



The Basanti Devi Amir Chand Prize is the earliest instituted award of ICMR, founded in 1953 by late Major General Amir Chand for the significant research contributions made by scientists in the field of biomedical sciences. The award for the year 2007 was to Dr. Vedantam Rajshekhar, Professor of Neurosurgery, Department of Neurological Sciences, Christian Medical College, Vellore for his work on “Cysticercosis”.

Dr. Rajshekhar has made major contributions in the field of Cysticercosis during the past two decades. He and his colleagues were the first to identify the true nature of Single, Small, Enhancing Lesions on CT scans (SSECTL) of Indian patients with seizures. Using stereotactic techniques his team demonstrated that the vast majority of SSECTL were a form of Neurocysticercosis (NCC) which presented as single lesions, namely, the Solitary Cysticercus Granuloma (SCG). Dr. Rajshekhar has devised diagnostic criteria for SCG which distinguishes SCG from solitary tuberculomas and other brain lesions and helps clinicians in avoiding unnecessary and inappropriate empiric therapy such as antituberculous therapy. He has also performed community-based studies on the larger problem of NCC as a public health issue, which may lead to some control measures for cysticercosis. Dr. Rajshekhar has made several refinements to the Enzyme Linked Immunotransfer Blot test for cysticercal antibodies in serum to improve its sensitivity in patients with SCG. He has represented India at several international fora to discuss and arrive at a consensus on various aspects of Cysticercosis including diagnosis, management and control measures.