

# Obituary

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The Indian Association for Social Sciences and Health (IASSH) deeply mourns the passing of its Founder President, **Prof. P.K.B. Nayar**, who left for his heavenly abode on 12th February 2026 at the age of 96 in Thiruvananthapuram. With his demise, Indian social sciences have lost a distinguished scholar, institution-builder, and visionary leader whose intellectual commitment and moral integrity shaped generations of researchers and practitioners.

Prof. P.K.B. Nayar was not only the founding President of IASSH but also one of the principal architects behind the emergence of health as a legitimate and vibrant domain within Indian social sciences. At a time when biomedical paradigms dominated discussions on health, he consistently argued for the centrality of social, economic, cultural, and structural determinants in shaping health outcomes.

As Founder President of IASSH, Prof. Nayar laid the intellectual and organizational foundations of the Association. He envisioned IASSH as an interdisciplinary platform that would bring together sociologists, demographers, economists, anthropologists, public health professionals, and policy practitioners to critically engage with the social dimensions of health and healthcare. Under his stewardship, IASSH developed a strong culture of academic dialogue, inclusivity, and rigorous scholarship-values that continue to define the Association's annual conferences and academic engagements. The IASSH he founded has expanded considerably over the years, with 1400 Life members now.

Prof. Nayar also made seminal contributions to the Indian Sociological Society (ISS), where he served with distinction, including as its President. He played a pivotal role in strengthening sociology's engagement with development, health, and social policy. His efforts helped widen the scope of sociological inquiry in India, bridging theoretical scholarship with pressing societal concerns. Through his writings, lectures, and mentorship, he inspired scholars to pursue socially relevant and ethically grounded research.

In recognition of his lifelong dedication, the 21st Annual Conference of IASSH, held at the University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, during 11–13 February 2026, paused to honour his memory. Even as the conference was underway, news of his passing reached the Association, casting a profound sense of loss among participants. To mark respect for the departed soul and to acknowledge his foundational contributions, a condolence meeting was organized in the Conference Hall on 13th February 2026 at 11:45 a.m.

During the condolence meeting, the current President of IASSH, Prof. R. Nagarajan, along with Past Presidents Prof. T.V. Sekher and Prof. C.P. Prakasam, and former Office Bearer Prof. N. Audinarayana, paid rich tributes to Prof. Nayar. They recalled his intellectual clarity, gentle leadership, unwavering commitment to interdisciplinary dialogue, and his role in nurturing IASSH from a nascent idea into a nationally respected professional body. All conference participants joined in the condolence meeting, which concluded with a one-minute silence in solemn remembrance.

Prof. P.K.B. Nayar's legacy lives on in the institutions he built, the scholarship he advanced, and the countless students and colleagues he mentored. His life stands as a testament to the power of ideas guided by social commitment. IASSH remains forever indebted to its Founder President, whose vision continues to illuminate the path for future generations of scholars in social sciences and health.

## Executive Committee

## Indian Association for Social Sciences and Health (IASSH)

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