

An engineer par excellence

Prof Dayantha Wijeyesekera

APPRECIATION: Deshamanya Vidya Jyothi Dr A.N.S. Kulasinghe who has come to his journey's end, started his technical education as an apprentice, achieved the highest honour and name to be one the best Engineers Mother Lanka has produced.

While his basic engineering studies was in the field of Civil Engineering, he soon turned out to be a multi-disciplinary -creative inventor, research oriented innovator, cost effective designer, down to earth practical engineer and a results oriented administrator.

Due to these remarkable qualities he was appointed by the suc-

cessive governments to be the founder Chairman of the State Engineering Corporation (SEC); founder Chairman of the Central Engineering Consultancy Bureau (CECB), founder Chairman of the National Engineering Research and Development (NERD) Centre in addition to the other numerous positions he held as a multi-faceted Engineer administrator. He always focused on low cost technologies, innovative construction techniques and utilization of local resources in his Engineering pursuits.

His pioneering efforts and contributions in the areas of Pre-cast concrete, Pre-stressed concrete, alternate low cost construction material, ferro-cement boat build-

ing, applications of the Shell design theory in the construction of the Kalutara Bodhi Chaitya and Kotmale Maha Seya (the tallest structure in Sri Lanka) would stand as monuments in his memory, in addition to large dams built during the last few decades under his leadership.

In the Academic sphere he was honoured by the University of Moratuwa with the Doctor of Science (Honoris Causa), he was the first Engineer to be a member of the Universities Grants Commission and the Chancellor of the Open University of Sri Lanka. He has been awarded many a recognition, National, Academic and Professional.

As an effective manager and

administrator he was effectively results oriented and determined to keep to set targets. He was one of the first in the late 1960s to have a radio controlled communication equipment from his vehicle linked to the construction sites to monitor the progress of the work even while he was travelling. He was able to cut down on many bureaucratic procedures for expeditious delivery and reducing costs. He was truly a technocrat who could challenge any bureaucrat!

Professionally, he was a President, of The Institution of Engineers, Sri Lanka (IESL), the Local Country Representative of the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) UK, and the Founder Chair-

man of the Sri Lanka Association of the Institution of Civil Engineers (SLAICE), having handed over the latter to me under his mentorship.

It was a tremendous experience, privilege and honour to have served under his leadership in my first position in Sri Lanka, as a Civil Engineer in 1970 and to have been interviewed by him in the same year to obtain the UK Charter of the Institution of Civil Engineers which paved the way to currently be the Local Representative of the same Institution. While he passed away at a time during these days when the Joint Board of Moderators (JBM) of the ICE are evaluating the Civil Engineering degrees offered by the Universities of Peradeniya and Moratuwa respectively, he would have been very glad to hear of its results as he was the facilitator of the last moderation visit of the JBM in 1999 and was inquiring of same when I visited him as one my "Gurus" a couple of months ago while he was guiding me on the two of the positions I had immediately succeeded him.

Mother Lanka, in particu-



Dr A.N.S. Kulasinghe

lar the Engineering community pay tribute and salute an Engineer par Excellence and hope the Engineers and technocrats of our nation would consider him truly as an example!

The writer is Senior Professor of Civil Engineering, University of Moratuwa; Chairman, Sri Lanka Association of Civil Engineers (SLAICE) Country Representative (SL) Institution of Civil Engineers, UK.