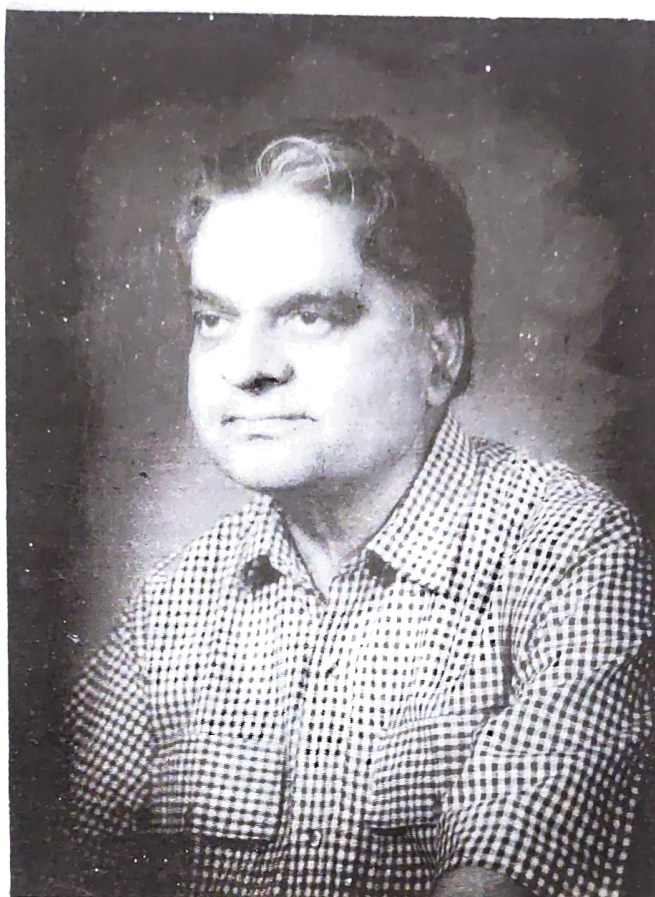


## OBITUARY



### PROFESSOR K.S. BILGRAMI

Professor Krishan Sahai Bilgrami suddenly expired on 31st December 1996 at Lucknow. The country lost in him an outstanding plant science teacher and a dedicated researcher. Only a few months back on his visit to Jabalpur we had talked about celebrating the centenary of our revered "GURU", Prof. R.N. Tandon in 2003, who initiated both of us to the study of fungi. Prof. Bilgrami was born on July 9, 1933 at Bilgram in district Hardoi of Uttar Pradesh. He joined Allahabad University in July 1950 as a graduate student. We came in contact in 1953-54 when I was completing my thesis for D.Phil degree and he would often enquire as a M.Sc. student something or the other about fungi. His keen interest in fungi inspired him to obtain the D. Phil, degree in 1956 and further to continue serious and intensive researches to earn him the prestigious degree of D.Sc. of Allahabad University in 1962. Meanwhile he was awarded

research scholarships of U.P. Government in 1954-55, of Govt. of India in 1955-56 and also of Indian National Science Academy in 1956-57. His seriousness of purpose and scientific aptitude combined with his friendliness and sense of humor made him an ideal fellow student. I followed with interest his outstanding career since then which earned for him a place in the highest ranks of botanists and the gratitude and affection of his very many students and friends.

He was appointed lecturer in the same department in 1958. After serving Allahabad University for about 5 years he shifted to Jodhpur University in 1963 as a Reader. During his short stay of 6 years at Jodhpur he initiated and developed a mycological laboratory and trained a number of students for their Ph.D degree working mainly on taxonomy and



physiology of Deuteromycetes with the then available meagre facilities. He finally moved to Bhagalpur University in 1970 as Professor and Head of the Department at the age of 37 years. Two to three Readers drawn from the constituent colleges already in position in the department were much senior to the new Professor both in age and service. Obviously there was a hostile atmosphere for the unwelcomed young Professor from outside Bihar. The department did not have a separate building of its own and was temporarily lodged in the premises of the local T.N.B. College. Prof. Bilgrami could somehow find a place for himself in a verandah of the college. It is not only highly commendable but may be wondered that even in such an odd and adverse circumstances facing the prevalent evils of the place as well, Prof. Bilgrami with his vision, academic superiority, administrative competence and splendid personality could soon convert his critics into his admirers and create a favourable and healthy environment to build up the department from a scratch to the country wide acclaimed present status. The Vice-Chancellors of the university used to take the V.I.P. visitors round the fast growing Botany Department and particularly its fascinating botanical garden with pride. After his superannuation in July 1993 he continued working in the department as a C.S.I.R. Emeritus Scientist till end. He was acting Vice-Chancellor (1978-79) and Pro Vice-Chancellor (1982-84) of that University.

Prof. Bilgrami established a strong school for fundamental and applied studies in Mycology, Microbiology and Plant Pathology by virtue of his active research and dynamic leadership. His research interest spread to varied areas like physiology and taxonomy of fungi, seed pathology, mycotoxins, microbial ecology and limnology. He was one of the leading researchers in Mycotoxicology and trained several doctorate scholars in this area. He did extensive work on different aspects of mycotoxins like their incidence, biological effects on plants and animal system and control. His outstanding contributions to plant science and especially to Mycology and Plant pathology are well known and have earned world wide recognition.

During his teaching and research career of nearly four decades Prof. Bilgrami guided research of thirty six postgraduate students, successfully completed several research projects funded by various national and international agencies published more than two hundred papers in journals of international repute, twenty two monographs/technical reports and six University level books including one on "Physiology of Fungi", the first by any Indian author. He also edited a number of volumes on the proceedings of National and International Symposia. He was actively associated with most of the scientific societies of the country in different capacities. He had been the President of Botany Section of India Science Congress Association in 1987 and also of Indian Botanical Society in 1988. He was member of Ganga Project Directorate Research Committee of Agricultural Research Committee and also of Lower Ganga Region constituted by the Planning Commission, Govt of India. He was decorated with the coveted Panchanan Maheshwari Award of the Indian Botanical Society in 1983 and was the first recipient of Prof. Saligram Sinha Memorial lecture award of the National Academy of Sciences, India in 1990. The Indian national Science Academy also honoured him by Prof. T.S. Sadasivan Endowment Lecture award in 1994.

Prof. Bilgrami was a humanist, a thorough gentleman and an amiable personality. He was gifted with qualities of head and heart. He was a man of deep culture and strong will power. He has carved a glorious academic tradition which will long endure and inspire Indian Botanists. He is survived by his wife, two daughters and one son. Prof. Bilgrami's death was mourned by friends, relatives, students and colleagues as their personal loss.

May his soul rest in peace.

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