

Sri R.V. Vaidyanatha Ayyar:

R.V. Vaidyanatha Ayyar is an independent researcher and a former member of the Indian Administrative Service (1966–2003). He was a visiting professor at the Centre for Public Policy, Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore, India (from 2003 to 2009). 'To Russia with love' was the first article of Dr. R. V. Vaidyanatha Ayyar, I.A.S., (Retd) then Visiting Professor at Centre for Public Policy, Indian Institute of Management, Bengaluru published in the August 2, 2008 issue of Bulletin of Centre for Policy Studies. Dr. Ayyar, the scholar-administrator, must have been pleased that by then his teacher and regular contributor to CPS Bulletin, Prof. M.N. Sastri's book 'Profligate Civilization' had been published by Centre for Policy Studies.

Dr. R.V. Vaidyanatha Ayyar's brilliant academic career reached its zenith when his doctoral dissertation, done under the supervision of Prof G. Gopala Rao, was evaluated by a panel comprising Nobel Laureate R.G.W. Norrish FRS, Sir Harry Melville FRS., and Prof. E. J. Bowen FRS of Oxford University. Dr Ayyar joined the prestigious chemistry department as a lecturer. Andhra University became famous because of its first two vice chancellors Dr. C.R. Reddy and Dr S. Radhakrishnan. A moment of glory it was for the university when India's first Nobel Laureate Gurudev Tagore gave a lecture in December 1933 on MAN, India's second Nobel Laureate Sir C.V. Raman was in the audience and one as eminent as these two, Vice Chancellor Radhakrishnan was in the Presidential chair. It was no ordinary coincidence that three celebrities who were on the faculty of the university, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, Sir C.V. Raman, and Sir M. Visvesvaraya became Bharat Ratnas. Dr Vaidyanatha Ayyar's selection as an IAS officer was, without doubt, a loss to education and gain to civil service, though Dr Ayyar with characteristic modesty wrote that he began his career as a teacher in 1966 and ended as a teacher at Bengaluru in 2009.

In between he did outstanding work as an administrator, policy maker and (4) chairman of expert bodies.

Dr. Ayyar was closely associated with the revision of National Policy on Education, 1986. His contribution to the development of primary and elementary education in India was significant, when he was Secretary HRD during 1997-2003. He was involved in both policy formulation and implementation at the national level and his expertise was recognized by the government while in service and sought by centres of higher learning after retirement.

Honours and awards, like the high positions he held in government service, sit lightly on the shoulders of the self-effacing Dr. Vaidyanatha Ayyar. This well known scholar administrator has contributed twenty seven articles, despite heavy work, to the bimonthly Bulletin of CPS during the last seven years. Dr. Ayyar's lucid style of writing, incisive analysis of complex subjects and thought provoking comments and observations have earned for him wide acclaim. Two of his books, one by the Oxford University Press, are ready for release. This small book being brought out by Centre for Policy Studies is a token of grateful appreciation of Dr. Ayyar's articles titled 'Unfashionable Thoughts' published in ten instalments in CPS Bulletin from April 2, 2014 to October 2, 2015. It is a timely critique of India's education policy which will be of immense value to all those interested in the study and progress of higher education.