

OBITUARY

Dr. R.L. PALIWAL
Jan 25, 1928-Jan 5, 2013

Dr. Ripusudan Lal Paliwal, the eminent plant scientist, breathed his last on 5th January, 2013. We are deeply distressed to lose such a wonderful friend and an internationally renowned scientist. He was born on 25th Jan., 1928 at village Sista near Sadabad, District Mathura. His father Madusudan Lal Paliwal belonged to a well known zamindar family. Ripusudan had his education up to VIII class at his village and later passed the high school examination from Tundla. Thereafter he came to B.R. College, Agra (presently R.B.S. College) for his higher studies and secured M.Sc. (Ag. Botany), in 1949. After completing postgraduate study, Paliwal joined the Department of Botany of the College as a Faculty member. As per the traditions of the Department, Paliwal also engaged himself in research work under the guidance of Professor Bahadur Singh. His work on the embryology of a few members of the family Santalaceae was remarkable. He reported synergid haustoria for the first time, in one of the genera of this family. He earned the Ph. D. degree of the Agra University for this work, after a thorough viva-voce examination conducted by the celebrated embryologist, Professor B. G. L. Swamy in 1954.

Dr. Paliwal visited the University of Oklahoma (USA) as the recipient of a Fulbright Fellowship in 1956-58 and was mentored by Prof. Beal B. Hyde on B chromosomes. Dr. Paliwal was an excellent teacher and a keen researcher. After returning from USA, he joined Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi, as Senior Maize Breeder in 1960. Thereafter, he moved to Uttar Pradesh Agricultural University, Pant Nagar as Director, Experimental Research Station in 1964. There he successfully enhanced research activities up to 1976. In the year 1972 the name of the University was changed to G.B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology. Dr Paliwal was invited to CIMMYT (Centro Internacional de Mejoramiento de Maiz y Trigo), Mexico, as Director of Maize Improvement Programme. This post was equivalent to the position held by the Nobel Laureate Norman Bourlaug, who was Director of Wheat Improvement Programme. Dr. Paliwal worked at CIMMYT in this position up to 1993. He was consultant to FAO and World Bank and stayed in Mexico up to 1998.

Dr. S.C. Mudgal, a former student of Dr. Paliwal, when he rose to the position of Director of Research of the G.B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, dedicated the Seed Research Laboratory of the University by naming it "Dr. Paliwal Seed Research Laboratory".

Dr. Paliwal was unanimously elected President, Indian Botanical Society and he presided over the Botanical Conference organized by the Department of Plant Sciences, MJP Rohilkhand University,

Bareilly in 2002. Dr. Paliwal was chairman, Quinquennial maize review team of Indian Council of Agricultural Research to review Indian National Maize Program and International Association for Maize for Food, Feed and Industry (AMMFFI). He was involved in collaborative projects with FAO on Maize Information Network for Tropics and Delineation of maize growing environments of important maize growing countries of the World. Dr. Paliwal wrote a comprehensive book on maize entitled “Tropical Maize Improvement and Production” published by FAO. He was also editor of Maize ECOPORT of FAO. Dr. Paliwal published 40 research papers in Scientific Journals and Periodicals and contributed a chapter and assisted in the preparation of the book “Successful Seed Programs: A Planning and Management Guide”, published by IADS, New York. He was Co-author of Book “Maize in the Third World” published by West View Press, Colorado, USA. Dr. Paliwal has several awards and honours to his credit and some of them are: Degree of Doctor of Science (Honoris Causa) by G.B.Pant University of Agric. & Tech., Pantnagar in 1988; Citation and Plaque of honour for his contributions to Seed Sciences & Technology, awarded at International Conference of Seed Science & Technology, Delhi, 1990; Citation and Plaque of honour for his contribution to Genetics & Plant Breeding awarded by Indian Society of Genetics and Plant Breeding at its Golden Jubilee Celebration, New Delhi in 1991. Citation and Plaque of Honour presented by UP Seeds and Tarai Development Corporation at their 25th Anniversary Celebrations, January, 1994. Dr. Paliwal was fellow and life member of several scientific societies.

Dr. Paliwal was an upright person with a dignified demeanour. He was a sportsman and loved to play tennis. He had great affection for his village, especially for the mango orchard. He was involved in innovative farming at his family farm. His some successful crop innovations were sweet corn and baby corn production; production of True Seed and successful cultivation of potato crop from C2 generation tubers raised from true potato seed.

We pay homage to this esteemed scientist.

S.N. Chaturvedi
Former President,
Indian Botanical Society
President, Society of Plant Reproductive Biologists