

Yellapragada Subbarao



(12th Jan 1895 - 8th Aug 1948)

Yellapragada Subbarao was a renowned Indian scientist born on 12 January 1895 in Bhimavaram. A pioneering biochemist, he made major contributions to medicines for cancer and filariasis. After studying at Madras Medical College, he moved to the United States and joined Harvard Medical School. He passed away on 8 August 1948 in New York City, leaving a lasting impact on medical research.

Scientific Contributions

Dr Subbarao's work changed the field of medicine forever.

Discovery of ATP

He was instrumental in discovering ATP, the cell's energy currency, pivotal to modern biology and biochemistry.

Discovery of Folic Acid

He developed a method to synthesise folic acid (Vitamin B9), essential for treating anaemia and nutritional disorders.

Cancer Medicine - Methotrexate

One of his greatest contributions was methotrexate, an early anti-cancer drug still used for cancer, arthritis, and autoimmune diseases.

Medicine for Filariasis

He discovered Diethylcarbamazine (DEC), an important medicine used to treat filariasis (elephantiasis).

Antibiotics Research

Under his leadership, chlortetracycline, the first tetracycline antibiotic, was discovered to fight bacterial infections.

Awards and Recognition

Although he did not receive many awards during his lifetime, today he is widely honoured as one of the greatest Indian scientists. India released a commemorative postal stamp in his honour. Streets and institutions have been named after him. He is remembered as a medical research pioneer.

Legacy

Dr. Yellapragada Subbarao's discoveries continue to save lives even today. His work in Cell biology, cancer medicine, vitamins, antibiotics, and tropical diseases has made him a legend in science. Many people call him "the forgotten genius of Indian medical science."

Conclusion

He was one of India's greatest medical scientists whose discoveries led to life-saving drugs for cancer and other diseases.