

RESEARCH SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF DIABETES IN INDIA 50 YEARS AGO

Dr. Vinod Kumar

RSSDI Patron and Founder Secretary, RSSDI (July 1972-December 1980)

Research Society for the Study of diabetes in India (RSSDI) was born in 1972 as a small research organization in Delhi at a time when the Mumbai based Diabetic Association of India with branches across the country was already flourishing well as a formidable organization since 1955 with a primary mandate to create mass awareness about diabetes in the country. Internationally, Diabetic Association of India had already the distinction of its two members as Honorary Presidents of International Diabetes Federation (IDF) while one of its members from Delhi later rose to become the first Asian to be elected to the high post of President of IDF from 1985 to 1988.

In the last 50 years RSSDI has evolved to become the world's second largest organization of physicians with interest in diabetes (over 9500 membership) and is marked by numerous excellent events and landmarks during its journey. Gradually diversifying from the focus of research to include awareness, advocacy, education and training, phenomenon of RSSDI has become such a long and fascinating story that no single member would be able to narrate the entire journey of this organization with his own updating and perception. The following description is based on my own recollection about RSSDI as it was 50 years ago and immediately thereafter.

The beginning

Dr. Vinod Kumar registered RSSDI on July 29th, 1972 and located the Society's office in the Department of Medicine at All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in New Delhi. Figure 1 depicts the original Certification of Registration which among other details also indicates a meagre sum of Rs. 50/- as the Registration fee in 1972.

RSSDI was established with following aims and objectives:

1. To encourage and support clinical and laboratory research in the field of diabetes.
2. To hold workshops and scientific meetings within the country; to gather scientists involved in the field for discussions or demonstration of laboratory procedures and seminars.

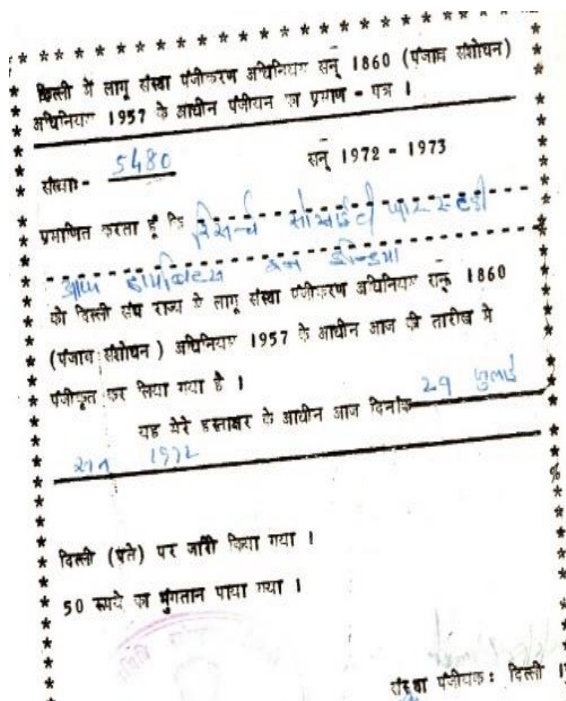


Fig.1 Registration Certificate

3. To encourage collaborative studies at national level and help training workers in various research techniques in the field.

As per Records of Minutes, First RSSDI Executive Committee (EC) met on September 25, 1972 with OP Gupta in chair and attended by BB Tripathy, Vinod Kumar, M Bhaskar Rao, MMS Ahuja and GS Mutalik. Their photographs are illustrated below (Figure 2 to 7).



Fig.2 MMS Ahuja, Dept. of Medicine, AIIMS, Delhi (Founder 1972)



Fig.3 OP Gupta, Dept. Of Medicine, BJ Medical College Ahmedabad (President 1972-73))



Fig.4 BB Tripathy, Dept.of Medicine, SCB Medical College, Cuttack (President 1974)



Fig. 5 GS Mutalik, Dept. of Medicine, BJ Medical College, Pune (EC Member 1972)



Fig. 6 Vinod Kumar, Dept. of Medicine, AIIMS, New Delhi (Founder Secretary 1972-80)

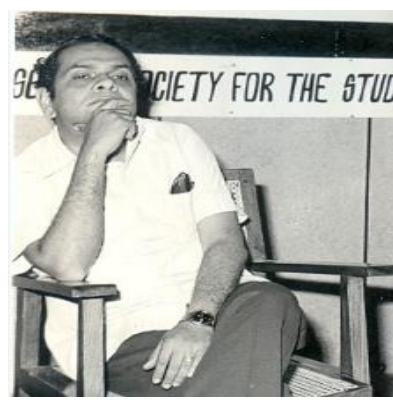


Fig 7 MB Rao, Dept. of Medicine, MA Medical College, New Delhi (Treasure 1972-77)

Financial matters

Certificate for the grant of 80 G tax relief under income tax act was obtained (Fig 8) vide IT Commissioner letter dated 16th June, 1973 and this certificate remained valid up to 31st March, 1974. Conventionally, this used to provide 50% relief in the hands of the donors. As

the time passed by, RSSDI drew up its constitutional amendments, adopted financial discipline

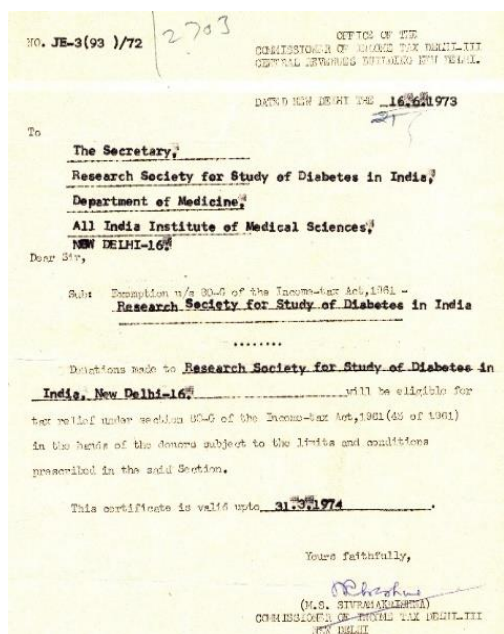


Fig 8 IT 80 G Certificate

of the day, complied with the changing requirements of income tax rules and obtained its PAN card. I am not a superstitious numerologist but I cannot ignore the fact that RSSDI seemed to have a special significance for the digit 50 because

Rs. 50/- was the Registration fee paid to obtain the registration Certificate.

Rs. 50/- was the concessional RSSDI life membership fee for ESI members.

Rs. 50/- was the monthly remuneration sanctioned for RSSDI steno typing work and

It is 50 years after the inception of RSSDI that all of this I am recollecting.

Early Executive and General Body Meetings (ECMs & AGMs)

20 EC meetings and 9 AGMs were held during the first decade. 20 ECMs included two in 1972, one in 1973, two in 1974, one in 1975, seven in 1976, two each in 1977 and 1978, one in 1979 and two in 1981. Not all ECMs were held in institutions. Since RSSDI was a closely knit family, many members played hosts to as many as 10 ECMs held at their own homes (4 at Vinod Kumar's, 2 each at Lt. Gen. R S Hoon's and H Vaishnava's and 1 each at MMS Ahuja's and NPS Verma's residences).

9 AGMs included one each in 1973 (Medical College, Udaipur), 1974 (MA Medical College, Delhi) and 1975 (Medical College, Madras), two in 1976 (both at All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi) and again one each in 1978 (Gandhi Medical College, Bhopal), 1979 (Medical College, Madras), 1980 (Trivandrum) and 1981 (Medical College, Nagpur).

Extensive discussions used to happen in these ECMs and AGMs on various issues. Their minutes were later digitalised but these discussions are outside the scope of the present article. One of the issues focussed on a request received in 1973 from Diabetic Association of India (DAI) for joining hands with RSSDI. Negotiations in this direction, however failed due to lack of consensus. There were two more such communications between DAI and RSSDI in 1976 and 1978 but each time efforts to forge a linkage failed again.

Know your founder

Following is the earliest known picture of our founder, Prof. MMS Ahuja (he is on your right with Vinod Kumar on your left) (Figure 9). This was on a boat ride in Nalsarovar Lake outside Ahmedabad in the winter morning of the year 1967.

Professor MMS Ahuja, (1929-1998), passed MBBS in 1952 (Madras), Joined AIIMS in 1958, rose to the position of Professor and Head of the Department of Medicine followed by the position of Professor and Head of the Department of Endocrinology and the Dean of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi. Professor Ahuja was also a Jawahar Lal Nehru Fellow in 1989. He was the Founder Editor of International Journal of Diabetes in Developing Countries and chief Editor of Progress in Medicine Book Series.



Fig. 9 MMS Ahuja (on the right) in 1967

Know your founding members (the first sequential ten)

1. BB Tripathy, Department of Medicine, SCB Medical College, Cuttack.
2. MK Chhetri, Department of Medicine, Institute of PGEMR, Kolkata.
3. M Vishwanathan, Diabetes Research Centre, 52, Main Road, Royapuram, Madras.
4. OP Gupta, Department of Medicine, BJ Medical College, Ahmedabad.
5. NG Srinivasan, Department of Biochemistry, Kasturba Medical College, Manipal.
6. SGP Moses, The Ark, 22-A, Casa Major Road, Egmore, Madras.
7. Naresh Bhu, Department of Medicine, SMS Medical College, Jaipur.
8. Vinod Kumar, Department of Medicine, AIIMS, New Delhi.
9. MMS Ahuja, Department of Medicine, AIIMS, New Delhi.
10. MB Rao, Department of Medicine, MA Medical College, New Delhi.

Know your first 50 Members of RSSDI State wise (States have been arranged alphabetically with membership enrolment number against each member's name).

1. Chandigarh – G K Rastogi-15, MK Sinha-26.
2. Delhi – Vinod Kumar-8, MMS Ahuja-9, M Bhaskar Rao-10, Hari Vaishnava-17, MC Srivastava-23, CB Sridhar-24, NPS Verma-30, RS Hoon-31, SNA Rizvi-34.
3. Gujarat - OP Gupta-4.
4. Karnataka – NG Srinivasan-5.
5. Kerala – KN Pai-11.
6. Madhya Pradesh – BN Srivastava-35.
7. Maharashtra –GS Mutalik-16, RD Kulkarni-22, SD Mehtalia-27, GS Sainani-28.
8. Odisha – BB Tripathy-1, NC Panda-18, A Sarangi-19.
9. Rajasthan – Naresh Bhu-7.
10. Tamilnadu – M Viswanathan-3, Sam G P Moses-6, VS Gandhi-20, U Mohammad-21, S Narsimhan-25, P Zackaria-29, A Ratnasabhapat-38, A Shanmugam-39, V Kannan-40, CRR Pillay-41, Sharda Menon-42, VT Balaraman-43, RV Moses-44, S Thangaswami-45, D Mathuranayagan-46, R Veera Bahu-47, JM Cherian-48, TK Ramanakumar-49, CV Krishna Swami-50.
11. Uttar Pradesh – NL Patney- 32, DK Hazra-33, Ram Singh-37.
12. West Bengal – MK Chhetri-2, PP Mitra-12, BR Sengupta-13, B Rai Chaudhary-14, AB Mukerjee-36.

Know your yesteryear office bearers of RSSDI

Presidents: OP Gupta (1972 and 1973), BB Tripathi (1974), SGP Moses (1975), Lt. Gen. RS Hoon (1976), M Vishwanathan (1977 and 1978), GS Sainani (1979),

Secretaries: Vinod Kumar (1972 to 1980), BK Ram (1981 onwards).

Treasurers: MB Rao (1972-1977), BK Ram (1978-1980), MG Karmarkar (1981 onwards).

Pictures of successive RSSDI Presidents are illustrated below:



Fig.10 OP Gupta



Fig. 11 BB Tripathi



Fig.12 SGP Moses



Fig. 13 Lt. Gen. RS Hoon



Fig. 14 M Vishwanathan



Fig. 15 GS Sainani

Pieces of heritage

These include the first RSSDI Letter head, RSSDI Annual Oration Medal (First Oration by SGP Moses at Annual RSSDI Conference held in Bhopal in 1978), RSSDI Medallion (in bronze or in white metal stuck or printed on some delegate bags) plus a huge collection of delegate badges denoting continuing education in diabetes as imparted by RSSDI over the years.

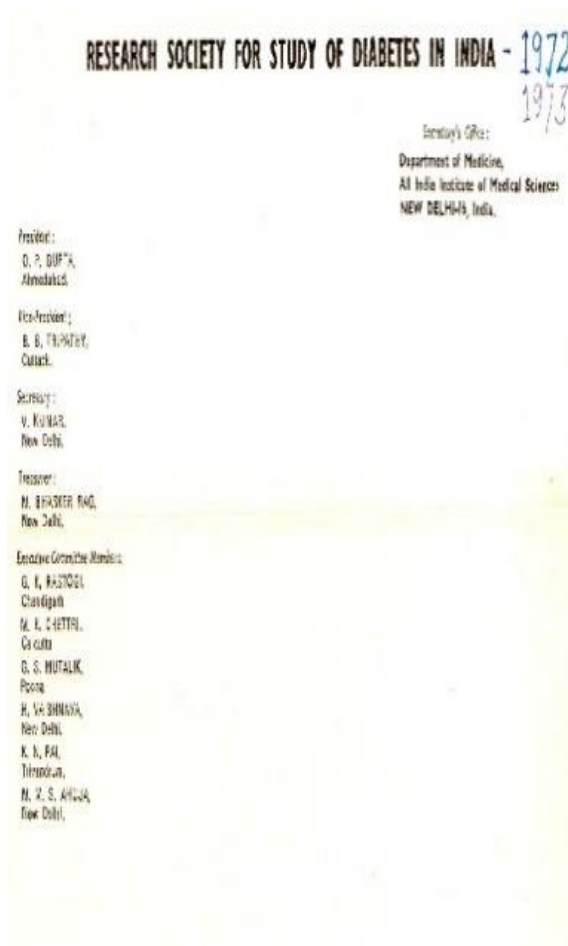


Fig. 16, 17 and 18 First letter head, Oration Medal (Front) and Oration Medal (Back)



Fig. 19 RSSDI Logo Bronze Medallion (Front)



Fig. 20 RSSDI Logo Bronze Medallion (Back)



Fig. 21 RSSDI White metal
Logo stuck on Delegate Bag



Fig. 22 RSSDI Logo printed
on Delegate Bag



Fig. 23 Representative collection of RSSDI delegate badges

First Decade of RSSDI Publications and Conferences

YEAR	PUBLICATION	EDITOR	CONFERENCE THEME ON WHICH THIS WAS BASED	CONFERENCE DATES	CONFERENCE VENUE
1972	Abstracts Book		Etiogenesis of Diabetes cum Workshop	December 19-23	AIIMS, Delhi
1974	Monograph	Vinod Kumar	Disorders of Carbohydrate Metabolism	January 24-25	MAMC, Delhi
1975	Abstracts Book		Complications of Diabetes	January 17-19	MC, Madras
1976	Abstracts Book		Chemical Pathology of Diabetes and Workshop on lab. techniques	January 21	AIIMS, Delhi
1976	Cyclostyled Articles in Book	DK Hazra	Challenges of Therapy of Diabetes in Developing Countries	October 30	AIIMS, Delhi
1977	Monograph	MB Rao	Diabetes Mellitus	November	Lucknow
1978			Health Care Delivery of Diabetes	January 19	Bhopal
1979	Abstracts Book		Diabetes in Young	January 17	MC, Madras
1980			Diabetes Mellitus	January	MC, Trivandrum
1981			Impaired Glucose Tolerance	January 18	Nagpur

Presently records of only two Monographs exist namely, Dr. Vinod Kumar's Disorders of Carbohydrate Metabolism and Dr. MB Rao's Diabetes Mellitus. These are briefly described below.

1. Disorders of Carbohydrate Metabolism: A multi author book of 161 pages edited by Vinod Kumar and published in 1974 by Research Society for Study of Diabetes in India in association with M/S Arnold Heinemann Publishers (India) Private (Ltd.), New Delhi who had Associates in UK. It has 14 Chapters including some from eminent foreign authors of Sweden, Germany and England. This book was reviewed in International Diabetes Federation Bulletin (1976; XXI January (1): 28) by Dr. Max Ellenberg, the then Immediate Past President of American Diabetes Association and the author of a 1962 Diabetes Book which was jointly written with Harold Rifkin.

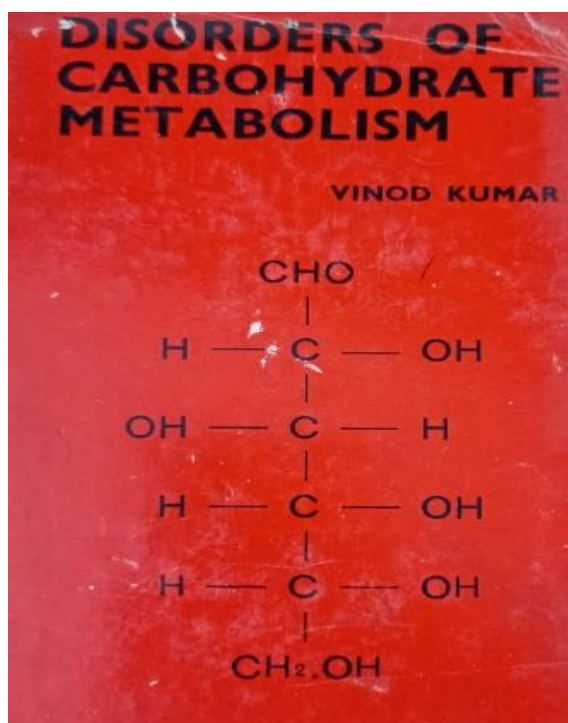


Fig. 24 COVER PAGE

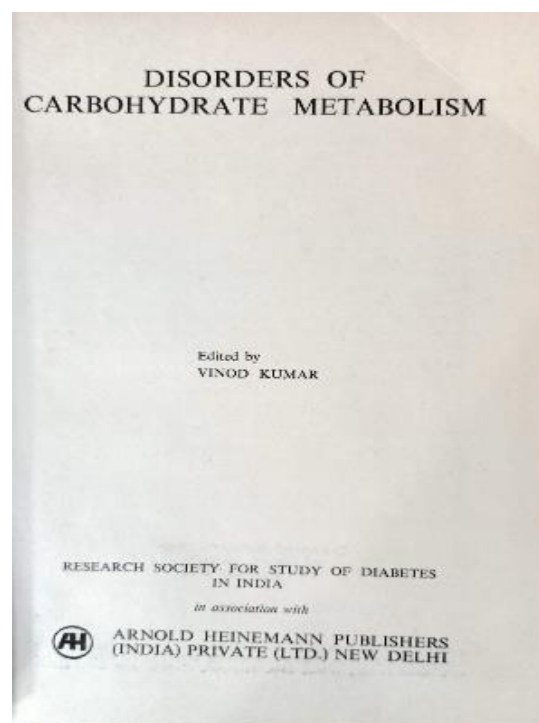


Fig. 25 INSIDE PAGE

2. Diabetes Mellitus: A multi author book of 320 pages edited by M Bhaskar Rao and published in 1977 by Research Society for Study of Diabetes in India in association with M/S Arnold Heinemann Publishers (India) Private (Ltd.), New Delhi who had Associates in UK. It has 25 Chapters by Indian authors on diverse areas such as epidemiology, aetiology, biochemistry, clinical and therapeutic aspects of diabetes and about diabetes in special situations.

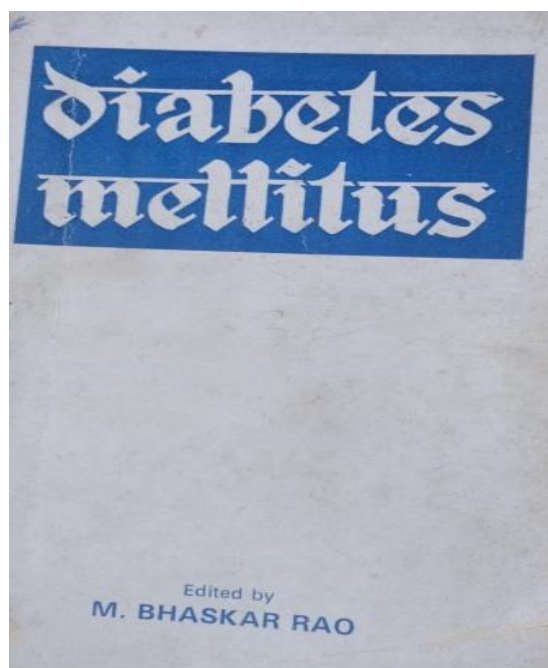


Fig. 26 COVER PAGE

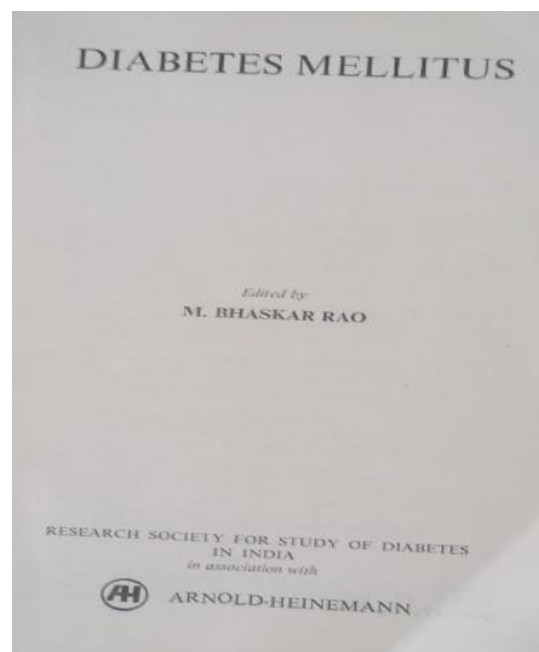


Fig. 27 INSIDE PAGE

Glimpses of the past (Names indicated under the pictures are from left to right)



Fig. 28 Vinod Kumar, M Vishwanathan, B Shankaran, Lalitha Kameswaran, SGP Moses



Fig. 29 M Vishwanathan, Ramachandran in centre



Fig. 30 MB Rao, M Vishwanathan and Vinod Kumar



Fig. 31 BB Tripathi, NC Panda and Vinod Kumar



Fig. 32 BB Tripathi and MMS Ahuja



Fig. 33 Vinod Kumar and SGP Moses



Fig. 34 A Mithal, Ranga Rao, Shah, RAF Retd. Doctor, Mrs. Bhatia, Sidharth Das, KC Samal, MMS Ahuja, MC Srivastava, CB Sanjeevi, Last three from Team Sheshiah (1985 Conference by Ahuja)



Fig. 35 Some conference in Odisha

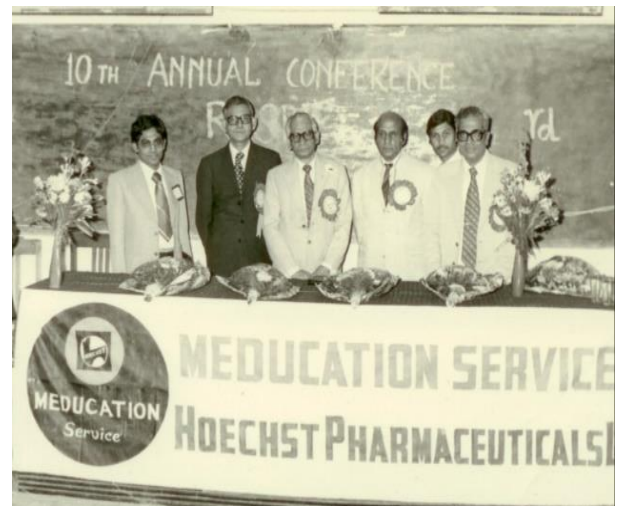


Fig. 36 Sidharth Das, RN Chakraborty, BB Tripathy, MMS Ahuja, Unknown, NC Panda



Fig. 37 SGP Moses and Vinod Kumar



Fig. 38 Vinod Kumar



Fig.39 Vinod Kumar, HOD Diet Dept., MMS Ahuja Fig.40 V Mohan, in late 80s in Chennai Meet



At IDF Congress, Delhi, 1976, President RS Hoon & Secy., Vinod Kumar with foreign delegates

Acknowledgements to Lt. Gen. SP Kalra (Retd.), Delhi and Col. Pradeep Behl, Associate Professor in Geriatrics, AFMC, Pune for their unceasing efforts in fetching the photograph of Lt. Gen. RS Hoon, the RSSDI President for 1976 from Army sources in Delhi and from AFMC Library in Pune respectively.