

REMEMBRANCE



Professor (Dr.) Mansaram Sukhdeo Patil
(15 July 1940 – 04 March 2025)

It is with profound sorrow that we record the passing of Professor (Dr.) Mansaram Sukhdeo Patil, an eminent mycologist, distinguished academician, and revered teacher, whose contributions to the discipline of botany—particularly fungal taxonomy—remain unparalleled.

Born on 15 July 1940 in Ajang village, Malegaon Tehsil, Nashik District (Maharashtra), Professor Patil came from a humble background. He received his schooling in Marathi-medium institutions at Ajang, Vadel, and Ravalgaon, later completing matriculation at Mahatma Gandhi Vidyamandir, Malegaon. He pursued his B.Sc. in Chemistry at M.S.G. College, Malegaon (1965) and went on to obtain an M.Sc. in Botany from the University of Poona in 1967. In 1968, he commenced research at the Department of Botany, Poona University, under the guidance of the eminent mycologist Prof. (Dr.) S.D. Patil. His doctoral studies on the fungi of south-western Maharashtra laid the groundwork for a lifelong dedication to fungal systematics.

Professor Patil's professional career began in 1971 at Science College, Karad, and from 1972 to 2000, he served at Shivaji University, Kolhapur, where he rose to become Professor and Head of the Department of Botany. During his tenure, he initiated specialized academic programmes in Sericulture, Agrochemicals, and Pest Management, thereby expanding the scope of applied Botany within the university. Over a career spanning more than four decades, Professor Patil established himself as an authority on the systematics of Ascomycetes, Basidiomycetes, and several lesser-known fungal groups. He had an extraordinary ability to communicate complex concepts with clarity, making him a beloved mentor to generations of students. Affectionately referred to as a "Living Encyclopedia", he was admired for his vast knowledge, eloquence, and storytelling ability, which captivated audiences both inside and outside the classroom.

A prolific researcher, Professor Patil published over 100 scientific papers in reputed national and international journals. He described more than 100 new fungal species and over a dozen novel genera, substantially enriching the field of fungal taxonomy. His scholarly contributions were enhanced by collaborations with renowned international mycologists, including Dr. I.R. Hall (New Zealand), Prof. N.C. Schenck (USA), Dr. J.M. Trappe (USA), Dr. R.W.G. Dennis (UK), Dr. R.F. Cain (Canada), and Dr. Kálmán Vánky (Germany).

As a supervisor, Professor Patil guided over 20 doctoral and M.Phil. scholars, many of whom went on to build distinguished careers. Even after retirement, he remained academically active as Visiting Professor at the University of Poona and through his participation in lectures, conferences, and faculty development programmes. He also contributed significantly on academic and administrative bodies, earning respect for his integrity and discipline.

Beyond academia, he was known for his humility, love of gardening, and talent as a Marathi poet. A mentor who fostered inclusivity and collaboration, his life journey—from modest beginnings to an illustrious career—epitomized perseverance and dedication. Professor Patil leaves behind a legacy of scholarship, mentorship, and human values that will continue to inspire the scientific community.

..... *May his legacy continue to inspire.*

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