

Controversial Chinese scientist defends gene-edited babies: 'I feel proud'

The Chinese scientist who sparked an international outcry after alleging to have helped create the world's first genetically edited babies, has raised the possibility of a third child being born, after announcing that a separate woman was pregnant at an early stage with a modified embryo.

Speaking in front of a packed hall of around 700 people at the Second International Summit on Human Genome Editing on Wednesday [November 28], He Jiankui publicly defended his work, saying he felt "proud" of his achievement.

He, an associate professor at the Southern University of Science and Technology in Shenzhen, sent shock waves through the scientific community on Monday when he announced in a video posted online that two ostensibly healthy twin girls had been born this month from embryos altered to make them resistant to HIV.

"For this specific case, I feel proud. I feel proudest, because they had lost hope for life," said He, Wednesday, referring to the parents of the twins, the father of whom is believed to carry HIV. "But with this protection, he (the father) sent a message saying he will work hard, earn money, and take care of his two daughters and his wife."

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He said his research has now been submitted to a scientific journal for review, without naming the publication and apologized for the result leaking "unexpectedly."

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