OBITUARY

Kanan Kumar Dutta
(1934-2020)

Shri Kanan Kumar Dutta, retired Director (Geological Survey of India), Professor (Nagpur University), and Editor of the Gondwana Geological Society was born in Calcutta on January 1, 1934. We mourn his passing away on January 18, 2020 in Kolkata.

Shri Dutta obtained his B.Sc. (1954) and M.Sc. (1956) in Geology from Presidency College and the University of Calcutta. From 1957 to 1960, he served as a Research Assistant at the National Atlas Organization. In 1960, he joined the Geological Survey of India as an Assistant Geologist and was posted in Lucknow. He conducted extensive searches for sulfide mineral deposits for antimony, copper, and lead ores in remote areas including the Garhwal Himalayas. His promotion to Geologist (Jr.) came within two years. His acumen in field geology put him in the Nepal Technical Cooperative Mission with responsibilities for systematic mapping in challenging terrains. Following his next promotion (Geologist, Sr.) he took charge of coal exploration in Singrauli. There he embraced, along with his junior colleagues, the concept that disposition of sedimentary facies rather than layer-cake stratigraphy controlled the distribution of coal deposits in the area. Laskar, Mukherjee, and Dutta (authorship was in the order of seniority) published a geological summary in the Records of the Geological Survey of India (v. 108, no. 2, pp. 170-181; 1977). Singrauli is currently the largest producer of coal in India.

In 1977, Shri Dutta was transferred to the Training Institute of GSI, first in Rajnandgaon and then in Nagpur where he supervised the Institute's administration and accounts. He was promoted to the rank of Director in 1981 taking charge of the Petrology Division of GSI's Central Region. He guided a team to study a new project – Crust and Mantle Studies of Son Narmada and Tapti basins (CRUMANSONATA). He then headed the Publication Division of the Central Region, organized a national seminar on the "Precambrian of Central India", and published the Special Volume 28 (1990) of GSI. The investigations led to the recognition of arguably multiple

separations and amalgamations along what is now known as the Central Indian Tectonic Zone (CITZ). More than 30 years later CITZ is still a hotly debated issue in the geology of India. In the last one year alone, more than 300 peer-reviewed papers have been published on the topic.

After retiring from GSI at the end of 1991, Shri Dutta taught Post-Graduate courses on sedimentology and coal geology for 15 years at Nagpur University. He had been active in the affairs of Gondwana Geological Society and was the editor of "Gondwana Geological Magazine" (1992-1998). In this period, he organized and conducted the "Birbal Sahni Centenary National Symposium on Gondwana of India" (January 1993) and the "National Symposium on Deccan Flood Basalts in India" (March 1996). Under his leadership, the Society published the Proceedings' volumes on the inaugural day of the symposia, a remarkable feat.

In 2006, he finally retired to Kolkata. There, he organized informal monthly meetings of geology friends from his college days in the 50s. While in Lucknow, he had married his close friend's sister Kalpana who survives him as do their daughter Manidipa, son-in-law Raghavendra, grandson Ishaan (all in London), and many relatives in his closely-knit extended family. We mourn his death along with his many friends.

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