

J V Raman

Newsman Artiste Teacher



Memorial meeting in Janpath



J V Raman

J V Raman, one of Doordarshan's first newsreaders, passed away last week . At a memorial meeting, a full hall of friends and colleagues paid rich tributes

In the early 1970s, newsreaders had as many followers as their counterparts now. Perhaps more, as the uncluttered newsscreens — without the persistent ticker — had more space for news anchors. Unlike the cacophony of today, JV Raman was “one of the sober voices in the news industry”, as former Doordarshan newsreader and colleague Rini Simon Khanna puts it. Raman died of kidney failure on August 7 2014 at Sant Parmanand Hospital in Civil Lines, Delhi. He was 68. At the Freemasons Hall, Janpath it was time for his colleagues to remember him at a prayer meeting on August 19. Among those who attended were his family members, friends and colleagues from DD as well as Rajdhani College and Delhi University, where he taught Economics for over 44 years. Raman started his TV career after a friend advised him to go for an audition that fetched him a place in DD as an English newsreader. Soon, he switched to Hindi news reading, and continued the freelance assignment until the late 90s.

His impeccable diction never betrayed the fact that he was from Andhra Pradesh. “Perhaps, the modulation of syllables was so perfect because he knew a south Indian language,” says Khanna. Shammi Narang, who read news with him for about 20 years or so, remembers Raman as a guide and mentor. “When I read my first bulletin in 1982, he said, ‘Narang, you should be thankful that you are associated with Hindi. This is one language jisme jaisa likhte hain, vaisa hi bolte hain (you speak Hindi exactly the way you write it). Read the script properly and mark the punctuations and the places where you need to pause’,” says Narang.

A thorough professional, he would often work with his producers to improvise on the script and style. Sarla Maheshwari, a colleague and newsreader, who remembers watching Raman's bulletins as a child, found an understanding friend in him when she started working with DD. She recalls how Raman volunteered to fill up for her for one of her bulletins as Maheshwari was away for her father-in-law's operation. “And this was at a time, when our recordings happened at Pitampura and all of us found the distance a deterrent,” says Maheshwari. Ved Prakash, another news reader who still freelances with DD, was often told that he copied Raman's style. “He was my guru, so I followed him,” says Prakash, “An era of TV news has ended with his demise.” But newsreading was not Raman's only passion. He was involved with a theatre group Abhiyan until last year. “He was more involved in organisational matters than acting,” says Kamlesh Bajaj, his colleague at college and a founding member of **Abhiyan**. A bachelor, Raman lived in a joint family in Delhi. During his last days, his sister JV Lakshmi Kalyani was the prime caregiver. “He liked watching sports and loved the pace of the new genre of cricket,” says JV Deen Bandhu, one of his three younger brothers.

His brother JV Arun anchored the meeting .