Archaean greenstone belts of southern India such as ultramafic komatiites, high-Mg basalts, anorthosites, boninites, adakites, Nb-rich basalts, grey-wakes, banded iron and manganese formations, the distinct phases and types of the TTG gneisses and granitoids (iv) evidence for Archaean life and (v) pioneering studies on Precambrian metallogeny such as gold mineralization in different geological environments within the Kolar, Ramgiri, Hutti and Gadag fields as well as in the banded iron formations at numerous localities both in southern India and Madagascar and the base metal deposits at Ingaldhal and Kalyadi.

Dr. Naqvi published over 200 research papers, many of these in reputed international journals. Recently, THE WEB OF SCIENCE 1978-2006 documented that Dr. Naqvi's papers were cited at more than 750 places, even as some of his earlier work such as the Proto-continental growth of Indian shield (Precambrian Research, 1974) continues to be referred by many. He has authored eight books / monographs. His monograph published in 1987 on Precambrian Geology of India co-authored with Prof. J.J.W. Rogers is highly cited and continues to be a popular textbook for geology students in India and abroad. His latest book entitled 'Geology and Evolution of Indian Plate' has been very well received by Earth scientists all over the world. He has supervised Ph.D. projects of more than 25 scholars and his leadership has contributed to the success of many multi-disciplinary and inter-institutional research projects

involving the Geochemistry Group of NGRI, which he developed and nurtured for over 40 years.

Dr. Naqvi has been the recipient of a number of awards: Gold Medal of Geological Society of India (1978), Shantiswarup Bhatnagar Award (1983), APCOST Award (1986), Fellowship of Indian National Science Academy (1986), National Mineral Award (1992), Taqi Hadi Award (1992), AMROHA Gaurav (1994), Decennial Award of the Indian Geophysical Union (2001), Fellowship of AP Akademi of Sciences (2001), Role of Honour, Bundelkhand University (2005), Excellence Award from Friendship Forum of India, New Delhi, (2005), Life-time achievement – National Mineral Award for Excellence (2006). He delivered many prestigious lectures such as: Prof. Sadashiviah Memorial Lecture, Dharwar (1987), Prof. Sampat Iyengar Memorial Lecture, Bangalore (1998), Special Lectures at Aligarh Muslim University (2000) and Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (2004).

All his close acquaintances admire the rare virtues of Dr. Naqvi, especially his 'never give up attitude' and unswerving motivation. His commitment and passion for

geology fueled him through phases of severe ill-health and personal discomfort during which he stayed focused and relentless in his scientific pursuits. In spite of three life threatening cardiac by-pass surgeries that he underwent over the last two decades, he never missed an opportunity to undertake grueling geological fieldwork or journeys to distant destinations to share his views at seminars and work tedious hours to communicate his results to journals, which received top priority in his routine. Above all, he was a humanist, which was evident in his compassionate relationship with all young and old. Another fascinating dimension of his personality has been his love for Urdu poetry and literature, which remained close to his heart. Dr. Naqvi is survived by his wife Rehana, three sons, many admirers, students, colleagues and friends for whom and many others to come, his life and achievements shall remain an inspiration.

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