



Prof. Shashi Bhushan Bhatia
(1930-2021)

Prof Shashi Bhushan Bhatia was born on 18th March, 1930 at Lucknow. His father Dr B.B. Bhatia – a professor in the King George Medical College was a famous physician. Shashi Bhushan post-graduated in 1950 from the Lucknow University. Later he obtained his Ph.D degree from the London University and D.I.C. from the Imperial College of London. He joined the Lucknow University as a lecturer in 1953. In 1958 he was selected in the Geological Survey of India. Subsequently in 1959 Prof. Bhatia was appointed as a Reader in the newly created Department of Geology in the Panjab University, Chandigarh, where he superannuated as a Professor and then continued as an Emeritus Professor.

Prof. Bhatia's contributions to the Indian geology cover a vast time span. Foraminifera was his original field specialisation. He is credited with the first discovery of the Permian foraminifera in India. Later he made important contributions to the study of Cretaceous and Paleogene ostracods. His research on the Cretaceous sediments aided in determining the time of extinction of the dinosaurs and initiation of the Deccan Volcanicity. Another important input to the Cretaceous was a report of bryozoa in the Neelkanth Formation—considered at that time a part of the Tal Group. The most important contributions made by Prof S.B. Bhatia, however, are to the Palaeogene sediments of the Himalaya. He studied fauna of the Subathu, Dagshai and Siwalik sequences. His findings precisely fixed the lower age limit of the Kakara sediments of at 56.5 Ma, which signifies the time of collision of the Indian and the Asian Plate. His research on the Subathu and the Dagshai formations makes significant contribution to the biostratigraphy, event stratigraphy and environment of deposition of that time. He put India on the world map of Chara studies.

Prof. Bhatia had around 250 publications in reputed journals. He

guided a dozen students for Ph.D degree. He was a highly decorated scientist. In 1958, he was appointed Indian Correspondent of the journal of Micropaleontology. He was a Fellow of the prestigious Indian National Science Academy and recipient of L. Rama Rao award. Oil and Natural Gas Corporation decorated him with a Silver plaque. He attended several International Conferences and brought laurels to self and the country.

He was an excellent teacher with exceptional skill of communication. He was a perfectionist and demanded the best from his students. No wonder many of his students earned International fame.

Immaculately dressed, Prof. Bhatia's interests included painting and photography. He was a keen Bridge player. He and Mrs Bhatia were perfect host to his students.

Such was Professor Shashi Bhushan Bhatia who breathed his last on May 1, 2021. The death came to him peacefully. He is survived by his wife, Mrs Sudha, son, Dr Shishu and daughter, Dr Sujata, they are going to miss him for all time to come. His death is a great loss to the Indian Geology and to his students, who feel academically orphaned. With his upright nature, honest dealing and devotion to his duty, Prof Bhatia was a "Karmath" in real sense of the word, and which would have earned him an instant "Moksha".

*Honorary Professor, Geology Department,
Panjab University, Chandigarh
INSA Honorary Scientist,
103 Sector 7,
Panchkula 134109
E: onbhargava@gmail.com*

O.N. BHARGAVA

DOI: 10.1007/s12594-021-1771-6