

Amarnath Bhargava (1932- 2022) : An International Player and a Successful Lawyer

(Freely translated, with minor changes, from Hindi to English, by Govindjee Govindjee, Ranjana Bhargava, and Rajeshwari Pandharipande, from 'Aaj', December 1, 2022, p.4, right column, middle section)

Amarnath Bhargava, who was born in Kydganj, Allahabad (now Prayagraj), passed away on November 3, 2022. He was 90 years old, and he left this world, while he was at his home at 28 Dayanand Marg (formerly Thornhill Road) in the presence of his three sons Pankaj, Neeraj, and Manoj, and daughters-in-law Priti, Shefali and Ritu. Also, at his side was Rajni, wife of his deceased younger brother Someshwar. (See below ^a for further information on the family.)

Amarnath was known to all as a highly successful lawyer, as well as one of the topmost international Table Tennis player. Beside this, others including his many 'admirers' considered him as an *icon* and an ideal person. To recognize his qualities, we have attempted to bring before us what a great person he was to us all.

Figure 1 shows a photograph of Amarnath Bhargava sometimes in the winter of 1969.



Figure 1. A 1969 photograph of Amarnath Bhargava at his home on Dayanand Marg in Allahabad. Source: Archives of the Bhargava family

According to his son, Neeraj, Amarnath was the one who kept all the family members strongly bound to each other. He was an ideal human being to all his friends as well as to all his colleagues at work. He was always ready to help those who needed help. He was a *messiah* for his clients, for whom he fought to deliver justice.

Amarnath had special love for sports. He played quite a few of them. In addition to flying kites (*patang*), he was deeply involved in playing Table Tennis; carrom; badminton; cricket; lawn tennis-and all this to almost the last days of his life. He was represented the UP (Uttar Pradesh) State Team Table Tennis. He was national veterans champion from 2012 to 2017. He also represented India in the world Veterans Table championship in Norway; England (UK), Canada, Switzerland, Japan, Mongolia, New Zealand, Sweden, Spain, and the USA. He was eagerly looking forward to his trip to Oman in Jan 2023, where he was to play in the ‘above 90- year category’; unfortunately, this did not happen.

In addition to his interest in games, Amarnath was a topmost accomplished lawyer, with great vigor, at Allahabad High Court; he was like a ‘warrior’ fighting vigorously for his clients and his cases. He dedicated 65 years to his law practice. At the same time, he was an immensely generous and a kind person. He extended his hospitality to all. If he found out that a friend or even an acquaintance is passing through Allahabad, he would make sure to meet the person at the Railway Station. Amarnath was a member of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and served as the President /Trustee of the Hanuman Temple of Rambagh, Allahabad. We all miss him.-

^aAbout some members the Family of Amarnath Bhargava

(by Ranjana Bhargava and Neeraj Bhargava)

Amarnath was the third of eleven children of Gajadhar Prasad and Rup Kanti Bhargava. His oldest sibling had drowned in Banaras (Varanasi) where he had gone to celebrate his success in intermediate examination. Amarnath’s wife Savita passed away in 1993. Figure 2 shows a 1980 photograph of Savita with Amarnath at their residence in Allahabad.

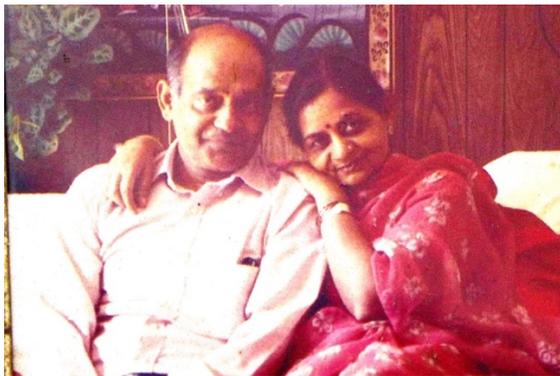


Figure 2. A 1980 photograph of Amarnath and Savita, at Allahabad . Source: Ranjana Bhargava

Amarnath's older sister Madhuri ,who passed away in 2014, was one of the two female students, in 1952, in Law, at Allahabad University. His brother Someshwar, who passed away in 1983, was the top Science post graduate student of his class, and had completed two PhDs, in Plant Pathology, one from Allahabad University, and another from the University of Cambridge (England, UK). Someshwar's wife Rajni now lives in New Jersey (USA) with the younger of their two daughters. Amarnath's younger brother Rameshwar, who also lives in USA, received his PhD in Physics, in 1965, from the Columbia University; he was a recipient of the Chancellor's Gold Medal for the best all-round student in the University. Amarnath's other younger brother Pradeep, who also lives in USA, was not only a star tennis and table tennis player (5th in Junior tennis in India, UP state champion in table tennis and tennis), but also received Chancellor's gold medal for the best student in Allahabad University. Amarnath's younger sister, Ranjana (coauthor of the above text), is a psychologist in Chicago area, and his youngest brother Rakesh is an investment and portfolio manager in USA and had won USA Tennis Father-Daughter National championship. In our extended family, there are fifteen children (including those of ANB), thirty-four grandchildren, and two great grandchildren; they are living in different parts of the world, and they all miss him.

[We are thankful to Rameshwar Bhargava for reading the above text. Also, we refer the readers to "Reminiscences" by Mohinder Nath Kashyap: "My Life and my Association with some friends from Allahabad", where he not only remembers Amarnath Bhargava, but has included a nice photograph.]

Reminiscences

My Life and my Association with some friends from Allahabad

by

Mohinder Nath Kashyap

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August 15, 2023

I came to India from Burma (an Indian State during the British Rule), with my parents, as refugees in the 1940s. My father was in the Government Service and the Japanese invasion of Burma had started on Dec 14, 1941, and ended on May 24, 1942. We first went to Lahore and Ludhiana (Punjab, India) before settling in Allahabad (UP). As I will be 90 in August 2023, I decided to write down some memories from the past, especially of some friends (the Late Amarnath Bhargava; the Late Udit Narayan Gupta; the Late Manmohan Laloraya; and Govindjee Govindjee), not necessarily in that order.

In 1944, I joined the 7th Class in Colonelganj High School at Allahabad; this is when I was 11 years old. It was not until the 9th class that I met Govind Ji (later Govindjee, now Govindjee Govindjee) and Manmohan Manohar Laloraya (1932-2023; also known to some as MML; see Govindjee et al., 2023a; and Guruprasad & S. Laloraya (eds), 2023). I was in the same section as Manmohan, but a different one than that of Govindjee. All three of us obtained, in 1948, our High School (10th class) certificates from the U.P. Board of Education. In 1950, I finished my Intermediate (12th class) from the Government Inter College (GIC), whereas both Manmohan and Govindjee did the same from the Kayastha Pathshala (KP) Inter College, also in Allahabad.

Thereafter, three of us went on our own ways. At GIC, I met Amar Nath Bhargava and Udit Narayan Gupta, and became close friends with these two. I note that, coincidentally, Amar Nath was also a friend of Govindjee. Amar Nath became a well-known lawyer in Allahabad- and both Govindjee and I kept in regular contact with him until he recently (November 3, 2022) passed away (see Anonymous, 2022; Govindjee et al., 2023b). Udit Narayan Gupta had studied Law, obtaining all the law degrees (LLB, LLM, and LLD) from the Allahabad University; later (during 1993-1994) he served as the 36th Vice Chancellor of that University. Unfortunately, he passed away in 2011.

Now, a bit about myself. I qualified twice for the IAS (Indian Administrative Services) as well as Allied Services, but, unfortunately, I did not get selected. However, I happily joined the AG (Accountant General) Office, and retired, in 1991, as Senior Audit Officer. Since I also had a law (LLB) degree, obtained in 1956, from Allahabad University, I decided to practice as a lawyer at Allahabad High Court, just as Amar Nath Bhargava, mentioned above, was doing.

As regards my family, my dear wife Sushma sadly, and unfortunately, passed away in 2009, due to Cancer. We have 3 wonderful children: Sailesh (& his wife Archana), and Rajesh (& his wife Alka) are established in India; and Ritu (with her husband Ritesh Tyagi) is established in USA. I am now living with Sailesh in Gurgaon (in India).

Although, in the past, I had not been regularly meeting with Govindjee and Manmohan, we have had many connections. Govindjee was a member of a “literary” club

(‘Aalok’) – that met at Amar Nath Bhargava’s home in Allahabad, the same club Daya Prakash Sinha (another common friend) was a member of; they published a magazine ‘Aryama’, where they wrote articles on many different topics. Further, I was one of the founders of the “Youth International Club” – that also met at Amarnath Bhargava’s home on what was then 28 Thornhill Road (Dayanand Marg), near the famous “Civil Lines” of Allahabad. We can say ‘Those were the Good Old Days!’ In particular, I remember that Amarnath was a sports-enthusiast and up to the end participated in table tennis matches at the international level. So far as I remember he remained in the Uttar Pradesh (UP) state Table Tennis team for a number of years; he played this game in pen grip style (Japanese style) –he was, perhaps, the only reputed player who played in this style–Right till the end, he used to travel across the world to play in World Veterans championships.

In addition, I had other personal connections. I was a friend of the late Mahesh Chandra Verma, a very close friend of Govindjee, from their days in being neighbors in the compound of ‘Chaddha Saheb’ (owner of many houses in what was in ‘George Town’ area of Allahabad). Mahesh’s younger cousin Rajni (a student of Botany; see Balashov et al., 2023) married Govindjee in 1957 in Urbana, Illinois, and Mahesh’s younger sister Maya married Manmohan Laloraya, in Allahabad. Further, Rajni is the younger sister of the late Pradip Chandra – who was a close friend of mine during my MSc days (for 2 years).

Yes, we all had rather close connections – in the good old city of Allahabad (now renamed as Prayagraj). See my photograph with two friends, mentioned above: the Late Amar Nath Bhargava and Govindjee (Figure 1).

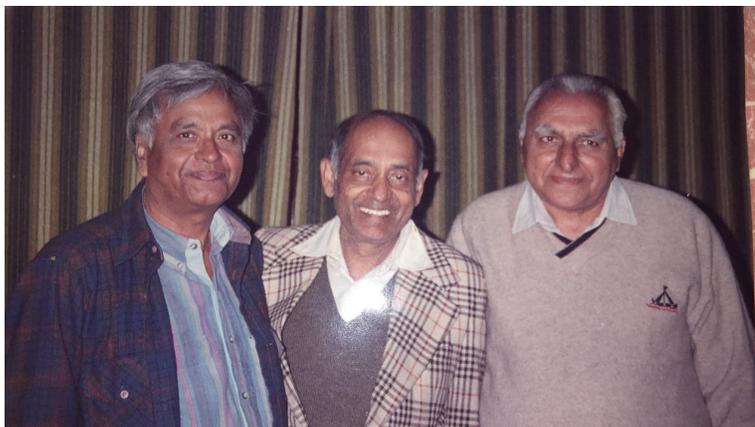


Figure 1. Left to right: Govindjee; Amarnath Bhargava; and the author Mohinder Nath Kashyap. Photo taken during one of the visits of Govindjee to Allahabad. Source: M.N. Kashyap.

I end my brief Reminiscences with a mention of my hobby of writing poems. I have published a book "Unmad Lahron Ka" (see Kashyap, 2021) containing 120 short poems, selected from lot of my posts on my Facebook page; these poems relate mainly to human behavior, experiences, reactions in the context of present-day life of tension and complications. I admit upfront that I am not a poet of any order of established poets—I would

say that I have made a novice attempt to expose and pen my thoughts as they would strike me. It is likely that, in the eyes of the literary world, I might have made a lot of mistakes- but I had great joy writing them!

Acknowledgment. I thank Govindjee (see Govindjee, 2019, for his own life in his own words) for reading the above, and for editing specific parts of the text, and for the references, cited below.

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