History of Development of Homoeopathy in India

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Abstract

Dr. Honigberger introduced homoeopathic method of treatment in India in 1839. On 16th Feb. 1867 Dr. Mahendra Lal Sircar, the then great allopathic physician and upholder of Indian science announced publicly about his conviction on homoeopathic system of medicine. In 1881 ‘Calcutta Homoeopathic Medical College’ was established in Calcutta. This institution made a great name and its popularity spread all over India and the students used to come here to learn homoeopathy. Homoeopathy became quite popular as an effective alternative method of treatment. Respectable persons and intellectual giants of India continued to support Dr. Hahnemann’s new science of therapeutics. After Independence the Indian Government constituted a number of committees and commissions to recognize homoeopathy. In 1974 Central Council of Homoeopathy (CCH) was established to regulate homoeopathic education and practice. Various research and studies performed in India proved the efficacy of homoeopathy. At present homoeopathic medical treatment is accepted far greater in India than any other country and co-exist with other medical systems.

Key words: Association, College, Council, History, Homoeopathy, Hospital, Practice Research

1. INTRODUCTION

The advancement of human civilization has not taken place uniformly everywhere. The art of how to cure originated in different parts of the globe in different times in different ways. Every therapeutic theory has a history of its own. Many civilizations, cultures, educational methods either halted or took turn. Similarly various process of treatment lost their path midway. Some, however, survived the taste of time, though changes took place in their course. Today those systems that still exist had their tradition or documented history. We are concerned with Homoeopathy, which has a phenomenal record. It means that homoeopathy has a history and a part of the history we are engaged to compile here.

2. ORIGIN AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF HOMOEOPATHY IN INDIA

Homoeopathy was invented and established by a German physician SCF Hahnemann in 1796 CE. India was then a satellite of Great Britain. In no time India welcomed homoeopathy by early 19th Century. John Martin Honigberger (1795-1869) the then Royal physician of the Punjab during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singhji claimed in his book entitled, ‘Thirty five years in the East, Adventures, Discoveries, Experiments and Historical Sketches relating to Punjab and Kashmir; in connection with Medicine, Botany, Pharmacy etc., together with an original Materia Medica and a Medical Vocabulary in four European and five Eastern Languages’ published from London in 1852, that Honigberger introduced homoeopathic method of...
treatment in India in 1839. Now the year 1839 is admitted unanimously as the year of introduction of homoeopathy in India (Sarkar, 1988, p.i).

In Nov. 1851, by the earnest endeavour of some dignified persons in Calcutta and under the patronage of the Hon’ble Sir John Hunter Littler, Deputy Governor of Bengal and President of the Council of India, a ‘Native Homoeopathic Hospital and Free Dispensary’ was founded in Calcutta. C. Fabre Tonner, M. D., a French allopath converted to homoeopath, was appointed health officer of the hospital. In Jan. 1852, an article ‘Homoeopathy and its Introduction in India’ was published in ‘Calcutta Review’, which pointed out the issue regarding the popularity of homoeopathy in Calcutta (Sircar, 1885).

In the middle of 19th century when homoeopathy was gaining popularity gradually, a landlord, Babu Rajendra Lal Dutta (1818-89) came forward to support of homoeopathy. He took part in the establishment of, Native Homoeopathic Hospital and Free Dispensary’. Thiennette Berigny, a famous French homoeopath, came to Calcutta in the beginning of 1864 and joined Babu Rajendra Lal Dutta to propagate homoeopathic method of treatment in Bengal. The first homoeopathic pharmacy was established in Calcutta by the inspiration of Dr. Berigny in 1866. Another great homoeopathic physician, L Salzar of Vienna, came to Calcutta and performed a noble work to spread homoeopathy in this country (Shastri, 1903, p.238).

16th Feb, in 1867, is the memorable day in the history of homoeopathy in India. On that day Mahendra Lal Sircar (1833-1904), the then great allopathic physician and upholder of Indian science announced publicly about his conviction on homoeopathic system of medicine. In fact, Mahendra Lal Sircar was the first Indian who though institutionally educated as a medical person was converted into homoeopathic physician. Within one year of joining homoeopathy he published the first homoeopathic journal of Asia, ‘The Calcutta Journal of Medicine’ in Jan. 1868. This journal was so advanced that it was welcomed not only in India but in the whole world as well. Mahendra Lal Sircar had a great devotion about science and he performed important role for the cultivation of science in India. On the 13th Jan. 1876 he established ‘Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science’ at Boubazar, Calcutta, by his own attempt. Mahendra Lal Sircar was familiar in the society as a paramount physician and a devoted scientist. So conversion of Sircar into homoeopathic physician exerted a great influence on the educated people to become religiously interested in homoeopathy (Shastri, 1903, pp. 259, 264-266).

In the meantime homoeopathy began to gain ground in other parts of India. In 1867, Mr. Ironside established the first homoeopathic hospital in Benaras. In 1869, a homoeopathic charitable dispensary was instituted in Allahabad of Uttar Pradesh by the help of some social workers. In 1870, another homoeopathic dispensary was set up in Agra; the historically important city of India. In the same year, Maharaja of Jaipur announced his conviction on homoeopathy and patronised in propagation of this method of treatment in Rajasthan (Ghosh, 1986, pp. R-I-XV).

The principal role to spread homoeopathy in south India was performed by Father Muller (1841-1910). By virtue of his zeal, in 1880, a charitable dispensary was founded in Konkanari, Mangalore. Father Muller established the General Hospital in 1895 (Directory, 1970-71).

Pratap Chandra Majumdar associated with M M Bose and D N Roy established ‘The Calcutta School of Homoeopathy’ on the 14th February in 1881 by their own effort. Afterwards the name of this institution was changed into ‘Calcutta Homoeopathic Medical College’. In course of time
this college became the ideal homoeopathic institution of India. Students from all over the country used to come here in large numbers to learn homoeopathy. Many talented persons after completion of studying homoeopathic medicine from this college radiated over all the states of India. Thus the glorious achievements of this institution to popularise the homoeopathic system of medicine in our country need be written in letters of gold (Ghosh, pp. 3-12).

M N Pillai (1882-1962) was the pioneer of homoeopathy in Kerala. Abhi Chandra Rao established the first homoeopathic medical college in Orissa. In this way the tree of homoeopathy which was nourished in Bengal, extended its branches to other states of India (Directory, 1970-71).

2.1 Formation of Homoeopathic Association and its Activities (in British regime)

At the outset homoeopathy was an enterprise in private capacity and a purely voluntary nongovernmental activity. There was an attempt to approach government for recognition of Homoeopathy. Consequently ‘The All India Homoeopathy Medical Association (AIHMA) was formed with the initiative of K N Katju and some other medical practitioners in U.P. and with active effort of Jitendranath Majumder in 1932. The All India Institute of Homoeopathy was formed in the Year 1944 with its central office in Delhi1.

3. Different Government Bodies and Institution for upliftment of Homoeopathy

After independence in 1947 the Indian Government acknowledged homoeopathy as a professional and science degree and constituted a number of committees, commissions and investigation bureaus like ‘Homoeopathy Enquiry Committee’, ‘Homoeopathic Advisory Committee’, ‘The Dave Committee’, ‘Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia Committee’ etc.

3.1 Central Council for Homoeopathy (CCH)

In 1964, a composite Central Council Bill for Ayurveda, Unani and Homoeopathy was introduced in Parliament. A joint Parliamentary Committee of 36 members of Parliament with Bhargava as Chairman was constituted which submitted its report in 1967 and recommended for separate Central Councils of Indian Systems and Homoeopathy. The Indian Medicine and Homoeopathy Central Council Bill, 1968 was introduced in Rajya Sabha, on December 27th, 1968. In 1971 Central Council for Indian System of Medicine was formed and a separate Bill for homoeopathy was raised in Lok Sabha in December 1971. In April 1972, a Joint Parliamentary Committee of 48 M.P.s was constituted for homoeopathy. Central Council of Homoeopathy Bill was accepted in the Rajya Sabha, in July, 1973. The Central Council of Homoeopathy Act was made in 1973 and the Government constituted the Central Council of Homoeopathy (C.C.H.) in 1974 with A K Kisku as the President and Jugal Kishore as Vice-President. Five Principal Committee were formed under the Central Council. They were – a) Educational Committee, b) Executive Committee, c) Liaison Committee, d) Planning and Development Cell, e) Council Meetings (Ghosh, pp. 92, 118).

At present the Central Council of Homoeopathy approves two courses.

1) B.H.M.S. - (Bachelor of Homoeopathic Medicine and Surgery)

2) M.D. (Hom.) – (Post-Graduate Degree Course)

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1 Souvenir of Homoeopathic Bijnan Parisad, ‘A Short History of Homoeopathy in India’ Published in Cal, on 8th May, 1988, Page – XV

3.2 Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy (CCRH)

On May 23rd, 1969, Government of India formed Central Council for Research in Indian Medicine and Homoeopathy and Yoga. In 1970, under the advice of K G Saxena, the then Honourable Adviser of Homoeopathy, the Central Government decided to found Central Homoeopathic Research Institute. The first homoeopathic research institute in India which was also the first one in Asia was established in Howrah, West Bengal. The Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy (CCRH), one of the successor organizations to the erstwhile CCRIMH was established as an autonomous organization, at New Delhi in 1978. Ever since, CCRH remains a unique organization which is engaged in various research studies in Homoeopathy.3

3.3 Homoeopathic Pharmacopeia Laboratory

Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia Laboratory, Ghaziabad (HPL) was founded in September 1975 as a plan-scheme under 5th plan (1975-80). Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia Laboratory, Ghaziabad is a sub-ordinate institute to the department of ISM & Homoeopathy, Government of India. It is also recognised by the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, as Scientific, Technological and Research Institution. The laboratory is functioning as standard setting-cum-drug testing laboratory at the national level. Standards of Homoeopathic drugs are covered under Second Schedule of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940. Standards as worked out by the laboratory and approved by the Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia Committee are published in the form of Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia of India (HPI). So far six volumes of HPI have been published consisting of standards on 706 basic drugs and standards on 159 finished products. Volume VII of HPI consisting of standards on 101 drugs is ready for publication (http://indianmedicine.nic.in/html/pharma/HPL.htm).

3.4 AYUSH

Department of Indian Systems of Medicine and Homoeopathy (ISM&H) was established in March, 1995. It’s name was changed to Department of Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH) in November, 2003. The Department is working constantly for up gradation of AYUSH educational standards, quality control and standardization of drugs. It is also working on improving the availability of medicinal plant material, research and development and awareness generation about the efficacy of the systems domestically and internationally (http://indianmedicine.nic.in/index.asp).

3.5 National Institute of Homoeopathy (N.I.H.)

In view of inspiring indigenous system of medicine and homoeopathy, Government of India took up programme so that in the National Health Service, these systems could be applied. For that reason Government intended to boost up education and research of indigenous system of medicine and homoeopathy. Consequent to the intention and action of the Central Government, on the 10th December 1975, National Institute of Homoeopathy came into existence.4,5,6

3.6 Formation of Homoeopathic Medical Associations

The All India Institute of Homoeopathy was formed in 1944, which later renamed as Indian

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4 Souvenir of All India Homoeopathic Congress, Organised by H.M.A.I in 1979.
5 From Chief Editor’s Desk. ‘Homoeo Rays’ Sept. 1985, Vol. IX, No. 9
Institute of Homoeopathic Physicians. The year 1975 is earmarked in the history of homoeopathy in India inasmuch as through the relentless effort of West Bengal State Homoeopathic Federation, two great Homoeopathic Associations, one being ‘All India Homoeopathic Medical Association’ and another one ‘Indian Institute of Homoeopathy’, held an All India Conference together in 1975 in Calcutta, opted to coalesce. Thus the year 1975, gave birth to the united All India Association under the name Homoeopathic Medical Association of India (H.M.A.I.)7,8

3.7 International Homoeopathic Congress held in India

The International Homoeopathic Congress organised by the International Homoeopathic League was held for the first time in India in New Delhi in 1967. International Homoeopathic League was founded in 1925 with head-quarters at Geneva (Chand, 1987).

XXXII International Homoeopathic Congress was held at Vigyan Bhaban, New Delhi from 5th to 11th October 1977. It is a matter of great pride and privilege that Indian Post and Telegraph Department printed and circulated 20 hundred thousands of postal stamps each worth Rs. 2.00 to mark the 32nd International Homoeopathic Congress.9 International Homoeopathy Congress was held in India for the third time in 1995.

Liga Medicorum Homoeopathica Internationalis (LMHI) organised its 66th Congress in New Delhi from 1st to 4th December 2011, over 2200 homoeopathic doctors including 250 foreign delegates from 33 countries, mainly from UK, USA, France, Germany, Russia, Brazil, Greece, Italy, Malaysia, South Africa, Austria, Belgium, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh participated in this congress.10

Liga Medicorum Homoeopathica Internationalis (LMHI) Chapter in India was proud to host the first ever LMHI National Homoeopathic Conference in New Delhi, India on 24-25 May, 2014. The conference was in collaboration with The Homoeopathic Medical Association of India (HMAI), Indian Institute of Homoeopathic Physician (IIHP) & Asian Homoeopathic League (AHML)11.

International Convention of World Homoeopathic Day was organised by LMHI on 9th to 10th April, 2016 with support from Ministry of AYUSH (Govt. of India), CCRH, CCH, NIH & HPL at Vigyan Bhawan, Rajpath Area, Central Secretariat, New Delhi.12

3.8 Appointment of a Homoeopathic Doctor to President

The year 1950 CE is an earmark in the annals of Homoeopathy, in as much as on and from 1950, one Homoeopathic Doctor was included in the group of honorary physicians of the President of India. The first President, Rajendra Prasad, might be given the credit of appointing the first Homoeopathic Honorary Physician, K G Saxena, on his personal staff in 1950. At present Ramakrishnan holds this post.13

4. RESEARCH IN THE FIELD OF HOMOEOPATHY

After the discovery of homoeopathic potency by Hahnemann, many a scientist in many a time tried to unravel the mystery of potency. It remains a riddle till recent times how a drug after

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7 Souvenir, West Bengal State Hom. Practitioners’ Conference, 24th session, 1976, Chandannagar, organized by HMAI W.B. State
8 Souvenir, West Bengal State Hom. Practitioners’ Conference, 28th session, 1981, Durgapur, organized by HMAI W.B. State
9 Journal of Homoeopathic Medical Association of India No. 1, Vol. 6, June, 1997, New Delhi
10 Vital Informer, Monthly Medical News Letter Published from New Delhi, January, 2012, Vol. 20, No. 01
12 www.lmhiindia.in/event-details.html?eid=13
12th potency can work to cure when there is no molecule of original drug substance left. Researches were carried on. There has been advancement and still researches are being carried on.

R L Jussal, consultant, biochemistry department, I.I.T., New Delhi, R D Dua, Head Biochemistry Cell, I.I.T., New Delhi, Aditya Kumar, Ph.D. and other scientists made research on this issue and results were published in different journals (Jussal and Kumar, 1979; Jussal, Meera, Dua, and Mishra, 1982; Jussal and Dua, 1983; Jussal, Meera, Dua, Mishra & Agrawal, 1984, p.245; Jussal, Dua, and Mishra, 1983, p.258).

Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay (Chemical Engineering Department) made the revolutionary discovery proving the existence of nano particles in the higher potencies of homoeopathic medicines. Jayesh Bellare from the scientific team published his path breaking research outcome in the famous international journal “Homoeopathy” in 2010 with the title “Extreme Homoeopathic Dilutions retain starting materials a nano particulate perspective” (Times of India, December 16, 2010; Kolkata).14,15

In the year 2015, research by doctors at the Hyderabad based JSPS Government Medical College and Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (IICT) had shown that homoeopathic medicine from snake venom, *Crotalus Horridus*, can arrest the multiplication of HIV (Times of India, April 10, 2015).

The elite laboratories of the Indian Institute of Engineering Science and Tecnology (formerly known as Besu and BE College) had initiated research on early diagnosis of cancer cells in the human body on the lines of homoeopathic principles. The IIST had been sanctioned a grant of rupees 11 crore by the AYUSH ministry to start the research work at the Bholanath Chakraborty Center for Advanced Research in Homoeopathy (https://m.timesofindia.com/city/kolkata/iiest).

On 12th Sept. 2017, India got first State-of-the art laboratory at Kolkata’s Dr. Anjali Chatterjee Regional Research Institute for Homoeopathy (RRIH). The Laboratory, established at a cost of 8 crore, was the only one in India for conducting basic and fundamental research for viral diseases such as Influenza, Japanese Encephalitis, Dengue, Chikunguniya and Swine Flue (https://m.hindustantimes.com/health/india).

5. OPINION OF INTELLECTUAL GIANTS OF INDIA REGARDING HOMOEOPATHIC SCIENCE

**Rabindranath Tagore:** “I have long been an ardent believer in the science of homoeopathy and I feel happy that it has got now a great hold in India than even in the land of its origin. It is not merely a collection of a few medicines, but a science with a rational philosophy as its base. We require more scientific interest and inquiries into the matter with a special stress upon the Indian environments.” (30th Aug., 1936, Uttarayan Santiniketan)

**Swami Vivekananda:** “An allopath comes and treats cholera patients and gives them his medicines. The homoeopath comes and gives his medicines and cures perhaps more than the allopath does, because the homoeopath does not disturb his patients, but allows nature to deal with them.”

**Shri Aurobindo:** “Homoeopathy deals with the physical personality, while allopaths go by diagnosis which does not consider the personality.”

**Mahatma Gandhi:** “Homoeopathy is the latest and refined method of treating patient economically and unviolently. Government must

14 Vital Informer Monthly Medical News Letter; Published from New Delhi, January, 2011, Vol. 19, No. 01; Page-1
15 Vital Informer Monthly Medical News Letter; Published from New Delhi, January, 2012, Vol. 20, No. 01 Page-11
encourage and patronise it in our country. Just as my non-violence will never fail, homoeopathy never fails. But the followers of homoeopathy may fail owing to faulty application of the principles.”

S Radha Krishnan: “Homoeopathy did not merely seek to cure a disease but treats a disease as a sign of disorder of the whole human organism. This was also recognised in the Upanishadic thought which spoke of human organism as combination of body, mind and spirit. Homoeopathy would play an important part in the public health of the country along with other systems. Medical facilities in India are so scanty that Homoeopathy can confidently visualise a vast field of expansion.”

Rajendra Prasad: “I hope the society will take up its work in right earnest and push it forward as homoeopathy is not yet receiving State patronage, at any State on a scale which it deserves; it naturally falls upon those who are interested in it to convince those who do not accept it as a method of cure, in its efficacy and scientific basis. It is well known that in a poor country like India even today there are a very large number of people who take advantage of it and derive benefit from it.”

6. Homoeopathy in India at Present

The prevalence of homoeopathic medical treatment is far greater in India than in any other country. As on 30.03.2016 there are 185 homoeopathic medical colleges imparting Degree level education and 14 Government homoeopathic medical colleges offering Post Graduate education in Homoeopathy in the country. Total PG seats 1149, of which total PG seats in Govt. Homoeopathic Medical Colleges is 277 (https://cchindia.com/php/allcollege_list.php, https://www.homeobook.com/homoeopathy-medical-colleges-in-india). About 13000 Graduates pass out every year. There are over 300000 registered practitioners of homoeopathy currently. There are 307 Homoeopathic hospitals having bed strength of 11099 and the number of Homoeopathic Dispensaries is 75000. There are about 23 State Boards/Councils for Homoeopathy which has been established by State Government to register persons possessing recognized medical qualifications. Prior to 1947, homoeopathy was practiced largely by individuals, including missionaries, officers of civil and military services and even retired people. In 1973, the government recognized homoeopathy as one of the national systems of medicine, and set up the CCH to regulate homoeopathic education and practice. Now Homoeopathy can only be practice after completion of a 5.5 year degree course, which includes 1 year of compulsory internship. This has led to better practitioners and more effective treatment. Regarding higher studies, a number of universities in India have introduced the postgraduate (MD) course in homoeopathy. In India, homoeopathy is the third most popular method of treatment after Allopathy and Ayurveda. The legal status of homoeopathy in India is very much at par with the conventional medicine. The Homoeopathic Drug Industry also is growing at a rapid rate in India.

7. Conclusion

We dwelt on the subject of the history of Homoeopathy from the days of the advent of Homoeopathy in India to present. In India, Homoeopathy came during 19th century. 19th century heralded renaissance in India. In spite of colonial bitterness, the urban Indians welcomed urban Europeans with mission and newness. Homoeopathy became extremely popular and effective in this tropical zone. The people of India took this new mode of treatment by their heart and homoeopathy spread all over India. Hanhemann’s conception regarding health, disease and cure coincides with ancient Indian philosophy. Hahnemann contends that the source of health and disease is not material but spiritual, that is, immaterial life principle, which is integrated with
body and mind in the human organism. Anything which affects the life principle morbidly must do so qualitatively and the medicine which cures diseases also does the same qualitatively. Until the coming of sulphur drugs and antibiotics in the middle of 20th century, allopathy was not much developed. Allopathic treatment is always very expensive. Villagers, city dwellers with a small income can hardly afford allopathic treatment. But they can easily afford homoeopathic treatment because it is comparatively much inexpensive. Moreover, most of the allopathic drugs have side effects. On the other hand, homoeopathic medicines are safe. They are extremely dilute substances and are not known to produce any toxic or adverse effect. Therefore, they can be administered without fear in all type of patients whether new born, elderly or terminally ill. Homoeopathy has limitation as much as allopathy has. Homeopathy is both complementary and supplementary to allopathy. Homeopathic method of treatment can coexist with other modern methods. The more investigation, exploration and research in laboratory and in homoeopathic treatment on patients are carried, the more the door of knowledge will open. Since in homoeopathy, more and more meritorious students are coming, it can be reasonably hoped that more and more avenues of modern research in homoeopathy will be opened. Consequently, patient attacked with difficult to cure diseases, will be greatly benefited.

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