

# Health village for medicare, research coming up near Chennai

Special Correspondent

**CHENNAI:** A health village is to be established in Elavur, near Chennai, to serve as the hub for medicare and medical research in South Asia. It is a joint venture between Frontier Lifeline Hospital and the Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation (TIDCO).

A memorandum of understanding, formalising the Rs. 450-crore project, was signed by representatives of the organisations on Wednesday in the presence of Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi.

Frontier Lifeline was represented by its founding chairman K.M. Cherian, and TIDCO, by its Managing Director S. Ramasundaram.

Electricity Minister Arcot Veeraswamy and Health Minister M.R.K. Panneerselvam were present along with Chief Secretary L.K. Tripathy.

The entire project will be completed in three phases over the next five years. Frontier Mediville, as the village is called, will also have a state-of-the-art national medical science park, which will facilitate research in basic and applied sciences, a multi-speciality 1,000-bed hospital, units of Indian systems of medicine, a vendors' park and a medical university.

## First of its kind

K.M. Cherian, founding chairman, Frontier Lifeline Hospitals, said it would fall under the category "bio-hospital," first of its kind in the country, an emerging concept that combined clinical prac-



**PROJECT FORMALISED:** Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi with Dr. K.M. Cherian, Chairman and CEO, Frontier Lifeline (left), and S. Ramasundaram, MD, TIDCO, at the MoU signing function for Frontier Mediville, planned at Elavur, on Wednesday. - PHOTO: R. RAGU

tice with regenerative medicine and basic sciences enhanced with holistic therapy. Frontier Mediville would also have a 'Sterile Biomedical Corridor' to facilitate manufacture of consumables, disposables and pharmaceutical products required for in-house hospital and research facilities.

This followed the Brazilian model, where the hospital generated products it required to run the entire unit, Dr. Cherian said.

The park would also be able to handle outsourcing orders from the rest of the world for tests, procedures and trials. Research and application of

nano-technology and bio-informatics would be the frontier areas of exploration, he said.

## Medical university

The comprehensive medical university would include a regional centre for nursing and paramedical training and would be run in collaboration with the Edward Dunlop Health Foundation, Australia. A herbarium was also on the cards, to be developed in collaboration with the Korean Research Institute of Bioscience and Biotechnology and the Asia Pacific Bio-Resources Consortium. It would house medicinal plants

and develop genetically engineered strains, from which molecules could be extracted for therapeutic treatment.

"Our aim is to establish Frontier Mediville as a single-stop destination for any medical requirement. It will also serve as a holistic healing centre for medical tourists," Dr. Cherian said at a press conference held after the MoU signing ceremony. He hoped that Frontier Mediville would evolve as a model for other States. The village would also be served by a helipad, a railway station and bus terminus to enhance accessibility to Elavur, located off National Highway 5.