PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

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Linga Venkateswar Rao

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Association of Microbiologists of India has rightly chosen “Microbial World: Recent Innovations and Future Trends” as main Theme for 53rd Annual Conference. With this theme the delegates will have the opportunity to know the recent happenings and also the possible areas to focus for the future.

AMI has grown to be a single major association in India that covers all the disciplines of Microbiology with equal weightage. The association publishes a quarterly Journal named Indian Journal of Microbiology for the last 48 years now in collaboration with Springer which has acquired a respectable status among National and International scientific community, with high quality research articles. AMI is planning to start, Indian Academy of Microbial Sciences from next year. Today, we have approved the Academy

Document in Central Council which will go to the General Body on 24th morning. I sincerely thank All Members, Office Bearers, Former Presidents for their efforts to build the Association of Microbiologists of India.

ASM association with AMI started in 1985 from Hyderabad Annual Conference and I am happy to see the President of ASM here and I hope mutual cooperation between the two old associations will further improve in the coming years for the benefit of Microbiologists of both countries

Though a lot of work has been done with microbes, there are more unexplored areas and many challenges to overcome in this discipline. We are all aware that microbes are ubiquitous and what we know about microbes represents not more than 1–2 % of total microbial flora. More than 95 % of microbes are waiting for young microbiologists like you to devise a medium for cultivation and their subsequent exploitation for human welfare.

Microbes play a major role in the life history of humans, animals and plants, in the quality and safety of our food supplies, in the health and sustainability of our air, land, and water; in bio-warfare and national security. Microbiology in 20th century has evolved into an extremely interactive discipline among the sciences and the past few decades have witnessed a quantum leap in our knowledge of microbes.

Pathogenic microorganisms are the cause of many infectious diseases of humans, animals and plants including agricultural crops. About 12 million people around the world die each year due to microbial diseases which could be prevented or cured through the use of vaccines or medication (WHO). Approximately half of all deaths caused by infectious diseases each year can be attributed to just three diseases: tuberculosis, malaria, and AIDS. Though lot of work has been done in our country on tuberculosis and malaria, there are many challenges.

L. Venkateswar Rao (✉)
Department of Microbiology, Association of Microbiologists of India, Osmania University, Hyderabad 500 007, AP, India
e-mail: vrlinga@gmail.com

The use of probiotics, prebiotics, and nutraceuticals throughout the world including India has become widespread without any in-depth understanding of their use and there is a need to give more focus to this area.

One of the challenges in the 21st Century is to meet the growing energy demand world over and reduce the dependency on fossil fuels. The future risks of global warming, depletion of oil reserves and environmental concerns promote the production and usage of alternative fuels. My laboratory was part of a national collaborative programme on bioethanol production with lignocellulosic substrates. Ability of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* converting glucose to ethanol is generating hundreds of crores income to several states in India and other countries.

I appeal to all the microbiologists particularly young microbiologists to take interest in AMI activities and provide your valuable suggestions. I also invite young and active persons who can spare time to be part of AMI Central Council whenever opportunity comes so that all parts of the country will have representation. I also appeal to all the members to apply for various annual awards of the association.

As there are very few dedicated institutions in our country based on microbial research, the AMI should take initiative to represent to the Government of India to establish a Central Institute of Microbial Sciences.

I hope that the conference will provide ample opportunities to the scientists, teachers, students and industry representatives from India and abroad to have cross-disciplinary interactions and exchange of ideas to address some of the challenges faced by humanity. It will be a good platform for developing collaborative linkages amongst microbiologists, researchers, scientists, academicians and industry

I would like to congratulate the founder of KIIT for creating excellent infrastructure within a short time and organising a mega event like Indian Science Conference this year. I thank KIIT authorities for permitting AMI to have this annual conference here.

With all our little contributions and knowledge acquired through interactions with various microbiologists, let us make this world a better place to live than what it was before.