

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

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Honorable Chief Guest – Respected Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Sir; Worthy Guest of Honor Dr Dilip Mahalanabis, Esteemed office bearers of Indian Academy of Pediatrics (IAP) on the Dias – Executive Board members, Office bearers of different state and city branches, Distinguished guests of the evening – including President of American Academy of Pediatrics Dr Thomas McInerney, National Neonatology Forum President-elect Dr Ajay Gambhir, Respected Past presidents of IAP, Honorable teachers of Pediatrics, Dearest members of the Academy, Guests from SAARC countries, Dear delegates and PG students, Friends from Media, Ladies and gentlemen: It is my profound privilege to welcome you all to this 50th Conference of Indian Academy of Pediatrics (IAP) – The Golden Jubilee PEDICON.

Indian Academy of Pediatrics is relentlessly working for the children of this nation for last 50 years and I am proud to say it has contributed immensely to bring down the infant mortality rate of the country from 144 in the year of its inception to only 44 per 1000 live births after a long struggle. This is a momentous and proud occasion for all of us and I am thankful to you all for being here to share this joy and happiness. I take the privilege of welcoming and honoring the revered guests of the evening Dr APJ Abdul Kalam and Dr Dilip Mahalanabis, on behalf of more than 20,000 members of Indian Academy of Pediatrics. Let us all give them a big hand.

Friends, at the outset, I would love to express my deepest gratitude to every member of IAP for reposing faith in me by electing me to the highest post of the Academy in its Golden Jubilee Year. This has given me a chance to march towards my dreams for children of India – which I have been cherishing since last 25 years.

I pay my thanks to almighty to award me an opportunity to address Honorable *Bharat Ratna* Shri APJ Abdul Kalam sir an institution in himself and affectionately known as “the people’s president” or “missile man of India.” You just cannot guess my

pleasure of occupying a seat next to a man who has more national and international awards than counting the ridges you have in fingers of your both hands. Amazingly, his journey is still on. Friends – stirred by presence of Dr Kalam Sir – I appeal you all that let us emerge as the strongest partner of Government of India in all child related programs and policies. Let us all strive hard to behave like a true advocate of child population – let Indian children recognize us as their own body – dedicated to their welfare, ensuring them justice and safe, quality life. Remember, that by definition, child means 0-18 years of age – so we have to take care of every child from birth till the end of adolescent period.

WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED SO FAR?

We are celebrating our golden jubilee – the small plant roped in 1963 by our 169 seniors from the entire country under guidance of “Father of Indian Pediatrics” Dr George Coelho. Today it is a full grown very healthy tree carrying 21,000 leaves, 328 small branches, 42 strong (state) branches and three offshoots – like a Banyan tree. Sir, we are always focussed on our goals. We have contributed our bit in bringing zero polio status to India, promoting ORS and zinc, strengthening routine immunization, working for child rights, caring for the newborn and ensuring first effective breath for every newborn through NRP FGM Project, and caring for adolescent health. There has been progress in overall indicators: IMR is down, child survival is up, literacy rates have improved and school dropout rates have fallen. We have always been surging ahead for providing updated knowledge and skills to our fellow members who are serving deep in inaccessible areas. However, still the decline in neonatal mortality rate (NMR) is very slow and early NMR is almost stagnant. Though progress has been made but it is distributed unequally.

Sir, now I would like to have your attention to peep into some of our future plans.

IAP ACTION PLAN 2013

IAP, as a community of pediatricians, has been, and will

continue its three pronged strategy of targeting child health care:

- Firstly to, target the community as a whole. To sensitize them towards the growing and changing needs of the children of today;
- Secondly we shall be targeting the children directly; and
- Lastly, we shall continue to target our fellow pediatricians by updating them with the recent researches and motivating them to settle for nothing but the best for the children.

This has been the motive of year 2013 Action Plan. Considering success stories and still deficient areas, IAP has set certain targets for us through various national programs. We may best have a bird's eye view of them:

1. IAP Mission Uday: For Better Child Survival

It is demoralizing to note that nearly 76 lac children are likely to die globally this year before they reach their 5th birthday, and out of them 17 lac are estimated to be contributed by India alone. Sadly, most of these deaths are due to causes that are preventable. With your help, IAP wishes to send a passionate message to world leaders:

No child should die from preventable causes, and we must give every child the best possible start in life, bring equity and quality in Child Care, and above all now the time has reached when we should start talking about not only child survival but quality of life and development.

Friends, we have enough manpower, technical resources, vision and think tanks. We wish to hit targets in prescribed time frame of 3 years for **Mission Uday**. I appeal to all concerned government offices and departments, all global and local NGOs and all individuals to join us financially and logistically to succeed in this pious mission.

2. IAP Mission Kishore Uday

With more than one-third of its population below 18 years, India has the largest young population in the world. Adolescent health could not get due recognition because of a single belief which is not correct to a large extent...that this age is the healthiest age forgetting that mental and psychological issues are also part of human health. They might be healthy organically but data related to suicide, depression and anxiety, AIDS, obesity, sex abuse, drug abuse, school drop outs, early marriages, drunken driving, and road accidents are alarming and require to be worked on. *Damini* taught us many lessons

– we will have to protect and nurture our adolescents in such a way that they do not harm themselves and let nobody harm them. Mission “*Kishore Uday*” is aimed at that.

3. Preventing Neonatal Deaths–IAP NRP-FGM (Neonatal Resuscitation Program - First Golden Minute)

It is our prestigious project that addresses neonatal care both basic and advanced. I am happy to say that today this project has assumed to be the biggest child survival project of world. World class Advanced NRP training has been developed by the team NRP India – and we are soon going to have its kick start in this year. Basic NRP will continue but with more vigor and enthusiasm. The contributions especially of Dr Naveen Thacker, Dr Panna Choudhary and Dr Vineet Saxena in bringing it to its present stature deserve mention.

4. Other Programs

We are going to launch 4 other community awareness programs, namely: Anemia control and Prevention – to prevent anemia; BLS for health care personnel and mass awareness – making Basic Life Support – the CPR more popular; Media Training – to equip us for dealing media appropriately; and Help Line – for answering the queries of parents and teens. For our Fellow Members, we will be launching the following programs:

- a) ACPP (Acute Care Management for Practicing Pediatricians) – for updating skills in acute care management of level II care;
- b) GEM – to teach beyond PALS and emergencies in office practice;
- c) IAP TOUCH (Training of Untrained Child Health workers) – For paramedics;
- d) Info Vac – For updating knowledge and answering queries of members of academy immediately;
- e) Doctors Indemnity – professional insurance scheme for Pediatricians;
- f) Making e-learning and telemedicine possible; and
- g) *Child India* – our new e-news bulletin – another dream project – I am so happy that the first issue is being released today.

Apart from these I am also committed to continue all those projects which have been widely acclaimed by the members – we intend to bring a new flavor to them.

I welcome you all for the *Golden Jubilee Dream Run* – scheduled tomorrow – with a slogan to *Prevent Teen Suicide* in world's Teen Suicide Capital West Bengal –

carries a special meaning.

We intend to organize a big Candle march on India Gate, Delhi – for bringing awareness on child Survival on children's day the November 14th 2013.

We also intend to organize Pneumonia workshops in different cities.

We intend to develop more Public Private Models – started in Gurgaon Pedicon by Dr MP Jain.

IDSurv will be strengthened and will make it mandatory for each member to register cases in it.

Under **Golden Jubilee Celebrations** we have many programs for various branches. Government of India has agreed to get a Postal Stamp released in February.

We have brought certain changes in Pedicon this year – democratic selection of speakers, one speaker – one session, free registration for faculty members of main conference, un-interfering science in Pedicon, Names of halls – on the name of senior members of IAP from each zone. This could not have been possible without the untiring efforts of Dr Piyush Gupta coupled with our HSG Dr Sailesh Gupta and Pedicon team headed by Dr R Kundu and Dr Jaydeep Choudhury.

I am sure, you will appreciate the new web management in IAP – new structure and design of our new website – loaded with plethora of feature – it is already on from today.

We intend to have frequent audio and video conferencing among OB and EB members from this year. We will also take necessary steps to reduce office expenditure.

Every office bearer and member of the Committee of Immunization shall abide by code of conduct and will sign a document of conflict of interest.

I am committed to make - Awesome the sponsor free, banquet free Pedicons more popular and spread it to all zones.

आपके द्वारा प्रतिपादित हर कार्यक्रम महत्वहीन है, अगर उसमें आपकी सक्रिय भागीदारी नहीं है। दोस्तो, हमने बहुत कुछ पा लिया है पर अभी बहुत काम बाकी है। हालात बेकाबू नहीं हैं। अपने मित्रों के साथ अपने संवाद तंत्रा को और अधिक सुदृढ़ बनाना है।

गाँव के अंतिम सिरे पर सेवा में संलग्न बाल रोग विशेषज्ञ से सीधे संवाद करने की प्रक्रिया को और सरल बनाना है। हर किशोर के मन में उसके अंतरंग मित्र होने की छवि स्थापित करनी है, ताकि बाहर से मजबूत दिखते युवा भावनात्मक स्तर पर उतने ही मजबूत हों। मानसिक उथल-पुथल की स्थितियां उनमें दिशाभ्रम पैदा न करें, राष्ट्र का भविष्य डगमगाता और लड़खड़ाता सा चलता न दिखे। युवाओं की जो संख्या हमारी उत्पादकता की शक्ति बन सकती है वह हमारे विघटन का कारण न बने।

I want to make a special note here about the immunization practices in our country. I want to stress the point that our vaccination protocols and recommendation should be science and resource based. The process of recommendations shall be absolutely free of conflict of interests and transparent. We should not make vaccination a lucrative business but should make it a great tool to prevent child mortality – improving the coverage. We also have to look into the matter of the huge discrepancy in the price of various vaccines being sold in the Indian market and the GAVI rates of same vaccines – we should ensure that the same prices are applicable to Indian market. I personally believe– we should promote indigenous vaccines.

A special mention about our postgraduates over here – they are the future of pediatrics and we need to nurture them continually as we were doing in past. We will be initiating few encouraging steps – like best thesis award, a research topic bank, workshops for thesis writing and we will work to bring uniformity in training PG students.

In the end friends, I would like to congratulate our entire fraternity for this Golden Jubilee year of IAP. Completing 50 years has been a long, tiring, rewarding and a well traversed journey.

Come!! Let us all join hands to take a pledge in front of an inspiring personality; His Excellency Dr Kalam – that we will not be associated with these programs just formally but emotionally – giving our 100 per cent to them. We should understand and believe religiously that HE has made ONLY us and ONLY we are responsible for the Health of Children, to ensure the future health of Nation. We should also realize if not we who else can do it – no one... no one ... We have to it ... We will do it.

Jai IAP – Jai Hind