



All India Primary Teachers' Federation

Sh. S. Eswaran: Voice of 2.3 million Teachers is Silent Now

Subramanian Eswaran, who for nearly 60 years led an illustrious career as a teacher, union activist and leader, died this morning at his home in Chennai, India.

The global education community is in mourning today after Mr. Eswaran, one of its fiercest advocates for education, and both the Secretary General of the All India Primary Teachers Federation (AIPTF) and Vice President of Education International (EI), passed away at age 76. He was laid to rest on Tuesday, Oct. 21 in his hometown of Ramnad, in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu.



5.5.1938- 20.10.2014

Known far beyond his native India for his work as a union leader, Eswaran, born in 1938, began his education career as a teacher in 1955. He then moved beyond the classroom to become the headmaster of his primary school, and later of a middle school, altogether spending an astounding 41 years dedicated to primary and middle school children.

Mr. S. Eswaran, the Secretary General, AIPTF, Executive Board Member of Education International has been actively associated with teacher union activities nearly 48 years since 21st June 1961 in various capacities. He was the elected general secretary (unanimously) of Tamilnadu Elementary School Teachers' Federation in Tamilnadu state of India from 1974 to 1996 for 22 years.

Perhaps best recognised for the more than five tireless decades devoted to unionism, both at home and on the global stage, Eswaran assumed his first union post in 1961 as AIPTF's Block Secretary, a position he held for 13 years before becoming the General Secretary of the Tamil Nadu branch of the AIPTF in '74. During the 22 years he would spend in the position, he was also elected as AIPTF Vice President, and later President. Under Eswaran's leadership as AIPTF's Secretary General since 1997, the union's membership grew beyond 2.3 million primary school teachers across the country.

When Eswaran made his move to EI, his dedication to quality education became evident to all who met him.

His tenure with EI began in 2001 as an Executive Board member. In Dec. of 2009, he assumed the role as EI Vice President, filling the vacancy of current President, Susan Hopgood. At EI's Sixth World Congress, held in Cape Town, South Africa in 2011, Eswaran's Vice Presidency was made official when he was elected to the position.

"He will be remembered in EI for his concern for the welfare of teachers," said Fred van Leeuwen-General Secretary-EI. "He was a well-respected mentor to many other leaders in

his region, and his wisdom and leadership were greatly valued by all who knew him. For me, he was a kind and caring friend and will be missed by all.”

He has gained lot of insight about problems and prospects in the field of education in general and teacher education in particular. He made immense contribution in the areas of Education for All, Elementary Education, Curriculum Development and issues related to Education and improving the status of teachers at National and International levels. He has been a great asset in implementing the educational programmes for teachers in India supported by the EI member organization in Australia, Canada, Denmark and Sweden.

Throughout his life as dedicated educational worker, he strives for quality education for all, empowerment of women, eradication of child labour and bringing about improvement in economic, professional and social status of members of teaching community particularly in the developing countries.

For the countless many who knew him, Eswaran will be commemorated around the world for his commitment to achieving quality education for all, the empowerment of women, and his efforts to eradicate child labour. But above all, he will never be forgotten for his determination to improve the lives and status of those he knew best: the teachers.