

Obituary

Dr. Narendra J. Pandya



Dr. Narendra J. Pandya (1933-2016)

Dr. Narendra Pandya was originally from East Africa. He completed his undergraduate medical education from the Seth G. S. Medical College and KEM Hospital, Mumbai. He then proceeded to acquire his FRCS in the UK, and then went to the USA for his further education and training in the field of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, in the prestigious Northwestern University in Chicago. He was the first Indian surgeon to qualify from the American Board of Plastic Surgery in 1970.

Dr. Pandya was the first Indian to be appointed Associate Director of the Sumner Koch Burn Unit, Cook County Hospital, Chicago. He also held the position of Associate Professor of Plastic Surgery at the Northwestern University in Chicago.

It therefore followed that he was the first American Board qualified Plastic Surgeon to return to India later in 1970.

After his return to India, he joined the Tata Department of Plastic Surgery with Dr. N. H. Antia as the head. He was appointed as Asst. Honorary in the B. Y. L. Nair Hospital, Mumbai, and he succeeded Dr. Mahaluxmivala as the head of that department, till his retirement in 1991. He also was appointed to the Jaslok Hospital in 1973, where he started the Department of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, and he was associated as the emeritus professor in the same hospital, until his death.

Dr. Pandya introduced cosmetic (aesthetic) surgery in India. His clientele included the rich and famous in the country. What is not so well known is his contribution to burn care, leprosy and cleft surgery.

Dr. Pandya has served as plastic surgeon to the two past presidents and seven governors. He has been an honorary consultant for the armed forces, being awarded the rank of Hon. Commodore, the only civilian, to have been bestowed with this honour.

His list of awards and titles runs into several pages. He received the prestigious Dr. B. C. Roy Award, at the hands

of the President. He has numerous social awards, for his recognition in the care of burn victims, dowry-related acid burns, etc.

He was president of the Association of Plastic Surgeons of India in the year 1992.

As a teacher and a surgeon, he was very exacting... expected everyone to give their best and had a very poor tolerance for inefficiency or a lackadaisical attitude. His concepts of punctuality, precise outcomes and operation theatre efficiency were transmitted to his many students, who owe him this debt of gratitude.

As a boss, he was tough but fair, and would unhesitatingly support his juniors in any venture and back them in times of trouble.

Dr. Pandya passed away unexpectedly but peacefully on February 7, 2016. He will be sorely missed by the entire lot of plastic surgeons.

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