

Ram Badan Singh

Following a multi-prize-winner student career - as B.Sc. (Ag.) and M. Sc. (Ag.) (India) and Ph.D. in Genetics (USA) - taught, researched, and administered in agricultural and in multi-faculty universities - including Banaras Hindu University. Authored 12 books, and more than 300 research and them/policy papers' guided 42 doctoral-thesis students. Made original and important findings in aspects of cytogenetics, biotechnology, and plant breeding. Developed cultivars for wheat and cotton that were/are widely grown in India and elsewhere, and that contribute to food security and to economic security.

Born and brought up in and being a part of a farming family, Prof. Singh's life mission has been to better the lot of farmers and farming communities. His Lal Bahadur Shastri Memorial Lecture "Who Will Feed India - The Small Farmers" and his FAO book "Smallholder Farmers in India: Food Security and Agricultural Policy" have been trend setters and used by India and several developing countries for policy and programme formulations to enhance livelihood security of farmers.

He has led at national and international levels the movement for realization of Farmers' Rights in balance with Plant Breeders Rights in context of conservation and utilization of genetic resources and equitable sharing of the benefits accruing from these resources.

Active and innovative - as Director of the India Agricultural Research Institute (IARI - with 4500 professional and supporting staff) and as FAO's Assistant Director General for Asia-Pacific (supporting 40 member countries and more than one-half of the world's smallholding and rural landless families) - in helping prepare organizational and national and regional policies and programmes for food security and bio-security and for rural-poverty alleviation and disasters preparedness, and for fostering public-sector-to-sector-private-sector linkages, and for promoting DIVERsified and sustainable food-production systems. Notably, assisted 18 Asia-Pacific governments to define policies and procedures for priority setting for investments, programmes, and resources deployment in agricultural-technologies research and development, and to promote the concept of the research-extension-farmer-market continuum as the "green revolution" transmutes into an "evergreen revolution". Facilitated analyses that quantified the contributions of smallholdings to household and to national food security, thereby reinforcing the justifications for policies and regulations that facilitate smallholder production and value-adding enterprise.

For the Asia-Pacific, conceived and helped formulate FAO's five strategic inter-disciplinary-thrust programmes to concentrate efforts and resources on: Rice-based livelihood-support systems and the lessening of hunger and rural poverty; Livestock intensification and pro-poor enterprise; Biotechnology, biosafety, bioDIVERsity, and biosecurity: Towards an evergreen revolution; World Trade: Globalization, capacity building, and enabling policy environment; and Disasters: Early warning, prevention, preparedness, and management. Similarly, at IARI, conceptualized the Vision-2020 for inter-disciplinary organization and actions, and led the team that prepared (without external consultants) for the World Bank a \$250-million multi-disciplinary National Agriculture Technology Project. At both FAO and IARI, prepared programme proposals to secure donor fundings, and approved, regulated, and monitored the disbursement and deployment of substantial resources of funds, facilities, and personnel.

As Chair of India's Agricultural Scientists Recruitment Board, ensured a nation-wide efficient allocation of India's valuable resource of agricultural professionals

A ADG/RR of FAO, towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals and internalising the various recent international declarations, such as TRIPS, TBT, CBD and Gene Treaty in national policies and programmes, provided technical assistance to several Asian countries in these areas and organised at least a dozen of national and regional expert consultations and wrote policy papers.

A career of leadership and senior management in improving livelihood security of farmers, especially the majority small and marginal farmers, inter-disciplinary research and technology development, in higher education and in farmer education and research-extension-farmer-market linkage, in agricultural and biotechnological transformation, and in policy and programme formulation and appraisal; each directed towards sustainable food security and poverty alleviation, and each pursued in national, continental, and global capacities. Doctor of Science (honoris causa) at four universities; Gold Medal Recipient of the International Board for Plant Genetic Resources; Recipient of the Lal Bahadur Shastri Memorial International Agricultural Scientist Award, of the Outstanding Scientist Award (USA) for Agricultural Scientists of Indian origin, and the Vigyan Gaurav Samman - the Highest Science Award of the Government of Uttar Pradesh' Fellow of the Indian Academy of Sciences, of the National Academy of Sciences, and of the National Academy of Agricultural Sciences. Key note speaker at international congresses. Member and chair of Academic and Executive councils and of Boards of Management. Founder Member and Executive Secretary of the Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutes; Former President of the Indian Societies of Agricultural Sciences and of Genetics and Plant Breeding, and of the Agricultural Sciences Section of the Indian Science Congress.

In recognition of his immense contribution to the science-led transformation of agriculture towards the alleviation of hunger and poverty in India and the Asia Pacific Region, Professor R. B. Singh has been awarded the Padma Bhushan by the President - one of India's highest civilian honours that recognizes distinguished service of a high order to the nation in any field, in 2003.