



# Indian Speech and Hearing Association (ISHA)

Regd. Under the Kamataka Societies Registration Act. Karnataka Act No. 17 Registration No. 25/67-68

## PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Presented by



**MR. K. NARENDIRAN**

**1997, Coimbatore**

Honourable dignitaries, respected teachers, dear colleagues and friends!!

It is a great honour and privilege to be the president of this august body-the Indian Speech and Hearing Association (ISHA). That too, assuming this status in my own place gives me a great joy and a rare distinction. I express my sincere thanks due, to all the members of this association for unanimously selecting me to this high office.

The venue of this conference- Coimbatore is a popular city well known for its industrial and agricultural growth, particularly the textile trade. The secret of this success lies in the cultural blend of both the traditional values and the modernity. In the past, this city has given a solid professional base to many of our colleagues and right now five placements are available to our graduates. I take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to all the branches of the medical faculty, allied professionals, the clinical population and the public for giving us valuable support. I would also like to congratulate the Coimbatore chapter for executing this well-organized conference.

We also know that the skill of communication adds richness to life, meaning to our activities and above all, it gives individuality to mankind. The verbal language existed long before other modes and thus the Vedas the earliest known literature of the human race was handed down to generations without any fault. In those days, perfect transmission of Vedic information was possible mainly because the memory was strong and the tradition was exact. Similar practice was



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also done in pre-historic period by the priests of Europe-the Druids. Such is the greatness of our faculty and we are proud of our chance to work in this area of specialisation.

Thanks to the visionaries who started the organization Speech and Hearing training programme in our country during mid sixties. As the awareness of our profession increased, and also because the demand has been high, many professional training centres have come up in the recent past. To reduce confusion in offering degree with different title names, a common degree like B.Sc., /M.Sc., (Speech and Hearing) in all the speech and hearing training colleges may be contemplated. With the increased output of graduates in our country, right now, there is a heavy completion for post graduate selection. To maintain the uniform standard in selection process, common entrance exam may be thought of. Because of increased information and accumulation of knowledge, specialisation at least in post graduate level may be necessary.

In concurrence to the beginning of professional training, an idea to start a National Association of speech and Hearing was first conceived by Dr. Y.P. Kapur in the year 1966 at Vellore and it came as a reality in the flowing year 1967. Indeed we are grateful to Dr. Y.P. Kapur and other ENT surgeons for nurturing and developing this association although its infancy stage. Its growth is significantly strengthened by the added contribution of other allied professionals. With gratitude, we recognise the sustained efforts and selfless service of all our predecessors and the contemporary colleagues and I sincerely thank them for bringing this association to this level of strong position.

Since our professionals have proved their merit, time and again, our field has spread its professional roots in all directions. At this point, let us recall the honours and credits our friends have gained. For example, our past president Mr. R. Rangasayee, has received the highest honour of our country-the president award. We are very proud of all such members' achievement and congratulate them on their success. Regarding job placements, both the government and the voluntary agencies have created many avenues and positions. I take this opportunity to congratulate my state, the Government of Tamilnadu for taking bold initiative in offering support and help to our graduates right from the beginning. To add another feature in its cap recently the Government of Tamilnadu has directed all its departmental vehicle drives who have crossed 40



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years of age to have a medical check-up including hearing assessment. This again emphasizes the need of our service. Considering the need, awareness & other factors, at this stage at least one facility in each district should be the minimum requirement. Our chances in varied medical departments including ENT, regular education, special education, behaviour sciences set up and in technical/Industrial units should also to be explored.

Schemes on Deafness control, early identification and intervention of speech language and hearing problems etc., may be started at national level to give more job opportunity to our graduates. On this occasion, I would like to state that our Association will come forward to increase the awareness of our field and particularly among Government agencies, Industrialists, and service clubs to create more positions. Mass media should be effectively used by our members to create awareness. By another measure, National Speech and Hearing day may be celebrated on a specific date. I would like to propose April 4<sup>th</sup> for this celebration, because it is the birthday of our association. This day may be marked for mass camps, public lectures, media exploration etc, to popularise our field. Considering the job satisfaction of our professionals, I hear from some people that our graduates are facing a lot of challenges in their professional existence and in gaining a status. At this moment, I would like to say that though specific problems are to be solved by individuals only, a joint effort is needed to meet the genuine challenges to uphold our dignity and rights.

Since updating the professional knowledge becomes very important, we should utilise all the opportunity to attend conference, seminars, symposia, refresher courses and workshop as and when it comes. Though the competence of our graduates are as good as that of western counterparts, closing or reducing time and information gap of our academic system becomes very crucial. To give an international exposure, a conference involving SAARC countries may be planned at least once in few years. State units or regional branches of our association can think of holding mid conference regional meets. If ISHA comes out with the publication of abstract of important journal articles, it will be very useful to many of us.

Our members working in developed countries can form a liaison group to offer help in getting us to know the latest scientific developments and information in our field. In such ways if



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we do not update our knowledge, topics of recent origin like specific language impairment, phonological analysis, Learning disability, written language pathology, swallowing disorders, otoacoustic emission, cochlear implant, speech tracking, gene therapy and genetic tailoring etc, may sound like an alien language. As responsible professionals we should find ways and means to curtail the menace of “Global Noising”.

To maintain the minimum standards in clinical practice, the certification of Rehabilitation council should be made available only to those who are member of ISHA, At any time while representing our profession in strategic committees, either at state or national level, our members should not hesitate to voice their protest to eliminate the decision detrimental to the interest of our field. At the same time, strong initiation and support need to be given to welcome the decision which will enhance our professional image. Having got a moral responsibility to give the best to the community, at a reasonable affordable cost, we should think of effective simple technique including community based rehabilitation programmes.

While technological advancement is taking place at a rapid rate to develop sophisticated new equipment, the existing aids and appliances are also to be refined. In this regard, starting a National institute exclusively devoted to aids and appliances of the disabled population, will be very useful. Manufacturers may also have to focus their attention in developing and producing assistive listening devices, which will be useful for hearing handicapped population.

The strength of our association need to be enhanced further by inducting more members and by increasing financial resources. To increase the financial position, starting a speech and hearing foundation may be thought of, and fellowship may be awarded through that. Speech and hearing manpower corporation as an unit of this foundation can be started to recruit our professionals for foreign assignment as and when asked. Acquiring a land for our Association becomes priority and Mysore may be the preferred place for it.

At this juncture, I wish to say that, let us work hard to consolidate the progress already made. Since much more is to be done, let us march further with an accelerated momentum to enjoy better recognition in the years to come.



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Let us follow the Dictum,

“OFFER SINCERE SERVICE AND  
GAIN DESIRED RECOGNITION”

as the theme of this year. Since we are the strong and sound people who can effectively deal with the silent problems, our strength should be expressed only through our sincere work.

I take this opportunity to promise you that I will work to maintain the dignity and pride of this high office. I wish to conclude my speech by saying that with the unified effort, we can definitely achieve the Nation Building target success of “Health for all in 2000 A.D.”

JAI HIND