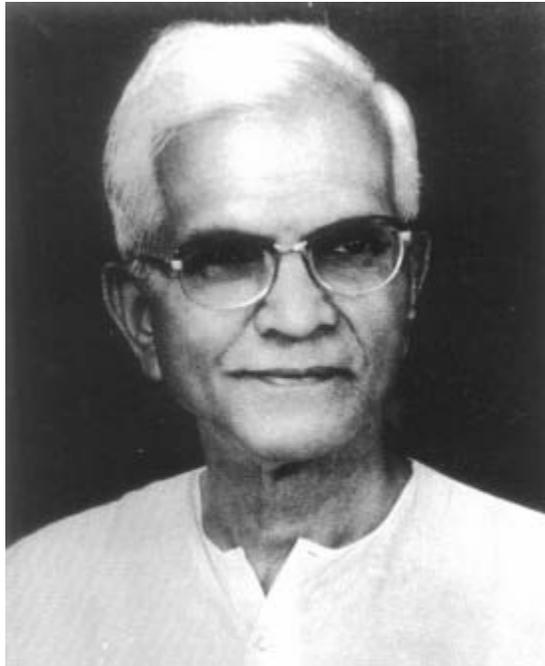


L.V. Prasad

L.V. Prasad, whose full name was Akkineni Lakshmi Vara Prasad, was born in Andhra Pradesh in 1908. As a child he did not show much interest in studies. He was attracted to dramas and movies and wanted to be part of them.

Married very young when he was only 17, Prasad soon had a daughter. But urge to act in movies was irresistible to him. In the dark of one night he quietly slipped away from home without telling even his wife.



Arrived in Mumbai, Prasad who spoke only Telugu, found it difficult to find employment in the film industry. But after months of struggle he was able to find a job to do errands for Venus Film Company. Finally he was able to land a small role in the first India Talkie cinema, "Alam Ara" in 1931. While working on "Alam Ara", Prasad met H.M. Reddy, now known as the "Telugu Cine Pitamaha" or the grandfather of the Telugu cinema. Reddy was making arrangements for a film in Tamil, "Kalidas". He offered Prasad a small role in that film. This was the first Tamil Talkie. Coincidentally, he landed in a role in the first Telugu Talkie, "Bhaktha Prahlada". Thus Prasad is the only

person who had the distinction of appearing in the first Hindi, Tamil, and Telugu Talkies.

After these initial successes, encouraged, Prasad went home to his wife and family. While he was away his young daughter passed away. But Prasad had definite plans for his career, so soon left home, this time with his wife, for Mumbai to pursue his acting career.

After his return to Mumbai, at the suggestion of a film clerk, Prasad shortened his name to L.V. Prasad. He strengthened his resume further when he was hired as an assistant director for the film "Kamar-Al-Zaman". But Prasad found going tough with a growing family, now he has two sons to feed as well. Income coming from doing either bit roles or assisting directors wasn't enough to feed four mouths. Frustrated he decided to call it quits and left for his native village.

While Prasad was settling down at his home, one day he was invited to act in H.M. Reddy's next film, "Grihalakshmi". His trip to Chennai changed his life for ever. He made few movies in Chennai and things were seemingly going good for Prasad. But soon the Second World War forced many to abandon their film projects and once again Prasad joined the ranks of unemployed.

Prasad returned to Mumbai once more to explore further for any type of work. During his previous stays he made few friends and acquaintances. One of them was the great stage and film actor Prithviraj Kapoor. Kapoor offered Prasad a job in his Prithvi Theatres and for now he was gainfully employed as an actor. This is the time when he met young Raj Kapoor, son of Prithviraj, and they became good friends.

With difficulties of the War behind, Chennai was abuzz once again making movies. Prasad decided to move to Chennai. He was immediately hired not only to act in the film "Griha Pravesham" but also to direct it as well. The movie became a hit and it is now considered to be one of the landmark movies of 40's. Following this success, Prasad acted or directed several other movies. One of these movies "Mana Desam", made in 1949, introduced young N.T. Rama Rao in a supporting role. Rao later became a much sought after actor and a successful politician.

Prasad directed Vijaya Pictures first film "Shavukar" in 1950 that became a hit and established him as one of the premium directors. In the same year he also directed "Samsaram", another hit that introduced Savithri in a bit

role. Subsequently Prasad also directed the Tamil thespian Sivaji Ganesan in the film "Manohara" that elevated Sivaji to the unprecedented heights of stardom.

Prasad started his own company in 1956 and made "Ilavelpu" in Telugu. He later remade this in Hindi as "Sharada (1957)" with Raj Kapoor. It was first of many successful Hindi films to come under Prasad Pictures banner. He produced films in various Indian languages including Bengali, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Oriya, Tamil, and Telugu.

In 1982, Prasad received Dadasaheb Phalke Award for his distinguished service to the Indian cinema.

Prasad, an actor, assistant director, camera assistant, story writer, and producer passed away in 1994.

Savithri and Prasad collaborated in the following movies:

1. Samsaram (1950)
2. Pelli Chesi Choodu (1952)
3. Kalyanam Panni Paar (1952)
4. Missamma (1955)
5. Missiamma (1955)
6. Appu Chesi Pappu Koodu (1958)
7. Kadan Vaangi Kalyanam (1958)