



## **Professor Ambadas Shripatrao Jadhav**

(4<sup>th</sup> August 1956 – 11<sup>th</sup> March 2021)

The geographical fraternity lost yet another promising geographer and eminent scholar Prof. Ambadas Shripatrao Jadhav, a former professor at Bombay University who passed away on 11th March 2021. A remarkable professor, researcher, and colleague, professor Jadhav will be remembered for his distinctive contribution to the field of geography and as a fierce academic activist who fought constant battles for the rights of his students and fellow teachers not only in the university where he taught but also in the state of Maharashtra and the country as a whole.

Professor Jadhav had a humble background but had an amazing academic journey that distinguished him from most others. Born on 4th August 1956 in a non-descript village Raje Rai Takali in Khultabad Taluka of Aurangabad district in the Marathwada region of Maharashtra, he received his early education in the village

itself. After completing senior school from Aurangabad in 1974, he joined Milind college of Marathwada University, Aurangabad where he completed his graduation and post-graduation in 1977 and 1979 respectively. His brilliance and industrious qualities caught the attention of his teachers Dr. Mandavdhare and Dr. Jai Kumar Magar who encouraged him to pursue research at the premier institute of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) at New Delhi. Dr. Jadhav proved himself by easily securing a seat in this prestigious University to do M.Phil./Ph.D. in the Centre for the Study of Regional Development, and completed M.Phil. under the supervision of a very distinguished Prof. M. H. Qureshi in the year 1981. His thirst for upgrading his skills as a researcher did not stop here. At a time when Photo Interpretation and Remote Sensing technology was at its incipient stage of training imparted to a select few, Dr. Jadhav

took the challenge and joined the course offered by the Indian Institute of Remote Sensing, Dehra Dun to complete a diploma in the field in the year 1983. He returned to JNU to pursue his Ph.D. but took a break from the research to join Shivaji University, Kolhapur as an assistant professor in 1984. He completed his Ph.D. research to get the award in 1995. His desire for even better training as a researcher brought him to South Dakota State University, Brookings, SD, USA wherefrom he earned his Post-Doctorate in 1996. From Raje Rai village to JNU and South Dakota State University in the USA has been an incredible story of Prof. Jadhav which transformed his world view and his approach to teaching and research. He took upon himself the duty to help and mentor the most deprived and underprivileged sections of the society who he found extremely talented but lacking in resources to rise in life and compete with the more privileged ones among them. While teaching and doing research in the Department of Geography, he guided the UPSC and MPSC aspiring candidates. He was also active in the welfare of teachers and took a keen interest in the Teachers Association to promote the interests of the teachers and bringing improvements in the quality of teaching in the university as well as in many of the affiliated colleges. He was passionately involved in improving the quality of education of students belonging to the most down-trodden communities studying in the university. Though extremely soft-spoken and amicable, he was firm in his commitments to providing social justice to the students coming from underprivileged classes.

His commitments to academic excellence and the strengths of his achievements

earned him the position of a Professor in the Department of Geography in the year 2002 where he continued till his retirement in the year 2016. Soon after joining the department, he brought about sweeping changes during his headship that improved the general academic environment. He served as a member of the senate and management council at Mumbai University and was appointed to the Board of Studies. He also contributed to enrich the academics of different universities in his capacity as a member of the Board of Teaching and Research. Apart from Geography, he also contributed a lot to develop African Studies as a member of its Board of Studies. He was associated with various professional societies and organizations like Indian Remote Sensing, Dehra Dun; Indian Institute of Geographers, Pune; American Society of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing, Baltimore, USA; as Secretary and Life member of Shivaji University Bhoogol Shikshak Sangh, Kolhapur; member of the Geographical Society of India, Chennai; Indian National Cartographic Association, Hyderabad; Maharashtra Bhoogol Parishad, Pune and National Association of Geographers, India (NAGI). His versatility and outspoken nature were appreciated by one and all. He was a favourite speaker in most academic meetings, conferences, and seminars held in Maharashtra and outside. He has delivered more than 150 lectures in several universities across the country on diverse topics related to remote sensing and socio-economic, political, and development planning issues.

As many as eight students earned their Doctoral degrees under his supervision and five of them were still working even after his retirement. He was widely travelled all over the globe to deliver lectures and present his

research findings in seminars and conferences held in the United Kingdom (1985), The Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland (1986), Thailand (1989), Nepal (1990), the USA (for his Post-doctorate fellowship (1994-96) and Sri Lanka (2016).

Before his retirement he was heading the Academy of Administrative Careers as its Director in Mumbai University, a position he was requested to hold even after his retirement. However, he was offered to lead Smt. Devkibai Mohansinhji Chauhan College of Commerce and Science, Silvassa, Dadra, and Nagar Haveli as its Principal which he accepted in 2017. His eagerness to learn was so great that he completed a bachelor degree in law only a few months before his demise.

He is survived by his wife Ujwala Jadhav, presently, an Associate Professor and Head of the Department of Life Science in Mumbai University, and his only son, Nikhil Namit, working as an Assistant Director in the Mumbai Film Industry.

In the passing away of Prof. Jadhav, Indian Geography has lost one of its most dynamic geographers. His absence will be felt by all his students, colleagues, and friends who knew him personally or through his works.

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