

PREFACE

This volume of Kavaka is dedicated to the fond memory of Late Professor B.P.R.Vittal, founder member of Mycological Society of India. His immense efforts and contributions in the field of mycology has played a pivotal role in the growth of Mycological Society of India in general and Kavaka in particular. As a part of the preface to this volume of Kavaka, a brief account of his life sketch and recognitions he received during his professional life has been highlighted so as to acquaint the mycological fraternity about the contributions of this great Indian Mycologist whose career flourished under the stewardship of none other than great Late Professor C.V.Subramanian. Coming from a humble background and belonging to Ranipadu village, Cumbum Mandal, Prakasam district, Andhra Pradesh, Late Prof.B.P.R. Vittal had his schooling from Narasaraopet, Prakasam district, Andhra Pradesh. He obtained a Masters degree in Botany from Andhra University, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh in 1964 and Ph.D. from CAS in Botany, University of Madras under Late Prof. C.V. Subramanian, the doyen of Indian Mycology on taxonomy and ecology of leaf litter fungi. After his appointment as a faculty member at CAS in Botany, University of Madras in 1976, Prof. B.P.R. Vittal established a research niche on aerobiological studies at this centre, while still pursuing diversity studies on litter degrading fungi. Prof. Vittal supervised the research work of 26 M.Phil. students and 11 Ph.D. students. He has over 80 publications in national and international journals and Proceedings of Symposia. He successfully handled 10 major research projects in the fields of Mycology and Aerobiology with funding from UGC, CSIR, DBT and MOEF.

In the course of his investigations on diversity of leaf litter fungi Prof. B.P.R.Vittal was involved in the description of new genus *Civisubramaniania eucaliptii*, and number of new species such as *Cercosperma longispora*, *Dactylaria eucalypti*, *Minimidochium indicum*, *Kellermania intermedia* and *Stachybotrys ramosa* collected on *Eucalyptus* litter and *Lophiostoma mangrovei* (now *Rimora mangrovei*). In addition to taxonomic studies he also worked on the various aspects of litter fungi, marine fungi in mangroves from east coast of India including Pichavaram in Tamil Nadu and Godavari and Krishna delta mangroves in Andhra Pradesh. Prof. B.P.R. Vittal also established a special niche for himself by initiating Aerobiological studies for the first time in 1976 at the Centre for Advanced studies in Botany, University of Madras. In recognition of his expertise and contribution to aerobiology Prof. Vittal was awarded a project by MOEF, New Delhi, as one of the coordinating centers of aerobiological research in India.

Prof Vittal served different societies in various capacities including the President of Indian Aerobiological Society (1994-1997), Treasurer, Secretary and President of Mycological Society of India (1994-2004). He was also a



**Prof. B.P.R. Vittal
(1944-2018)**

member of International Aerobiological Society. Prof. Vittal was conferred with several Fellowships, Awards and Honours which included Fellowship of Indian Aerobiological Society; Fellowship of Madras Science Foundation; Lifetime Achievement Award of Indian Aerobiological Society and Lifetime Achievement Award of Mycological Society of India.

His sudden demise in 2018 is an irreparable loss to Indian Mycological fraternity. We in MSI and editorial team of Kavaka felt it not only appropriate but also most befitting and apt that a commemorative volume of Kavaka is released in memory of Late Prof. B.P.R. Vittal as a tribute in recognition of his achievements and contributions to Indian Mycology.

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