

Indian Scientist

Asima Chatterjee

Padma Bhushan (1975)



(23 Sept 1917 - 22 Nov 2006)

Dr. Asima Chatterjee was a groundbreaking Indian scientist recognized for her work in **organic chemistry and medicinal plants**. She advanced treatments for **epilepsy and malaria**, inspiring many young girls to pursue science.

Early Life and Education

Dr. Asima Chatterjee was born in Kolkata and developed an early interest in medicinal plants. She studied chemistry at Scottish Church College, University of Calcutta, and in 1944 became the first Indian woman to earn a Doctorate of Science (D.Sc.), a notable achievement in her time.

Scientific Contributions

Dr. Asima Chatterjee made significant contributions to organic chemistry and medicinal plant research.

1. Anti - Epileptic Drugs

She developed plant-based anti-epileptic medicines, including Ayush-56 for epilepsy treatment.

2. Anti-Malarial Research

She studied anti - malarial compounds from Indian plants to fight malaria.

3. Cancer Research

Dr. Chatterjee studied vinca alkaloids for chemotherapy, advocating for natural products in cancer treatment.

4. Medicinal Plants of India

She authored 400+ research papers and books, connecting Ayurveda with modern science.

Achievements and Awards

Dr. Asima Chatterjee was awarded several prestigious honors, including the Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize (1961) as the first woman in Chemical Sciences, the Padma Bhushan (1975), the C. V. Raman Award, the P. C. Ray Award, and she was a Fellow of the Indian National Science Academy.

Legacy and Impact

Dr. Asima Chatterjee was a pioneering Indian scientist who linked Ayurvedic knowledge with modern science. Despite financial challenges, she achieved national recognition, including a tribute in the Rajya Sabha and a Google Doodle. She inspires young scientists, particularly women in STEM.

Conclusion

Dr. Asima Chatterjee's curiosity and dedication led to groundbreaking discoveries in medicinal plants, advancing Indian science and inspiring future generations to pursue innovation and excellence in the field.