

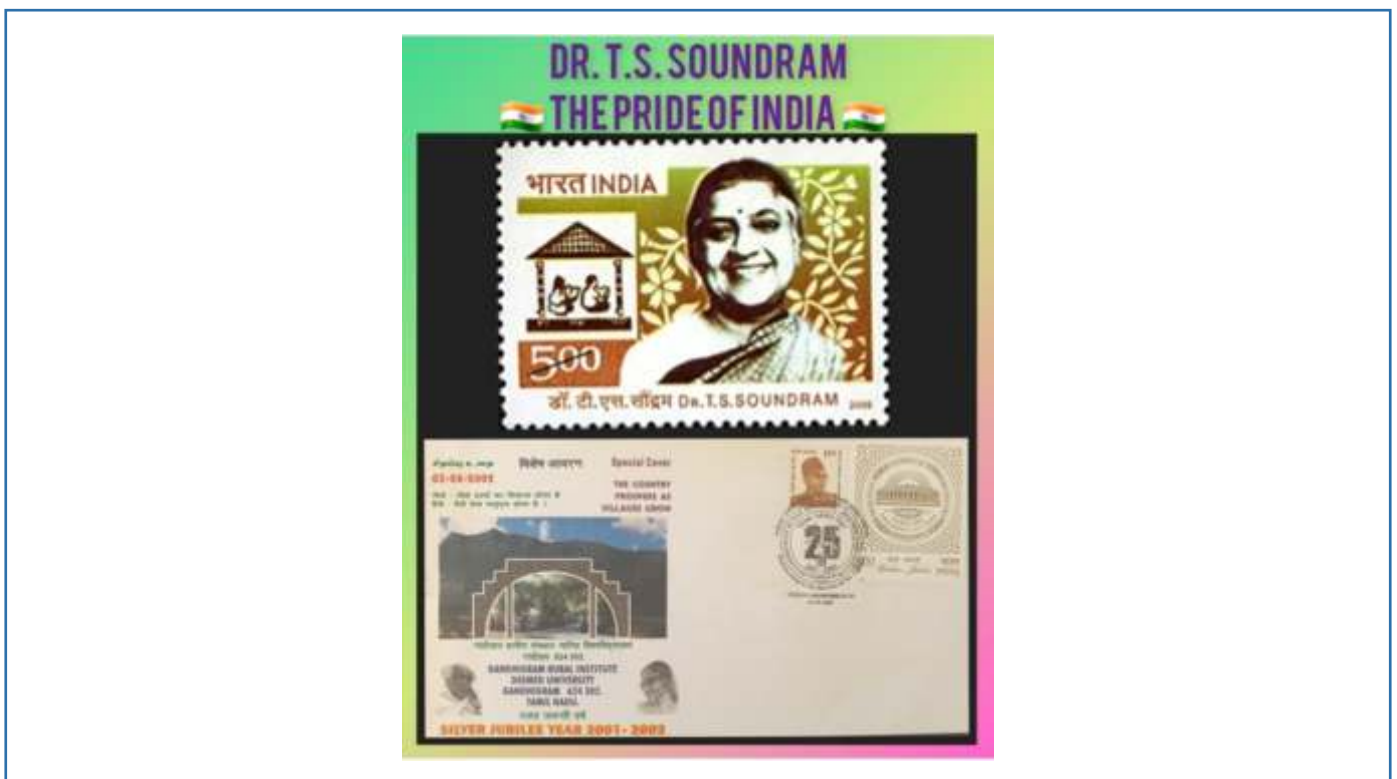
History

A Tribute to a Physician with a Beautiful Mind and Generosity of Heart

Dr. T.S. Soundram

August 18, 1904 - Oct 21, 1984

Indian Physician & Social Reformer



Her contributions...

- Dr Soundram was born in Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu. She was the daughter of T.V.Sundaram, the founder of TVS Group of companies, which is one of India's largest industrial conglomerates.
- She got married to Dr Soundararajan at the very young age of 14 years. Unfortunately, her husband succumbed during the plague outbreak. On his deathbed, he insisted her become a doctor and also remarry.
- Hence she joined to study medicine with the support of her parents at Lady Hardinge Medical College, Delhi and received her graduation in 1936.
- During her college days, she got an opportunity to meet Gandhiji and she dedicated herself to the Indian freedom movement.
- Thereupon, she met G. Ramachandran, who was a teacher and intimate disciple of Gandhiji and also an inmate of Gandhi's ashram. Then they fell in love with each other. She broke the barriers of caste and got married to him in 1940 with the blessings of Gandhiji.



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- On their wedding day, Dr.Soundram was privileged to wear a saree made of yarn spun by Kasturba Gandhi and a mangalsutra dipped in turmeric by Mahatma Gandhi himself.
- After her medical studies, Dr Soundram was involved in the Quit India movement. Gandhi was impressed by her commitment and he appointed her as a representative of South India's "Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust".
- Therefore the couple shifted to Dindigul, Tamil Nadu and was instrumental in setting up "Gandhigram" in 1947 for rural development.
- Furthermore, she enthusiastically involved herself to focus on healthcare, education, economic development and social welfare in the rural communities.
- In 1947, she began a two bedded clinic in a village called Chinnalapatti. Being a visionary, she made the hospital with several inroads into rural health and family welfare which has become a 300-Bedded Kasturba Hospital now.
- In 1956, they founded "The Gandhigram Rural Institute" later it became a Deemed University in 1976. The purpose of building the institute is to uplift "Rural Students, Rural People and Rural Villages".
- Moreover, Dr Soundram entered into politics and she was elected twice as an MLA and then Member of Parliament representing the Dindigul district in 1962.
- Later, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru had trusted and appointed her as the Union Deputy Minister for Education. While in service, she played the main role in making primary education free all over the country.
- Consequently, she was honoured for her meritorious social work with the Padma Bhushan award in 1962.
- In fact, she was born rich but lived a very simple life by possessing only three sets of khadi sarees and did selfless service to the underprivileged. Thereby, she became a living example of the Gandhian vision.

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