

## OBITUARY

On January 22, 2017, Prof. Anjali Roy, an eminent mycologist from India, left for her heavenly abode. Her life of 86 years has been full of accomplishments with contributions to the growth of science, especially to the domain of her specialization, Mycological Studies.

Anjali Roy was born in Rajsahi, Bangladesh in pre-independent India in April 1930. She did her schooling at Rajsahi, Bangladesh and passed the matriculation examination from Rajsahi Girls School, Bangladesh in 1945. In an era when not many girls pursued higher studies, she completed her graduation from Presidency College, Calcutta with a honours in Botany. At the socio-political front, the move for Independent India had gained immense momentum. Amidst the transition from a colonial country to an independent nation, she endured and completed her postgraduate studies in 1952 from Ballygunge Science College, The University of Calcutta, India was trying to carve its niche as an independent nation and needed its younger generation to shoulder frontiers of scientific development. As a young, female interested in biological studies, she did her doctorate under the guidance of Dr. S.N. Banerjee from Calcutta University. Her zeal for further studies continued, leading her to successfully accomplish D.Sc. from Calcutta University. The levels of commitment from a young, female in pursuing and sustaining a higher education trajectory, sets her as an icon, even for the contemporary generations.

Dr. Roy's deep inclination to knowledge led her to earning a post-doctorate research in Canada under the guidance of the eminent mycologist, Dr. Mildred K. Nobles on the genus *Coriiolellus*. She developed an interest in studying wood-rotting Polypores and systematically dedicated herself to taxonomic studies of Polypores based on their morphology, anatomy, type of rots they produced, their growth characters in culture, their sexuality, and analysing chemical responses to various tests. Lately, biochemical aspects attracted her attention, which she worked on in collaboration with her twin sister Dr. Arati Das, Scientist at the Bose Institute, Calcutta.

The wide spectrum of research interests led her to contribute to several emerging sectors associated with mycological studies. She worked as medical mycologist in Department of Medical Mycology, School of Tropical Medicine, Calcutta and published several research papers adding to the body of knowledge in the field. Her keenness in disseminating knowledge among the science community and inspiring youngsters was evident in her publications, teaching and academic responsibilities that she shouldered in her career. She was a lecturer at The University of Burdwan, West Bengal, India in the year 1974. Later, she joined Visva Bharati University, Santiniketan, West Bengal, India in the year 1979 and worked there until her retirement in 1995. She published a book for degree students with her sister Dr. Arati Das. Prof. Roy's work earned her appreciation and goodwill from the Indian as well as the international community of scholars. Several eminent mycologists have interacted and encouraged her work through her lifetime. Some such scholars include, Dr. Teixeira, Dr. Fidalgo, Dr. Furtado, Dr. Parmasto, Dr. Alix David, Dr. Boidin, Dr. Rajchenberg, Dr. Wright, Dr. Ryvardeen, Dr. Gilbertson, Dr. Larsen, Dr. Ginns and many more. In her academic career, Prof. Roy mentored 10 Ph. D. students and published about 150 research papers in different research journals of repute in India and abroad. Her students benefitted from her international exposure and her work experience in some of the finest laboratories of her times, such as the Royal Botanic



Gardens, Kew in U.K. and The Academy of Sciences of the Estonian S.S.R. Institute of Zoology and Botany of the then U.S.S.R.

The monograph on *Polyporaceae* titled, "*Polyporaceae of India*" co-authored with her student, Dr. A. B. De in 1996, has been an immense contribution to the field. The *Royoporus* belonging to family *Polyporaceae* was created by Dr. A. B. De in honour of Prof. Anjali Roy. She also inaugurated the first self-funded database of Aphylllophorales from India, namely; Indian Aphylllofungal Database (IAD) developed by Dr. Kiran Ranadive, Prof. Neeta Jagtap and Mr. Harshavardhan Khare. Prof. Roy served on Advisory Committee of the research journal, Journal of Mycopathological Research. She was also honoured by Savitribai Phule University, Pune.

In contemporary times, when interest in classical mycology is losing its sheen, the contributions of Prof. Roy's journey of academic explorations is a gentle reminder in seeking the worth in investing ourselves to systematic explorations of the beautiful expanse of natural, mycological flora that surrounds us. For those who have known us, she will always be an inspiring figure. For those, who have not come in direct contact, the contribution through her works will leave indelible impressions of appreciation for her work and a sense of deep respect in their minds. May her soul rest in peace!

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