

## Obituary

### Professor (Dr.) Mihir Kumar Chakrabarti

It is with profound grief that we announce that our beloved Professor Mihir Kumar Chakrabarti left for his heavenly abode on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September, 2021.

The second child of Late Lalit Mohan Chakrabarti and Late Girija Rani Chakrabarti, Mihir was born on 19<sup>th</sup> September 1936 in the small village of Kalkipur close to Sundarban in South Bengal.

Mihir did his initial schooling in the village school 'Ramkamal Vidyapith' founded by his grandfather Late Ramkamal Chakrabarti. When the family shifted to Kolkata in 1950, Mihir resumed his schooling at 'Scottish Church Collegiate School'. Post completion in 1954, he secured admission in 'St. Paul's College' and then 'City College', from where he graduated with Physics Honours. He then proceeded to complete his Master's Degree in Radio Physics and Electronics from University College of Science and Technology, A.P.C. Road, Kolkata, popularly known as 'Rajabazar Science College, Calcutta University' in 1962.

Soon after, he joined the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) in Kolkata. He was then seconded to Jadavpur University (JU), Kolkata to work with a team of engineers who designed and developed the first indigenously built digital computer christened ISI-JU to mark the joint achievement of the two institutions. This computer was commissioned in 1966 by the then Union Education Minister Professor M C Chagla.

Post this hallmark endeavour, Mihir resumed his engagement with ISI, but soon chose a sabbatical to pursue his PhD from Leeds University, UK.

Feted with a PhD Degree, Mihir returned to Kolkata as an Assistant Professor, ISI in 1970, and continued to become Associate Professor and eventually Professor, from where he retired in 2002. During his tenure at ISI, he headed many important committees and positions. Mihir was the Dean of Studies during 1986-1988, Professor-in-Charge of the Physical and Earth Sciences Division during 1994-1996, and of the newly formed Computer and Communication Sciences Division during 1996-1998. He chaired and participated in various selection committees for recruitment and admission, providing a rich contribution to the growth and development of the esteemed institute.

Post retirement, with his love for academia, he joined the Institute of Technology and Marine Engineering at Diamond Harbour, Kolkata as Founding Principal. Under his tutelage, the institute soon established itself as one of repute in the field of engineering and maritime studies.

He served the Asiatic Society as General Secretary for two consecutive terms during 2010-2013. During his tenure, he arranged a public lecture series by stalwart researchers and educators on various topics such as the history of electronics computers. He led the initiative of digitization of various documents in the society.

Professor Mihir Kumar Chakrabarti was a revered member of the academic community of Kolkata, a loving family man. He was very disciplined, systematic and professional yet always with a smile and an anecdote or two to share. A pragmatic person, Prof. Mihir was well known for his open views and was often approached by many for his sound advice. He lived a full and productive life and his contribution to academia will be remembered by many. His demise leaves an irreplaceable void in the lives of many that he touched.