

Obituary

Sachindra Nath Pradhan

Neuropsychopharmacology (2009) 34, 2785;
doi:10.1038/npp.2009.63



Dr Sachindra Nath Pradhan, a former 'Distinguished Professor of Pharmacology' at Howard University, College of Medicine, died at his home in Bethesda on 21 March 2009, at the age of 89 years, from complications of a stroke.

Strongly motivated, he endured grave hardships to attain academic excellence while not forgetting where he came from. He grew up in a remote village in West Bengal, India. The village had no electricity or running water. He walked barefoot for miles to attend school and lost his mother at an early age. Nevertheless, driven by a quest for education and science, he endured these hardships to pursue an academic career.

Dr Pradhan received his MD degree in 1945 from Calcutta Medical College, Calcutta University and did his graduate studies at the School of Tropical Medicine, Calcutta. In 1953, he came to the United States as a Visiting Scientist to the National Cancer Institute of the National Institutes of Health and later pursued graduate studies in pharmacology, receiving his PhD degree in 1959 from George Washington University, Washington, DC. He had a long and distinguished research career in neuropsychopharmacology in the Department of Pharmacology at Howard University College of Medicine (HUCM), Washington, DC and served as a scientific consultant to the US Food and Drug Administration. He received research grants from both government and non-governmental organizations. He was a gifted teacher and trained scores of graduate students in his

laboratory. He published more than 130 scientific papers and contributed 50 reviews, monographs and chapters in several scientific books. He published four books including, *India in the United States*. He edited two scientific books, *Drug Abuse: Basic and Clinical Aspects* (Mosby) and the text book, *Pharmacology in Medicine: Principles and Practice* (SP Press International). He was a member of the editorial boards of *Arch. Internat. Pharmacodyn.*, *Advances in Alcohol and Substance Abuse*, *Progress in Neuropsychopharmacology*, *Psychopharmacology* and other peer-reviewed journals. He was a fellow of the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology and had memberships in the Society of Neurosciences, American Society of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics, American Association of Cancer Research and the New York Academy of Science.

He was one of the early Indian immigrants in the United States, and never forgot his roots despite his academic success. He funded scholarships and provided shelter and support to many Indian graduate students. Influenced by the principles of Mahatma Gandhi, he lived a very simple life, nevertheless he established a charitable Trust, 'Pradhan Foundation' for poor and needy students for education and scientific advancement. He served as the Head, Division of Pharmacology, Central Drug Research Institute, in Lucknow, India from 1962 to 1964 while on leave from Howard University. He made significant endowments to advance education in India. As a result of his noteworthy philanthropic efforts, the research facility 'S.N. Pradhan Center of Neurosciences' was established at the Calcutta University.

The Center for Neurosciences at the Calcutta University represents the first such center in Eastern India and one of very few in India. Dr Pradhan's unwavering desire, unflinching support and sharing his dream created a frontier of Biological Science at the University of Calcutta.

Last, but not least, Dr Pradhan will be remembered by his friends, for his humility, benevolence, love of nature and his appreciation of the Arts. He is survived by his beloved wife, Dr Sikta Pradhan.

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