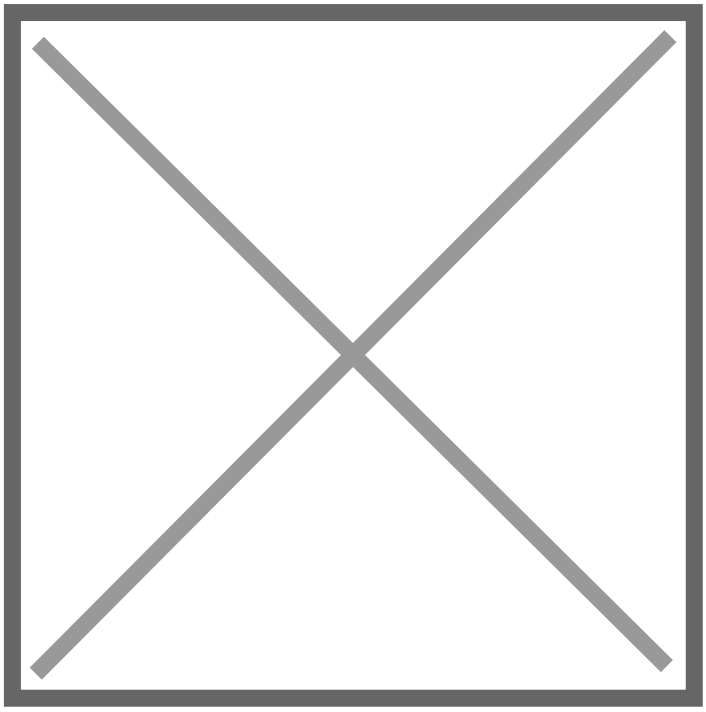
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ATRO calls for collective cancer research in India

22 February 2013 | News | By BioSpectrum Bureau

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With Bangalore having the highest incidence of cancer cases (113.4 - males and 139.1 - females) among key cities in India, there has been an urgent call to action to debate existing cancer care, treatments and research based medicine. The next other cities having the highest incidence of cancer cases in India include New Delhi (124.3 - males and 121.2 - females) followed by Mumbai (99.1 - males and 110.4 - females), according to the latest Population Based Cancer Registry, cancer incidence for every 1, 00,000 males and females in key cities in India.

"India as a country has immense potential to be one of the leaders in oncology research with its burgeoning cancer population and comprehensive cancer care centers," said Dr. B.S.Ajaikumar, President, Association for Transitional Research in Oncology (ATRO) at the Afro-Asian Conference of Transitional Research in Oncology (ACTRO) that commenced in Bangalore on February 22.

The three day conference brought together oncologists from Asia and Africa, to discuss the need for personalized cancer care and a repository of cancer based research in the country. The conference began with research topics focused on personalized medicine, organ and functional preservation in breast cancer, hematology and stem cell transplant and cardio thoracic oncology.

Dr. B.S.Ajaikumar, further said, " The theme of this conference is "From Bedside to Benchmark" with a focus on superior cancer care for patients through futuristic technology to improve their quality of life. Due to dearth of research in India, we have been depending on the western population data and guidelines, to manage the problem. The ACTRO 2013 conference will act as a platform for oncologists to analyze our own cancer care treatment outcomes, through efficient documentation and data management."

Dr. Prahlad Ram, Medical Oncologist, MD Anderson Cancer Center, USA, said, "One of the emerging challenges in oncology is the utilization of patient-specific genomic information in order to develop personalized and targeted therapeutic options based on molecular aberrations in the tumour. A second challenge facing cancer medicine is the identification of pharmacological options to overcome resistance and the repurposing of currently approved drugs for cancer therapy."

Dr. Samuel JK Abraham, Surgical Oncologist, Yamanashi University-faculty of Medicine, Japan, said, "In the human immune surveillance system, a combination of adaptive and innate pathways work together to tackle cancer. When functioning optimally, they destroy any aberrant cell which might evolve into a cancer. The dysfunction of the immune system by itself or a relative dysfunction against an overwhelmingly strong cancer causative factor culminates in cancer development. One of the therapy aims is to empower the autologous immune cells to treat an already diagnosed cancer and also to prevent a cancer development as well its recurrence."

There are about 30 million cancer survivors in the world today, which is expected to rise to 70 million by the end of the year 2050. ACTRO aims to bring together oncologists to discuss preventive care and improved treatment, to advance the quality of life of cancer patients and survivors across the country.