

## Twitter Thread by





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**Remembering the Bengali scientist Dr Subhash Mukhopadhyay- the Pioneer of IVF in India, the creator of India's first and world's second child using IVF on his birth anniversary. The Father of IVF in India who was rewarded with suicide was born on 16.01.1931 in Hazaribagh.**

**#Thread**



Dr. Subhash was the son of a doctor and studied at the National Medical College in Kolkata after completing his schooling. Fascinated by innovations in gynaecological surgery from his early days as a medical student, he completed his PhD in reproductive physiology +



from the University of Calcutta before going to the Edinburgh University in UK for a PhD in reproductive endocrinology. On his return to India in 1978, he started researching ovulation and spermatogenesis. Soon after, he teamed up with Sunit Mukherji, a cryobiologist +



and Saroj Kanti Bhattacharya, a gynaecologist, to work on a method of in-vitro fertilization for a patient (Bela Agarwal) with damaged fallopian tubes. +



**Dr. Subhas Mukhopadhyay (centre) in a conversation with Dr. Sunit Mukherjee (left) and Dr. Derek Gupta**

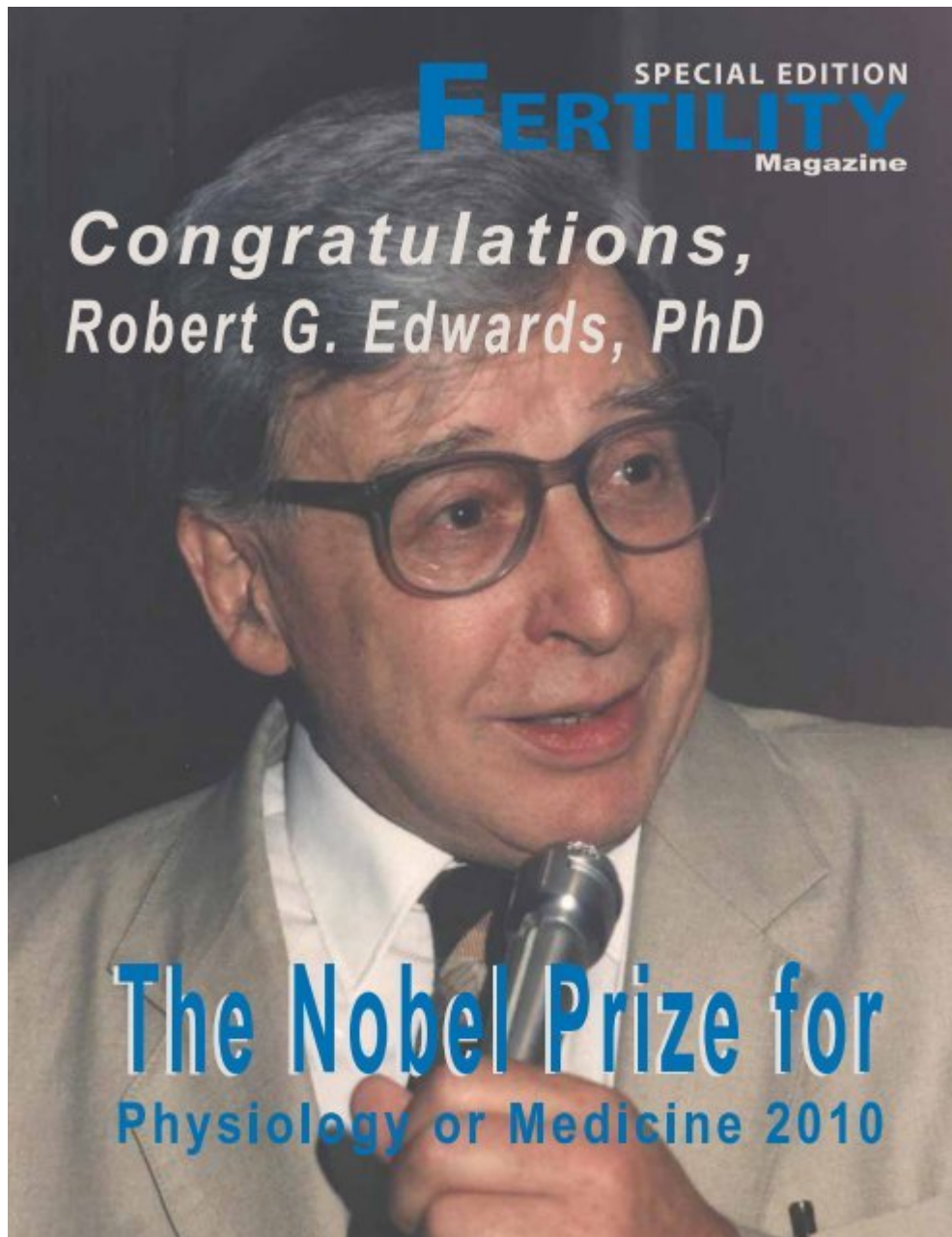
Mukhopadhyay with a double PhD started work on IVF techniques in the mid 60s and created history by becoming the first physician in India and second in the world after British physicians Robert Edwards and Patrick Steptoe) to perform the In-vitro fertilisation. +



On October 3, 1978, Subhash and his team announced the birth of the world's second test tube baby in Calcutta, a baby girl who was nicknamed "Durga" after the Hindu goddess who embodies the feminine force of creation. +



Durga (whose parental name is Kanupriya Agarwal) was announced the India's first and world's second test tube baby who was born 67 days after the birth of the world's first test tube baby named Louis Brown. RG Edwards was awarded nobel prize in 2010 for his achievement. +



Not only had attempt of Dr. and his team at IVF succeeded, they had also successfully achieved the cryopreservation of an eight-cell embryo storing it for 53 days, thawing in DMSO reagent and replacing it into the mother's womb-a full five years before anyone else would do so. +





He was also the first to use human menopausal gonadotrophins (hMG) to stimulate ovaries to produce extra eggs. However, the contributions of Dr. Mukhopadhyay were never recognised by the then West Bengal and Indian Government. +

In November 1978, the West Bengal Government appointed an expert committee along with the medical association to give their verdict on the fate of Dr. Subhash Mukhopadhyay. The expert committee was presided over by a radiologist and comprising of a gynecologist, a psychiatrist, +

and a neurologist who knew absolutely nothing about the modern reproductive technology. At the end of the ridiculous farrago of exasperating dimwitted questions, his research papers were termed as "absolutely bogus." +

Moreover, he was handed a punishment which transferred him to the Ophthalmology department, also effectively ruining his prospects of working on the hormone project. +


Facing social ostracisation, bureaucratic negligence, reprimand and insult instead of recognition from the West Bengal Government and the refusal of Government of India to allow him to attend national conferences, he committed suicide in his Calcutta residence on 19 June, 1981. +

**POSTHUMOUS RECOGNITION**

**Jan 16, 1931** | Subhas Mukhopadhyay born at Hazaribagh

**1967-1975** | Lecturer, reader & professor in physiology at NRS Hospital

**July 25, 1978** | World's first test tube baby Louise Joy Brown born at



England's Oldham General Hospital. Robert Edward and Patrick Steptoe are the architects

**Oct 3, 1978** | India's first test tube baby in Kolkata born to Provat Kumar and Bela Devi Agarwal after


**Sunit Mukherjee at the research unit**

prolonged treatment under Subhas

**1981** | Commits suicide

**1985** | Reproductive biology centre set up

Pic: Amit Moulick



In his suicide note, he wrote :

"I can't wait everyday for a heart attack to kill me." +



KOLKATA PHYSICIAN **SUBHASH MUKHOPADHYAY** DIED ON JUNE 19, 1981

# FIRST TO PERFORM **IVF** IN INDIA



Instead of being recognised, was insulted & **barred by the govt** from attending conferences & sharing his achievements

Was the **FIRST PHYSICIAN** in India to **perform IVF** & create a test tube baby 'Durga' on Oct 3, 1978



THE FILM  
**EK DOCTOR KI MAUT**  
WAS BASED  
ON HIS LIFE



newsflicks

**COMMITTED SUICIDE** at his Kolkata residence

**TC ANAND KUMAR**, Director of Institute for Research in Reproduction **acknowledged his achievement**

Mukherjee's research came into light when T.C. Anand Kumar, the creator of official first human test tube baby of India, Harsha Vardhan Reddy Buri, went to Kol. In 1997, Kumar was in Kolkata, it was there that he came across the research documents of Mukherjee that were given +



18.01.1936 – 26.01.2010



to him by Dr. Sunit Mukherji. He became certain that it was Mukhopadhyay who brought India's first test tube baby into existence after going through evidences and extensively talking to Durga's parents. In his speech at 3rd National Congress on Assisted Reproductive Technology +



**Sunit Mukherjee revisiting his fond memories**

in Calcutta, he made an appeal that Subhash Mukherjee should be credited posthumously for creating India's first test tube baby. After all the work Kumar putting into revealing the actual father of in-vitro fertilisation in India. Two months later, he followed up his appeal +

with the publication of an article in the journal current science, entitled 'Architect of India's first test tube baby : Dr. Subhash Mukherjee.' After all the work Kumar putting into revealing the actual father of in-vitro fertilisation of India, finally Mukhopadhyay was given +

the title of being the first Indian test tube baby and the ICMR recognised his work.

In October 2003, on the 25th birthday of India's first test tube baby Durga, a function was organised by ICMR and Hope Fertility Clinic in Bengaluru in which the scientific community gave +

Dr. Mukherjee his due. Anand Kumar later said, "Subhash was far ahead of his time in successfully using an ovarian stimulation protocol before anyone else in the world had thought of doing so."

In 2003, mourning the death of her scientific father, Durga spoke at an +



**Dr. Subhash Mukhopadhyay**



**Durga**

IVF conference and said, "I certainly do not want to be a poster girl of the IVF industry, which undermined Dr. Mukhopadhyay's work for 30 years," and finished with, "I am not a trophy but I am proud to be the living example of work of a genius." +



Dr. Subhash Mukhopadhyay was a man who had sacrificed hopes of children for his research. Dr. Subhash and his wife had decided not to start a family as he wanted to complete his research. The wife of Dr. Mukhopadhyay, Namita Mukhopadhyay has been paralysed and battling with +



ignominy and neglect ever since her husband committed suicide. Dr. Subhash was a very emotional person and dedicated himself to work. But he never got any support from governments and his peers. +





In 2007, the story of his life and work were included in the Dictionary of Medical Biography, a book published by Wellcome Trust Centre for the History of Medicine at UCL, London, that lists the names of 1100 scientists from 100 countries around the world who made path breaking +



contributions to medical science. He was also honoured and recognised by the Brazilian Medical Society during an event celebrating 30 years completion of IVF. Mukhopadhyay is only the third scientist from Kolkata to be included in the Dictionary of Medical Biography, UK, 2007. +



C had put up bill-  
r the city asking own-  
g that are more than  
to get the health of  
s examined by struc-  
ers. Billboards were  
nt of old and dilapi-  
res.  
mentioned that 20

people died when portions of an  
old structure fell on them in the  
city. The civic authorities had asked  
the tenants to vacate the premises  
but floating the KMC order, they  
continued to live in the premises  
and faced the consequences.  
Civic officials said all these  
accidents had happened during

most across dilapidated buildings  
all over the city. Most of the build-  
ings are situated in the areas under  
Borough B, III, IV, V, VII and IX.  
The problem has risen with the  
buildings whose owners could not  
be traced. Along the river Hooghly,  
there are many buildings whose  
owners have died and their descen-  
dents could not be traced.  
Civic officials said if some of  
the old and dilapidated buildings  
are not pulled down before mon-  
soon sets in, then there will be the  
risk of people getting killed due to  
building collapse.

attack. The victim was an active member  
of the party.  
According to locals, the victim was  
found lying in a pool of blood a few  
meters away from his house. He was a  
resident of Nityanandalathi village under  
Swarupnagar police station.  
There were multiple injuries on  
his body. After being informed, police  
reached the spot and recovered the  
body. According to police, the victim  
was stabbed several times by the accused.  
The body was later sent to a hospital  
for an autopsy.  
The family members of the victim  
said Mullick had been involved in vari-

was a deliberate attempt by the accused  
ants to weaken the party organisation.  
A senior Trinamool Congress leader of  
the district, however, blamed the BJP for  
the incident.  
He said the victim was brutally killed,  
as he was found with his throat slit. There  
were several stab injuries on his body.  
Both the CPI-M and BJP leaders  
denied the allegation and termed the  
incident a result of a clash between two  
factions within the ruling Trinamool  
Congress.  
Police have started detailed probe into  
the incident. Raids are being conducted  
to nab the culprits.

India. The accused was later  
handed over to the BPC, all are  
port police station for investi-  
gation. The accused was  
interrogated before the investi-  
gators in this connection.  
They were trying to ascertain  
his motive.  
The Bidhannagar police  
have started a detailed probe  
into the incident. They are  
investigating if the accused  
had an intention to sell the gold  
bottoms in Indian market or  
wanted to hand over them to  
some other persons.

## cket Creator of India's first test-tube baby awarded posthumously

PRADIP CHATTERJEE

KOLKATA: Dr Subhash  
Mukherjee, the creator of  
India's first test-tube baby,  
who committed suicide after  
the Left Front government  
had allegedly neglected his  
research and was harassed  
by the then strong gynecolo-  
gists' lobby, has been paid due  
respect posthumously by the  
Mamata Banerjee government  
for his enormous contribution  
to modern reproductive system  
as it named prestigious chairs at  
two state-run medical colleges  
in the city after him.

Dr Mukherjee, who pio-  
neered in-vitro fertilization  
(IVF) in India, created the  
Country's first test tube baby,  
Kanupriya Agarwal, alias  
Durga, in October 1978 inside  
his house in Kolkata with the  
help of some general apparatus  
and a refrigerator.

He eventually committed  
suicide in 1981 after failing to  
get recognition. He could not  
handle constant criticism and  
the outright harassment he was  
subjected to.

After coming to power,  
the Mamata Banerjee govern-  
ment has showed respect to  
Dr Mukherjee by nam-  
ing chairs after him at  
the Physiology department of  
the NRS Medical College and  
Hospital and also in the School  
of Tropical Medicine.

The Endocrinology  
building at the NRS Medi-  
cal College and Hospital  
has been named after him  
for his contribution towards  
the modern reproductive  
technology.

Since his feat did not receive  
due acknowledgement from  
the scientific community, he  
might have taken a drastic step.

He had to face humili-  
ations when he was transferred  
to Bankura Sammilani Medi-  
cal College and Hospital from  
the Physiology department of  
the NRS Medical College and  
Hospital.

He was again transferred  
to RG Kar Medical College  
and Hospital before being  
shunted to the Regional Insti-  
tute of Ophthalmology in Kol-  
kata in June 1981 where there

was no physiology depart-  
ment. He had committed sui-  
cide within a few weeks after  
he was shunted.

The West Bengal govern-  
ment set up an enquiry com-  
mittee to investigate the matter

in 1978. The committee con-  
cluded that his claim was false.  
It was said that the committee  
that condemned Dr Mukher-  
jee's procedure reportedly  
comprised a gynaecologist, a  
psychologist, a physicist and

a neurologist—none of whom  
had any knowledge of modern  
reproductive technology.

The Left front govern-  
ment had argued that Dr  
Mukherjee lacked sufficient  
documentation.



Dr Subhash Mukherjee

In the year 2002, the Indian  
Council of Medical Research  
(ICMR) recognised his work  
for the first time.

He went to Edinburgh  
University in the UK for a  
PhD in reproductive endo-  
crinology after studying  
at the National Medical College  
and Hospital. After his return,  
he started his research in ovu-  
lation and spermatogenesis.

Within a year, he  
announced the birth of the  
world's second test-tube baby  
with a team comprising Suniti  
Mukherji, a cryobiologist,  
and Saroj Kanti Bhattacharya,  
a gynaecologist. Dr Mukher-  
jee was born at Hazaribagh in  
Jharkhand.

It came only 67 days after  
the British biologist Robert  
Edwards had announced the  
birth of the first test-tube baby  
in England.

But unlike Edwards,  
Dr Mukherjee's method of  
cryopreservation to pre-  
serve the human embryo  
is currently the preferred  
technique of medically assisted  
reproduction worldwide.

It was the tragic tale of Dr. Mukhopadhyay that inspired the national award winning film "Ek Doctor Ki Maut (1990) directed by Tapan Sinha.

#DoctorSubhashMukhopadhyay

#Bengali

