

## A Report

### Pradip Bose Memorial Award 2022

Eminent Social Scientist and Essayist Professor Pradip Kumar Bose passed away in 2021. He was one of the founding members of Calcutta Research Group. To commemorate his memory, Calcutta Research Group started an award for promising writers in the Bengali language for original works based on ethnographic research. This year, the selection committee headed by Sibaji Pratim Basu, Vice Chancellor, Vidyasagar University and Member Calcutta Research Group, selected two promising Bengali essayists Manjira Saha and Debashis Aich for their recent ethnographic works on the lives of



the migrants and migrant labours during the COVID-19 pandemic. The awards were given in a small function on 10 September 2022 at Salt Lake, Kolkata. The award programme was presided over by Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury, Honorary Director, Calcutta Research Group. Partha Chatterjee, Honorary Professor, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences Calcutta, was the chief guest and Anirban Chattopadhyay, former Executive Editor, Ananda Bazar Patrika and a member of the Pradip Bose Memorial Award Selection Committee, was the special guest. All senior members of CRG, college and university teachers, publishers, journalists, researchers and civil society activists were present on that programme.

The programme began with a half-minute silence in memory of Pradip Bose. Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury initiated the programme by welcoming the guests and the awardees. He briefly threw some light on the illustrious academic career of Pradip Bose. Talking about Pradip Bose's association with Calcutta Research Group since its inception in 1997, Basu Ray Chaudhury said that Pradip Bose was always keen to encourage experimental research in social science. As a former member and office bearer (he served as president and secretary several times at CRG) Bose encouraged young researchers to do cutting-edge research. Basu Ray Chaudhury briefly said about the research done by Pradip K Bose and his keen interest in ethnographic writings. Bose was always encouraged to do serious research in Bengali. He believed that, there were enormous opportunities to do fundamental social science research in the Bengali language. He wrote/ edited most of his well-known books in Bengali for this reason.

Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury briefly described the reason behind the starting the award in the name of Pradip K Bose. He said that it was one of the special initiatives taken in the 25th year of the institution to promote scholars in vernacular language. The institution felt proud of taking this initiative. He passed the microphone to Anirban Chattopadhyay, one of the selectors of the award



committee. Anirban Chattopadhyay, member of the Pradip Bose Memorial Award selection committee emphasised good writing in the Bengali language. He briefly talked about the challenges in writing in the vernacular languages and described how it had been difficult to choose these two awardees. He praised both authors to do this type of challenging work during the pandemic. He said that the award had been the best occasion to honour the works that Pradip Bose did. Partha Chatterjee, the chief guest of this award programme agreed with both Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury and Anirban Chattopadhyay. As one of the former colleagues of Pradip K Bose, he observed Bose's keen interest in Ethnographic research in the Bengali language. He told about the association with Pradip K Bose since the early 1970s. Remembering the field survey in the villages and small cities of West Bengal that did by Partha Chatterjee, Pradip K Bose, Ranabir Samaddar and a few other colleagues of the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences in 1997, Chatterjee explained their journey through a political ethnography of an election. He praised Calcutta Research Group for starting an award in the name of Pradip K Bose. Talking about the books Chatterjee said that both the books told the journey of the migrant labours in their own voice. According to him, both authors did excellent work to bring the voices of the migrants during the pandemic. He referred to some of the incidents mentioned in both books to show how the authors minutely described the crisis. He congratulated both authors on their work.

Both Debashis Aich and Manjira Saha expressed their gratitude towards CRG for this award. They described their journey with the migrant workers. Manjira Saha told how she faced the families of her students who went to other states as migrant labours in the construction sectors for better pay. Sometimes her students left the school and went with them. She explained her experiences with the families of her students during the pandemic. Debashis Aich also talked about his experiences with migrant labours and their families during the lockdown. He felt their crisis and scarcity of food, the brutality from state authorities and others.

The programme ended with a vote of thanks by Rajat Kanti Sur, Calcutta Research Group.