

Obituary

Prof. (Dr.) Ashis Kumar Datta



Prof. (Dr.) Ashis Kumar Datta, a Life member of IDA, left for heavenly abode on June 12, 2023 leaving behind a legacy of academic excellence, kindness, and generosity. He was a highly esteemed scholar, and dedicated educator who made significant contributions to the field of Agricultural and Food Engineering.

Prof. Datta's professional journey was marked by outstanding achievements and a relentless pursuit of knowledge. He began his academic pursuits at the prestigious Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur, where he obtained his Bachelor of Technology (Honours) in Agricultural Engineering in 1976. His brilliance was evident during his undergraduate years, earning him the top rank in his class with an impressive 79% marks.

Continuing his thirst for knowledge, he travelled to the United States and completed his Master of Science in Agricultural and Biological Engineering from Rutgers - The State University of New Jersey in 1978, where he maintained an exceptional Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of 3.48. Undeterred by the challenges, Prof. Datta pursued his Doctor of Philosophy in Food Engineering at Pennsylvania State University, University Park, and graduated in 1982 with a remarkable CGPA of 3.61.

In September 1983, Prof. Datta began his teaching journey as a Lecturer in the Food Science and Nutrition Department at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, CA, USA. After enriching the lives of students in the USA, he returned to his alma mater, IIT, Kharagpur, in December 1985, as an Assistant Professor in the Agricultural and Food Engineering Department. Over the years, he achieved the positions of Associate Professor in 1998, Professor in 2004, and ultimately the highest designation of Professor (HAG) from August 2019. After a brief period of re-employment in January 2020 to June 2020, Prof. Datta continued his academic and research activities as usual as Emeritus Professor in the same department till December 2022. He came back to Kolkata in February 2023 and was planning for his next innings of activities while his sudden death had shattered all; his only daughter Chandrani, spouse Chandrima, students, colleagues and well wishers.

Throughout his distinguished career, Prof. Datta garnered immense respect and admiration from his colleagues, peers, and students. His passion for teaching was evident in the profound impact he had on countless students, molding them into skilled professionals and responsible citizens. His kind and calm demeanour made him approachable, and his dedication to education was unmatched.

Prof. Datta had guided innumerable numbers of B. Tech., M. Tech. and several Ph.D. Theses. He had published several research papers, book chapters and articles. His book on "Transport Phenomena in Food Process Engineering" has acclaimed among the students across the world. He had been associated with several research projects with direct practical importance. One such project '*Continuous Kheer Making Machine*' had got excellent awarded from NDDB.

Prof. Datta's benevolent nature was extended beyond the classroom. He was known for his generous contributions to the underprivileged, always lending a helping hand to those in need. His selfless acts of giving touched the lives of many, leaving an indelible mark on their hearts.

Beyond academia, Prof. Datta cherished his leisure time, finding joy in traveling and catching up on much-needed rest. His zest for exploration and relaxation allowed him to find balance amid his demanding career.

The Association mourns the death of Prof. (Dr.) Ashis Kumar Datta and pray to God to grant heavenly peace to the departed soul and give enough strength to the family members to bear this irreparable loss.