

Dr. D. N. Barua – a tribute



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Dr. D. N. Barua, an internationally reputed Scientist, a versatile personality and a prominent senior citizen of Jorhat breathed his last on 22nd January at 8.10 a.m. due to cardiac arrest at Jorhat Christian Mission Hospital. He was 96 years. Dr. D N Barua was born on 1st July, 1916 at Jorhat in a respected family.

Dr. D. N. Barua did his Matriculation in 1934 from Jorhat Govt. High School under Culcutta University and stood first amongst Assamese students. Again, he passed I. Sc. in 1936 from Cotton College , Guwahati and stood first amongst Assamese students under Culcutta University and secured Diparu Medhi Medal. D. N Barua completed his B.Sc. (Hons.) in Chemistry from Cotton College in 1938 under Culcutta University . Later he did Ph. D. from Cambridge University , England in 1953, which was sponsored by the Management of Tocklai Experimental Station.

Dr. D N Barua joined Tocklai Experimental Station, the first and largest Tea Research Institute in the World, in 1939 as Senior Scientific Assistant. He left to England for his Ph.D works in 1949 and returned to India in 1954. He rejoined Tocklai Experimental Station as a Plant Physiologist in 1954 and promoted as Senior Botanist and Plant Physiologist in 1962. He was promoted as Deputy Director in 1972 and retired on July, 1973 at the age of 56 years. Dr. D. N. Barua had served Assam Agricultural University , Jorhat as an Adviser from July, 1973 to July, 1976 under World Bank Assignment. After that he again joined Tocklai Experimental Station as Adviser in 1977 and served long 35 years in the same position till his death. Dr. Barua worked almost 73 years in the field of Tea Science and Culture with utmost contribution. Dr. D. N. Barua's innumerable contribution in Tea Science placed Tocklai Experimental Station on a high pedestal institute in the world.

He pioneered research in many fields of Tea Science and Culture. He published more than 150 research papers which were reviewed in National and International Journals. His book "Science and Practice in Tea Culture" published in 1989 was widely circulated throughout the Tea Growing World, which has been acclaimed as the only authoritative book so far written about Tea. He attended a large number of Conferences and Seminars both in India and abroad. He received twice Nuffield Foundation Fellowship of England, once in 1964 and again in 1972.

Dr. D N Barua was associated with Dibrugarh & Gauhati University in various capacities. He was Chancellor's nominee for 9 years in the Selection Committee of Dibrugarh University. He was a member of the Standing Committee for Agricultural Research of I.C.A.R. for 6 years. He served in the Governing Body of the C.S.I.R. Complex at Palampur for 6 years. He was a member of Governing Body of J. B. College, Jorhat for 23 years and its President for two terms.

Dr. D N Barua received Dr. C. S. Venkataram award on 3rd December, 1994 from Indian Society of Plantation Crops, Kasaragod, Kerala for his outstanding contribution in Plantations Crop Research. He received Lifetime Achievement award from Tea Board India on 22nd August 1998 for his invaluable contribution in Research and Teaching for all round benefit of the Tea Industry of North East India through Tocklai Experimental Station, Jorhat. He was the first recipient of the award initiated by the Tea Board. The Dibrugarh University awarded him the honorary degree of D.Sc. in their 11th Convocation held on 22nd March 2007. Dr. D. N. Barua's name was proposed for Padmabhusan by the Convenor of Assam Valley Branch of Consultative Committee of Plantation Association in 2010, but unfortunately, there was no recommendation from our own State Government.

Till the age of 96 years, Dr. D N Barua was physically and mentally active and regularly attended his office at Tocklai Experimental Station. He reviewed scientific activities of the institute and guided the scientists. In 2009, Mr. D. M. Jayaratne, Hon'ble Prime Minister (then Minister of Plantation) of Sri Lanka on his visit to Tocklai was surprised to meet 94 years old active scientist Dr. D. N. Barua and had a long discussion. Dr. D N Barua actively participated in the World Tea Science Congress in November 2011, held in commemoration of 100 years of Tocklai Experimental Station. His last attendance in public function was on 22nd November 2011 on the inauguration of World Tea Science Congress by Dr. A P J Abdul Kalam, former President of India and Eminent Scientist.

Dr. D N Barua was an active reader and mastered in various fields. He was a good astrologer and published a book on astrology based on scientific calculations. Hindu religion, mythology, philosophy and Sanskrit language, English literature were his area of interest. He played good cricket, football during his young days. Dr. Barua was a master bridge player. He was a good Sitar player too and organised All Assam Music Competition at Jorhat in 70s. Dr. D N Barua was a courageous man and interested in traveling. In 1968, Dr. D N Barua took his family to South and Central India tour by road in his Ambassador Mark III Car and completed 7000 Kms by burning 1000 Ltrs petrol in two months. His most loved Ambassador Mark III Car is still laying in his garage.

It is not a death of a person; it is a death of an institute named Dr. D N Barua. On this day of his Adiya Shardha, we pray to almighty for his eternal peace.

by B. Chakravarty

Tea Research Association

Tocklai Experimental Station

Jorhat

editor

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