

**EULOGY FOR DR. OM PRAKASH GUPTA,
BRILLIANT DIABETOLOGIST, TEACHER AND MENTOR**

This is our chance to say 'thank you' to a man who is a symbol of diabetes in India of the past, present, as well as of the future. Born in December 1929, Dr. Om Prakash Gupta had a bright, unstoppable, career, securing first position in MBBS from Agra University, passing MD (Medicine), MRCP (Endocrinology-UK) and MS (Medical Education-USA) in first attempts and receiving FRCP (UK) for his outstanding contributions with a winning spree of 26 medals, prizes and awards during his undergraduate, postgraduate and later career. Little did anyone know at that stage that Dr. Gupta was to become a doyen of diabetology in India!

We all affectionately remember Dr. Gupta in our own different ways; yet there was always something common amongst us. To all of us, he was the epitome of humility, gentleness and level-headedness which underpinned all his other wonderful attributes. He touched the lives of his countless colleagues, students and mentees. He had such an extraordinary appeal and was so great a towering personality, that any person who attempts to describe Dr. Gupta's greatness would find it difficult to do full justice to him.

His contemporaries and compatriots and whosoever had come in contact with him, will recollect Dr. Gupta's pivotal role not only in promoting the discipline of diabetology but also in the fields of teaching, patient care and administration. After a short stint as Assistant Professor of Medicine at All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, he had a rapid, but tranquil, ascent to the highest positions any medical doctor could aspire for. His appointment as Professor and Head of the Department of Medicine at the young age of 31 and Dean (Principal) of B. J. Medical College at Ahmedabad which was soon followed by his appointment as Director, Medical Education and Research and as Director, Health and Medical Services, Medical Education and Research, Government of Gujarat serve as a testament to Dr. Gupta's professional attributes. Apart from being a much sought after physician, diabetologist and endocrinologist (both among the elite and the downtrodden alike), Dr. Gupta had successfully added a valuable sheen to his professional career by publication of a large number of research papers and book chapters. His skills were also made abundantly clear through numerous orations, national and international awards, and several recognitions. To name a few, these were the Government of India Fellowship for advanced training and research in Endocrinology at the Royal Post Graduate Medical School and associated Hammersmith Hospital in London, England, WHO Fellowship for medical educational technology at University of Southern California, USA, the prestigious B C

Roy Award from the Medical Council of India and the training received at world renowned Joslin Clinic in Boston, USA, among several other glorious achievements. Furthermore, Dr. Gupta's continuing engagement as a consultant physician and diabetologist for over 30 years, even after his formal retirement, speaks volumes about his commitment towards his patients.

Dr. O.P. Gupta's seminal paper published 50 years ago titled 'A survey of the prevalence of diabetes mellitus by means of a house to house survey in Ahmedabad (Gujarat), India' came just before the first collaborative nation-wide study on Epidemiology of Diabetes Mellitus began under the sponsorship of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR). Indeed, it is fair to state that Dr. Gupta's publication was one of the papers which ignited the interest of Indian diabetologists in the field of diabetes epidemiology. When the Research Society for the Study of Diabetes in India (RSSDI) was established in 1972, Dr. Gupta was invited to lead this organization as its first President. Not only did he motivate youngsters to join the RSSDI, but, for the next half a century, he ensured his own participation in practically every annual RSSDI scientific meeting. Same was the story with regard to his participation in successive Diabetes Congresses of International Diabetes Federation (IDF) held all over the world. He was also appointed as the Chairman of the ICMR Expert Committee on Endocrinology for two years from 1972 to 1974 during which he coordinated and guided the Committee Members regarding the large number of research proposals submitted to ICMR for funding. Though an astute scientist, Dr. Gupta was open to all ideas. His work on Ayurveda drugs in diabetes reflects his inquisitiveness to explore new directions.

Sadly, Dr. Om Prakash Gupta left for his heavenly abode in April, 2021 but not without brightening our lives, not without serving countless patients and organizations and not without enlightening our way into the future of science and humanity. Dr. Gupta is survived by his wife and a daughter. All we can say that a glory has departed but he will live on in our hearts, forever. Let us feel beholden to our association with this gracious and mighty person and be worthy of him.

Dr. Vinod Kumar, Patron, RSSDI
Dr. V. Mohan, Patron, RSSDI

Dated: May 5th, 2021