



The Bone and Joint Decade 2000-2010 PRESS RELEASE

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Despite Chaos, Bone & Joint Decade Forges Ahead With Mission in India

30 November 2008 | Pune (INDIA) –Delegates of the 2008 Bone and Joint Decade World Network Conference and the International Patient Advocacy Seminar arrived in Pune, India Thursday for a four-day conference, going ahead with their meeting which will shape the direction of bone and joint health policy around the world in the coming years, despite deadly militant attacks in Mumbai just days earlier.

The international event will run from November 27 to December 1 and representatives include government officials, doctors, researchers, NGO's and patients from nearly 40 countries around the world.

Professor Lars Lidgren, of Sweden, and chairman of the Bone and Joint Decade, said our global organisation of health care practitioners and patient advocates strongly condemns the terrorist attacks in Mumbai, and we express our deepest condolences to the bereaved families of those who have lost their lives, but we chose not to abandon our conference here in India because our mission has always been about bridging borders and supporting our international colleagues through good times and bad. We will not be deterred from this."

The BJD 2008 World Network Conference, which focuses on childhood rheumatic conditions, road trauma and injury prevention, and public outreach, is hosted by Dr Arvind Chopra of the Centre for Rheumatic Diseases, Pune. Dr Chopra said: "The BJD mission has woken the world up from the deep sleep of apathy and indifference towards the real-life issues of bone and joint disorders, for the millions of people suffering in India and around the world. We are working to improve not only treatment but also prevention, and to get people to perceive quality-of-life related to chronic disease as a vital parameter of health."

Dr. R. K. Srivastava, Director General of Health Services for the Indian government, endorsed BJD India in 2001. To date, the United Nations-endorsed Bone and Joint Decade has the support of 61 governments around the world.

Highlights in the events held during the conference include:

- **Friday 27 Nov:** A two-day Patient Advocacy Seminar begins with a visit to the rural village of Bhigwan to learn about the Community-Oriented Program for Control of Rheumatic Diseases (COPCORD) and discuss public outreach campaigns in a rural setting.
- **Saturday, 28 Nov:** A very special lecture and practical session on Iyengar Yoga by the master himself, B.K.S.Iyengar (Guruji), adapted as a treatment to help those suffering from rheumatic conditions.
- **Sunday 29 Nov:** A one-day combined session on Childhood Rheumatic conditions with the Indian Rheumatology Association which will be led by internationally renowned experts in the field.
- **Monday 30 Nov:** Road Traffic Safety event - BJD Delegates will take to the streets of Pune to hand out 1000 safety helmets freely to motorcycle and moped riders on the city's busy roads, and to encourage safe riding practices. The event will start at 11:30am on Shivajinagar, and finish at Sancheti Hospital parking lot.

Professor Lidgren, BJD chairman, and head of the Department of Orthopaedics at the University of Lund in Sweden, said: "Our vision is a society where prevention, treatment and care of people with musculoskeletal disorders are of high standard and accessible around the world – our work is focused to this end. The commitment, support and action by the Indian Network as demonstrated here has made a significant contribution towards the mission of the Bone and Joint Decade globally as well as locally for the benefit of the Indian society and those affected by musculoskeletal disorders and their families."

About the Bone and Joint Decade

Launched in January 2000, the Bone and Joint Decade is an NGO comprised of National Action Networks in 62 countries and with the support of more than 750 related organisations globally. Its mission is to advance understanding of musculoskeletal disorders worldwide through research and to improve the quality of life for those affected. The Bone and Joint Decade is initiative works closely with the United Nations and the World Health Organization.

Prof Lars Lidgren, Chairman of the Bone and Joint Decade, and Head of the Department of Orthopaedics at the University of Lund, said: "Trauma and musculoskeletal disorders are the leading cause of disability around the world, affecting one out of every four adults and accounting for 25% of the total cost of illness also in developing countries." The Decade aims to build awareness of the burden of musculoskeletal conditions by educating the public and driving research and legislation to improve prevention and treatment.

Some facts:

- Every 30 seconds someone dies in a road traffic accident, and in the same time frame three others are severely injured.
- Road traffic accidents are the leading cause of death and disability for people under age 45.
- Several hundred million people worldwide already suffer from joint diseases such as osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis, and this figure is set to increase exponentially due to the predicted doubling of the number of people over age 50 by the year 2020.
- One in every three women over age 50 will suffer a fracture caused by osteoporosis.
- Up to 80% of people will suffer from back pain during their lives.
- Back pain is the second leading cause of work-place sick leave.

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