

**ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY DR.K.ROSAIAH, GOVERNOR OF TAMIL NADU
AT THE INAUGURATION OF THE DIABETIC RETINOPATHY SCREENERING CAMP
AT DARBAR HALL, RAJ BHAVAN, CHENNAI ON 29.02.2012 AT 10.00 A.M.**

At the outset, I thank the Lions Club of Central Madras, District 324 A1 for organizing the Diabetic Retinopathy Screening Camp for the Raj Bhavan staff and for their family in association with Sankara Nethralaya, Diabetes Association of India here today. It is pleasure to inaugurate the Diabetic Retinopathy Camp present the awards to the Educational Institutions, Doctors and to the Lions Club members for the distinct contribution and to address this distinguished gathering here this morning. Health is one of the primary pursuits of man and is the wealth of the nation. Both the State and Central Governments have health of the citizens as their prime agenda. The Governments have introduced various health care projects and schemes for the benefit of the people. The Voluntary Organisations deserve commendation for working in close coordination with the Government for the upkeep of health and hygiene of the people.

The true, sincere and committed service of the volunteers and NGOs, Doctors and paramedical staff has provided an able support in taking the health care schemes to the unreached and to the poor and needy people.

The Lions Club of Central Madras deserves commendation for its 41 years of dedicated service to the people. Its efforts to create Diabetes Awareness, Conduct of

Comprehensive Eye Screening Camps, propagation of Voluntary Blood Donation deserve commendation. The able support and services rendered by Sankara Nethralaya, Diabetes Association of India, Southern Chapter and Lakshmi Landstein Medical Research Foundation to the Lions Club of Central Madras 324 A1 deserve appreciation.

WHO statistics reveal that there are about 39 million are blind and about 90% of the world's visually impaired lie in developing countries. It is estimated that there are about 15 million people who are visually impaired in India and what is worrying is that 75% of these are cases of avoidable blindness.

Diabetic Retinopathy is one of the leading causes for blindness. There are approximately 35 million people in India with diabetes, the largest number in any country, and this is predicted to rise to 80 million by 2030. Although progress from lack of symptoms to blindness due to diabetic retinopathy may take several decades. It already accounts for 3% of blindness in India. The prevalence of diabetic retinopathy in India is 18% of diabetics.

It is high time that we put in joint and concerted efforts to create awareness on Diabetic Retinopathy and caution about the cause of blindness. Early detection and proper treatment will help to reduce the cause of blindness due to diabetic retinopathy. The initiatives taken by the Lions Club of Central Madras 324 A1 to conduct Eye Screening Camps for Cataract and Diabetic Retinopathy in association with Sankara Nethralaya

and with the Diabetes Association of India, Southern Chapter for Creation of Diabetic Awareness, Diabetic foot care and Diabetes Detection Camps are laudable.

If it is eye or eye care one thing which immediately comes to one's mind is "Sankara Nethralaya". I congratulate Dr. S.S.Badrinath, Chairman, Emeritus, Sankara Nethralaya for his distinguished service in the field of Eye Care.

I congratulate the recipients of Lion Dr.P.Sivaraj Memorial Awards, Lion Dr.C.V.Ananthasayanam Memorial Awards and Lion E.S.Krishnan Memorial Awards for their service to the society and for their close co-ordination with the Lions Club of Central Madras, District 324 A1.

I convey my warm felicitations to Dr. S.Bhaskaran, Chairman, Sankara Nethralaya, Lion Andal Rajaram, President, Office Bearers and Members of the Lions Club of Central Madras District 324 A1, Doctors, Medical and Para Medical Staff and to all those who are associated in conduct of the Diabetic Retinopathy Screening Camp.

I wish the Lions Club of Central Madras, District 324 A1 all success in its endeavours.

My greetings to all of you.

Jai Hind.