

It is indeed a privilege and honour to be able to write a **Guest Editorial** for the very **FIRST Issue** of Indian Journal of Surgical Oncology (**IJSO**). IJSO will indeed be the official mouthpiece of our Association and we must be grateful to **Prof. Gopinath** for his untiring efforts in bring out a Journal that represents the interests of Surgical Oncologists across the Country. Undoubtedly, the quality of papers published in the Journal would give IASO an opportunity to demonstrate to the world of our commitment to practicing evidence based cancer care. I am aware it requires enormous funding and talent, but am very optimistic that it is achievable. I am delighted that the First issue is a move in this direction.

With over 100,000 new cases of breast cancer being diagnosed every year, it has overtaken the incidence of cervical cancer to become the leading cause of cancer related mortality in urban India. Although Breast Cancer is managed by Surgical Oncologists, the vast proportion of both benign and malignant Breast disease is managed by General Surgeons across the Country. I am very happy that this Issue has articles that are of interest to both Surgical Oncologists and General Surgeons practicing Breast Surgery both in rural and urban India.

The Review articles in this Issue focus on the magnitude of the burden of Breast cancer in India and the role of Breast conserving surgery in locally advanced breast cancer. As more than 50% of breast cancers in India present in advanced stage, this article assumes significance. The single most important advance in recent years with particular reference to Breast Cancer Surgery is the evolution of the art and science of **Oncoplastic Breast Surgery** – techniques that are utilized to reshape the breast after breast conserving surgery.

Oncoplastic Breast Surgery must not be identified nor confused with Breast reconstructive surgery that is performed after mastectomy. Over the recent years, Breast cancer care has been enhanced by the emergence of **Specialist Breast Surgeon** with training in Oncoplastic Surgical skills – *Oncoplastic Breast Surgeon*.

Axillary node involvement is an important determinant in assessing of prognosis of breast cancer. Sentinel node biopsy has revolutionized the management of axilla in early breast cancer, significantly reducing the morbidity associated with the traditional axillary node clearance. Five original articles address the issue of management of axilla in this issue. Of course, Abstracts of Award Papers at NATCON IASO 2008 Hyderabad Conference are highlighted and the Journal will now routinely publish Abstracts of Award Papers presented at NACON IASO annually.

Finally, I wish the Membership '*happy reading*'. The Editors would be very grateful for your constructive suggestions and advice, which would help improve the quality of IJSO. In the fullness of time, I hope that the Journal would be indexed, and this can only happen, with your active support and contribution

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