



**Subhash Ravindra Dharker, President NSI 2004**

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**Introduction:**

Born on 5<sup>th</sup> March 1946 Dr. S.R. Dharker (SRD) hails from an illustrious family of Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh. His grandfather was Inspector General of Police in Gwalior State and his father Prof. R.S. Dharker, an eminent and renowned neurosurgeon, started Neurosurgery in Gwalior in 1958 after completing two years training in Neurosurgery



*Prof. S.R. Dharker with father  
Prof. R.S. Dharker*

from CMC Vellore. Prof. R.S. Dharker was awarded Padma Shri in 1976. Dr. S.R. Dharker completed his initial schooling and college education at Gwalior. He was excited and elated when he was admitted to G.R. Medical College, Gwalior in 1963 for pursuing medical studies, as it was his childhood dream to become a doctor and particularly a surgeon.

**Family Background:**

SRD is the eldest amongst four siblings. On 24<sup>th</sup> December 1972, he married Mangala, a home maker and a constant pillar of support, who helped him balance his professional and personal life. They have two children, Vaidehi and Nachiket. Vaidehi is married to Mr. Amarish Pradhan, a Computer Engineer well placed in Pune. They have very charming sons Nikhil and Nishant. Dr. Nachiket has a PhD in Bioscience and is happily married to Dr. Poorva, who has a PhD in Biotechnology. The couple is blessed with a beautiful daughter Siyona.

### Undergraduate medical education:

SRD completed MBBS in December 1967 (It was the first batch of 4½ years), securing First position in all the three professional university examinations of Jiwaji University, Gwalior. He stood First in Anatomy, Pharmacology, Medical Jurisprudence, Surgery and Obstetrics & Gynaecology. He secured Distinction in Medical Jurisprudence.



*S.R. Dharker receiving Certificate for standing first in First Professional University Examination*

He received two Gold Medals, one for standing First in Final M.B.B.S University examination (awarded by Jiwaji University, Gwalior) and another for securing First position in Surgery. He used to play Cricket and Tennis during his school and college time.

### Postgraduate medical education and initial training:

After completing M.S. (General Surgery) in December 1971 in the first attempt, he joined CMC, Vellore, Tamil Nadu in January 1973 for M.Ch in Neurosurgery. He completed M.Ch Neurosurgery in April 1975 (First attempt). He got the inspiration of becoming a surgeon and particularly a neurosurgeon from his father, although his father never asked him to take surgery or neurosurgery and had left it to him to choose the specialty.



*S.R. Dharker's teachers: Prof. Jacob Abraham, Prof. K.V. Mathai and Prof. G.M. Taori*

In those days, two candidates were registered for the two year M.Ch course per year at CMC Vellore. There were two Neurosurgery units with a Professor in each unit and one Neurology unit with one Professor and a Lecturer. The Neurosurgery units were headed by Prof. K.V. Mathai and Prof. Jacob Abraham, while Neurology was headed by Prof. G.M. Taori. Dr P.T. Raman was Lecturer in Neurology. Thus registrars had direct and good

interaction with Professors. There used to be enriching discussions during ward rounds. Neuroradiology meetings were held twice a week and Neuropathology meetings once a week. In neuroradiology, registrars used to describe radiological findings and differential diagnosis. All the faculty members and registrars used to attend these meetings. Every Saturday, during seminars, registrars had to present some basic sciences topic in detail. Prof. Dharker's contemporary in neurosurgery was Dr. S.M. Panda. No one was registered in Neurology. His immediate seniors were Dr. Mathew Chandy and Dr. S.K. Ramchandra Nair. Dr. T.N. Shadangi was a year junior to him. His examiners for M.Ch Neurosurgery examination were Prof. B. Ramamurthi, Prof. K.V. Mathai, Prof. M. Natarajan and Prof. Balpameshwar Rao.



*S.R. Dharker and  
Prof. T.N. Shadangi with spouses*

During his training as a post graduate in Surgery in Gwalior, he cultivated values of hard work, sincerity, honesty and care for fellow human beings. These qualities were further strengthened during his training in CMC Vellore. All these helped him in building his future career. After obtaining M.Ch Neurosurgery degree, he joined the Department of Surgery and Neurosurgery, G.R. Medical College, Gwalior as a Lecturer. He further learned finer techniques in neurosurgery and gained valuable experience under his father in Gwalior. His father wanted him to join some other Medical College and establish himself on his own. Soon he got a couple of opportunities: one was an appointment as Associate Professor in Neurosurgery at Sri Chitra Thirunal Medical Center, Trivandrum and another as Reader and Head of Neurosurgery, S.M.S. Medical College, Jaipur. He chose to come to Jaipur and joined the Department of Neurosurgery at S.M.S. Medical College on 7<sup>th</sup> June 1978. Initially he was on deputation from Government of Madhya Pradesh as there was no neurosurgeon in Rajasthan after superannuation of Prof. M.G. Sarin in November 1977. Later on, in 1979 he was confirmed to the post of Associate Professor in Neurosurgery through Rajasthan Public Service

Commission. He was promoted to Professor of Neurosurgery on 25<sup>th</sup> September 1982. He was the lone faculty member for about four months attending both routine and emergency work. Right from day one he never felt that he was an outsider to this great institution. Due to his hard work, sincerity, discipline, and honesty he was accepted by all and got excellent support and co-operation from all quarters. Looking at his way of working, his registrars and nursing staff also worked sincerely and put in great efforts. He was lucky to have dedicated, hardworking, sincere and dependable registrars and nursing staff right from the very beginning. Dr. P.P.S. Mathur joined him in September 1978.

### **Training Overseas:**

Prof. Dharker was awarded Commonwealth Medical Fellowship for one year in 1983 for training in micro-neurosurgery under Prof. Sir Graham M. Teasdale in Southern General Hospital, Glasgow, Scotland. In Glasgow, he worked as a team member and got very good exposure in management of head injuries. Here he learned micro-neurosurgical techniques, microvascular and trans-sphenoidal pituitary surgery. He also learnt how to conduct research and was exposed to working in an experimental laboratory. In May 1988, he visited Prof. M.G. Yasargil's Department in Zurich,



*Prof. Dharker with  
Prof. M.G. Yasargil at  
his residence in Zurich*

Switzerland as an observer for a month. There he had the opportunity to learn Prof. Yasargil's surgical techniques, live as well as through videos. In 1992 he visited neurosurgical centers in Glasgow, Queens Square London, Newcastle Upon Tyne and Bristol as a Senior Commonwealth Medical Fellow. Micro neurosurgery and surgery for intracranial aneurysms and arterio-venous malformations were started in 1984 after his return from Glasgow, Scotland (Commonwealth Medical Fellowship). The first case of Pcom aneurysm was clipped, by borrowing an Indian operating microscope from the experimental surgery laboratory of the medical college and a bipolar electro cautery unit from Prof. V.K. Pande, Professor of Hand Surgery.

## **Development of Neurosurgery in Rajasthan:**

The Department of Neurosurgery got very good support from the Government of Rajasthan as well as from the local administration which helped in developing the department. In addition, the public and different societies used to extend help for developing the department and also contributed towards the day to day working, for patient care. The faculty also gradually increased from one person single unit, to twelve with three units. The department was soon well recognized nationally as well as internationally. Through his relentless efforts, dedication, perseverance and ability to bring everyone together, Dr. Dharker persuaded the people of Rajasthan to develop confidence in the department, for management of neurosurgical diseases. He persuaded the Government of Rajasthan to start and develop neurosurgery departments in the other five medical colleges of the State as well.

His zeal to take the Department of Neurosurgery of the S.M.S. Medical College to new heights did not stop here. With the support of the Government of Rajasthan and generous donors, he managed to set up a new state of the art Neurosurgery Complex which included four neurosurgery operation theatres and a 23 bedded ICU. Apart from procuring the latest equipment, he started a DSA and crush cytology lab in the theatre complex itself. He also transformed cerebral angiography, ventriculography, myelography etc. to sophisticated imaging studies with high end CT and MRI facilities, available 24/7.



*Honorable Chief Minister of Rajasthan  
Late Shri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat during  
ceremony of New Neurosurgery OT-ICU  
complex at SMS Hospital, Jaipur*

## **Establishing neurosurgical training in Rajasthan:**

Due to the high quality of work and increasing number of patients receiving treatment, the Department was soon recognized and approved by Medical Council of India and University of Rajasthan in 1985 to start the M.Ch Neurosurgery course. This was started in 1985 with two students per

year. H. Bagaria and V.R. Sardana were the first two residents. Till Dr. Dharkar's superannuation in 2006. 42 residents were registered and trained. In his constant endeavor to inspire his junior colleagues and students to sub specialize in neurosurgery, he sent R.S. Mittal and V.R. Sardana for training in trans-sphenoidal surgery, to Sir Prof. Graham Teasdale in Glasgow. Subsequently, other neurosurgeons also went abroad for advanced training and for expanding their horizons.

### **Contributions to Neurosurgery:**

Along with doing high quality work, he was also publishing his work in National and International journals and presenting papers regularly in National and International conferences. He has published 88 research papers, 14 of which are in International journals and read over 100 papers in National and International conferences. In addition he has written 12 chapters in Text books and Proceedings of workshops / seminars. Some papers have been quoted in chapters in Youman's Text book of Neurosurgery and in Neurosurgery by Wilkins and Rengachary.

Prof. Dharker has delivered Six Orations and several lectures in scientific meetings. He was one of the invited speakers at the World Federation of Neurological Surgeons Congress in Sydney Australia 2001, Marrakesh Morocco 2005, and Boston USA 2009, in 12<sup>th</sup> Asian Australasian Congress of Neurological Surgery in Nagoya Japan and Congress of Neurological Surgeons (USA) in New Orleans USA in 2009. He was also invited to deliver a lecture in Hannover Germany in 2000 in the Symposium "Neurosurgery Meets Millennium".

### **Administrative contributions:**

On 31<sup>st</sup> August 1999 he was appointed Principal and Controller of S.M.S. Medical College and attached hospitals. This was a good opportunity for him to at least partly repay the debts as this institution had provided him a platform for working and establishing himself. He was Dean, Faculty of Medicine, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur from 1999 to 2001. During his tenure as Principal for approximately six and half years, he



*Prof. S.R. Dharker and  
Prof. P.N. Tandon*

focused on developing all departments of Medical College and different hospitals by further improving the infrastructure facility in the existing space and also by making available additional space for improving patient care within the limited budget. College laboratories were also provided additional space and equipment. With the help of faculty members he could shift the college library to a new building. Due to his efforts, Medical College got



*Prof. Dharker with Dr. R.P. Sengupta and Prof. B.K. Misra*

permission to access books and journals from the National Medical Library, in 2001. Thus students and faculty could get access to many journals. By increasing the budget for library, number of journals could be retrieved and new journals and books were purchased. The space created by shifting the library was utilized in expansion of departments in the Medical College. With the help of faculty members, efforts were made to uplift the academic standards in the college and in attached hospitals. Efforts were also made to hold undergraduate and postgraduate examinations on time which in the past had often been delayed. Large number of National and International Neurosurgeons visited the department. Profs. B Ramamurthi, K.V. Mathai, P.N. Tandon, S.N. Bhagwati, A.K. Banerjee, V.S. Dave, V.K. Kak were some of the visitors. Others included Prof. William Sweet, M.G. Yasargil, Majid Samii, Sir Prof. G.M. Teasdale, Lyndsay Symon, James Ausman, Peter Jenneta, R.P. Sengupta, D. Long and S. Mullen. Dr. Dharker was examiner for M.Ch Neurosurgery in different universities including AIIMS, New Delhi, PGI Chandigarh, SGPGI, Lucknow, Bombay University and also for DNB Neurosurgery. He was inspector for the Medical Council of India and the National Board of Examinations for starting and recognizing neurosurgery courses in different Medical Colleges and hospitals.

### **Awards and Recognitions:**

Prof. Dharker was awarded several awards and certificates of recognition from Government of Rajasthan and different scientific societies and bodies. He was awarded Shri Chiranjee Lal Agarwal Memorial Award in 1994 by President of India and Merit Certificate by Government of Rajasthan in

1988. He is a member of several International and National Scientific Societies. He is also a Fellow of National Academy of Medical Sciences and an International Fellow of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons. Prof. Dharker was President of Neurological Society of India in 2004 and President of Skull Base Surgery Society of India from 2000 to 2002.



*Honorable President of India  
Late Shri S.D. Sharma awarding  
Shri Chiranjilal Memorial award  
to Prof. S.R. Dharker*

### **Conferences organized:**

The department of neurosurgery under his able mentorship organized many conferences. They included National symposium on C P Angle Tumours in February 1991, International symposium on Current Trends in Neurosurgery in February 1994, 46<sup>th</sup> National Conference of NSI in December 1997, WFNS Tumour Section Meeting in October 2004, 18<sup>th</sup> National Neurotrauma conference in August 2009, 59<sup>th</sup> National Conference of NSI in December 2010, 5<sup>th</sup> Asian Australasian Society of Neurological Surgeon's Neurotrauma Committee and 2<sup>nd</sup> WFNS Military Neurosurgeon's Meeting in October 2015.

He regularly organized Neurosurgical Camps in rural areas of Rajasthan and is Secretary of Neurosurgical Services and Research Society, Jaipur. Prof. Dharker has donated most of his personal books and journals to the Department of Neurosurgery, S.M.S. Medical College, Jaipur to start a departmental library. Prof. Dharker has also given all savings of W.F.N.S. Tumour Section Meeting 2004 and Neurosurgical Services and Research Society (approximately Rs. 25 Lakh) to the Principal S.M.S. Medical College, Jaipur for starting Experimental lab in the Department of Neurosurgery.

### **Association with NSI:**

Every scientific society needs office bearers to run it and he was lucky to serve NSI as President elect and then as President He also worked as one of the members of Neurotrauma committee of the NSI. He had given Rs. One Lakh) to NEUROLOGY INDIA from the conference savings. This was probably done for the first time in the history of NSI. NSI provided

a forum to present his work in conferences. In NSI conferences, CME and other meetings he got an opportunity to listen to national and international stalwarts, to interact personally with them, share experiences, enrich his knowledge and widen his horizons. In earlier days, such NSI conferences and educational meetings were of great help as junior consultants and residents were not able to attend international meetings outside India. Such exposures helped in developing one's personality as a whole.

### **Contribution to Neurosciences in India:**

Neuro-radiological investigations during pre-CT era used to be time consuming, required great skill to perform and needed high proficiency in interpretation and localizing the lesion. Sometimes it was difficult to accurately localize the intracranial and intraspinal lesions, as the investigations available during pre-CT era had some limitations as well. These investigations were invasive and painful. They were performed by neurosurgeons, neurologists or neuroradiologists. When CT Scans came into existence, those lesions which previously were not diagnosed, could now be diagnosed easily and accurately localized with good probability of histopathological diagnosis. Moreover, CT, MRI help a lot in decision making in surgery.

As different faculties of neurosciences are rapidly developing in our country and younger generation neurosurgeons are gaining more and more international exposure, they are more inclined to limit themselves to different subspecialties. This is definitely a good indication of development of Neurosciences and neurosurgery in particular in our country. Younger neurosurgeons today have better facilities to develop their surgical skills in the experimental laboratories. They have excellent access to different journals and books. Fiber dissection techniques and different surgical techniques have made neurosurgery much safer. Developments in the basic neurosciences have remarkably helped in better understanding of the disease process, their progression and management. Neurosurgery continues to be the most demanding and challenging amongst all faculties of medicine. Lots of developments have taken place over the past three to four decades in basic sciences, investigations, surgical techniques and management. With sub-specialties developing in neurosurgery, youngsters after qualifying have better opportunities. ■