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**From:** Alarmel Valli <dipasikhadance@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** 04 October 2023 16:07  
**To:** Soumya Swaminathan - MSSRF <doctorsoumya@mssrf.res.in>  
**Subject:** Re: Celebrating the life of our beloved APPA

Dear Dr Soumya Swaminathan,

I was deeply saddened to hear about Dr MS Swaminathan's passing. Words are woefully inadequate at a time like this when you and your sisters have lost a beloved father and the world, a great Titan. I can imagine how bereft you must feel. I am so very sorry.

I consider myself blessed to have known Dr Swaminathan since I was in my teens and his consistent support and affection over the decades enriched my life greatly. I owe him much. Over the years, he has very often invited me to dance for special occasions and it was always a special privilege to perform for him. I was deeply touched and motivated by his faith in my dance and knowing he was in the audience was an inspiration and motivation to me.

My husband, Bhaskar Ghose, was recollecting his early days as a district magistrate in West Bengal, when he had the responsibility of convincing farmers to plant your father's high yielding rice, at a time when the food grain situation was very grim in many parts of the country. He said Dr MS Swaminathan was a true saviour to the country and to farmers and that in a short time, Bhaskar was able to experience the almost magical and vital transformation wrought by your father's Green Revolution.

Incidentally, your father achieved something I had thought was impossible. Despite her paramount role in my career, my mother would insist on sitting in the wings and would refuse any public acknowledgement of her contribution. She was adamant about not being seen on stage. But at a performances at one of his conferences, Dr Swaminathan somehow managed to persuade my mother to come onstage to be garlanded. It was the first time she had done so in the four decades or more since my arangetram! For this too, I am grateful to him.

Dr MS Swaminathan represented all that's best in Indian culture. My mother, Bhaskar and I revered him, not just as a great scientist and visionary, but as someone who epitomised the highest principles and ideals, and above all, unswerving integrity. I am immeasurably saddened by his passing and feel it as a personal loss. If I may borrow the words of Ben Jonson on his "guru",

Shakespeare, I would like to say of your father whom I considered to be one of my manasiga gurus, “He was not for an age, but for all time.”

Bhaskar joins me in sending you and the rest of the family our deepest sympathies.

With warmest regards,

Valli