

Dr. Hiralal Chaudhuri: father of induced breeding

(Dr. Hiralal Chaudhuri was recently honored by the World Aquaculture Society as Honorary Life Member. He has worked with AQD in the '70s and '80s, and has made quite an impression on AQD researchers, in particular Dr. Jurgenne Primavera who wrote the following summary of Dr. Chaudhuri's career accomplishments in aquaculture. This summary is reprinted from *World Aquaculture*, December 1997).

Freshwater fish are the top aquaculture commodity, comprising 66% of the total 1993 aquaculture production of about 16 million metric tons. Such production owes much to a quiet and unassuming scientist from India, Dr. H. Chaudhuri, who pioneered the use of reproductive hormones in finfish culture and has trained numerous fisheries workers all over Asia.

Hiralal Chaudhuri was born 21 November 1921 in Assam, India, and finished his secondary and higher education with the help of Indian government scholarships. He received his undergraduate and Master's degrees in Zoology from University of Calcutta which also granted him the Ph.D. in Zoology in 1961. Another M.S. (in Fisheries Management) was awarded to him by Auburn University in 1955 for his thesis on the effect of pituitary injections on pond fish reproduction.

As researcher with the Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute in Cuttack for the greater part of three decades (1948-1976), he made his greatest contributions to aquaculture in the hormonal induction of breeding in Indian major carps and exotic Chinese carps, hybridization of cultured carps, improved nursery management of fish, and the "composite culture" or polyculture of Indian and Chinese carps. The results of his many studies can be found in more than 60 research papers, reviews,



At AQD, Dr. Chaudhuri headed the training and extension group (1976-1979), and worked on induced spawning of milkfish (1985-1988).

technical manuals, monographs and other publications. In September 1994, a colloquium on "Applications of Endocrinology to Pacific Rim Aquaculture" was held in his honor at the University of California - Bodega Marine Laboratory.

Under the sponsorship of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, his expertise in freshwater fish breeding and grow-out has been shared with extension workers and other government officials in many countries including India, Laos, Myanmar, the former Soviet Union, Malaysia and Fiji.

He also served as Project Coordinator and Chief Technical Adviser of the FAO/UNDP Aquaculture Project in Vietnam and Lao PDR in 1979-1984. In the Philippines, he served as Regional Coordinator and Deputy Director of (SEAFDEC / AQD's) Asian Institute of Aquaculture in Iloilo, Philippines in 1976-1979 and again as Visiting Scientist in 1985-1988.

It was during the latter stint that I worked closely with him in the collabora-

tive training program of the SEAFDEC/AQD and FAO Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia. As his next-door neighbor in the housing complex in Tigbauan, I would see him painstakingly gather from the ground the freshly fallen fruits of the popular tropical tree *Muntingia calabura* and offer these to local children who lined up early each morning for the delicious red berries. He was as generous with the fruits of his garden as those of his research.

After a visiting professorship at the University of the Philippines in Los Baños in 1988-1993, he retired and returned with his wife Mukul to Calcutta where they now enjoy occasional visits from their grown-up daughter Soma and son Shubham. In February of this year, Burdwan University in West Bengal, India awarded him an honorary Doctor's degree in recognition of a lifetime devoted to aquaculture research and service.

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