



**Prof P N Sharma**  
**The lasting imprint**

It's almost a cliché to describe a person in any field of life as a legend in his own life-time. Yet, when we meet a many-splendoured legendary personality, we are in the presence of someone like Parmananda Sharma, more popularly known as PN Sharma, here's an example of a man who had incredible achievements as an academic, an inspirational fountainhead in sports and in culture, administrative talents, a renowned poet, a Buddhist scholar, an uninterrupted role and presence for almost seventy years in the life of Dharmshala town.

After MA in English from Government College Lahore and teaching at Doaba College Jalandhar, PN Sharma ji joined government college Dharmshala on 17/12/1949, and, as he used to say, first sight, he fell in love with Dhauladhar. Trekking and mountaineering became his passion down the years. He belonged to the first batch of NCC officers post-independence. He had already published his epic poem on Shivaji, Chhatrapati, which later won him Manglaprasad Paaritoshik from UP government. His family retains the letters he exchanged, on this book, with Shri Atal Bihar Vajpayee, then editor of Rashradharma magazine.

Mr PN Sharma walked 500 kms on foot as he was selected to be deputy leader of the Polling Party that conducted first General Elections, 1957 ( India's second) in Lahaul and Spiti. Election Commission of India awarded him a Silver Medal for his outstanding leadership. This travel-adventure resulted in his book, Men and Mules on a Mission of Democracy. Publication of this book with Asia Publishers could be possible only as he met Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, (first Prime Minister of Free India,) who was on a Summer-time visit to Manali, and who also wrote Foreword to his book.

Transfer is a part of government service. Thus, he also taught at govt colleges in Nabha and Hissar. After the 1962 Chinese aggression, he was selected as NCC officer to command a battalion at Burdwan in West Bengal. On return to college, he later got posted at government college Dharmshala, from where he retired as Principal (1977-82).

Post-superannuation, his active association continued for several decades with several NGOs like State War Memorial, Durga Mal Dal Bahadur Gold Cup football tournament Committee, Lions Club, Sathya Sai Samiti and so on. His Holiness the Dalai Lama appointed him to the Executive Committee of the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives. His book, People of the Prayer-Wheel about Tibetans and Buddhism had a forward by HH the Dalai Lama. His dedication to any cause he had taken up is exemplified by the fact that for thirty years, he did not miss a single meeting of LTWA committee. ( Similarly, down the decades, he has always been present when Durgamal Dal Bahadur Memorial Tournament was organised).

Mr Sharma translated several books on Buddhism from Sanskrit to English and from English to Hindi. His own creativity flowed equally both in English and Hindi. He published book-length poems on Banda Vairagi, Porus, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Sri Sathya Sai Baba, HH the Dalai Lama, and so on.

Besides translation Jai Shankar Prasad's classic Hindi epic poem into English, he also translated Ghalib's ghazals into Pahari language. Honoured as Poet Laureate in 1964 by the government of Panjab, Mr Sharma has also been a member of Sahitya Academy, 1977-82.

His autobiography, My Mountain and My Valley, was brought out by Tibetan Library, who are now into publishing its Hindi translation shortly. The interesting part is that Mr PN Sharma himself completed in long hand the Hindi version on the eve of his 99th birthday, and finally he chose to depart on 30/3/2023 for the other world from where no traveller returns. The most lasting imprint of Mr PN Sharma is that of a teacher, who taught not only in a class room but to whatever area of human activity he moved, he did so with love for the passionate pursuit of sharing knowledge with whosoever he met. To borrow Shakespeare's famous words, 'All the elements so mixed in him that Nature might stand up and say : He was a man'.



**Dr Lalit Mohan Sharma**, born in 1952, has published ten books of English poetry which include 'Man with A Horn', 'Eyes of Silence' and 'There's No Death'. His book, A Three- Step Journey, is English translation of Zahid's Urdu poems. 'Icicles of Time' is the latest in 2024.

Sharma was conferred with 'Master of Creative Impulse' at World Poetry Conference in 2019.

A former Principal, Government College, Dharamshala, he has been anthologised in several books of poetry, stories and such books of academic interest as 21st Century Critical Thought : A Dialogue with Post-Modern Voices Vol I, (2020), A Handbook of Contemporary Ethics, (2024), Ed by Molly Joseph and JS Anand

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