

18th April 2006 Daily mirror (HP)

APPRECIATION

S.H.C. de Silva – an irreparable loss to engineering community

The news of the sudden passing away of my friend caused me shock beyond belief and untold grief because his death was totally unexpected, as he was enjoying good health with no known ailments.

He had as usual, gone for his daily early morning swim to Otters where unbelievably, he drowned in the pool. How this could have occurred cannot be understood or imagined as SHC was a good swimmer.

His death has left a deep void among his family and relatives and among the large number of his friends and colleagues in Sri Lanka and abroad.

SHC received his primary and secondary education at Mahinda College, Galle and Ananda College, Colombo respectively. After completing the first year at the University, he opted to go to Britain to pursue engineering studies and successfully completed his Bachelor's Degree in engineering at the London University. He continued his studies and was awarded a post-graduate Diploma in Hydraulic Engineering.

On his return to Sri Lanka he joined the Irrigation Department (ID) where he performed his duties with commitment, dedication and devotion. He never acted against his conscience. He was an exemplary public servant.

He was sought after by officers of the ID for his counsel and guidance. He was their counsellor and teacher. He retired in 1988 as Additional Director of Irrigation. After retirement he continued to serve as consultant to the ID for more than three years. Thereafter, he was employed as a consultant at 'TEAMS' for more than six years. This was followed as Director of the Water Resources Board and the ICATD for five years and three years respectively up to the end of 2004. Even at the time of his death he was functioning as Lanka Rainwater Harvesting Forum's Chairman.

SHC was an active exco member of about 20 professional associations, societies and NGOs. He served as the President of the Institute of Engineers and for more than five years and as the President of the Association of Franco-Ceylonese Technologies.

His death is an irreparable loss not only to Sri Lanka but also to the world engineering community where he was known and highly respected. My heartfelt condolences go to his wife Hema, son Nilanth and to his daughter who was unable to be present at the funeral.

May he attain the bliss of Nibbana

D.P.W. Karunatileke