



BIOLOGY CENTRE, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic  
**Institute of Parasitology**

Branišovská 31, 370 05 České Budějovice, Czech Republic  
Phone: 00420-38-777 5403; Fax 00420-38-53 10 388

## Supervisor's Report on Anirban ASH

At the very beginning, I have to apologise that my report will not be politically correct in places. This is due to the fact that the current situation of studies on parasite diversity in the Indian subcontinent is disastrous and causes a headache for anybody who has to deal with global biodiversity. Previous research did not contribute at all to a reasonable and reliable knowledge of fish parasite fauna in this region. With the exception of the British researchers working in India at the beginning of the 20th century and a very few papers from pioneers of Indian helminthology in the 1920's, virtually all literature on the taxonomy and systematics of fish helminths is nothing but garbage.

This was the actual situation when a large project to map the diversity of cestodes around the globe, supported by the National Science Foundation in the USA, started a few years ago. The main aim of our team was to define the diversity of basal groups of tapeworms, which implied that we needed to address the dozens of taxa with doubtful validity from India and neighbouring countries. What to do? How to resolve this seemingly unresolvable situation?

I hope you will find some answers in Anirban's PhD thesis. Without his participation in our cestode team, this aim could never be fulfilled, even partially. Therefore, I am very much grateful to him and his Indian colleagues, especially his Indian consultant, Pradip Kumar Kar, for enabling us to "clean the table".

Regarding my evaluation of Anirban's studies, I have to say that he has made considerable progress since he appeared in our lab for the first time. At the beginning, his theoretical knowledge and practical skills were quite weak, but he has learned very much. I appreciated his capacity to learn different methods, including DNA sequencing, his ability to present his results (he won several prizes for oral presentations and posters) and his aptitude with the relevant literature, especially when he was able to find obscure Indian papers on the internet. Last but not least, I would like to point out Anirban's ability to perfectly organize field sampling in India, where I noticed considerable differences between him and other Indian graduate students and researchers. Anirban has achieved a good level as a scientist, but cannot sleep on laurels because he still needs to work more independently, to be more active and to improve his theoretical knowledge by continually reading pertinent literature.

To summarize, I am very satisfied with Anirban's achievements and strongly recommend his thesis for defence. I also use this opportunity to express my gratitude to everyone who has helped him, in particular his consultants Miki Oros and Pradip Kar. At the very end, I have to say that I am happy that Anirban has worked in our lab!

Tomáš Scholz

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