



Foreword

Prof. S. Bhagavantam was the second Scientific Adviser to the Defence Minister in our country's history. He took over the stewardship during the turbulent times of the sixties when there were concerns about the strength of our defence forces. The Defence Research and Development Organisation he was heading then was a fledgling one with modest facilities and infrastructure. He soon realised that to provide tactical advantage, it is necessary to be technologically upto-date and went about setting up laboratories dedicated to electronics, electronic warfare systems, missiles and materials technologies. His tenure thus saw an explosive growth of the organisation with many many new laboratories and disciplines nucleating at various parts of the country and a large number of scientists getting inducted to defence research. It is this foresight that is paying us rich dividends today. But for these laboratories and competent scientists, DRDO's contributions in these areas of national defence would have been grossly inadequate.

I met Prof. Bhagavantam first when I joined the Indian Institute of Science as a research student. He was the Director of the Institute then and insisted on interviewing every student admitted to the Institute. He was, I remember, curious about my interest in taking up research in metallurgy, but encouraged me to that area; even the problem I was then given had some bearing on his earlier interests on the measurement of elastic constants of solids. I did not have any further occasion to see him, for I moved to the Atomic Energy Establishment soon afterwards, and he, to the Ministry of Defence. I had another occasion almost twenty-five years later when I took over as the Scientific Adviser. In spite of being in frail health, he came specially to New Delhi for this occasion and spent some hours reminiscing and discussing the challenges that lie ahead in defence research. All of us in DRDO were sorry to hear of his death on 6th February, 1989.

This special volume of the Defence Science Journal is dedicated to the memory of Prof. S. Bhagavantam. Many of the contributors to this volume knew him well and they have therefore chosen as subjects that would interest him. There are also some reminiscences. The Guest Editor of this volume is Dr. M. Krishnamurthi who until recently was a senior scientist of the Defence Research and Development Organisation. An old student and collaborator of Prof. Bhagavantam, he so kindly came forward to invite and edit the articles for this volume.

I am grateful to him for this labour and love.

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