



History of the Development of Indigenous Medical System in Sri Lanka

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According to section 89 of Ayurveda Act no 31 of 1961 the term Ayurveda includes the Siddha, Unani and *Desiya Chikitsa* system of Medicine and Surgery and any other system of Medicine Indigenous to Asian countries and recognized as such by their respective Government.

Siddha System of Medicine

This Medical System is popular among the Tamil speaking people in the country. Originally it was involved and perfected in India. According to Hindu tradition it was Communicated by Lord Siva and Parvathy to Murugan, Nanthi, Agasthiyar and other Siddhars.

The founder of this system is said to be Agasthiyar who is commonly believed to be the originator of Tamil Language.

In 1925 there was a demand by some members of Legislative Council for the allocation of a sum of money for the training of Ayurvedic physician. This was followed by the passing of resolution for the appointment of a committee to study the feasibility of this proposal. The committee recommended that a board of Indigenous Medicine be constituted to deal with the subject of training of physicians and that college be setup in Colombo for this purpose with a hospital and an outdoor dispensary attached to it.

According to the recommendation the first Board of Indigenous Medicine consisted of the following members.

1. Mr. K. Balasingham (Lawyer and member of the legislative council) Chairman
2. Mr. A. F. Molamurue (Subsequently became the leader of the House of Representative)
3. Hon. D. S. Sennanayaka (who became the first Prime Minister of Independent Sri Lanka)
4. Hon. W. A. De Silva (who became the Minister of Health)
5. Mr. (Late Sir) D. B. Jayatilake (who became the leader of the House in the State Council)

6. Mr. Donald Obeyasekara (Bar-at Law and Chairman Oriental Medical Studies)
7. Mr. C. Muthukumar
8. Mr. M.S.P. Samarasinghe

All the above members are recommended for their valuable service to restore Ayurveda to its due place. Two of them however stand out prominently. They are Mr. K. Balasingham due to his efforts the College and Hospital at Borella were founded and Mr. Donald Obeyasekara who made a significant contribution for the promotion of Indigenous Medical education.

The setting of the College and Hospital at Borella in 1929, it is an important landmark in the movement for the revival of Indigenous Medical System in the Country.

His Excellency Sir Herbert James Stanley the Governor of Ceylon declared open the college of Indigenous Medicine on 10th June 1929. At this occasion on behalf of the Board of Indigenous Medicine the Chairman Mr. K. Balasingham extended most cordial welcome to Governor. Captain A. N. N. Panikar, Ayurveda Booshana (Madras), M. B. Ch. B. (Edin) M.R.C.S (Eng) L.R.C.P (London) L. C. P & S. (Calcutta), L. M. S. (Homer), A. M. A. C. (Madras) was appointed as the first Principal of College of Indigenous Medicine.

Pandit A. Kanagaratnam, Bhishak. C. Sambasiva Iyar and Dr. T. Nallainathan were appointed as Lecturers of the Siddha Section.

The Establishment of the College and Hospital at Borella in 1929 is an important landmark in the revival of Indigenous System of Medicine in this country. Between 1929 and 1961 when the Ayurveda Act enacted is a formative period, the major part of which is played by Hon. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike. His tenure of office as Chairman of the Board of Indigenous Medicine (1937-1944) Minister of Local Government and Health (In the State council of the first Parliament) and finally as Prime Minister (1956-1959) gave him ample opportunity to work for the upliftment of the Indigenous System of Medicine. During his period as the Minister of Local Government and Health made necessary arrangements to place the College and Hospital directly under the State Management. Further he was instrumental for the establishment of the Department for the Development of the Indigenous Medicine. He also made an allocation for the establishment of the Department for the Department of Indigenous Medicine. Initiated a programme of construction of Ayurvedic Hospital under the Management of the Department of Indigenous Medicine.

Later with the enactment of the Ayurveda Act No 31 of 1961 the foundation for the development of Ayurveda had been laid

With the implementation of the Act the following steps had been taken.

1. Establishment of the Department of Ayurveda
2. Establishment of the Central Hospital of Ayurveda
3. Establishment of Bandaranaike Ayurvedic Research Institute
4. Establishment of Ayurvedic Drugs Corporation

In the parliament Headed by the Prime Minister Honorable Srimao R.D. Bandaranaike in the year 1977 Honorable Al Haj Badiudeen Mohamed Minister of Education made all efforts to upgrade the status of the College of Ayurvedic Medicine to the status of an Institute of Indigenous Medicine and affiliated it under the University of Colombo in the year 1977. Dr. M. A. M. Jalaldeen Head of Unani Section also contributed much in the birth of the Institute of Indigenous Medicine along with the academic staff of the College of Ayurvedic Medicine. The College was affiliated to the University of Srilanka on 2nd April 1977 by the Gazette Extra Ordinary No 67/14 dated 21.12.1979. It was established as an Institute of Indigenous Medicine attached to the University of Colombo, Sri Lanka. Now the Institute comes under the purview of Higher Education Act No 16 of 1978.

The following Lecturers held the post of Principal at the College of Indigenous Medicine.

1. Captain A.N.N. Pannikar (First Principal) Ayurveda Booshana (Madras) M.B.CH. (Edin) M.R.C.S (Eng) L.R.C.P (London) L. C. Pand S. (Calcutta), L. M. S. (Homen), A. M. A. C. (Madras).
2. Kaviraj R. B. Lenora Master of Ayurvedic Medicine (Hons) Licentiate in Ayurveda Medicine and Surgery ASHTANGA Ayurveda Vidyalaya (Calcutta) M. A. M. S. (Calcutta) Senior House Physician and Deputy Out door Physician Jhamini Bushana Ayurveda Hospital Calcutta.
3. Dr. D. H. Edirisinghe
4. Pandit William Alwis
5. Dr. C. Wickiramasinghe
6. Mr. P. K. Dissanayake
7. Dr. S. J. Seniveratne
8. Pandit G. P. Jayatillake
9. Dr. Upali Pilapitiya

Unit of Siddha Medicine, University of Jaffna

The Siddha section was transferred to the University of Jaffna on 2nd July 1984.

The following Academic Staff of the Department of siddha medicine also were transferred to the University of Jaffna.

Dr.S.Bhavani (Continued to be the Head/Siddha Medicine)

Dr.S.Arunachalam

Dr.T.Gunaratnam

Dr.S.Thirunavukkarasu

Dr. (Mrs.)M.C.Srikhanthan

Subsequently Dr.S.Arunachalam and Dr.T.Gunaratnam retired from service.

At the time of transfer of the siddha section to the University of Jaffna.

Prof.S.Vithianantha was the Vice Chancellor, Prof Indrapala was the Dean/ Arts and Mr.V.N.Sivarajah functioned as Registrar of the University of Jaffna. The Siddha section was attached to Faculty of Arts as a Department.

Prof N.Balakrishnan succeeded as Dean/Arts after Prof.Indrapala retired from service to migrate to Australia. Prof.S.Vithiananthan(Vice chancellor) and Mr.V.N.Sivarajah(Registrar) worked hard and got the buildings at Kaithady to accommodate the Siddha studentswere finding it difficult without proper class rooms at the University of Jaffna.

Prof.StanleyKalpage (Chairman U.G.C) and Prof.Stanley Wijeyasundara assisted Prof.S.Vithiananthan to vest the buildings at Kaithady for the functioning of the Department of Siddha Medicine could not occupy the whole building immediately as it was occupied by refugees.

The Staff and Students shared the buildings at Kaithady with the refugees. Gradually the displaced people were accommodated in various places and the University of Jaffna commenced the repair works of the damaged buildings at Kaithady.

In the latter part of 1984 the recruitment of Demonstrators and lecturers commenced Dr. (Miss.)J.Perual, Dr. (Miss.)S.Kandiah and Dr. (Mrs.)S.Sivapalan were appointed as Assistant lecturers and Dr. (Mrs.)G.A.Bhavani was appointed as Senior Lecturer.

Mrs.K.Uruthirasundram was appointed as clerk to look after the office work and various nonacademic staffs too were appointed as technical officers, library assistants and sanitary labourers.

The following Academic Staffs were appointed after1985,

Dr. (Mrs.)S.Pancharajah,

Dr. (Mrs.)T.Kumutharanjan,

Dr. (Miss.)V.Thevarajah,

Dr. (Mrs.)V.Sathiyaseelan