

PALAEOBOTANICAL CONFERENCE AT THE BIRBAL SAHNI INSTITUTE OF PALAEOBOTANY, LUCKNOW

In celebration of its Silver Jubilee the Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeobotany organized a Palaeobotanical Conference at Lucknow, India from 5th to 11th December 1971. There was a very enthusiastic response to the two advance circulars which were issued to announce the holding of this conference. One hundred and thirtyfive abstracts of scientific papers were received before the commencement of the conference. Besides, a large number of scientists from India and abroad had expressed their desire to attend it. Unfortunately, just a day prior to the scheduled opening, war broke out in the Indian subcontinent. This affected the attendance of the foreign participants very adversely. Still, 11 of them representing Burma, Malaysia, Netherlands, U.K., U.S.A. and West Germany took part in the deliberations. However, in spite of the troubled conditions in the country, more than 200 Indian delegates from the various botanical and geological organizations, universities and institutions attended the conference.

The conference was inaugurated at the local *Ravindralaya* on 5th December by Dr. B. Gopala Reddi, Governor of Uttar Pradesh. The scientific programme was held at the Birbal Sahni Institute. It consisted of 6 symposia, 9 sessions of contributed papers and 5 special lectures. The subjects of the symposia were:

1. Early plant life.
2. Stratigraphical palynology.
3. Origin and phytogeography of angiosperms.
4. Morphological and stratigraphical palaeobotany.
5. Late Quaternary vegetational developments in extra-European areas.
6. Structure, nomenclature and classification of pollen and spores.

A total of 81 contributed papers were read and discussed in the 9 sessions. They covered all aspects of palaeobotany, dealing with plant remains ranging from Palaeozoic to sub-Recent.

The symposia will be published as special publications of the Sahni Institute. The contributed papers are being published in the regular numbers of the *Palaeobotanist*.

The special lectures delivered were:

1. *The Strange Bennettitales* (Nineteenth Sir Albert Charles Seward Memorial lecture) read for Prof. T. M. Harris by Dr. A. Wesley.
2. *Airborne surveys in the accelerated search for mineral resources in India* by Dr. K. Jacob.
3. *Nature and origin of plant viruses* by Prof. T. S. Sadasivan.
4. *Geological history of blue-green algae: a paradigm of evolutionary conservatism* by Prof. J. W. Schopf.
5. *Mesozoic floras* by Dr. A. Wesley.

An exhibition was also arranged in one of the museum halls displaying Professor Sahni's works and the important Indian fossil floras arranged stratigraphically. An important feature of the conference was the award of silver medallions to the following scientists and institutions in commemoration of the Institute's Silver Jubilee:—

1. Professor C. A. Arnold
2. Professor K. Faegri
3. Professor T. M. Harris
4. Professor O. A. Høeg
5. Professor A. G. Jhingran
6. Professor K. N. Kaul
7. Professor S. Leclercq
8. Professor T. S. Mahabale
9. Professor D. D. Pant
10. Professor R. Potonié
11. Professor A. R. Rao
12. Professor T. S. Sadasivan
13. Professor K. R. Surange
14. Professor A. L. Takhtajan
15. Geological Survey of India, Calcutta
16. Botany School, Cambridge
17. Lucknow University Botany Department, Lucknow
18. Lucknow University Geology Department, Lucknow.

The closing plenary session of the conference was held on the afternoon of 11th December, 1971.

According to the scheduled programme a post-conference palaeobotanical excursion was to be arranged covering the Mesozoic and Palaeozoic localities of Eastern India. Unfortunately, due to the disturbed conditions in India at that time this item had to be cancelled.

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