

Prof. S.K.Shankar – My compassionate colleague

I am honored to write a eulogy on the founder member and past president of our society – Prof. S.K.Shankar. I also feel that this is the best way to convey my richest tributes to my dear compassionate friend.

In many ways, Prof. Shankar and I had several similarities. Both of us were born in the year 1947. Both of us graduated in the year 1970 and completed the postgraduate training in Pathology in 1974. It was a coincidence that both of us started our respective professional career in Neuropathology under similar circumstances in late 1970s and we also attained superannuation in 2011. During this long period of association, we were closely watching each other's progress and there was a healthy competition between us. We used regularly attend and meet at the annual conferences of NSI during the period 1980-1990. A stiff competition between two of us at the platform presentations during these conferences attracted the attention of prof. B.Ramamurthy and Prof. P.N.Tandon – the two great stalwarts in Neurosurgery. In all fairness and honest to myself he was much more committed and had a passion for the subject than myself.

I used to periodically discuss the problems and setbacks that I faced at SCTMC with Prof.Shankar. He would always come with simple solutions and he was a source of encouragement for me. For the development of a museum at SCTMC, he personally took interest and denoted several academically interesting specimens. He also visited our institute several times and delivered a series of lectures for the benefit of residents in neurosciences. These visits were very valuable for the academic growth of my department.

His contributions to development of Neuropathology in this country are too well known to every one of us. However, for the benefit of younger generation of our society, Prof. Shankar who for the first with the concept of starting Neuropathology Society of India and with his two of his disciples Prof. Chitra Sarkar and Prof. Anita, he toiled hard but he worked behind the curtain. As a result of which NPSI was born in 2015. He also was the first person of our country to start 2 year diploma program in Neuropathology at NIMHANS, Bengaluru. Subsequently, DM program in neuropathology became a reality. By this, he promoted the training in Neuropathology and touched the lives of countless students all over the globe. Despite his physical disability, he will stand hours after hours and teach the gross neuroanatomy and neuropathology to his students. Such was his passion for teaching.

Prof. Shankar most remarkable contribution is that he established a facility – Human Brain Bank and tissue repository (HBTR) at NIMHANS, Bengaluru for the support of neurosciences research in this country. He also personally established the neuropathology brain museum at NIMHANS, Bengaluru. During the post retirement period, he opened it to public and school children to disseminate the neuroscience knowledge and 'sow the seeds of neurosciences' in young minds.

He had health issues and was not keeping good health during his terminal years and left for heavenly abode on September 5, 2022. The Teacher's Day – poetic justice for a great teacher. What is most noble and remarkable is that he being a life – long crusader of organ donation, he donated his brain, eyes and heart to support neurosciences in the country.

Prof.Shankar, you made an indelible mark as a great teacher, innovator, researcher in the field of neurosciences of our country. The void left by you is irreparable and certainly our society lost his

precious jewel. Personally, it is huge loss for me. Prof. Shankar, my dear friend, 'you may be gone from my sight but you will never go from my heart'. The shining sun has set but the glory will remain with us.

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