



## Ramaiah BMT Unit Achieves Global FACT Accreditation



**R**amaiah Memorial Hospital (RMH) has been awarded accreditation by the Foundation for the Accreditation of Cellular Therapy (FACT), one of the world's most stringent authorities governing quality and safety in bone marrow transplantation and cellular therapy.

With this recognition, RMH becomes one of only two hospitals in India to hold FACT accreditation and the only hospital in the country to hold both FACT and Joint Commission International (JCI) accreditations — a rare distinction that places it among globally benchmarked transplant centres.

FACT accreditation certifies compliance with internationally recognised FACT-JACIE standards, widely regarded as the gold standard in hematopoietic stem cell transplantation.

Dr. M. R. Jayaram, Chairman, GEF (Medical) & Chancellor, RUAS, said, "FACT accreditation reflects our commitment to governance-driven, patient-centric care and measurable clinical outcomes. It validates the discipline and systems required to meet global benchmarks. This achievement ensures that patients in India receive care aligned with the world's best."

Bengaluru serves as a referral hub for complex blood disorders across Karnataka and neighbouring states. At RMH, nearly 1,000 patients with blood disorders are evaluated annually, with approximately 100 deemed clinically eligible for transplantation. However, only 30-40 patients undergo transplantation each year due to donor availability, logistical challenges, and safety concerns.

FACT accreditation is expected to strengthen confidence in clinical systems and transplant governance, helping address these barriers by reinforcing international safety and quality benchmarks.

Dr. Nagendra Swamy S.C, CE, Healthcare Services, GEF (Medical), & RMH, said, "India's growing cancer and blood disease burden demands more than expanding transplant capacity - it demands proven outcomes. FACT accreditation demonstrates that quality, safety, and accountability are embedded into every step of our transplant programme. This milestone is about delivering reliable, globally benchmarked results that patients and families can trust."





**RAMAIAH**

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**Jnana Vahini**

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## Strengthening Healthcare Through Quality, Innovation, and Empathy

**H**ealthcare institutions today are increasingly measured not only by the clinical services they provide but by their commitment to innovation, quality assurance, and community engagement. The recent achievements and activities across Ramaiah Medical College and Hospitals reflect a dynamic ecosystem where academic excellence, global benchmarking, and patient-centered care converge to advance medical science and public health.

A landmark milestone this year is the Foundation for the Accreditation of Cellular Therapy (FACT) accreditation awarded to the Bone Marrow Transplant (BMT) Unit at Ramaiah Memorial Hospital. FACT accreditation represents one of the most rigorous international benchmarks in hematopoietic stem cell transplantation and cellular therapy, emphasizing patient safety, standardized clinical protocols, and outcome monitoring. With this recognition, the hospital becomes one of the very few institutions in India to meet these global standards and uniquely holds both FACT and Joint Commission International (JCI) accreditations. Such distinctions demonstrate that high-complexity therapies, including stem cell transplantation, can be delivered within India at internationally benchmarked levels of quality and governance. This recognition is particularly significant in a region where the demand for advanced treatment of hematological disorders and cancers continues to rise.

The broader academic and clinical environment within the institution further reinforces this commitment to excellence. Faculty members have received national recognitions for teaching, clinical research, and scientific leadership, while postgraduate trainees and students have achieved notable success at national conferences and academic competitions.

Equally important are the numerous community-oriented and educational initiatives conducted during the month. Departments across the institution organized awareness campaigns, walkathons, continuing medical education programmes, and community outreach activities addressing conditions such as cancer, tuberculosis, and leprosy.

In an era of rapidly evolving medical science, such milestones remind us that progress in healthcare is ultimately built on three pillars: rigorous standards, dedicated professionals, and an unwavering commitment to improving patient outcomes.

Dr. Santosh K. Devadas, HOD, Medical Oncology and Hematology, RMH, said, "In stem cell transplantation, risks often arise from system gaps rather than isolated events. FACT accreditation requires programmes to eliminate those gaps, ensuring safe cell handling, proactive complication management, and continuous outcome monitoring. These directly improve survival and long-term recovery."

**Strengthening India's Cellular Therapy Landscape**

FACT-accredited centres remain rare in India. RMH is currently the only such centre in Bengaluru and the second in the country. The accreditation enhances the hospital's readiness for advanced

cellular therapies while reinforcing its commitment to donor protection, clinical transparency, and sustained outcome measurement.

During the Programme, Dr. M. R. Jayaram, Chairman, GEF (Medical) & Chancellor, RUAS, Dr. Nagendra Swamy S. C, CE, Healthcare Services, GEF (Medical), & RMH, Dr. Harish K, Director, Ramaiah Institute of Onco-sciences, Dr. Madan S. Gaekwad, Chief Operating Officer (COO) Dr. Rasmi Palassery, Associate Professor, Department of Medical Oncology, Dr. Santosh K. Devadas, HOD, Medical Oncology and Hematology and others were present.

*Congratulations Sir*



Prof. Kuldeep Kumar Raina, Vice Chancellor, Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences, was conferred the PMA Honorary Fellowship – 2025 for his outstanding contributions to teaching and research, and for establishing the Materials Research Laboratory catering to liquid crystal materials and devices, electro-ceramics, polymers, self-assembled thin-film systems, nanocomposites, polymer-liquid crystal dispersed composite systems for smart switchable windows, and fast-response ferroelectric materials.



Dr. Sirisha Vinzamuri, Assist. Prof, was honoured with National Teaching award and was conferred with the AIOS-National Resource Teacher award title. This prestigious honour was presented by the All-India Ophthalmological Society on 1st February, 2026, in New Delhi.



## Precision, People, and Progress: The Oncology Landscape in 2026

The practice of oncology in 2026 is defined by a dual commitment: the pursuit of molecular precision and the delivery of compassionate, individualized care. As we observe World Cancer Day (WCD) and International Childhood Cancer Day (ICCD) this February, the medical community reflects on a global framework that seeks to harmonize rapid technological advancement with the nuances of human experience.

### **Global Mandates: Personalization and Measurable Impact:**

The World Cancer Day 2026 theme, "United by Unique," marks the second year of the UICC's triennial campaign. For clinicians, this is a call to operationalize people-centered care. It acknowledges that while two patients may share a histopathological diagnosis, their clinical trajectories are shaped by unique genomic backgrounds, varying comorbidities, and distinct socio-economic realities.

In parallel, ICCD 2026 concludes its three-year cycle with the theme "Demonstrating Impact: From Challenge to Change." This year, the focus shifts to measurable progress toward the WHO Global Initiative for Childhood Cancer (GICC) target: achieving a minimum 60% survival rate for children with cancer worldwide by 2030. In high-income countries, survival often exceeds 80%, but in low- and middle-income regions, it can be as low as 20% due to diagnostic delays and limited access to specialized care.

### **The Epidemiological Burden: Projections for 2026.**

The global and domestic cancer burden remains a significant public health challenge, requiring rigorous clinical vigilance:

**Global Burden:** IARC estimates for 2026 project approximately 18.7 million new cancer cases and nearly 10 million deaths annually. Alarmingly, up to 40% of these cases are linked to modifiable risk

factors—tobacco use remains the leading cause (15%), followed by preventable infections such as HPV and H. pylori (10%), and alcohol consumption (3%).

**The Indian Context:** Domestically, India faces a sharp rise in incidence. Projections for 2026 suggest nearly 1.87 million new cases. Tobacco-related malignancies, breast cancer, and cervical cancer account for over 50% of this burden. With the population over 60 expected to grow significantly, the onco-geriatric patient population will require more tailored therapeutic strategies.

### **Evolution in Diagnostics and Therapy:**

The "unique" aspect of modern care is grounded in Precision Oncology. We are witnessing a definitive shift from organ-based treatment to mutation-driven protocols.

**Diagnostic Nuances:** Beyond standard imaging, Next-Generation Sequencing (NGS) and Liquid Biopsies are now vital for identifying molecular vulnerabilities and detecting Minimal Residual Disease (MRD).

**Therapeutic Frontiers:** The expansion of CAR-T cell therapies, bispecific antibodies, and antibody-drug conjugates (ADCs) allows for targeted cytotoxicity, improving survival while preserving the quality of life.

### **Holistic Excellence at Ramaiah Institute of Oncosciences (RIO):**

The Ramaiah Institute of Oncosciences provides a vertically integrated oncology service model, encompassing advanced medical oncology for systemic and precision therapies, high-precision radiation oncology for targeted treatment, and specialized surgical oncology for comprehensive tumor resection and management. At RIO, we translate the global standards of cancer care into a comprehensive, multidisciplinary ecosystem. Our model ensures that every patient benefits from

collective expertise through our Integrated Tumour and Haematology Boards.

**Our Advanced Clinical Services:**

**1. MDT-Based Organ-Specific Treatments:** We provide specialized care pathways for site-specific malignancies, including Breast, Thoracic, Gastrointestinal, Head and Neck, and Uro-oncology. Each case is managed via a Multidisciplinary Team (MDT), ensuring that surgical, radiation, and medical oncology strategies are perfectly synchronized from the outset.

**2. Hematology and HSCT:** In collaboration with the University of Illinois, Chicago, our unit provides advanced Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplantation (HSCT), including autologous, allogeneic, and complex haplo-identical transplants within a state-of-the-art HEPA-filtered facility and now we have recently been conferred the FACT (Foundation for the Accreditation of Cellular Therapy) accreditation. This prestigious international certification signifies that our facility meets the most rigorous global standards for clinical care,

cell collection, and laboratory processing, ensuring the highest levels of patient safety and treatment efficacy in stem cell transplantation.

**3. Comprehensive Supportive Care:** Recognizing that survivorship begins at diagnosis, RIO offers dedicated Palliative Care for advanced symptom management, Psycho-oncology for emotional and cognitive support, and specialized Onco-physiotherapy to optimize functional recovery and mitigate treatment-related morbidity.

By aligning with the "United by Unique" philosophy, we ensure that our technological capabilities are matched by a commitment to the whole patient, bridging the gap between clinical science and human compassion.



**Dr. Rasmi Palassery**

Associate Professor  
Department of Medical Oncology



Urvashi Banerji, student, secured first place in the essay writing competition at the 3rd Global Autism Conference 2026, conducted by St. John's Medical College.



The Department of Dermatology organized World Leprosy Day through a series of awareness programs themed "Leprosy is Curable – the Real Challenge is Stigma." Dr. Deena Patil delivered a health awareness talk at the Rail Wheel Factory, Yelahanka. An educative play was performed by postgraduate students on 3rd February, 2026. Additionally, a health awareness program was conducted at the Primary Health Centre, JP Park, in collaboration with the Department of Community Medicine.



The Department of OBG organized a walkathon as part of the World Cancer Day awareness programme on 4th February 2026.

The initiative aimed to raise awareness about the prevention, early detection, and management of cancers affecting women, particularly cervical and breast cancer.

The programme included health education sessions, a walkathon, an edutainment skit for patients, counselling sessions, and awareness talks emphasizing the importance of regular screening, HPV vaccination, and timely medical consultation. The screening activities included breast cancer screening using a thermal scanner and cervical cancer screening through PAP smear tests, both of which were offered free of cost to the patients.



Dr. Anupama Hegde, Prof, Dept. of Cardiology delivered a talk on cardiovascular risk assessment for post-menopausal women at API Bhavan organised by Bangalore Menopausal society on 21st February, 2026.



Dr. Ananth Ram, Assoc. Prof, Dept. of Community Medicine, was invited as a panelist at the CME of the Physicians Association of Nutrition (PAN) – India. He spoke on “Micronutrient Deficiencies.” He was also inducted onto the Board of Directors of the PAN Bengaluru Chapter.



Dr. Pragati Rao, Prof, Dept. of Respiratory Medicine, was a faculty member at the European Respiratory Society at a summit in Hyderabad on 5th February, 2026.



Dr. Ananth Bhandary, Professor and Head of the Ophthalmology Department, was a faculty member at the international conference on 'Dry Eye and Ocular Surface Society'. He also presented a scientific paper on cosmetics and keratoconus. Additionally, he showcased Karnataka's rich culture through a Yekshagana performance.



Dr. Pramila Kalra, Prof. Dept. of Endocrinology, received ISCR ACCRI National Award 2026 for excellence in academic clinical research in the mid-career category for her Birac registry project work. She also participated as office bearer of Indian thyroid society and faculty at ITSCON 2026 at Chandigarh.



Dr. Praveen Kumar S, Prof, Dept. of Dermatology, chaired a session at National Conference of HAE Society of India (HAESICON), organised in association with Bangalore Dermatological Society.



The 9th Annual Conference of the Society for the Study of Xenobiotics (SSX 2026) was on 20th to 22nd February 2026, with the theme "New Approaches to Navigate Complexities in Drug Discovery and Development." It was organized in collaboration with the Faculty of Pharmacy at Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences.

Dr. Pragati Rao D, Prof, Dept. of Respiratory Medicine, delivered a lecture at PulmoKarn 2026 on one of the most significant breakthroughs in Pulmonary Hypertension: Sotatercept.



Dr. Fayeza M Malvi, final year resident, Dept. of Pathology, won best paper award in PulmoKarn 2026, annual Scientific meeting of Karnataka Pulmonologists Association at Bengaluru on 22nd February, 2026.



Dr. H.C. Srikantaiah, Prof. & HOD, Dept. of General Surgery, delivered a lecture on "Safe Access Techniques in Laparoscopic Cholecystectomy" at Command Hospital, Bengaluru at the AMASI – on 22nd February, 2026.

## International Epilepsy Day: Turning Awareness into Action

International Epilepsy Day is a global initiative dedicated to raising awareness about epilepsy, reducing stigma, and promoting better care and treatment. Epilepsy is one of the most common neurological disorders worldwide, affecting nearly 70 million people, with a significant burden in developing countries. In India alone, more than 12 million people live with epilepsy, contributing substantially to the global burden. Despite advances in medical science, epilepsy continues to affect individuals, families, and healthcare systems both socially and economically.

An epileptic seizure is defined as a transient occurrence of signs and/or symptoms caused by abnormal, excessive, or synchronous neuronal activity in the brain. While many patients respond well to anti-seizure medications (ASMs), a significant proportion develop drug-resistant epilepsy. Drug-resistant epilepsy is defined as the failure of adequate trials of two appropriately chosen and tolerated anti-epileptic drug regimens to achieve sustained seizure freedom. Studies show that nearly one-third of newly diagnosed patients may not achieve complete seizure control. The likelihood of seizure freedom declines with successive drug regimens, especially after the first two treatments.

Drug-resistant epilepsy has profound consequences. Persistent seizures are associated with cognitive decline, psychiatric disorders such as depression, reduced quality of life, increased risk of injury, and even sudden unexpected death in epilepsy (SUDEP). In children, recurrent seizures may lead to developmental delay or regression, particularly in those under two years of age. Chronic epilepsy also imposes a heavy psychological and financial burden on families and society.

However, drug resistance does not mean that treatment options are exhausted. Epilepsy surgery has emerged as an effective and safe therapeutic option for carefully selected patients. The goal of epilepsy surgery is the removal or disconnection of the epileptogenic zone—the region of the brain responsible for generating seizures—while preserving critical functional areas known as

eloquent cortex. Long-term seizure remission after surgery is approximately 60%, compared to only 5–14% in non-operated drug-resistant patients. Importantly, the major risk of epilepsy surgery in experienced centers is less than 1%, which is significantly lower than the long-term risks of uncontrolled epilepsy. Early identification of surgically remediable syndromes, such as mesial temporal lobe epilepsy with hippocampal sclerosis, lesional temporal and extratemporal epilepsies, hemispheric syndromes, and hypothalamic hamartomas, is crucial for improving outcomes.

The 2026 International Epilepsy Day campaign introduces the #EpilepsyPledge, marking a shift from awareness to action. Following last year's "My Epilepsy Journey" campaign, which highlighted real-life experiences and unmet needs, the #EpilepsyPledge invites individuals, schools, workplaces, community groups, and epilepsy organizations to take one concrete action in 2026 to strengthen awareness, safety, inclusion, and community understanding of epilepsy.

Not everyone can change national policy or fund research, but everyone can take one meaningful step—dispel a myth, share a story, speak up against stigma, or learn seizure first aid. Using the #EpilepsyPledge hashtag is more than symbolic; it represents solidarity with the estimated 50 million people worldwide living with epilepsy. A pledge is a commitment to act, to raise awareness, to challenge misconceptions, and to improve lives.

On this International Epilepsy Day, let us move beyond awareness and choose action. By combining medical advancement with social responsibility, we can reduce stigma, promote early intervention, and ensure that individuals with epilepsy lead safer, healthier, and more inclusive lives.



**Dr. Pradeep R**  
Additional Professor  
Dept. of Neurology



Dr. Smitha Patil, final year resident, Dept. of Respiratory Medicine, won best paper award in PulmoKarn 2026, Annual Scientific meeting of Karnataka Pulmonologist Association at Bengaluru on 22nd February, 2026.



Dr. Prasanna Kumar T, Prof. & HOD, Dept. of Respiratory Medicine, was selected as Treasurer of the Karnataka Pulmonologists Association. He also served as Chairperson for the session on “Newer Drugs in the Respiratory Armamentarium” at PulmoKarn 2026 on 22nd February, 2026.



The Department of Paediatric Surgery organised a CME programme on “The Bladder” on 21st February 2026. The event brought together experts for discussions on critical paediatric urology topics, including neurogenic bladder, exstrophy, urodynamics, posterior urethral valves, and renal management.



The 7th ICVC – International Cadaveric Vascular course was organized by the Departments of Vascular & Endovascular Surgery, Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences & National University Health System, Singapore on 14th February, 2026. A comprehensive academic experience featuring expert didactic lectures, intensive hands-on cadaveric modules, and international faculty collaboration between India & Singapore were focused



Dr. Samra, final year resident, Dept. of Respiratory Medicine, won 1st place in quiz competition on 20th February, 2026 in Pulmokorn - Karnataka State Conference – during the Inhalational Lung Injury workshop.



Dr. Naveen, PG student, Dept. of Community Medicine was awarded for the best oral presentation at the St. John's geriatric conference, guided by Dr. Nandakumar BS, Dr. Ananthram, Dr. Shivaraj from the dept. of Community Medicine.



Dr. Revathy P has been serving in the department of Radiation Oncology since 2011, with extensive expertise in brachytherapy, clinical dosimetry, and radiation safety, contributing to the treatment of over 3,000 patients and publishing 10 research articles. Promoted as Senior Radiological Safety Officer in 2023, she led the commissioning of advanced technologies including the Varian TrueBeam linear accelerator and Asia's first WOMED IORT-50 unit. Her most recent achievement is the successful completion of her Ph.D. in December 2025, further strengthening her contributions to medical physics and radiation oncology.



Dr. Monika N, PG student, Dept. of Nephrology has been awarded best investigator at ISNSCCON-26 at Hubballi.



Dr. Anupama K, Additional professor, dept. of Anatomy won best research paper award in Society of Medical Anatomist's National Conference (SOMACON) 2026 at S N Medical College Jodhpur.

Rajitha, final year student was awarded 2nd place for Poster presentation in UG Category at the St. John's Geriatric conference. She was guided by Dr. Ranjith, Community Medicine and Dr. Ashwin Kulkarni from General Medicine.



A postgraduate sensitisation programme on Tuberculosis and the National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme was conducted on 26th February, 2026, jointly organised by the Departments of Respiratory Medicine, Community Medicine, and Microbiology. The programme covered updates in TB control, diagnostics, management, and latent TB infection.



The Department of OBG, in association with the Department of Nephrology, organised a Continuing Medical Education (CME) programme on "Multidisciplinary Management of Hypertensive Emergencies" on 17th February 2026. The CME focused on enhancing clinical expertise in the multidisciplinary management of hypertensive crises and renal disorders in pregnancy, emphasizing improved maternal and fetal outcomes.

## WELCOME



**Dr. Rishab T. Ramesh**  
Senior Resident  
Radio Diagnosis



**Dr. Sai Harsha Sreepada**  
Senior Resident  
Orthopaedics



**Dr. Ahmed Sainulabdeen**  
Assistant Professor  
Gastroenterology



**Dr. Rakshitha Gowda B.H.,**  
Assistant Professor  
Biochemistry



**Dr. Spurthi Rajesh**  
Senior Resident  
Radio Diagnosis



**Dr. Kishore R**  
Senior Resident  
Radio Diagnosis



**Dr. Niveditha S**  
Senior Resident  
Radiation Oncology



**Dr. Shivangi Agarwal**  
Senior Resident  
Psychiatry



**Dr. Sumitha Murthy**  
Senior Resident  
Emergency Medicine



**Dr. Edna Maria Rodriguez**  
Senior Resident  
Dermatology



**Dr. Kaikade Sachin Ramdas**  
Senior Resident  
Hospital Administration



**Ganesh T**  
Junior Laboratory Technician  
Pathology.

## BIDDING ADIEU



**Dr. P.T. Acharya**  
Professor, Neurology



**Dr. Akshay Jain**  
Assistant Professor  
Gastroenterology



**Dr. Anisha P. Bindagi**  
Senior Resident  
Dermatology



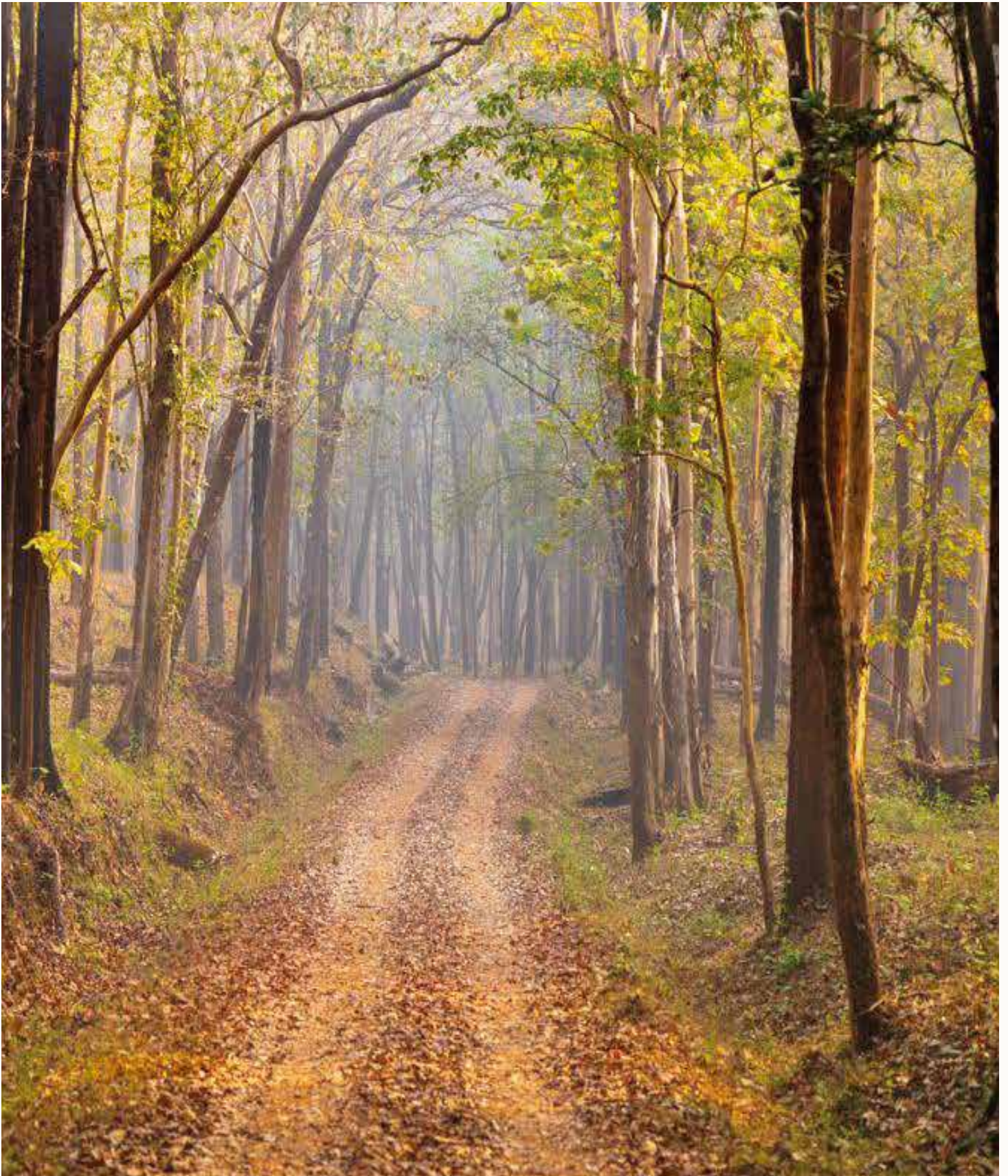
**Dr. Bharath A. Chhabria**  
Assistant Professor  
Pulmonary & Critical Care Medicine



**Dr. Apoorva Chauhan**  
Senior Resident  
Paediatrics



**Dr. Shruthi Deshpande**  
Assistant Professor  
Emergency Medicine



Into the forest I go to lose my mind and find my soul

Snap by - Dr. Pradeep