

Prof. N.V. Chalapathi Rao – Appointed as Director of the National Centre for Earth Science Studies

V.N. Vasudev

Geological Society of India, Bengaluru - 560 085, India

E-mail: vasu.sacredtrust@gmail.com

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Prof. N.V.Chalapathi Rao was appointed as the Director of the National Centre for Earth Science Studies (NCESS) in January 2024. His dedication to Earth Sciences and unwavering commitment to excellence in teaching, high quality research and guidance to Research Scholars have propelled him to this highly coveted position as Director of a prestigious National Institute.



At this juncture, I deem it appropriate to recall Dr.Chalapathi Rao's professional profile because it would interest and inspire budding scientists, research scholars and his colleagues. Dr.Rao began his career as a Scientific Officer at the Ore-Dressing Division of the Indian Bureau of Mines, Nagpur, where he served almost for a decade (1998-2007). After gaining experience in ore mineralogy, Dr.Rao opted for a career in teaching and research at the Department of Geology, Banaras Hindu University (BHU), Varanasi. He started as a Reader, became an Associate Professor in 2010 and a Professor in 2013 and continued till he joined NCESS as Director, in January this year, on deputation from BHU.

Prof. Chalapathi Rao's research contributions are focussed on the petrogenesis of Indian kimberlites, lamproites, lamprophyres and their entrained xenoliths including diamond. He utilised this knowledge in unravelling the large-scale geodynamic processes of the Indian shield including the composition and evolution of its sub-continental lithospheric mantle, supercontinent cycles, origin and original spatial extent of the Mesozoic LIPs (viz., Deccan Flood basalts, Rajmahal

basalts) and the Proterozoic Sedimentary Basins. He has published over 120 research papers in SCI-Journals and has also authored two books besides editing 3 volumes on topics dealing in Earth Sciences. Prof Rao's deep involvement in Mantle Petrology made him set up a *state-of-the art* EPMA and SEM Labs at the BHU.

Concurrently with teaching and research, Dr.Chalapathi Rao has served as Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Earth System Science (Indian Academy of Sciences) and Member of Editorial Boards of a number of important journals dealing in Earth Sciences including the Journal of the Geological Society of India. He has also served as an Adjunct Professor at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bhubaneswar.

Prof. Chalapathi Rao is a globally well-recognized Earth scientist. He has received many accolades and honours including the National Mineral Award; Prof C.N.R. Rao award for outstanding research by BHU and National Award of Excellence in Geoscience & Technology by the Ministry of Earth Sciences, GoI. The Geological Society of India has honoured him with Prof. K. Naha Award in 2008 and Bellur Rama Rao Birth Centenary Award in 2019. In 2013, Dr. Rao delivered Prof. T.N. Muthuswamy endowment Lecture for the Geological Society of India.

Soon after taking over as Director, Dr. Chalapathi Rao conveyed to his friends and colleagues his VISION of developing the National Centre for Earth Science Studies in the following words; "*I humbly solicit your continued support, advice and encouragement to enable the institute to scale newer heights in terms of scientific excellence, visibility and mentoring the young earth scientists of our country in the domain of solid earth research.*" I have no doubt that his vision, strategic thinking, and his ability to provide transformative leadership will help the Institute to progress and reach greater heights. Dr. Chalapathi Rao's ability to navigate challenges and foster collaboration will undoubtedly make this Institution globally visible.

On behalf of the Council of the Geological Society of India, I once again, congratulate Dr. Chalapathi Rao on this well-deserved new position and wish him all success.