US election results not favoured by dentists
Seventy per cent think a McCain presidency would have been better for the profession

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LEIPZIG, Germany/FRAN-CISCO, CA, USA: According to a recent survey, US dentists might be disappointed by the Democratic win in the US elections last month. Two out of three dentists surveyed in a poll by dental practice marketing resource The Healthy Dentist said that former Republican nominee John McCain would be a better president for dentists. One in six favoured Obama, while the remaining said there would be no difference between the two.

Illinois Senator Barack Obama won the recent US presidential election against John McCain by 565 to 173 votes. He will take office from incumbent president George W. Bush in January next year. In a Democrat radio address in November, he announced the development of a plan that will create 2.5 million jobs by 2011—“a plan big enough to meet the challenges we face that I intend to sign soon after taking office.” He has also promised to expand federally funded health care for lower income children and other groups.

Many poor and lower-middle-class families in the US do not receive adequate care, in part because most dentists want customers who can pay in cash or have private insurance. The lack of dental care is also not restricted to the poor and their children, recent data show. Experts on oral health say that about 100 million Americans have no access to care. Most dentists, however, believe that a Republican would have been better for the economy. “Due to higher taxes by Obama, there will be less money to spend on dentistry,” grieved a Louisiana dentist. “Obama will be a disaster, raising costs for employers and decreasing patient service,” agreed a New Jersey dentist. “There will be less elective cosmetic services as the economy goes downhill!”

Dentists were concerned about tax issues. “Obama is a classic Robin Hood Democrat: tax the people who work to create wealth, and redistribute it to the masses,” said a Florida dentist. “The last thing I need is higher taxes,” said a California periodontist.

Barack Obama was not dentists’ first choice for US presidency. Photo: Misty Dawn.

Schools in India and Japan cooperate
CHENNAI, India: With increased trade talks between India and Japan, the Sri Ramachandra University (SRU) in Chennai, India, has announced the signing of a collaboration agreement with the Kyushu Dental College in Japan. The agreement includes the exchange of personnel between the two universities as well as the sharing of scientific results, a SRU press release announced.

Prof. Hosokawa, Head of the Department of Prosthodontics at Kyushu Dental College, said his department was currently conducting research in oral hygiene index profiling, bone biology, and computer-guided surgery, among others, in which the students and research scholars from SRU will be able to participate. Prof. Thiyagarajan, Director Chief Advisor of Research at SRU, added that the agreement will help in launching joint research projects in vital areas.

Australia, NZ consider fluoridation
BARTON, Australia/WELLINGTON, New Zealand: Australia and New Zealand are considering approving the voluntary addition of fluoride to bottled water. Reports went public after Coca-Cola Amatil and the Australian Dental Association quarrelled over a print advertising campaign that was adding fur to parents’ fears about the negative effects of soft drink consumption on their children.

Food Standards Australia New Zealand has now released a report for public comment that proposes amending, the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code. Should the organisation approve the sale of bottled water containing added fluoride, it will be a voluntary permission allowing manufacturers to add fluoride under the conditions of the Code.