OBITUARY

Swades Kumar Basu
(1943 – 2014)

Dr. Swades Kumar Basu passed away on the 31st March 2014 at Kolkata. He was a Fellow of the Geological Society of India. When I learnt about the sad demise of Swades I could not believe it. I had met him at Dhanbad in the month of November 2013 during the Annual General Meeting of the Geological Society of India where he had come for the release of his book “Geology of Sikkim and Darjeeling District of West Bengal” published by the Society. He was very enthusiastic and happy about the release of the book. It was during the book writing project I came in close contact with him. He was an endearing personality with gentle manners and humility. He was receptive to new ideas and suggestions with lot of patience. In his sad demise the Society has lost a devoted Fellow.

Swades Basu was born on October 6, 1943. He had his early education at Kolkata. He obtained B.Sc degree with Honours in Geology from the University of Calcutta in 1965. He completed his Master’s Degree in Geology from the University of Calcutta in 1967. He worked as a Junior Research Fellow of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) in the Department of Geology, University of Calcutta from 1969 to 1971. Later in 1980 he was awarded PhD degree for his thesis “Petrology of the acid igneous complex of eastern part of Barda Hills, Western Saurashtra, Gujarat” by the Calcutta University.

Swades Basu joined the Geological Survey of India (GSI) in April 1971. He served the GSI from 1971 to October 2003. Swades Basu served as Director PPOD Laboratory of GSI, Bangalore during the last two years of his service. During this period he led a group of earth scientists working in the field of petrology and petrochemistry of rocks and minerals. He encouraged his junior colleagues and supported them in their research work.

He had achieved significant expertise in mineral exploration. In recognition of his contribution in this field he was conferred the National Mineral Award in 1997 by the Government of India. In recognition of his outstanding contribution to Earth Science, Swades Basu was also awarded the “Dr. Coggin Brown Memorial Gold Medal” for 2003 – 2004 by the Mining, Geological and Metallurgical Institute of India, Kolkata. He published several scientific papers on exploration of mineral deposits of major belts

of Khetri Copper Belt and South Purulia Shear Zone in national and international journals.

After retirement from the GSI, he was invited by the Department of Geology, University of Calcutta to initiate a research project on alkaline-carbonatite rocks of South Purulia shear zone in eastern India (2008-2012), as a principal investigator, which was supported by the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Govt. of India. At the time when the Geological Society of India was looking for an earth scientist who could assemble all the geological information pertaining to the State of Sikkim and write a text book as part of their project of publication of geology of different states of the Indian Union, Swades Basu came forward to undertake the assignment. That is how I came to know him intimately. He took up the challenge with remarkable zeal and enthusiasm and submitted the first draft in a relatively short time. He expressed that the draft of his book should be thoroughly refereed. He was amenable to all the positive suggestions made by the referees. Swades revised the draft and agreed to the suggestion to incorporate and integrate the Geology of Darjeeling District of West Bengal for its geological contiguity with Sikkim. His book is a labour of love for the geology of this Himalayan state of Sikkim. It is a standing testimony to his hard work and devotion to Geology. The book was printed in 2013 and was released in the Annual General Meeting of the Society held at Dhanabad in November the same year. Dr. and Mrs. Basu came to Dhanabad to participate in the book release. It was a happy meeting, but I could not imagine that it was for the last time I was meeting him and when I received the news of his sad demise I simply could not believe it. His book “Geology of Sikkim and Darjeeling District of West Bengal” remains as a constant reminder of his industry and intense interest in earth science and remains an useful reference for any one pursuing research and geological information in Sikkim and Darjeeling areas.

Swades Basu is survived by his wife Mrs. Ajita Basu, daughter Parama, son-in-law Sayak, relatives, and a large circle of friends and admirers.

Geological Society of India

S.V. SRIKANTIA