



Anik Dutta

Filmmaker Anik falls to death

**DEBRAJ MITRA AND
MONALISA CHAUDHURI**

Calcutta: Filmmaker Anik Dutta, whose ability to play on the follies and foibles of Bengal's people had won him critical and popular acclaim and whose debut film marked a seminal moment in Bengali cinema, is suspected to have fallen to death from the terrace of his wife's Hindusthan Park home on Wednesday afternoon. He was 66.

Dutta is survived by his wife, Sondhy, and their daughter, Oishee, who lives in Europe. Dutta was scheduled to meet Sondhy in her apartment on Wednesday afternoon, but he went straight to the terrace.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7 ►

Anik falls to death

► FROM PAGE 1

Dutta's brown Kolhapuri sandals were neatly placed together on the parapet. Not far from them on the terrace was a magazine on cinematography.

Police said they found a note in an envelope inside the magazine that said Dutta was "solely responsible for the consequences of his actions".

Sources said the note, addressed to his daughter, further mentioned that "no one should be bothered or harassed for this". It ended with "I hope you understood what I mean".

The police said CCTV footage showed Dutta going to the terrace alone.

Dutta, a veteran ad filmmaker, announced his arrival in celluloid with the path-breaking *Bhooter Bhabishyat*, the 2012 satire that followed a group of eccentric ghosts from different eras living in a crumbling but palatial mansion. Bengalis, as a people, had almost lost the art of laughing at themselves until Dutta revived it with his debut film.

He had since made several films, the last being *Joto Kanda Kolkatatei* in 2025.

Dutta's work was often inspired by Satyajit Ray. In 2022, he made *Aparajito: The Undeclared*, which tells the backstory of the timeless *Pather Panchali*.

Dutta had told this newspaper in the run-up to the theatrical release: "The film is like a detailed behind-the-scenes of *Pather Panchali*. Not only the making of the film but also an account of Ray's foray into the medium and what he wanted his first project to be like."

Datta was known to speak his mind. In 2019, he criticised the Kolkata International Film Festival for plastering Mamata Banerjee's images all over the venue. The face had nothing to do with films,



Police personnel in the building where Anik Dutta fell to his death on Wednesday.

Picture by Bishwarup Dutta

Dutta had said.

Retribution was swift. His film *Bhobishyoter Bhoot* was pulled from theatres across Bengal a day after its release on February 15 that year.

Dutta never backed down from being vocal about his politics. Devoutly Left.

An alumnus of St Xavier's College, he was the grandson of Narendra Chandra Dutta, the founder of the United Bank of India.

His house was on Dover Lane, across Rashbehari Avenue from his wife's house. He was declared dead at Manipal Hospital, Dhakuria.

On Wednesday, the police cordoned off the area where Dutta was found lying. It was blood-stained and had parts of a fallen branch, suggesting Dutta had hit a tree before landing on the ground.

A woman who works as a help at the Hindusthan Park apartment is said to have told investigators that Sondhy had asked her to answer the door as Dutta was expected to be there. She lives in a duplex.

"According to the statement of the help, Dutta's wife had asked her to answer the door when dadababu (Dutta) comes. Having said that, she went for a workout in another room," a police officer said. The help has further told the police that she kept waiting but no one came. "Instead, she

heard a thud and went out and saw Dutta in blood," a source said.

The police said they had not received any complaint from the family. "A case of unnatural death has been started," a senior officer said. The body will undergo post-mortem at SSKM Hospital.

The preliminary post-mortem report indicated severe injuries consistent with a fall from a significant height. "Deep injuries on the head and neck, excessive external and internal bleeding, severe trauma to the left side of the head, fracture of the left side of the skull, fractured ribs on the left side, injuries in his left leg, severe injuries on the left side of his waist and pelvic region and abrasions and injury marks on the left side of his face, indicating he fell on his left side first," an officer said.

The police said there was at least one eyewitness who may have seen the fall.

Chief minister Suven- du Adhikari posted on X: "Saddened by the untimely demise of renowned filmmaker Shri Anik Dutta. His contributions towards Bengali Cinema is priceless. Heartfelt Condolences to his family & friends. I trust @KolkataPolice will investigate & unearth the mysterious circumstances shrouding his sudden death."

Suvenu met the family members at SSKM. Dutta will be cremated after his daughter returns.

Gargee Roychowdhury, who acted in Dutta's 2017 thriller *Meghnadbodh Rohshyo*, said: "An acute eye for detail was central to his craft. Through the director, you see the man. He was an extremely fussy person. To live up to such a fussy director, dare I say make him happy, was very satisfying for me. It meant a lot. He also had a charming innocence and a fine sense of aesthetics."