

PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU (DEFENCE WING)
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

(NOT TO BE PUBLISHED OR BROADCAST BEFORE
THE MORNING OF NOVEMBER 10, 1960.)

'MOST DISTINGUISHED AIR
FORCE OFFICER'

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Government Tribute To
Air Marshal Mukerjee

NEW DELHI, November 9, 1960.

A black-bordered Gazette of India Extraordinary issued on the death of Air Marshal S. Mukerjee, Chief of the Air Staff, says:

"The President has heard with the deepest regret of the sudden demise of Air Marshal Subroto Mukerjee, Chief of the Air Staff, Indian Air Force, at Tokyo on the evening of Tuesday, November 8, 1960. By his untimely death India has lost a most distinguished airman who had devoted his whole life to the service of the country.

"Air Marshal Mukerjee was born in Calcutta on March 5, 1911. After his early education in India, he went to the United Kingdom in 1929 for higher studies. Shortly after his arrival in the United Kingdom an announcement was made that for the first time Indians would be admitted into the Air Force. He sat for the competitive examination and was selected. He was one of the first Indians to be trained at the Royal Air Force College, Cranwell. In 1932, he was awarded his wings as a pilot.

"For about a year he served with an R.A.F. Squadron in England. His association with the I.A.F. began with the constitution of the first I.A.F. Squadron on April 1, 1933. In March 1939, he became the first Indian officer to command a Squadron. As a Squadron Commander, Air Marshal Mukerjee took part in the Miranshah operations for which he was Mentioned-in-Despatches.

"After graduating from the Staff College, Quetta, he held various Staff and Command appointments until he came to the Air HQ in 1944. In November 1947, he was appointed Deputy Chief of Air Staff, and was the

first...

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first Indian to hold this post. Seven years later he assumed the high office of the Chief of Air Staff, and again was the first Indian to do so. In 1955, in addition he became Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee, which position he held until the day of his death.

"Air Marshal Mukerjee played a very important part in the building of the Indian Air Force from the very beginning. His deep knowledge and experience of operational and administrative matters were invaluable to the Defence Forces and the Indian Air Force in particular. Because of his understanding and human approach to problems he was greatly loved and respected by all who came into contact with him.

"The Government of India mourn the loss of a very distinguished and conscientious officer and wish to place on record their appreciation of his exemplary devotion to duty. By his untimely death, the Services and the country have suffered a grievous loss.

"To the bereaved family, Government offer their sincerest sympathy."

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