



DR P VENUGOPAL

THE PATRIARCH



14 February 1940 - 31 July 2023



Guruji

Prof P Venugopal was unique both as a leader and teacher.

My formative years were spent in Pune and later in England. There were not many established Urology training centers in the country then. Hence some of us from the western part of India had to seek Urological training abroad. Around this time, Urology blossomed in Madras and Vellore. Prof P Venugopal after getting trained under the Urological Doyen Prof HS Bhat went on to establish the first ever teaching unit in Manipal. He single handedly made it second to none.

As a leader, he was special. He was not only the youngest president of the Urological Society of India but he continued to lead the society on matters of critical importance throughout his life. He was a live wire in the AGMs of our society.

He was a teacher par excellence. He continued to teach till the very last few days of his life.

I have had the privilege of his association for long long years.

He was India proud. He never missed an opportunity to appreciate and encourage Indian innovators.

With his moving on, we lost a teacher of the classical era of surgical training.

Dr Sanjay B Kulkarni
President
Urological Society of India



The Teacher of Teachers

Professor P. Venugopal, the founder chairman of the Department of Urology at Kasturba Medical College Manipal, embodied the essence of being a teacher of teachers. In his retired years, he dedicated his time and energy to the students of his students. When the Department of Urology at Kasturba Medical College, Mangalore (located 60 kilometres south of Manipal, the city he chose to spend his retired life), was recognized by the National Board of Examinations to admit two students per year for postgraduate training in Urology, he gladly assumed the role of Emeritus Professor of Urology in this department. In doing so, he became a teacher to the third generation of students in the country, a remarkable achievement accomplished by only a few.

Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, the octogenarian professor conducted regular teaching sessions, which were attended not only by postgraduates but also by others in the department. Under his guidance, various academic activities such as clinical case discussions, problem-solving exercises, operative urology sessions, and journal clubs thrived. Additionally, he embraced e-learning initiatives, delivering teachings through e-loops in groups and on a one-to-one basis for students. His commitment to education extended beyond his official responsibilities.

His clinics for postgraduate students from across the state, held in 2012 when the teaching department in Mangalore was established, are still fondly remembered even after a decade. At his behest, the department established an endowment to conduct a competitive examination for general surgery postgraduates, commemorating the memory of his esteemed colleague, Dr. A. B. Rao, the former professor of urology at KMC, Mangalore.

Dr Venugopal's clinical expertise was sought by patients seeking consultations on complex issues, often for third or fourth opinions. In the department, he served as a super consultant, providing valuable guidance to the staff when they faced dilemmas regarding patient care and treatment options. His emphasis on clinical examination redirected the current generation of students from excessive reliance on expensive investigations back to the realm of practical and comprehensive clinical care.

There are two types of teachers: those who strive to illuminate the path for their students, and those who empower students to illuminate their own path. Professor P. Venugopal belonged to the latter category. Students who had the privilege of learning from him became self-guided, empowered individuals. Such was the profound impact of his teaching.

He often lamented, "We possess a wealth of clinical knowledge, but when it comes to health issues, we surrender to foreign dictates. As true Indians, we should not only retain our knowledge but also share it." This expressed his concern for self-reliance and the importance of relying on our own data and experiences in medical practice.

On July 31, 2023, he transcended his earthly existence, merging with the elements. The saddest day arrived on August 1, 2023, when we had to perform the painful task of removing his name plaque displayed alongside other staff members in the KMC Hospital Mangalore. However, his name will forever be enshrined in our hearts.



Dr G. G. Laxman Prabhu
Prof and Head, Urology
KMC, Mangalore

48 HOURS A DAY

I started my urology practice in Akola in 1998. Having tutored by Dr Percy Chibber, I was tech savvy right from day one. Like, I bought a desktop computer first and urology equipment later. Those days the cost of a desktop computer and cystoscopy telescope were the same. Somewhere in late 2001 or early 2002, I started an online urology discussion board titled "Urology_India". We used to discuss cases and other urology related issues on this board. One member with e-mail address peeveegee75@yahoo.com used to contribute a lot on these groups. Having brought up and settled in west zone, I did not know who he was. Later, while discussing with friends, I came to know that he was The P Venugopal, a teacher of teachers. His posts on this group were quite detailed and thoughtful. However, this group was not much widespread and did not have a mentor like him. And being new in practice, I could not devote much time to it. Moreover, it was confined to the urologists in India. Later sir started a group called "Uroeducation" which became immensely popular. One day sir called me and said is it possible to merge the two groups together because some of the posts on your group are quite relevant, but your member strength is too low. You need to reach a wider audience. Somehow merging the groups did not happen or was not possible. With advent of social media, the online discussion boards became rarity. He continued to contribute to both the groups. Slowly urology_india group died a slow growth and with yahoo disowning groups, uroeducation yahoo group also ceased to exist. But the interaction with sir continued. He used to teach me directly or indirectly. He would opine on cases, share references, and sometimes made comments which we could never think of. When I became a west zone secretary in 2020, he used to request for link of online webinars and conference.

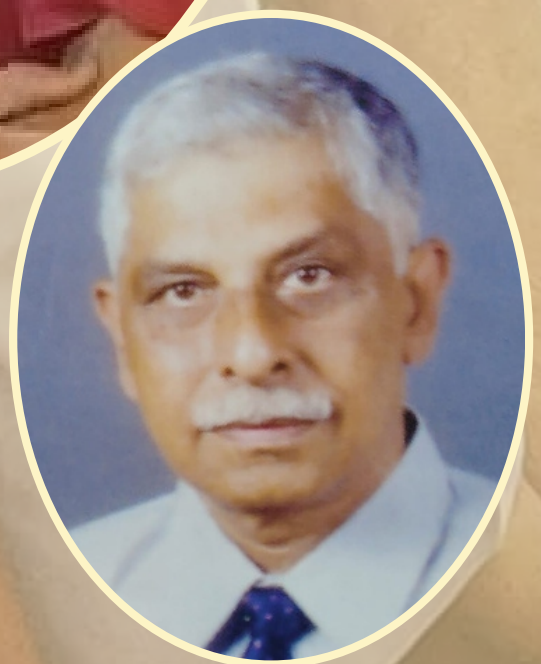
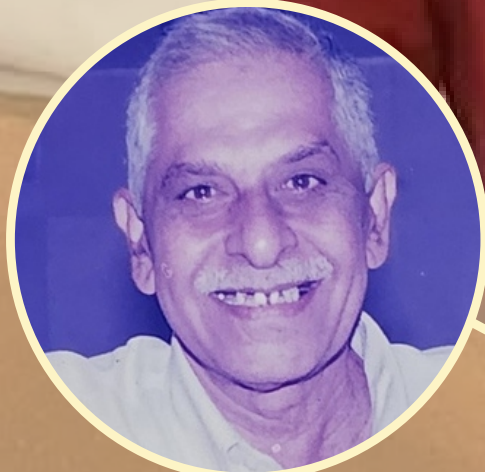
A man who said "A day has 48 hours, out of which 24 hours are meant for working" is still living through his disciples, teachings and all workaholics amongst us. He refuses to die. In a way he was a perpetual teacher, or do I say a perpetual student?

I am indebted to Dr GG Laxman Prabhu, Secretary USI, for giving me the opportunity to be the editor of this special newsletter. That way I could read a lot about The PVG. This special newsletter has his biographical sketch, reminiscences of students, snippets from those who came in contact with him, some photographs and some of his famous quotes. Releasing this special newsletter on 5th September, the teachers' day is a perfect tribute to Guruji, a teacher who refuses to die. I am sure you will like this issue.

Dr Prashant Mulawkar
Consulting Urologist, Akola
Professor of Urology, GMC & SSH, Akola
Tutor in Urology, University of Edinburgh, UK



Memories...



PROFESSOR P VENOGOPAL – A PROFILE

Prof. P. Venugopal was born on 14 February 1940. He obtained his MBS degree in December 1961, from the Medical College, Pondicherry (Madras University). His MS degree in General surgery came on his Birthday, in the year 1966 from Medical College and Hospital, Trivandrum (Kerala University).

Later, he did his super specialty training in Urology at Christian Medical College Vellore under Professor H S Bhat, the doyen of Indian urology and obtained the MCh degree in March 1968 from the Madras University.

After a short stint as Sr. Lecturer in Urology at C.M.C. Hospital, Vellore (April 1968 - Aug 1970), he proceeded to UK. on a Senior Commonwealth Fellowship for training in Pediatric Urology (September 1970 - September 1971).

In October 1971, he joined Kasturba Medical College, Manipal as Reader in Urology. He started the Department of Urology here and developed it into one of the best centres of Urology in the country. He was Prof & Head of this Department since 1974 till premature retirement in June 1993.

The MCh (Uro) training started by him here is the first ever higher training program in the Karnataka State. He trained 26 Candidates for MCh (Uro) here who are spread all over the country doing quality urology work. The department had independent floor space for Urology with all Lab. Facilities, 4 Operation Theatres, ESWL Suite and 116 beds.

He is an active member of the urological society of India since its inception and has held the following positions in the society:

- Governing Council Member (October 1977 - October 1978)
- Hon. Treasurer (October 1978 - October 1980)
- Vice President (October 1980 - October 1982).
- President (October 1982 - October 1984)
- Honorary Treasurer, Indian Journal of Urology (Oct 1984 to Dec 1992)
- Chairman, Editorial Committee of Indian Journal of Urology (Dec 1992 - Jan 2000)

He was instrumental in commencing the Indian Journal of Urology during his Presidential year (1984). He conducted the Annual Conference of Urological Society of India at Manipal in 1982 which was unprecedented in quality and conduct, remembered as the Manipal conference even today by those who attended it.

He was awarded the Urology Gold Medal for contributions to Urology in October 1986. He delivered the prestigious Dr Himadri Sarkar Oration at the Annual Conference of Urological Society of India in October 1986 at Vijayawada. He delivered Dr. Pinnameneni Oration at Annual Conference U.S.I. in December 1992.

He also has held the following offices:

- Founder Honorary secretary, Karnataka State Chapter of Association surgeons of India (October 1981 - March 1985)
- Chairman, KSC of ASI (March 1986 - March 1987)
- Governing Council Member of Association of Surgeons of India (Jan 1988 - Dec 1990)

He has delivered the following prestigious orations:

- Prof. H. S. Bhat Oration of K. S. C of A. S. I Annual Conference - March 1985
- Dr. Ramaiah Oration of APSAUGUS - December 1993
- U. A. K Oration of Urological Association of Kerala - Jan 1994
- Prof. H. S. Bhat Oration at the South Zone Urology Conference at Mangalore - August 1997

He has introduced and nurtured the following Awards:

- Prof. H. S. Bhat Oration, KSC of ASI
- Prof. C. K. P. Menon Memorial Award for the Best Paper at Annual Conference, USI

- Dr. Sitharaman Memorial Essay Prize at the Annual Conference, USI

He has been an Examiner for M.Ch (Uro) and Dip N.B (Uro) at all Universities and Centres in the country. He has given innumerable lectures at various fora all over the country.

He was also the Emeritus Prof. and HOD, Dept. of Urology at K.L.E.Society's Hospital &MRC, Belgaum (June 1999 to May 2001). He commenced the M.Ch(Urology) at the K.L.E.Society's Hospital, Belgaum in June 2000.

He has served as senior consultant in Urology at University Medical Centre, Mangalore from May 23, 2001 to Dec 8, 2001.

He was senior consultant in Urology at Unity Health Complex, Mangalore from Dec 2001 to 2006 June.

His last work assignment was Emeritus Prof of Urology at KMC Hospital, Mangalore which commenced on April 15th 2012. He actively supported the DNB Urology program here and continued to teach the trainees almost till the last days of his life in July of 2023.

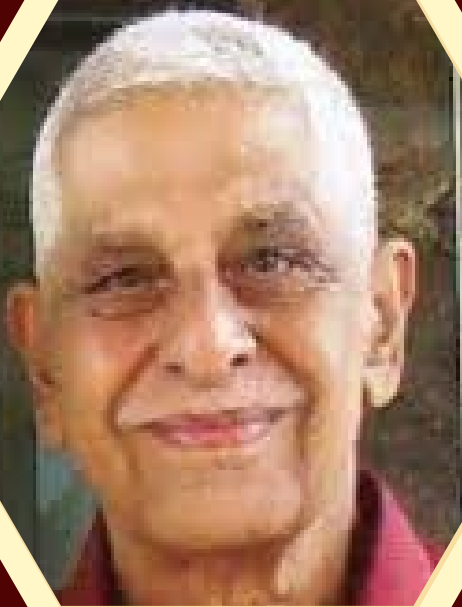
His wife, Late Dr Nalini Venugopal was an eminent Pathologist and well-known teacher.

His son Dr Anand Venugopal is a Professor of Radiodiagnosis and Imageology, KMC, Mangalore and currently the CEO of teaching units of the Manipal Academy of Higher Education- an institute of eminence.

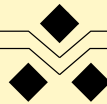
Professor P Venugopal was an unusual teacher. He was directly and indirectly responsible for the starting of three Urology training departments during his long academic career spanning over five decades. He wanted to see the ascent of Indian Journal of Urology and by the providential grace; he saw the journal getting its first impact factor during his life time. He loved his subject and work throughout his life. Urology never left him. He became a living soul of urology on 31st July 2023 as he left the material frame. The departments founded and nurtured by him will continue to be the monuments in honour of him. In short, he was a tireless teacher!



PEARLS



***Protect and Preserve the urinary tract
always while treating urinary tract
afflictions.***



***The best surgery is learnt during lunch hour
and the most instructive complication is
managed during dinner time. A surgical
trainee therefore should learn to skip both
lunch and dinner.***



PROFESSOR P VENUGOPAL: A TRIBUTE

I script these lines to register my unfeigned tribute to Professor P. Venugopal whose demise in the recent past has plunged us to depths of genuine despair and grievously weakened our society. The impact of our loss is not deciduous and unlikely to evanesce.

I first set my eyes on Venu sometime in the mid-seventies at CMC Vellore where I was then an urology sophomore. I along with Mahendra Bhandari, Vasanth Krishna and Sunderlal Babu formed an interesting cluster of post-graduates there. Venu had majored in Urology almost seven years before us and by then had already set up a nucleus of a department at KMC, Manipal. He frequently visited Vellore those days and being a staunch and loyal CMC alumnus, any diaphanous pretext was good enough for him to rush these peregrinations. The physical presence of Prof. H. S. Bhat continued to be an ineluctable beacon summoning him to CMC precinct again and again. We, a percipient clutch of post-graduates, was also a major factor occasioning his visits. We fully capitalized his CMC sojourns; spending several late hours in the departmental library teasing out cases retrieved from the archives; exhausted from such laboured expiscation we would then at the break of dawn saunter towards the CMC gate for a refreshing cup of tea and lend an ear to the sublime dawn chorus generated in the midst of the proximate verdancy. I daresay with some justifiable conceit that we were his first students and he honed his teaching skills at CMC; we, the beneficiaries, managed to ease and constringe his learning curve in good measure.

During our student days, the USI was a very nascent establishment and yet to cut an academic tooth. The academic landscape, therefore, was rather lackadaisical and forlorn. The arrival of Prof. P, Venugopal into its academic corridors most certainly energized a dormant society and animated its pursuits. He bestowed it with a hitherto unknown cadence.

He was not a run of the mill pedagogue. Rather, he had all the lineaments of an exemplary teacher. Expansively read, he possessed an amazing stock of erudition. He was urbane and articulate. At times he was, perhaps, persuasively pugnacious, and argumentative. But he was too decorous to hector anyone into submission.

He was the youngest President of the Urological Society of India. He conducted its business with perfect poise and official correctitude. Internecine dissonance, if any, was nipped in the bud. He midwived, during his tenure, the birth of the Indian Journal of Urology and special interest groups. Through an agreeable happenstance I became the first convenor of the Paediatric Urology speciality group. Other members were Venu and Shyam Joshi.

His department at KMC became a veritable hot house incubating and nurturing quality urological talents. He was gracious to summon me time and again to be a principal participant in the programs he scrupulously schemed. I was a persistent MCh adjudicator of his famed university. My indebtedness to him for my professional expansion is immeasurable.

His personal life was beset by two calamitous deprivations – loss of Nalini and Aravind. He manoeuvred swiftly through these tragedies disclosing preternatural fortitude.

It is, perhaps, appropriate that I sum up this essay on a personal ore. Our camaraderie stretched over many years. I measured and respected his great professional and personal qualities. Our friendship stood on a different footing from any I had established. Coruscating images of his life and time will become a warm part of our memories- they will tenaciously inhabit us.

Prof K Sashidharan, MS, MCh
Past President of Urological Society of India
Former Editor, Indian Journal of Urology
Former Prof and Head, Urology, Medical College, Trivandrum
Former Prof and Head,
Urology, KMC Manipal



A TYPICAL DAY OF MY RESIDENCY IN UROLOGY AND TRIBUTE TO MY MENTOR

I joined the department of urology Manipal under Prof. Dr. P. Venugopal in 1978. It was a fledgling then with late Dr. Snehal Patel as Assistant Professor and late Dr. R. Seetharaman, the first MCh candidate who had just completed the freshman year (first year) in urology.

Every day, work started at 7.30AM in E2 ward (Male General Ward in old building with 25 beds) All of us would assemble in the staff room attached to this ward. The ward nurses were Miss. Shamala and Miss. Irene and the ward boy was Mr Devendra. All the three worked tirelessly as Urology developed under the chief who himself was destined become the teacher of teachers and revered one.

Urological imaging in those days comprised KUB, IVU, MCU and Urethrogram. Ultrasound and CT came much later. At any time there would be 50-55 patients spread in general (both Male & Female), special and Pediatric wards. Case discussions will go for an hour and half. This will be followed by detailed ward rounds wherein there will be further discussions on cases which would culminate in preparation of OT list and also list for diagnostic Cystourethroscopy under local anesthesia. The daily rounds were akin to grand rounds which we talk of and thereafter Prof. Dr. Venugopal would go to see outpatients with Dr. Snehal Patel. My job was to go to radiology department to do IVU, Ascending urethrogram, MCU. Dr. Seetharam will go back to ward and start ward work and I used to join him later.

After ward work, we used go to E.OT (minor OT) for Cystoscopy under local anesthesia. It was also the time when rod lens Cystourethroscopy had been introduced. Dr. Snehal Patel took pains to teach us about instruments, cleaning them and their maintenance. Dr. Snehal Patel would supervise us when we did Cystoscopy.

Thereafter, Dr. Mohan Suvarna, Dr. V. Ramesh and Dr. Kamalakar Achrekar joined the department and our worked progressed very well. We used to have operative procedures to be done live for our exams those days in presence of examiner. There used to the one candidate every year for nearly five years.

Having associated with Dr. P. Venugopal for several years, I have known him as a teacher par excellence, whose grip on the subject was through, his knowledge up-to-date, his clinical sense astute, a teacher who would be hard during studies but soft during leisure, whose commitment to urological education unalloyed, enthusiasm to develop subspecialties keen and support to upcoming talent total.

It should be pointed out that our mentor had an abiding interest in pediatric urology which blossomed fully in the years that followed. His Himadri Sarkar Oration on "Large Ureters" was one of the finest that has been delivered by anyone till now which bears ample testimony of his commitment of this subspecialty.

He strove hard to start the Indian Journal of Urology which is today indexed with an impact factor of 1.2 Above all; he was a great friend and a good hearted person. When shall we see another one like him? How can I pay tribute to a teacher whose debt can never be repaid? All I can say is May his teachings continue to guide us so that we never falter in the profession he had taught us.

**Dr. K. S. Devanathan, MS, Mch,
Trichy**



Mysore, India.

P.O. 69 /71-72.

June 17, 1971.

Dr. P. Venugopal, MS, M.Ch.,
108, Manor House Road,
Jesmond,
NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE-2,
England.

Dear Sir:

With reference to your application dated 22-3-1971, we are pleased to appoint you as a Reader in Urology to work in the Manipal Section of this college. You will be paid a salary of Rs.590/- per month in the scale of pay Rs.550-40-950 plus 25% of your basic salary as non-practising allowance subject to a minimum of Rs.150/- per month plus Rs.90/- per month as dearness allowance. No other allowance is payable and no consultation practice is permitted.

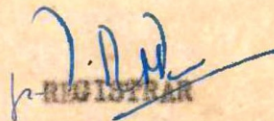
You will be on probation for a period of one year at the end of which if your work is found to be satisfactory, your services will be confirmed. At the time of your confirmation, you will be given due weightage in your salary considering your work and also your past experience. You will be further governed by the Service Rules of the college.

Please let us know if the above terms are acceptable to you and if so, when it will be possible for you to take up the post.


Yours faithfully,

nvb.

o/e
P.O. 70/71-72


REGISTRAR

Copy to Dr. P. Venugopal, C/o Prof. G. K. P. Menon, A-8, Medical College Campus, Trivandrum-11.

- Copies to:-
- 1) The Dean, KMC, Manipal, 
 - 2) The Principal, KMC, Mangalore, P.O. 71/21/72
 - 3) The Medical Director, KH, Manipal, P.O. 84/72
 - 4) Accounts Dept., KMC, Manipal. P.O. 85/72

NOBODY, COMEDY & TRAGEDY

When I look back at my teacher's life, many things come in front of my eyes. It's like a flashback which has happened just now. It's as if he is still there and we are having a good chat together. I wish to narrate three incidents of great amusement value which I am sure make an enjoyable reading. Reading in between the lines the reader may also find the kind relationship Prof PVG had with his students.

NOBODY

It was conference time. Prof PVG loved to travel for conferences with his entire department those days implying nobody will be left behind to guard the fortress. When the then dean Prof Krishna Rao learnt of this, he summoned me as I was the junior most and by an unwritten convention is expected to stay back and look after patients. I appeared before him as instructed.

"I have been told that you too are going for the conference" he queried.

"Yes sir" was my reply.

"Who will be left behind then to look after work?" he questioned.

"Nobody sir" was my answer.

"Who asks you not to stay back?" He shouted.

"Boss sir", I replied.

"Will you jump into a well if your boss asks you?"

"Yes sir" I uttered undaunted.

"You people are incorrigible. You may go" he said.

I attended the conference. I was wondering what made me say all that I had said. Later, when I narrated the conversation to Sitaraman and Devanathan both my immediate seniors, they said, "the faith". "Faith in your teacher makes you strong", they said in unison.

COMEDY

Boss had once developed chest pain during work and had to undergo detailed cardiac evaluation. Prof SGS Prabhu had decreed that he had to give up smoking at any cost. The responsibility of seeing to it that boss gave up smoking was on our shoulders. The only way to achieve this was to stay with him all the time. We did this in turns. Soon we found that boss was frequenting the washroom every now and then. He also was found to be carrying candies and peppermints. We thought that he had developed a urinary problem this time. It was only after a while we discovered that he was smoking in the toilets and used the peppermints to conceal the smoker's breath!

TRAGEDY

In 1985, soon after the Bhopal gas tragedy (On December 2nd 1984, leakage of methyl isocyanate in the union carbide factory at Bhopal, MP had taken a heavy toll of human life), one morning, I had done a bladder tumour resection and had shifted the patient to the post operative ward. Little later, I along with an anaesthesiology colleague had inadvertently caused dropping of a huge oxygen containing gas cylinder (Rocket Cylinder) on to the floor. Consequently, there was a frighteningly loud gas leak. The orderlies by then were yelling "gas leak, gas leak". A little later, the gas leak was stopped, and I made it for the post operative ward only to find that it was empty. I was deeply concerned about my bladder tumour patient who was hooked onto IV fluids, irrigation and also had an epidural catheter. I was then flabbergasted to find him in the corridor of the hospital without the hardware. He had managed to bolt out after disconnecting all that had restrained him upon hearing the yelling of the orderlies! Such was the fear of the very word gas in the heart of people around that time. He was not bleeding despite all this. I proudly announced this to Prof PVG hoping to score a brownie point. "Lucky son, as usual the epidural has not worked. That is why he could run for his life" he quipped. This is how 'Manipal Gas Tragedy' ended.

Dr Mohan Chandra Suvarna, MS, MCh,
Former Professor of Urology, KMC and Fr Muller's Medical college, Mangalore
Consultant Urologist, Urology Research Centre and Stone Clinic, Mangalore



UROLOGY@MANIPAL: PIONEERING THE PATH IN PRIVATE MEDICAL EDUCATION

A young man in his early 40s, after formal training in Urology embarked on a journey to Manipal in the late 1970s with a vision of establishing a separate Urology department. His name was Padmanabhan Venugopal, MCh in Urology from Christian Medical College, Vellore.

Determined to create an independent unit focused on Urology rather than being part of the Surgery department, he tirelessly overcame numerous challenges with unwavering energy and passion. Within a few years, Urology@Manipal flourished and became a bustling center of activity. Driven by his unmatched dedication and enthusiasm, he earned the moniker "PVG," which became synonymous with Urology in the region.

His ultimate goal was to establish a teaching unit within the department, and he persevered through the rigorous challenges that came his way. His efforts paid off when Urology@Manipal became recognized for MCh training. As a teacher, Dr. Venugopal possessed a unique ability to simplify complex concepts and transform them into unforgettable lessons. Every year, an increasing number of aspiring urologists sought the opportunity to learn under his guidance. His infectious enthusiasm for learning left an indelible mark on the hearts and minds of his students. Upon completing their three-year training, these students proudly referred to themselves as Venu's boys (Venu was Prof P Venugopal's call name) students. Dr. Venugopal's morning class discussions, daily rounds, Sunday lectures, informal teachings during surgeries and in hospital corridors and shared dinners will be cherished and remembered for years to come.

Dr. Venugopal was a visionary who always stayed ahead of his time. He made seemingly insurmountable subjects and issues conquerable. To provide the best training and education to his students, he procured state-of-the-art equipment and instruments in the field of Urology. Thanks to his efforts, his students garnered accolades and made a significant impact, rapidly elevating Urology@Manipal to a national level. Driven by his exceptional organizational and administrative skills, he rose to become the President of the Urology Society of India. Under his mentorship, his students became proficient teachers, skilled practitioners, and leaders in the field of Urology. Today, many of his students have gained recognition both nationally and internationally. Dr. Venugopal not only educated minds but also touched hearts by maintaining connections with his students during both joyous and challenging times. As the founder of Urology@Manipal, his legacy is deeply ingrained in every aspect of the department and will endure indefinitely.

Personally, we had the privilege of spending one-on-one time with Dr. Venugopal on numerous occasions. Whenever we called upon him to be present in Manipal for an event or in times that required his guidance, he was always there for us. Although we were not his direct disciples, he mentored me and taught us the importance of remaining dedicated to teaching, continuously learning about urology, and always considering ourselves as students of the field. We can never, ever forget that.

Prof Venugopal moved on for his heavenly abode at the ripe old age of 83 on 31st July 2023. He was a tireless teacher till his last breath. Urology@ Manipal will be poorer without his guidance and mentorship. But his legacy of teaching and passion for learning will forever inspire future generations of students.

Dr Arun Chawla
Prof and Head Urology
KMC, Manipal

&

Dr A Padmaraj Hegde
Dean, KMC, Manipal
(a constituent unit of MAHE - an institute of eminence)



INAUGURATION OF UROLOGY FLOOR AT MANIPAL



USICON AT MANIPAL - 1982



USICON AT MANIPAL - 1982



UAKCON AT MANIPAL



EVER A PART OF UROLOGY@MANIPAL



PVG'S DISCIPLES

Kasturba Medical College Manipal

Dr Sitharaman R Bhat
Dr Devanathan Kelanatham Sadagopan
Dr MC Suvarna
Dr V Ramesh
Dr Kamalakar L Achrekar
Dr Ajith Kumar Jena
Dr Basil Elias
Dr Juvekar Ramesh Laxman
Dr AN Thomas
Dr Shashi Kiran Pal
Dr H K Nagraj
Dr Gopinath Menon PK
Dr V Sreenivas
Dr Mohan Raju
Dr Sri Kumar Ramachandran
Dr Venkatesh Krishnamoorthy
Dr Nerli Rajendra Bapusaheb
Dr Dilip Kumar Sharma
Dr K S Ramgopal
Dr C S Vijay Kumar
Dr D Ramesh
Dr Ashok Pandith
Dr G G Laxman Prabhu
Dr Alluri Madhusudhana Venkatachalapati Raju
Dr M G Kamath
Dr Sandeep Sharma
Dr Ajaykumar Dattatray Bhandarkar
Dr Mamani Manohar K
Dr Venkata Krishna Reddy S
Dr Darwin D Therattil
Dr Shivakumar H.B

Kastruba Medical College, Mangalore

Dr M Gurucharan
Dr K N Sanman
Dr Rajesh Kumar Reddy Adapala
Dr Rakesh Halappa
Dr Santosh Patil
Dr Tushar Daani
Dr Basavaraj Ugran
Dr Anand Baid
Dr Girish H M
Dr Rony Jacob
Dr Shalabh Agarwal
Dr Vikas Nagraj
Dr Sachin
Dr Shijith M R
Dr Babasaheb Dhakne
Dr Nidhin Mathew
Dr Siddaling Ladde
Dr Vignan Kumar R
Dr Abhilash Reddy N
Dr Vipin Reddy B
Dr Pratyush Mahanta
Dr Sivaprasad PVM
Dr Shreeram Pradeep Savant
Dr Raghavendra Muttur
Dr Arjun B V
Dr Naveen Pahade

JN M College, Belgaum

Dr Manohar Shetty



PVG THE STAR HERE AND STAR ETERNAL

This is my personal adieu to one of the greatest urologists who lived to get the branch of urology going. I have had innumerable interactions with him from the start of my career. These encounters have left a long-lasting impression on me. I was MCh resident and during the conferences I would see him sitting in the hall all through the days and asking questions. I used to wonder how he could have so much knowledge. I would approach him and discuss some difficult cases and he would spend all the time to educate me. I was interested in Pediatric urology, and this also brought me closer to him. He used to call me MALLI with so much of love. His approach to urology both academic and political was what I admired. He was a man who would be hot on issues and also cool on individuals and a cold beer given with love would cool him down. We were having candid discussion in Hyderabad in 2014 about the future of urology. I had stated that urology will be split one day into subspecialties. He was angry then I told him that it was he who split USI from ASI and the society is what we see today. He then realized and told me that let us see the subspecialties as branches than multiple trees. This is what we see today. I saw his passion, anger, and anguish when someone would rename his child ASU as South Zone urology. I did not understand why all the teachers stay teachers till I joined Nellore as the Head of department of Urology.

The presence of youngsters around you rejuvenates oneself. I'm not one who is so fond of taking photos. All his encounters with me are etched in my memory. There will be many photos of PVG or Venu Sir but what I cherish in my memory is priceless.

He teaches, He taught, and He Remains a Teacher and will remain a big influence in my life.

Enjoy your Rum sir wherever you are.

Dr Mallikarjuna Reddy N
Hyderabad



PVG - AN OCTOGENARIAN TEACHER

As student, I noticed that Dr Shyam Joshi and Dr Venugopal sir used to be the main speakers from the floor in conferences. Only in recent years did I dare to talk to him and soon he knew me by name and soon it became an association with a great personality.

We hardly see octogenarian teachers attending conferences and webinars with the same vigour and enthusiasm.

Will we see such dedicated people again.....

Dr Sujata Patwardhan
Prof and HOD
Dept of Urology,
GSMC and KEMH, Parel, Mumbai



Lucky Me!! ...

This is my real-life story which dates back to nearly three decades. It is necessary to give my brief background to the reader to appreciate the greatness of Professor P. Venugopal, fondly known as PVG, who played a decisive role in changing my destiny.

When I was a junior resident at the Department of Surgery in Baroda Medical College, I was looking for an innovative topic for my dissertation. During a casual conversation with one of my friends, who was working in the department of Archeology at the MS University, he told me that they studied different stones from the riverbed to predict their age and things about the civilization of in that era. They employed thin section Optical Crystallographic analysis to study the arrangement of the crystals in the stones. Upon hearing this, I wondered why this couldn't be adopted to study the stones from the kidney. I set about reviewing literature and found articles in Journal of Urology published in 1940s about the similar studies for urinary calculi by Edwin L Prien, from USA¹. This encouraged me to approach the Professor of Archeology at the university where my friend worked and he agreed to guide my dissertation. I studied 50 renal calculi in 1988 as a part of my dissertation. The work was appreciated by professor of surgery. Working on urinary calculi drew me closer to super-specialty of Urology. As soon as I finished my General Surgery in 1989, I joined Muljibhai Patel Urological Hospital (MPUH) as a resident surgeon. It was a center of excellence for Urology training but yet to become a formal academic center at that time.

Within few months of my joining MPUH, an annual conference of Urology Society of India USICON 89, was being organized at Ahmedabad. One-day Live Operative workshop at MPUH was part of this conference. It was being attended by all the giants of Urology from India along with Dr. Dretler and Dr. Perez Castro, as invited international faculty. Our job as residents was to work in the Operating Room (OR) or as floor coordinators in the auditorium. I was in the auditorium looking after all invited guests and dignitaries.

I was aware of the worth of my work on urinary calculi analysis but wanted an authentic comment or at least a word of appreciation from any one of the great teachers of urology, sitting in the front row of the auditorium. I was confused as to whom and how to ask this question. There were so many professors actively interacting in the workshop.

Then I saw one of them getting up and going out of the auditorium (He was a Prof. PVG, obviously wanted to smoke a cigarette). I chased him and gathered courage to ask him, "Can I can get a cup of coffee for you, Sir?" He gave a typical professorial glance, scanning me from head to toe and nodded positively. But honestly, I was new to this field and had no idea about who this professor was.

While getting a cup of coffee, I found out that, he was a well-known professor from Manipal and past president of Urological Society of India. While handing over the cup of coffee, I grabbed the opportunity and found the courage to ask him, "Sir, do you believe in the study of Urinary Calculi by Thin Section Optical Crystallography?"

He was slightly taken aback by my question and gave me an honest answer. "At present I am unable to recollect what type of analysis of urinary calculi you are talking about, but we routinely do chemical analysis of stones removed from the kidney."

I started explaining him about the process of making thin sections of urinary calculi and how we study these slides under specialized polarizing microscope. He asked me, "how do you know all this?"

I said, "Sir, I have done this study as a part of my dissertation during surgery, and I would be thankful if you can spare some time going through it." He said, "I am interested in knowing about it but this may not be the right time and place to discuss this subject." After thinking for while he said, "I am staying back for one more day with Dr. Snehal Patel, who is known to me and show me your work tomorrow." He went back into the auditorium and got busy with

the interaction during the live operative workshop. I wasn't sure whether I achieved my purpose of getting an expert comment or advise regarding my work.

Conference and live operative workshop were over on the same day and all delegates dispersed. We were also busy managing patients in the wards carrying out our routine work. Next day after the workshop, there was no elaborate operative list, but Dr. Snehal Patel had posted Radical Nephrectomy, as patient was known to him. Dr. Snehal Patel was from Vadodara, and it was with his guidance and recommendation, I was pursuing urology training at MPUH.

I saw, Prof. PVG sitting in Dr. Snehal Patel's office, when Radical Nephrectomy was going on in the OR. I was running around doing my routine work and did not have courage this time again to talk to the professor sitting in the office.

But to my surprise, he called me inside the office and asked, "Hey man!! When do you want to show me your work on stone analysis?" I was pleasantly thankful to this and was happy that this teacher was as good as words of assurance given to me during those two minutes of chat on the sidelines of the workshop.

I happily said, "Sir, I will get my dissertation from the locker for your perusal right away." I ran to OPD area and got the copy of dissertation for the professor to see.

While sitting in the office and waiting for Dr. Snehal Patel to finish Radical Nephrectomy, Prof. PVG went through the entire dissertation in detail. He saw color photographs of the crystals and structure of urinary calculi. I also explained him how the thin sections of urinary calculi were made and studied under special microscope.

Dr. Snehal Patel finished his surgery and entered the office while our discussion was going on. He was Prof. PVG's colleague, and both were instrumental in starting M.Ch. urology training program at KMC, Manipal in late 1970s.

"Snehal, are you aware, what kind of work this boy has done on urinary calculi?" Prof. PVG asked Dr. Snehal Patel as soon as he settled in his chair. He said, "I can't say I know about the work as I have not read his dissertation."

In my presence, Prof. PVG said to Dr. Snehal Patel, "You must read this dissertation and encourage this student for his work. It is our duty as teachers to channelize the talent of young students in the right direction and support them. They are the future"

Prof. PVG said to me, "Hey young man!! Never give up on your enthusiasm for innovative academic work in urology. You may be busy in clinical work, but don't stop this work."

Dr. Rajapurkar, who was the director of the MPUH at that time, entered the office. Prof. PVG asked Dr. Rajapurkar also to support me for the stone analysis work. Dr. Rajapurkar agreed and immediately promised that all stones removed during the surgery at the MPUH shall be analyzed by me with Thin Section Optical Crystallography. I will get every assistance for the work. Prof. PVG said to me, "See, now the onus is on you to take it further. Don't waste this opportunity and make all your teachers and guides proud."

I was given special allowance to travel to Vadodara on all Wednesdays with stone samples and analyze them at the Department of Archeology, MS University. I continued this work for more than 18 months and analyzed nearly 2000 samples. It boosted my confidence and helped me tremendously to get into the academic MCh urology training program. Later, I did publish my work in the Indian Journal of Urology.²

I shall always be indebted to the great teacher and academician, late Prof. P. Venugopal for his encouragement and support at the right time of my career. Of course, team MPUH too, played a great role in my career.

That is why, I considered myself lucky to have interacted with the right person at that time and my life got the best direction. I also got the chance to join the MCh program at Manipal and work under Prof. P. Venugopal as his student. There are many other interesting stories of how Prof. PVG played in shaping my career but this one is the first and I thought I must share this with everyone.

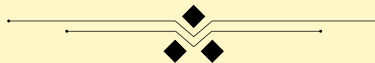
I sincerely pray almighty for the departed soul of Prof. P. Venugopal, who will always be remembered as an exceptionally outstanding teacher who shaped lives of so many of his students.

Dr. Ajay Bhandarkar,
MS, MCh, DNB
Executive Council Member, Urological Society of India (2022-24)
Past Honorary Secretary (2018-20), Urological Society of India West Zone,
Chief and Consultant Urologist,
Sujay Urological Hospital,
Vadodara, Gujarat



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2. Bhandarkar, AD; Prabhu, L; Venugopal, P: Value of detailed structural study of urinarycalculi. Indian Journal of Urology –[13\(1\):p15-20, JulDec1997.](#)

Put Your differential diagnosis into the diagnostic funnel guarded by a sieve of logic. What comes out is the most likely diagnosis.



Routine investigations unfortunately have become the routine when it should be thoughtful investigations done after sufficient thought.

- PVG

MCI INSPECTION



DAD

Arvind, my younger brother and I grew up in Manipal, the medical college campus to be precise. Our formative years were spent mostly in the official quarters allotted to mom and dad, both teachers attached to the Kasturba Medical college, Manipal. Mom (Late Prof. Nalini Venugopal) taught pathology and had 8 to 5 PM schedule, though the workload and her administrative responsibilities kept her back in the department for longer hours in the evening. To dad, his department was his first home. This meant that we were left to our own devices for the best part of the day when they toiled hard to develop their departments and further the cause of their chosen specialties.

Mom and dad were very caring and were also fun loving. They did everything within their powers to keep us both happy. We had our share of quality time with them during our early childhood but both of us soon learnt that we were a part of dad's extended family made up of his students so much so that I studied for my 10th standard final exams sitting in the Urology department along with dad's MCh students and also went out with them to eat bun masala at Eshwaranna's cart stationed at the Tiger circle during the mandatory break we took while studying. He took long classes on Sundays, the only day available then to him during the week for his clinical load was so massive that number of urology surgeries done under him those days far exceeded that done by all the general surgery units put together, leaving him with little time to take postgraduate clinics. He ran packed outpatient services and the indoor patients exceeded 150 on any day. This meant that dad spent little time at home. We never grudged this at all because we were aware of his duties and obligations. Urology was his life and he believed that his time and energies can only be for it.

Mom had a penchant for neatness and would never waste a moment of her time. She was an accomplished violinist and a keen follower of Carnatic classical music. Dad on the other hand loved filmy music but had deep respect for Indian classical music. Dad was a workaholic but enjoyed being in the company of his friends. He had no ostentations about him and his friend circle included people from all walks of life. Dad was closely associated with Mr. Ganesh Pai, one of the Manipal Pairs, who was also his best friend. Ganesh Uncle as we used to call him was a genius with machines. Dad recalls very fondly how he repaired his diathermy unit once so that the next morning he could do a transurethral resection (TUR). It was real fun going on those drives with Ganesh Uncle to small eateries which used to make excellent Konkani food. The other close friend of dad's is Mr. Raja Acharya, popularly known as Hunter Raja for his hunting exploits.

Dad was very strict and I dreaded meeting him whenever asked to do so because I was always up to some mischief. Whenever mom said, "you have to meet dad in the department" I knew I was in trouble.

Dad encouraged both of us to play sports, cricket being one of them. We accompanied the KMC staff cricket team often and many of them later became my teachers and then my best friends.

The official quarters where we grew up was a famous address-Number 10, Madhav Nagar (named after Late Dr. T. M. A. Pai, founder of Kasturba Medical College in 1953). After the arrival of the lithotripter to Manipal, his student rechristened it as Number 10, Steinstrassen, literally meaning Stone Street in German as dad had already become an authority on treatment of stones by then and his was the best center in the country that time. Many teachers and dad's friends frequented this place. In the early nineties, mom and dad built a house in Manipal with the plan of moving into this place during their twilight years but this was never to be as cruel fate took away Arvind from us in 1993 and soon mom and dad left Manipal to continue their professional endeavors in Calicut, Thiruvalla, Belgaum and finally Mangalore. I left Manipal around the same time to continue my postgraduate studies in Davangere. Dad was not sentimental about places for he was always on the move even during his student days. This was so because my grandfather late Prof. C K P Menon served as a professor of surgery in the erstwhile Madras presidency and his was a transferable job. His frequent transfers to various southern Indian surgical departments compelled his children to shift from one college to the other always. This was largely the reason why dad is so very catholic and cosmopolitan in his outlook. Perhaps this trait also came to his rescue when he left his department raised and nurtured by him single handedly. He often declared that his real department is scattered all over the country comprising of his students. His students starting from Devanathan of Trichy to Sandeep Sharma of Ludhiana and all

those in between are his pride. The love and respect they have for dad is really wonderful. I wish his first student Sitaraman were there today. We lost him in a tragic road mishap in 1980.

After qualifying as a radiologist, I landed in Mangalore and not Manipal. I was destined to live with dad's extended family again, this time three of them (Drs Mohanchandra Suvarna, Ashok Pandit and G. G. Laxman Prabhu) in Mangalore, one of these heading the urology services in the hospital where I work and the other two are visiting consultants. When a teaching program in Urology was commissioned in our hospital, dad willingly lent his shoulders to carry the burden of academics, which he is doing even today.

As providence had it, I became the medical superintendent of the hospital and dad's student the head of urology and this prompted him making affectionate digs at both of us every now and then saying, "I have two bosses, one my son and the other my student!"

Since he moved on, both I and Dr Laxman Prabhu miss "bossing" over him.



Dr Anand Venugopal

Prof PVG as I knew him...

Prof P Venugopal had joined the erstwhile University Medical Centre sometime in the summer of 2001 when I was in charge of Urology theatre. I had the privilege of assisting him during surgery then. I had heard a lot about him before his arrival from my colleagues who had known him from their Manipal days. I was expecting to meet a very strict person.

My apprehensions melted away soon when he actually started surgeries in OT D of our theatre complex. He was a stickler for time and started every case on the dot. He performed many procedures, both endoscopic and open surgical very well. His age never came in the way. He was a tireless teacher and constantly taught us how to better ourselves every time. He was very touchy about the endoscopes and would personally take care of these. When it came to instruments, it appeared that he took more care of these than his own children. He always had something new to tell and I always wondered how he updated his knowledge. His enthusiasm was infectious and all of us took an instant liking for him. He soon became a father figure to us.

I wish to narrate an incident which makes me laugh even today whenever I think of it. He once did cystoscopy and diagnosed a bladder stone. He asked for pneumothoclast and started the banging. After some time, he was exhausted. "This is a very soft stone and that is the reason why it is not fragmenting" he said. As he lifted his head up, he found that the patient had a Suprapubic catheter. He was hitting the balloon all the while. He burst into laughter and told us that breaking a balloon is not all that easy!

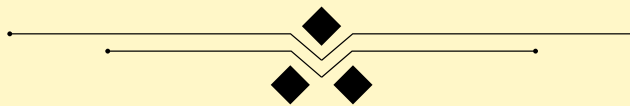
His commitment to teaching amazed me always. He had a large body of students and in a small way I too belonged to it.

Sr Annamma Mariamma, Bsc (Nursing)
IN Charge UROLOGY-OPERATION THEATRE
KMC Hospital, Mangalore



PEARLS

A day has 48 hours, out of which 24 hours are meant for working.



Unrealistic aping of the west while treating our patients is the surest way of providing disservice to them.



HOMAGE TO MY INCREDIBLE MENTOR

In the realm of medicine, a mentor is rare,
Dr. Venugopal, a name beyond compare,
With wisdom vast and heart so kind,
Guiding souls, aspiring minds.

Homage to you, dear mentor Bold,
Carving us into urologists, we behold,
Your commitment, a beacon bright,
In the darkest hours, a guiding light.

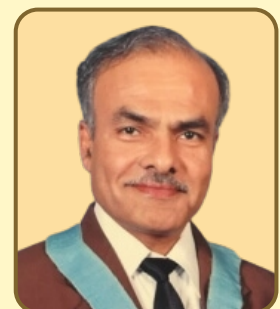
Your training, strict yet ever true,
Disguised to nurture, help us grow,
In the crucible of skills, we did find,
The strength to heal, the art refined.

Dedicated, you lived, to pass the flame,
Imparting urology's essence, a noble aim,
To any soul who sought your aid,
In your footsteps, we gladly stayed.

Roaring voice, in congregations heard,
Of urology's glory, you fervently stirred,
Adored, and cherished, your words inspire,
In our hearts, they'll never tire.

In this ode, our gratitude we pour,
For your guidance, we'll forever adore,
Dr. Venugopal, our mentor dear,
Your legacy, in us, will persevere.

- Dr Kamalakar Achrekar



HIS TOUCH ON MY LIFE

The day Professor P. Venugopal passed away, a profound sense of loss enveloped me, as if a piece of my heart had been taken. The realization that he was no longer with us created an irreplaceable void.

Throughout my career in pediatric urology, Professor Venugopal was an integral part of my journey. He was a trailblazer in the field of Pediatric Urology in India, and his contributions will be remembered for years to come. As a selfless and inspirational teacher, his enthusiasm for learning, even in his twilight years, was infectious and humbling for those of us actively practicing.

It is said that we encounter individuals in our lives who leave an indelible mark, altering the course of our path. Late Professor Venugopal was that person for me.

I first encountered him on a web platform called Uroeducation in 2009, and later had the privilege of meeting him in person at Agra during USICON in 2010. He inspired me to pursue paediatric urology as a subspecialty, emphasizing the importance of fully trained urologists with comprehensive knowledge and skills in this field.

He supported me unconditionally, requesting that I share my cases and treatment methodologies with him and others. This arrangement proved invaluable as I was practicing in a peripheral centre with limited access to tertiary care. His constant encouragement instilled confidence in my abilities and reinforced the belief that success is achieved through hard work and dedication.

I would share my clinical cases with him, and he would provide the latest literature to assist in managing these cases effectively.

Professor Venugopal often emphasized that we can see farther by standing on the shoulders of giants.

A legendary teacher, an academic catalyst for many, a tireless mentor, and a pioneer of web education in Urology even before the era of Covid, his absence will be deeply felt.

In the past, when face-to-face webinars were not as prevalent, Professor Venugopal's presence was evident through his posts in PVG Yahoo groups or Uroeducation. These e-platforms boasted more than 2000 members actively participating.

He encouraged me to read and think critically every day, to apply that knowledge in practice, and even contributed to textbook chapters.

I can never fully repay the debt I owe him.

With the passing of Professor P. Venugopal, we have lost yet another giant in the field of Pediatric Urology in India, the other being Late Dr Shyam Joshi.

Professor Venugopal's teachings will continue to influence those who were fortunate enough to be touched by him, inspiring us to strive for excellence in patient care. Our memories of the time spent with him will forever remain cherished.

To me, he was akin to a divine presence.

As I conclude, I am reminded of the words of Sant Kabir:

"Guru Govind Dono Khade, Kisko lagu paay, Balihari Guru apaki, Govind diyo batay."

Translation:

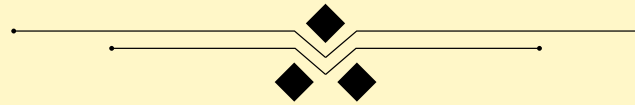
Both the Guru and the Divine are present before me, Whom should I bow down to?

I offer my gratitude to the Guru, For showing me the path to the Divine.

Dr Anil Takvani DNB(Urology)
Consultant Pediatric Urologist
Junagadh (Gujarat)



The kink is always in the clinician's mind, never in the ureter.



Our enthusiasm for scientific communication begins and ends in our conferences. Seldom does our work become a lasting document.



MY MEMORIES OF PROF P VENUGOPAL

The moment I think of him I remember the way he used to greet me. He used to greet me lovingly as Periamana House referring to my email address which he used to say was quite different from the run of the mill addresses. My association with Prof PVG dates back to my training days in Calicut in the early nineties when we used to visit Manipal for various teaching sessions and conferences. During those days frequent visits and academic exchanges were the order. UAK conference at Manipal comes to my memory. I had to rush back at the end of the event to Karunagapalli since my wife's grandmother passed away. The complete control with which Prof PVG used to run academics along with Prof Roy Chally and Prof K Sasidharan was not only impressive but impeccably instructive!

Another memory was when he came to Government Medical College Calicut to take teaching sessions on the invitation of Professor VN Bhat. His characteristic style of smoking incessantly and taking cups of coffee over long sessions make him stand apart. His special way of calling Vasu still remains in the ears. Once when we were late in reaching the teaching room since our ongoing transplantation case got prolonged we had a lot of explaining to do to pacify an agitated PVG sir. The passion for teaching made him special.

The passion he demonstrated for online teaching later in life is a lesson for all of us by his embracing of new technology so late in life.

My memories of talking to him at the Kochi USICON 2020 venue during evening functions over a variety of topics are evergreen. He was truly a person concerned with interpersonal relationships.

A teacher of such qualities is rare, and I pray for the eternal peace of his soul.

Dr S Vasudevan
Professor and HOD Urology
Government Medical College Kottayam



A PERFECT TEACHER

Prof P Venugopal was a perfect teacher I ever found in my life. I had joined him in Manipal after my MCh and it is here I honed my skills needed for a professional.

As a teacher, he was profound in knowledge and tireless in efforts. He never looked at the clock when he taught and was at home in any space. All that he craved was students and he had the time!

In Urological matters, he was the final opinion to me and provided the perfect solution to all problematic cases I had put before him.

He was a task master and could be harshest among the harsh when things were not in order. But was softest among the soft outside working hours. These, it appeared would never come with his extremely busy schedule those days.

Professionally, he was my God father. He taught me the craft and science of Urology which has stood me in good stead all my life.

I wish he is reborn as a Urologist to set the same standards in the profession in all of us.

I will miss him perpetually.

Dr Prakash Kashinath Prabhu
Mysuru



THOUGHTS

***Make every patient your friend.
You will never go wrong.***



***The term megaureter is confounding.
Large ureter describes the
morphology better.***



PROF. P VENUGOPAL - A DYNAMIC INSPIRATION IN UROLOGY

Embracing Urology with Unwavering Dedication

After completing my medical graduation at Medical College Kottayam and junior residency at JIPMER, followed by a brief period of community practice in Kerala as a general practitioner and general surgeon, I was granted the rare opportunity to pursue the coveted M Ch course in Urology at KMC Manipal. It was the year 1985, and I found myself as a super PG in this renowned institution.

At that time, I was married with two young children, and our humble abode was located in quarters F7/4, a little distance away from the main institution at what was known as the end point of KMC Campus. I didn't own a vehicle, so I had to walk to the department every day. Little did I know what awaited me.

Soon enough, the honeymoon period ended, and the reality set in. Our professor was an imposing figure, akin to a ferocious lion. There was no room for even the slightest mistakes. Any error was considered unpardonable, and the consequences were severe, often resulting in being barred from the department for a whole week. Realizing the gravity of the situation, I had to purchase a Lamby scooter to ensure I could continue the course.

Our boss, Prof. Venugopal, taught us the basics from the ground up. We learned how to escort patients to radiology, labs, and other departments for referrals. We were shown how to start IV lines, how to safely shift patients on a trolley, and even how to manoeuvre the patient trolley alone to the operating theatre. We were taught the art of safe catheterizations, how to interpret the sequence of films in IVU, and how to position patients for various procedures. Above all, we were trained to immerse ourselves in urological thoughts throughout the day, leaving little room for family, children, or even parents (thankfully, there were no mobile phones, WhatsApp, or YouTube distractions back then). In those three years, I barely visited my parents in Ernakulam three times. We were practically living in exile.

Each day started with around 15 cases of IVU, alongside discussions on RGPs, RGUs, MCUs, and more, commencing at 7:30 am and lasting until 11 am. Following that, there were rounds, surgeries, post-operative rounds, discharges, seminars, and so forth. It was an all-encompassing immersion into the world of urology, connecting us with gurus and experts from India and around the globe.

Our boss had a well-defined hierarchy within the department. He made the medical decisions, which were then conveyed to his commanders, Dr Mohan Suvarna and Dr Achrekar. They, in turn, executed the orders through senior PGs who shared the responsibilities with second and first-year PGs. It was a tightly knit family within the field of urology.

During my time, we had remarkable individuals in the department. Dr Basil Elias had recently left, and Dr. Ramesh Laxman Juvekar was preparing for his final exams. Then there were Dr. AN Thomas, Dr. SK Pal (the present international PCNL wizard), Dr. HK Nagaraj, and myself, followed by Dr. VS Sreenivas, Dr. Mohan Raju, and Dr Sreekumar Ramachandran. The list went on, with each one leaving their mark on the department.

In due course, Dr. MS Rao joined as the second unit head in Urology, and he was as gentle as a lamb.

Although Prof. Venugopal appeared formidable, he had a way of bringing his PGs together under his kind yet assertive control. He taught us the art of forfeiting lunch and replacing it with snacks (a practice I still follow), sacrificing sleep as we were on call most days with no exceptions for junior or senior doctors. Our boss even had a knack for spying on us, ensuring our presence in the ward, theatre, and library. He would monitor whether we were going out or "loitering with family" in Udipi town. Watching the movie "Ghoomer" and the role of Abhishek Bachan in it reminded me of our boss.

Aside from the clinical aspects, Prof. Venugopal instilled in us the importance of organizing the department and effectively managing subordinates. Despite his strict demeanour, he had many humane qualities. We would gather for regular monthly dinners at hotels, which were free for all sessions. Even though we were "on our toes" for three years, our chief always took extra care during the final exams, ensuring our success.

Those three years spent with our beloved boss were incredibly inspiring and encouraging. We all matured and

became knowledgeable experts in practical urology and decision-making. Throughout each day, we often think back to this dynamic soul and how he supported us in conferences. We were privileged attendees as "Venu's PGs," enjoying a unique status.

Sadly, the fire and spark that once illuminated our journey seem to have dissipated over time. However, the indomitable spirit of our guru will forever remain with us as long as we possess our senses, as he has imprinted his style of urology as our way of life. Our beloved boss will always be a spiritual presence, a dynamic inspiration that continues to guide us.

I offer my prayers and deepest respect to the great soul, Prof. PVG. He deserves all the credit for shaping me and my family into who we are today.

With utmost reverence,

Gopinatha Menon
Consultant Urologist
Head of the Department of Urology
AHALIA Hospital
Mussafah, Abudhabi, UAE

AN UNFORGETTABLE ENCOUNTER DURING MY DNB EXAMINATION

Professor P. Venugopal, a legendary figure in the field of Urology, commanded immense respect and admiration for his contributions spanning over six decades. As urology residents from Mumbai, we had limited opportunities to learn from him, usually limited to meetings and conferences. His magnetic personality always attracted a crowd of students and admirers.

However, a remarkable and unforgettable experience unfolded during my DNB examination in Varanasi, back in 1989. Professor Venugopal, an examiner, became the driving force behind a complete transformation of the examination process. The exam took on an entirely new form, incorporating spotters, specimens, microscopic slides, and more. It turned out to be the most challenging and fulfilling examination of my career, with Professor Venugopal sitting on the other side of the table. His vast knowledge and expertise were unmatched, yet he displayed remarkable compassion and kindness throughout the entire process. Those two days witnessing his dedication and expertise remain etched in my memory forever. I consider myself fortunate that this encounter stopped short of being the next kind*.

Professor Venugopal's approach was characterized by openness, candidness, and practicality. Having shaped the lives and careers of countless individuals, his legacy will forever live on in the hearts of all those fortunate enough to have been touched by his wisdom and guidance.

The encounter with Professor P. Venugopal during my DNB examination was a truly extraordinary experience that left an indelible mark on my life. His towering presence, knowledge, compassion, and kindness made it a once-in-a-lifetime memory. I am forever grateful for the opportunity to have interacted with such a revered figure in the field of Urology.

Dr. Atul M. Shah
Consulting Urologist & Andrologist
Neelgiri Hospital, Malad, Mumbai



*Editor's comments:

Please note that the author considers himself fortunate to have had an encounter of the third kind, as opposed to the subsequent kind described in UFO terminology.

IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE OF A TEACHER, WHO MADE A DIFFERENCE

In the quiet halls of education, a profound emptiness now remains as we write this message for Professor PVG, also known as Guruji.

Immediately after completing my MS (Surgery), I had the good fortune to join the Department of Urology at KMC, Manipal in March 1989, where I encountered my first Urological Guru, Professor Venugopal. During the six months I spent there, he was the center of our attention. He had high expectations and pushed us hard, but he also had a deep fondness for his students and always went the extra mile for them. One example was the weekly class on Sundays, where after the demanding session, he would take us all to Valley View for refreshments.

He was a kind-hearted person, and it was he who suggested that I leave due to certain issues. In March 1996, I had the pleasure of hosting him in Meerut, where he performed a Nd YAG laser prostatectomy during the North Zone mid-term workshop.

Throughout the past three decades, he always treated me as one of his own, and his trademark smile would light up his face the moment he saw me. As we bid farewell, we reflect on the lasting impression left by a devoted teacher whose influence will endure forever.

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti

Dr. Anil Elhence
Meerut



801, SYMPHONY APARTMENT, STURROCK ROAD, MANGALORE: APOLOGY TO APPRECIATIONS...

In 2005, after completion of M.Ch from Grant Medical College, I was trying to find my place in Mangalore and was accommodated at K.S. Hegde Medical Academy (KSHEMA). As my training was from West zone of USI, my knowledge about the doyens of urology in the South was very limited. I was told that Prof. P Venugopal (PVG) was staying at Symphony Apartment, Mangalore and was travelling to Goa for consultations. Hence I had not met him nor had any interactions at that time.

Mangalore then had only a handful of practicing urologists and Mangalore Urology Forum (MUF) was in its nascent phase. Dr. Ranjith Shetty handed over the baton of secretary-ship of MUF to me in those years and I was quite keen to arrange monthly meetings for some informal interactions and interesting case discussions. I used to fix the meeting primarily at my convenient date and call all the members 2-3 days prior to the event. Most of the time when I called PVG sir, he would be out of station and hence unable to attend those meetings. This became a routine, MUF meetings without PVG and a newcomer like me fixing it regularly ignoring his absence. This hurt PVG's ego, but back then I did not realize the gravity of the issue.

I got a phone call from Dr. GG Laxman Prabhu, sir's close disciple, informing that Dr. PVG wanted to meet me at Symphony Apartment. So, I visited his apartment one evening to give my explanation and tender my apology. This was going to be my first meeting with PVG; I was frightful when I pressed the doorbell, as I had heard a lot about his temperament and outspoken nature. Sir welcomed me to his room, and I saw him for the first time, a fatherly figure, shirtless clad in a white dhoti; there were papers and journals lying on a computer table with an active desktop monitor featuring his late wife, Nalini madam's picture, and a small door from that room opening to the balcony. He greeted me in Malayalam and in the conversation that ensued, I came to know a lot about PVG sir's personality and an attachment appeared to adhere from that moment onwards. He would move out to the balcony for a smoke and I would accompany him for the continuation of conversations. Though I went there to give my apologies, I realized that it was a mistake from my side that I was ignorant about PVG sir and his dedication to the subject of Urology. Hence I felt it was a God given opportunity to meet him in that way.

That relationship grew further; I have been to that room on innumerable occasions: for inaugural invitations, for departmental activities, or to get an opinion on my write-ups. MUF meetings used to happen only with PVG sir, and KSHEMA Urology up-gradations and CMEs would happen only with his blessings. As the MCI inspection for initiating our PG program had shown deficiencies, I had requested PVG sir to perform a mock inspection of our department. Sir advised me to highlight our extensive KSHEMA-IVF Lab, which was a rare feature in teaching hospitals and also asked me to focus on high-end Andrology work.

As our department had organized the 31st Annual Conference of Urological Association of Kerala at the picturesque remote destination in Bekal, Venu sir actively participated for the entire two days and was a pillar of support for me. I had the opportunity to travel with him to attend a urology conference in Trichur, sitting side by side, in the chair-car compartment of Parasuram Express, where I heard the life story of the legend in his own words – his cross-roads in urology, his memes like 'grow and grey in the same institution' regarding career development, his experience with an enormous number of in-patients in his urology unit in Manipal (nearly 280 patients) on a day, having all the latest of equipments in his custody, the difficulties encountered for its shipment from Germany, and being a key person for setting up the M.Ch programs in different medical colleges.

I had given him to proof read my article “Guidelines in clinical practice: Dictum or damn!” and he appreciated me on the middle path I had taken at its conclusion. My visits to 801, Symphony Apartment were very fruitful and sir even used to mail me lot of articles related to my wife's Ph.D. topic on Bisphosphonate related osteonecrosis of Jaw.

From my first frightful steps to enter the Symphony Apartment, time has changed and over the decade, PVG sir infused confidence in me to take the leap into the greens of Urology. His towering presence in the field of Urology, the guidance eluding conversations and the lessons learned from the acquaintance will be cherished for years to come.

A big salute to you, Sir...

Dr T P Rajeev
Mangalore

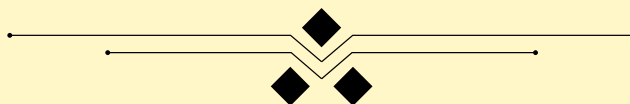


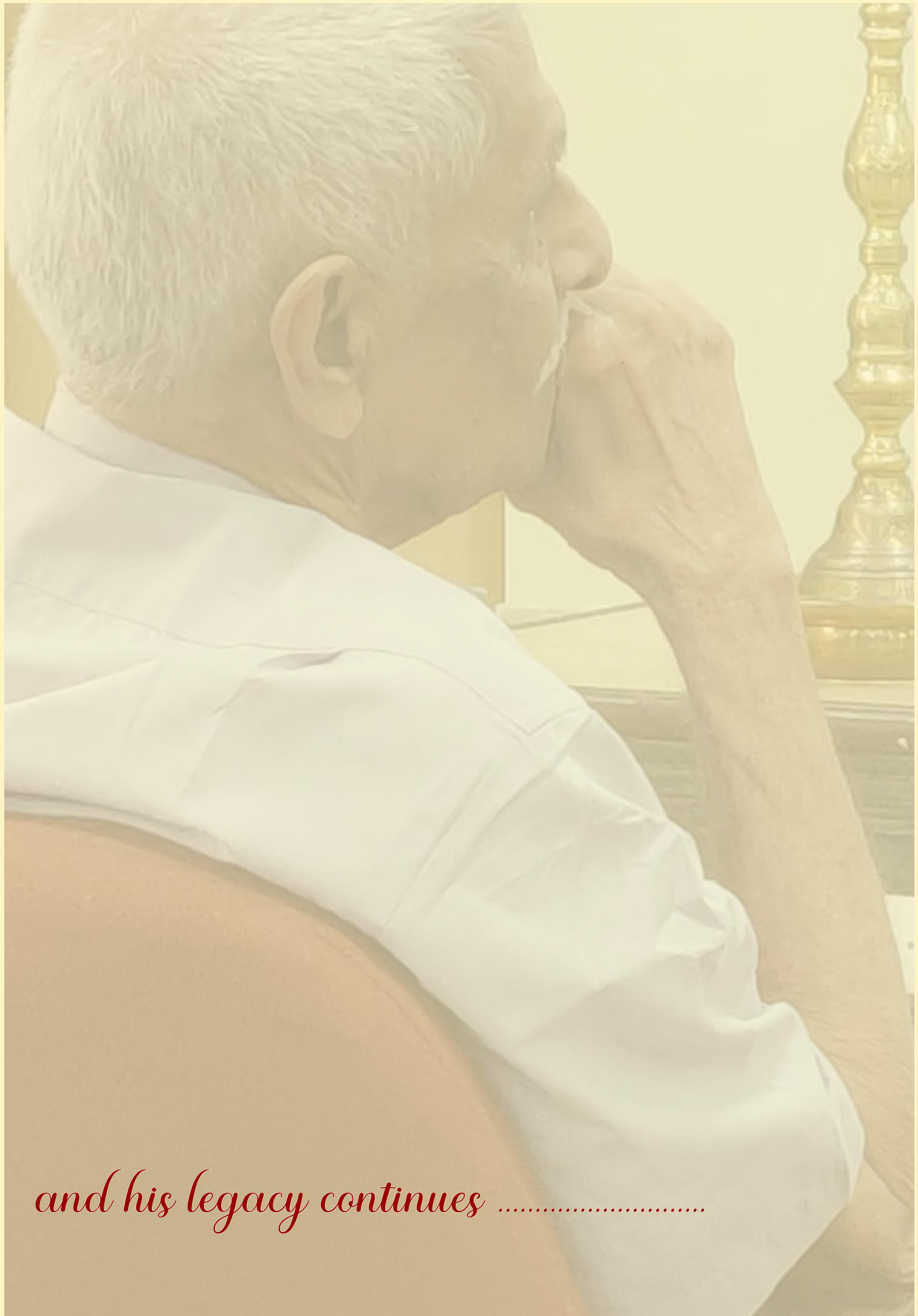
***Don't offer guidelines to patients.
Learn to find answers to the patient's
problems.***



***We have a wealth of clinical
material. But when it comes to
health issues we surrender to
foreign diktats.***

***We are true Indians who are not
supposed to publish but keep things
to ourselves.***





and his legacy continues