

Eminent Indian artist Balu dies in road accident

Eminent Indian artist Velachery Balu, 79, died in a hit-and-run road accident near his residence here, the police said Friday.

Basavangudi police inspector Ramalinga Gowda told IANS the accident occurred Thursday when Balu was hit from the side by a speeding two-wheeler while crossing the road after his evening walk.

'Balu was crossing the road towards his house from the nearby M.N. Krishna Rau Park when the unidentified scooterist knocked him down and sped away, leaving the artist bleeding with severe head injuries.

'Though Balu was rushed to a nearby nursing home for immediate medical attention, he failed to respond to the treatment. Later, he was shifted to NIMHANS hospital for an operation but succumbed to the injuries sustained in the accident,' Gowda said.

After a post-mortem examination at NIMHANS Friday, Balu's body was taken to his residence in Basavangudi, a posh suburb in south Bangalore.

Artists in the city expressed shock and grief over Balu's sudden and untimely death.

'Though Balu was nearing 80, he was full of life and active in his artistic work. It is hard to believe he is no more,' his neighbour Venkat Krishnan lamented.

Balu began his artistic career as a cartoonist during his college days. His works of art had the message of peace, as depicted in 'Rhythms of Peace', a collage with girls dancing amidst a swirl of ribbons. Though not a conventional artist, Balu's works found widespread acceptance and encouragement.

The Dalai Lama and South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu were among the admirers of Balu's paintings. Balu also wrote books and travelled extensively to spread the message of peace and love through his artistic creativity.

(© IANS / India eNews)