

In Memory of Kesar  
May 19, 2012

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Friends, loved ones and family -

It is my privilege to pay tribute and honor to a close friend, a wonderful collaborator and a great colleague of mine. Kesar was a sweet giant. He was remarkable in many ways. I had heard friends and colleagues commended that "Kesar is VERY good at what he is good at." To me, Kesar was another John Nash, perhaps. He had a beautiful and brilliant mind, even though he might be a little bit lacking in expressing himself.

Kesar had a beautiful mind. When I first came to Rutgers, almost fifteen years ago, I heard that he was THE K. Singh who was among the first to provide theoretical support for Efron's seminal work on bootstrap methodology while he was only 25 years old, fresh from his PhD degree from the Indian Statistical Institute. This simple fact immediately commanded my respect to him. I didn't know him that well like many others, until I started to work with him a year or two later. During the last thirteen or fourteen years working together, I have learned a great deal from and also about him. We had co-authored many papers and we still had several unfinished work. In research, Kesar always sought to be original and deep. He wanted to publish papers that would have lasting impact. Kesar was not the best writer or communicator. But he had a beautiful and brilliant mind. People knew him deeply appreciate that. I always enjoyed my intellectual discussions with him, no matter how big, how small, how deep or how naive the question was. I will dearly miss this part of conservations and discussions. Because of his death, our department has lost a great researcher and our statistical community has lost a great contributor and original thinker.

Kesar was a family man. Although Kesar did not like to travel, we took a couple of trips together to Palo Alto, California. We spent a lot of time together on these trips. I can recall conversations in both trips that he wanted to change his flights to go back home, because "Swati called" and one of the doggies was not doing well. He worried whether Swati would be doing fine and whether the doggies were doing okay. He talked about his commitment, his struggle and his affection. I got to know him very personally during these trips. He was so attached to Palo Alto and its surrounding areas, where he started his American dream together with Swati. He still remembered vividly those streets and those houses that he and Swati spent time more than thirty years ago. He said when he retired, he would settle down in Palo Alto area with Swati to revisit those places and the wonderful time. I told myself that time this would be good anecdotes to talk about in his retirement party, to joke about he wanted to change his flight back to New Jersey on the first day of the trip, to joke about his childish dream and attachment to Palo Alto. But god has another plan, and I am speaking here for his sudden departure.

People who knew Kesar knew he was also a very proud person. Sometime his pride got into the way. But he was a warm person, he liked to provide and he liked to share. Many of us here have shared our triumphs, our achievements, our good times, our bad times and our complaints with him.

Kesar, you lived a full life, you had a good family who loved you, you had colleagues who liked and appreciated you and you had students who adored you. You have graced many of our life more than you ever know. We all will miss you dearly. You are in good hand now. Please rest in peace and god bless!