

Chairman's felicitation speech for Lions Club of Central Madras function

Good Morning to all of you!

It is a great pleasure and privilege to participate in this momentous function organized by the Lion's Club of Central Madras under the auspices of His Excellency the Governor of Tamil Nadu at the historic Durbar hall. At the outset I would like to express my profound gratitude to his Excellency the Governor of Tamil Nadu on behalf of Sankara Nethralaya and the Lion's Club of Central Madras for giving his valuable time in the midst of his busy official schedules to inaugurate the diabetic retinopathy screening camp today and for kindly consenting to make his August presence in today's Award Presentation Function.

The Lion's club has been in the fore front in the battle against blindness the world over for more than 8 decades which is almost a century. Their holy crusade against blindness which dates back to year 1925 when they accepted the great Helen Keller's challenge and became 'Knights of the blind in the Crusade against darkness' and 'Sight First' the far reaching global eye care initiative by them are golden pages in the history of their fight against blindness. I am proud to say here that the 'Lion's Club of Central Madras' have added their own glorious chapter to this history through the unstinting support and tireless efforts of their members in eliminating blindness. I have had the privilege of being a partner and participant in their joint efforts with us in this direction and I can declare with confidence that the long partnership between the Lion's Club of Central Madras and Sankara Nethralaya has been a 'roaring' success and an outstanding example of a great and spirited partnership between two dedicated NGO's deeply committed to the noble cause of providing quality healthcare to the public.

The Lions club of Central Madras has been a great source of strength and inspiration to us and has helped us most generously in cash and kind in many of our endeavors, I am restricted by time to go into the details of each of them and will confine myself to recalling some of their watershed involvements like the total upgrading of the facilities at Sankara Nethralaya with the help of funding from the Lions Club International Foundation in year 1999, funding of the diabetic retinopathy camps during 2002-03 which helped in screening thousands of people

and their recent thoughtful gesture of gifting a pocket CCTV to the Low Vision Clinic.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the distinguished institutions and doctors who have been honoured with the Lion Dr.P.Sivaraj Memorial Award, Lion Dr CV. Ananthasayanam Memorial award and Lion Dr ES.Krishnan Award for their significant contributions towards the cause of preventing blindness and other visual impairments and Dr SS.Badrinath our Chairman Emeritus for being bestowed with a special award for his 'Service to the people'. The award to Dr SS Badrinath comes as a dual honour, it is a recognition of his services to the Lion's club of which he is a member and to Sankara Nethralaya the institute for which he is the founder, prime architect and driving force.

I thank all of you once again for gracing this noble function being held under the auspices of His Excellency the Governor of Tamil Nadu. A function which I am sure would go a long way in highlighting the critical need for screening, prevention and treatment of eye debilities and blood donation.