



**Basant Kumar Misra, President NSI 2008**

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**Summary:**

Dr. Basant Kumar Misra, M.B.B.S, MS, MCh, DNB, born on 18<sup>th</sup> January 1953 completed his MBBS from VSS Medical College, Sambalpur University, Odisha. He was the best outgoing student and recipient of 3 University Gold Medals and the Pfizer Post Graduate Gold Medal during the MS (Gen Surgery) from Delhi University. He received his M.Ch. in Neurosurgery from AIIMS in 1983. Dr. Misra joined SCTIMST, Trivandrum as Lecturer in Neurosurgery in 1984. He was awarded the Commonwealth Medical Scholarship to UK in 1984 and was in the University of Edinburgh, from 1984-87. He returned back to SCTIMST and was there till 1995 as Additional Professor. As a Faculty in SCTIMST, Dr. Misra was instrumental in starting the postgraduate program in Neurosurgery and making the Department a Centre of Excellence. Dr. Misra took up a new assignment as Consultant, Department of Neurosurgery at P D Hinduja National Hospital (PDHNS), Mumbai in 1995 and continues to be the Head of the Department there. He started the post-graduate DNB in Neurosurgery at PDHNS. The department is the only center in India recognized as a World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies (WFNS) Post Graduate Training Centre. It is also the only centre in the private sector recognized as a Class I International Centre for Skull Base Surgery. Dr. Misra was appointed as Clinical Professor, Department of Neurosurgery, Macquarie University, NSW, Australia between 2012-2014, a rare honour for a Neurosurgeon practicing in India. He has also been Journal Reviewer to major international journals from USA, Europe and Australia. He has been a Visiting Professor to many institutions in India & abroad, notably: George Washington University, Johann Wolfgang Goethe-University, Germany, Royal Melbourne Hospital, Australia, Acibadem University, Turkey, National Taiwan University College of Medicine, and Himeji Heart & Brain Centre, Japan.

His peers consider him a gifted surgeon producing excellent results in surgery of vestibular schwannoma, cerebrovascular surgery, skull base surgery and minimally invasive surgery. He has many 'Firsts' to his credit - including image Guided Aneurysm Surgery and introducing Gamma Knife Radiosurgery in India, Awake Craniotomy and 'Key Hole' spine surgery.



*Visiting Professor in Germany*

### **Contributions to Indian Neurosurgery:**

Dr. Misra is credited with initiating co-operation with international organizations when he was the President of NSI. The first such interaction resulted in NSI being invited as a Guest Society to the Congress of Neurological Surgeons (CNS) conference in 2009, in New Orleans. President Abdul Kalam and Padma Vibhushan Professor P N Tandon represented NSI as Honoured Guest Speakers. Since then, the tradition of international co-operation is continuing. Dr. Misra also organized the successful Asian Congress of Neurological Surgeons conference in 2006 in Mumbai. This led to a decision to hold the 15<sup>th</sup> Congress of Asian Australasian Society of Neurological Surgery (AASNS) in India in 2019 – for the first time. Dr. Misra's passion is empowering young neurosurgeons of India. He conducts every year, highly sought after CMEs. He has also been instrumental in introducing many rising stars of Indian neurosurgery to the international scene thereby promoting Indian neurosurgery.

### **National & International Recognition:**

Dr. Misra is an acclaimed international leader and has been the President of Neurological Society India, Skull Base Surgery Society of India and the Cerebrovascular Society of India,. Currently he is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President of the World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies after being Secretary of the WFNS (First Asian), President of Asian Australasian Society of Neurological Surgeons (First Indian), President of World Federation of Skull Base Societies (First Asian) and President of International

Conference of Cerebrovascular Societies (First Indian). In fact, no other neurosurgeon has held so many leading positions in organized neurosurgery. Dr. Misra is only the second Indian member of the American Academy of Neurological Surgery (Late Professor B Ramamurthi was the first). He has also been honoured with Membership of Japan Neurosurgical Society and World Academy of Neurological Surgeons. Recognized as ‘One of the World’s Top 16 Neurosurgeons that matter’ by Jo Lee Magazine, New York in 2015, Dr. Misra has brought glory to India.

### **Family Background:**

I, Basant Kumar Misra, was born on January 18, 1953, on “Basant Panchami” day (hence the name Basant), to Dr. Baidyanath Misra M.A., A.M., PhD and Smt. Basanti Misra, M.A. in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. Dr. Baidyanath Misra (BM) is a renowned Economist and was Professor & Head Department of Economics at Utkal University, Vani Vihar, Bhubaneswar. He retired as Vice chancellor of Orissa University of Agriculture and Technology and was also Deputy Chairman, State Planning Board of Odisha.



*BKM parents*

My mother, Basanti Misra, is a homemaker and took care of us, four children, the eldest daughter, Bijayalaxmi Tripathy (after marriage to Doctor Ajatsatru Tripathy an

Ophthalmologist), I am second and I have two younger brothers Jayant Misra, BE, MBA, currently Director of IMFAA, Bhubaneswar and the youngest Dr. Sukanta Misra MA, PhD, Prof of Economics and Dean at Texas State University, Lubbock, Texas, USA.

I got married to Sasmita Kar, M.A. on 1<sup>st</sup> February 1981. A very outdoor girl, with a passion in sports and an accomplished artist, she sacrificed her career to take care of the house. We have two handsome sons, Sarthak and Siddharth. Sarthak did his MBBS from BYL Nair Medical College, Mumbai, did a period of research at Harvard and a residency in psychiatry at St. Louis University, USA and is currently a Board-certified psychiatrist practicing near Boston. Siddharth did his B.E. and MBA from Mumbai and

went to work with a multinational bank in London. Currently, he is doing a second MBA at the prestigious Chicago Booth, Chicago. These two young gentlemen are our most prized possessions and would qualify as our greatest achievements.



*With wife*



*With sons*

### **Graduate and post graduate education:**

My early education was from Demonstration Multipurpose Higher Secondary School, Bhubaneswar, 1<sup>st</sup> Year BSc from BJB College Bhubaneswar and MBBS from VSS Medical College Burla, Sambalpur. I don't think, I can point out why I wanted to do Medicine but I distinctly remember I wanted to be a Neurosurgeon right from my school days! After finishing my MBBS, I left for Delhi for post graduate education. I did a house job at Safdarjung Hospital, Delhi and then got selected for Master of Surgery in Delhi University. After my MS in General surgery, I got selected for the M.Ch. in Neurosurgery at the prestigious All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) along with dear friend Dr. Sudhir Pai, who had done his MS General Surgery from AIIMS. My neurosurgery Chief was Prof. P N Tandon, and the other teachers were Profs. AK Banerji (AKB), Brahm Prakash & R Bhatia. Prof. Brahm Prakash left AIIMS shortly after I joined, to head the Department of Neurosurgery at G B Pant Hospital, New Delhi. Needless to say, the foundation of my career, attitude, personality and approach to any problem was laid at AIIMS. We had the most remarkable department. Prof. P N Tandon (PNT), a legend, scientist, a teacher par excellence and inspiring speaker was always up-to-date (was not at all easy those days) with the recent literature. If there was one man who complimented PNT, it was AKB. While PNT dreamt big and stressed

on new research and advances, AKB emphasized sticking to basics and on the importance of clinical examination. His famous saying “Man Scan is better than Cat Scan” (there was no MRI then) influenced our training and our lifelong adherence to importance of clinical examination. Both of them were severe task masters and ran the department with strict discipline. Yet, they were always there if one needed support. I would like to make a special mention of Dr. VS Mehta (VSM), who was my senior as a resident first and became a lecturer during my last year of residency in AIIMS. Many of my initial operations and training was from VSM. VSM remains a truly dear friend, guide and well-wisher till date.

I completed my Neurosurgery Residency and passed my M.Ch. from AIIMS in 1983. There was no faculty position in AIIMS and I continued in the department as Senior Research Officer of ICMR and then moved to Sree Chitra Thirunal Institute of Medical sciences as a lecturer in early 1984 on the advice of my teachers. Looking back, neurosurgery residency at AIIMS was tough indeed. Most of us residents, during the first few months, had thought of quitting the department. While it was tough, it was not very difficult for me as I grew up, as a child, in a strict discipline of a Professor, my father. During my residency, there was a very tragic event: the first candidate of the 5-year neurosurgery residency programme at AIIMS, Prashant, about one-year junior to me, committed suicide. It was a watershed moment in the department of neurosurgery, AIIMS. I think it affected our teachers more than us, the residents. They started telling us to go to the room and not come on Sundays or on holidays when we were not on duty. Let me put on record, the training at AIIMS was tough but it was the best ever. I would not trade that training for anything in the world. How I wish, we have more such teachers and such departments today.

I joined SCTIMST in early 1984 and was selected by Director MS Valiathan to start microsurgery at SCTIMST. Dr. D Rout was Associate Professor and HOD of the department. Dr. Rout was a brilliant surgeon but there was no culture of microsurgery. Interestingly, the prototype contravas Zeiss microscope, one of its kind in India, was lying in the stores but was not used as there was some reservation about sterility issues and the microscope was not brought to the theatre. Thanks to Dr. Valiathan, I could start microsurgery at SCTIMST in 1984 and the rest, as they say, is history. I was already the winner of Commonwealth Scholarship before joining

SCTIMST and was preparing to leave for Edinburgh, UK, few months after joining SCTIMST Dr. Valiathan informed me that ‘there is no rule for leave which he can grant but also asked me to put in an application for extra ordinary leave without pay and said he would take it to the governing body’. There is no doubt in my mind that it was Dr. Valiathan who called the shots at SCTIMST and he granted me EOL. I went to UK in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 1984 to University of Edinburgh under Prof. James Douglas Miller (JDM). When JDM asked me what I would like to do and whether I would like to be in the regular Registrar duty, I informed him that I would do the regular Registrar duty and I would be interested in planning some research on cerebrovascular surgery. He was surprised with my answers as some of the previous commonwealth scholars did not want to do ‘on call’ and he thought neurosurgeons from India were not interested in research. Anyway, he was pleased on both counts and I was put on a project on CBF measurement in rats in an experimental model of carotid endarterectomy. On my first day in the lab, Mr. Anthony Bell (Tony), my senior explained to me the protocol: one has to expose the carotid artery in the rat, apply a temporary clamp, cut the carotid, re-anastomose and measure CBF after that, after putting electrodes in the rats’ brain. He also sympathetically added “BK, do not worry, you would kill a few rats to get a hang of it before you can micro-anastomose the carotid. Do not get disheartened”. He left me in the lab and came back about an hour later to see me measuring CBF in the brain. He was a little irritated as he thought I did not understand that CBF had to be done after micro-anastomosis of the carotid in the rat. What he did not know that I had already had a lot of experience at AIIMS in the lab with micro-anastomosis in rats (thanks to AKB) and I had already successfully done the rat carotid anastomosis in that animal and I was measuring CBF! Tony was both surprised and impressed though he did not show that but JDM was informed. My position changed dramatically from the next day in the department of neurosurgery, Western General hospital, Edinburgh. From a 1<sup>st</sup> year registrar, I became a fully paid, final year registrar and was also appointed as Research Lecturer in Neurosurgery by University of Edinburgh!

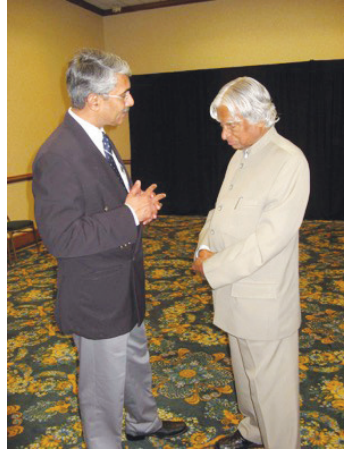
I came back to SCTIMST as Associate Professor in 1987, again to everybody’s great surprise, as JDM had invited me to stay back The next few years was career defining for me. Though I was interested in vascular

surgery, as Dr. Rout was also interested in this, I started developing Skull Base Surgery and probably became one of the first dedicated Skull Base Surgeons of India. I still kept doing vascular surgery and helping Dr. Rout in difficult cases. We did, for the first time in India, the high flow saphenous ECIC bypass for a giant ICA Aneurysms and also the first aneurysm (basilar trunk) surgery under cardiopulmonary bypass. Incidentally, both had successful outcomes. I was also responsible for doing all the acoustics from 1988 and presented my personal experience with 100 consecutive cases microsurgery of acoustic neuroma, in NSI meet in Chennai in 1993 with more than 30 per cent hearing preservation!

In 1995, I got selected as Professor of Neurosurgery at AIIMS. While waiting for the appointment order from AIIMS, I was offered a Consultant position at P. D. Hinduja National Hospital and Medical Research Center (PDHNS) in Mumbai. I joined PDHNS in November 1995 on a sabbatical from SCTIMST with a plan to join AIIMS later in that year. My family was still in Trivandrum. The appointment order from AIIMS was getting delayed and as the new academic year in schools were starting, the family joined me in Mumbai and my two sons got admitted to Bombay Scottish School, Mumbai. The appointment as Professor at AIIMS, the position for which I dreamed for years, finally came but only after my sons had joined school in Mumbai. I still wanted to move to Delhi. Two people influenced my decision to stay in Mumbai. My wife was very reluctant for me to leave the private sector and join AIIMS and did not share my enthusiasm of being a Professor at AIIMS. I was not sure what to do. Then, Prof. B Ramamurthi congratulated me on my appointment as Professor, 'as Head of Neurosurgery' at AIIMS. I corrected him that I was selected as Professor but not the Head. He was quick to advise me against joining AIIMS if I was not going to be Head. Anyway, after almost holding on to the offer from AIIMS for almost a year I declined and continued at PDHNS where I continue till date. The first two years at PDHNS was quite stressful as I was a complete outsider and the practice in Mumbai is significantly dominated by GP referral. Dr. PP Ashok, my batch mate during our residency in AIIMS, Consultant Neurologist at PDHNS was a great support and helped me to settle down in Mumbai. I was also fortunate to get tremendous support from the management and we became first in South Asia to install the Gamma Knife Radiosurgery Facility. We also acquired

Neuronavigation and Neuroendoscope system in early 1997 and became the best equipped Neurosurgery centre in the country. There was no looking back. I was trained at AIIMS and had tremendous experience at SCTIMST and now I had the best technology at PDHNNH! I was operating the same high-end cases as I was operating in the public sector though fewer in numbers. With better emoluments at my disposal and good clinical material under my belt I attended more and more international meetings, mainly skull base and cerebrovascular and got recognized. I also started the post graduate DNB program at PDHNNH, today one of the most sought-after program in India. The Department of Neurosurgery, PDHNNH became a WFNS accredited International post-graduate training center, the only such department in India.

I was also very active in organized neurosurgery. In 2000, we formed a new Society, Indian Society of Cerebrovascular Surgery. AKB was the President and I was the Secretary. I continued as Secretary for quite a few years and finally handed over to Dr. S N Mathuriya, once we were reasonably established. My first presidentship of a professional society was that of Skull Base Surgery Society of India in 2004. My first big international break also came around that time as I took over as President of Asian Congress of Neurological Surgery (ACNS). This



*BKM & President Kalam*

presidentship culminated in the highly successful ACNS in 2006 in Mumbai. ACNS 2006 was by far the most successful meetings of all the ACNS and was billed as the best neurosurgical event in India after the World Congress (1989) in Delhi. Elected in 2007, as President Elect of NSI, I was responsible for international cooperation. Our efforts bore fruit and NSI was invited as the Guest society to Congress of Neurological Surgeons (CNS) 2009 in New Orleans. It was a watershed moment for NSI. NSI returned the favour and CNS was invited as Guest society to NSI 2010 in Jaipur. This started the NSI-international collaboration and continues till today. 2009 was also a significant year for me, a Plenary talk



at CNS and invited Faculty at the World Congress, Boston to speak at the Marquee session “Master’s Symposium” at ‘Ether Dome’ where 10 top neurosurgeons of the world were chosen to speak!

My next level of leadership in the world stage started when I became Assistant Secretary, World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies (WFNS) in 2009 and subsequently Secretary, WFNS in 2013. I was elected as President of International Congress of Cerebrovascular Surgery (ICCVS) for 2 years in 2014 and culminated in the ICCVS 2016 meeting in Mumbai with Dr. Robert Spetzler as the Honorary President. I was also elected as the President of Asian Australasian Society of Neurological Surgery (AASNS) for 4 years in 2015.

In 2016, I got elected as President of World Federation of Skull Base Surgery Society (WFSBS) for 4 years and in 2017, I have again got elected as 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President of WFNS after my for 4-year term as Secretary WFNS. No Neurosurgeon in the world can claim to a similar distinction! I hope I will continue to contribute and mentor many more young minds and continue to contribute as an ambassador of Indian Neurosurgery. ■