

Dr. Meera Villavarayar an Eminent Educationist

It is with profound grief, I write this note on Meera Villavarayar who passed away recently after brief illness. My association with Meera was almost two decades ever since she joined the Department of Aesthetic studies, National Institute of Education, Maharagama as a Project officer in Carnatic Music.

I was attached to the Teacher Education Unit of the same Institute and as colleagues was worked together on several projects related to developing the curriculum, syllabus, Teachers' Instructional manuals in Carnatic Music in the Secondary and post secondary levels. She had a good team of writers for this purpose and the Teachers' Instructional Materials that were produced were of a very high standard and are still being used by teachers of music. Further, the seminars and workshops she conducted for Teachers and In-service Advisors of Carnatic Music were very useful and effective because she had the ability to properly plan and implement any project that came under her purview.

As an eminent Academic, Meera not only contributed to the learning and teaching process of Carnatic Music in secondary classes, she also had been helping the department of Examinations for several years as the Controlling Chief Examiner in Carnatic Music for GCE O/L and A/L Examinations. In recognition of her leadership and guidance, Meera was promoted as the Chief Project Officer and she continued to serve in this capacity till she prematurely retired a couple of years ago for personal reasons.

Meera's insatiable appetite to learn more is amply demonstrated by the post graduate degrees she obtained from leading Universities in Tamil Nadu finally ending up with the PhD in Carnatic Music. Special mention should be made of her scholarly contributions to the field of research in Carnatic Music. Meera had published several books on Carnatic and Hindustani Music which are acclaimed as very informative and valuable by leading educationists. She had authored these books with complete authority and helped to disseminate knowledge among others. She had also written several articles related to her subject which had appeared in several prominent journals. Besides this, Meera had rendered valuable services as part time lecturer in Carnatic Music at Sri Palee Campus, Horana affiliated to the University of Colombo and also at the University of Kelaniya. She also performed as an Evaluator of PhD and MPhil Dissertation from universities in Tamil Nadu. In recognition of the distinguished services rendered to Art and culture, she was appointed All Island Justice of Peace.

Meera being a frank and straight forward person was never afraid to call a spade a spade and was prepared to face the consequences. At the same time, she possessed a sense of humor. Her witty remarks with a peculiar smile and interesting jokes will always be remembered by all those who closely associated with her. She was very close to my family after she took up residence at Soysa pura.

Meera was just 53 years old when she departed us forever. But she was able to achieve many things during this short span. Her departure is an irreparable loss to her kith and kin and all of us.

May Meera attain the Supreme and eternal Bliss-Moksha

CT Rajendram
Retired Senior Lecturer
Open University of Sri Lanka, Colombo