

Times of India      24.07.2009 [CM's house to be turned into a free hospital](#) CHENNAI: In a grand gesture, Chief Minister M Karunanidhi on Thursday announced that he would donate his house in the centre of Chennai to run a free hospital for the poor after his and his wife's lifetime. The elegant two-storeyed mansion on 4th Street, Gopalapuram — which the CM described as a “street house” — has been his residence for over four decades. “I have the consent of my wife and children for this (donating),” Karunanidhi said.

At a function organised to roll out the Rs 517-crore state health [insurance](#) scheme, the Kalaingar Insurance Scheme for life-saving treatment for one crore poor families, the CM said the house would be entrusted either with the state government or the Kalaingar Charitable Trust to run a hospital in the name of his parents Anjugam and Muthuvel.

The [market value](#) of the house, registered in the names of his children in 1968, is said to be Rs 8 crore.

Karunanidhi's decision to give away his property to charity recalled similar gestures in the past by other Dravidian leaders. Periyar E V Ramasamy bequeathed his houses and properties in Erode and Chennai to a trust to propagate his ideals. MGR left a portion of his estate in Ramavaram to run a school and home for the deaf and speech-impaired.

Delivering an emotional speech, the CM said: “All those who are in politics in the state are aware that there is not even sufficient space in my house for local visitors and foreign dignitaries...”

He said it was the only property he had acquired after he became the chief minister, apart from a 14-acre plot in Kattur near Tiruvarur. “I may be the only chief minister in India not owning a bungalow but living in a street house. In the past when I was the CM, I did not approve of the idea of shifting to a big government bungalow,” he said.

Some alterations have been made to the nearly 50-year-old structure over the years. Some of its features now bear an Art Deco look. An elevator was installed inside some years ago after Karunanidhi's knees began troubling him.

The Gopal-apuram house is where four of his children including Stalin and Azhagiri grew up. They continued living there with their families even after marriage. They have moved out into their own homes over the last two decades.