

Shri Harbans Lal Gupta

Shri Harbans Lal Gupta was born in village "DUBHERAN" in Rawalpindi (now in Pakistan) on Feb.4, 1912. He graduated from Gordon College Rawalpindi in 1931 and completed his M.A. in Economics from Foreman Christian College Lahore in 1933. During the course of his studies, Shri H.L. Gupta came in contact with Gandhi Ji, Lala Lajpat Rai, Lala Mehar Chand Mahajan and eminent Christian and Muslim scholars. Their impact shaped Mr. Gupta into a secular and wholesome personality. He liked English literature, Urdu and Persian Poetry. A firm believer in individual freedom, a staunch disciplinarian, Shri H.L Gupta was an embodiment of hard work and punctuality. He was broad-minded and loved humanity and was imbued with qualities of head and heart. In 1934 he qualified for the Fellowship of the Royal Economic Society, London and also completed his B.T. in 1941.

Sh. H.L Gupta, the illustrious founder of MIER, is admired for his foresightedness, vision, determination, leadership and entrepreneurial brilliance. He founded Model Academy as the first coeducational school in Jammu in 1936 after rejecting various lucrative job offers in the government and developed the institution with love, dedication, sacrifice and vision.

As an educationist his fellow teachers, parents and students admired his teaching skills, compassionate nature and ability to work with zest and zeal. Gupta ji, as he was popularly known was an innovator and a research minded person who was always ready to experiment with new ideas for promoting the cause of education. He was in fact a pioneer who gave a new dimension to the system of education in the school as he militated against the caste system and other isms to provide a common platform for students from different religions and castes to interact with one another like providing one glass for drinking water for all students. He was also the first person to initiate the organization of co-curricular activities in which both boys and girls participated together. He laid immense stress on academics and was personally involved with the students through various programmes to enable them to excel in examinations. In fact his dedication and sense of duty is unquestionable as once when he broke his leg and was unable to go to the class , he made his bed move to the office and taught the students there itself.

Realizing the importance of research in education, Mr. Gupta founded a Research Wing in Model Academy in 1968 which was the first of its kind and this paved the way for the establishment of MIER College of Education in 1981.

As a professional teacher and Administrator he traveled far and wide both within and outside the country several times in pursuit of quality education. He attended several conferences and visited centres of learning. A fine and forceful orator, Mr. Gupta kept audience spell bound by his views. He was also the Founder President of J&K Cooperative Union and contributed a lot to the development of the cooperative movement and remained president for 20 long years. For this he was awarded the Fellowship of German Institute for Developing countries in Berlin in the field of Cooperatives in 1960. He also took part in the Bhoodan Yatra with Acharya Vinoba

Bhave. As a renowned educator he also remained senator of the Jammu & Kashmir University and Board of School Education for a number of years.

In view of his contributions to the field of education, Mr. Gupta is also hailed as the “Father of Voluntary Enterprise” in Education in J&K State.