

Dr. Ronita Nag Chaudhuri

Assistant Professor

Post-Graduate Department of Biotechnology

St. Xavier's College, Kolkata.

INDIA

Year of joining: 2010

Ph.D in Molecular Biology, Biophysics and Genetics: Department of Biochemistry, University of Calcutta.

Post-Doctoral training: School of Molecular Biosciences, Washington State University, USA

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Specialization: Molecular and Cell Biology

Teaching in the Department: Plant Physiology and Biochemistry, DNA damage and Repair Mechanisms, Microbial Genetics, Recombinant DNA Technology, Post-transcriptional Gene Regulation, Epigenetics and chromatin regulation.

Research interest:

- **Investigating abiotic stress response and related aspects of plant development: genetic and epigenetic regulatory mechanisms**

Plants being sessile organisms counteract the plethora of unfavorable environmental conditions through a sophisticated repertoire of stress response mechanisms. Central to such stress signaling pathway is reprogramming of gene expression. Regulation of gene expression in response to an environmental cue or associated developmental changes is functionally controlled by transcription factors. Ability of the transcription factors to control gene expression is again dependent on chromatin regulation that may render a genomic landscape conducive or non-conducive for transcription. **Our lab works towards understanding the interplay of transcription factors and associated chromatin modifications in regulating gene expression**

in response to stress signals and developmental cues (*Bedi et al., 2016, 2018; Sengupta et al., 2020; Sengupta and Nag Chaudhuri, 2020*)

▪ **Epigenetic regulation during DNA damage response**

Genome of all living organisms faces constant assault from various endogenous and exogenous DNA damaging agents. The DNA damage repair mechanisms play a crucial role in prevention of both spontaneous and environmentally induced damages at the molecular level. Defects in DNA damage repair in mammalian cells may lead to increased cancer frequency, neurological abnormalities as well as growth and developmental defects, among others. Organization of DNA into nucleosomes and the higher order chromatin architecture affects regulation of nuclear functions, like DNA damage repair, transcription, etc. The dynamic nature of chromatin plays an important role in modulating the access of these regulatory factors to the genetic template and maintenance of genomic stability. DNA damage repair pathway is no exception to this general rule. Regulated chromatin accessibility during start of the process followed by restoration of the chromatin structure at the end of the process is the underlying key for successful removal of DNA lesions. **Our lab works towards understanding the role of chromatin modifications and remodeling during DNA damage repair through analyses of histone structural mutants** (*Ray et al., 2018, 2020*)

Publications:

From Research work at St. Xavier's College, Kolkata

- Deacetylation of H4 lysine16 affects acetylation of lysine residues in histone H3 and H4 and promotes transcription of constitutive genes.
Anagh Ray, Preeti Khan and **Ronita Nag Chaudhuri.**
Epigenetics (2020), DOI: [10.1080/15592294.2020.1809896](https://doi.org/10.1080/15592294.2020.1809896)
- ABI3 plays a role in *de-novo* root regeneration from *Arabidopsis thaliana* callus cells.
Sourabh Sengupta and **Ronita Nag Chaudhuri.**
Plant Signaling & Behavior (2020), 1794147.
DOI: [10.1080/15592324.2020.1794147](https://doi.org/10.1080/15592324.2020.1794147)

- ABI3 mediated repression of RAV1 gene expression promotes efficient dehydration stress response in *Arabidopsis thaliana*.
Sourabh Sengupta, Anagh Ray, Dristhi Mandal and **Ronita Nag Chaudhuri**.
BBA Gene Regulatory Mechanism (2020), 1863(9):194582
DOI: [10.1016/j.bbagrm.2020.194582](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bbagrm.2020.194582)
- Regulated acetylation and deacetylation of H4 K16 is essential for efficient NER in *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*.
Anagh Ray, Preeti Khan and **Ronita Nag Chaudhuri**.
DNA Repair (2018), Vol. 72; Pg: 39-55. DOI: [10.1016/j.dnarep.2018.09.009](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dnarep.2018.09.009)
- Transcription factor ABI3 autoactivates its own expression during dehydration stress response.
Sonia Bedi and **Ronita Nag Chaudhuri**.
FEBS Letters (2018), Vol. 592 (15); Pg: 2594-2611. DOI: [10.1002/1873-3468.13194](https://doi.org/10.1002/1873-3468.13194) **THE ARTICLE WAS SELECTED AS "FEATURED ARTICLE OF THE ISSUE"**
- ABI3 mediates dehydration stress recovery response in *Arabidopsis thaliana* by regulating expression of downstream genes.
Sonia Bedi, Sourabh Sengupta, Anagh Ray and **Ronita Nag Chaudhuri**.
Plant Science (2016), Vol. 250; Pg: 125-140.
DOI: [10.1016/j.plantsci.2016.06.006](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.plantsci.2016.06.006)
- Rad26, the Transcription-Coupled Repair Factor in yeast, is required for removal of stalled RNA Polymerase-II following UV irradiation.
Sounak Ghosh-Roy, Dhiman Das, Debarati Chowdhury, Michael J. Smerdon and **Ronita Nag Chaudhuri**. **PLOS ONE (2013)**, Vol. 8 (8): e72090.
DOI: [10.1371/journal.pone.0072090](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0072090)

From Post-Doctoral and Ph.D research

- A cassette of N-terminal amino acids of histone H2B are required for efficient cell survival, DNA repair and Swi/Snf binding in UV irradiated yeast.
Ronita Nag, McKenna Kyriss, John Smerdon John Wyrick and Michael J. Smerdon. **Nucleic Acids Research (2010)** Vol. 38:1450-1460.
DOI: [10.1093/nar/gkp1074](https://doi.org/10.1093/nar/gkp1074)
- Altering the chromatin landscape for Nucleotide Excision Repair.
Ronita Nag and Michael J. Smerdon. **Mutation Research Reviews (2009)**, Vol. 682(1):13-20. DOI: [10.1016/j.mrrev.2009.01.002](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.mrrev.2009.01.002)
- A single amino acid change in histone H4 enhances UV survival and DNA repair in yeast.
Ronita Nag, Feng Gong, Deirdre Fahy and Michael J. Smerdon.

Nucleic Acids Research (2008), Vol. 36 (11): 3857-66.
DOI: [10.1093/nar/gkn311](https://doi.org/10.1093/nar/gkn311)

- Protein turnover in response to transient exposure to exogenous auxin is necessary for restoring auxin autotrophy in a stressed *Arachis hypogea* cell culture.
Ronita Nag, Manas Kanti Maity, Anindita Seal, Amit Hazra and Maitrayee DasGupta. **Plant Cell Tissue Organ Culture (2006)**, Vol. 84, pg 17-26.
- Dual DNA binding property of ABA insensitive 3 like factors targeted to promoters responsive to ABA and auxin. **Ronita Nag**, Manas Kanti Maity, and Maitrayee DasGupta. **Plant Molecular Biology (2005)**, Vol. 59, pg 821-838.
DOI: [10.1007/s11103-005-1387-z](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11103-005-1387-z)
- Exogenous auxin depletion renders an *Arachis hypogea* suspension culture sensitive to water loss without affecting cell growth. Anindita Seal, Amit Hazra, **Ronita Nag**, Subho Chaudhuri and Maitrayee DasGupta. **Plant Cell Reports (2001)** Vol 20 pg 567-573.

Extramural Research Grants:

□ ONGOING

1. **Investigating the role of histone acetylation during UV-induced Nucleotide Excision Repair** under SERB (DST) Grant # CRG/2018/000461.

□ COMPLETED

1. **Investigating the mechanism of RAV1-mediated desiccation stress signaling and significance of ABI3-RAV1 crosstalk** under Department of Biotechnology, Government of West Bengal [569(sanc)/BT-56/2014].
2. **Mechanism of ABI3 mediated desiccation tolerance in plants: Genetic and Epigenetic Regulation** under CSIR Grant [38 (1283)/ 11/EMR-II].
3. **Chromatin Regulation during DNA Damage Repair** under SERB -Fast Track Scheme of Department of Science and Technology [SR/FT/LS-145/2009].
4. **Understanding the mechanism of ABI3 gene regulation during desiccation stress response** under CSIR Grant #38 (1411)/ 15/EMR-II.

LAB MEMBERS:

PRESENT:



Preeti Khan (CSIR-Net Fellow, JRF)

Project: Role of histone acetylation in Nucleotide Excision Repair and gene expression regulation.



Drishti Mandal (JRF)

Project: Cross talk between hormone signaling pathways in modulation of root system architecture.



Saptarshi Datta (CSIR-Net Fellow, JRF)

Project: Genetic and epigenetic regulation of root system architecture and its dynamism in response to abiotic stress signals.

PAST:



Sonia Bedi:

Ph.D degree awarded. Genome Solution Specialist, Molsys Ltd. Bangalore.



Anagh Ray:

Post-Doctoral Fellow, National Cancer Institute, NIH, Bethesda, MD, USA

Awaiting Ph.D degree.



Sourabh Sengupta:

Thesis submitted. Awaiting Ph.D degree.

Invited Talks/Papers presented in conferences/seminars

International Conferences

- **ASPB Plant Biology 2019 meeting, held in San Jose, California, USA.** Presentation titled “Decoding ABI3 gene regulation and its novel role in dehydration stress and

recovery response in *Arabidopsis thaliana*". Sonia Bedi, Sourabh Sengupta and Ronita Nag Chaudhuri; **ASPB, 2019 travel grant awardee.**

- **INDO-US conference 2018 on "Transcription, Chromatin structure, DNA repair and Genomic instability"**. Anagh Ray and Ronita Nag Chaudhuri
- **"Epigenetics and Human Disease", Indo-Japan International Conference (2018), organized by Bose Institute, India.** Invited oral presentation of paper entitled "Loss of regulated acetylation and deacetylation of H4 K16 residue affects chromatin accessibility and DNA damage repair efficiency". Anagh Ray, Preeti Khan and Ronita Nag Chaudhuri
- **International Conference on "Insight to Plant Biology in Modern Era", Bose Institute Centenary Celebration, India (2017).** Presentation of paper entitled "Decoding the genetic and epigenetic regulation of ABI3 in desiccation stress response". Sonia Bedi, Sourabh Sengupta and Ronita Nag Chaudhuri.
- **VISCEA (Vienna International Scientific Conference and Events Association) (2015),** International conference on Plant Abiotic Stress III held in Vienna. Presentation of paper entitled- "ABI3-mediated abiotic stress tolerance in *Arabidopsis thaliana*". Sonia Bedi, Sourabh Sengupta and Ronita Nag Chaudhuri.
- **Keystone Symposia on "Chromatin Mechanisms and Cell Physiology" organized by Keystone in association with German Ministry (2014),** held in Oberstdorf, Germany. Presentation of paper entitled- "Significance of genetic & epigenetic control in understanding the mechanism of ABI3-mediated desiccation stress response". Sonia Bedi, Anagh Ray, Sourabh Sengupta and Ronita Nag Chaudhuri.
- **Washington State University, Academic Showcase (2008),** held at Pullman, Washington State, USA. Presentation of paper entitled –"A Single Amino Acid Change in a DNA Packaging Protein Improves Cell Survival and DNA Repair in Yeast." Ronita Nag, John M. Hinz and Michael J. Smerdon.
- **Gordon Research Conference on Mammalian DNA Repair held at Ventura, California, USA (2007).** Presentation of paper entitled - "Nucleotide Excision Repair in SWI/SNF-Independent (SIN) Histone mutants in *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*." Ronita Nag, Feng Gong, Deirdre Fahy and Michael J. Smerdon.
- **The 37th Annual Meeting of Environmental Mutagenesis Society (EMS) held at Vancouver BC, Canada (2006).** Presentation of paper entitled - "Nucleotide Excision Repair in SWI/SNF-Independent (SIN) Histone mutants in *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*." Ronita Nag, Feng Gong, Deirdre Fahy and Michael J Smerdon.

National Conferences

- **"The world of Microbes: pathogenesis, environment and evolution"- 100 years commemoration, Bose Institute, India (2016).** Presentation of paper entitled "Mutation

of histone residue H4 K16 affects dynamism of chromatin structure-function in *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*.” Anagh Ray and Ronita Nag Chaudhuri. ***Best Presentation Award- First Prize.***

- **National Conference organized by WAST (West Bengal Academy of Science and Technology), India 2016.** Presentation of paper entitled “Understanding the mechanism of ABI3 regulation during desiccation stress response”. Sonia Bedi and Ronita Nag Chaudhuri. ***Best Presentation Award- First Prize.***
- **Interdisciplinary Approach to Biological Sciences, IABS (2015)** organised by Indian Association of Cultivation of Sciences. Presentation of paper entitled- “Role of H4 K16 acetylation status in affecting chromatin structure during Nucleotide Excision Repair.” Anagh Ray and Ronita Nag Chaudhuri.
- **National Symposium on Plant Physiology & Biochemistry in Transgenic Era and Beyond, held at Bose Institute, Calcutta (2001).** Invited for oral presentation of paper entitled- "Molecular mechanism of auxin mediated stress tolerance in Arachis hypogea cell suspension culture." Ronita Nag, Anindita Seal, Shubho Chaudhuri and Maitrayee DasGupta.
- **The XXV All India Cell Biology Conference held at the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore (2001).** Invited for oral presentation of paper entitled- "Molecular analysis of auxin mediated stress tolerance in Arachis hypogea cell suspension culture". Ronita Nag, Anindita Seal, Shubho Chaudhuri and Maitrayee DasGupta.

Awards /Fellowships/Honours

- Received American Society of Plant Biologists (ASPB) Travel Grant Award, 2019.
 - Received CSIR Travel Grant Award, 2019.
 - Junior & Senior Research Fellowship (2000-2005), CSIR, India.
 - Received Government Fellowship for excellent performance at Bachelor’s level examination (1997).
- **Associate Editor, International peer-reviewed journal “The Nucleus” (Springer Nature Publication).**