



punjab geographer



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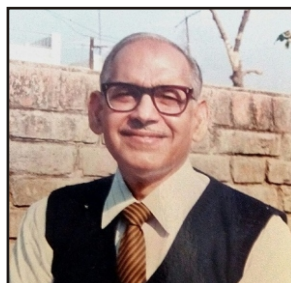
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IN MEMORIAM



Prof. Ramesh Dutta Dikshit
(November 03, 1939-December 24, 2019)

December 24, 2019 was a sad day for me. My esteemed teacher and a highly rated geographer in the field of Political Geography, Prof. Ramesh Dutta Dikshit, passed away at Gurugram (Haryana).

Born in village Mahuatar (maternal village), Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh), on November 3, 1939, Ramesh Dutta Dikshit was the third of four children of (late) Bal Dev Dikshit and (late) Roopkali Chaube. His paternal village was Gopalpur, district Ghazipur (Uttar Pradesh). His early life was very difficult. He lost his father in March, 1941. He grew up with all possible support from his maternal uncles, who by virtue of their being in the field of education guided him.

Prof. Dikshit did his graduation and post-graduation from the University of Allahabad. He did his masters in Geography in 1958, a first class first. His teaching career began as a lecturer in August 1960 when he joined the Department of Geography, Deen Dayal Upadhyay Gorakhpur University, Gorakhpur. He was awarded a Commonwealth Fellowship for doing his doctorate at the Australian National University, Canberra,

Australia. He went to Canberra in June 1968 to join the Department of Human Geography, Research School of Pacific Studies, Institute of Advanced Studies. He completed his doctorate under Prof. O.H.K. Spate and Prof. A.T.A. Learmonth (his joint supervisor till 1969). The topic of his thesis was "*The Political Geography of Federalism: An Inquiry into Origins and Stability.*" Although his supervisors suggested him to take a job there, he preferred to come back to join family in India. His doctoral thesis subsequently appeared as a book under the same title, published by Macmillan (London & New Delhi) and John Wiley, New York, in 1975. It was reviewed and widely acclaimed across the world. It is still rated as one of the most valuable contributions to the field of Geography of Federalism.

Prof. Dikshit left Gorakhpur in September, 1974 and joined Department of Geography, Punjabi University, Patiala as Reader and Head. He became Professor in October 1978. In December 1984, he joined the newly formed Department of Geography, Maharshi Dayanand University (MDU), Rohtak as Professor and Head. He retired

from the same department in November 1999. It was through his academic towering personality and able leadership that the Department of Geography at MDU, Rohtak became one of the most important centres for teaching and research in the field of geography in the country. Throughout his career, he remained honest and forthright in his approach and that made him a firm academician and administrator.

He was the foremost contributor to the field of political geography including electoral geography, and geographical thought from the Indian sub-continent. He had published numerous oft-quoted books and research articles. Besides his widely acclaimed work on Geography of Federalism, his other books include Political Geography: The Spatiality of Politics (Tata McGraw Hill), Developments in Political Geography (Sage), The Art and Science of Geography, Geographical Thought (Prentice Hall) and Geography of Elections: The Indian Context (Rawat Publications). His command over both English and Hindi gave him wide readership. He had also published a number of research articles in national and international journals of high repute. His articles appeared in Annals of the Association of American Geographers, Journal of Politics, Professional Geographer, Political Geography Quarterly,

Area, Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geographie, Asian Profile, and all leading Indian geography journals. He was on the editorial board of specialized research journal Political Geography Quarterly (now Political Geography). His passion of reading and writing continued even after his retirement. The revised edition of his Political Geography (Macmillan 2020) was published posthumously.

His death is a long lasting loss to the academic world. We all will miss him; however, his continued honest pursuit of learning will continue to encourage geographers for a long time to come. He is survived by his beloved wife (Krishna Dikshit) and three children Jaya, Ashutosh, Ila, daughter-in-law and two granddaughters. His elder brother (Dr. G.D. Dikshit, retired from Department of Mathematics, University of Auckland) is living in New Zealand and younger sister in Varanasi.

May the Almighty give peace to the departed soul and strength to all his family members, friends and students to bear this loss.

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