

G. S. Ramaswamy

Guruvayur Subramanian Ramaswamy, the founder Director of the CSIR Structural Engineering Research Centre, passed away in Chennai on 9 March 2002. Born on 3 October 1923, GSR, as he was fondly addressed, had his early education in Trichur and moved to the then College of Engineering, Guindy from where he took BE degree with Honours in 1944. He received MS and CE degrees in 1948 from the California Institute of Technology, USA. On his return, he was appointed professor and head of the Department of Civil Engineering of the Annamalai University when he was only 26 years old. After serving the university for about eight years, he joined the Central Building Research Institute, Roorkee in 1956 as the Head of the Structures Division. During his tenure that lasted for nearly nine years, GSR carried out spectacular R&D projects that earned him universal acclaim and several awards. The technology developed by his group for a unique cost-saving flooring scheme involving the use of concrete funicular shells was adopted in the construction of thousands of buildings in India and abroad. It was due to GSR's efforts that the currently popular twisted, concrete-reinforcing steel bars (on which he took a patent) gained acceptance in the country in the early seventies.

In 1965, he founded the Structural Engineering Research Centre (SERC) at

Roorkee, whose headquarters later moved to Chennai in 1974. As the Director of SERC and the Coordinating Director of CSIR campus, he initiated pioneering research in a number of disciplines in structural engineering which made him and SERC well-known in national and international circuits. GSR's far-sighted



vision enabled the setting up of several advanced laboratories and facilities, including the tower testing station at Pallavaram, which is among the best in the world.

GSR served as the UN Chief Technical Advisor, Consultant at Trinidad and Riyadh. He trained and guided many young scientists and engineers presently occupying high offices in India and

abroad. He authored several books which have become reference books¹⁻³ on the respective topics. His latest book on 'space structures' was recently released in UK. He had immense interest in literature and fine arts. He was a prolific writer and a great orator. He chaired several committees constituted by state and central governments. Even a few hours prior to his passing away, he was preparing notes for his next technical book. GSR leaves behind his wife, a daughter and two sons. With his passing away, the scientific world and the structural engineering profession have lost an outstanding and eminent scientist-cum-consultant.

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1. Ramaswamy, G. S., Eekhout, M. and Suresh, G. R., *Analysis, Design and Construction of Steel Space Frames*, Thomas Telford Publishing Limited, UK, 2002.
 2. Ramaswamy, G. S., *Modern Prestressed Concrete Design*, Pitman Publishing Limited, London, 1976.
 3. Ramaswamy, G. S., *Design and Construction of Concrete Shell Roofs*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, USA, 1968.
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