

Dedication



## A dedication to Dr. Dipankar Chakraborti: In honor of a visionary mind



Dr. Dipankar Chakraborti

School of Environmental Studies (SOES), Jadavpur University, India

Born: 29 October 1943, Ujirpur, Barisal, Bangladesh

Death: 28 February 2018, Kolkata, West Bengal, India

The inaugural issue of the *Journal of Environmental Science, Health & Sustainability* is dedicated to Dr. Dipankar Chakraborti (popularly known as Dip) in honor of his unwavering commitment to addressing the arsenic (As) crisis in the Bengal delta. As a visionary scientist, he played a crucial role in bringing global attention to the widespread As contamination affecting Bangladesh, West Bengal, India and other Indian states.

Dr. Chakraborti was deeply devoted to mitigating groundwater As contamination and its severe consequences on human health. Throughout his life, he tirelessly advocated for As-affected communities, inspiring generations of scientists with his pioneering research and relentless efforts to support those suffering from As exposure. His remarkable contributions to As research and his dedication to the victims of the Bengal delta will be remembered and cherished.

Dr. Chakraborti started his academic career as a lecturer in 1967 and earned a Ph.D. in Analytical Chemistry from Jadavpur University, India, in 1973. His research journey took him to prestigious institutions worldwide, including the University of Prague (as a UNESCO Fellow), Universitaire Instelling Antwerpen, Belgium, and Texas A&M University, USA. After returning to Jadavpur University in 1987, he founded and directed the School of Environmental Studies (SOES). Leveraging his global experience, he founded the internationally recognized Arsenic Research Group at SOES in 1988, pioneering research on As toxicity. He remained at SOES until his passing in 2018, maintaining its self-funded, self-sustaining model, and never accepting foreign grants.

Dr. Chakraborti and his team extensively studied groundwater As contamination issues in the Ganga-Meghna-Brahmaputra (GMB) Plain and fluoride contamination in several parts of India. Since 1988, his research played a crucial role in documenting the magnitude of As contamination in the Bengal delta, covering both India and Bangladesh. At a time when only a handful of reports existed, he was instrumental in bringing global attention to this crisis, highlighting its impact on millions of people.

His groundbreaking work led to several key discoveries, including the first identification of groundwater As contamination in Bangladesh and the proposal of the pyrite oxidation theory explaining As mobilization process in groundwater from Bengal delta. He also pointed out the As-safe groundwater locations in Bangladesh and As contamination in Bihar state of India. His research on As field-testing kits led to UNICEF discontinuing the use of unreliable test kits in Bangladesh and India. His contributions helped governments in Bangladesh and West Bengal take critical steps toward mitigating As contamination in drinking water and food crops.

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Dr. Chakraborti's scientific impact was profound. He was a member of the WHO working group and contributed to the IARC Monographs on carcinogenic risks. He authored 20 book chapters and co-authored over 200 peer-reviewed journal articles. His efforts earned him international recognition, and his work continues to influence As research globally.

Dr. Chakraborti's unwavering commitment went beyond his research, as he generously contributed his personal earnings to create an As research fund at Jadavpur University. That fund supported to continue research extensively and assisted As-affected families financially. His relentless efforts to raise awareness, find solutions, and support victims have made a lasting impact on As research, inspiring future generations of scientists to tackle this critical environmental health challenge.

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