# Asian Crystallographic Association felicitates Ramaseshan and Verma

The Asian Crystallographic Association (AsCA) held one of its triennial meetings on 18 November 2001 at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore. This is the first time that a meeting of the AsCA is being held in India. S. Ramaseshan and A. R. Verma, two doyens among Indian crystallographers, were felicitated at the inaugural function of the meeting, for their monumental contributions to crystallography.

Photo taken at the felicitation function. From left to right: Smt Sadhana Verma, Prof. A. R. Verma, Prof. S. Ramaseshan, Smt Kausalya Ramaseshan.

Sivaraj Ramaseshan (b. 10 October 1923) began his research career with C. V. Raman at IISc in 1943, in the field of optics, mineralogy and crystallography. For short durations, Ramaseshan worked at Brooklyn Polytechnic and also taught low-temperature crystallography (1954–55). He was also associated with Dorothy Hodgkin at Oxford University (1964–65). While felicitating Ramaseshan, R. Chidambaram (Homi Bhabha Chair Professor, BARC and Advisor, Govt of India) referred to his various contributions in the field of crystal physics. Ramaseshan's studies covered different crystal forms of diamond, Faraday rotation in birefringent media and magnetic studies. Chidambaram noted that Ramaseshan was instrumental in establishing schools at IIT, Chennai; NAL, Bangalore and IISc in various fields related to materials science like high-pressure science (the very first laboratory of its kind in India), composites, biomaterials and biodevices. Ramaseshan's work on multiwave anomalous scattering for phase determination, his suggestion to use anomalous neutron scattering for solving large structures, icosahedral coordination in ionic crystals, etc. are well-known. Ramaseshan predicted pressure-induced optical activity and predicted and verified the existence of pressure-induced liquid crystallinity also. Ramaseshan was the Vice-President of the International Union of Crystallography. In addition to holding many important responsibilities in science administration, Ramaseshan held many editorial responsibilities; notably he edited the *Collected Works of Dorothy Crowfoot Hodgkin*; at present he is one of the editors of *Current Science* and a Distinguished Professor-Emeritus at the Raman Research Institute, Bangalore.

Ajit Ram Verma (b. 20 September 1920) received his Ph D degree from London University in 1952 and was an ICI Research Fellow of London University during 1952–55. He was associated in research with K. S. Krishnan, S. Tolansky and J. D. Bernal. Having specialized in structures of 'real crystals', Verma's optical, interferometric and X-ray studies in SiC provided support to Frank's theory of crystal growth via spiral dislocations. Verma and his students carried out extensive studies on different polytypic structures of SiC and $CdI_2$. Several new polytypes and transformations were discovered. Growth of whisker crystals formed a novel series of studies. The nature of crystal growth and polytypism were discussed in several publications. These studies resulted in three well-known and popular books in crystallography authored by Verma, namely, *Crystal Growth and Dislocations* (Butterworth, 1953), *Polymorphism and Polytypism in Crystals* (co-authored with P. Krishna; John Wiley, 1966) and *Crystallography for Solid State Physics* (co-authored with O. N. Srivastava; Wiley Eastern, 1982). Referring to various other contributions of Verma, Krishan Lal (Director, NPL) mentioned that under Verma's tutelage as the Director of NPL, precision crystallography got established at that laboratory, resulting in state-of-the-art X-ray topography and multiple crystal X-ray diffractometry.

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