Nominee Statement: Taraprasad Das

# Position: IAPB Vice President

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| **Nominee Name** |
| Taraprasad Das |
| **Nominee Job Title** |
| Vice Chairman |
| **Nominee Organisation** |
| L V Prasad Eye Institute |
| **Nominating IAPB member organisation** |
| Individual Member |
| **Represented by:** |
| Serge Resnikoff |
| **Seconded by:** |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | |  | Van Charles Lansingh | |
| **Seconding IAPB member organisation:** |
| HelpMeSee |
| **Seconding Statement** |
| Dr. Taraprasad Das, TP to his friends, is an outstanding clinician, academic, and administrator with over 4 decades of experience in public health ophthalmology. His current executive positions include Vice-Chair, L V Prasad Eye Institute, India; Regional Chair, IAPB South-East Asia; Chairman, Universal Eye Health, Odisha (India); and Vice President, Asia Pacific Academy of Ophthalmology.   Dr. Das joined LVPEI in 1990 as Head of Retina Services and was instrumental in developing this department. He led the LVPEI Odisha (India) service that established the main campus at the capital Bhubaneswar, four district centers, and twelve primary centers. He has trained many ophthalmologists, who now work throughout India, as well as in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. I have had the privilege of knowing Dr. Das for more than a decade. During my time as IAPB regional coordinator to Latin America and the Caribbean, we worked together at several IAPB meetings. He was always very helpful in arranging short-term fellowships at LVPEI. I can personally attest that he is very resourceful and a valuable team player to advance public health ophthalmology in low- and middle-income countries.   As the Regional Chair of IAPB South-East Asia, he has advocated for eye care with regional governments and liaised with international NGOs and the WHO SEARO. He detailed the regional eye health experience in his upcoming book “South-East Asia Eye Health: The Systems, Practices, and Challenges” (Springer, scheduled for release in October 2021).   After the Government of Odisha committed USD 100 million towards eye care, Dr. Das became Chairman of the Universal Eye Health Program in Odisha, the only Indian state with an official universal eye health program. His impressive achievements and accomplishments in medicine were recognized by the government of India in 2013 when they honored him with the Fourth highest Civilian Award, Padma Shri.  His excellent work in public health also earned him the IAPB Vision Excellence award this year.  As an academic researcher, Dr. Das has received 18 competitive research grants, has delivered 21 eponymous lectures, published over 300 scientific papers, and authored three medical and two non-medical books.   With great enthusiasm, I second his nomination for Vice President, IAPB. |
| **Nominee Statement** |
| I am an ophthalmologist by training and fellowship-trained (Aravind, Madurai and international) vitreoretinal specialist. I am practicing ophthalmology for 4 decades, one decade in Aravind (1980-1990) and three decades in the LV Prasad Eye Institute (LVPEI) (1990 till date). Currently I am the Vice Chair of LVPEI. I have also worked in Nepal (1983) as WHO consultant and established the first version of Mechi Zonal Eye Hospital at Bhadrapur.   Work in Odisha, India I am the current Chairman of the Universal Eye Health Program, Odisha, India since 2017. Odisha is the eastern state of India and is relatively backward in health care. The government has committed USD 100 million. Most of this budget is spent on improving eye care at village (primary) and district (secondary) level, and capacity building of AOPs. I also spearheaded establishing the LVPEI eye care system in Odisha in 2006. In last fifteen years the LVPEI has established a network of tertiary, secondary and primary centers. This has benefitted over 1.5 million people and has reduced significantly the cost of care to the patients in this relatively poor state.   Work in South-East Asia Region In 2012, I became the Regional Chair of IAPB South-East Asia. I worked directly in 4 countries as follows:  I. Data collection and Capacity Building Maldives and Timor-Leste- First blindness and visual impairment RAAB survey. The generated data helped strategize the eye care program including the National Plan in Timor-Leste.   Bhutan- 1. Second RAAB in Bhutan after a gap of 9 years; this showed over 30% reduction in the prevalence of blindness and vision impairment. 2. First national-level School Sight Program. 3. Reskilling over 30 AOPs.  Bangladesh- First RAAB Rohingya refugees in Cox’s Bazar.  II. Advocacy Regional and country WHO and international organizations. Convened two regional IAPB- WHO meetings.   All these have been published in peer reviewed scientific journals.   My Vision as IAPB Vice President, if elected are:  1. Membership drive including new Patrons  2. Raise new funding opportunities though ophthalmic device and pharma industry  3. Engage regional WHOs and through them the governments and all Regional Chairs  4. Engage country and region- specific international organizations  5. Capacity building of AOPs 6. Drive the IAPB and WHO agenda of IPCEC and SDG |