

Presidential address

O P Bansal

President IRIA 2016, Director, Millennium Diagnostics, E-319, Greater Kailash-II, New Delhi - 110 048, India
E-mail: dropbansal@rediffmail.com



- Hon'ble Chief Guest - Prof. David Cosgrove
- My distinguished predecessor and outgoing President - Dr. Jignesh Thakker
- President Elect - Dr. Bhupendra Ahuja
- Organizing Chairman - Dr. Kamal Mohapatra
- Organizing Secretary - Dr. MVK Rao, other dignitaries on the dais and off the dais, Respected Past Presidents, Office Bearers of Indian Radiological and Imaging Association (IRIA), IJRI, and ICRI
- Representatives from Healthcare Industry
- Distinguished guests from India and Abroad
- Member colleagues of our association, media, ladies, and gentlemen.

At the outset, I would like to extend my hearty greetings and best wishes for the year 2016, with the hope that this year will usher in good health, happiness, and prosperity to all of you and your family, and I warmly welcome you all to the "69th Annual Conference of Indian Radiological and Imaging Association."

It is indeed an honor for me to take over as President of our prestigious "Indian Radiological and Imaging Association" at the 69th Annual Conference being held in Bhubaneswar, the "Temple City of India" and a center of economic and religious importance in Eastern India. I thank each one of you for providing me many opportunities to serve the association in various capacities in the past and reposing great faith in me by electing me unopposed to this highest post. I assure all the members that I along with my entire team shall leave no stone unturned to rise up to your expectations.

As I stand in front of this august audience, I wish to express my deep appreciation for the heart-warming hospitality by the organizers of 69th Annual Conference of IRIA. I thank the organizing Chairman Dr. Kamal Mohapatra for his untiring and inspiring efforts. I also wish to proudly acknowledge the contribution of Dr. MVK Rao, Organizing Secretary and all the members of Organizing Committee for their time, energy, and efforts for the success of this conference. The

Chairman Scientific Committee Dr. Manoranjan Mohapatra and his team have made an excellent scientific program. The guest lecturers from national and international faculties will enrich and update the knowledge of all the delegates. My heartfelt thanks are also due to the families of the organizing team who have been extremely understanding and tolerant in past few months. It is because of their cooperation that the IRIA members are having a great time in Bhubaneswar.

The "Indian Radiological Association" was registered in 1937, with membership strength of 24. The first Annual Congress was held in 1946 at Madras under the Presidentship of Dr. M. D. Joshi. Seventy-eight years later, we are a strong family of 12,600 members and are one of the largest organizations and the contribution of many of our colleagues' world over is remarkable. This growth has been due to lifetime efforts of our teachers and committed luminaries in Indian Radiology. I feel proud in saying that other great international societies such as RSNA, KSR, and CSR are acknowledging the growing status of IRIA by inviting IRIA in their special sessions such as "India presents," "India meets RSNA," and "Asian Radiology Form."

The need for imaging was borne out of a desire to study the human body and its diseases. We have come a long way since the time WC Roentgen actually saw his wife's hand's image. At present moment, radiology is one of the most sought after specialties. Imaging has become an integral part of most patients' work-up due to its capability to visualize abnormalities even at cellular level, the exciting opportunities continue as the use of imaging for ultrastructural diagnostics, nanotechnology, functional and quantitative diagnostics, and molecular medicine is steadily increasing. More than 50% of the radiologists are below the age of 45 years. With many young radiologists around, I see further rise in dynamism and youthful creative ideas in our profession.

As knowledge expands exponentially, there is an increasing trend toward subspecialization. Many radiologists who are

into subspecialty practice do not find it useful to attend general IRIA meetings any more. Moreover, subspecialty meetings have focused teaching. Recognition of this fact has prompted the IRIA to establish sub-specialty chapters in Abdominal Imaging, Chest Radiology, Head and Neck Imaging, Pediatric Radiology, Musculoskeletal Radiology, Neuroimaging, Women's Imaging, Breast Imaging, Emergency and Trauma Imaging, and Interventional Radiology. Each subspecialty head has been entrusted to write two white papers on important subjects within the specialty and hold one session in the National Conference and CME programs of IRIA. The concept has been a super success and we have already seen a tremendous response to the white paper authored by Dr. Ashu Seith Bhalla, our subspecialty head in Thoracic Radiology.

One of the banes of the radiologists is Cuts and Commission Practice. This unhealthy, illegal and unethical phenomenon is being taken very seriously by the government. IRIA does not approve or support the practice of giving or taking cuts or commissions.

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.

Admittedly, female feticide is not only morally and ethically unacceptable but also it is a matter of shame. Basically, this is a sociological problem and may be eliminated in the long run with greater awareness and empowerment of women. Hence, role of education, publicity, and action by civil society can hardly be overemphasized. However, this is not to suggest that legal and regulatory measures should not be pursued vigorously to contain this menace till sociological changes by themselves eliminate this malpractice.

In India, it is 20 years since PC and PNDT Act was enforced in 1994. It is very clear that this promising act has not served its purpose. Today, action is taken within few minutes, without fair trial for trivial human errors, such as writing NA instead of not applicable in the form F and not wearing an apron by the Doctor. Many radiologists are being harassed by the appropriate authorities on these minor things. These coercive methods will produce only temporary results and can never be sustained. Suspicion level among society has increased to alarming proportions. People tend to view each and everything suspiciously, making day-to-day work very difficult. During routine sonography examination, there is so much emphasis on the PC and PNDT Act compliance that academic and quality part is suffering. Due to legal hassles and complexities,

many young talented doctors are now afraid of joining the specialty of Radiology.

We had submitted a lot of representations to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India. IRIA has been helping and cooperating government at all levels; however, its representations on various issues of the PC and PNDT Act are still unresolved. It appears that either government is unable to do anything or does not actually want to do anything on this matter. In such a scenario, our innocent members are suffering from this injustice. With extreme pain and in all consciousness, we have been forced to give Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, notice to come out with solutions to our problems; else we shall be constrained to go on indefinite stoppage of all sonographies.

In the last conference of IRIA held at Kochi, we had presented a vision document for IRIA with emphasis to bring about transparency, objectivity, and accountability in the working of the IRIA. We have been able to implement the major part of our promises, the response at the central IRIA has been fast tracked, the procedure for awards, orations, etc., has been streamlined and made transparent. Organization of the national conference on regional basis is a work under progress and is being fine-tuned. I wish to reassure each one of you that I am personally committed to propriety and transparency in financial matters of the organization and shall hold everyone, including myself accountable for every penny which is collected on your behalf.

Education to the residents and young radiologists is very important and it is duty of all senior radiologists to educate the young buds in the field. IRIA has appointed a National Coordinator for Resident Education Program. He shall be responsible to coordinate with educational activities such as IREP, Resident Education Program on practical skills in radiology, International Day of Radiology, and other similar programs which are basically meant for the education of residents.

There are many more projects of IRIA that are ongoing and I will continue to support them. I take this opportunity to thank the faculty of experts who have come from all corners of India and the world, and I hope that you will enjoy your stay with us. I also thank our members for coming in such large numbers, and hope that you will go back with enhanced knowledge and skills to better serve your patients. We are really indebted to the healthcare industry for the faith and confidence that they have reposed in IRIA and assure that all their support will be put to highly productive use.

On this momentous occasion, I wish to place on record my deep appreciation to the contribution of senior members, past

presidents, and I assure this august gathering that I would carry their legacy of compassion, purpose, and hard work. With your support, I will strive to uphold the dignity of the office of the President and will carry IRIA to lofty heights.

Friends, I am indebted to everyone for helping me achieve this position, especially Dr. Jignesh Thakker, my predecessor, and Dr. Lalendra Upreti, National Coordinator for Resident Education who have immensely helped and supported me in achieving what I am today, and I wish to especially thank all my family members for their abounding sense of understanding and their support which helped me to attain this status. My parents-late Sh. Laxman Dass Bansal and Smt. Shanti Devi Bansal, my wife – Dr. Archana Bansal and my children Akshaya Bansal and Jatin Bansal deserve a special gratitude from me.

Long live IRIA!

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