

## Confusion over death news

**Bangalore:** Confusion prevailed about the authenticity of news of Raja Ramanna's death on Thursday night as agencies differed on what actually happened.

The news channels too were confused as some went by agency reports stating that he was dead. When the first reports trickled in at about 9.30 pm on Thursday, the agencies said Raja Ramanna was critical at a Mumbai hospital. However, by about 11 pm agency reports quoting Ramanna's personal assistant Ramakrishna, said he died at about 7.30 pm due to a problem in the intestine.

Ramanna was "feeling all right this morning" but he breathed his last this evening," he was quoted to have said.

Another report also said that he was critically ill and was admitted to the hospital on Monday. He was said to be

undergoing treatment under the supervision of noted cardiologist B K Goyal.

# Man with a great sense of humour

**Mumbai :** Eminent nuclear scientist Dr Raja Ramanna, the father of the 1974 Pokhran-I nuclear tests, who passed away on Friday, was a multi-faceted personality playing different roles throughout his life but always remaining at core a team leader and disciplinarian.

Dr Ramanna, a former Chairman of Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) and an ex-Minister of State for Defence, was a noted nuclear scientist, a great statesman, a perfect musician, a true guide and teacher, a philosopher and an administrator besides being a fine gentleman and a loving human being.

The 79-year-old Dr Ramanna passed away at the Bombay Hospital and Research Centre in the wee hours of Friday morning following a brief illness, leaving behind his wife, son and two daughters and a large number of admirers and followers.

Dr Ramanna shot into prominence after the May 18, 1974 peaceful nuclear experiment at the Pokhran ranges of Rajasthan when he was the Director of the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), the premier nuclear research and development establishment of the country.

His sense of humour was evident in the code "The Buddha is Smiling", used by the nuclear establishment to inform the then Prime

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Minister Indira Gandhi about the successful tests. Dr Ramanna was the Chairman of Atomic Energy Commission between 1983-87, Director of Bhabha Atomic Research Centre in two stints - 1972-78 and 1981-83, Minister of State for Defence in 1990 and also the Scientific Advisor to Defence Minister between 1978-81.

In 1990, he was elected to the Rajya Sabha and became the Minister of State for Defence.

Dr Ramanna had been a consistent campaigner for nuclear power to be accorded prominent place in energy planning. In matters concerning nuclear weapons and the Non-Proliferation Treaty, he had

clearly formulated views that moulded the national policy.

Dr Ramanna completed his BSc honours in physics from Christian College, Madras in 1945 and left for the UK to work in the field of nuclear physics at the King's College, London for his doctoral degree, which he was conferred in 1949.

He was one of the earliest to join Dr Homi J Bhabha -- Father of India's nuclear programme -- at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, before moving to the Atomic Energy Establishment.

During his long and distinguished career with the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), he was associated with several important events besides the Pokhran-I nuclear test.

He was a young reactor physicist in the team under H J Bhabha when India's first research reactor was commissioned on August 4.

Dr Ramanna was also present, in his capacity as AEC Chairman, when the fast-breeder test reactor attained first criticality at Kalpakkam on the night of October 18, 1985.

In between came the leadership and skillful direction he provided as BARC Director for the peaceful nuclear test, which took the world by surprise.