

# DR. ASHOK KUMAR GUPTA

M. S. (Surg.), M. Ch. (Plast. Surg.), M. N. A. M. S. (Plast. Surg.),  
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## CONTRIBUTIONS DEVELOPMENT OF SPECIALITY RECONSTRUCTIVE MICROSURGERY SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY WORK

During his tenure as an undergraduate medical student for MBBS, as a postgraduate student for Master of Surgery (M.S.) General Surgery, as a post doctoral student for the degree of M. Ch. in Plastic Surgery and thereafter as Lecturer at the department of Plastic Surgery (Teacher) at the Government Medical Colleges, Nagpur, Dr. Ashok Gupta had shown high levels of leadership quality in social and community work, education, scientific research and publications, sports (hockey, Mountaineering / high altitude trekking), as well goodwill ambassador at inter community / inter collegiate activities.

After obtaining the post-doctoral degree of M.Ch. (Plast. Surgery), he proceeded to **United Kingdom** for advanced training in **Reconstructive Microsurgery** at few of the best-known Centers of Learning like **The Nuffield Research Centre** and the **Department of Plastic Surgery** at the **Stoke Mandeville Hospital**, Aylesbury (Oxford Region), the **Birmingham Accident Hospital** (Midland Region), The **Derriford Hospital**, Plymouth (Deven Port Region), the **Royal Marsden Hospital** and the **St. Georges Hospital**, London at United Kingdom from 1979 to 1982. On return from U. K. about 30 years ago, he as a “**READER**” in the **Department of Plastic and Maxilla facial Surgery** at the Grant Medical College, Sir J. J. Group of Hospitals, Mumbai and thereafter as “**Asso. Professor of Plastic Surgery**” at the Gokaldas Tejpal Hospital, Grant Medical College, Mumbai had an opportunity to develop and establish the specialty of Reconstructive Microsurgery. Thereafter, his zeal to reach out to the downtrodden and underprivileged patients, who required major reconstructive surgery was well supported and undertaken despite all the odds.

Dr. Ashok Gupta had been credited by the **Director, Medical Education and Research, Govt. of Maharashtra** for performing the first ever successful complex micro surgical procedure of surgical reconstruction of the face in a two year old child in 1983 at the Grant Medical College and Sir J. J. Group of Hospitals, Mumbai. In the following years, Dr. Ashok Gupta developed and established a strong section of the specialty of Reconstructive Microsurgery at interacting in close association with various other departments like the ENT, Head & Neck Surgery, Pediatric Surgery, Neuro Surgery and the Orthopedic Surgery at the Grant Medical College, Sir J. J. Group of Hospitals, Mumbai and undertook a number of complex life saving microsurgical procedures as well developed a number of surgical techniques (being referred as Mumbai Technique).

Dr. Ashok Gupta developed a new technique for the Esophageal Reconstruction (Oro-pharynx, Cervical and the thoracic part) in a young child of 9 months using the latissimus dorsi muscle flap in close association with Pediatric Surgery departments at the Grant Medical College, Sir J. J. Group of Hospitals, Mumbai. Later this was published in the English literature as the first case report of such reconstruction in the specialty of Reconstructive Microsurgery, which later on set the milestone surgical protocol for reconstruction of the myocardium using the latissimus dorsi muscle.

Dr. Ashok Gupta was recognized in 1983 as the **Post Graduate Teacher and the Examiner** for the post doctoral degree of M. Ch. (Plastic Surgery) at the Grant Medical College and Sir J. J. Group of Hospitals and then at the Grant Medical College and Gokaldas Tejpal Hospital and at the Bombay University, Mumbai. Thereafter on being appointed as Assistant Professor of Plastic Surgery in the Department of Plastic and Surgery at the Gokaldas Tejpal Hospital (Teaching Hospital affiliated to Grant Medical College and the Mumbai University) and also at the Bombay Hospital & Medical Research Centre, Mumbai, Dr. Ashok Gupta continued with the extensive life threatening / life impairing surgical reconstructions achieving excellence through microsurgery.

While in training, at United Kingdom, one of the acclaimed teacher **Dr. J. S. P. Wilson** did mention that in a surgeons life; (quote) **“it is not important that how many good surgeries one has performed, but is laudable that how many good surgeons one has trained”** (un quote), Dr. Gupta started to give back the advantage of his acquired specialized professional skills and knowledge to his associates, fellows and the residents and conducted hands on training session in Microsurgical technique, cadaveric flap dissection course as well didactic lectures in reconstructive microsurgery from 1982 to 1987 at the Grant Medical College and Sir J. J. Group of Hospitals and thereafter at the Institute of Medical Sciences, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, S.M.S. Medical College, Jaipur and the Dayanand Medical College and Hospital, Ludhiana respectively. Dr. Gupta continued his zeal to teach the applications of the techniques of reconstructive microsurgery and travelled across the globe to conduct hands on training workshops, live operative demonstrations and participated in seminars / CME programs.

Keeping with the ideas of development of the specialty of reconstructive microsurgery, Dr. Ashok Gupta travelled across the width and the breadth of the country and conducted several hands on training workshops, operative demonstrations and participated in seminars / CME programs to teach many plastic surgery, orthopedic and ENT colleagues in complex techniques of Reconstructive Microsurgery as well make physicians from other surgical specialties to aware of the potentials of the specialty of Reconstructive Microsurgery.

Recognizing the contributions made by Dr. Ashok Gupta in the fields of reconstructive microsurgery, he was invited as Key Note Speaker, as Guest Speaker and / or invited faculty at numerous International Conferences, workshops as well CMEs since last thirty years i.e. from 1983 onwards.

To further his expertise in reconstructive microsurgery, he was a visiting professor / scholar to the Department of Plastic Surgery, the **University of Tokyo** and the **National Cancer Centre, Tokyo**, Japan for advanced training in Head & Neck reconstructive micro surgery in 1985.

On return from training in Reconstructive micro surgery at Japan, Dr. Gupta undertook some of the most challenging microsurgical reconstructions. In the year 1990, he was awarded the **International Travelling Fellowship** instituted by the Association of Plastic Surgeons of India, to undergo advanced post doctoral training in microsurgery for brachial plexus injuries as well facial paralysis at the **Micro Surgical Research Centre, Eastern Virginia Graduate school of Medicine, Norfolk, Virginia, USA**, in 90 - 91 under the guidance of Prof. Julia Terzis.

On his return from USA about 21 years ago, Dr. Ashok Gupta started to give back the advantage of his acquired specialized professional skills and knowledge reconstructive microsurgery for brachial plexus injuries as well facial paralysis and conducted several hands on training workshops, operative demonstrations and participated in seminars / CME programs to teach many colleagues as well make physicians from different surgical specialties to aware of the potentials of the specialty of reconstructive microsurgery.

Dr. Ashok Gupta also founded the **Micro Surgery Group of India** and the Founder Member of the **Indian Society of Reconstructive Microsurgery** and then was elected as the President of the said group for the year 2000 – 02.

Dr. Gupta was awarded “Ethicon Travelling Professor” of Microsurgery for the year 1992, instituted by the Association of Plastic Surgeons of India and conducted numerous workshops as well CMEs in the field of Reconstructive microsurgery. Dr. Gupta was admitted as the Member of the International Society of Reconstructive Microsurgery (ISRM) and the International Microsurgical Society (IMS) which merged together to form World Society of Reconstructive Microsurgery (WSRM). He was elected as the Founder Member of the later in 2003.

Later, recognizing the outstanding contributions in the fields of Reconstructive Microsurgery, by Dr. Gupta, he was awarded the coveted **Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons FRCS (ED)**, Edinburgh, UK in August 2004

Considering Dr. Gupta's contributions in the fields of Reconstructive Microsurgery, his name has been included in the Book "**World History of Microsurgery**".

Dr. Gupta was also awarded "**Ethicon Travelling Professor**" of Plastic Surgery for the year 2004 - 05, instituted by the Association of Plastic Surgeons of India and conducted numerous workshops as well CMEs in the field of Plastic Surgery.

Dr. Gupta nominated as the Founder Member of the **Brachial Plexus Surgery Group of India** and then was elected as the **President** of the said group for the year 2007 - 2009.

Dr. Gupta was also nominated the Founder Member of the World Society of Reconstructive Microsurgery and then was elected as the Member at Large (Member of the Executive Council) for the year 2007 – 2009 and 2009 - 2011.

Dr. Gupta two World Records for life through Reconstructive Microsurgery as outstanding reconstructions in the Literature.

- a. Maximum number of major microsurgical / flap procedures in a single patient (Seven flaps: Full Report annexed).

A middle aged man was run over a speeding truck. The extent of injury to his Abdomen, Urinary Bladder, Scrotum, Testes, Phallus and Thighs (R + L) was so extensive, that his life was in danger. After admission, he was being looked after by a **Team of Surgical Specialists**, including General Surgeon, Orthopedic Surgeon, Urosurgeon, Thoracic Surgeon and Neuro Surgeon. With continuous efforts and dedicated care, his condition improved. This patient had to be operated upon on more than 56 occasions, out of which 5 were supra-major procedures, lasting over 16 - 30 hours. This patient's details were projected as the **Maximum number of Microsurgical Reconstructive surgical procedures done on an individual**, at the **Inaugural Conference** of the **World Society for Reconstructive Microsurgery**, held at **Taipei**, 2001 and thereafter at Heidelberg in 2003.

- b. Longest warm / cold ischemia time for proximal replantation  
A young engineer, whose Left **Arm** was cut off from the body following an industrial accident. He was initially treated at the local hospital and was transferred to Bombay. There was an unduly delay in transfer of the patient (30 hours).

As soon as he was admitted to the Hospital, he was attended to and taken to the Operation Theatre within a short time and following a major and **unusual microsurgical procedure, spreading over 18 hours**, and the blood circulation in his arm could be **successfully re-established** and had remained successful throughout.

Under special circumstances, with **proper cooling** of the part, there can be safely and effectively achieved **up to 12 hours**. Having **achieved the life in the totally cut off arm, after 40 hours** of no circulation, itself is an **extra-ordinary surgical achievement**.

Case details of this patient were also presented at the **International Conference** of the **International Society for Reconstructive Microsurgery**, as one of the **longest Ischemia** time in the world literature (Longest being that of 75 hours for finger by a surgeon in USA). Case details of this patient has been also published in the "**Plastic Surgery News**", published by the **American Society for Reconstructive Plastic Surgeon**.

To list a few of his leadership stride in to social and community work for the inter community people even as a medical student at the Govt. Medical College & Hospital, Nagpur:

- a. Dr. Ashok Gupta Volunteered as **CAMP LEADER** at the High Altitude Trekking Training session at the **Himalayan Trekking Program** run by the Youth Hostels Association of India for three years from 1969 to 1971 and helped a number of participants overcome problems like frost bite, high altitude sickness and other high altitude medical elements.
- b. Dr. Ashok Gupta Elevated to the Rank of **Senior Sergeant** at the National Cadet Corps (NCC), Government Medical College & Hospital, Nagpur, from 1968 to 1970 as well attended the Army Attachment training camp for 2 months at the Armed Forces Medical College, Pune / Infantry Battalion.
- c. As a final year medical student, Dr. Gupta had collected used clothing from the fellow students / friends at the Medical College and then made them usable by washing and stitching himself and then offered these **CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR** to about 200 Leprosy affected inmates of Leprosy Home on the <sup>2<sup>nd</sup></sup> October 1971 “The Gandhi Jayanti Day”. He collected old and new cloths and donations single handedly through door-to-door visits to friends and neighbors, washed and repaired them himself and then distributed at a function under the guidance of Dr. Marwah.
- d. As an Intern, Dr. Ashok Gupta participated as the member of the **“Medical Relief Team”** for the drought relief work in backward areas of Western Maharashtra and undertook vaccination and other medical relief to over 1000 people for 3 months in 1971.
- e. As a Senior Registrar in General Surgery / Plastic Surgery, Dr. Ashok Gupta participated in Free Reconstructive Surgery Operative sessions at the Civil Hospital, Yavatmal in 73 - 75.

Dr. Gupta during these 32 years, has been performing over **5000 Free Reconstructive Plastic Surgical procedures** on underprivileged children at **remote and tribal areas** of different States like **Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Bihar, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana** and other parts of the Country. There is a large tribal population in these States, people here are very poor and it is difficult for them to make both ends meet. Thinking of approaching a specialist doctor for reconstructive surgery is beyond their means and imagination.

During these years, Dr. Gupta has voluntarily extended his services for few **Complex and Life threatening** Reconstructive Micro Surgical specialized procedures on a number of victims of

- Post Lok Sabha Election riots 1984
- The Post Babri Masjid related violent episodes
- The Infamous 1993 Serial Mumbai Bomb Blasts
- The heroes of Kargil War
- The victims of Bhuj Earth Quake
- The Terrorist attack at Akshardham Temple at Gujarat” &
- The “2002 and 2003 serial Bomb Blasts at Mumbai”.
- The Train Blast in Mumbai 2006 and the
- The Infamous Mumbai attack on 26 / 11 / 08

Dr. Ashok Gupta also founded the Reconstructive Surgery Foundation to serve under-privileged people in the remote / tribal belt of Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Punjab. Despite of many odds, Dr. Gupta gathered a group of like-minded specialists and other physicians, created an awareness in the philanthropist people in the region and the medical institutions and continued to help the poor in far flung and tribal areas like Padher, Betul, Itarsi, Jhansi, Durg (Madhya Pradesh) Amaravati, Akola, Badnera, Gondia, Jalna, Srirampur, Tumsar, Warora (Maharashtra), Sumerpur (Rajasthan) and Ludhiana (Punjab).

So far under the leadership of **Dr. Ashok Gupta** “Reconstructive Surgery Foundation” has examined over 5000 patients and successfully performed complex to very complex surgeries over 1500 patients during last 5 years, dealing with congenital defects, birth trauma, burn injuries, accidents and other deformities.

Dr. Ashok Gupta gathered a group of like-minded specialists and other physicians, created an awareness in the philanthropist people in the region and developed the project “**SAVE THE FACE**” under the **Reconstructive Surgery Foundation** to help the poor victims of “**Acid Attacks**” and has been conducting a number of free surgery sessions to restore the disfigured faces.

Dr. Gupta is a world renowned and is one of the trusted clinician as well as an academician Plastic Surgeons of India. He has handled some very complex cases and has given miraculous results.