



Author of the Week

Harivansh Rai Bachchan

Childhood

Harivansh Rai 'Bachchan' Srivastav was born in the year 1907 in the village Babupatti near Allahabad in a Kayastha family to Pratap Narayan Srivastav and Saraswati Devi. He was their eldest born. As a child, he was fondly called 'bachchan' because of his child-like ways. The moniker stuck with him, thus becoming one of the most recognizable names.

Early Life

Harivansh Rai Bachchan started his education from a municipal school. It was the same time that he also started learning Urdu from Kayasth Paathshaalas. Later, he pursued his higher education from Allahabad University and Banaras Hindu University. In 1941 he joined the English department of Allahabad University as a faculty and taught there till 1952. He then went to Cambridge for two years to do his doctoral thesis on W.B Yeats and occultism, becoming the second Indian to get a Ph. D. in English Literature from this university. It was also during this time that he dropped Srivastav from his name and used Bachchan as his last name. He then came back to India and took up teaching, while at the same time, serving sometime at the Allahabad Station of All India Radio.

Awards And Recognition

In 1966, Harivansh Rai Bachchan was nominated to the Rajya Sabha and in 1969 he received the Sahitya Akademi Award. Seven years later the Government of India bestowed on him the Padma Bhushan in recognition for his contribution to Hindi literature. In addition he was also awarded the Sovietland Nehru Award, the Lotus Award of the Afro-Asian writers' conference and the Saraswati Samman. The Uttar Pradesh government conferred him the "Yash Bharati" Samman in 1994. A postage stamp was released in 2003 in his memory.

Important Links:

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harivansh_Rai_Bachchan
- <http://www.iloveindia.com/indian-heroes/harivansh-rai-bachchan.html>

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