

Anjan Ghosh

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Anjan Ghosh, an associate professor of sociology at the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta, has been called to eternal rest at the age of fifty eight only. He was attacked by leukemia and after a brief period of struggle with this fatal disease, died on 5 June 2010. A former student of St Xaviers College, Calcutta and Jawharlal Nehru University, Delhi, he was associated with the CSSS as a researcher cum teacher of sociology for more than three decades, and taught at more than one university in India and abroad.

His academic excellence is not, however, an adequate description of his career of his worth as a human being. He belonged to the class of intellectuals who were constantly striving to develop an ideology that would help create a better and more democratic society. When he was a young man of only twenty-seven, Anjan, as a member of a team of four, visited the Baharagora region of Singbhum for an investigation of police atrocities on peasants. The local police threatened them with death, but could not crush their spirits. The incident caused quite a sensation, and even Jay Prakash Narayan came out with a statement condemning the attitude of the administration and the police. The entire episode was reported in the illustrious journal *Economic and Political Weekly*. Before that, he was an enthusiastic participant in the Movement for the Release of Political Prisoners in 1977. It was during that movement that this writer came to know him. That early acquaintance later developed into an enduring friendship.

Anjan was closely associated with *Frontier* for about ten years as a regular writer. Later his association with the paper grew a bit thinner and writings less regular, but the ties were never snapped. His last write-up in *Frontier* was a drama review 'Baghdad Burning' appeared in the February 21-27, 2010 (Vol 42, No 32) issue. The drama was staged by 'Aranjan', a theatre group from Delhi led by Kirti Jain at Kolkata's Minerva Theatre on November 2, 2009. In fact his long association with the weekly shows that he tried to swim against the current in varying degrees all through his life. Although an academic of a high standard of excellence, he never coveted position or money or power. This trait, although not extra-ordinary for an intellectual with at least some degree of ideological commitment, is remarkable in a society of teachers and researchers where mercenary attitude and lust for power and self dominate the mainstream. Anjan tried to live in a way different from this mainstream. □