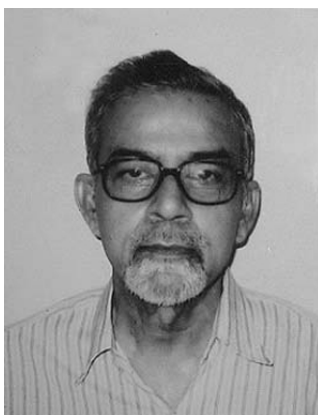


OBITUARY



Pronab Kumar Banerjee
(1933-2008)

Pronab Kumar Banerjee, former Deputy Director General of the Geological Survey of India, breathed his last at his residence in Kolkata in the morning of 26-12-2008.

Born on the 1st April, 1933 in Shibpur, a western suburb of Kolkata. On passing the matriculation examination, he joined the Presidency College, Kolkata for higher studies. He passed the M.Sc. examination in Geology in 1954, obtaining a first class. Late Prof. Asoke Mookherjee of IIT, Kharagpur and Dr. D.K. Ray, former Director General, GSI were his contemporaries in college. He obtained the D.Phil. degree in Geology from the Calcutta University in 1970.

He joined the Geological Survey of India in January, 1955. He served the organization with great distinction till his retirement in 1991. His initial posting in the Geological Survey of India was as a Geological Assistant in the Petrological Laboratory at the headquarters. He undertook a petrofabric study of deformed calc-silicate marbles of Palamau district, which brought out unusual C-axis girdles, not known from natural marbles at that time. Such girdles were reported from the Austrian Alps subsequently.

As Director, Division of Regional Integrated Surveys, Eastern Region, he had developed and supervised programmes for mineral exploration in Bihar, Orissa, West Bengal and Andaman & Nicobar Islands. In the latter part of his tenure in Orissa, compilations of Quadrangular geological maps and mineral belt maps were undertaken for publication. He acted as the Convenor of the UNESCO sponsored IGCP Project on Lateritisation Processes and edited a volume for a Seminar held in Trivandrum in 1979.

A recipient of the Crookshank Gold Medal of MMGI in 1969 for his contributions in the field of geology. He was awarded the National Mineral Award in 1970-71 for

discovery of the Kansa nickel deposit in the Sukinda valley.

On being promoted as Deputy Director General in 1985, he was given the charge of the Offshore Mineral Exploration and Marine Geology Wing till his retirement in 1991.

After superannuation from the Geological Survey of India, he became an Emeritus Professor, School of Oceanography, attached to the Department of Geological Sciences of the Jadavpur University and guided research scholars. He was Deptt. of Ocean Development (DOD)'s Project Co-ordinator for the "Bengal Fan". Imprints of Late Quaternary climatic and sea-level fluctuations along the east and southern coasts of India and a qualitative assessment of seismic risks along the Peninsular coast of India were also among the topics of his research.

He was elected as a Fellow of the Indian National Science Academy (INSA) in 1987 and later became its Senior Scientist. He was made a Member of the American Association for Advancement of Science in September, 2002.

He was pious and a person of integrity, who never compromised with his principles. He possessed an indefatigable spirit, profound scholastic abilities and was dedicated and meticulous in all his endeavours. He had an aura of awe and admiration in his personality. Wit and humour were other traits of his character, which he retained till his final critical days. It was a treat to hear him narrate anecdotes of famous personalities of the GSI, with whom he had come in contact. He was an eloquent orator who could captivate his audience.

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