

CLOSING CEREMONY

For the 18th International Inner Wheel First Virtual Convention

Concluding Address by Dr Bina Vyas

International Inner Wheel President

April 18, 2021

My dear Friends....

I hope you have all enjoyed the 18th IIW First Virtual Convention. The Physical Convention had been planned to be held in one of the most beautiful cities of India, a heritage city of India & the Pink City of India - Jaipur in the massive monument- like structure - the Jaipur Exhibition & Convention Centre. Attending the physical Convention would have certainly been a treat to the eyes. Lots of preparations had been completed in the nearly 50,000 sq ft land.

But the pandemic changed everything. We had to cancel the physical Convention which disheartened the Members in India, particularly and Members worldwide, who were eagerly hoping to attend the Convention. Between September & December 2020, plenty of meetings were held with the Governing Body to deliberate on an alternative to the physical Convention.

The Governing Body has supported the Virtual Convention in spite of many apprehensions.

The announcement of the Virtual Convention was made in December last week with no possibility of postponement of the Convention dates. Friends.... Even Events – like Seminars or Conferences, with just a few hundred participants cannot be planned & executed in just 2 months. But the host country India, the Local Convention Committee headed by PAP & PBD Renu Baljee and the Event Management Company, MCI have made it happen very successfully with a great deal of patience and high efficiency. They have persevered 24 x 7 , at the cost of their health, to give one of the finest Conventions, that too for the first time – a Virtual Convention in a period of just 2 months.

Friends.... The 83 Non Districted Clubs from 36 countries are Inner Wheel Members. They are a valuable part of Inner Wheel and are contributing to the development of their Communities.

Giving the Non Districted Clubs importance, involving them in the Talk Show has given them a sense of belongingness to our Organisation. They have excitedly and enthusiastically participated in the Talk Show organised for the first time in a Convention.

Also an excellent no of members from NDCs have registered for the Convention from Non Districted Clubs.

The Talk Show with UN Representatives also gave us an understanding of their way of working in their respective UN Offices. They are giving their time, energy and own resources in representing Inner Wheel in the various Commissions of the United Nations.

Presentations on International Covid Fund & Lebanon's Success Story have given you an insight into the serious engagement of International Inner Wheel to contribute to the welfare of the needy & affected people. It has planted the seeds for continuing Corporate Projects at the International Inner Wheel.

For the first time.... Clubs have been involved in all the activities of the Convention by way of participation in the Exhibition of Projects through Collages, Presentation of Success Stories of Best Projects by Clubs & Talent Show of dances by members of countries.

In spite of restrictions & lockdowns in countries, I applaud the enthusiastic participation of Clubs & Members due to the motivation of National Presidents & National Representatives.

With just 2 days decided for the Convention , we had to manage to pack a lot of interesting programs for you.

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Very diverse attractions have kept us gripping with interest – like Exhibition of excellent projects by Clubs, Dances by beautiful Inner Wheel members from many countries & Success Stories of the best projects by Clubs.

Entertainment by India is always a treat to the eyes and today they have manifested the diverse cultures of the country.

I have tried my best to motivate, inspire, promote & encourage participation by Clubs in all the activities.

In the Talk Show with Non Districted Clubs - 14 members from 8 Clubs of 4 countries participated

More than 90 members from 15 countries have participated in the Talent Show.

36 countries have participated in the Project Collages for the Exhibition and Success Stories

We have changed the perspective of a Convention, by constantly creating awareness about the Convention & its programs, through all mediums, creating belongingness of our Members for our Organisation, involving maximum participation of members & countries in all the activities of the Convention and creating a positive image of IW which will certainly lead to further growth in Membership and progress of Inner Wheel .

By the time this recording is being done, more than 4100 Members have registered from nearly 68 countries, which is again a record. This shows that nearly 70% of Inner Wheel countries are attending our Virtual Convention. Registrations are still in progress till April 5. Indeed we have witnessed great Changes and great records in this 18th International Inner Wheel First Virtual Convention....

I take this opportunity to place on record our appreciation and compliments to the experienced, senior most members from around 40 countries involved in the Promotion of the Convention, who have brought in nearly 2000 registrations.

This demonstrates their unstinting love & affection for Inner Wheel.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Past International Inner Wheel Presidents Catherine Refabert, Charlotte de Vos, Yemisi Alitaise, Minna Kapur, Anita Agarwal, Abha Gupta & Kapila Gupta for their positive guidance, inspiration and support.

And my many dear friends in the world for their continued motivation and friendship, which I value very much.

Friends.... We have brought the Convention to your homes.

It is not that it is difficult but in just 2 months ... it is a great achievement.

My congratulations to the Convention Committee led by Coordinator Past National President & Past Board Director – Renu Baljee, Treasurer Gomathi Vishwanathan, Shailaja Bhat & Pushpa Suryamurthy for their ever smiling, hardworking & responsible coordination. I would like to sincerely express our appreciation by presenting them with a token of our love and gratitude.

I would also like to convey our sincere gratitude to the wonderful, cooperative & hard working team of MCI – Convention Director - Aman Kalra ; Convention Manager - Shilpi Oberoi; Registration Team of Alkesh Chourasia ; Entertainment & Production Team of - Saurabh Dey ; Speaker Management -Udit Joshi ; Finance – Saurabh Relan ; Creative & Designing Team with Rahul Sahni & Rakesh Bijewar & their Teams , Saurabh and Jacob, Swapnil and Shailendra – with Samir Kalia at the helm of MCI along with the Executive Director of MCI-Gets - Ruchi Mahotra.

Our special thanks to IIW Admin Alan Philips and Elaine Hathaway for coordinating and helping in the Business session on Proposals, recordings and coordination with LCC & MCI.

Though it is an accepted truth, I would like to convey my heartfelt gratitude to my family. My husband – Past District Governor and Past Rotary Coordinator Mayur for his ever smiling, unstinted support and value additions in all that I have been doing and standing by me in every adversity to always guide me positively.

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My daughter Rohini, my son-in-law Aseem for their all-time help, understanding, love and affection and my darling grandson Agastya, who is patiently waiting for me to spend all my time with him.

Thank you ... my lovely family.

Our special gratitude to all the Inner Wheel Members whose continued registrations are boosting our morale and keeping us always in high spirits.

Your trust & faith in us have encouraged us to give one of the most fruitful, fulfilling and memorable Virtual Conventions.

In spite of trying hard to give you a wonderful Virtual Convention, if at all, there are any shortcomings in the planning & execution of the Convention Program, the entire responsibility is mine.

The International Inner Wheel Theme this year – LEAD THE CHANGE - has certainly brought in positive changes in our outlook and changed our entire perspectives in the functioning of Clubs, Districts & Countries.

This Virtual Convention has now paved the way for future Conventions.

We have certainly fulfilled the Theme – **LEAD THE CHANGE**. This shows the impact of the Theme as we are Leading the Change and will continue to Lead The Change for a better Inner Wheel World.

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