

## OBITUARY

## In Loving Memory of

**Professor Kaustubha Nand Bhatt**

*An Eminent Agricultural Economist, Social Scientist, Interdisciplinary Researcher, Teacher, Mentor, Institution Builder and Founder & Life Trustee, Indian Social Science Association - ISSA*



(1958 - 2026)

The Executive Committee, Members, Editorial Board and Fraternity of the **Indian Social Science Association (ISSA)** expresses profound grief at the passing of **Professor Kaustubha Nand Bhatt**, an eminent agricultural economist, distinguished interdisciplinary social scientist, accomplished researcher, inspiring teacher and compassionate mentor, who passed away on **July 25, 2026**. With his demise, the Indian social science community has lost a scholar whose lifelong contributions to agricultural economics, rural development, ecological economics, and interdisciplinary research enriched both academic scholarship and public policy. His life was characterized by an unwavering commitment to knowledge creation, institution building and pursuit of socially relevant research.

Professor Bhatt devoted more than four decades to advancing interdisciplinary social science research and higher education. Before joining the permanent faculty of **Govind Ballabh Pant Social Science Institute (GBPSSI), Jhansi, Prayagraj**, he was associated with interdisciplinary research programmes supported through the **Central Statistical Organisation**, contributing to empirical and

policy-oriented studies on issues of national importance. He subsequently joined the Institute as **Assistant Professor of Economics** and through his academic distinction and dedicated service, rose to the position of **Professor of Economics**. During his long association with the Institute, he made invaluable contributions to strengthening its research culture, interdisciplinary orientation, academic programmes, and national standing.

Professor Bhatt earned his **D.Phil. in Economics from the University of Allahabad**. His scholarship reflected remarkable intellectual breadth, encompassing **Agricultural Economics, Ecological Economics, Natural Resource Management, Environment and Development, Rural Development, Disaster Management, Panchayati Raj, Decentralization, Literacy and Primary Education, Child Labour, Research Methodology (PRA/RRA), and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)**. Throughout his career, he remained firmly committed to rigorous field-based research and evidence-based policy analysis, believing that social science should address the real concerns of society and contribute meaningfully to sustainable and inclusive development.

Among Professor Bhatt's most enduring scholarly contributions was his pioneering work in sustainable agriculture. He was among the earliest Indian researchers to undertake systematic studies on the **System of Rice Intensification (SRI)** and one of the foremost academic advocates of **millets** long before they received national and international recognition as climate-resilient and nutritionally significant crops. His research substantially enriched understanding of agrarian transformation, rural livelihoods, environmental sustainability, and food security, influencing both academic discourse and development policy.

A prolific scholar, Professor Bhatt authored and edited **more than twenty books** and published numerous research papers in reputed national and international journals and edited volumes. He successfully directed and participated in several interdisciplinary research projects supported by prestigious national and international organizations, including the **International Labour Organization (ILO), UNESCO, UNDP, the World Bank, ICSSR**, and various

ministries of the Government of India. His research consistently demonstrated how interdisciplinary scholarship can bridge academic inquiry with development practice and contribute to evidence-based policymaking in agriculture, rural development, education, natural resource management, and social development.

Teaching and mentorship occupied a central place in Professor Bhatt's academic life. He guided and inspired **numerous MBA (Rural Development), M.Phil., D.Phil., and Post-Doctoral scholars**, many of whom today serve as academicians, researchers, administrators, and development professionals in universities, research institutions, governmental organizations, and international agencies across India and abroad.

Professor Bhatt also made remarkable contributions to academic leadership and institution building. He organized and coordinated numerous national and international seminars, conferences, workshops, and research programmes, creating vibrant platforms for academic dialogue and interdisciplinary collaboration. His expertise in **Corporate Social Responsibility** earned him recognition as an advisor to several corporate organizations.

An active contributor to scholarly publishing, Professor Bhatt served with distinction as **Editor, Managing Editor, Editorial Board Member, and Reviewer** for several reputed national and international peer-reviewed journals including **Social Science Gazetteer**.

Professor Bhatt's academic engagement extended well beyond India. He actively participated in collaborative research, academic exchanges, invited lectures, and professional assignments across **North America, Europe, Asia, and Australia** Italy, Ireland, Australia, South Korea, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, the United Arab Emirates, the Maldives, Bahrain, Nepal and others), fostering international academic collaborations and representing Indian social science scholarship on the global stage. These engagements enriched his intellectual outlook while strengthening institutional and scholarly linkages between India and the international academic community.

Professor K N Bhatt belonged to a generation of scholars who believed that the true purpose of research was to improve society. His scholarly writings, research projects, editorial contributions, institutional leadership, and, above all, the generations of students and researchers he mentored constitute an enduring intellectual legacy that will continue to inspire the academic community for many years to come.

As a core **Founder and Life Trustee of Indian Social Science Association (ISSA)**, Prof. Bhatt was a guiding pillar of our association. His vision, relentless effort, and wisdom helped shape ISSA into a vibrant platform for social scientists across the country. Beyond his academic brilliance, he was known for his warmth, generosity of spirit, humility and well-wisher to all who had the privilege of working alongside him.

His departure is an irreplaceable loss to the academic community and to the entire ISSA family. We bid a heartbreaking farewell to our Life Trustee, dear colleague, mentor, and visionary guide. We extend our deepest and heartfelt condolences to his bereaved family, friends, colleagues, students and innumerable admirers during this painful time. Although Professor Bhatt is no longer with us, his intellectual legacy will continue to live through his writings, the institutions he strengthened, the scholars he mentored, and the values of scholarship, integrity, humility, and humanity that he exemplified throughout his life.

May his noble soul rest in eternal peace, and may his enduring legacy continue to inspire us.

**In grief and solidarity,**

**Team Indian Social Science Association (ISSA)**

**With Ayaz Ahmad Life Member ISSA**