

PRESIDENTIAL SPEECH

Presidential address

Rajesh Kapur

President, IRIA, Vasant Visions Diagnostics, New Delhi, India

Correspondence: Dr. Rajesh Kapur, F-9/4, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi - 110 057, India.
E-mail: drrajeshkapur@gmail.com

Hon'ble Chief Guest Shr. Ram Naresh Yadav Ji, Governor of Madhya Pradesh, my distinguished predecessor – outgoing President Dr. Harsh Mahajan, all other dignitaries on the dais and many off the dais, including distinguished guests from India and abroad, my friends and colleagues in IRIA, representatives from the healthcare industry and media, ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to begin with wishing you all a very happy and peaceful New Year and welcoming you to this 66th Annual Congress of IRIA at Indore, a city which takes pride in history, culture and traditions.

I deem it a honor to address this August gathering as the new President of the Indian Radiological and Imaging Association. At the outset, allow me to thank you for your generous support and reposing your faith in me to serve our Association in this capacity. It goes without saying that the primary goal of a professional organization like ours needs to be to strive to better serve the people and at the same time work in the best interest of its members. I assure you of my commitment to these goals and together let us strive to catapult IRIA to higher esteem of the Society through improved service and adherence to professional ethics.

Our Association, as it was then called the “Indian Radiological Association,” took birth in the year 1931 in Calcutta, but only in 1937 it was registered with the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies, Bengal, with a total membership strength of merely 24, and that was 75 years ago, making this a very momentous year. We have come a long way from there, including taking on a more pertinent name of Indian

Radiological and Imaging Association with membership strength of close to 10,000 today. I say this with great pride that other great Societies like the ESR and RSNA have acknowledged our growing status by inviting IRIA to make presentations during special sessions like “Europe meets India” and “India Presents” during their annual Society meetings in the recent past.

International Participations

Over the past few years, we have fostered friendly relations with Chinese and Korean societies of radiology, which includes exchange of faculty during our respective annual national conferences. IRIA plays a pivotal role in loco-regional radiological societies of SAARC Countries and even though we ruffled few feathers, Dr. Prabhakar Reddy is now the President-Elect of AOSR. Another reason to cheer and a matter of pride for us is that our past president, Dr. Mukund Joshi, was honored with honorary membership of RSNA this year. All this is testimony to the world recognizing our contribution and growing potential as a strong and vibrant national and regional radiological society. We have amongst us today representatives from the Royal College of Radiologists, ESR, Chinese and Korean societies of radiologists, RSSC and AOSR, AIRP and AARI. My warm welcome to all of you for having come and I hope you have a comfortable stay and enjoy our hospitality through the efforts put in by Dr. O. P. Tiwari, Dr. Sodani, and their team.

Academic Activities

I was fortunate to be part of the team as the Secretary General of IRIA, when many new initiatives were started, which include IRIA-sponsored CMEs, resident education programs, and international travel grants, to recall a few. Our academic wing, Indian College of Radiology and Imaging, is doing creditably well and our journal has been indexed with Pub-med for a few years now. Let me say that we as an Association, have come of age and with that comes higher expectations along with greater responsibility and accountability.

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PC and PNDT Act

Before I state my views on PC and PNDT Act, please allow me to say that female feticide on a large scale, even after 65 years of independence, is not only morally and ethically unacceptable, it is in fact a matter of national shame. Having interacted very closely with the Government agencies, including many seminars on this topic, I assure you that everyone considers this a social evil. I would compare it with untouchability and sati-pratha in the past. For eradication of this utterly unacceptable practice, the role of education and action by civil society cannot be overemphasized. And, we as responsible citizens and members of the respected and influential medical profession have to do our bit before the sociological changes themselves eliminate the demand of ultrasound scans for sex selection.

Many of my predecessors, starting from Dr. Col. Pant, Shyam Doda onward, have spearheaded actions to safeguard the interest of radiologists and minimize harassment under the Act, which includes filing cases in the courts of law. It would suffice to say that a lot has been achieved, but even more needs to be done, and I would strive to ensure that the PC and PNDT Act be implemented uniformly throughout the country, without fear or favor.

Under the Act, anybody with 6 months training in ultrasonography is allowed to perform ultrasound, and recently MCI has also formulated a training program. In this context, I exhort all of you radiologists not to decimate or undermine your valued post-graduate training of 2-3 years by issuing experience certificates to anyone and maintain the dignity of our speciality.

One can talk endlessly regarding the role and importance of radiology services in modern healthcare delivery the world over. The field continues to grow, as illustrated by recent advances such as molecular imaging, fusion imaging, etc., While these developments are of great interest to us, in the interest of saving time, I will limit myself to sharing with you what I heard during the opening session of RSNA just a few weeks back. RSNA had invited a lawyer and a

physician. Both ladies were breast cancer survivors and they recounted their experience of undergoing CT and MRI scans during the treatment and during follow-up. What they said must have moistened the eyes of most in the audience. They narrated how radiologists, though very good professionally, never talked to them or discussed scan findings with them. Each time this left them scared and anxious. Friends, please remember, a patient is not an object or a thing that we are trying to analyze as if we are in a lab. We deal with human beings who have feelings, who are worried about their health condition. They are scared of what we may detect, and wish that we speak to them. Please relate with their anxiety and be more humane. Talk to them or at the very least hear them out. This also makes good business sense, because as independent practitioners we are not a faceless ancillary department in a hospital.

While we all endeavor to make an honest living, we cannot forget that we are living in a country which has among the largest population of people below the poverty line. We are fortunate to have the skills to serve the people and should not confine our service to only those who can afford and ignore all who need them but are too poor to pay. We have to follow the principle of *Noblesse Oblige*, which enjoins those in privileged position to serve those in need.

I take this opportunity to thank all you wonderful friends for your unstinted support, guidance, and valuable advice at all times. We are enjoying the hospitality laid out by organizers of this 66th Annual Congress of IRIA and my sincere thanks to the Chairman Dr. O. P. Tiwari, Organizing Secretary Dr. Sodani and their entire team for their efforts in making us comfortable and ensuring top-class academic and gastronomic feasts.

Finally, I would like to thank my parents because of whom what I am today, Sangeeta my wife, for helping me bond with many of you who come for CCMs to Delhi and my children Rohan and Sanjana, for their quiet support in all my endeavors.

Welcome once again, thank you and Jai Hind!

Announcement

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