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## IN MEMORIAM

**Prof. Vijay Kumar Sharma**

(August 23, 1944 - March 11, 2026)

With profound sorrow and with a very heavy heart I have to share that Prof. Vijay Kumar Sharma, my respected teacher, a distinguished geomorphologist, researcher and prolific author, passed away on March 11, 2026 at Kurukshetra. His departure has made the end of a long and intellectually productive academic career devoted to the study and teaching of Geography. His association with the Department of Geography, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, extended over three and a half decades, during which he made significant contributions to geomorphology, hydrology, agricultural geography, environmental studies, water resource assessment, remote sensing and land resource planning.

Prof. Sharma was born at Dharamsala in Himachal Pradesh. He did his Matriculation in 1959 and subsequently graduated from Panjab University, Chandigarh, in 1965. He continued his studies in Geography and obtained his M.A. in Geography from Panjab University, Chandigarh, in 1967. His academic career took an international turn when he proceeded to Canada for higher studies. In 1971, he obtained his M.Sc. in Geography from the University of Alberta, Canada. His masters' research was entitled as "Evapotranspiration and Water

Balance in the Sturgeon River Basin, Central Alberta." The subject of his masters' research provides an important insight into the direction of his subsequent scholarship. His early scientific interest in evapotranspiration, water balance and basin hydrology remained a recurring theme of research throughout his career. His later investigations on water resources in Haryana and snowmelt-runoff processes in the Western Himalayas can be viewed as further expressions of this sustained interest in the geographical dimensions of water.

After returning from Canada, Prof. Sharma joined the Department of Geography, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, as a Lecturer in Geography on October 04, 1971. This appointment marked the beginning of his long and distinguished association with the University. Kurukshetra University became the principal institutional home of his academic life. Prof. Sharma attained his Ph.D. degree from Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, on the topic "A Geographic Assessment of Water Resources in Haryana and their Impact on Agricultural Land Use" in 1979. The research took place under the supervision of Prof. Jasbir Singh from the

Department of Geography and Prof. N. N. Pillai of the Regional Engineering College, Kurukshetra (now known as National Institute of Technology, Kurukshetra). This has been a striking intellectual continuity with his research in M.Sc. His masters' research examined evapotranspiration and water balance in Central Alberta, while his doctoral research assessed water resources and agricultural land use in Haryana. Thus, both studies have placed the study of water within a geographical framework and highlighted the relationship between physical processes and human utilization of resources.

Prof. Sharma has published three books, namely (i) *Geomorphology: Earth Surface Processes and Forms* in 1986, (ii) *Remote Sensing for Land Resource Planning* in 1991 and (iii) *Introduction to Process Geomorphology* in 2010. Apart from these, he also co-authored two books such as (i) *Determinants of Agricultural Productivity* in 1985 and (ii) *Agro-environmental Units in Northeast Haryana-An Indian Experience* in 1988. Taken together, these books illustrate the remarkable breadth of his intellectual interests. However, major landmark among these books has been the “*Geomorphology: Earth Surface Processes and Forms and Introduction to Process Geomorphology*”, which has been an internationally accepted text books in the field of Geomorphology. His later book on *Introduction to Process Geomorphology*, published in 2010, has demonstrated that geomorphology has remained an important area of his academic interest even in the later part of his career.

Prof. Sharma published his research papers in a range of national and international academic journals of repute, including *Quaternaria*, *Journal of the Geological Society*

of India, *Nordic Hydrology*, *Geographical Review of India*, *National Geographical Journal of India*, and *The Geographer*. Out of his research papers, four that deserve a special mention, are (i) *Post-glacial Terraces of the Weed and Willow Creeks, Central Alberta* published in *Quaternaria* in 1973, (ii) “*Preliminary Investigation of Pleistocene Valley Glaciation in Part of Kangra District, Himachal Pradesh*” published in *Journal of the Geological Society of India* in 1977, (iii) *A Test of Snowmelt-Runoff Model for a Major River Basin in Western Himalayas* published in *Nordic Hydrology* in 1989 and (iv) *Linear or Nonlinear Covariance of Seasonal Snowmelt and Snow Cover in Western Himalayas* published in *Nordic Hydrology* in the year 1992. The range of journals in which his work appeared is itself an indicative of the breadth of his scholarship. All these publications have been the result of his dedication towards punctuality and hard work. Besides his own research, Prof. Sharma supervised four Ph.D. research scholars and several M.Phil. dissertations.

Another important contribution of Prof. Sharma's academic life has been his participation in the research project on “*Snow Cover, Snowmelt and Runoff in the Himalayan River Basins*”. The final technical report was published in 1988 as NASA-CR-182434. The report was jointly authored by B. Dey, V. K. Sharma, D. C. Goswami and P. Subba Rao and has been published through the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Thus, Prof. Sharma leaves behind a substantial intellectual legacy. His research papers, technical contributions and books document a career characterized by scientific curiosity, interdisciplinary research and a commitment to geographical education.

Prof. Sharma will be remembered as a dedicated teacher, an accomplished researcher, a geomorphologist and hydrologist of distinction, and, a prolific author whose work enriched geographical scholarship in India. His intellectual journey-from Central Alberta to the Himalayas and the agricultural plains of Haryana-reflects a lifetime of engagement with the processes, resources and landscapes that define our geographical world.

Prof. Sharma is survived by his beloved wife, Dr. Chander Kanta, his two daughters, Goya and Pallavi, and his son, Manu. He has been a devoted husband and a loving father who took immense pride in the achievements and lives of his children. All of his children have established themselves abroad, carrying forward the values of dedication, education, and perseverance that he cherished and

instilled in them. His family remains a lasting testament to the love, guidance, and enduring legacy he leaves behind.

His writings and research will remain part of the academic heritage of Geography, and his contribution will continue to be remembered by colleagues, students, researchers and readers of his works. His death is an irreversible loss for his family, relatives, friends, colleagues, students and academic world as a whole. He is being deeply missed and remembered for his academic excellence.

May God provide peace to the departed soul!

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