

# FRI gets Somdev herbarium in donation

With this, 2,000 more specimens now in its kitty

## Collecting plants a spiritual experience for the botanist



Vijaya Sharma, wife of late Prof Somdev Sharma, inaugurates the herbarium she donated to the FRI on Wednesday. TRIBUNE PHOTO: VINOD PUNDIR

### TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

DEHRADUN, JUNE 1

The country's second largest herbarium at the Forest Research Institute (FRI) is enriched as it gets the most credible specimens from the late botanist Somdev Sharma's herbarium.

As many as 20,000 specimens have been added to the FRI herbarium that has come through a process of donation made by family members of Somdev Sharma. The donation was made at a function held at the FRI herbarium here today.

Somdev's wife Vijaya Sharma (87) and son Vivek Sharma handed over the private herbarium to the FRI authorities. Vivek Sharma said 'Herbarium Somdev' was the largest private col-

lection in India which was earlier housed in simple surroundings at his residence on Balbir Road here.

He said his father's last wish was that it be put to good use for the scientific community and the nation as a whole. "According to his desires, my mother Vijaya Sharma has donated his collection to the FRI," he said.

The section at the FRI will be dedicated to Prof Somdev for his valuable contribution to the field of taxonomy.

Dr Wazabat Hussain recalled his student days in the 50s and remembered his teacher Somdev Sharma with love and affection. The handing over of the herbarium was possible due to the efforts of Dr Mahesh Bhandari, a former student

of the botanist, and Dr Ashwani Kumar, Director General, ICFRE.

Somdev was a faculty with the Botany Department of DAV (PG) College, Dehradun and had collected the flora specimens from different parts of the state and the neighbouring areas through sheer hard work.

The FRI will now study all these specimens. Besides having advantage of getting a rare specimen among the new additions, getting an additional specimen of a particular species of flora will be an added advantage.

FRI Director Dr Savita said the specimens that had now become part of the FRI's herbarium were certainly a valuable addition and would be of immense benefit for researchers.

### TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

DEHRADUN, JUNE 1

This is what he believed in all his life. To impart knowledge was like a religion to him and his passion to share set him apart from this world. His knowledge was his God and the quest for it his religion.

Professor Somdev Sharma was born in 1925 in Ajmer to the parents who were very much part of the freedom struggle. Much of his early childhood was spent in Churiala, a village in Uttarakhand, living the life of what every child would dream - being one with nature.

He grew up to be the only person to take up botany in his family of eminent lawyers and judges. His excursions to the Himalayas to study some of the rarest and endangered species were a quest. One particular plant among them is in the UN redbook of endangered plants, *eremostachys superba*, was collected by him during one of his excursions. This was nothing less than any spiritual experience for him. His field books are a narration not only of the plant he collected but a complete anthropological study of that region.

He also had some local volunteers to collect plants



RENOWNED BOTANIST SOMDEV SHARMA

### A passionate expert

- His residence also has many rare plants and orchids growing in the garden
- His home was an open house to all researchers, students and enthusiasts who would come in search for plant information from all over the world
- His taxonomic knowledge was so amazing that he could close his eyes, touch the bark of a tree and identify the tree, its species and habitat
- He was among the very few who were known for their deep knowledge in taxonomy.

for him and learn the subject from him. He would teach them ways to press plants and how to record their findings in a similar field book he carried.

Prof Somdev passed away on January 29, 2005, leaving behind a vast legacy in the form of his personal herbarium with about 20,000 specimens which he collected over 40 years mostly from the Garhwal and Kumaon Himalayas, the Shivaliks and Doon Valley, Haridwar and Rishikesh.

He also left behind hundreds of illustrations and two unfinished books on bamboos and grasses. This is undoubtedly the largest private collection in India. Herbarium Somdev, housed in simple surroundings at his residence 13, Balbir Road, is a national resource. His last wishes was that it should be put to good use for the scientific community and the nation as a whole.

His pioneering effort in the book, "The Orchid Flora of North West Himalaya" is a first of its kind in India.

Prof Somdev in his long and illustrious teaching at DAV College, Dehradun, and research career of 40 years in which he has taught and inspired students would like to keep his name and dedication to plant sciences alive.

He is survived by his wife, Vijaya Sharma, who lives in Dehradun and his son, Vivek Sharma, who is a publisher and lives in Delhi.

# Prof Som Deva Herbarium donated to Forest Research Institute

DEHRADUN,  
JUNE 1 (HTNS)

In a grand event held at Forest Research Institute, Vijaya Sharma, wife of Prof Sharma, donated 20,000 herbarium specimens collected by Late Prof Som Deva Sharma to Botany Division, FRI.

Family members, friends, relatives and several students of Prof. Sharma, attended the event. Professor Som Deva Herbarium is the largest private collection of flowering plants in India.

Vijaya Sharma expressed her gratitude to FRI for arranging a separate section of her husband's magnificent collection of herbarium specimens along with world renowned FRI (DD) Herbarium. She personally thanked Dr Ashwani Kumar, DG, ICFRE, Dr GS Goraya, DDG (Research), ICFRE and Dr Savita, Director, FRI

for taking keen interest in the entire process and expressed her satisfaction over the arrangement and upkeep of specimens.

Vijaya Sharma was later felicitated by DG, ICFRE and Director, FRI and assured her of proper maintenance of their proud possession.

All the students of Prof Sharma shared beautiful memories of their teacher.

Prof Som Deva Sharma was a dedicated botanist



known for his considerable contribution to Taxonomy of Plants. He taught Plant Taxonomy at DAV College, Dehradun, for over 30 years, and is well known among his fraternity as an ardent botanist and an outstanding teacher.

His students have named two plant species on his name to mark their respect for him viz. *Dendrocalamus somdevai* and *Gentiana somdevai*.

He published over 30 research papers in international and national journals. One of his most notable works is his book on, 'The Orchid Flora of North-West Himalaya'. He collected one plant listed in IUCN Red Data Book of endangered plants, *Eremostachyssuperba*. He developed his personal Herbarium at his residence, which was today donated to FRI.

# Late botanist Som Dev Sharma's herbarium donated to FRI

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2/6/16 - FEE

**Prof Sharma was noted for considerable contribution to taxonomy of plants**



**PNS ■ DEHRADUN**

Containing more than 20,000 specimens collected over a period of 40 years mostly from the Garhwal and Kumaon Himalayas, the Shivaliks and Doon Valley, Haridwar and Rishikesh by the late botanist professor Som Dev Sharma, this private herbarium was donated to the botany division of Forest Research Institute by the late professor's wife Vijaya Sharma as it was his wish that that the collection be put to good use for the scientific fraternity and the Nation as a whole. The Professor Somdeva Herbarium

is considered to be the largest private collection of flowering plants in India.

It is pertinent to mention here that the late Professor Sharma was a dedicated botanist noted for considerable contribution to taxonomy of plants. Among the 30 plus of his research papers in national and international, one of his most notable works in his book on 'The Orchid Flora of North-West Himalaya' apart from which a plant (*Eremostachys superb*) listed in IUCN Red Data Book of endangered plants, was collected by him.

Having taught plant taxon-

omy at the DAV College in Dehradun for more than 30 years, his students have named two plant species on him- *Dendrocalamussomdevai* and *Gentianasomdevai* in his honour.

His Herbarium collections along with illustrations, personal library and papers will be kept in a separate section of the Systematic Botany Division of FRI. This section will solely be dedicated to Prof Som Dev for his valuable contribution in the field of taxonomy. An old student of his, Dr Mahesh Bhandari and the Indian Council of Forestry and Education (ICFRE) Ashwani,

Kumar are said to have played major role in facilitating the development.

Professor Som Deva Sharma single-handedly his collection for decades with more than 20,000 specimens of Angiosperms from north India covering Upper Gangetic Plains, Shivaliks, Chakrata Hills and various parts of Greater Himalaya. Perhaps it is one of the largest private collections of flowering plants in the country.

It will be recalled that he undertook excursions to the Himalayas to study some of the rarest and endangered species



प्रसिद्ध वनस्पति विज्ञानी प्रो. सोमदेव के हर्बेरियम नमूनों को एफआरआइ के सुपुर्द किया गया। इस अवसर पर आइसीएफआरई महानिदेशक डॉ. अश्विनी ने प्रो. सोमदेव की पत्नी को स्मृति स्वरूप पौधा भेंट किया।

## प्रसिद्ध वनस्पति विज्ञानी का संकलन एफआरआइ को सुपुर्द

दिनांक 02/06/16 - PHE

जागरण संवाददाता, देहरादून : प्रसिद्ध वनस्पति विज्ञानी प्रो. सोमदेव शर्मा की मृत्यु के बाद उनके 20 हजार हर्बेरियम नमूनों को वन अनुसंधान संस्थान (एफआरआइ) के सुपुर्द किया गया। यह देश का निजी स्तर पर सबसे बड़ा हर्बेरियम संकलन है। इसे संस्थान की बॉटनी डिविजन के विश्वविख्यात डीडी हर्बेरियम में अलग से रखा गया। यहां पहले से करीब तीन लाख वनस्पतियों के नमूने हैं।

बुधवार को स्व. प्रो. सोमदेव की पत्नी विजयलक्ष्मी शर्मा ने अपने पति के हर्बेरियम संकलन को एफआरआइ के सुपुर्द किया। प्रो. सोमदेव के संकलन को हमेशा के लिए जिंदा रखने की व्यवस्था करने के लिए उन्होंने भारतीय चार्जिकी अनुसंधान एवं शिक्षा परिषद (आइसीएफआरई)

♦ स्व. प्रो. सोमदेव शर्मा के 20 हजार हर्बेरियम नमूने उनकी पत्नी विजयलक्ष्मी ने किया भेंट

के महानिदेशक डॉ. अश्विनी कुमार, उप महानिदेशक जीएस गौगया, एफआरआइ की निदेशक डॉ. सविता का आभार जताया। अधिकारियों ने आश्चर्य व्यक्त किया कि प्रो. सोमदेव हर्बेरियम के नमूनों को सुरक्षित व संरक्षित रखा जाएगा। स्व. प्रो. सोमदेव शर्मा टैक्सोनामी आफ प्लांट्स के क्षेत्र में उत्कृष्ट योगदान के लिए जाने जाते हैं। उन्होंने 30 वर्षों तक इस विषय का अध्यापन कार्य भी किया। इस विषय पर उनके 30 से अधिक शोध पत्र राष्ट्रीय-अंतरराष्ट्रीय स्तर पर प्रकाशित हो चुके हैं। यह हर्बेरियम उन्होंने अपने निवास स्थान पर ही विकसित किया था।

राष्ट्रीय साहारा 2/6/16

## एफआरआई को भेंट किये 20 हजार हरबेरियम नमूने

■ देहरादून।

सहारा न्यूज ब्यूरो

वनस्पति विज्ञानी स्व. प्रोफेसर सोमदेव शर्मा की पत्नी विजय लक्ष्मी शर्मा ने बुधवार को वन अनुसंधान संस्थान (एफआरआई) को 20 हजार हरबेरियम नमूने भेंट किये। ये हरबेरियम नमूने प्रोफेसर शर्मा द्वारा संकलित किये गये थे। प्रोफेसर सोमदेव हरबेरियम भारत में पुष्पी पौधों का सबसे बड़ा निजी संकलन है। भारतीय

वनिकी अनुसंधान एवं शिक्षा परिषद के महानिदेशक डा. अश्वनी कुमार व एमआरआई की निदेशक डा. सविता की मौजूदगी में श्रीमती शर्मा ने संस्थान के वनस्पति वैज्ञानिकों को हरबेरियम नमूने भेंट किये। इस अवसर पर प्रोफेसर शर्मा के पारिवारिक सदस्य, मित्रगण व स्कूली छात्र

भी उपस्थित रहे।

वन अनुसंधान संस्थान द्वारा इन हरबेरियम नमूनों को रखने के लिए अलग अनुभाग की व्यवस्था की गई है। विभागीय अधिकारियों ने आश्वस्त किया कि प्रोफेसर शर्मा द्वारा संकलित घरोहर (हरबेरियम नमूने) का

उचित अनुरक्षण किया जायेगा। प्रोफेसर शर्मा टैक्सोनॉमी ऑफ प्लांट्स के लिए समर्पित व अपने उकृष्ट योगदान के लिए जाने जाते हैं। उन्होंने तीन दशक तक डीएवीपीजी कालेज में प्लांट्स टैक्सोनॉमी का अध्ययन

वनस्पति विज्ञानी स्व.  
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में बना अलग अनुभाग

किया। उनके विद्यार्थियों ने उनके सम्मान में दो वनस्पति प्रजातियों का वैज्ञानिक नाम उनके (प्रो. शर्मा) नाम पर रखा। ये वनस्पति प्रजाति हैं डेंड्रोकेलेमस सोमदेवई व जैनटिआना सोमदेवई। प्रो. शर्मा ने 30 से अधिक राष्ट्रीय व अंतरराष्ट्रीय शोध पत्र भी प्रकाशित किये थे।