

Presidential Address

Modern Technology for Obstetrics and Gynecology



Behram S. Anklesaria

Chief Guest Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Honourable Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, dignitaries on the dias and my fellow FOGSIANS,

I apologise for being the first male FOGSI President after three consecutive lady Presidents! Let me first introduce you to your new team: Vice-Presidents Dr. Sanjay Gupte, Dr. Neera Aggrawal and Dr. Purna C. Mohapatra make a great combination of academics and practicality. The secretariat headed by Dr. C. N. Purandare includes dedicated Fogsians, Dr. P. K. Shah, Dr. Nozer Sheriar and Dr. Rajesh Soneji. But the most important member of the team is Dr. Sadhna Desai, who has just finished a triumphant year as FOGSI President. Madam, without your blessings and active involvement, we will not be able to function this year. Looking forward, we seek the closest association with my very dear friend, President elect Dr. Shyam Desai who has promised to complete tasks left incomplete by our own inadequacies.

Tributes

My first duty as your President is to pay homage to the legendary men and women who have preceded me, whose great names can now be seen on your video screens. Contemplating their achievements, I am filled with a sense of deep humility at my own deficiencies. Among my FOGSI teachers, I pay my utmost respects to Dr. Nurgesh Motashwaw, Dr. Shirish Sheth, Dr. Usha Krishna, Dr. V. N. Purandare, Dr. Rustom Sonawalla, Dr. R. M. Nadkarni, Dr. Rohit Bhatt and Dr. R. D. Pandit. Among the doyens of FOGSI attending this session, I salute Dr. Mahendra Parikh, Dr. S. N. Daftary, Dr. C. S. Dawn, Dr. Dasgupta, Dr. Vasant Patwardhan, Dr. Rajan, Dr. Kamal Buckshee and last but certainly not the least Dr. D. K. Tank.

Among my recent predecessors, I warmly greet Dr. Alokendu Chatterjee, Dr. Kamini Rao, Dr. Usha Saraiya and Dr. Mehroo Hansotia, under whom I was privileged to serve as Sr. Vice President.

The AICOG Story

Eight and sixty years ago, a few very special men and women gathered together, to dedicate themselves to the noblest of all causes, the cause of Women's Health. Meeting at the city of Chennai, then known as Madras, under the leadership of our revered first president, they called themselves the first All India Congress of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

And today, eight and sixty years later, here we are, at our 47th AICOG, gathering together in our largest ever numbers at the city of the Taj. In just eight and sixty years and how our speciality has changed! Just sixty eight years and our entire country has been transformed!

MTOG (Modern Technology for Obstetrics and Gynecology)

There is no doubt that a large measure of credit for this transformation goes to the introduction of revolutionary modern technology in our field. For the year 2004, the year of MTOG, I would like FOGSI to spotlight and to reevaluate the dramatic changes that MTOG has brought to our field and to our country. A country may be transformed, but *humanity* can truly benefit, only if modern technology benefits the poorest of the poor. Technology is not meant to be restricted only to those few who can afford it. Scientific advances are not made to be used only by society's pampered elite, It is in this spirit that I give you FOGSI's theme for the year: "MODERN TECHNOLOGY FOR UNDERPRIVILEGED WOMEN."

FOGSI is today India's largest medical speciality body. We have 172 vibrant Societies and over eighteen thousand active members. I give them this clarion call: Let each society organize programs this year that focus on relevant and affordable forms of MTOG that would uplift the weaker sections of our population. The "popular triad" (Endoscopy, Imaging Sciences and ART) of MTOG has many takers. But what about the STDs and the new AIDS vaccine in our country? I know this project is close to the heart of our Chief Guest. What about menopause medicine, hemoglobinopathies and

stem cell research ? What about communication and transport technology for saving the lives of mothers facing obstetric emergencies in remote rural areas ?

Modern Technology for Scientific Communication

I congratulate Dr. Narendra Malhotra and his entire team for organizing the largest and one of the best FOGSI conferences ever to be held in our country. Agra inspires us to move one step further from the city based conferences. Imagine a conference where all 172 FOGSI societies are linked together like one family under one roof – a satellite roof of course! That is exactly what we plan to do on October 30-31, 2004, for our National conference on MTOG. And how much would delegates have to travel to attend this conference ? The few kilometers that takes them to their own local society premises ! These two days, Ahmedabad will UPLINK our first Totally Satellite Relayed Conference (TOTSATRELCO). This interactive event will be available for DOWNLINKING to all 172 FOGSI societies. Welcome to your own homes. All India delegates !

The FOGSI Family

The FOGSI Fraternity Insurance Scheme to be launched this year is yet another attempt to bring the family spirit to our Federation. Is FOGSI really one family? Personally I can claim blood ties to FOGSI, since I am the unworthy son of our very worthy 15th FOGSI President, Dr. S. B. Anklesaria. And what about friendship? Whenever I have visited your societies and your homes, wherever you may be in India, you have always made me feel part of your family. I am deeply grateful. This is all part of FOGSI being one family. Yet there is still more to being a family, over and above blood ties and friendship – let me explain.

Women and mothers

Follow any religion or study any philosophy you will find one eternal truth, dressed up in different languages. A society is judged according to the status it gives to women. *अत्र ना-म्नु पूजन्ते गमन्ते तत्र देवता।* Where women are worshiped, the Gods are happy. The highest physical, physiological and psychological role that a human being can attain is the role of Motherhood. God cannot be in all places and at all times, so he made Mothers. My fellow Fogsians, verily I say unto you that we are truly one family, not because of blood ties, not because of friendship but because we all share the unique privilege of serving Women and Mothers in their hours of greatest need !

At this juncture I want all of you here to pause for a moment and remember your own Mother, as I remember my mother and all that I owe her. And I want all the men here, to take time out to love and appreciate the mother of their children, as I love and appreciate the mother of my children !

FOGSI Jammu and Kashmir Academic Initiative

And what about the mother all of us, Mother India. We are all her children. Can we as Fogsians not do something for her ? FOGSI with its academic and scientific outlook, the vast spread of her members – this FOGSI can be a great instrument of National Integration. Accordingly, with your help we can formulate a FOGSI Academic Initiative for the region of Jammu and Kashmir where our brothers and sisters need our help the most. I am confident every FOGSI Committee will organize at least one program in this region, which is so close to our hearts. But you may question about security. Let me tell you that along with close friends, Bhargav Patel, Rajesh Soneji and Vice President P.C. Mohapatra, I have visited Jammu and Srinagar Societies as recently as 12th to 15th December, 2003. As you can see from some of the pictures on your video screen, we found not insecurity, but warmth and enthusiasm. Just four days ago there was a militant attack on Jammu railway station. Yet there are many brave members in the audience today who have come here from Srinagar and also from that same Jammu railway station. These members and fellow professionals are keen to rejoin the academic and social mainstream. Let us extend our hands and help them do so. We would be performing a great service to them, to ourselves and to the Nation.

Paraphrasing John Kennedy

*My fellow FOGSIANS,
Ask not what FOGSI can do for you,
Ask what you can do for FOGSI
And our country, men and women,*

Ask not what Doctors can do for you,

*Ask what we, - Doctors and Citizens, as partners
Can together do, for all Humanity.
We bow to the Mother - Vande Mataram !
Long Live Women's Health !
Long Live Fogsi !
Jai Bharat Mata !*

Agra
6th January, 2004.