

OBITUARY

PROFESSOR BAHADUR SINGH

Prof. Bahadur Singh, Honorary Fellow of the Indian Botanical Society and an eminent Plant Morphologist left for his heavenly abode on August 1, 1998 at Agra. We have lost in him a noble person, an ideal teacher and a great disciplinarian.

Born on 15 May, 1907 in an enlightened Zamindar family of Aligarh district in Uttar Pradesh, Prof. Singh received early education at B.R. College, Agra and carried out his higher studies at Agra College, Agra from where he obtained M.Sc. degree in Botany standing first in order of merit in the University under the renowned mycologist late Prof. K.C. Mehta. Later on, he took up research work on the embryology of members of the family Loranthaceae. Previous attempts on embryological studies of this group of plants had failed and he took up the challenge on the advice of late Prof. P. Maheshwari F.R.S. and started working under his guidance at Agra College, Agra. Later he shifted to Lucknow University to pursue doctoral research. He was awarded the Ph.D. degree in 1943 under the supervision of Prof. Birbal Sahni F.R.S. Sahni was highly impressed by the unflinching devotion with which Singh carried out the research work in his laboratory. He has a series of publications on the embryology of several parasitic taxa, particularly *Dendrophthoe falcata* and *Macrosolen cochinchinensis* and he paved the way for further work on these unique group of angiosperms. The work he initiated on the Santalaceae at B.R. College, Agra was subsequently taken up at other Universities. Prof. Singh also successfully completed a research project on the control and eradication of Bandha parasite which causes great damage to fruit trees. Prof. Singh also had an opportunity of working with Prof. P. Parija at Ravenshaw College, Cuttack. He visited Botany School, Cambridge University, U.K. to work with Prof. E.J.H. Corner on seed structure from May 1951 to March 1952. He also visited Institute of Botany, Zurich University, Switzerland in April, 1952. After his visit to these institutes of

higher learning he initiated research work on the structure of seed in many taxa in India. Several of his students advanced this work, making significant contributions in this field at other centres in the country.

Prof. Bahadur Singh established the Department of Botany at B.R. College, Agra (now known as R.B.S. College) in 1938 and nourished it with great dedication and a high academic tradition. The research activities carried out under his stewardship brought the Department on the map of India. He had the distinction of developing the discipline Cytogenetics and Plant Breeding at the post-graduate level at a time when other traditional Universities had not taken any interest in this important area. This helped his students in securing jobs at I.A.R.I. and other agricultural establishments where they occupy senior positions today.

Professor Singh joined National Botanical Research Institute, Lucknow as Assistant Director in July 1959 and established the Seed Biology Laboratory which is being maintained by his successors. After retirement from N.B.R.I., Prof. Singh preferred to work as an Emeritus Scientist of C.S.I.R. at R.B.S. College, Agra because of his deep attachment to the parent institution. He again played a pivotal role in enhancing research activities and guided research work of many Ph.D. students. During that period he served as a member of the Board of Management of the College and contributed richly to its growth.

Prof. Singh was a botanist in the true sense. He was an embodiment of human values of which integrity and dignity are foremost. He was a man of principles and a source of inspiration to younger botanists. Prof. Singh is survived by his wife who has been showing motherly affection to all his students, her illustrious sons and a daughter.

I had the proud privilege of being a doctoral student of Professor Singh. When I later became a

teacher in the same college he treated me as a colleague and generously welcomed my views on several matters. Persons of Professor Singh education, transparency, straight forwardness are rare. His passing away, is a great loss to the Indian Botany and we

pray for eternal peace to the departed soul.

S.N. Chaturvedi
Professor Emeritus
R.B.S. College, Agra