

# CORRESPONDENCE

## INDIA-BORN NOBEL LAUREATES

Over the years, I have thoroughly enjoyed the editorials, articles, papers, essays and notes of Dr. B.P. Radhakrishna, published in the Journal of the Geological Society of India (*JGSI*), as they stimulate the intellect, refresh the mind, contain original ideas, raise interesting problems requiring solution, are inspiring and thought-provoking, and have a charming writing style spiced with, humour, and subtle sarcasm.

The latest editorial, 'India-born Nobel Laureates' (*JGSI*, v.75, 2010, pp.347-353), was no different, and is one of the very best. The photograph of Sir C.V. Raman on the journal cover is simply superb, sparkling, scintillating, and stunningly beautiful, attractive, and captivating, as is the one on p.350.

The editorial took me on a trip down memory lane: fifty-eight years ago, as students of geology in the Presidency College, Madras, we went on a geological tour of Mysore State (now Karnataka) to study the outcrops of Dharwar schists, Peninsular Gneiss, and Closepet Granite. Before returning to Madras, we visited the Raman Research Institute in Bangalore. Sir C.V. Raman welcomed us with love and affection, and ushered us into his museum with showcases containing numerous fluorescent minerals. The moment he switched on the ultraviolet light, the entire hall glowed and dazzled with different spectacular shades of brilliant colour which were a real feast to our eyes. We felt as if we were transported to an entirely different magical world.

I requested Sir C.V. Raman to pose for a photograph. He asked me what camera I had. When I told him that I had an Italian Ferraris Alpha camera, he quipped: "When will

we have our own India-made cameras?" He then took me to his garden and asked me to take his photograph with his "favourite eucalyptus tree" as the background. The black and white photograph of Sir C.V. Raman I took is the star attraction in my album, even after fifty eight years, in an era dominated by colour photos.

I asked Sir C.V. Raman what advice he had for those of us who wished to pursue research after post-graduation. He said geology is an amalgam of physics, chemistry, physical chemistry, botany, zoology, and geography, and therefore, offers a wide spectrum of topics for research. He warned us against borrowing ideas from the West, and advised us not be carried away by the sophisticated instruments being used in the USA and UK for geological research.

He strongly felt that even an ordinary petrographic microscope can unravel the mysteries and secrets hidden in minerals and rocks, and urged us to contribute something truly original, not proposed by anyone else previously.

Scientists in India are indeed grateful to Dr. Radhakrishna for enlightening them on the high caliber, excellence, and outstanding contributions of the two "Truly (100%) Indian Laureates – Tagore and Raman" – to use Dr. Radhakrishna's sub-title on p.348. I am sure, Dr. Radhakrishna's latest editorial will inspire most of our scientists in India to scale new heights of glory and pursue research leading to the award of a Nobel prize.

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