

## GUEST EDITOR



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### **We can make it possible.....but only through much better coordination.**

Needless to say, I feel proud and elated to pen this editorial! Our APCRI has stepped into the 23rd year since it was founded ...just two more years to go for its Silver Jubilee celebration ! During these years, it has contributed significantly and played pivotal role at the national and the international level on promoting awareness and relevant activities in rabies. To quote some, the National survey of 2004, India Multicentric survey of 2017 (both supported by the WHO), initiating the Laboratory based surveillance for rabies in dogs in Andaman and Nicobar and cats in Lakshadweep for the first time. From the point of development of human resources, annual conventions in different regions in India for wider national coverage, CMEs and World Rabies day have been organized. As we all know, this society is the brain child of doyens Dr. M.K. Sudarshan (The founder President of APCRI), Late Dr. Madhusudhana (who revolutionised the research in rabies in India) and Dr. S. Abdul Rahman (Executive Director, Commonwealth Veterinary Association-CVA, and my mentor who twisted my arms to take up animal rabies research seriously and establishing the Karnataka Veterinary, Animal and Fisheries Sciences University(KVAFSU)-CVA-Rabies diagnostic Laboratory at Veterinary college, Bengaluru through his international connectivity !!). Hats off to these TRIO for giving this solid platform to the subsequent generations. It is their forethoughts, dreams and guidance that further expanded the family APCRI comprising of both Medical and Veterinary Professionals from all over the country. As a Veterinarian, I feel proud that more and more of Veterinarians are joining the team APCRI since the last 10 years. This development itself is an indication of strengthening 'ONE HEALTH PLATFORM' with respect to rabies in India. Neither Veterinarians nor Medical Professionals nor any other individual sector alone can accomplish the dream of successful control of rabies culminating in it's elimination (Achievable by 2030 ???). In this context, the initiatives by the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare with the support of Dept. of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD), The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR),The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), Govt. of India and other stake holders in evolving the guidelines and National Action Plan for Rabies Elimination (NAPRE) is commendable. Lets hope and jointly strive hard for the effective implementation of this pragmatically oriented, ambitious programme in our country. However, before institution of this programme, an effective and feasible dog rabies surveillance system is a pre requisite. In this regard the development of network of animal rabies diagnostic laboratories of the Veterinary colleges or State animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratories is a mile stone under the OIE Twinning programme initiated by the CVA and the KVAFSU with the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Atlanta , US and Animal Health and Plant Agency (APHA), Weybridge, UK. With this, it is necessary to evolve a comprehensive disease reporting system to identify the hot spots, implementing the control strategies with the involvement of the Animal Welfare Organizations (AWO), Non-

Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and most importantly the community. On the other note, corporate sectors in India are conscious of the kind of impact they are having on all aspects of society, including economic, social, and environmental. In this context, exploring the so far unexplored Corporate Sectors through their Corporate Social responsibility (CSR) in implementation of rabies control programmes could have immense impact. Whether APCRI can bell the cat?

Rabies control in India is not just the responsibility of any individual organization but has to be a well coordinated effort involving all the stake holders with due respect to each other without overlapping each others mandate. Again, I emphasise the involvement of the community, AWO with defined roles and responsibilities to them. However, looking back, it appears that the Govt. sector shall take the primary responsibility not only in the urban areas but especially the rural India. This is in view of the availability of the services of the Govt. Veterinary and Medical institutions at the village / grass root levels unlike the civic organizations, NGOs, AWOs which are mostly active in the urban areas.

Any amount of efforts in implementation of the rabies control in India may not be fruitful unless the practically oriented extension / awareness programmes for the involvement of the community and general public in both urban and rural areas are in place. This is a major mandate of the APCRI and still we need to go a long way !

Keeping the aforementioned issues in view and with the 'NEVER GIVE UP' attitude, the APCRI dreams for 'Rabies free India' by the end of the next decade and strives hard to achieve this global goal. Lets hope for the best !

Before I sign off, I would like to compliment the Editorial committee and the vibrant Executive committee for placing the APCRI journal on the fast track and for being responsible for indexing it in Index Copernicus International. The contents and the quality of printing of APCRI journal and the News letters have been impressive. Just wish the members make the best use of the journal, update themselves and dissipate the recent developments in the field of rabies in India and adopt it. I also appeal all the members for further expanding the membership drive.

Thanks to Dr. Sumit Poddar, Secretary General, APCRI for giving this chance to me to express my views through this editorial to you all !

**Dr. Shrikrishna Isloor**

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