

Prof. A.P. Misra Memorial Life Time Achievement Award (2007-08)*



PROF. R.L. MUNJAL

Prof. Ram Lal Munjal was born on June 15, 1920 at Dera Ghazi Khan (Punjab) now in Pakistan. He did his high school in 1936, B.Sc. (Ag.) in 1940, M.Sc. (Ag.) Mycology and Plant Pathology in 1943 from Punjab University, Lahore and Ph.D. in Mycology and Plant Pathology in 1970 from Punjab University, Chandigarh on "Studies on Karnal bunt of wheat".

He worked as Research Assistant, Punjab Agriculture Department (1944-45), Sr. Research Assistant, Baluchistan Agriculture Department, Fruit Research Station, Quetta (1945-47). He shifted in 1947 and joined as Research Asstt. (1947-53), Asstt. Plant Pathologist (1953-56), Asstt. Systematic Mycologist (1956-57), Plant Pathologist (1957-60), and subsequently as Systematic Mycologist (Jan. 1961-Sept. 1972) in Division of Mycology and Plant Pathology, Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi. He took over as Professor and Head in Sept. 1972 in the Department of Mycology and Plant Pathology, Himachal Agriculture University, Palampur (H.P.) and continued till his superannuation in June 1980. After his retirement he joined as Emeritus Scientist at Solan.

Prof. Munjal guided several students for M.Sc. and Ph.D. program on topics covering Karnal bunt of wheat, Anthracnose of beans and also made a number of monographic studies on "Black Moulds" and other genera like *Cercospora* and *Septoria*. He is one of the pioneers in the field of Mushroom Cultivation in India and initiated Mushroom Cultivation Unit at IARI, standardized the spawn production techniques, compost preparation and casing material in collaboration with Dr. W.A. Hayes, in India. His leadership in this field encouraged many students to establish mushroom cultivation and training units in all major Agricultural Universities in the country and also to promote its cultivation in the villages around these institutions. Later he was

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involved in establishment of National Research Centre for Mushroom (ICAR) at Solan (H.P.).

Prof. Munjal has vast experience in the field of Mycology and Plant Pathology. He was involved in teaching in systematic mycology and regularly took students on mycological trips to various places in India thereby adding a large number of specimens to the herbarium (HCIO) at IARI, New Delhi. His outstanding contribution was preparation of Exsiccati sets, for distribution and exchange among International Herbaria. His other contributions are publication of series of papers entitled "Notes on Miscellaneous Indian Fungi" documenting large number of fungi from India. In recognition of his professional excellence, he was nominated as a member of Scientific Research Council of Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi.

He was awarded Rockefeller Fellowship (1956-57) for advance studies in taxonomy of fungi at CMI, Kew (UK). There he acquired the working competence of mycological tools such as Lyophilization and freeze microtome etc. This knowledge proved beneficial to Indian students at that early stage.

Prof. Munjal was appointed as Consultant of International Centre for Agriculture Research for Dry Areas (ICARDA) in 1980 where he studied disease situation in the number of crops in Egypt and recommended future research priorities for that country. Besides he was appointed FAO Consultant during September-October, 1983 and was assigned to report on the prospects of increasing mushroom production in Laos.

Prof. Munjal was elected as President of the Indian Phytopathological Society in 1981 and also Secretary of Indian Mushroom Growers Association.

In appreciation of his unparalleled contributions in the field of Plant Pathology and Mycology, IPS is pleased to honour Prof. R.L. Munjal with Prof. A.P. Misra Memorial Life Time Achievement Award for the year 2007-08.