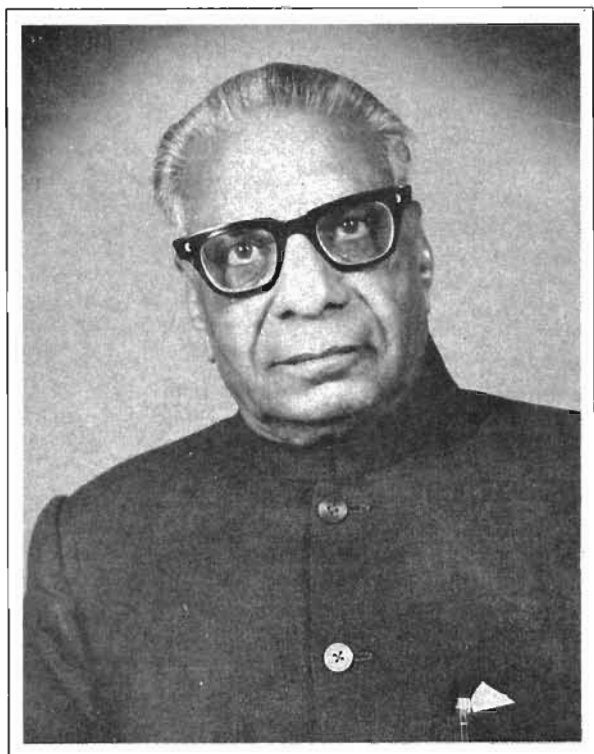# Professor K. M. Gupta
(1908-1987)

Professor K. M. Gupta was born on October 27, 1908 at Beawar in Rajasthan. He got his early education at Beawar and Agra. He got his Master's Degree in Botany from the Lucknow University in 1932. He was very much impressed with Professor Birbal Sahni, and joined research under his able guidance in the Department of Botany, Lucknow University. In 1932, he accompanied Professor Sahni on an excursion to the Rajmahal Hills, Bihar when the Nipania locality, famous for petrified plant remains particularly those of the Pentoxyleae, was discovered. He worked on "The anatomy and theoretical significance of homoxylous angiosperms" for his Doctoral Thesis. Professor Gupta studied both extant (*Trochodendron, Tetracentron, Drimys* and *Zygogynum*) and extinct plants (Cycadeoideas and Bucklandias) in this connection and came to the conclusion that *Homoxylon rajmahalensis* Sahni was not an angiosperm but a Bennettitalean wood. He was awarded the Ph.D. Degree in Palaeobotany from Lucknow University in the year 1936.

Professor Gupta published a large number of papers on plant fossils, especially from the Rajmahal Hills. He investigated in detail a number of species of the water fern *Marsilea*, especially those found in Rajasthan and wrote a Monograph on the genus.

Professor Gupta started his professional career as a teacher at M.T.B. College, Surat (Maharashtra) in 1936. Later on he taught at Dungar College, Bikaner; Jaswant College, Jodhpur; and Government College, Ajmer. He was appointed Professor and Head of Botany Department, University of Jodhpur in 1967. Professor Gupta did great service to the Indian palaeobotany by introducing palaeobotany in the syllabi of University of Rajasthan and University of Jodhpur.

After superannuation Professor Gupta joined the spiritual mission '*Sahaj Marg*' and devoted his time to it. He passed away on July 20, 1987 at the age of seventynine. He will be long remembered by his many students and fellow palaeobotanists.

B. D. Sharma