

OBITUARY :

PROFESSOR NIRMAL CHANDRA SINHA THE FOUNDER DIRECTOR SRIT AN APPRISAL OF HIS CONTRIBUTION

Prof. Nirmal Chandra Sinha, Director of the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology, Deorali who was leading a retired life in Siliguri, passed away at Sunrise Nursing Home in Siliguri at about 7.25 P.M. on Sunday, the 3rd August 1997. According to his eldest son, Mr. Ajay Sinha, a senior Secretary in the West Bengal Government, who was near his side at the fateful hour told the Gangtok Times that he passed peacefully. Mr. Ajay Sinha and Mr. Alok Sinha and Mr. C. D. Rai and his son Mr. P. D. Rai join the funeral procession from Sikkim. The procession reached the Buddhist Monastery in Gurung Busty and Khadas was offered as a last respect to the departed soul. After a brief



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Buddhist ceremony by the inmate monks of the gompa, the lama chanted sermon wishing him liberation from the bondage of earthly attachment. This was befitting for Prof. Sinha that Buddhist monks chanted sermons for this departed soul who more than two decades served the August Internationally famed Mahayana Buddhist Institution and Prime source inspiration for contributing multifarious aspects of Buddhism and history of Tibet, Central Asia Himalaya at large.

The Late Maharaj Kumar of Sikkim, Palden Thondup Namgyal was the moving force behind the establishment of the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology with the blessing of the Chogyal Sir Tashi Namgyal. On the strong recommendation by the Maharaj Kumar of Sikkim, Prof. N. C. Sinha was appointed as the first founder Director of the Sikkim Research Institute of Tibetology. During his long tenure as the Director of the Institute Prof. Sinha looked upon as a great friend of the Royal families of Sikkim and Bhutan.

From his early years, Prof. Sinha had developed a taste and flair for writing articles and books. The noble tradition he maintained as he used to write articles for Sikkim Express and Gangtok Times. After his final retirement from this Institute of Tibetology in the year 1987 Prof. Sinha made his stay at Siliguri because he wanted to be near the Himalayas. Even after his retirement he contributed several learned papers on Dharma and Ashoka in the Bulletin of Tibetology. He devoted his studies in the field of Mahayana, Tantrayana, Buddhism, History of Lamaist Polity on Tibet, China, Central Asian relations and contributed papers in Bulletin of Tibetology and other leading Journals of India and abroad.

His last contribution 'Lenin and Buddhism' was published in Gangtok Times on July 19-25. He contributed moving article 'My passage to Buddha' - Field (G. T. Sept-Oct 28-04). He initiated Bulletin of Tibetology under the guidance of then crown prince Palden Thondup Namgyal in 1964 and contributed many learned papers on Religion, Philosophy and Statecraft etc. He published all those papers from Firma K.L.M. Calcutta and Sikkim Govt. Press, Gangtok with the following titles - 'Asian Studies', 'Prolegomena to Lamaist Polity' (K.L.M. Calcutta, 1969), 'Inner Asian Studies' 'How Chinese was China's Tibet Region' - a question of History (Printed at the Sikkim Darbar Press, December 1966). The epigraphist and a leading historian and astute diplomatic Mr. Hugh E. Richardson has the rare distinction of possessing a deep on the spot knowledge of the traditions and customs of Tibet and her neighbours. Remarks in the Foreword 'It is that philosophical and popular - theoretical foundation for the view of the chartist right to rule also in worldly affairs with which Mr. N. C. Sinha deals principally in his short study. His examinations, in the light of the chain of thought form the formula of Refuge, though the active role of the protective Bodhisattva, to the conjunction of religious and political function in the union of Chhos and Srid is illustrated and substantiated by a wealth of references to Sanskrit and Tibetan canonical texts and to Mongolian and Chinese usage as well (viii).

In 1965 Prof. Sinha wrote a scholarly introduction to the reprint of Work 'Indian Pandits in the Land of Snow' the classic work of Sarat Chandra Das. In 1965 Prof. Sinha delivered a paper at the Seminar on the Teaching of Chinese History and Language in Indian Universities, Panjab University, Chandigarh December, 12, 14, 1966, this paper was enthusiastically applauded by the learned gatherings. In then, Bulletin Information Service of India (vol. xix. No. 16,22 December 1966, Gangtok) Sikkim an Appreciation was published. A book selection of Sinha's Research paper with some title was published by the Institute, 1966. Another selection of Research Paper under the title 'Consideration on Inner Asian History' in 1967. Prof. Sinha has delivered innumerable learned papers in many leading Universities of India and abroad on the aspects of Asia and Buddhism in learned societies also.

In appreciation of contribution and maintaining mutual friendly bond between erstwhile protectorate kingdom and India, he was awarded the 'Padma Shri' on the occasion of Republic Day of India in 1971 when he reached the age of 60. Earlier, he was also awarded the Prestigious 'Pema Dorjee' for his extraordinary contribution of Buddhism, Tibetan Studies - by the Chogyal of Sikkim in the sixties.

Prof. N. C. Sinha was born in Ranchi and was post graduate of Presidency College, Calcutta. He was sometime Prof. of History, Behrampur College, he has the distinction to work under Dr. Triguna Sen in Indian Archive, New Delhi.

After his retirement in 1971-72, he was appointed Centenary Professor of Interantional relations, University of Calcutta. In 1955, he joined Political Office (Residency) in the capacity of Cultural Attache. In 1956 he had enviable

opportunity to visit Tibet as one of the member of delegations sent to Tibet by the Government of India to invite H. H. The Dalai Lama XIVth and Panchen Lama and other leading incarnate lamas for participation during 2500th Buddha Jayanti in the year 1956. He draw immense inspiration for all out study of Tibetan History and Culture. He made a relentless crusade against the apathy and indifference of modern historians in the study of the Inner Asia with its utmost important owing to Geo-Political problem that prevail in Asia since 1st half of 20th century through the media-Bulletin of Tibetology and other leading Journals and through innumerable speeches in the learned gathering in various institution of india. Through long association we know his extensive study in the field of International Law, Economics etc. He also contributed in a book along Prof. Patel on 'Indian War Economy'.

Prof. N. C. Sinha's multiferious services for Sikkim and his extraordinary talents in various fields of learning will be remembered by his friends and admirers in Sikkim. Lastly, the Director, and the Staff member of the Sikkim Research Institute of Tibetology, Gangtok deeply condoled and mourned the passing away of Prof. Nirmal Chandra Sinha and pray to the Triple Gem for the peace of departed soul.