

Prof. Prem Narain - An Eminent Scientist

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I feel greatly honored to have been asked to reflect my impressions on the ideology of Prof. Prem Narain. As a first reflection, Dr. Prem Narain could be considered a role model for many. He is admired by one and all for his valuable contributions and leadership in the field of agricultural statistics, especially statistical genetics and application of statistics to crop and animal sciences.

I learnt biometrical genetics from Prof. Prem Narain at the Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute (IASRI), while I was a Ph.D. student at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi in mid-sixties. Personality of Prof. Prem Narain has impressed me in many ways. In true sense, he had always been a real friend, philosopher and guide, caring for all his colleagues and students. Also, I found him to be an excellent teacher during my student career. His delivery and knowledge of the subject created specific interest among students in the subject, such as biometrical genetics. Personally, I benefited a great deal since my topic for Ph.D. thesis was "inheritance of yield and yield attributes in wheat", using the diallel analysis, path-coefficients and discriminant function approaches.

Later, I was fortunate to have continued association with him when he rose to the coveted position of the Director of the Institute. As Director of the National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (NBPGR), I always received best possible cooperation from him. He launched various new programs and took famous IASRI to newer heights. Growth of the Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute during his tenure was indeed remarkable, involving multifarious activities. He nurtured IASRI exceedingly well, for which he will always be remembered.

Subsequently, I happened to work with Prof. Prem Narain on the Executive Council of the Indian Society of Agricultural Statistics for more than 5 years, during which period, I observed his sincerity and commitment towards growth and development of agricultural statistics in India. Obviously, the Society benefited a great deal from him through his dedicated services and visionary leadership.

I must also mention about great human qualities of Prof. Prem Narain. He is a great communicator and a very good listener, with extraordinary interpersonal relationship skills. Despite his busy schedule, he had always been prompt in his replies to each and every one! He is a very soft spoken person and his oratory skills have always been admired by one and all. In scientific meeting and conferences, I always found his interventions and speeches to be highly relevant, informative and to the point, obviously each one prepared with considerable imagination, effort and innovative thinking.

I am happy to know that a special Prof. Prem Narain Felicitation Volume is being brought out by the Society. It is a befitting tribute to him. I take this opportunity to wish him a very productive, prosperous long and healthy life. Prof. Prem Narain will always be remembered by all his colleagues, friends and students for his dedicated services rendered to Indian agriculture.