NATCON 2019
94th National Annual Conference and
80th Annual Meeting of Central Council
Indian Medical Association

Presidential Address

Dr. Rajan Sharma
Honorables Chief Guest, Immediate Past President Dr. Santanu Sen, respected Elders, my colleagues and friends, it's my privilege to stand before you as the National President of Indian Medical Association. My special thanks to our leader Dr. Ketan Desai for giving me this opportunity to serve the Association. With a deep sense of humility, I thank you all for reposing your confidence in me to lead the medical fraternity of India. I hope I will be able to meet your expectations in carrying out the responsibilities bestowed upon me with your kind support and cooperation.

I would like to reiterate and stand by the original resolution of IMA passed 91 years ago on this day which says – **IMA is formed with the objective of looking after the interest of Medical Education, Public Health and Medical Profession in India.**

Whereas, I will be taking forward all the good work done by my predecessors to the logical conclusion, the following important activities will be taken up on priorities:

**Violence against Doctors, Health Care workers and Clinical Establishments:**
IMA is viewing with lot of concern on the increasing violence against doctors, health workers and clinical establishments. Many a time it is lack of basic facilities in the government hospitals which trigger such episodes and junior doctors become a victim of this dissatisfaction of the patients to lack of common facilities. It is distressing to note that intellectuals, professionals, public, police or judiciary are reluctant to criticize on such uncivilized and heinous crime. Even in a war zone hospitals are a protected zone. When a hospital is attacked not only the concerned health worker is attacked but the whole patients in the hospital are psychologically and physically affected and the care of these patients are also affected. About 19 states in our country have hospital protection act, but their effective implementation is affected due to a lack of specific rules in the police manual and specific section in CrPC which can only be done by central act. IMA demands that a central act should be enacted at the earliest. IMA also demands that hospitals are declared as protected zone. IMA also declares hospitals as **Zero Tolerance Zone.**

**Health Policy of the Government of India and National Medical Commission Act:**
The Government of India has made an undeclared serious deviation in the health policy of our country. IMA is very much distressed that these fundamental changes will lower the standard of medical education and affect patient safety and health delivery.

Way back in 1946 Sir John Bhore committee recommended that MBBS should be the minimum qualification to practice and prescribe modern medicine. The committee also recommended a three-tier health delivery system. IN 1956 these fundamental principles were incorporated in the medical council of India act. Unfortunately, through section 32, 50 and 51 of National Medical Commission Act Government is implementing middle level practitioners and Ayush doctors with bridge courses to practice modern medicine at sub center, and PSC level. These middle level practitioners will also be allowed to practice even at higher level hospitals. That means primary health care which forms 60% of health needs of public will be taken care of by these
unqualified and improperly trained persons. This will in effect discriminate the rural public and deny them the fundamental right for health. IMA is deeply concerned about the patient safety if this is going to be implemented. The standard of medical education will also be affected if various sections of the NMC act regarding medical education are implemented.

Current projected increments in healthcare GDP is much below requirement. IMA appeals the Govt. to increase healthcare GDP without further delay. IMA also appeals for tax subsidy for healthcare providers and professionals. A special healthcare zones for private small and medium size hospitals needs to be created like Special Economic Zone

**National Education Policy:**
National education policy vis-a-vis medical education is also a matter of concern to IMA. By introducing common syllabi and curriculum for three years for all streams of medical systems and providing provision for lateral entry, is going to promote unscientific mixing of various systems of medicines. Under the excuse of outdated syllabi, institutional powers to decide/change their own syllabi will harm the quality. Teaching medical students, the basic principles of various systems of medicines which are different and contradictory will help only in confusing them. NEP overlooks the natural, rational and visionary sides of education policy needs. The requisites in the NEP are replace by many unwarranted, harmful inclusion.

**Allied Health Professionals Council:**
IMA welcomes formation of paramedical council/ Allied health professionals council to regulate standards of education of paramedical courses and for maintenance of registry for qualified paramedical personal. But IMA is definitely against allowing paramedical personals like Physiotherapist, occupational therapists, optometrists, Clinical psychologist, speech therapists etc. being given independent authority to practice their own area without doctor's supervision.

**Proposed Amendment to Schedule K of Drugs and Cosmetic Act:**
The health ministry is amending schedule K of drugs and cosmetic act to allow various categories of health care workers and middle level practitioners to prescribe modern medicine without supervision. The drugs and cosmetic act permit as of now only pharmacists and single man clinic doctors to dispense medicine. Allowing various categories of health care workers and middle level practitioners who are not qualified enough to prescribe and dispense modern medicine without supervision will greatly affect the patient safety. IMA demands that such amendments of schedule K of drugs and cosmetic act should be withdrawn.

**Ayushman Bharat:**
IMA welcomes the concept of free health care particularly to the people below the poverty line. Although the objective is laudable, the means to attain the goal through health insurance is not a practicable one. The health insurance model is a failed model even in countries like USA. Ayushman Bharat scheme doesn't cover OP treatment. Under the Ayushman Bharat scheme there is provision for private health insurance agency as an intermediary and their service charge is 15% of total budget, even in USA the private health insurance agency is paid 5% of the total budget. One is left to wonder whether the scheme is meant to support the private agency or public health. It is irrational to include Government health institutions under the scheme since Government clinical establishments can be directly funded rather than after paying private insurance agencies for service charges.

The package rates for procedures are very low and financially unsustainable to private medical institutions. IMA demands that Government clinical establishment should be excluded from this program and should be funded directly for completely free treatment, the package rates should be revised to make it financially viable to the private medical sector.

**Formation of National Medical Cadre:**
IMA supports the concept of Indian Medical Services at par with others All India Services and have uniform medical cadre across the country.

**Academic wings of IMA:**
IMA has College of General Practitioners, Academy of Medical Specialists and AKN Sinha institute of medical sciences as academic wings. There is considerable overlap in the courses conducted by these wings. None of these courses are recognized
by any University, National board of examination or Medical council of India. An effort will be made to restructure these courses to suite the requirement of the members of various wings. The topics will be decided, the syllabi will be accordingly modified and the duration of the course and fee will be uniform. An attempt will be made to get the courses recognized as post diplomas by appropriate bodies.

**Investing in Next Gen:**
Medical Students' Network and Junior Doctors' Wing are very important resourceful strength of our organization. We appreciate the initiative taken by MSN & JDN in fighting against draconian laws of Govt. and further disseminating the view points of IMA through Awaken India and Suno Bharat program in different medical colleges. IMA would like to work hard to bring the younger generation in the main stream.

**Healthcare Accreditation:**
Quality of Patient Care Services is important, but making a pre requisite of Healthcare Accreditation by insurance agencies will be a huge roadblock for rendering healthcare services in small and mid size towns. In my view, smaller and single doctor clinical setups need to be exempted from the basic requirements of Healthcare Accreditation. As we are aware, we are facing problem in implementing parts of BMW Management Rules such as ETP / STP /Fire safety etc. which are being forced upon us with retrospective effect. Even healthcare establishments which are running in the tribal and hilly areas are not spread. This will only increase the establishment cost in providing healthcare services.

**Awareness, Information and Communication:**
We cannot run away from the fact of the current era of effective communications with the patients and relatives which is their right. Always spend time explaining the outcome of the treatment and greet the patient with the smile showing empathy and sympathy. Complications if any should be owned and we should be seen with the patients. The current scenario of increasing of violence which is being propitiated on us has many dimensions. Lack of planning and inadequate budgetary provisions for health by the successive governments has worsened the situation. The system of CHCs, PHCs, Urban health Centers and secondary care hospitals was a well thought out plan but, we failed to create required infrastructure - residential accomodations for doctors and staff, diagnostic facilities and basic amenities like water and electricity. In today’s scenario the healthcare authorities want everything to be delivered by us through the so called insurance schemes. The schemes are loss making and ultimately we are the ones to face the brunt as in cases of CGHS, ECHS, AYUSHMAN BHARAT and the previous RSBY schemes.

**The Theme** of this year will be:

**“Protect the Single and Couple Doctor Setups”**

In conclusion, I want all my brethren and their family members to be healthy and stress free and should take out quality time for the family and find ways and means to be stressed free. Further, I appeal all my fraternity members to remain undisturbed by unwanted rumors spread through social media on activities of IMA and their members. IMA will make all possible efforts to reach out and disseminate the messages through our leaders. CWC members, CC Members state branches and local branches. I sincerely thank Dr. Santanu Sen, Immediate Past National President, IMA, Dr. R V Asokan, Honorary Secretary General, IMA, Office Bearers of IMA Headquarters, Schemes and Wings and all the Staff of IMA Headquarters for supporting me in last One Year for my active participation as National President (Elect) and I expect the similar cooperation in the ensuing year.

Thanking you for your penitent hearing
Know your President

Dr. Rajan Sharma is a renowned Orthopaedic Surgeon from Yamuna Nagar (Haryana). He runs 30 bedded “Rajan Hospital” and also a Nursing College (Dr. J.P. Sharma Memorial College of Nursing) in Yamuna Nagar.

Academics:
- MBBS from Dayanand Medical College and Hospital, Ludhiana
- MS (Ortho) from Dayanand Medical College and Hospital, Ludhiana

Clinical Experience:
Senior Resident in PGIMER Chandigarh
Other Credentials
- 7 International Publications
- Paul Harris Rotarion
- Rotary Medical Mission Director to Rwanda, Gabon, Cameroon, Zimbabwe etc.

Dr. Rajan Sharma is a member of IMA since 1999 and since then he has served the Association as Member of IMA CWC, President of IMA Jagadhri - Yamunanagar Branch in 2006-07 President of Haryana State Branch for more than Two years from 2011-March 2013. During his tenure as President, he was able to revive the state IMA and helped it achieve new heights. He was a member of IMA-CWC for many years. He was Director of IMA AKN Sinha Institute of Medical Sciences. He was a member of IMA HBI in 2016. Now he is the National President Elect for 2019-20. He is the Coordinator of Beti Bachao Programme of North Zone.

Since 1999 onwards, he started taking pro-active initiatives in the working of IMA Haryana State Branch. He is involved in many social activities apart from medical practice. Due to his active involvement following achievements were possible:
- Haryana is the only state where Exemption from Clinical Establishment Act has been granted to Hospitals less than fifty beds.
- Haryana is one of the few states where a District Medical Negligence Board has been constituted thus ending the terror of Police Complaint and arrest in Negligence cases. Haryana was the third state Where an Act for violence against Doctors came into existence. These achievements have come with the ongoing efforts of successive teams but the foundations were laid during his tenure as State President.

Family:
Father : Late Dr. J. P. Sharma
Mother : Smt. Krishna Pandit, Former Minister in Govt. of Haryana
Wife : Dr. Meenakshi Sharma, Obstetrician and Gynaecologist
Daughters : Ms. Tanya, Pursuing Masters in Fashion Design
            Ms. Riya, Medical student 2nd year

To maintain the Honour and Dignity and to uphold the interest of medical profession and to promote cooperation amongst members and fight against the Doctor Unfriendly policies of the administration are amongst his priorities.

His Baptism in IMA started in his early age when his father Late Sh. J P Sharma led the Local IMA, IMA Haryana State (1977-78) and later had organized Medicon 1989 in Yamuna Nagar. He was also National Vice President IMA Head Quarters.
“RECONNECT, REJUVENATE AND RESOLVE”
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