

Meet The Saviour, The Symbol Of Strength: Kadambini Ganguly

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The male-centric world, when women were bound with the fetters of social norms, so-called rituals and social evils and made to believe that she has no right to cross the threshold of the house. When women were confined in their houses, stuck in household chores, rearing children, Dr. Kadambini Ganguly defied all demarcations and denunciations. She possessed a plethora of tenacity, a never to die will, die-hard obduracy and an irresistible courage. An epitome of knack who became a paradigm, an ideal for the generations to come and an embodiment of perseverance, she helped in upgrading the status of women and changing their image. She was wrapped up with determination to bring a change in the perspective of the women about themselves and also of the society towards them. Success stories enchant us but knitting one is not a cake-walk. Kadambini Ganguly is just not a name but a symbol of strength. The first

female physician of pre-partition India. She was a gynaecologist and pediatrician.



Kadambini Basu was born on 18th July 1861 at Bhagalpur, Bihar. At a time when education for women was not even in the pleasantest of dreams, being a doctor was a far-cry. Her greatest supporter was her father Braja Kishore Basu, a follower of Brahma Samaj. He didn't believe in what society deemed to believe and didn't accept what was accepted by all. He had a vision and perspective of his own and wanted his daughter to be well-educated. Condemnations and denunciations met her way, but failed to shudder her persistence. These all ordeals united to further intensify her desire to prove herself. She started her initial education from

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Hindu Mahavidyalaya, Ballygunj which was later consolidated with Bethune School. Dwarkanath Ganguly, her teacher whom she married later, helped her in unleashing her potential. She pursued fine arts from the college class of Bethune school. Kadambini Ganguly took the entrance examinations of Calcutta University. She was the first female to clear the Calcutta entrance exam. The college was reluctant to admit her despite her merit. After campaigning and a lot of grappling by Dwarkanath Ganguly, Kadambini got admission in the college. She was the first female to clear the Calcutta entrance exam. After receiving her graduation degree, she got married to Dwarkanath Ganguly. After graduating in Fine Arts from the college class of the Bethune School, she wanted to pursue medicine. She again had to wriggle with the accepted perceptions of the medical college authorities who were reluctant to admit a female student. The amalgamation of strive and persistence eventually led Dr Ganguly to be the first female to enter the gates of the Calcutta Medical College and pursue medicine. The ingrained prejudice couldn't elope from some minds and she was intentionally failed by one of the professors. Consequently, she couldn't receive the certificate of MB, but only received the certificate of First LMS examinations. The unfaltering tenacity of Dr Ganguly made her the recipient of the prestigious accolade of the Graduate of Medical College of Bengal from the principal of the college Dr. JM Coates. The struggle didn't end there. Even after becoming a doctor, people were apprehensive to get them treated by a lady doctor. She was considered as a local midwife and was censured at every step. Despite all the hurdles that came in her life, her unfaltering will denied submission and outweighed all. In 1893, she went to England to pursue higher medical studies. With the unfathomable support of her husband and her family, she could proceed to England. She pursued triple diploma courses in medical science from the Scottish College in Edinburgh. She could complete her triple diploma in a very short span of time. After she returned from England, she started practising in a hospital and later she started her own private practise. Not only a practitioner, but also a human of the tenderest heart! She marked her name on every stone of success. She dedicated her whole life to mitigating the affliction of others. On 3rd October, 1923 she departed to the Promised Land, leaving behind a legacy of insight and contrivance.

The benevolence, empathy and tenderness encased in her heart gave birth to that unshakable will to improve the condition of women in India. She ignited many other hearts to free themselves from the ensnaring net of social norms established with the aim of subjugating and vanquishing women. She made many others believe in themselves and follow their dreams. She opened the door and left her footprints to follow. The saga

of this dedicated doctor forced us to rethink and wonder of all the bondages, restrictions, ordeals that we feel can never be conquered, for all the situations where we lose hope, the denunciations which pierce our heart to conclude that fighting for the right is the ultimate mantra of life. Kadambini Ganguly showcased an exemplary example that success or a change won't be bestowed upon, will never be served to savour. We need to wriggle, we need to wrestle, we need to grow inside out and be a better version of ourselves. There are still many prevailing perspectives propagating and budding in the society that needs to be changed. Let us believe that it can be changed. Let us believe that impossible is in the lexicon where determination, consistency and will never find their place. The will has the magnificent power to change everything. Let us believe that we all can change it. Let us all believe that if it hasn't been achieved till now that doesn't imply that it won't be achieved ever. Kadambini Ganguly has ceased this world long ago but her story will keep on igniting minds. The inspiration she left will never fade from our hearts. She will be remembered forever! She will be revered forever!

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