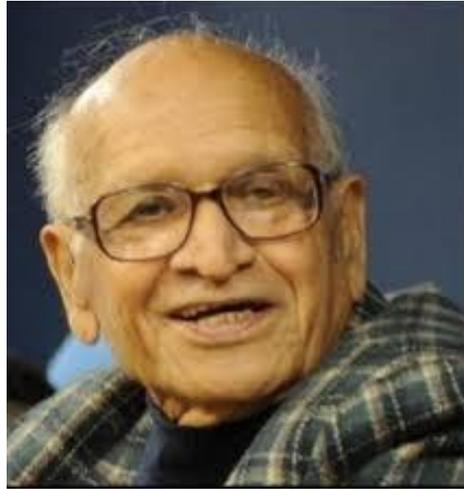


- 31 Aug 2014
- Hindustan Times (Delhi)
- Rakesh Batabayal

## *Hindu*ite Professor Bipan Chandra



### **Professor Bipan Chandra**

PhD His 1963

Padma Bhushan 2010

Reader Hindu College

General President Indian History Congress 1985

Member UGC 1993

Chairman National Book Trust 2004 – 2012

Forman Christian College Lahore Stanford University Delhi University

National Research Professor 2007

With **Professor Bipan Chandra's** death, India has lost one of the finest articulators of her modern history. Born in Kangra in 1928, and educated in Lahore and the US, he spent a lifetime as a teacher exemplar at Hindu College, University of Delhi, and Jawaharlal Nehru University.

A new nation required a definition that was not rooted in colonial interpretations. And Chandra provided the new nation that definition. The rise and growth of Economic Nationalism brought the likes of Dadabai Naoroji, MG Ranade, GK Gokhale, GV Joshi, NG Chandravarkar, Surendranath Banerjee and BG Tilak alive, as critical thinkers who gave shape to the vision of a free and independent India. He gave us a sense of pride in our intellectual prowess to challenge the might of the colonial system, be it in Naoroji's 'drain theory' or Gokhale's critique of colonial budgets. Chandra wanted to articulate the early nationalists' vision of India as a modern, scientific and democratic nation.

He wrote the most popular textbook on Modern India and the Freedom Movement, at a time when there was none, and through this book he placed India on the global map as one of the rare post-colonial countries to have her own historiography. He was one of the fiercest critics of the Khalistan movement for creating a wedge between the Hindus and Sikhs, and also was much against casteist politics. For him, these battles were to be fought at the level of ideas and not at the level of personalities.

Chandra started as a Marxist and by the 1970s he reinterpreted Marxism into the Indian realities. So much so that he critiqued even Karl Marx's ideas on India. It is here in this process of naturalising radical ideas that he rehabilitated Gandhi in the most radical and sophisticated manner.

Rakesh Batabyal is a historian and teaches at Centre for Media Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University His 2015 book “ JNU : The Making of a University” is now on stands and at Booksale wsites .

*Bipan Chandra passed away 30.08.2014*