

BHISHAGRATNA ACHANTA LAKSHMIPATHI

HIS DEDICATED SERVICE TO AYURVEDA

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ABSTRACT

Dr. Lakshmipathi was born in 1880 and passed his F. A. in 1899. He joined Madras Medical College in 1904 and graduated in 1909. While studying B.A. at Rajamahendravaram he was attracted to Ayurveda by Seetaramiah. He had confidence not only in Ayurvedic medicine but also in its spirituality. While having a roaring practice at Madras he came in contact with Pt. Gopalacharlu and he became a devoted follower of Ayurveda and completely gave up modern medicine.

After Gopalacharlu, he took up the administration of Ayurvedic college. He started a Pharmacy to supply genuine medicines to the rural practitioners. He tried to bring Ayurveda to the common man. He published a number of books and popularised Ayurveda by conducting *arogya yatras*, screening films, arranging toy shows, and singing *arogya geyas*. He established Arogya Ashram and donated all his property to it. He practised what he preached. He stressed on the protection of health of the people rather than treating the diseases.

It is hard to believe that a person, who started his life as a clerk in a Taluk Office would later become not only an admirer of and scholar in Ayurveda after graduating in modern medicine but sacrifice his life for the upliftment of Ayurveda. It happened in the case of late Bhishagratna Achanta Lakshmipathi, who endeavoured every minute of his life for the cause of Ayurveda.

Lakshmipathi was born in the village Madhavaram in Tadepalli taluk of West Godavari District to the parents Ramaiah and Janakamma on 3rd March, 1880. He was initiated in his 8th year and was married at the age of 15 to Seetamma, who was 12 years old. He passed his FA Examination in 1899 and joined as a clerk in the Kovvuru taluk Office with a salary of Rs. 15 per month. Before completing the service as a clerk even for an year, he left the job and joined in B.A. at Rajamahendravaram. During these days he was attracted to Ayurveda by Seetaramiah, who was treating his mother. He also learnt several principles and fundamental theories of Ayurveda from Seetaramiah. Later he joined the Madras medical college in 1904 to study MB & CM on a scholarship of Rs. 30 per month and he graduated in 1909. Though he studied modern medicine he used to administer only Ayurvedic medicine for the members of his family.

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He had great belief and confidence not only in the effect of Ayurvedic medicines but also in the philosophy of Ayurveda and its spirituality. When his first wife was almost on the death bed due to puerperal fever and when friends suggested to give some modern medicines so that the patient is allowed not to feel the pain, he refused to administer sedative medicines, stating that it is better to take the last breath with full consciousness and praying God, instead of lying in an unconscious state caused by the effects of medicines and without praying God.

After graduation he started practice in 1910 at Madras. He was a physician to the elite of the days like the Raja of Venkatagiri and others. He earned good lot of money. However, he used to treat students and poor freely and with affection. During these days he had the acquaintance of Vaidyaratna Pandit D. Gopalacharlu, who was the Principal of Ayurvedic college. Lakshmipathi taught surgery in Ayurvedic college and studied Ashtangahridaya under Gopalacharlu. The impact of Pt. Gopalacharlu on Lakshmipathi was very great and he became a still devoted ardent follower of Ayurveda and he completely gave up modern medicine.

Once there was a meeting on the nervous system and Ayurveda with Dr. P. Kutumbiah in the chair. After some scholars spoke, Dr. Kutumbiah suddenly got up and said 'Ayurveda is utter nonsense' and sat down. Everyone in the meeting was taken aback at this unexpected remark. Immediately Dr. Lakshmipathi got up and said 'Yes, Dr. Kutumbiah, I too thought like you at your age'. This shows his unstinted devotion to Ayurveda.

He published small booklets on Cholera, Malaria (Chalijvaram) and infant care (Chantibidda). He edited the natural sciences and medical sciences part of the encyclopaedia "Andhra Vijnana Sarvasvamu". He contributed several articles in the journal 'Andhradesha' 'Ranjani' a daily in Telugu.

After the demise of Gopalacharlu in 1920 Lakshmipathi took the organisation and administration of the Ayurvedic college. Students used to come to study Ayurveda to this college from far off places like Punjab, Rajasthan and Srilanka.

With a view to supply good and genuine medicines at reasonable rates to the Ayurvedic practitioners spread in hundreds of villages, Lakshmipathi started "Andhra Ayurveda Pharmacy" on co-operative basis. It had more than 1000 agencies and branches and supplied medicines almost to the whole of South India. The sales reached to Rs. one lakh per year. Lakshmipathi was very keen on the genuineness of the raw drugs and the proper methods of preparation. Once it so happened that a raw drug

“Thegada” (*Operculina turpethum*) was purchased in tonnes and later it was found to be spurious. He ordered the whole lot to be burnt. He also maintained to destroy the powders (*churnas*) after the stipulated time. Lakshmipathi held several positions like President of All India Ayurveda Congress (Ayurveda mahasammelan), and Member of Osman Committee. In 1925 the school of Indian Medicine was changed into a college and huge funds were granted by the Govt. by the influence of the second wife of Lakshmipathi, Smt. Rukminamma, who was the then Health Minister of Composite Madras state.

The greatness of Lakshmipathi lies in the fact that he tried to bring Ayurveda—the system, rules of hygiene, regimen, treatment, medical care and all aspects—to the common man from the classical books in Sanskrit. Though he agreed that knowledge of Sanskrit is due necessity to keep up the tradition alive, he thought it also necessary that the literature should be made available in regional languages to derive the practical benefit of Ayurveda to the common man in the changed circumstances. He devoted all his life for this aim. He published number of books in Telugu and also in English apart from commentaries and translations of classics. He also made a change in the approach and collected information from different ancient classics and prepared the books subject-wise under a common series ‘Ayurveda Shiksha’.

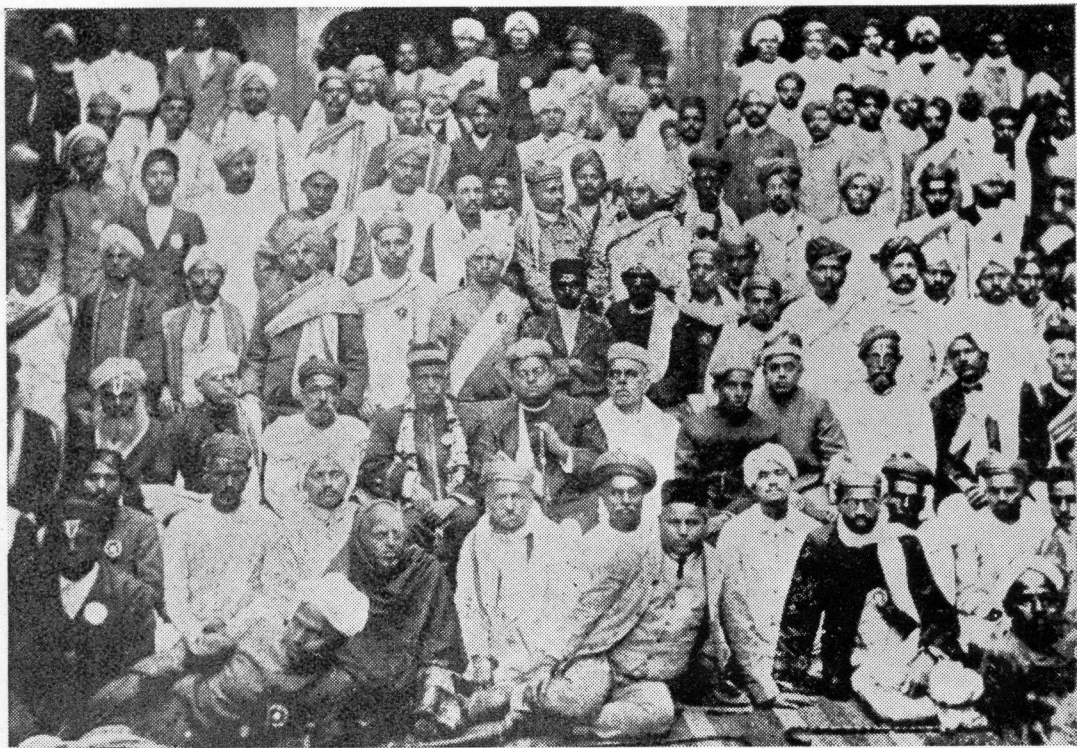
Apart from publishing books he organised ‘Arogya Yatras’. Under this scheme, he along with about 100 physicians used to visit number of villages by foot and teach and propagate the principles of Ayurveda. Impressed by these *arogyayatras*, Mahatma Gandhi invited Lakshmipathi to conduct the *yatras* from Sevagram also, which he did. He also established a herbs garden at Sevagram.

During these tours intended for popularising Ayurveda, he used to give more stress on oil-baths, exercises, *asanas* and so on. Several methods were employed for popularising the system like screening films, arranging toy shows, and singing Arogyageethams. His stress was on popularising the principles of healthy life and maintain the health of the nation instead of increasing bed strength in the hospitals

He toured throughout the country from Kanyakumari to Peshavar two to three times and conducted *arogyayatras* and delivered lectures. He also established Arogya Ashram in Avadi in Madras in an area of about 300 acres and he donated all his movable and immovable properties to this Ashram. In this Ashram facilities were provided for *snehana*, *sveda* and other *panchakarma* methods, and also for *rasayana* treatment.



Dr. Achanta Lakshmi pati (1899-1964)



Dr Achanta Lakshmiipati (second from right in the second row from below) along with Pandit D. Gopalacharlu (first from left in the same row) and Late Balagangadhar Tilak (third from left in the same row) in the All India Ayurveda Vaidya Maha Sammelan held at Poona in February 1917.

Special arrangements for diabetes (*prameha*) and *rajayakshma* (TB) patients for staying in cowsheds and goatsheds respectively as prescribed in Ayurveda were provided.

Lakshmipathi not only preached but practised. He used to perform strictly what he preached. Till his death at the age of 84 he was hale and healthy and was very strong physically and mentally and was an ideal Ayurvedist. Some of the important incidents/positions held by Lakshmipathi are given in the end along with a list of books published by him. He kept burning the lantern of Ayurveda which he took from his preceptor Gopalacharlu and dedicated his life for the upliftment of Ayurveda.

The Andhra Pradesh Govt. appointed Lakshmipathi Committee in 1954 and he strongly suggested that Ayurveda should be taught in M.B.B.S. course also. He was awarded titles like Ayurvedodharaka, Bhishagratna, Ayurveda Brihaspati, Pranacharya, and Ayurveda Vachaspati.

The last message of Dr. Lakshmipathi to Ayurvedic physicians is given here in a nutshell.

“I am ending my life with the full confidence that I have performed my duties properly. I also hope that you too will fulfil the duties in your life. According to the classical saying one should maintain and protect his body leaving aside all other things. Every physician should strive to keep a healthy body and should be an ideal person to the people in the aspect of keeping good health. The first and foremost duty of the physician is to protect and preach the maintenance of good health; the treatment of the diseases by giving medicines comes only next.”

LANDMARKS IN LAKSHMIPATI'S LIFE

- 1910 — Started practice in Madras. Became famous physician, surgeon, and Eye Specialist. Contributed articles for the 'encylopaedia. Founder & Manager of 'Vijnana Chandrika Grantha Mandali'. Associate Secretary of the Andhra Sahitya Parishad for the upliftment of Andhra in Scientific and literary fields. Secretary of Hindu Marriage Reform League.
- 1914-19 — Professor of Anatomy & Surgery in Ayurvedic College and learnt Ayurveda from Late Pandit Gopalacharlu.
- 1917 — Established Andhra Ayurveda Vaidya Mandali.
- 1920-28 — Principal, Ayurvedic College, Madras.
- 1920-24 — Member of the Usman Committee.
- 1920 — Established the Andhra Ayurveda Pharmacy.

- 1920-44 — Edited & Published “Sri Dhanvantari” monthly journal of Ayurvedic Medicine in Telugu & Tamil.
- 1922-27 — Published Andhra Medical Journal (English).
- 1919 — President, 3rd Andhra Vaidya Sammelan held at Vijayawada.
- 1933 — President, 22nd All India Ayurveda Maha Sammelan at Bikaner.
- 1939-40 — Member, Central Board of Indian Medicine of Composite Madras State.
Led the movement against the enactment effecting the prohibition laws to Asavas & Arishtas.
- 1939 — Worked as Physician in Sevagram under the order of Mahatma Gandhi.
- 1940 — Arogya Yatra.
- 1941 — Established Ayurveda Teachers Parishad in Avadi, Madras.
- 1947 — President 35th All India Ayurveda Maha Sammelan at Kanpur.
- 1948 — Member in Chopra Committee appointed by the Govt. of India.
- 1950 — Principal, Ayurvedic College, Trivandrum.
- 1954 — Headed the “Experts Committee” appointed by the Andhra Government.
- 1958 — Edited and published ‘Encyclopaedia of Ayurveda’ in Telugu and English in two volumes.
- 1960 — Adviser to the Planning Commission.

**BOOKS WRITTEN BY LATE DR. ACHANTA LAKSHMIPATHI
ENGLISH**

1. How to fight disease
2. National Health
3. Health Expedition
4. Enemies of Health
5. Secrets of long life
6. Vyayamasashtra
7. History of Indian Medicine
8. Care of Mother and Child
9. Curriculum of general Education for girls in Ancient India
10. Life of Pandit D. Gopalacharlu
11. The lessons of My life
12. Massage

13. Try these Hindu Exercises
14. Ayurveda Siksha Series in 16 volumes.
 - I. Historical background.
 - II. Philosophical background
 - III. Principles of Treatment
 - IV. Deha Dhatu Vijnana
 - V. Principles of Diagnosis
 - VI. Principles of Pathology
 - VII. The mind in Health and Disease
 - VIII. The Pancha Karmas
 - IX. The Nervous System in Indian Philosophy
 - X. Ayurveda—its scope and importance
 - XI. Abhyanga
 - XII. Some important Prescriptions in Ayurveda
 - XIII. Town-Planning in Ancient India ; The Indian Student
 - XIV. One Hundred useful Drugs
 - XV. Practice of Medicine
 - XVI. The Thirteen constituents of the Human Body.

TELUGU

1. Jeeva Shastra
2. Vishuchi
3. Cholera
4. Chalijvaram
5. Chantibidda
6. Antuvyadhulu
7. Arogyasutramulu
8. Vyayamshastramu
9. Hridaya Vyadhulu
10. Nooru Aushadayogamulu
11. Andhra Ayurveda Pharmacy Aushadayogamulu
12. Andhra Vaidya Chintamani
13. Vaidya Saramu
14. Prachina Bharatamuna Balikala Vidya Vidhanamu
15. Shata Shloki
16. Kshaya Roga Nidana Chikitsa Paddhati
- 17- Kaumarabhrityamu

18. Charaka Samhita (Sutra Sthanam)
19. Bharatiya Vijnanam
20. Darshanamulu
21. Roga Vijnanam
22. Prasuti Vijnanam (in 2 vols)
23. Aushadha vijnanam—Paribhasha
24. Vriksha Ayurvedam
25. Vanaushadha vijnanam - (in 4 vols)
26. Roga Vijnanam
27. Kaumara vritham
28. Sharira Vijnanam
29. Aushadha Yoga Vijnanam
30. Rasa Aushadha vijnanam
31. Ayurveda Chikitsa Paddhati
32. Ayurveda Chikitsa vijnanam—Jvaramulu
33. Sharirasthanam.

AYURVEDA SHIKSHA

Vol-I. 1. Sutra Sthanam

2. Bharatiya Vijnanam
3. Darshanamulu
4. Bhautika shastra vijnanam

Vol—II. Aushadha Sthanam

1. Aushadha Vijnanam
2. Vriksha Ayurvedam
3. Vanaushadha vijnanam
4. Rasa Aushadha vijnanam

Vol-III. Arogya sthanam

Vol-IV. Sharira Sthanam

Vol-V. Chikitsa Sthanam

1. Roga vijnanam
2. Navina Paddhatula Roga Vijnanam
3. Jvara Roga Vijnanam
4. Chikitsa Vijnanam

Vol. VI. Shalya Shalaky Vijnanam

1. Shalya Tantram
2. Shalaky Tantram

Vol. VII. Prasuti Sthanam

1. Prasuthi Tantram
2. Stri Rogamulu

Vol. VIII. Uttara Sthanamu

1. Agada Tantram
2. Vyavahara Tantra.

सारांश

भिषग्नतन आचण्टा लक्ष्मीपति-आयुर्वेद के प्रति उनकी समर्पणभावात्मक सेवा

ले० बि. रामाराव

लक्ष्मीपति का जन्म सन् १८८० ई में हुआ। वे मद्रास मेडिकल कालेज से १९०९ में स्नातक बने। राजमहेन्द्री में बि. ए. पढते समय सीतारामय्या के द्वारा आयुर्वेद की ओर आकर्षित हुए। उन्हें आयुर्वेद के औषधियों में ही नहीं बल्कि उसकी आध्यात्मिकता पर भी विश्वास था। मद्रास में प्रावटीस करते समय उनका परिचय पण्डित डी. गोपालाचार्लू से हुआ और वे आयुर्वेद के श्रद्धालु अनुयायी बने और आधुनिक चिकित्सा पध्दति को पूर्णतया छोड़ दिये।

गोपालाचार्लू के बाद आयुर्वेद महाविद्यालय का प्रशासन उन्होंने ने अपने हाथ में लिया। ग्रामीण वैद्यों को प्रामाणिक औषध की आपूर्ति के लिए फार्मसी को प्रारम्भ किया। उन्होंने ने आयुर्वेद को जनसाधारण के स्तर तक पहुँचाने का प्रयत्न किया। उन्होंने ने कई ग्रन्थों का प्रकाशन किया तथा आरोग्य यात्राएँ, फिल्म दिखाना, गुडियों की प्रदर्शनी का आयोजन तथा आरोग्यगीत के गानों द्वारा आयुर्वेद को जनसाधारण में प्रशंसा प्रदान की। इन्होंने ने आरोग्य आश्रम की स्थापना करके अपनी पूर्ण सम्पत्ति को उसको दे दिया। वे जो कहते थे उसका अभ्यास करते थे। रोगों की चिकित्सा करने से अधिक उन्होंने ने जनता की स्वास्थ्य रक्षा पर जोर दिया।