

Chandra Dutt Pant Award 2002

Introduction by Anshu K. Sinha

I deem it a matter of great pleasure to introduce Dr. Rashmi Srivastava, Scientist 'C', the recipient of Chandra Dutt Pant Award 2002. The award was instituted in the year 1952. Mrs. Srivastava is a hard working and dedicated scientist. Besides being a good scientist, she takes keen interest in extra-curricular activities of the Institute. Her devotion to the Science has brought dividends in the form of this award.

The award includes Gold Medal and a Citation. It is awarded every alternate year for the best piece of research work carried out by Scientist 'C' during the last three years.

Mrs. Srivastava was born on 19th October 1957 at Lucknow, where she had her entire education. She received her Masters Degree in Botany from the University of Lucknow in the year 1977. Thereafter she joined research under Prof. B. S. Trivedi, FNA, at Botany Department, Lucknow University for her Ph. D. In 1980 she did Proficiency Certificate course in French Language from the same University.

Rashmi started her career in the Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeobotany (BSIP) as Junior Scientific Assistant in March 1981 and worked on Lower Cretaceous Flora of South Rewa Gondwana Basin, India. In 1985, she was promoted as a Senior Scientific Assistant. Since then she has been working on morphotaxonomy of Upper Cretaceous–Tertiary plant megafossils of India and their palaeoclimatic and phytogeographical significance. In the same year she was awarded Ph.D. Degree on the topic "Contributions to the fossil woods of Deccan Intertrappean flora of Madhya Pradesh".

Dr. Rashmi Srivastava carried out work on sedimentary sequences associated with Deccan Traps of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Gujarat. She also worked on floristics, morphotaxonomy, palaeoclimatology and phytogeography of Neogene plant fossils of Warkalli Beds, Kerala; Ratnagiri Beds, Maharashtra; Pre-Siwalik and younger sediments of lesser

Himalayas of Himachal Pradesh and Jammu region and made extensive collection of plant megafossils from different Deccan Intertrappean and other Tertiary exposures of India. She is also associated with a DST Sponsored Project entitled "Cretaceous megafloreal and coprolitic derived plant assemblage from the Deccan trap associated sedimentary sequences in Dongargaon–Pisdura area, Maharashtra" as Co-Principal Investigator.

She was selected to visit Japan in 1998 under International Scientific Exchange Programme between Indian National Science Academy (INSA) and Japan Society for Promotion of Science (JSPS). During her stay in Japan she worked on Oligocene fossil wood of Fukuoka Prefecture, Kyushu Island and published a paper with Prof. M. Suzuki. She has also worked on the fossil woods of Indonesia and developed a collaborative programme with Japanese and Indonesian scientists, which is under progress.

Rashmi has visited different palaeobotanical centres of Japan and delivered lectures in different Institutions. She was invited to present paper on Systematic Anatomy of fossil woods in the Tertiary flora of India during International Wood Anatomy Conference held at Rotorua, New Zealand in 1994. She has about 40 publications to her credit in leading National and International Journals.

Rashmi is actively engaged in planning and development of National Fossil Park at Ghughua, Madhya Pradesh for which she contributed to the preparation of a lay out plan and identified fossil specimens exhibited in the park.

Rashmi is a sincere worker with devotion and conviction to palaeobotanical researches. She is lively, amicable and a good singer.

Rashmi deserves the honour being bestowed on her - *Chandra Dutt Pant Medal* for the year 2002 and I wish her all success in her life.

Response by Rashmi Srivastava

I was delighted when I heard that I had been selected for the Chandra Dutt Pant Medal 2001 in recognition of my research work for the last three years. I am indeed honoured and would like to express my gratitude to all those who helped me achieve this prestigious award. November 14th, 2002 was a red letter day in my career, when the Chandra Dutt Pant Medal was awarded to me. I would like to take this opportunity to thank

Prof. Anshu Kumar Sinha, Director, Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeobotany, Lucknow for his continuous encouragement and the members of selection committee who found me worthy of this honour.

I could recollect my memories of 25 years back, when I was a M. Sc. student and got married to a Palaeobotanist of the BSIP, Dr. Ashwini Kumar Srivastava. At that time, it was

my great desire to opt Palaeobotany as a career and accordingly I pursued research in Palaeobotany under Prof. B. S. Trivedi of the Botany Department, Lucknow University, on fossil woods from Deccan Intertrappean beds of Madhya Pradesh soon after passing M.Sc.

I was fortunate enough to get a job in BSIP as Junior Scientific Assistant in March, 1981. Since then I worked on Lower Cretaceous flora of South Rewa Gondwana Basin, India; Deccan Intertrappean flora of Central India and Gujarat and many Neogene exposures of Kerala, Maharashtra and Extra-Peninsular area. Besides, I also got an opportunity to work upon Japanese and Indonesian material.



I'll forever be indebted to my guide, Prof. B.S. Trivedi and my senior colleague Dr. J. S. Guleria, who shaped my scientific career with their able guidance which enabled me to achieve what I am today. I also offer deep gratitude to my senior Drs. R. N. Lakhanpal and N. Awasthi for giving valuable suggestions whenever needed.

I would like to dedicate this award to my parents for inculcating in me the discipline and zeal to work hard and softly for nothing but the best. I am extremely grateful to my husband Dr. Ashwini K. Srivastava for being so supportive and encouraging.

I would also like to put a word of thanks for my daughter Swapnil for providing a peaceful and conducive atmosphere at home and volunteering to do house hold work, including cooking whenever I had some urgent work on hand. And at last but not the least I want to thank all my colleagues for their help without which all this would have not been possible.