

Dr Duru Shah: Empowering the Women of India

Dr Duru Shah, Scientific Director at Gynaecworld, became the first Indian gynaecologist to be bestowed with the international FIGO Distinguished Merit Award in Rome. She received this prestigious award during the opening ceremony of the World Congress of the Obstetrics and Gynaecology held in October, 2012. FIGO is the International Federation Of Gynecology & Obstetrics instituted for more than 20 years now. The award is awarded to only three deserving candidates globally, once every three years.

Commenting on this latest achievement, Dr Shah said, "This award means a lot to me. I feel both honoured and blessed to be India's first recipient to receive this prestigious award. It is a sign that my work is appreciated and this gives me the impetus to do more."

Dr Shah is reputed to be an ethical gynaecologist for over three decades. She is also known as the female crusader of the healthcare sector and has spearheaded successful women's health programmes, mainly in the hinterlands of India. Being the President of the Federation of Obstetric and Gynaecological Societies of India (FOGSI), in 2006, she also initiated many social programmes like 'Growing up' - the urban adolescent empowerment project which educated approximately five million girls in India on adolescent reproductive and sexual health, 'Kishori'- the urban slum-based adolescent empowerment programme in Dharavi and a rural maternal health programme - 'Save the Mothers'.

Academics is another area that interests Dr Shah. She has been the Chairman of the Indian College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists, the academic arm of FOGSI. She has initiated educational programmes such as the 'Satellite School' in association with the Indian Space Research Organization at FOGSI, the Post Graduate Review Course at ICOG, and the Post Graduate Quiz at the Indian Menopause Society. She is presently working as the Director of "E-Tutorials" a web-based educational programme for post graduate students in ObGyn.

She has authored more than 100 publications. A peer reviewer for many journals, she is also on the editorial board of 'TOG' by the Royal College of Obs & Gyn, the 'Climacteric' by the International Menopause Society and 'Menopause International' of the British Menopause Society.

Dr Shah's passion has always been preventive health, especially in young girls and women, with combating sexual abuse, especially in young girls, being a new focus area. Her overall aim is to empower Indian women as they are the 'mothers of tomorrow's children' and thus she feels her efforts 'really take care of our future'.

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