

## **Annual Report on Activities of the IACR during the year 2006-2007**

The aim of the Indian Association for Cancer Research (IACR) is to advance research in all the aspects of cancer, promote interaction among scientists in this field and spread awareness about cancer among common people. IACR publishes three issues of 'IACR Newsletter' every year, for the dissemination of information about IACR's activities and the latest scientific developments. This newsletter is sent to more than 600 life members of the association that are spread all over India and overseas as well as annual members and student members. In the year 2006-7, the IACR Newsletter volume 22, no. 2 and 3 were published. Important topics like proteasome - machinery and microtubule dynamics in cell division and death were addressed by Dr. A. Bagwe, Guest Editor of the newsletter and her editorial team. In 2007, Dr. Prabhudas Patel has taken over the responsibilities as the Editor. Dr. Patel and his editorial team have published vol. 23, no.1. Eminent scientists contributed articles in all these Newsletter issues and provided the latest information to the reader.

The IACR has instituted a number of awards for students and young scientists. These awards have been instituted from generous donations. Since 1999, the IACR has instituted an 'All India Essay Competition', which is open to the post-graduate students and research scholars from Indian universities and research institutions. The best essay is published in the IACR Newsletter. In 1981 derivation of pluripotent stem cell lines from cultured mouse embryos was first reported. To celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the landmark discovery, 'Cancer Stem Cells' was chosen as the topic for this year's essay competition. Along with the annual All India Essay Competition, an essay competition was organised for Mumbai zone. In both the competitions, there was a tie and therefore two prizes were given. The Annual Essay Competition Award was won by Ms. Toral Kobawala from the Gujarat Cancer and Research Institute, Ahmedabad and Mr. Sachin Kumar from All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi. In Mumbai zone, an essay competition was organised on the topic siRNA – Hype & Hope. In this competition the award was shared by Ms. Sarisha Kotlikar from the Institute of Chemical Technology, Mumbai and Ms. Shubhada Bharné from the Advanced Centre for Treatment, Research and Education in Cancer, Navi Mumbai.

The Association organized a 'Cancer Research Awareness Programme' that was organised for the students of the Rochiram Thadani High School for Hearing Handicapped, Mumbai. This is for the first time that the IACR organized such a programme for the Hearing Handicapped students. Tremendous response from the students, teachers and parents in the last interactive session indicated that the challenge to convey the message to these students was successfully met.

The Gujarat local chapter had organized the second session of Seminars on Modern Techniques in January 2007. In this

Annual Convention of the IACR is one of the major activities that IACR undertakes every year. In the year 2006-7, the Annual Convention of IACR was held at Bhubaneswar, from 17 - 19 January 2007. As a part of the convention, an eminent scientist in the field of cancer research is invited to deliver an oration each year. This year, the oration award was given to Dr. Mamen Chandy from the Christian Medical College, Vellore. During the Convention, the scientific programme had several sessions covering different areas of cancer research such as biomarkers, immunotherapeutics, signal transduction, angiogenesis, etc. An international special symposium was also organized on the 'Translational Research in Cancer'. Travel

awards were given to the students, to enable them to participate in the Annual Convention. To encourage the young students and bring out best of them, special competitive presentation sessions were organized for students. The best poster presentation as well as oral presentation was awarded. Shri Sitaram Joglekar award and Smt. Mangala Bamne Award for best oral presentation were bagged by Ms. Marie Lue Antony from the Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology, Thiruvananthapuram and Ms. Vandna Prasad from the National Centre for Cell Science, Pune, respectively. For best poster presentation, Shri Rajnikant Baxi Award was given to Mr. Vishal Kothari from the Advanced Centre for Treatment, Research and Education in Cancer, Navi Mumbai while Shri Rambhau Kulkarni Award was won by Ms. Mousumi Majumder from the Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata.

Thus, in accordance with the aims and objectives of the association, various academic and educational activities in the field of cancer research were organised during the year.