

Famous Statisticians

In the International Year of Statistics we would like to honour the following scientists who have had a profound impact on the research and practice of statistical science.

Thomas Bayes (1702–1761), FRS, was a mathematician who introduced Bayesian inference or inverse probability in statistics. Even though the *Bayes Theorem* in probability is named after him, he never published his accomplishments in statistics and probability. (See *Resonance*, Vol.8, No.4, 2003.)

Sir Ronald Fisher (1890–1962) was a statistician, evolutionary biologist, geneticist and eugenicist. His important contributions to statistics include the analysis of variance (ANOVA), method of maximum likelihood estimation (MLE), sufficiency, Fisher information and Fisher's linear discrimination function. (See *Resonance*, Vol.2, No.9, 1997.)

Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis (1893–1972), FRS, was a scientist and applied statistician. His major contributions to statistics were the *Mahalanobis distance* and the design of large-scale sample surveys. He founded the *Indian Statistical Institute*. He was a member of the Indian Planning Commission and contributed to the Indian five-year plans. He was the President of the Indian Science Congress (1950). (See *Resonance*, Vol.4, No.6, 1999.)

Raj Chandra Bose (1901–1987) was a mathematician and statistician who contributed to the fields of combinatorial designs, error-correcting codes and multivariate analysis. The class of *BCH* codes is partly named after him. His joint work with S S Shrikhande and E T Parker disproved the Euler's conjecture that two mutually orthogonal *Latin Squares* of order $4n + 2$ do not exist for any n . (See *Resonance*, Vol.8, No.9, 2003.)

Debabrata Basu (1924–2001) was a statistician who made profound contributions to the foundations of statistical theory which include sufficiency, ancillarity and the likelihood principle. *Basu's Theorem* establishes the independence of a 'complete sufficient statistic' and an 'ancillary statistic'. He was also influential in spreading the Bayesian approach to statistics.

Mohan Delampady
Indian Statistical Institute, Bangalore
Email: mohan@isibang.ac.in

