A Loss for The Entire World



By now, you have no doubt heard the news of the sudden passing of Dr. Pratip Banerji.

All in one moment, India lost a visionary leader, his family lost their lodestar, and homeopathy lost a wealth of research acumen and future discovery.

The loss for the entire world is immeasurable.

Dr. Pratip Banerji was highly esteemed by leaders and influencers around the world! His library was filled to the brim with gifts from royal families, the President of India, Governors and high-ranking officials from all over the world.

Books, statues, candy, exotic foods – many, many gifts were constantly bestowed upon him. I would say gifts would arrive twice a week at least. And, of course, as the generous man he was, he would share the foodstuffs and candy with those in the clinic.

But those gifts represented the high regard in which the Drs. Banerji were held – by both the powerful and the powerless.

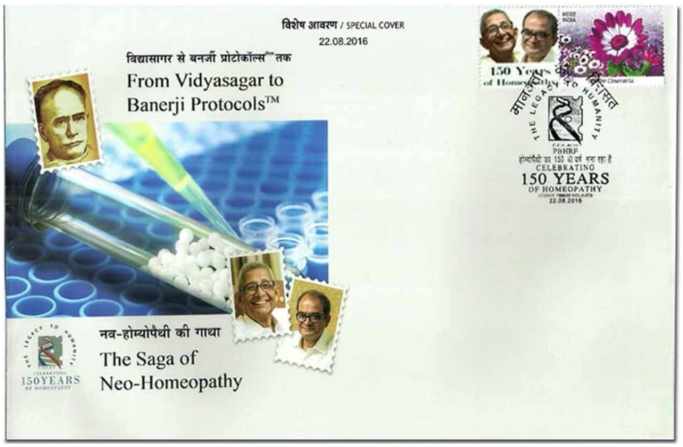
Their impressive two-story library (where we often met) also contained all of the awards these two men had accumulated.

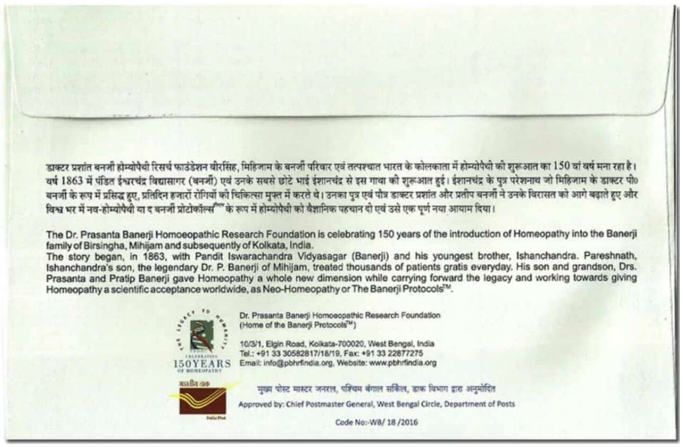
You see, the Banerji family was considered intellectual and philanthropic royalty for their visionary work throughout all of India – not just Kolkata.

Generations of the Banerji family receive great respect in India's history. Members of the family were instrumental in changing India's laws to allow widows to keep their property after their husbands' death. (Previously, after the man of the family died, women were left destitute as all of their husbands' wealth and possessions were taken away.) It was a Banerji family member who helped put an end to child marriages!

This Banerji legacy of selfless, compassionate work continued with Dr. Pratip Banerji and his father, Dr. Prasanta Banerji. They served myriads of the sick and desperate at The Prasanta Banerji Homoeopathic Research Foundation.

To commemorate their contributions, the Indian government commissioned a national Special Cover (stamp) bearing the images of Drs. Prasanta and Pratip Banerji.





It is also undeniable that the Drs. Banerji did more to carry homeopathy into the mainstream than anyone else in recent history.

Dr. Pratip established a foothold in the international medical community with his clinical studies and regular worldwide presentations. Then, his research collaborations with premiere, international scientific establishments catapulted homeopathy into the 21st century.

You can read about his journey and professional accolades – of which there were many – on the website for The Prasanta Banerji Homoeopathic Research Foundation.

But today, I want to focus on the Dr. Pratip Banerji whom I knew – for I lost not only a mentor but a very dear close friend.



Pratip and I just clicked.

He called me his “American Sister,” and I called him my “Indian Brother.”

He tried to teach me a bit of Bengali. I wrote it down phonetically – the Sanskrit was undoubtedly too much for me.

He would say, “Kemôn achhen? (How are you?)

And I would reply, “Bhalo achhi.” (I am fine.)

If I said it wrong, he would say, “Now, come on … you can get this!”

Do you know what was interesting about him? He never allowed any mistakes. At all.

He checked everything like a hawk. So, if a junior doctor wrote something in a patient’s record, and there was a misspelling, or a number was slightly off, he would make them write it over. And that was a lot of work! Sometimes white-out could be used, but many times adequate correction required a complete re-writing of the document!

And if he saw those mistakes from the same doctor more than two or three times, he’d get overtly irritated! He wanted all records to be perfect.

He expected professionalism because that’s what he was: the quintessential professional.

So, when it came to my elementary Bengali lesson, he would drill me on it! Every week, each year I returned.

“Have you got it now?” he’d tease!

One of the things I loved about him was his boyish sense of humor. Once we became comfortable with each other … oh, boy, would he rib me!

I had lunch with Pratip many days when I was in India.

Not the first year, though. When I first attended the clinic, I felt like I was imposing and did everything I could to stay out of his way and not take up his valuable time.

By the second year, he said, “What are you doing? Where are you going? Come on and have lunch with us!”

From then on, he often invited me to have lunch in his family dining room.

He often sat cross-legged. And that’s how I like to sit! I don’t like to sit with my feet down!

So, there we both sat, cross-legged, lunching at a beautiful table with a large lazy Susan in the center. Sometimes it would be an American or European meal (because he and his wife were well-traveled, especially in England, Germany, Switzerland, the U.S. and Spain). But more often, lunch was local food.

One time, he turned the lazy Susan toward me and said, “Here. Try this.”

I asked, “What is that?”

“They’re pickles,” he said.

So, thinking it was a pickle, I put it in my mouth – and it was a very, very unbelievably hot pepper.

He, in his boyish way, just completely cracked up!

Meanwhile, Dr. Prasanta Banerji, who was sitting next to me, said to one of the servers, “Quick! Get her some milk!”

When I could finally talk, I yelled, “Pratip! That’s not a pickle!”

He said, “Oh, well, where you come from, maybe that’s not a pickle. But where *we* come from … *that’s a pickle*!”



Each day, I couldn’t get up early enough to be at the clinic/research center. Even though I was with Pratip or his senior doctors many nights until 10 PM, sitting by Pratip’s side gave me an electric charge – an exhilarating intellectual lift.

But more importantly, I knew I was positioned next to a man of keen intellect, refined manners and big ideas. Having also sat with his father, Dr. Prasanta Banerji, I knew Pratip’s demeanor, subtle grandeur and brilliance were explained by his lineage. I never tired of learning from him and just being in his presence.



I could go on and on about his intellect, but I want to share more about his personality, which I treasured.

He was a gentleman. He was witty, wholesome and driven – but in a balanced way. The love I saw him demonstrate toward his wife, children and father was *awesome*. I rarely use that word because it has become trite, but it's an apt word to describe this man.

He was adoring of his children and always had time for them. His youngest would often come into the office and draw pictures for us. Pratip's face lit up each time she entered the room. It was no different with his older daughters who he also adored.

His capacity was bigger than many men. Maybe that's why he left so soon. Perhaps the earth couldn't comprehend his enormity.

It appeared to me that his focuses were narrow. I don't know if I missed something, but I spent a lot of time in his library. In my experience, people are what they read, and it

was clear who he was.

He didn't have time for golf nor tennis. He didn't make fine dining restaurants a priority, watch television or follow sports. He was myopic about two things: his family and his work.

That's how you get to be great.

You are undistracted by the noise of your surroundings and head straight into your life's work. Hourly. Daily. Over decades.

And in Pratip's case, generations.

My personal memories are punctuated with professional memories. And one of the most important things I learned during my time in India is a caveat both Drs. Prasanta and Pratip Banerji used to give their patients:

"Take it in your stride. Don't take your illness too seriously."

I can't emphasize that enough with my students and clients. We certainly need to know the details, but after you've finished recounting all the details in a one-on-one consultation, forget what you've said, go on and live your life and pretend your illness doesn't exist.

What the Drs. Banerji and I mean is we cannot strive for the impossible. We will never have perfect health. It doesn't exist.

And that brings up a very good point at this somber, reverent time.

As I discussed his passing in my Facebook Live earlier this week, I noticed quite a few of you asking, "Why didn't homeopathy help him?"

The short answer is, “I don’t know.”

I will not speculate on his last days on this earth. Why? Because to fully understand a case, one must consider many aspects of a person’s condition that may have led up to the illness.

However, even if I *did* know what may have contributed to Dr. Pratip’s illness, I would never offer his private story. When I write cases to teach, they are anonymous. And he – more than anyone – deserves the highest ethics from those who knew him.

But I can offer you the Drs. Banerji’s philosophy: we cannot strive for the impossible.

Life is a tenuous balance. On the one hand, life can be robust, and on the other hand, we are just a breath away from loss. We’re always on the precipice.

The loss of Dr. Pratip is not cause to be discouraged with homeopathy. Even with homeopathy, we will never have perfect health. Homeopathy is great! Nothing – no medicine – is infallible.

And nothing offers us immortality.

But while we are here on this earth, we can – we must – carry on his legacy.

Dr. Pratip and I often talked about our respective missions. His was to take the Banerji Protocols – his homeopathic medicine integrated with the scientific method – to the international medical world. My small part is to share his methods with families.

So, I leave you with this: Respect Dr. Banerji’s protocols. Bring his family’s methods to your family and circle of friends – for the great Dr. Pratip Banerji wanted good for all humanity.

While we’re here for our brief stay on earth, let us hold a candle to the light he and his father lit for humanity. Let us do good work in our families as a tribute to his memory.

Pratip was slightly more than a decade younger than I – yet somehow, he was centuries older. We all know when we’ve crossed this kind of person’s path; they leave us inspired and humbled.

Dr. Pratip Banerji was a visionary, a brilliant doctor, a world leader in his field – and a saint. Indeed, his footprint was enormous.

My wish for myself and the world is to modestly follow in those colossal marks he left upon this earth.

Warmly,

