

Committed to Dental Excellence

13 June, 2018

Smt. Nirmala Sitaraman
Hon'ble Defence Minister
Government of India
104, South Block
New Delhi 110001

Respected Madam,

Subject: Presentation of Indian Dental Association's

1. Free Dental Healthcare Treatment Services to Martyr's Families
2. Application of Forensic Technology to Identify Victims of War and
3. Swachh Mukh Abhiyan Campaign for Oral Health & Hygiene Awareness

Background

The Indian Dental Association (IDA), established in 1946, is the largest recognized body of dental professionals in the country. It has a national presence, and works through its 29 State & 7 UTs and nearly 600 local branches spread across the country to promote oral health and hygiene. It has a membership of over 74,000 professionals in the country.

As custodian of oral health in the country, IDA has been in the forefront of promoting oral healthcare awareness in the country and improving the quality of dental healthcare services rendered to the community. Through several oral health initiatives IDA has been able to significantly contribute to oral healthcare management in the country.

You may be happy to know, Hon'ble Minister, that IDA had hosted the World Dental Congress in Greater Noida, Delhi, on behalf of the World Dental Federation, Geneva, which was inaugurated by the then Hon'ble President of India, Shri Pranab Kumar Mukherjee, in September, 2014.

The Vision – Optimal Oral Health and Hygiene

IDA'S vision is to lead the country to optimal oral health and hygiene for all to improve the general health index of the country. Allied to it is the goal of professional advancement of its members. Hence, all programmes and projects of IDA are directed towards attaining these twin goals with a missionary zeal.

Education & Research Centre

Oral health is a generally overlooked component of overall health and well-being. A corollary to improving oral health of the community is advanced training to the dental professionals in the state of the art technology and treatment procedures to enhance their skills to facilitate rendering of quality services to the people. Towards this end, IDA has set up, Hon'ble Minister, the Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Education & Research Centre and a Super Speciality Dental Clinic with all modern facilities at its Head Office at Prabhadevi in Mumbai. The Centre aims to promote professional advancement of dental surgeons and provide free treatment to the underprivileged and the needy poor. It has an Educational Training Centre set up to honour its founding father, Dr R Ahmed, and a Research Centre named after Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, our former late President. The Centre was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Minister for Science and Technology, Dr. Harsh Vardhan in February this year.

Services to the Martyrs

(a) Disaster Victim Identification

It may interest you to know, Hon'ble Minister, that, as advised by our former late President, Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, IDA has devised a programme aimed at adopting globally accepted techniques of forensic odontology for the swift identification of martyred soldiers of the Indian armed forces whose bodies are difficult to identify. This is much more cost-effective than the DNA method. The same application can be used for victims of natural disasters as well.

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(b) Free Dental Healthcare Treatment Services to Martyr's Families

As a humble tribute to our soldiers, IDA has also devised a programme to provide free oral health check up and treatment services to the families of our soldiers killed while performing their national duties of safeguarding the nation.

This application is ready with IDA and we would like to dedicate it to the nation at the hands of the Hon'ble Minister.

Swachh Mukh Abhiyan

Oral diseases are emerging as one of the main public health concerns in our country owing to their high prevalence and their effect on quality of life. People do not give as much importance to oral health as compared to other ailments and avoid dental check-ups. Less than 5 percent of the population visits a dentist at least once a year as compared to a global average of 48 percent and only less than 50 per cent use brush to clean their teeth using toothpaste. According to estimates, about 50% of schoolchildren suffer from dental caries and more than 90% of adults have periodontal diseases. The use of tobacco products, in smoking or smokeless form, is widely prevalent in our country. Hence, oral pre-cancers and cancers are emerging as major threats to younger people and increasing to alarming proportions in India. Patients generally have a poor understanding of oral health and its significance in maintaining overall health and quality of life.

Oral problems are not only causing pain, agony, functional, and aesthetic problems but also lead to loss of working man-hours. Hence, in the long run, they are bound to have a significant impact on our economy. Most people, particularly those in the rural areas, hardly have any knowledge of oral hygiene and a good sense of clean mouth. This led IDA to launch the campaign on clean mouth.

The 'Swachh Mukh Abhiyan' is a national campaign initiative started by the Indian Dental Association, Mumbai, under which dentists are trying to reach out to the people to make them aware of the importance of oral health and hygiene. It's a programme to educate people about the health hazards of not keeping proper oral hygiene and how maintenance of oral health can contribute to improving the general health index of the nation. The campaign has now been launched in Maharashtra. IDA intends to intensify the campaign across the country to improve awareness of people about oral health and hygiene.

My object in writing this letter is to seek your availability and convenience to make presentations of the above cited programmes. We would be greatly honoured if the Hon'ble Minister could kindly indicate any day and time convenient for presentation of the programme at New Delhi.

We would appreciate receiving a favourable response to our request.

With respectful regards,

Ashok Dhoble

Yours respectfully,

Dr Ashok Dhoble
Hon Secretary General

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