

## **9. Heartfelt Homage to Dr. N. Prabhakara Rao, Ex-HOD, Professor, Dept. of Mathematics, BEC**



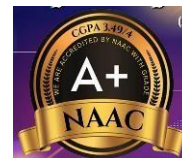
Dr. Nagalla Prabhakara Rao was born on November 21, 1954, in Amrutaluru village near Tenali. He completed his early education at Z.P. High School in Amrutaluru, followed by his P.U.C. and B.Sc. in Mathematics at V.S.R. College, Tenali. He was among the top rankers in studies right from his school days and won several prizes. His passion for mathematics led him to pursue M.Sc. from the P.G. Center in Nallapadu, now Acharya Nagarjuna University, before earning a Ph.D. in 1977 from Andhra University under the esteemed guidance of Prof. K.L.N. Swamy, whom Dr. Rao revered as a profound mentor, instrumental in shaping his academic journey.

His expertise in Group Theory, Graph Theory and Autometrized Algebra led to the publication of 14 research papers in prestigious international journals, along with 10 papers in national journals. His groundbreaking work in these areas attracted the attention of Prof. Kiyoshi Iseki of Kobe University, Japan, resulting in an invitation to collaborate and contribute to the esteemed *Mathematica Japonica* Journal.

The extensions Dr. Nagalla Prabhakara Rao proposed to the theorems by Griss in Group Theory were so significant that the then Editor of the *Mathematica Japonica* Journal suggested that from then onwards, the Algebra must be known as Griss - Rao Algebra.

In 1977, he began his teaching career at Siddhartha Engineering College as a Lecturer in the Mathematics department. Encouraged by Prof. S.R. Parimi, he explored programming on the HCL mini-computer, igniting a lifelong passion for coding and software development alongside his teaching of mathematics.

In 1983, he joined Bapatla Engineering College, where he spent over three and a half decades, contributing not only as a dedicated teacher but also in various administrative roles. He served as Professor and HoD of Mathematics, Examinations Officer, Founder Director of the Computer Center, Founder HoD of Computer Science



and Engineering, and Founder In-charge of Bapatla Junior College.

He was instrumental in starting the B. Sc (Computer Science) course at Bapatla Arts College. A student of that first batch was from Telugu medium all along up to then. But his performance in the oral interview on explaining a topic in programming in Pascal language (taught by Dr.NPR) was so impressive that he was one of the 7 selected in the all-India interview to work on the super computer at IISc, Bangalore. There were hundreds of applicants, some of them from IITs. I was told that the doyen of computer education in India, Prof. Rajaraman (of IIT Kanpur and later IISc, Bangalore) himself was the head of the interview committee.

He is a passionate teacher of Mathematics and Computer Science. His students continue to fondly remember and share memories of his exceptional teaching, mentorship, and guidance, a testament to the lasting impact he had on their lives and careers. His first-generation non- computer science students, particularly those settled in the USA, warmly credit their coding skills and career success to his transformative teaching of programming.

One of his many notable accomplishments was establishing and managing the M.Sc. (Mathematics) program at Bapatla Engineering College, which produced university gold medalists for a decade. Later in his career, his passion for research was rekindled, and he played a key role in establishing University-recognized Research Center at the college. Under his supervision, 12 scholars were awarded M.Phil degrees, and 3 earned Ph.D. degrees, setting his legacy as an influential researcher.

He has established various ideal procedures in Mathematics department to benefit and encourage the students. Even today all faculty in the department are following in his footprints as these procedures became the landmark in the department for the newly joined faculty members. His unwavering and tireless efforts made the department as one of the departments of the college with proven academic excellence.

He held great respect and gratitude for Sri Muppalaneni Seshagiri Rao, Former President of Bapatla Education Society, Sri Manam Nageswara Rao Rao, Secretary of Bapatla Education Society, Executive Committee members and Governing Body members for their support and encouragement. His unwavering dedication to education and administration left an indelible mark on Bapatla Engineering College.

Dr. Nagalla Prabhakara Rao passed away on December 30, 2023, leaving behind a remarkable legacy of academic excellence, mentorship, and service.

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*“Dept. of Maths promotes computational nature; Computational nature enriches the students’ future”*