

PERSONAL NEWS

There was a notable contrast between the style of Abhyankar in writing mathematics and his style in speaking it. He wanted his writings to be perfect, logically and notationally, to the extent that perhaps even a computer could read it. This ensured elimination of any errors but also made the reader's task quite hard. However, a few of his writings were exceptions to this rule, notably the book for scientists and engineers mentioned above.

On the other hand, listening to his lecture on mathematics was not only a relaxing experience and a pleasure, but the listener often came away with some rare

insights into the subject which would almost never come from reading a book.

Two other passions of Abhyankar were Marathi and Sanskrit languages and Indian mythology. His long stay in India in the 1970s was partly influenced by his desire to have his children learn Marathi language and culture in a genuinely desi environment. His knowledge of Indian mythology was immense and it was not hard to detect his passion for it even during his conversations in mathematics. During a talk by him at Purdue on 'Relationships in *Mahabharata*' the audience was awestruck by his unmistakable and firm grasp on the intricate web of inter-

relationships among numerous characters in the epic.

Abhyankar is survived by his wife, son, daughter and four grandchildren. His absence will be deeply felt in the world of mathematics.

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Erratum

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Page 1473, 3rd column, lines 24–28

'After his sojourn in New Zealand, he worked at CSIRO, Canberra, Australia as a Professional Fellow from 1991 to 1999 and thereafter as an Emeritus Fellow.'

should read as

'After his sojourn in New Zealand, he worked at the Australian National University, Canberra, Australia as a Professorial Fellow from 1991 to 1999 and thereafter as an Emeritus Fellow.'