

'Gift Your Sight' Campaign

Close your eyes. Now, walk around the room, find your favourite things groping in darkness, imagine the faces of your loved ones, think about your favourite holidays and now assume that you can never open those eyes and get out of that staggering darkness - Welcome to the World of Blind.

Millions of eyes in India are either burnt or buried. Our eyes, after our death, can be donated, giving sight to two blind people. We may die, but we continue to live as the vision. Our eyes have the ability to lead two blind people to paradise. But the most disappointing fact is - people are not willing to donate their eyes - many do not donate because of the myths and many others because of the apathy. At one end, you have people who are physically blind and at the other end you have people who are mentally blind (mainly because of wrong notions, ignorance and lack of seriousness). I can call the latter as socially blind. Eye banks should be informed within 6 hours of death. Bereaved family, being emotional about the death, forget to inform the eye bank, some others do not bother, few others do not respect the pledge form. Pledge form should be treated as the wish of the dead person and eye donation should be executed with utmost respect. Even though many people have pledged their eyes, number of eyes which are being collected by eye banks (after the death of the people with their eyes pledged) is in fractions. Considering the death rate of India, banishing blindness is a plausible act provided more bereaved families take the responsibility of executing eye donation successfully. Waiting list is in lakhs while eyes collected are in thousands. This huge gap is not because of the lesser number of donors but because of the hollowness of the awareness. It is easier to cure physical blindness compared to social blindness. Pradeep Sudarshan, recognizing the importance of awareness, one of the cures to social blindness, has started a campaign called - 'Gift Your Sight'. For more details about the campaign visit <http://www.freewebs.com/giftyoursight/> In line with his efforts to spread the awareness among the community, Pradeep, in association with Lions International Eye bank, set up an awareness counter at his office - iGate on 22nd Feb 2006 (Wednesday). Counter was open from 1150hrs to 1650hrs. About 275+ people pledged their eyes. This is an encouraging figure (around 25% of the day strength of the campus) but the figure also reminds us of the long way we need to walk. Most of the pledging happened during lunch hours (1230 to 1400hrs). Members of Mukta are planning to put up awareness stalls at their respective offices. Here is a quick walkthrough of the procedure.

- Talk to HR and facilities about the campaign. Resolve any dependencies or concerns
- Speak to the Eye Bank and fix up a convenient date. Lions International Eye Bank Contact Number is: (080) 2212 1253 / 2212 1255. Inform eye bank about approximate number of pledge forms required.
- Speak to facilities regarding the required infrastructure. If your office is too far, eye bank might need some help with transport. If you are arranging the campaign in a sunny place (like Amphitheatre), an umbrella might be needed. Resolve all issues related to infrastructure.
- Two/Three days prior to the campaign date, send out an official communication to the employees, with the help of HR. If possible, try to put posters around the campus. Follow up with reminder mails.
- On the D-day, after setting up the counter, send out a mail. In between, if possible, publish the status of the number of pledges (just to motivate and encourage fellow employees)
- At the end of the day, send a mail thanking all - HR, Facilities and most importantly - pledgers. [Click here](#), for the complete report of the event CSP
(February 25, 2006)