

## **HISTORY OF HOMEOPATHY IN INDIA**

It is generally held that the first Homeopathic treatment in the Indian sub-continent was given by two German geologists, who were called "cholera doctors" in Bengal in the 1820's. Babu Rajendra Dutt is considered to be the father of Indian Homeopathy and there are letters he wrote to his Homeopathic doctor friend asking for some clarifications to be made by Hahnemann himself, indicating that this was happening in the life of the Master. However the first recorded treatment of which historical details are available was of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1839 in Lahore by Johann Martin Honiberger of Romania of which he has chronicled in his book "35 years in the East". The first qualified doctor to practice Homeopathy was Dr. Mahindra Lal Sarkar who was one of the first three Indian doctors to qualify for the post graduate degree of M.D. in medicine in the nineteenth century. Before the end of the last century, two Indian doctors studied in the erstwhile Homeopathic Institutions in the USA and one of them, Dr. B.K. Bose, was a direct disciple of the renowned Dr. James Tyler Kent. The first Homeopathic College in India was established in 1884 and all the subsequent homeopathic institutions in the sub-continent follow the same pattern of education that it established.

There was a progressively increasing public demand for homeopathic treatment that motivated the government to pass a resolution to form a Homeopathic Enquiry Committee in 1938. The most prominent doctors of both Allopathic constituted these Committee and Homeopathic disciples and luminous names such as Dr. J.N. Majumdar, Col. Amir Chand FRCP, Dr. M. Gururaju, Dr. L.D. Dhawale, Dr. P.N. Chopra and Dr. Diwan Jai Chand are mentioned in the list of members. The committee finally presented its report in post independence India in 1949 which contributed to the recognition of this system of medicine by the by the Indian government.

The government of India had progressively increased its patronage of Homeopathy and given it a practical shape. Successive Presidents of the Indian Republic have had Homeopaths on their panel of Honorary Physicians. The Central Council of Homeopathy was established in 1973 to oversee the standards for homeopathic education and practice. The Government of India in 1978 set up the Central Council of Research in Homeopathy and its activities include clinical confirmation of proving, drug research, drug proving and literary research through its 51 centers in different parts of the country. A Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia was established in 1962 and the Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia Laboratory established in 1975 is recognized under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act. There are 132 Colleges in the country imparting Homeopathic education and there are 183,210 registered practitioners in Homeopathy attending to over 1 million illness episodes through 287 hospitals and private clinics. There are about 700 licensed Homeopathic Pharmacies in the country. In 1995, a separate Directorate for Homeopathy was established within the Ministry for Health and Family Welfare.

Three Congresses of the International Homeopathic Medical League have been held in India in the years 1967, 1977 and 1995. Dr. Diwan Harish Chand of New Delhi is the only Asian to have been honoured with the responsibility of the Presidency of the International League, a post which he held from 1979 to 1982 and he has subsequently been elected as the President of Honor of this organization.