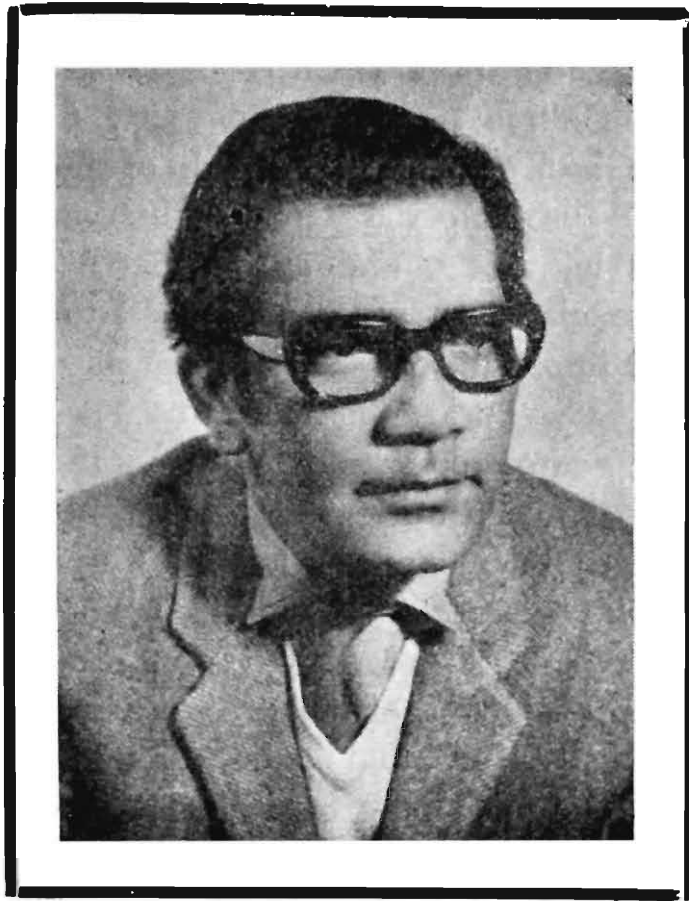


Obituary



Professor ANIL KUMAR DATTAGUPTA
(1924-1988)

The announcement of the sudden and untimely death of Professor A. K. Dattagupta, an eminent educationist, on 2nd April, 1988 due to cardiac failure was a sort of news for those who knew him found difficult to believe. For, Prof. Dattagupta was a man so active but calm and quiet, with such varied interests, that one did not associate any cessation of activities—let alone death—with him so early in life. In his passing away, world has lost another giant among pioneers who did yeoman service to echiuran biology.

Born in an educated family of the then East Bengal on October 30, 1924, he had his early education in Mymensing, Chittagong, Calcutta and Cooch Behar due to his father's transferable job. After passing Matriculation Examination in 1941 with first class marks and merit scholarship he joined Victoria College in Cooch Behar. But within a year he participated in Freedom Struggle Movement and as a result he had to leave the place and found shelter at Calcutta. Like others, Prof. Dattagupta had to face great sufferings in 1942 August Quit India Movement for Independence. Afterwards, he joined the University College of Science, Calcutta, from where he took his B. Sc. (Honours in Zoology) and M. Sc. (Zoology) degrees in 1945 and 1947, respectively.

As most of his family members were either teachers or physicians he chose the profession of a teacher. From 1948 to 1953 he served at the Maharaja's College in Orissa and City College at Calcutta. Receiving G. P. Ghosh (Lump) Scholarship of the Calcutta University in 1953 he joined the Imperial College in London for doctoral study. Before leaving for London he married a lady who was then a research scholar in the Zoology Department of the Calcutta University. At the Imperial College he worked on the insect toxicology and was awarded Ph. D. degree in 1956. There he took various courses in applied entomology and received the Diploma of the Imperial College. On returning from abroad he joined as a reader at the Birla College, Pilani (presently Birla Institute of Technology and Science—BITS) and soon became Professor and Head of the Department of Zoology. There he felt that knowledge of physical science is a must for a student of biology and vice versa. As a result, in the biological science course he introduced the relevant components from the sister discipline in 1964. In an Exchange Visitor's Programme between BITS and MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) he joined in the Biology Department of MIT in 1966. After returning to BITS in 1967 with fresh ideas he reoriented the biology programme of the Institute. He received responses from all corners—students, colleagues and administration and as a result Microbiology, General Biochemistry, Cytology, Genetics, Ecology and Instrumentation were common for the Zoology and Botany students. A Fresher Course in Biology was introduced in 1968 for Chemical and Electronics Engineering students and by 1971 this course was applicable to all students who joined the BITS. He served the BITS up to March, 1976, of which last 6 years as Dean of the Faculty of Sciences. Then he joined the Kurukshetra University as Professor and Head of the Department of Zoology and also shouldered the responsibilities as Dean of Sciences and Dean of Students' Welfare until retirement. Here he inspired his students, colleagues and friends to write the observations on natural history in Hindi and as a result, *Jeevanti*, a natural history journal in Hindi came out in 1978 due to his initiative and this is being continued till-date. Prof. Dattagupta is to be well remembered for his valuable service he rendered for the development of the Biology Departments at BITS, Pilani and at Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra. He is also well remembered by his students as a good teacher, doing good justice to the subjects he taught.

Besides his teaching capability, he was a dynamic worker in the field of research. Though he trained himself in the field of insect toxicology and other branches of entomology, yet to-day he is known as an echiuran

biologist in the world. Along with this, he started work on biology of the rotifers during his later life. Incidentally, both the groups (Echiura and Rotifera) receive less attention in the zoological realm. With indefatigable energy and tireless work, he gave ample encouragement and valuable guidance to his students that resulted in the publication of over sixty useful research papers on diverse aspects and 27 students obtained their doctoral degrees under his able supervision.

His studies on Echiura led him to travel widely in the Indian mainland, and insular areas as well as abroad. Side by side he gained experience in the field of biology, ecology taxonomy and morphology of various invertebrate groups of animals. My first acquaintance with Prof. Dattagupta dates back to 1970 when he participated in an International Symposium on the Biology of Sipuncula and Echiura at Kotor, Yugoslavia, sponsored by the Smithsonian Institution, Washington and Marine Biological Station, Kotor. He presented his work on Indian echiurans while the author on Indian sipunculans. He was the moderator of one of the Sessions of the Echiuran Biology. He had been invited as an author for the "Result of Biogas Missions" in the Bay of Biscay, France in 1972 and his article on the deep sea adaptation of the bonellids attracted the other workers. He regretted his missing the two chances in the participation of the Atlantic Expedition Cruise of the C. O. B., France, for some reasons which were beyond his control. He visited some parts of Europe and the U. S. A. on academic ground in 1982 and 1983.

After his retirement from Kurukshetra University in January, 1985, he joined as Scientist Emeritus of the C. S. I. R. first at Bhubaneswar and later at the Zoological Survey of India, Calcutta, since 1986 until death. Besides his own project on Indian echiurans, he was actively engaged on the taxonomy of the deep sea echiurans of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

As a man he was very simple, generous and kind-hearted and particularly liked and helped diligent students. He had been a sportsman, too, all along playing hockey, tennis and billiards. In his leisure time he used to paint or play on his sitar.

To Mrs. Gitika Dattagupta and their daughter, Mrs. Swati Sen, we extend our deep sympathy.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS OF PROFESSOR A. K. DATTAGUPTA

1955. A biometrical study of components of insecticidal resistance. Ph. D. thesis. London University.
1956. Relative response of closely related species to insecticide. *Proc. zool. Soc., Calcutta*, **9** : 97-103.
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1957. Metabolism of synergised pyrethrum by insects. *Indian J. Ent.*, **19** : 193-199.
1958. Response to touch stimuli by a tenebrionid beetle *Gonocephalum depressum*. *Curr. Sci.*, **27** : 219-220. (with B. B. Gupta)
1958. A note on the fore tarsi of *Cybister tripunctatus asiaticus* Sharp (Dytiscidae). *Sci. Cult.*, **23** : 662-663. (with N. S. Sidhu)
1959. Response of some grasshoppers to pyrethrum. *Sci. Cult.*, **25** : 273-274. (with V. K. Divakaran)
1960. Wing venation of Coleoptera. Part I. Studies on the wing venation of five species of Meloidae. *Proc. Raj. Acad. Sci.*, **7** : 63-66. (with S. Munshi)
1961. Wing venation of Coleoptera. Part II. Carabidae and Curculionidae. *Ibid.*, **8** : 121-128. (with S. Munshi)
1961. A study on the abundance of certain insects of Pilani with the help of light trap. *Ibid.*, **8** : 79-87. (with B. B. Gupta & H. L. Kundu)
1961. An annotated list of fishes of Rajasthan. *Ibid.*, **8** : 120-134. (with P. K. B. Menon, C. K. G. Nayar & C. R. Das)
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1962. Disease of tropical aquarium fishes : cephalic ulcers and fin rot. *Univ. Raj. Stud.*, **5** : 12-16. (with P. K. B. Menon)

1962. A note on the deformity of *Heteropneustes fossilis* Bloch (Heteropneustidae : Siluroidea). *Zool. Polonae*, **12** : 305-308. (with R. Tilak)
1962. The PH and the digestive enzymes of the red pumpkin bug, *Coridius janus* Fabr. (Heteroptera : Dinidoridae). *Proc. zool. Soc., Calcutta*, **15** : 57-64. (with S. C. Rastogi)
1962. On a new species of *Ikedosoma* (Echiura). *Ann. Mag. nat. Hist.*, ser. 13, **5** : 305-309. (with P. K. B. Menon)
1962. Apical complex in the testis of a scarabeid beetle *Holotricha consanguina*. *Sci. Cult.*, **28** : 340. (with S. Khurana)
1963. Loss of weight and other responses of certain grasshoppers to pyrethrum. *Physiologia bohemoslov.*, **12** : 81-83. (with P. Johnson)
1963. Morphology and histology of the female reproductive organs of some beetles. *Indian J. Ent.*, **25** : 147-160. (with R. K. Aggarwal)
1963. Intraspecific variation in *Heteropneustes fossilis* Bloch (Heteropneustidae : Siluroidea). *Anat. Anz.*, **112** : 129-134. (with P. K. B. Menon & R. Tilak)
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1971. Anatomical notes on four species of *Ochetostoma* Leuckart & Ruppell (Echiura) together with a list of the species of the genus. *Rec. zool. Surv. India*, **65** : 175-182.

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1976. Morphological and histochemical studies on the segmental organs of a few echiurans. *Ibid.*, 159-170. (with S. Singh)
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1978. Morphology of *Achaetobonellia maculata* Fisher (Echiura). *zool. Anz.*, **201** : 136-142. (with R. N. Singhal)
1978. Laboratory culture of rotifer *Asplanchna brightwelli*; *Sci. Cult.*, **44** : 316. (with N. V. Gopinath)
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1982. Studies on some aspects of reproduction in *Achaetobonellia maculata* Fisher (Echiura). *Netherlands J. Zool.*, 32 : 113-123. (with R. N. Singhal)
1983. Response of some freshwater micrometazoans to DDT. *Proc. Indian Acad. Sci.*, 92 : 19-29. (with M. P. Sharma)
1983. Echiurans collected during the SAFARI cruise in the Indian Ocean south of Madagascar. *Bull. Mus. natn. Hist. nat., Paris*, 4e ser. 5A : 1045-1050.

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2. Report on the animals of phylum Echiura collected from Kavaratti and Minicoy Islands, Lakshadweep. *Rec. zool. Surv. India* (with B. P. Haldar)
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5. Atlantic Echiurans. Part II. *Bull. Mus. natn. Hist. nat., Paris*,