



K. Chandrasekharan

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Komaravolu Chandrasekharan was born on 21 November 1920 in Machilipatnam in modern-day Andhra Pradesh. He attended District Board School in Guntur District, Andhra Pradesh, and then High School at Bapatla, also in Guntur. He then obtained his M.A. in Mathematics from the Presidency College, Chennai and was a Research Scholar in the Department of Mathematics of the University of Madras during 1940-1943. During 1943-46 he was a part-time Lecturer at Presidency College and obtained his Ph.D. during this time under Ananda Rau, who was with Ramanujan in Cambridge. Chandrasekharan then went to the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, U.S.A.

In 1949, while he was in Princeton, he was invited by Homi Bhabha to join the School of Mathematics of the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research. An extraordinarily gifted organiser and administrator of science, he transformed the fledgling School of Mathematics of TIFR into a centre of excellence respected the world over. He initiated a very successful programme of recruitment and training of Research Scholars at TIFR. The programme continues to this day along the same lines that he set down. He put to excellent use his contacts with the leading mathematicians of the world, persuading many of them (like L. Schwartz, a Fields medalist, and C.L. Siegel) to visit TIFR and deliver courses of lectures over periods of two months and more. The lecture notes prepared out of these lectures and published by TIFR enjoy a great reputation in the world mathematics community to this day.

During 1955-61, he was a member of the Executive Committee of the International Mathematical Union (IMU). He served as the Secretary of IMU during 1961-66 and as President during 1971-74. His initiatives over a long period of 24 years on this Committee were numerous and valued greatly. He served as the Vice President of the International Council of Scientific Unions during 1963-66 and as its Secretary General during 1966-70. He was a member of the Scientific Advisory Committee to the Cabinet, Government of India during 1961-66. He was awarded the Padma Shri in 1959, Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Award in 1963 and the Ramanujan Medal in 1966.

He was responsible for the IMU sponsoring the International Mathematical Colloquium held every 4 years at the Tata Institute starting 1956. In 1957 on his initiative, TIFR published the *Notebooks of Srinivasa Ramanujan*.

In the fifties, Chandrasekharan held the editorship of the Journal of the Indian Mathematical Society. Thanks to his abilities at persuading some of the great names in the field to publish there, several great papers appeared in the journal during this period.

In 1965 he left TIFR and moved to Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule, Zurich.

He worked in the fields of number theory and summability. His mathematical achievements are first rate, but his contribution to Indian mathematics has been even greater.