

OBITUARY



DR. ASHOK KUMAR KHANNA

(1951 - 1984)

The Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology, Dehra Dun lost two promising geoscientists Dr. Ashok Kumar Khanna and Dr. Pramod Chandra Pant along with two sincere and young supporting staff, Shri Kundan Singh, Driver and Shri Kunwar Singh Rawat, Field Attendant, in a fatal accident on 27th August, 1984, while proceeding to Spiti valley on field work.

Dr. Ashok Kumar Khanna the other scientist who lost his life joined the Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology in 1977 and worked on the biostratigraphy of Subathu Formation from type area in Himachal Pradesh westward to Jammu and eastward to Sataun. Furthermore, he had also been working on the palynology of the Lower Phanerozoic Tethyan sediments of the Spiti Valley. He had collected samples from several measured sections covering Cambrian to Triassic sequence. After several years of patient laboratory processing, he was able to produce a wealth of microfossils, mainly chitinozoa, scolecodonts, acritarchs, etc., from the Lower Palaeozoics of Spiti and Malla Johar. His contribution on the chitinozoa, scolecodont and acritarch biostratigraphy of the Pin Dolomite of the Tethys Himalaya is a noteworthy contribution which in fact marked the beginning of the task of building a palynological reference section for biostratigraphic correlation in the Himalaya. Besides, he contributed to the palynology of the Po Formation of Spiti valley. A number of important papers on the palynostratigraphy of the Subathu Formation of Himachal Pradesh are to his credit. He not only demonstrated the value of palynological zonation of Subathu succession but was able to reconstruct its depositional history. As a person, Dr. Khanna was bright, amicable and energetic, with a very pleasing personality. He leaves behind his wife and two little daughters.