

Obituary: *Prof. Biswanath Koley, 1930-2020.*

Professor Biswanath Koley, an eminent Physiologist and legendary figure in the field of electrophysiological research in cardiovascular and respiratory system, breathed his last in the early hours of June 5th, 2020 at his residence, CA 223, Salt Lake, Kolkata: 700 064, at the age of 90 Yrs. He is survived by his wife, Prof. Juthika Koley, Retired Reader, Department of Physiology, University of Calcutta, and their son Amit Koley.



Prof. Koley was born on April 1st, 1930 at Purat, Hooghly, West Bengal. After obtaining the degree of Master of Science in Physiology from the University of Calcutta in 1955, he joined as Research Fellow at SSKM Hospital, Kolkata in 1956. Eventually, he was awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Physiology from the University of Calcutta in the year of 1961.

After completion of his education, he joined the Department of Physiology, University of Calcutta and started his teaching and research carrier as Lecturer in 1962, and gradually he attained the position of Professor in 1987. He served the University until his superannuation in 1995. He devoted himself to both teaching and research. By virtue of his reputation as a physiologist, he was invited quite often to deliver lectures at different colleges of Tripura University, Burdwan University, Visva-Bharati University, Banaras Hindu University, etc as a Visiting Professor. He also acted as a teacher of physiology at the University of Leeds as a Welcome Trust Fellow, UK during 1974-1976. For some time past he had been serving as a Professor of Physiology at a medical college under Kathmandu University, Nepal. For his ginormous contribution in teaching, University of Calcutta honoured him in 2013 as “Eminent Teacher”.



Prof. Koley's research activity spanned more than 40 years in the field of cardiovascular and respiratory physiology and generated more than 251 publications during 1958- 2001. As many as 30 students have been awarded PhD degree under his direct supervision. He was Vice President of Federation of Indian Physiological Societies (FIPS) and President of The Physiological Society of India (PSI) for more than ten years. He acted as the General Secretary of the Association of Physiologists and Pharmacologists of India for two consecutive years. He was an active member of various national and international associations and societies, including the Physiological society of Great Britain, International Brain Research Organization, and Indian Science Congress Association and was associated with the organization of a number of conferences, congresses and seminars on physiology. He acted as Sectional President in Physiology in Indian Science Congress held in Lucknow in 1984. All through, he was playing an important role for the development of physiological studies in India. For his notable contributions in physiology, he was elected Fellow of the National Academy of Medical Sciences (India) in 1991.

Prof. Koley's most notable contribution was the development of the “Electrophysiology Unit” in the Department of Physiology, University of Calcutta. It was the first electrophysiology lab in Eastern India. Based on his own developed electrophysiology lab (“Electrophysiology Unit”), he trained a number of students the “single-fiber technique”, which was used to explore the neurophysiological basis of different cardiogenic reflexes, baroreceptor reflexes, viscerocardiac reflexes, viscerosomatic reflexes, etc.