



Dr. K.S. Rama Krishna: Impeccable Integrity, Simplicity and High System of Values

Dr. K.S. Rama Krishna became a civil engineer after performing well on a University-administered examination in India, where he was born. He explains that, in his country the competition is very high and everyone takes these types of tests with an eye to become a doctor or an engineer. Rama Krishna pursued the engineering path, attaining both an M.S. and a Ph.D.

He was born in a small village, called Badampudi, in the state of Andhra Pradesh, India, with about 5,000 inhabitants. He is among six brothers and five sisters, which suggests a competitive early environment.

He began his career working for Engineers India (EIL), a premier consultancy firm in hydrocarbon and nonferrous metallurgical industries, for 10 years in New Delhi. EIL was formed by the Government of India in collaboration with Bechtel International Corporation. At EIL, Rama Krishna worked on several specialized foundations for land, coastal and offshore projects. He was closely involved in establishing the feasibility of storage of hydrocarbons in underground rock caverns. He held senior management positions in companies in Singapore such as Soilcrete and Econ Piling, before moving back to India where he served as director of Econ India.

Rama Krishna's next step was to Larsen & Toubro (L&T) as head of foundation engineering. L&T is an Indian multinational firm headquartered in Mumbai. He worked at identifying new technologies and developing competency in design, planning

and execution of specialist foundation and geotechnical projects.

Rama Krishna's former boss at L&T, K.P. Raghavan, has high praise for his former employee. He notes that Rama Krishna took part in complex geotechnical projects being performed for the first time in India. "He was both innovative and practical in developing solutions, and was always keen to introduce the latest techniques and to using the most appropriate equipment and methods. This often required convincing the clients, consultants and project stakeholders."

Raghavan says that Rama Krishna felt that geotechnical engineering in India was seriously lagging behind what was practiced internationally. As far back as 2009, Raghavan recalls that Rama Krishna was seriously considering bringing institutions, such as DFI, to India to upgrade the practice in India and bring about a "major transformation."

DFI Inspiration

Rama Krishna became involved in DFI, attended conferences and workshops, and came to admire the organization, especially for its wealth of information. He thinks India needs more practicing geotechnical engineers and needs to teach the subject differently, through focusing more on managing construction. Some past DFI presidents, notably James Morrison and Rudolph Frizzi, as well as Theresa Engler, executive director of DFI, encouraged his interest and urged him to pursue his idea of setting up DFI of India. Rama Krishna believes that DFI presents the "right platform" to help with the process of improving the industry in India. In addition, he alludes to the "huge" task ahead, that of changing the culture of engineering education.

DFI of India was founded in 2013, following the success of the Conference on *Deep Foundation Technologies for Infrastructure Development in India*, held at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras, Chennai in 2012. Currently, there are three employees working from the DFI of India office in Chennai, a major city in the region.

There is an 18 member executive committee for DFI of India. There are also weekly conference calls that include Theresa Engler; Mary Ellen Large, P.E., D.GE, director of technical activities; Gianfranco Di Cicco, secretary of the DFI Board of Trustees; some of the executive committee members and staff of DFI of India. Rama Krishna heads DFI of India, and is a trustee of DFI and a geotechnical engineering consultant.

New Initiatives

Rama Krishna says the current role of DFI of India is to continuously help the deep foundations industry by implementing new technology initiatives and organizing training programs to enhance the skill levels of operators, engineers and others within the geotechnical industries.

One key initiative is the Implementation of Continuous Flight Auger/Augered Cast-in-Place (CFA/ACIP) Pile Technology in India, which includes a full-scale demonstration program. The initiative was funded through the DFI Committee Project Fund (CPF) and is supported by several companies in India. "Recently, we completed the soil investigation and site characterization, and are in the process of finalizing the pile design, installation, concrete mix design, and testing program to be able to proceed to installing and testing six CFA piles by February or March 2018," explains Rama Krishna. "After this demonstration project, we expect to develop guidance manuals for using CFA piles in India."

Another initiative being undertaken is drill rig operator training. DFI of India has formed a committee comprising representatives from equipment manufacturers, major contractors and other organizations within the industry. The objective is to develop and implement appropriate training programs to enhance skill levels of a target goal of 3,000 rig operators in India over time.

DFI's Presidents Award

In 2017, Rama Krishna was named one of four winners of the DFI President's Award. At the DFI 42nd Annual Conference on Deep Foundations in October, DFI President Dan Brown, Ph.D., P.E., D.GE, pointed to Rama Krishna's efforts in creating DFI of India, organizing annual conferences and quarterly workshops, introducing CFA technology to India, and creating a permanent DFI of India office.

Another of Rama Krishna's former bosses, Joseph K.C. Sin, Managing Director of Econ Piling in Singapore, spoke of his colleague's honesty and "straightforward behavior." He says Rama Krishna is "a gentleman and an academic, and very knowledgeable in geotechnical engineering." Sin says his former colleague exhibited significant management skills during the period in which he was senior manager in Econ's Singapore office.

Sin adds that Rama Krishna's "impeccable integrity, high values both personally and professionally, and his passion to contribute to the profession and society are all attributes worth emulating. He is a great human being with noble qualities. I am very fortunate to have known and to have worked closely with him, and am happy he has been honored by DFI."

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