At the outset, on behalf of the entire IAP Community, I pay tribute and homage to the COVID martyrs. The only thing I would say is that we will never forget your sacrifices!

To begin with, I take the opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to every member of the Academy for the confidence reposed in me by electing me as the President of the second largest specialty body of pediatricians in the world. I am humbled by the affection and love showered by one and all in the fraternity, and it shall be my earnest endeavor to give my very best to the Academy.

As I assume office, I am aware of the weight of responsibility that comes in leading a great organization. Certainly, I am inheriting the legacy of great stalwarts culminating with my predecessor Prof. Piyush Gupta, who has led IAP with great determination through the difficult days of the pandemic. I will strive to continue his good work and pass the baton on an equally strong platform to my successor, President-Elect Dr. Upendra Kinjawadekar.

Today I have the privilege of sharing this platform with our distinguished Chief Guest, Honorable Minister for Women and Child Development Smt Smriti Irani ji, who has set her goal for an India witnessing “rapid transition from women’s development to women-led development”. Child welfare has been very close to her heart. She has been the active proponent of the telemedicine support system introduced last year with the participation of IAP for the child care institutions across the country.

I am delighted to have Dr. Mahesh Sharmaji, former union minister and the incumbent Member of Parliament representing Gautam Budha Nagar. Being one amongst ourselves in the medical profession, he has gone to great lengths to support us in organizing this event. I must say he has been a mentor and patron to us and showed us that he is not just an MP for Noida, but an MP for the medical fraternity too.

A friend, choosing to be a pediatrician has been one of the most worthy choices in my life. Pediatrics is a specialty which enables you to touch the lives of hundreds of families and feel pride in nurturing the future of humanity. Through IAP, I was able to see the vast canvas of our profession and got opportunities to contribute my knowledge and resources to make a difference to child health. As the President, I have identified two broader arms for the activities in my presidential tenure: primarily, Contribution to child health, and Contribution to the profession through IAP.

Going forward in this track, IAP today stands at a new juncture whereby we propose to become a broad based organization and focus on the more difficult phase of childhood, namely adolescence. This is in preparation to our future role as a profession dealing with both Pediatrics and adolescence. In this context, I must congratulate my predecessor Dr Piyush Gupta for his sustained efforts to get the domain of Pediatrics to be renamed as ‘Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine,’ to which the Government of India has already agreed.

One immediate and primary concern on child health should be reduction of under-5 mortality. As of 2020, under-5 mortality rate for India revolves around 35, which means 35 out of 1000 children born in our country do not get the opportunity to celebrate their fifth birthday. IAP has identified the goal of achieving under-5 mortality rate of 25 by the year 2025 as an important component in the country’s journey to Sustainable Development Goals 2030. This is a stiff target, but nothing is impossible if we aim it on a mission mode. In our country, under-5 mortality rate has wide disparity interstate as well as intra state. With an in-depth district wise secondary data analysis, we have identified 57 high priority districts with high U5MR for urgent intervention. We understand one size does not fit all. As such, district-specific road maps have been devised. We are primarily aiming at catalyzing the activities of Government of India in these focused districts with the collaboration of other major stake holders like WHO, UNICEF, FOGSI, NNF and TNAI.

My dears, it is a fact of life that children cannot express all their needs. We, the pediatricians, as the custodians of child...
health need to raise our voice for them. Our responsibility for
the child’s well-being goes way beyond the physical health of
individual patients. IAP needs to be more vociferous and
visible in various domains of child advocacy like child rights,
child abuse, gender discrimination and many more. We need
to continue our proactive support to child health initiatives
from GOI like INAP (India Newborn Action Plan), Anemia
Mukth Bharath, NSSK and the various nutrition support
programs. I humbly request our strong force of 35,000 IAP
members to continue to remain socially committed in all these
realms of public health and augment the Government
programs in your own regions.

In this digital era, we propose to set up an online
Member Benefits Portal, which will be giant stride in
organization and profession development. A wide range of
Member Benefits are envisioned in this portal, the most
significant of which will be the QR Code based digital ID
Cards, the PeD card, which apart from providing IAP
identity, will privilege the members for loyalty services from
many renowned service providers. I am sure, all these will
result in a complete transformation of our organization
functioning and make IAP more member and branch
friendly.

Friends, academics is our forte. Keeping pace with new
developments and recapping the basics is vital to optimal
patient care. To this end, we have formulated the Standard
Treatment Guidelines in Pediatric Office Practice. We have
started releasing guidelines on one common pediatric illness
every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from January 1,
2022 Academy year. I am proud that the STG Team has
been on the dot and as of today, we have been able to
publish 33 guidelines in the last 11 weeks. Parallelly, we
have 12 physical modules including the ambitious ECD-
Early Childhood Program and 5 virtual academic modules
already lined up for the year, with 8 TOTs happening at
Noida itself with PEDICON. The 300 workshops on TB
eradication planned in next two years is a reflection of our
teenage End TB 2025 project. I assure that all the 340
branches of IAP will have the opportunity to conduct one
or the other of these as district level workshops in physical
real time mode with academic grant from Central IAP Office.

My dear friends, as I stand before you as the President,
I look back and recap my journey of 5½ decades. The
dream of a rustic boy from Kuttanad, the water logged
backwater village of Kerala to come up high in the medical
profession would not have been realistic, but for the vision,
nurturing care and the sacrifices made by my late parents. On
this very special occasion, I offer my respectful prostrations
to my father Shri PG Ramachandran Nair and mother Smt.
Kalyani Amma L, both of whom earnestly desired to see me
as a successful doctor. They even blessed me with a name
with a unique spelling – ‘Remesh’ – which is spelled with an
‘e’ rather than an ‘a’ – and which has raised many an
eyebrow at every occasion I have to spell my name.

In conclusion, I thank every member, friend and colle-
ague who has enabled me to attain this coveted position.
The staff of IAP central office has been most cooperative
and are the pillars of strength to any President. I thank them
all. I have no words to thank my wife Dr. Jayalakshmy and
son Arjun who by themselves have been like co opted IAP
members and were always positive in their thoughts for
IAP, and allowed me to spare much more time and effort for
the organization. My special gratitude to my immediate
colleagues in Pediatrics and management of Apollo Adlux
Hospital, Cochin, especially Medical Director Dr Anil, CEO
Mr Neelkannan, and my colleague, Senior Consultant in
Pediatrics, Dr Saju, for their constant encouragement and
support.

On this occasion, my thoughts go out to my respected
teacher at Government Medical College, Kottayam and IAP
President 2011, Dr TU Sukumaran who handheld me to IAP
2½ decades back, and Dr. MKC Nair and Dr. Sachidananda
Kamath, Past National Presidents of IAP, who ably guided
me at the organizational level. I am very much indebted to
Dr. Santhosh Soans and Dr. Diganth Shastri, who, as my
Presidents, nurtured my organizational aptitude in my
tenure as Honorary Secretary General of CIAP in 2018 and
2019. If I am to come this far as the President of IAP, the
credit should truly be placed at the feet of my Friends at
IAP Kerala who always cared and inspired me by their
warmth and affection.

I am very much thankful to the OB and EB of 2022 for
the whole hearted support in their proactive commitment to
the Academy. My HSG, Dr Vineet Saxena, is my pillar of
support and as always is a perfect task master at the back
office. It is well said that “The best preparation for
tomorrow is doing your best today.” The organizing team
of PEDICON 2022 has strived every day for the last two-
and-a-half years, even in the face of a raging pandemic, to
make today a reality. With this TEAM at the helm, we all are
sure to have the life time toast of an academic, gastro-nomic
and social feast at India Expo Mart, Greater Noida in the
week ahead.

Dears, the Covid pandemic makes it pertinent to reflect
on a famous saying “This too shall pass.” Life is like a road,
there are bumps, cracks, U turns, road blocks, but the only
important thing is life goes on. I end by quoting the
Chandogya Upanishad:

\[
yovaibhumâ, tatsuhaC, nãlpesukhamasti,
bhûmaivasukha Chhûmâtvevavijijãsitavyaiti
\]
“There is no joy in the finite; there is joy only in the infinite.”

Friends, we have been through the terrible experience of a Pandemic. It was a situation of despair and no hope, yet life is now returning to normal. Let us all orient ourselves to this healing process of humanity and contribute our mite to the emerging world of peace and prosperity for all. I wish you all a safe, healthy and most enjoyable post-COVID era coming up. I will and shall always remain as your humble servant and friend in IAP!

Jai Hind! Jai IAP!

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