OBITUARY

Prof. Pranab Kumar Bhaumik (1935-2020)

Dr. Pranab Kumar Bhaumik, ex-Professor and Head, Department of Paediatrics, Medical College, Kolkata, left for his heavenly abode on the 1st of June, 2020, at the age of 84 years. His three sons, daughters-in-law and grandchildren survive him.

Dr. Bhaumik was born on 17th September, 1935 at Medical College, Kolkata. He was the only son of Dr. Prabhat Chandra Bhaumik, a physician and freedom fighter and Smt. Parul Bala Debi. After graduating with MBBS degree from NRS Medical College, Kolkata, he earned his MD in Medicine from SSKM Hospital and joined the West Bengal Health Services. After his initial posting at North Bengal Medical College, he was transferred to Medical College Hospitals, Kolkata, Department of Paediatrics (Shishu Niwas) – considered to be the hotbed of Paediatrics, where he spent the rest of his illustrious academic career. One among the many stalwarts of the department, he rose to become the Professor and Head, a post he held till his retirement. In his own words, the hospital where he was born also gave him the best years of his career.

Professor Bhaumik was regarded as one of the doyens of pediatrics in West Bengal. His astute clinical acumen, and excellent bedside teaching skills made him one of the most admired teachers. He was highly respected for his punctuality, discipline, honesty, and dedication to his profession. He was admired for his sharp yet subtle wit and camaraderie with his peers and students alike. His ward rounds were famed for the great learning experience they provided. He was a man of unflinching principles who believed that a doctor’s service can never be equated with monetary exchanges, and exemplified this by selflessly treating patients coming from every strata of society with equal quality and care. Though so profound in knowledge, he liked to maintain a low profile, abhorring publicity and flamboyance.

Dr. Bhaumik was the father of three sons, the younger two, being twins. Unfortunately, owing to some chronic indisposition of his wife Geetanjali, soon after the birth of the twins, Dr. Bhowmick was entrusted with the added responsibility of taking care of his sons, his ailing wife and his aged parents, beside his hospital work, in the early days of his career. In spite of limited resources, he never compromised on his values. He led an austere life, with minimal needs, without undue excesses. He was a stickler for values and principles and instilled the same among his students who are well spread out in different parts of the world, and cherish the wonderful time spent under his guidance.

Dr. PK Bhaumik was the president of the Association of Health Service Doctors, and also the past president of West Bengal IAP in 1993. After retiring from active service, he continued his academic associations with IAP, attending state conferences in various capacities.

Though he was ailing for the past one year intermittently, and lost his wife in January, 2020 he lived a fruitful life in his humble abode at 42 Scott Lane, Kolkata, which was considered a pilgrimage by his students. His vast knowledge, teaching skills and unparalleled service to society touched and enriched the lives of aspiring medical students, junior doctors, colleagues, innumerable children and their parents. With his demise, an era in West Bengal pediatrics has ended. His memory will remain eternally etched in the hearts of all his patients, students and colleagues.
Air Cmde (Retd.) Vasudev Vatwani (1938-2020)

Air Cmde (Retd.) Vasudev Vatwani was an alumnus of the prestigious King George Medical College Lucknow, where he began his journey into the world of medicine. After completing his under-graduate training from KGMC in 1963 he was commissioned into the Indian Army Medical Corps where he began his career as a young doctor. He completed his post-graduation in Pediatrics with Honors from Osmania University, Hyderabad. Thereafter he completed his Diploma in Child Health from the Armed Forces Medical College, Pune. He was a well-liked and admired pediatrician who was popular and respected both by the patients as well as his colleagues. He had an illustrious professional career and was a much respected teacher having a long stint at the prestigious Armed Forces Medical College, Pune as Reader as well as Associate Professor. He went on to become Senior Advisor and Professor in Pediatrics and was Head of Department, Pediatrics at large Command Hospitals at Lucknow and Udhampur, as well as, Head of Department at the premier Army Hospital (Research/Referral), New Delhi. He continued to excel both academically and professionally and was promoted to the rank of Air Commodore and was the Principal Medical Officer at Headquarters Maintenance Command, Nagpur till his retirement in 1996.

Although he retired from active military service, the teacher and doctor in him was very much active; he continued with both clinical work and teaching. He set up the Pediatric department at Dr. DY Patil Medical College in Pimpri and was instrumental in getting the center recognized for post graduate teaching. He continued as Professor and Consultant in Pediatrics at Yashwantrao Chavan Memorial Hospital, Pimpri and at Walwalkar Hospital and BKL Walwalkar Rural Medical College, Chipliun until 2018. He was an examiner for various universities including Pune, Delhi, Lucknow, CPS Mumbai, MUHS Nashik, DY Patil University and Gujarat University. He was also a recognized Teacher for PhD at DY Patil University and has been a guide to multitude of post graduates. He was recognized for his vast knowledge and dedication to his patients and his profession, and respected and loved by his students who found him always open and accessible for all help and guidance.

During his career Air Cmde (Retd.) Vatwani undertook several original research projects, presented numerous papers at national conferences and contributed to many scientific publications and books. In recognition of his academic excellence and contribution, he was felicitated with a memento by the Armed Forces Medical College for his service from 1964-2014, commemorating 50 years of education, patient Care and research.

Air Cmde (Retd.) Vatwani was an active member of the IAP since 1971, an avid reader of, as well as a contributor to the IAP publications. He always kept abreast of the latest research, developments and guidelines in pediatrics and medicine. He was an exemplary human being who spent his life not only as a dedicated doctor but also as a much loved and respected guide, mentor and friend to his colleagues and students alike.

Air Cmde (Retd.) Vasudev Vatwani will be forever remembered for his vast knowledge, patience, humility and resilience.