



FIRST REPORT OF ROSE LEAF BLIGHT CAUSED BY *Botrytis cinerea* FROM JAMMU AND KASHMIR

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Rose (*Rosa hybrida*), the symbol of beauty and fragrance, is most popular ornamental plant which occupies prominent place in public gardens and private lawns. During June-July 2009 and 2010, blight of leaves and petals was observed on rose cv. 'Gala Red' in Nishat garden, Srinagar, J&K (India). On leaves, incipient symptoms observed were water-soaked olive sunken areas or blisters that turned into tan in colour and developed dark margins. Infected petals exhibited water-soaked appearance that ultimately turned brown or brownish black. Under humid conditions, grayish brown powdery spore mass was seen on leaves and petals. Isolation on potato dextrose agar from diseased tissues yielded fungal colonies with a thick creamy white mycelium that produced globose to black oblong grayish black sclerotia within 12-15 days of inoculation at $20\pm1^{\circ}\text{C}$ and measured 4.6×3.7 mm (Plate 1). Conidia were oval, hyaline, aseptate and measured 2.2×1.4 μm . The pathogenicity was established by inoculating healthy rose leaves cv. 'Gala Red' with a conidial suspension (4×10^4 spore ml^{-1}) using detached leaf technique. The typical disease symptoms developed within 7-10 days of inoculation. Re-isolations from induced lesions yielded the original pathogen. Non-inoculated leaves remained healthy.



Plate 1: *Botrytis cinerea* (from left to right) i. sclerotia (40x); iii. sporophore (10x); iv. Spores (40x)

Based on cultural-morphological characteristics (Daughtrey *et al.*, 1995), the fungus was identified as *Botrytis cinerea* Pers. ex Pers. (Fr.) Keissler. The fungus has previously been reported from Ludhiana, Punjab as causal pathogen for rose leaf blight (Chohan *et al.*, 1976); however, is *hitherto* unreported from Jammu & Kashmir (Bilgrami *et al.*, 1981; Sarbhoy *et al.*, 1996, Jamaluddin *et al.*, 2004), hence this forms the first report from Jammu & Kashmir. The specimen has been deposited and preserved in the herbarium of Division of Plant Pathology, SKUAST-Kashmir, Srinagar, J&K.

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