

Press Note No.174

Dt. 24-11-2006

Asia Pacific Dental Federation
Inauguration of International Workshop on Dental Education
Speech of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu,

His Excellency the Governor

Hon'ble K.K.S.S.R. Ramachandran

Mr. David Hopper, Counsel General USA Chennai

Padmabhushan Dr. Anil Kohli, Organizing Chairman, the President
Dental Council of India

Dr. S.M. Balaji, the Organizing Secretary,

Dr. Vetrivendan,

My dear Vice Chancellors; Principals; Professors; invitees from all over
the world and dear friends.

Vanakkam

I am happy that a workshop of this magnitude on Dental Education is being held in India and you have chosen my state and my city to be the host. I extend a warm welcome to one and all to Chennai.

Tamilnadu State enjoys a premier position in health care in the country. Health parameters in the State are among the best in the country. The Government of Tamilnadu is totally committed to provide quality medical facilities at the doorstep of the citizens of the State. All efforts are being made to provide latest medical equipments in the field of medicine through out the State.

In an effort to provide medical care at the doorstep of every citizen the "Varumun Kappom Thittam" has been launched by Government. Under this scheme, comprehensive health check up, treatment and

health education to both rural and urban areas is provided. Medical camps will be conducted at Health sub-centre level every week covering a population of 5000 persons. During these camps, specialist doctors, including dentists will screen beneficiaries for diseases. Treatment is provided at the spot and follow up camps conducted in referral hospitals. The camps under the "Varumun Kappom thittam" will go a long way in improving further the health status of the State.

The research carried out in our Government Dental College shows that 66% of the population of Tamil Nadu suffer from Dental Caries, 88% from Gum Disease and 40% from bite deformity with a number of districts in our state prone to dental flurosis.

In Tamil Nadu there are in total 16 dental colleges. However, the dentist population ratio in the rural areas, is 1:50,000 and therefore we are in need of more dental practitioners in the rural areas.

Towards reducing shortages of dental doctors in rural areas my Government took a policy decision to encourage Dental Colleges in rural areas. So far, we have given permission to start ten new colleges to raise the number of dental health professionals in the state.

In order to distribute the work-force and to reach the rural population, the Tamilnadu Government has decided to appoint dental surgeons in all Taluk hospitals in Tamil Nadu. We have initiated actions to recruit dental surgeons to man these positions.

We have high regards for the Dental Council of India, the statutory body that controls Dental Education in the whole country; we appreciate the way it is being run, in a transparent and efficient manner. We would

like to request Dr. Kohli to render support to the new dental colleges and provide more post graduate seats in Tamilnadu so as to create a pool of specialists in the State. Their support is necessary in upgrading the oral health status of our state and the health status of the country.

I would like to compliment the Dental Council of India and IDA for conducting this International Workshop on Dental Education in association with APDF. As the need of the hour is not only to increase the number of dental professionals but also to introspect and re-focus our strategies to ensure that the very best in Dental Education and clinical practice reaches the common man.

I have great pleasure in inaugurating this conference and wish this conference great success. I hope you will return to your home countries with pleasant memories and a worthwhile report to enhance the standards of dental education globally.

Though I would like very much to be here, till the discussions are over, I am forced to take leave of you all including his Excellency the Governor, as I am little indisposed. Dr. Vetrivendan, who is my personal and popular Dentist, knows this well, as he met me yesterday to remind of today's function.