

Jyoti Bhusan Chatterjea



PROFESSOR JYOTI BHUSAN CHATTERJEA died unexpectedly on February 29, 1972 due to a massive cardiac infarction. He was 53 years old. His death has deprived his wife, only daughter, students, and colleagues of his inspiring guidance.

Dr. Chatterjea was born in Calcutta on February 16, 1919. He obtained the M.B.B.S. degree in 1942 and that of Doctor of Medicine in 1949 from Calcutta University, maintaining a brilliant record throughout the period of study. Subsequently, he undertook research work in hematology as Assistant Research Officer under the Indian Council of Medical Research at the School of Tropical Medicine, Calcutta, and he gradually rose to the rank

of Professor of Hematology in the same institution in 1956. In addition to his duties as Professor of Hematology, he was appointed Director of the School of Tropical Medicine in February 1966.

While still in his thirties he became well known internationally as a hematologist and a teacher. His original contributions have played significant roles in delineation of the spectrum of hematological disorders prevailing in India. His work on nutritional and iron-deficiency anemia and red cell enzymes is well known. Discovery of Hb E in Bengalis and comprehensive studies on Hb E thalassemia disease from a clinical, biochemical, biophysical, and genetic standpoint have provided exciting new information which has greatly enriched contemporary medical science. The excellence of his studies and significance of his original findings have been highly acclaimed all over the world. In view of his achievements, he received several national awards. These included the Barclay Medal (1963) awarded by the Asiatic Society of India, the Basanti Devi Amirchand prize (1964) awarded by the Indian Council of Medical Research, and the Minto Medal (1965). He delivered several lectures on various aspects of hematology; among the places in which he spoke were: New York City; Rahway, New Jersey, Newcastle upon Tyne, England; Sydney; New Guinea; and New Zealand.

He was associated with many scientific organizations—founder of the Indian Society of Hematology and Blood Transfusion, President of the Anthropological Society of India (1968, 1969), President, Indian Science Congress, Medical and Veterinary Section (1964); Fellow, National Institute of Sciences of India (1960); Member, Sectional Committee of Physiology and Biochemistry (1965–1967; 1969–1972); Councillor of International Society of Hematology (1954–1968) and Vice-President (1968–1972); elected Asian representative to the Executive Committee of International Society of Blood Transfusion (1964);

elected member of the Council of the International Reticuloendothelial Society (1964); member of the governing body of International Standardization Committee in Hematology since 1964; elected Fellow of College of Pathologists (U.K.) in 1968; Corresponding Fellow of American College of Physicians (1965) and was the first Indian to get this distinction.

He was also Member of the Expert Advisory Panel on Human Genetics, World Health Organization (1967–1972). He presided over various sessions of International Society of Hematology and International Society of Blood Transfusion and delivered a number of distinguished orations under the auspices of various scientific bodies in India and abroad.

Apart from his scientific achievements, Dr. Chatterjea had a great love for literature which made his speeches interesting and kept his audiences engaged. He was a scientist and gentleman with sympathy for the suffering. He induced enthusiasm and confidence in his students and younger colleagues.

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