

Editorial

Ushering in the new century

With this issue the *Indian Journal of Medical Research (IJMR)* steps in its new century. It marks an important milestone in the history of *IJMR* as in this very month a hundred years ago *IJMR* was born and with this July 2013 issue being the first issue in 101th year of *IJMR*, it marks the beginning of a new era. The question which has haunted mankind through centuries and made even the greatest of minds of our generation think twice was knocking on our doors, the question staring down at us and asking us, “Will we continue to succeed by rapid improvement in our impact factor and also the levels of satisfaction of Indian biomedical-scientific community?” The centenary highlights included initiating new sections such as Clinical Images, bringing out state-of-art centenary special review articles, the select *IJMR* classics, the most cited articles of the past five decades, all wrapped up in new get-up of the journal. The *IJMR* now begins to breathe the air of its new century, with further improved impact factor (IF) of 2.061, which not only is the highest ever in the history of *IJMR* but the highest among Indian biomedical journals. These are two momentous milestones of *IJMR*, which is now 100 years old with an extended outreach and popularity across the globe. In the last decade though the *IJMR* attained 1+IF which was a very significant achievement but remained between 1.224 and 1.883.

From the time of its very birth, the *IJMR* has covered contemporary original research and even today though with a widened scope, still aggressively promotes original cutting edge research and will continue to do so.

In the early part of the 20th Century *IJMR* came into existence to publish research related to sanitation and prevention of communicable diseases which is

evident in the articles published in the initial volumes of *IJMR*. The first decade of *IJMR* (1913-1922) reflected an intense concern over sanitary problems and related diseases. There were numerous articles published on cholera (by Dr E.D.W. Greig), followed by articles on plague, tuberculosis, kala-azar, *etc.* Also during this decade Dr R. McCarrison published several articles on endemic goitre covering aetiology, epidemiology and treatment. In the next decade (1923-1932) articles on kala-azar, particularly by Dr U.N. Brahmachari and colleagues started pouring in though a large number of articles on cholera and tuberculosis continued to be published. The article on kala-azar by Dr C. Donovan was brought out in the first volume first issue of *IJMR* (July 1913). Hookworm infection was another significant area covered in countless articles published in the second and third decades of *IJMR*. Significantly large numbers of research articles on nutrition, nutritional deficiencies and nutrient contents of food items were published in the next decade. In the ensuing period, there was a transition of focus from infectious diseases to nutrition and related diseases. A series of articles on endemic fluorosis by Dr C.G. Pandit and group was published in 1940. Another significant documentation was Dharmendra's articles on leprosy which started appearing in 1940s. A series of his articles was published in *IJMR* in January 1942 (vol. 30, no.1).

The next decade (1943-1952) exhibits an era of publication scenario dominated by nutrition. During this decade India gained independence in 1947, followed by sad demise of Mahatma Gandhi in January 1948. An obituary (In Memoriam) of Mahatma Gandhi was published in April 1948 issue of *IJMR* (vol. 36, no. 2). Lt. Col. M.L. Ahuja became the first editor of *IJMR* in independent India. Distinguished editors of

IJMR in pre-independence included Brevet Colonel S.R. Christophers, Lt. Col. J. Taylor, Lt. Col. H.W. Mulligan, and Lt. Col. W. J. Webster.

During the next decade (1953-1962) the *IJMR* became a general medical journal in true sense as articles covering a vast area of subjects were published. Though nutrition dominated the scene but several articles on experimental studies involving murine models also appeared. The famous study “Kwashiorker in India” by Drs C. Gopalan and V. Ramalingaswami (the two great Director-Generals of ICMR) appeared in October 1955 (vol. 43, no.4). The next decade (1963-1972) witnessed a surge of articles published in all major fields of medicine. During this decade from 1964 the *IJMR* became a monthly journal and since then the *IJMR* is being brought out in 12 issues a year. In 1913, it was started as a quarterly and in between twice became half-yearly with only two issues a year (in 1940 and then during 1943-1946). During this decade articles were published on different viruses such as dengue, chikungunya, mumps, chandipura, smallpox, *etc.*, as also typhoid and paratyphoid fever. A supplement on Kyasanur Forest Disease was brought out in April 1968.

During 1973-1982 the *IJMR* published articles on diverse fields of biomedical sciences. “Trial of BCG vaccine in south India for tuberculosis prevention” the landmark Tuberculosis Prevention Trial, Madras, was published in September 1979 (vol. 70, no. 3). This trial was simultaneously published in Bulletin World Health Organization also [*Bull World Health Organ* 1979; 57 (5): 819-27]. In July 1980, an *IJMR* supplement was brought out on “Tuberculosis Prevention Trial, Madras”. In April 1981, another supplement on “Domiciliary tuberculosis chemotherapy” was brought out. During this period articles on contraceptive devices started appearing in *IJMR*.

The famous research findings of longitudinal studies of linear physical growth in preterm infants and newborn were published during the next decade (1983-1992). Microbiology, both bacteriology and virology dominated this decade. An article on HTLV-III was published in April 1987 (vol. 85, no. 4) which was perhaps the first article on HIV published from India.

Cancer became the major area during 1993-2002. HIV, hepatitis and other communicable diseases also had a large share. There were review articles published

on re-emergence of malaria, TB and other bacterial pathogens in 1996 (vol. 103, no. 1). The historical 15 year follow up of trial of BCG vaccines was brought out in August 1999 (vol. 110, no. 2). In 2004 the *Journal* started publishing editorials, commentaries and review articles regularly in each issue as also systematic review and meta-analysis, view points, perspectives, and Students’ *IJMR* in addition to original research articles. In the last decade (2003-2012), 11 special issues were brought out on Tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, Leishmaniasis, Sleep medicine, *etc.* Further, keeping in view the changing needs of India special sections were also published on Maternal and Child Health, Cardiovascular Diseases, Haemoglobinopathies, and TB Diagnostics.

During the centenary year, a total of 13 centenary special review articles contributed by renowned experts were published covering mainly India-centric topics with a history of intense research. The major areas covered included HIV, dengue, tropical endomyocardial fibrosis, malaria, leprosy, tuberculosis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, rheumatic fever/rheumatic heart disease, neurolathyrism and emerging & re-emerging diseases in India. The new section on Clinical Images has received a very encouraging response from both the contributors as well as the readers.

The primary aim and emphasis of editors of *IJMR* has always been to promote good quality research, and to narrow down the gap between discoveries in sciences and their dissemination. The *IJMR* has always remained a general medical journal, largely theme based and interdisciplinary, keeping a distance from specialism and continued to cover a wide range of subjects pulling together diverse readers.

The *IJMR* would like to place on record its gratitude to all its editors, editorial board members and reviewers for its success, present status, stability, authority and commitment to promote original research and shall remain focused on its original vision. The *Journal* owes its success to its contributors. Today the *IJMR* reflects the fine research being conducted in India and in other parts of the globe, advances in diagnostics and patients care, the policy issues in health, new guidelines being formulated, and preventive aspects of various diseases. The advancement in technology has given a boost for a wide and fast dissemination of publication. Hard-work

put in by Production and other staff associated with the review and production process also needs to be put on record.

In this next century we intend to move forward with focus of publishing significant original research, new discoveries and new ideas, educative and innovative review articles and other features. The journey of *IJMR* enters new century with the aim to set more milestones

which will undoubtedly bias on non-communicable diseases and hopefully obituaries to many infectious diseases. We are optimistic that the next century in the life of *IJMR* will be known for many new landmarks in the journey of Indian nation to achieve health for all which means the last underprivileged citizen on the landscape of our country.

**V. M. Katoch & Anju Sharma
and team IJMR**