



Crossword fraternity mourns Gridman

The passing away of C G Rishikesh has created a void in the country's crossword fraternity that will be difficult to fill. He breathed his last on Wednesday (April 14, 2021) morning in Chennai. He was 78.

To Extra-C, which in its endeavour to popularize the crossword culture in India drew generously from his talent, the loss will be even more. Rishikesh was part of CCCC Cryptic Crossword Contest (CCCC) and Indian Crossword League (IXL) as a setter and a moderator.

Son of an IAF officer, Rishikesh aka Gridman was born in Coimbatore in 1943. Completing his higher studies from Vivekananda College, Loyola College and Madras Christian College, he first served as a teacher in a Chennai college before wielding the pen as a journalist. He retired in 2003 after his stints with The Indian Express and The Hindu.

His love affair with crosswords lasted a lifetime, his epithet a testimony to his skill as a setter. His first crossword puzzle was a US-type definitional that was published in The American Reporter sometime in the early 1970s. Some half-a-dozen straightforward puzzles sent by him as a 'reader' were published in the now-defunct Evening News of London.

Later a Chennai-based magazine published his cryptic puzzles every month over a period. Puzzles set by him have also appeared in Sports world, The Telegraph, Frontline, Target and Sparks.

A follower of The Hindu Crossword (THC) from Puzzle No. 1 that was published in 1971, he joined THC setters' panel in 2001. Since then his puzzles appeared regularly every month.

Rishikesh has contributed a lot to blogs and message boards on the crossword in general and THC in particular. He initiated the Simple Clue-Writing Contest in Google group.

We at Extra-C express our condolences and pray for the departed soul.