

SURENDRA KUMAR AGRAWAL



(1926-1995)

Professor Surendra Kumar Agrawal passed away peacefully on Tuesday, the 3rd January, 1995 in Varanasi. He was born on 1st June, 1926 at Rampur, western U.P. in a family which was intimately associated with the Banaras Hindu University since the 1920s. Young Surendra was provided moral, traditional and fundamental education within his family and then formally sent to a school in Rampur from where he passed the High School Examination in 1940. Thereafter, he joined the B.H.U. and took to the subsequent examinations to finally secure the M.Sc. Degree in Geology in 1946. While serving as a Lecturer in the B.H.U. from 1947, he was encouraged by his Guru, Professor Raj Nath, to undertake higher studies in the U.K., and the young man accordingly joined the British Museum (Natural History), London in 1954. However, he shifted to the University of Paris in France. There, he not only mastered the French Language but also produced his doctoral thesis in French and obtained the *Docteur-es-Science* degree (with "tres-hons.") in 1956, under the supervision of Professor P. Pruvost in Sorbonne.

After returning from France, Dr. Agrawal resumed his duties as Lecturer in the B.H.U. where he continued his researches on the Jurassic invertebrate faunas. Impressed by his academic achievements, Professor K.P. Rode persuaded him to join

the Rajasthan University, Udaipur, as Reader in 1961. After a short stay at Udaipur, Dr. Agrawal returned to his alma mater in 1967 as Professor and Head of the Geology Department. He served the department in the capacity of Head from 1967 to 1978 and as Dean to the Faculty of Science from 1976 to 1978 and 1981 to 1983. He always placed the University interest above his own and was extremely occupied by his academic as well as administrative duties until his mandatory retirement in May, 1986.

Due to his strong principles, integrity and emotional involvement to the B.H.U., he could successfully steer the Faculty as its Dean through very difficult, and sometimes even hostile, situations. In view of his academic-cum-administrative achievements, Prof. Agrawal was nominated as a Member of the Executive Council of the University for the period 1979-'82.

As a teacher, he laid great emphasis on the fundamentals of Geology, and endeavoured an all-round development of his students. He was a strict disciplinarian and held great command over his students with his eloquent lectures, their clarity and brevity, and depth and breadth of his knowledge. A keen researcher himself, he developed in the B.H.U. what may be called the strongest team of Jurassic workers (invertebrate

palaeontology, stratigraphy and sedimentology) in this country. He published scores of valuable papers in various national and international journals. He guided several students for their doctoral degree, who are now serving in various capacities in different Indian universities and Govt./Semi-Govt. organisations.

Prof. Agrawal was intimately associated with several learned societies, and was one of the founder members of the Palaeontological Society of India, Lucknow. He had been a member of the Sub-commission on the Jurassic System under the International Union of the Geological Sciences and also of the National Committee on the I.U.G.C.P.

Prof. Agrawal has left behind his family (wife, a son and two daughters) and relatives, colleagues, innumerable friends and admirers, generations of students, and a vast community of geologists to mourn his demise.

May the Almighty grant him lasting peace.

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