

# WHO HOW FACTS



“It’s not about where you were born, or where you come from that makes you a good scientist. What you need are good teachers, co-students, facilities. I honestly don’t think my roots have much to do with it. I’m sure this won’t make me popular, but this is what I think.”

**Dr. Venkatraman Ramakrishnan**

He may have migrated to the US long back, but Indian-American Venkatraman Ramakrishnan made a billion people back home proud by winning the Nobel Prize for Chemistry for having showed what the ribosome looks like and how it functions at the atomic level. He is the 7th Indian or of Indian origin to win the prestigious award. Currently, he is a Senior Scientist at the MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology in Cambridge, UK and has authored several important papers in academic journals.

**Dr Venkatraman**, known to most as "Venki," started out to fulfill his father’s dream of becoming a Doctor. He got admitted to the Baroda Medical College , but appeared for the National Science Talent exam. He made a deal with his father — that if he got the scholarship, then he shouldn’t be forced to do anything. He got the scholarship, and transferred from medical college to study physics. He moved to the US and after graduate school designed his own 2-year transition from physics to biology. Then, as a postdoctoral fellow at Yale University, he worked on a neutron-scattering map of the small ribosomal subunit of E.coli. He has been studying ribosome structure ever since.

- Birth:** 1952 in Tamil Nadu, India
- Residence:** United Kingdom
- Citizenship:** United States
- Fields:** Biochemistry and Biophysics
- Education:** B. Sc in Physics from M. S. University of Vadodara, India  
M.Sc and Ph. D in Physics from Ohio University, USA
- Nobel Prize:** Shares the Nobel prize with Thomas E Steitz (US) and Ada E Yonath (Israel) for their "studies of the structure and function of the ribosome"
- Other Honors:** Guggenheim Fellowship (1991)  
Member of the National Academy of Sciences, USA (2004)  
Louis-Jeantet Prize for Medicine (2007)  
Heatley Medal of the British Biochemical Society (2008)  
Elected foreign member of the Indian National Science Academy (2008)  
Rolf-Sammet Professorship at the University of Frankfurt (2009)



**Owns no car but 2 bicycles for self and 5 for guests**



**Autographs a chair at the Nobel Museum**



**Venkatraman Ramakrishnan, Thomas A Steitz and Ada E Yonath**