



punjab geographer



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IN MEMORIAM



Professor G.B. Singh
(August 2, 1936-August 22, 2024)

A well-known academician and agricultural geographer, Dr. G. B. Singh was born on August 2, 1936, in a farmer's family in the Ganaur village of Gujranwala district of Punjab in erstwhile India. After partition, his family settled down at village Manawan near Zira in Ferozpur district. He did his matriculation from J.M.B.D. High School, Zira in 1954, where upon he did his bachelors and masters in Geography from Government College for Boys, Ludhiana.

Dr. G. B. Singh started his teaching career at Government College, Tanda and went on to teach at Government College, Rohtak and then at Randhir Government College, Kapur-thala. Identifying the need of geography text books in Punjabi, Dr. G.B. Singh wrote and translated various geography texts on themes as diverse as Physical Geography, Economic Geography of India and World Geography in Punjabi. His passion for Geography took him to the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, on the Lamb Fund Award. He returned from Scotland with a Ph.D. and joined the newly established Department of Geography at Punjabi University, Patiala, on October 6, 1975. It was here that he spent the majority of his academic

life and retired from the department on 31 August, 1996. During his illustrious career, he supervised many doctorates and Masters of Philosophy students, and organized and participated in 38 National and International conferences and seminars.

He made a name for himself in the field of Agricultural Geography and his ten years of research and toil culminated into the publication of 'Agricultural Planning Atlas of Punjab', published by Punjabi University, Patiala. The Atlas, with its solid research and bilingual methodology, remains an exemplar text and an enviable piece of research in agricultural geography.

Apart from his life as an academic he has been the president of organizations as diverse as National Association of Geographers, India (NAGI), Association of Punjab Geographers (APG) and Punjab Heritage Society, Patiala. He has been the member of Punjab State Flood Control Board, Punjabi Bhasha Academy, Border Areas Committee of the Government of Punjab. Dr. G.B. Singh had a penchant for travel, photography, and hospitality. His love for his place of birth took him to Pakistan. Post retirement, Dr. G.B. Singh's spirit to venture made him indulge in

the realm of publishing academic books, getting involved with Punjab heritage, visiting his Alma Mater - the University of Edinburgh once again, and visiting his three children settled in Canada and Australia and spending time with his grandchildren.

His versatility, magnetism, fearlessness, moral integrity, administrative acumen, clarity of thought and expression, and desire to encourage endeared him to one and all. This meant that he attracted friends of all ages and dispositions. He considered friendships as sacred and he was well loved by the vast circle of his friends. This also meant that he was sought after and prized by people from all walks of life including Vice Chancellors, politicians, students, colleagues, friends and family. Although he won many awards and accolades for his contributions to his field and served on various prestigious academic, non-academic positions, and despite being a strong

candidate for vice chancellorship at the university, he so dedicatedly served, heading Punjabi University remained an elusive thing for him. Yet, Dr. G.B. Singh, in all magnanimity of heart, never had any regrets.

An always upbeat, encouraging, inspiring and meticulous individual, known to all the lives he touched as very pleasantly disposed, Dr. G.B. Singh passed away at his residence in Patiala on August 22, 2024, surrounded and cared for by his wife and children. His 88 years of life are a testimony to his humble origins, and a rewarding life born out of sheer toil, grit and confidence and a life very well lived. Considered admirable by his friends, students, colleagues and family alike Dr. G.B. Singh lived life to the lees.

Dr. Lakhvir Singh Gill, Principal,
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Patiala (Punjab).

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