

asked me why I was studying cancer chromosomes? I gave him my detailed reply and then he told me, 'Next time when you visit India, I want you to give a talk in Chittaranjan Cancer Center in Calcutta and tell them why the study of cytogenetics is so important in the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of cancer'. He and his student G. K. Manna were the first in India to start a cancer cytogenetics laboratory in this hospital in Calcutta, but received minimal enthusiasm from local physicians. Ray-Chaudhuri was a pioneer in starting not only animal cytogenetics, but also cancer cytogenetics in India.

During his trip to USA Ray-Chaudhuri visited many cities and delivered a series of talks. While returning to India, he stopped to visit his students in Europe. After returning to Calcutta he wrote to me a letter on 3 June 1981 about his trip from which I am quoting directly. He wrote, 'You can imagine how pleased I was to see you people so well-liked and respected in your place of work'. What else can a 'true teacher' ask for from his students?.

Ray-Chaudhuri knew the technique of planting young seeds of scientific inquiry in the minds of his students. I personally feel very lucky and blessed to have had the opportunity to learn not only animal cytogenetics, but also human qualities

from him. Some of Ray-Chaudhuri's students have become authorities in their respective fields of research and administration, but he was not fond of administrative responsibilities. Once he told me, 'Never become Chairman of the Department. You will become a glorified clerk'. Because of their achievements, some of his students are worthy of mention here: G. K. Manna is Professor Emeritus in Kalyani University, T. Sharma is Professor Emeritus in BHU, P. G. Kale is still active in teaching and research at Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University in Normal, Alabama and Lalji Singh is currently Director of the Center for Cellular and Molecular Biology, Hyderabad, India.

Ray-Chaudhuri was a positive thinker. During a conference at New Delhi sometime in the mid 1960s he was having dinner with several other delegates. One of the guests, who was then Chairman of Zoology in Delhi University and also a former classmate of Ray-Chaudhuri from Calcutta University, started a conversation regarding his recent trip to USA. He started speaking about how scientists in USA were criticizing Muller's hypothesis and his published papers. The intention was to humiliate Ray-Chaudhuri in front of other scientists. Someone asked Ray-Chaudhuri to respond. Instead of becoming angry Ray-Chaudhuri said

politely 'I am grateful to you Professor ... for bringing such good news about my mentor (Muller). It shows that scientists are very much interested in Muller's research and that the field of genetics is making tremendous progress in the right direction. But what happened to your Professor's field of research? It appears that what you and your mentor worked on has not changed in the last 30 or 40 years. Your science is at a standstill because no one is interested anymore in that direction'. This unexpected response of Ray-Chaudhuri made everyone burst into laughter and the dinner became more enjoyable. What a classic illustration of his positive thinking!

I hope I have succeeded in describing some of the contributions made by this great teacher and scientist, Prof. Ray-Chaudhuri, in the field of animal cytogenetics and showing his humane qualities by narrating some personal episodes. Without any hesitation, I would like to call him 'The Father of Animal Chromosome Research' in India.

Sen Pathak is in the Department of Cancer Biology and the Department of Laboratory Medicine, The University of Texas, M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, 1515 Holcombe Boulevard, Houston, Texas 77030, USA. (e-mail: spathak@notes.mdacc.tmc.edu)

Errata

Species diversity and relative abundance of lichens in Rumbak catchment of Hemis National Park in Ladakh

Hans Raj Negi and D. K. Upreti

[*Curr. Sci.*, 2000, 78, 1105–1112]

On page 1108, 2nd column, the following equation was missing:

$$J_{xy} = \frac{C}{(A+B)-C}$$

We regret the error.

Soft condensed matter physics

[*Curr. Sci.*, 2000, 78, 661–663]

The meeting report on 'Soft condensed matter physics' which appeared in the 25 March issue, was incorrectly attributed to Gautam I. Menon and K. R. Rao. The authorship should be credited to K. R. Rao.