

## Sankara Nethralaya Celebrates Republic Day 2022 Chief Guest Dr. Prof. R. Surendran



## Sankara Nethralaya wins The Economic Times Healthcare Best Hospital - Ophthalmology (National) Awards



## Sankara Nethralaya wins Economic Times Healthcare Awards 2021



Sankara Nethralaya is proud to announce we have received the Economic Times Healthcare Awards 2021 in the category “Best Hospital – Ophthalmology (National)”. Considered as one of the pioneers in India, Sankara Nethralaya consistently maintains quality eye care for those in need.

Recognizing India’s healthcare sector as one that rose to the challenge during the pandemic and beyond, tirelessly steering the nation through the crisis, the ET Healthcare Awards 2021 celebrates the Healthcare sector’s ability to adapt to urgency, cross through disruptions, and embrace transformation in the face of uncertainties.



After being recognized as one among the ‘Best 4 Ophthalmological Institutions in the World for Year 2021’ by Newsweek, the international news magazine, Sankara Nethralaya wins the The Economic Times Healthcare Awards 2021 for Best Hospital – Ophthalmology on the national level.

We thank all our consultants, nursing, staff and our supporters for their hard work and dedication to provide total eye-care solutions of highest standards to all sections of community in a patient-friendly environment.

## Sankara Nethralaya observes 28<sup>th</sup> Aradhana of Sri Maha Periyava



Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati, the 68th Peethadhipati of Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam, whose grace is felt even now by innumerable devotees across the world, has been Sanakra Nethralaya’s guiding light and the inspiration for our dear founder, Dr. S. S. Badrinath to establish India’s first eye hospital focusing on vitreoretinal subspecialty. In remembrance of Sri Maha Periyava, the 28th Aradhana of Sri Maha Periyava was held on 04th January 2022, at 5:00 pm in Sri V. D. Swami Auditorium. Dr. N. Angayarkanni compered the evening’s events,

which was a blessed and refreshing beginning to the New Year.

The event opened with the auspicious Veda Gosham, followed by a prayer song sung by Mr. Durai Raj D. Junior Research Fellow, Projects - CSIR - Histopathology Lab. Dr. Anuradha, Principal, Elite School of Optometry, gave the welcome address and introduced Sri Ganesh Sharmaji. Dr. Girish Shiva Rao presented the honoured chief guest with a silk shawl. Sri Ganesh Sharma shared anecdotes from Sri Mahaperiyava’s life that illuminated the holy saint’s selfless, sage insights into human nature and inspired everyone who listened. Dr. Sripriya Krishnamurthy, Director, General Ophthalmology, gave the closing speech thanking Sri Ganesh Sharmaji for his moving and insightful discourse on Sri Maha Periyava’s life and his philosophies. Sri Mahaperiyava’s wisdom was such that he was able to offer advice to individuals from all walks of life.

After the moving discourse ended, Dr. Angayarkanni gave the closing speech and everyone offered flowers to Sri Maha Periyava and paid their respects at the end of the ceremony.

## Sankara Nethralaya Celebrates Republic Day 2022



Sankara Nethralaya family once again celebrated India's Republic Day 2022 with all the standard operating protocols in place. With only essential staff and the Chief Guest, physically present, many more viewed the ceremony online from the safety of their homes. The Flag hoisting ceremony started at 8:00 a.m. and Dr. G. Suganeswari offered a warm welcome to the chief guest, Dr. Prof. R. Surendran, Director of Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary Centre for Surgery and Transplantation at MIOT International Hospitals, Chennai.

Joining our esteemed Chief Guest on the dais were Dr. Girish S. Rao, President, and Dr. T. S. Surendran, Vice Chairman, Sankara Nethralaya. Mr Chellasamy I K, Chief Security Officer escorted Dr. R. Surendran to unfurl the flag, while Mr. Ravi, DPS, led everyone in singing the national anthem. While Mr. I. K. Chellasamy introduced our chief guest to the assembled security guards, Mr. Ravi sang a moving patriotic song especially themed for Indian Republic day.

Mr. Mani Bhaskaran, Deputy Director of Glaucoma Services, gave a brief introduction of the history of the Constitution of India, and the significance of India's Republic day and invited Dr. T. S. Surendran to introduce the chief guest, Dr. R, Surendran. Dr. T. S. Surendran reminisced that about meeting Dr. R. Surendran in 1964 in school and maintaining a close friendship since. Dr. T. S. Surendran showered his appreciation and praise on Dr. R. Surendran. Our chief guest completed his MBBS, MS, and MCH in Stanley Hospital, and specialises in liver diseases. He established successful liver transplants, the only of its kind in the government sector throughout India

He performed many Whipple procedures (pancreaticoduodenectomy – major operation to remove the head of the pancreas.) His most famous achievement was to start a gastroenterology block in a government hospital overcoming the bureaucracy and offering low cost treat for liver diseases in the government hospital. Dr. R. Surendran is an admirer of Dr. S. S. Badrinath and emulates Dr. SSB in his philanthropic deeds.

Many employees from our institution were treated by him. He successfully initiated multi-tasking among his subordinates while working at Stanley Medical College, making his innovations unique in the government sector.

Dr. Girish S. Rao, President, honoured the Chief Guest with a 'pōnnādāi' (silk shawl). Dr. R. Surendran took the stage and acknowledged Dr. S. S. Badrinath as his 'Asaan' or teacher. He told the enthralled audience a little known factoid about the constitution – the Indian Constitution consists of 328 pages and the largest constitution in the world. He spoke of the inequalities existing in our country – the rich get better medical treatment than the have-nots in spite of our Constitution speaking of the right to equality and freedom.



He recounted a small incident demonstrating Dr. S. S. Badrinath's humanitarianism - a patient from the North East region of India who came to Sankara Nethralaya for treatment suffered a stroke on the day of his discharge, and became semi-comatose. Dr. T. S. Surendran coordinated with Dr. R. Surendran who was in Stanley Hospital for the patient's admission to the Neuro-ICU. But Dr. Badrinath took a personal interest and sent the patient to Apollo Hospital, spending a princely sum on the patient's recovery, stating that it was Sankara Nethralaya's responsibility to send the patient back in good health. Dr. R. Surendran said Sankara Nethralaya staff is very fortunate to work in a humanitarian atmosphere led by Dr. Badrinath's spirit of selflessness. He called for young doctors and other youngsters to make the world a better place, and reminded the younger generation to remember their early enthusiasm to help the poor and not change to materialism when they got older.

Dr. R. Surendran advised the young doctors that success is not important but significance is important. He elaborated that while skill and knowledge made good doctors, empathy was important to become a great doctor. He urged the young doctors to choose a significant life of character. He ended his speech by blessing Sankara Nethralaya to grow in the same spirit of missionary vision.

Dr. G. Suganeswari thanked Dr. R. Surendran for his inspirational speech and announced the presentation of service awards. She called on Mrs. Sudha Mohan to announce the Dhingra Trust Awards for the children of employees who had excelled in their studies. On the occasion of India's 50th Independence day, the institution had taken a vow to grant merit awards to employees' children who scored 80% and above in their academics. The Dhingra Family Trust was established in 2004 by Sri Ram Dhingra who belongs to California, USA, for the children of employees who scored above 70%, and going on for college education. A total of 21 children - 18 from Chennai and 3 from Kolkota were the joyful recipients of the Dhingra Trust awards.

After the awards were distributed, one of the awardees, Ms. Janani, daughter of Ms. Revathy, Department of Patient Services, shared her thoughts and thanked the institution on behalf of all the awardees.

Mrs. Shalini Srikumar, who started her career at Sankara Nethralaya as a consultant secretary in 1997, was encouraged to become a clinical research coordinator. Her daughter too was the recipient of the Dhingra Trust Awards. She thanked the institution for encouraging the students in their future careers and enabling the employees to have good careers.

Dr. Suganeswari concluded the Republic Day celebrations by thanking the Chief Guest, Dr. R. Surendran, Dr. Girish S. Rao, President, and Dr. T. S. Surendran for attending the event. She also thanked the security guards, housekeeping, and all the other staff who attended the event. She ended by quoting Dr. Abdul Kalam, "A dream is not that which you see while sleeping, it is something that does not let you sleep."



## A Smart Move by Sankara Nethralaya and Vision-Aid



Sankara Nethralaya and Vision-Aid, an international NGO that works for the welfare of the visually impaired, are long-term partners, collaborating on various vision rehabilitation programs including running the Vision Enhancement Clinic (VEC) at Sankara Nethralaya's Shenoy Nagar campus. In partnership with the India-based NGO Trees for Life India, Vision-Aid gave away 10 smartphones to visually impaired patients of the Low Vision Care Clinic (LVC) and VEC at Sankara Nethralaya

main campus in Chennai on Oct 28th 2021.

In the first phase of a much larger rollout, ten visually impaired deserving patients of the LVC and the VEC were given smartphones in a small event. The phone distribution event was a closed group event in accordance with the continuing guidelines against the COVID19 pandemic. The event also serves to encourage optometrists and rehabilitation specialists with knowledge of the latest smartphone apps.

Dr. Girish S. Rao, President, Dr. T. S. Surendran, Vice- Chairman, Dr. Pramod Bhende, Director of Vitreo-Retina Services, Dr B Shantha, Senior Consultant - Glaucoma Services, Mr. V. L. Narasimhan and Mr. Vijay Francis from Vision-Aid, India attended the ceremony.

An intensive training schedule jointly conducted by Sankara Nethralaya and Vision-Aid to assist the beneficiaries will follow this event. The training schedule aims at teaching the beneficiaries to use the smart phones and assistive mobile apps efficiently to overcome the daily challenges of the visually challenged.

Though there are many sophisticated mobile apps freely available for modern smartphones, few are aware of their existence and know how to use them to improve their day-to-day living.

Smart phone companies have poured a lot of money into creating very powerful technology in today's smart phones, such as AI-based apps that help blind users see objects around them, navigation apps that help the visually challenged to navigate safely, and learning apps that connect to a range of digital resources for learning and education. Through such apps, smart phones can become like constant, personal companions, helping to enable, educate and empower the blind and visually impaired to live with independence and dignity.

## Sankara Nethralaya Congratulates Dr. Sheila John on her Doctoral Degree

Sankara Nethralaya family congratulates Dr. Sheila John on receiving her doctoral degree from the Faculty of Surgery and Surgical Specialties, The Tamilnadu Dr. M. G. R. Medical University on 20th December 2021. She successfully defended her doctoral thesis titled "To Compare the Accuracy of Computer-aided Grading for Presence or Absence of Diabetic Retinopathy in Type 2 Diabetes Patients in a Telescreening Program." Her aim was designed to provide inputs on the suitability of a computer-assisted DR screening solution on Type 2 diabetes patients, for use in a larger prospective study.



Dr. Sheila John was awarded her Ph.D during the convocation attended by Thiru M. K. Stalin, honourable Chief Minister of Tamilnadu and Shri R. N. Ravi, honourable 15th Governor of Tamil Nadu.

Teleophthalmology camps were conducted in two districts in Tamil Nadu, India, from January 2015 to May 2017 and around 472 diabetic patients underwent teleconsultations at Sankara Nethralaya, Nungambakkam (main campus). Around 1200 retinal photographs from Type 2 diabetes patients at diabetic clinics in Chennai were also imaged through tele-screening for the data analysis.

## Sankara Nethralaya celebrates World Diabetes Day

SN celebrates World Diabetes Day (WDD) on November 14th

This year we conducted a camp for people with diabetes who were hospitalized for COVID 19 infection. The theme of WDD this year was to improve the access of care to people with diabetes.

There is evidence that patients with diabetes who additionally were hospitalised for Covid showed higher progression in diabetic retinopathy. This could be due to many reasons such as ischemia experienced in Covid or due to lack of access to eye care during lockdown and fear of stepping out to get eye care assessment done. Close to 600 patients were called on 14th November 2021 to the main branch for assessment. This was done over 2 weeks with the help of the Communication department and Diabetic retinopathy team who called eligible patients and gave appointments.

A battery of tests that included ocular and Covid history, vision assessment, ocular biomicroscopy and applanation tonometry. Following this the patients were dilated with mydriatic drop, fundus photograph was taken, their HbA1c was assessed with one prick test. Dilated fundus evaluation was planned to be done by an ophthalmologist.



Based on the diagnosis, the patients were given counselling and advice by dietician on controlling blood sugar levels. Additionally, this year special yoga which included breath control and simple yoga exercises were included.

Unfortunately, due to heavy rainfall and water lodging in many areas of Chennai, many elderly patients could not report on the specified date. Of the patients who reported, 68% patients had no diabetic retinopathy, 24% had diabetic retinopathy but showed no progression and 16% of patients who had progression were referred for additional investigations and treatment.

Besides this initiative, Dr Rajiv Raman wrote an article in “Hindu” a leading newspaper in Tamilnadu explaining Frequently Asked Questions on Diabetic retinopathy.

In addition, an article with input of Dr RRN on Diabetic Retinopathy written by Mr A P Irungovel, Manager-Medical Sociology was published in the Famous Tamil Weekly Kalki.

## Sankara Nethralaya serves the unorganized sector through Occupational Optometry

Sankara Nethralaya’s Department of Occupational Optometry Services conducted a focused continuous comprehensive services for the laborers in the unorganized sector. Sunday camps also were held monthly once between July to November 2021 at the main hospital, with the invaluable support of Computer Ages Management Services (CAMS) as a part of their CSR activity.

This camp included a Visual Task Analysis Based eye examination for sculptors, hair dressers, fishermen, agricultural workers, and toy-making artisans crossing the borders of Tamil Nadu. Around 896 workers benefited by these camps and around 686 individuals were dispensed with new glasses including safety eye wear & about 162 were referred for further specialty cross consultations. Cataract surgery for about 28 patients were funded by CAMS and followed-up by OOS.

We thank all our supporters such as CAMS for collaborating in the fight against preventable blindness and bringing quality eye care to the deserving patients of our nation.



## Inauguration of the SN – Sanmar Centre of Excellence for Stevens Johnson Syndrome (SeNSCE SJS)



The SN – Sanmar Centre of Excellence for Stevens Johnson Syndrome (SeNSCE SJS) was inaugurated on 11th October 2021 in the H. T. Parekh block, JKCN in collaboration with the Sanmar Group. The inaugural puja of the restricted entry facility was attended by Mr. Vijay Shankar, Deputy Chairman, The Sanmar Group, Dr. Girish S. Rao, President, Dr. T. S. Surendran, Vice Chairman and Director - Paediatric Ophthalmology, Dr. Pramod Bhende, Director, Ophthalmology – Vitreo Retinal, Dr. Rama Rajagopal, and other dignitaries.

Stevens – Johnson Syndrome SJS is a serious auto-immune disorder – a reaction to common medications such as antibiotics and anti –epileptic medications that leads to corneal blindness in the later stages of the disease. Worldwide, an estimated 30,000 children and adults suffer from this devastating disease. Sankara Nethralaya has been at the forefront of management of ocular sequelae of SJS, contributing significantly to research, clinical expertise, and patient care.

In 2003, Sankara Nethralaya was the first to start the very complicated and complex MOOKP or “tooth-in-the-eye” surgery for patients of SJS. The Ocular Surface Disorders clinic was established in 2005. In 2007, the clinic was dedicated to Dr. G. Sitalakshmi and renamed as the Dr. G. Sitalakshmi Memorial Clinic for Ocular Surface Disorders. In the past 2 decades, Sankara Nethralaya has been pioneering management strategies contributing to global paradigm shifts in the management of SJS, and the only ophthalmic centre in the world to offer all management options under one roof.

Dr. Geetha Iyer paid homage to the gurus Dr. S. S. Badrinath, Late Srimati Dr. G. Sitalakshmi, and Late Prof Giancarlo Falcinelli, acknowledging their support and encouragement that goes towards making Ocular Surface Disorders clinic one of the best in the country.

Dr. Bhaskar Srinivasan, Dr. Geetha Iyer, and Dr. Shweta S Agarwal form the core team of the SeNSCE SJS facility with a distinguished board of members to support their services. Dr. Prema Padmanabhan, Dr. Rama Rajagopal, and Dr. Girish S. Rao, President are the mentors.

Dr. Geetha Iyer welcomed all members who attended the presentation virtually and read out their messages. Calling Sankara Nethralaya’s ophthalmologists and scientists the vanguard Prof. James Chodosh said, “It is indeed a high honor to be asked to join the Board of the SN - Sanmar Centre of Excellence for Stevens Johnson Syndrome (SeNSCE SJS)... this important new center is certain to dramatically speed progress towards elimination of blindness from this devastating affliction.”

Prof Scheffer C. G. Tseng congratulated the SeNSCE facility in receiving a generous grant towards targeting SJS. He said it was a true unmet clinical need and last ocular surface frontier. Prof. Christopher Liu also congratulated the facility on behalf of the British Ophthalmology and the Royal College of Ophthalmologists. Dr. Koushik Bhojani sent his blessings and lauded the Sankara Nethralaya team for pursuing a venture few would support.

Dr. Muralidhar lauded Dr. Geetha Iyer for bringing together dermatologists and for her dedication to the project. Dr. Dhanapalani said it was a privilege to be involved in the project and that he looked forward to work with the team. He appreciated the efforts of Sankara Nethralaya in putting together the team.

Dr. Girish S. Rao, Dr. T. S. Surendran, Dr. Pramod Bhende, Dr. Rama Rajagopal, Dr. Bhaskar, Dr. Shweta S Agarwal, gifted Mr. Vijayshankar a token of gratitude on stage. Dr. Pramod Bhende presented Dr. Muralidhar with a token of appreciation.

Mr. Vijayshankar recalled his family's long association with Sankara Nethralaya and appreciated all the ophthalmologists involved with the initiative. He congratulated the team for bringing together the successful initiative.



## Donation of old spectacle frames organized Mylapore Round Table 3 and Madras Mylapore Ladies Circle - 4 on 19 Nov, 2021



## 96th Birth Day of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba on 23 Nov, 2021



## Visit of His Excellency, Mr. Gudni Bragason, Ambassador of Iceland on 26 Nov, 2021



## Ms. Lata Mangeshkar's support for Sankara Nethralaya's mission to save vision



It's a well-known fact that Srimathi M. S. Subbulakshmi, the late great Carnatic singer had strong ties to Sankara Nethralaya. What is not a well-known fact is that she was a soft-spoken ambassador for the good cause that Sankara Nethralaya stood for. In 1994, Smt. M. S. Subbulakshmi was presented the Dinanth Mangeshkar Smruti Pratishthan award for her meritorious service in the Carnatic music field by Kumari Lata Mangeshkar's at a function organized by Medical Research Foundation, Vision Research Foundation and the Dinanth Smruti Pratishthan.

The Dinanth Smruti Pratishthan award was instituted by the Mumbai-based Dinanth Smruti Pratishthan to honour the memory of Marathi singer and actor, Deenanath Mangeshkar. It is awarded annually for excellence in literature, music, and theatre. Ms. Lata Mangeshkar, founder of the Dinanth Smruti Pratishthan and daughter of Late Deenanath Mangeshkar, presented Srimathi MS Amma, as she's fondly called by her admirers, with a cheque and a memento, for her unforgettable contributions to Carnatic music genre.

Smt. MS Amma, a humanitarian at heart, presented the cheque of the Dinanth Smruti Pratishthan Award to Dr. S. S. Badrinath, Sankara Nethralaya's founder. This selfless gesture inspired the nightingale of India, Ms Lata Mangeshkar to personally donate Rs. 25000 in a generous spirit to save the vision of deserving patients.

### Help a Poor Person Regain His Sight

Dear Well-wisher,

Warm greetings from Sankara Nethralaya,

I hope you and your family are safe during these difficult times. With the country still recovering from the second wave of the Covid19 pandemic, not-for-profit organizations like ours are especially vulnerable as we don't collect payment for any of our eye care services to the needy.

While the second wave has been ravaging our nation, we have put in place rigorous guidelines to protect our patients as well our frontline workers and staff who are in close contact with patients and their caregivers. Patients, caretakers, doctors, nurses and frontline staff are provided with Government regulation PPE kits. Our attention to the safety of those we serve and employ means the burden on our resources is under severe strain.

We had slowly gotten back to our normal patient flow after the initial lockdown and the second wave struck. Sankara Nethralaya does not believe in over-charging our paying patients in order to subsidise our community efforts. Every one of our patients who come to us is treated equally. Your support would go a long way in improving existing infrastructure and adapting it to the prevailing Covid-19 requirements.

We thank you once again for your support in our mission to provide quality treatment and look forward to your most timely support for upgrading our ophthalmic facilities during these difficult times. Your help and support is vital in the mission to shine a light in the lives of so many blind people and raise them out of poverty.

With warm regards and best wishes

**Dr. Girish S. Rao**

President

Donation Schemes	
Rs. 5,000 - 1 cataract surgery	Rs. 50,000 - 1 Perpetual cataract surgery 12 years
Rs. 17,500 - 1 major surgery	Rs. 1,50,000 - 1 Perpetual major surgery 12 years
Rs. 20,000- Rural Tele-ophthalmology camp - 1 day	Rs. 2,00,000 - approximately 40 surgeries per day
Rs. 20,000 - Rural school screening camp - 1 day	Rs. 10,00,000 - Naming a room
General Corpus fund for community outreach programs : Any Amount	
Mobile Eye Surgical Unit Rural Camp - 10 Days - Rs. 10,00,000	

Donate Online: <https://www.supportsankaranethralaya.org/donation/Donate.aspx>

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Please mail your feedback to us at  
[eyelights@snmail.org](mailto:eyelights@snmail.org)

## Join our Mission for Vision



### DONATION SCHEME

### AMOUNT IN INR

#### 1. One time on a designated date

Single Cataract Surgery	Rs. 5,000
Single Major Surgery such as Retina, Glaucoma	Rs. 17,500

#### 2. Single day free service

Approximately 40 Surgeries per day	Rs.2,00,000
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#### 3. Year after year on a designated date for 12 years

Single Free Cataract Surgery	Rs.50,000
Single major Surgery (Retina, Glaucoma)	Rs.1,50,000

#### 4. Tele-ophthalmology

Sponsoring the Tele-ophthalmology camp for one day	Rs.20,000
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#### 5. Corpus Fund

For Community outreach program	Any amount
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#### 6. Mobile Eye Surgical Unit

Rural Camp - 10 Days	Rs 8,75,000
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#### 7. Naming a room

Rs 10,00,000

Kindly draw your cheques in favour of  
"Medical Research Foundation"  
Donations are exempt under Section 80G

### For more details, contact

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[www.supportsankaranethralaya.org](http://www.supportsankaranethralaya.org),

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We seek your kind patronage for 'Insight' the poignant narration of Sankara Nethralaya's growth to a world class humanitarian eye care institution and success of a social enterprise by noted biographers Shri. George Skarias, Shri. VV.Ranganathan and Ms Meera Prasad, with interesting inputs from eminent personalities. 'Insight' is a most enjoyable and informative book and a wonderful gifting option for all age groups and occasions. Entire sales proceeds go towards providing cost free eye care to the poor and needy. Please pick your copy of this great literary work of compassion at the SN main centre, Higginbotham's and Rasi Silk emporiums at Anna Nagar, Mylapore and Nanganallur.

