

Meet Our Teacher – Dr. B. S. Chaubey

It was a great surprise and honour when Dr. S.M. Patil called me up and told me to take interview of our beloved teacher, Padmashree Dr. B.S. Chaubey. I am writing the excerpts of interview carried at his residence on 18th Feb'09 at 5.30 pm. alongwith Dr. Tankhiwale.

Dr. NNB - Sir, at the outset we would like to congratulate you for being conferred with Padmashree Award. Can you tell us about the award?

Dr. B.S. Chaubey :- (Smiles)... Thank you very much. I think it is the recognition of your work to the society at large over the years. It was Saturday evening and we were having tea when the Deputy Secretary from Home Ministry called me up and informed about the award and told me that official letter would be delivered to me on Monday. It was a pleasant surprise & the entire family was happy.

Dr. NNB - Sir, we all know you as a teacher, but we would like to know about your childhood.

Dr. B.S. Chaubey : It is a very long story and my childhood I moved through almost every city of Vidarbha and MP (CP & Berar then). My father was in police and posted at Washim where I was born. My schooling started in Yavatmal and as my father got transferred from one place to another, we also moved accordingly. First to Narsingpur, then Paratwada, then Balaghat, Bilaspur, Hoshangabad, Chindwara and finally in 1948 to Nagpur.

Dr. NNB - Sir, were you predetermined to pursue a career as a doctor? What influenced you to come to Medical profession?

Dr. B. S. Chaubey :- I was never determined to pursue a career as a doctor. After Inter Science, I had taken admission in Geology. However, I also filled up a form for competitive examination for Medical College. There were 60 seats for CP & Berar and I stood 3rd in that exam. Every one told me that Medical profession is better than Geology and I landed up in Medical College.

Dr. SRT - Sir, during your medical training which teachers influenced you?

Dr. B. S. Chaubey :- There were a galaxy of teachers we were groomed by. To name a few – Dr. Nigam..... Dr. Ramesh Nigam was my role model during my undergraduate days. I had certainly thought of becoming a surgeon. Dr. Nigam was FRCS, Professor of Surgery and 1st class 1st from Lucknow University. He was also M.D. in Pathology. He had exceptionally sharp memory

and was best known for his unique style of teaching and clinics. He was Role Model for many. Then I met Dr. Berry. I was his House Officer. Here my inclination for surgery started receding. I was deeply impressed by the way Dr. Berry worked. The 'Human factor', his sympathy for patients, his desire to work tirelessly for betterment of patients influenced my thought process to move from surgery to medicine. I was 1st in Medicine and 1st in Surgery. I passed MBBS in 1957. My confusion about further specialization was solved by my professors only. Dr. Nigam and Dr. Berry were both there during interview and before anyone could say anything Dr. Berry said, 'this boy is for Medicine'.

Dr. NNB - Sir, you were instrumental in setting up Nephrology and Pulmonology clinics in GMC. Please tell us some memories of the same.

Dr. B.S. Chaubey :- Yes..... (thinks, smiles and then laughs) it is all fate Balankhe. I was deeply interested in Pulmonology. I still remember, I will registrar to Dr. Berry when my father expired. And finances were one of the reasons why I opted for M.O. post in infectious diseases from registrar post. Dr. Barve, the Dean then helped me for the same. I used to get Rs. 260/- p.m. as MO. During this tenure of 14 months I wrote my first paper titled 'Vertebral Compression in Tetanus' a review of 92 cases. In 1960, I was selected for lecturers post in Internal Medicine. Then I got selected for Commonwealth Scholarship in Pulmonary Medicine. In England, I was posted in Prof. Crofton and Prof. Douglas's unit. I was registrar to Prof. Crofton. During this posting, I went for MRCP. I did my MRCP in the shortest time ever by anyone. From here I went for further Pulmonology training at Hammersmith hospital under Moral Campbell. After coming from England I set up a Pulmonology unit in GMC. We used to do lots of Bronchoscopy and also did 1st Bronchial Biopsy in India here only. Lots of new things were added to the unit. However, on one 'HOLI' day when we were enjoying rangpanchmi at Dr. Das' residence with Dr. Gharpure, Dr. Subhedar etc., I got a message from Dr. Zakaria (Health Minister then) to meet Governor urgently in Mumbai. The Governor told me that I was required to go to England within 8-10 days for

training in nephrology. Later on I came to know that they wanted a MRCP for this fellowship and hence I was forced to go. I went to England in London Hospital and worked with Prof. De Wardner in Dept. of Nephrology. So, that's fate..... I changed from Pulmonologist to nephrologist and started nephrology unit in GMC later on.

Dr. NNB - Sir, you are also instrumental in bringing superspeciality hospital in Nagpur. Tell us how it was made possible.

Dr. B. S. Chaubey :- It so happened that Chief Minister, Mr. Vasantdada Patil was admitted to ICU. He could hear us speaking that there were lots of things required for emergency were not available in ICU and were required to be flown from Mumbai. 'Dada' noticed lots of deficiencies and when I told him that all of them can be solved by setting a superspeciality hospital in Nagpur. He agreed immediately and cleared up lots of technical hurdles. In conjunction with health ministry and PWD department, superspeciality hospital came into existence. The idea was to make hospital on lines of GB Pant and Maulana Azad Hospital.

Dr. NNB - Sir, you have done pioneering work in Pulmonology, Nephrology and Infectious diseases. Out of these which one you enjoyed the most.

Dr. B. S. Chaubey :- (instantly) Nephrology.

Dr. NNB - What do you think are your best contributions to GMC?

Dr. B. S. Chaubey :- They are difficult to enumerate. I think, formation of Dept. of Pulmonology and Dialysis Unit may be few amongst many.

Dr. NNB - Sir, what about clinical epidemiology centre?

Dr. B. S. Chaubey :- (With a bright smile).. Ah....yes, this idea came basically from Rockefeller Foundation, USA. They held a conference of all the Deans (40 in number) from all over India in Shrinagar and discussed various issues and also discussed cases. To my luck, I got Hypertension. As discussion went ahead, it came towards Aortoarteritis and then.... there was everything our way. Our Centre got selected for site visit (only 5 centres were selected) and then we started getting annual grants for research purpose after the visit.

Dr. SRT - You were my best teacher. We liked your clinics and lectures equally. Which one did you enjoy? What is the message for Medical teachers today?

Dr. B.S. Chaubey :- I always like bed side clinics for various reasons. There is nothing better than interaction and exchange of knowledge. Today's teachers should

prepare for lectures, and go out of their working place to, National exposure and whenever possible to International exposure. They should have an influence by world authorities over them then only they can deliver their potential. I think, as a teacher, I became a better person after interaction and influences from teachers abroad.

Dr. NNB - Now a days doctors have been more of investigation based practitioners than clinicians. Do you think this is a result of CPA or due to lack of clinical training?

Dr. B. S. Chaubey :- CPA is totally anti clinical medicine. But more than CPA I feel doctors are doing it because of easy availability of tests and demanding nature of patients to become better earlier. There is no shortcut to clinical medicine.

Dr. NNB - None of us know about your non medical interests.

Dr. B.S. Chaubey :- I don't have many. I am deeply interested in reading. I have read almost every book of P.G. Woodhouse and James Hadley Chase. Unlike others I am not much interested in songs or movies. I do remember watching 'Bridge on river Kwai' in Liberty theatre. I also like traveling and the best destination according to me is 'Kanyakumari'. It is the best possible reflection of India. My only hobby if you ask is to go on talking for hours with friends or anyone.

Dr. NNB - If you are asked to enumerate most defining moments of your life.. what are they?

Dr. B.S. Chaubey :- It is very difficult to answer. But as you want me to tell I shall say my most defining moment of life was getting MRCP and being invited for dinner (which is a usual protocol to inform the results. The results are not declared, but the successful candidate is invited for dinner). I was the youngest candidate there. To everyone's surprise, my chair was next to the President and ex-President of Royal College of Physicians which meant I was the best candidate. My other defining moment is my nephrology posting.

Dr. SRT - Any message to our Journal?

Dr. B.S. Chaubey :- Teacher is always a winner. He can't be a loser. Become a good teacher, read regularly and organize yourself with the topic and then go to the students.