

Surjit Singh – An obituary

Surjit Singh, Professor of Chemistry at the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras died on 6 September 1997.

Surjit obtained his B Sc and M Sc degrees in chemistry from Agra University, and obtained his Ph D degree from IIT, Kanpur under the guidance of C. N. R. Rao. After his Ph D, he was a post-doctoral Fellow at the University of Calgary, Canada. He was also an NRC/CIDA Research Fellow in Canada during 1968–69 and also later during 1975–76. He joined the Chemistry Department of IIT, Madras as a Lecturer in 1969, became an Asst. Professor in 1971 and a Professor at Regional Sophisticated Instrumentation Centre (RSIC) in 1979. He was a Fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation working at the University of Marburg, Germany and later a DFG Visiting Professor at the University of Siegen, Germany. In 1995 he visited Japan on an INSA–JSPS fellowship.

He was elected to the Fellowships of the Indian Academy of Sciences, Bangalore in 1986 and the Indian National Science Academy, New Delhi in 1988. He was awarded the INSA Asundi Memorial Award for research in Physical Chemistry, 1994. He has made signal contributions to theoretical and experimental aspects of intermolecular inter-

actions, vibrational and Raman spectroscopy, molecular association, solvation phenomena, etc. He showed how Raman spectra of solutions of electrolytes in dipolar solvents give definite evidence to anion molecular interactions through the CH₃ groups. Some of his studies focused on the effect of cooperativity in stabilization of liquid structures. Isotropic Raman spectra



of solutions have been used for the evaluation of vibrational relaxation times which have given information on the structure and stability of complexed species. He has also done extensive *ab initio* calculations on solvated ions and ion pairs.

Surjit Singh has made important contributions to curriculum development, teaching and research of the Chemistry Department of IIT, Madras. His elective

courses on advanced molecular spectroscopy were very well received even by the physics students. Surjit has guided a large number of students for Ph D degree in Chemistry, and they now occupy important academic and administrative positions in institutions across the world.

Apart from having been an excellent academician, Surjit was a marvelous human being, always helping his friends and colleagues with a generosity surpassed by none. In his demise, the Indian scientific community, the Indian Institute of Technology and the Regional Sophisticated Instrumentation Centre have lost one of their most beloved personalities. The community of chemists will fondly remember him with admiration and affection. Surjit Singh (born on 12 June 1994 at Jhelum), son of Mrs and Mr Budh Singh leaves behind his wife Baljit Kaur and two daughters.

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