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I am delighted to learn that the 48th Annual Meeting of the Indian Society of Human Genetics, combined with the International Conference, is being held in the warm and vibrant city of Ahmedabad, a location made famous by Mahatma Gandhi and the Indian Institute of Management. Three hands-on Pre-conference workshops are being held, including one on the interpretation of somatic and germline variants organized by experts from the Broad Institute. This is a unique opportunity for Indian scientists. The main conference, from January 21 to 24, 2024 has 7 plenary sessions, 10 concurrent sessions, and 5 workshops. Here 30 outstanding international and 75 top Indian experts will present cutting-edge research on all important topics in genetics. Such a galaxy of speakers is being assembled for the first time in India. What a star cast! I must congratulate Jayesh, Harsh, and Frenny for their brilliant organizational effort.

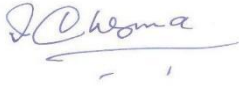
My mind goes back to the first national meeting on genetics organized by Dr Mutalik in Pune, and then the next one by Dr Sanghvi and his group in Mumbai, where the society was born. The scientific program of the 48 conference is unparalleled in its scientific reach and the eminence of the International and national faculty. One important feature is the awards granted to young scholars whose scientific contributions are very impressive and portend a bright future for the country.

Medical genetics in India is passing through momentous times. The focus of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare on "Rare disorders" has given prominence to genetics as never before. The Government has set up 11 centers of excellence to diagnose and treat genetic disorders. It is heartening to note the increasing number of trained medical geneticists joining the ranks. The DBT, DST, CSIR, and their associated institutions have shown keen interest in developing genomics. The time has come for the Society to get involved in the national research and service plans dealing with genetic disorders.

The therapies being developed in the West are too expensive and are not available for patients in India. The Commissioner of the FDA called India "the Pharmacy of the World". The senior geneticists must mentor their junior colleagues to develop therapies based on the molecular pathology of genetic disorders. Given the high quality of our bioinformatic and molecular expertise, we should work towards making India "the genetic hub of the world". Let us follow Shakespeare and ride the current upward tide of genetics, discover and innovate, and make money. I want you to become biotech billionaires, so I can say I have billionaires as my friends. The task is cut out for you and is well within your reach. I hope you will enjoy the conference, get inspired by the experts,

and make discoveries. I wish you success and hope you will grasp lady luck with the single hair on its head.

Ishwar Verma

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Ishwar Verma', with a horizontal line underneath.

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New Delhi,**

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Genetics, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi.**