

Text of the speech for the Central Working Committee meeting of IMA at Chennai

Ladies & Gentlemen,

When I am addressing this learned gathering I need to explicitly put across that I am filled to my brim with emotions of unending gratitude and beyond the expression of thankfulness. It is this essence which is pervading me in all its flavor and glamour alike. The onus and responsibility that destiny has accrued on my shoulders by virtue of my taking over the reins of the august Presidency of the premier World Medical Association would be carried out exclusively on the sole strength of your solidarity, trust and faith in me.

It is true that nothing comes in life easily and handily as the dictum goes that “the swimming qualities are tested exclusively in deep and not shallow waters”. Accordingly, one has to venture in with all strength and commitment at his disposal to accomplish the goal that he has set out for himself. This mandatorily needs a blind focus, a chiseled concentration, acute determination, bountiful of devotion and unassailable dedication. It is not only a test of endurance but what is realistically tested in my understanding is one’s persistence, perseverance, and pursuance. It is this trinity which has a magic wand in itself which realistically not only makes things move but also shape and guides them to the desired destination.

Let me admit vociferously without any “ifs” and “buts” that larger goals are not attained in a single flight out of singular efforts. It needs stout shoulders to balance, willing hands to hold, comforting hearts to

accommodate and committed intellect through counsel and guidance to carry through. I have to admit unconditionally that I had the benefit of all these boons in grossest possible abundance. This realization is not new or nascent for me. I have always harbored your solidarity as my most enviable asset because I knew for sure that it was borne out of sheer faith and trust blended in one which can make one steer through the most toughest of time and turbulent weather.

At this juncture I am reminded of a small tale that I had read through in my adolescence. It is all about a river originating as a small outlet from a difficult mountain and upon coming out of it think that it has dispensed its greatest task by traversing through the same. But then she finds equally another difficult mountain to tackle through. She tides over the same but that is not the end of her flowing path. She comes across yet another tougher mountain to tide over. She grapples and makes a way and then finally flowing through her path meets her ultimate destination where she is required to merge in the mighty ocean. The material question is that an originating river is not meant only to traverse and tide over the difficult path, because in finality it has to end up in the ocean as its ultimate destined design.

The moral of the story has been the real backbone in my mind to take up causes, their pursuits, mitigating challenges and finally bringing into fold the desired and destined goal. Tiding over one difficulty does not mean the end of the road. There are many more in the path, may be, countless in nature and endless in character. No journey or voyage is easy and handy. It is full of challenges, difficulties which need to be tackled and surmounted to carry oneself to his desired goal. You cannot endlessly wait for the difficulties to melt away and wither out on their own. On the contrary they need to be dealt with an iron will

and determination of steel. Frankly speaking, it is the challenges on the path which make the voyage not only meaningful but purposive as well. The same has been aptly and vividly brought out by Hindi Poet in a beautiful verse

tkS vfMx jgrk gS [kM+k rwQku esa cjlkr esaA

ogh rkjk VwV tkrk gS “kjn dh jkr esaAA

eqDr thou dh çxfr Hkh }Un esa l;?kkr esaA

Qwy dk;Vksa esa f[kyk Fkk] lSt ij eqj>k x;kAA

I feel duty bound to bring to fore that in this sturdy journey the well meaning friends and office bearers of Indian Medical Association stood with me with all at their disposal like the rock of Gibraltar. This I do not take as something which I deserve or sincerely desired. I always felt and believed and now I committedly uphold that such friends and such solidarity is only out of what in Indian philosophy is designated as a part of “Prabrah” of your life accumulated for you out of your “Sanchit Punya”. My faith in this philosophical dictum has strengthened very deeply by virtue of the experience that I need to uphold in all its majesty all my life.

This has also added to our existing responsibility because now we are to carry the mantle for a larger global cause. The key principle issues which I delineated in my address to the global assembly pertained to professional autonomy which is under threat and needed to be upheld at all costs. Likewise, protection and insulation to the professionals in diligent dispensation of their duties at all places and at all times was mandatory and should be evoked in all forms and format by all concerned. The professional practice has to be free from all types of

kickbacks and other impressible pollutions and perversions. The right to health accruable to a global citizen needs to be evoked against the gross inequities that plague the world as of now.

One of the significant suggestion which was brought out for the consideration of the global assembly was that “on the lines of the world peace keeping force” a “world health keeping force” needs to be evolved by all the national medical associations acting in unison so as to provide a meaningful contingent of pooled professionals who would rise to the occasion to cater to the larger humane cause of rendering helping and healing touch in any contingency in any part of the globe.

In diligent dispensation of my duties and responsibilities as the President of World Medical Association I would need help, support, counsel, guidance from all of you from time to time which I am sure will come to me freely and handily. However, I would like to reiterate my commitment to my brethren that my sole endeavour would be catering to the professional cause ensuring its esteem, prestige, honour and dignity at all costs. I pray Almighty to bestow that courage on me which would enable me to carry my responsibility in the desired mode and manner with the help and guidance of all my well meaning friends and well wishers.

With a commitment sincerely to uphold the responsibility placed on my shoulders and wanting to endlessly remain indebted to your help and support all my life, I close with sense of gratitude and reverence alike.

Jai Hind