



Nethrodaya
LET'S SHARE THE LIGHT

The Eyeopener...

Annual News Magazine

2024

*Together,
our shared vision and unity
will lead us forward...*



Founder's Desk



It brings me immense joy to announce that Nethrodaya has reached a significant milestone—22 years of committed service to the differently-abled community. Establishing Nethrodaya as a self-help institution has been a profound privilege, and I am grateful to see the positive impact it has had on so many lives.

In the past two decades, Nethrodaya has been able to assist thousands of individuals with disabilities through various initiatives, including:

- A free residential higher secondary special school for visually impaired and physically challenged students.
- A free hostel for underprivileged college students with disabilities.
- A safe shelter for homeless differently-abled individuals.
- Livelihood programs for economically disadvantaged blind families.
- A dedicated medical helpline for persons with disabilities.
- A free ration centre for visually impaired families in need.

Highlights of 2023-2024

This year has been especially rewarding, as our outreach has expanded, and we've been able to serve a growing number of beneficiaries. While there is still more work ahead, our progress would not have been possible without the unwavering support, generosity, and guidance of our well-wishers and volunteers, to whom we are deeply indebted.

Our dedicated staff continue to work tirelessly to achieve our mission, and our volunteers have been exceptional in their commitment and cooperation in bringing our programs to life. Their support has been invaluable, and it is a privilege to have such a devoted team.



Looking ahead, we are excited to continue our journey of service to those in need. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this shared vision. Together, we look forward to many more years of making a meaningful difference.



Awards & Recognitions

- As a recognition of our dedicated service in the field of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, we have been conferred with the Prestigious National Award by the Hon'ble President of India
- "Best Social Worker", Award conferred by former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu for the dedicated service to the differently abled community.
- Best Institution Award by Government of Tamil Nadu for the dedicated service to the differently able community.
- Lincoln Global Leadership Award, an international recognition for dedicated service towards the empowerment of persons with disabilities.
- Doctorate in Social Service Conferred by Asian Vedic Culture Research University.
- Citizen of the Year Award for Outstanding Community Service by Australian Consulate General.
- Helen Keller Award conferred by National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP)



*Best Social Worker Award
- C Govindakrishnan*



Best Institution Award - Nethrodaya



National Award from Hon'ble President of India



Citizen of the Year Award



Lincoln Global Leadership Award 2024



Helen Keller Award



Doctorate in Social Service

Inhouse Services

Free Residential Higher Secondary Special School for Visually Impaired & Physically Challenged Recognised by Government of Tamil Nadu

Nethrodaya's Special School for the Visually Impaired and Physically Challenged, is a unique and the only Educational Institution in Tamil Nadu which is being run by a Visually Impaired person benefitting hundreds of Visually Impaired and differently-abled economically backward students hailing from remote villages of Tamil Nadu. Nethrodaya, continues to impart the best quality education, absolutely free of cost.



Nethrodaya practices inclusiveness with an integrated methodology. Here the visually impaired and the orthopaedic students co-exist to learn and leverage upon each other's strengths by overcoming their disabilities. Implemented successfully, this practice provides an opportunity for orthopaedic students to read and write for the visually impaired and to share and exchange their books of knowledge.

We have been imparting the best quality special education to the economically backward, visually impaired as well as physically challenged boys and girls from classes 1 to 12.



Inhouse Services

Music Centre

Nethrodaya's music centre offers students the chance to learn a variety of musical instruments under the guidance of skilled instructors. This initiative not only brings joy to students as they explore music but also enhances their career prospects in the music industry, fostering self-reliance and independence.



Computer Training Centre:

Nethrodaya's fully equipped Computer Training Centre with Wi-Fi access offers essential training for visually impaired individuals, enabling them to work with Microsoft Office, the Internet, and email just as confidently as sighted users. Over the past 22 years, thousands of visually impaired students have benefited from this training and secured rewarding IT jobs with competitive salaries—a true testament to the success of Nethrodaya's computer courses.

Fitness

Emerson once said, "The first wealth is health." Aligned with this belief, Nethrodaya offers a fully equipped gym with a dedicated trainer, enabling students to stay fit and lead healthier lives. Daily warm-up exercises and strength training sessions help students build strength and maintain an active lifestyle.



Outreach Activities

Nethrodaya's Free Medical Helpline

"He who has health has hope, and he who has hope has everything"

Nethrodaya offers a 24/7 free Medical Helpline that provides quality healthcare services to visually impaired individuals. Through this helpline, thousands of visually challenged patients have received vital treatment and proper medication during critical moments, all completely free of charge.



Elsi, a pregnant visually impaired woman and her husband, also visually impaired, required immediate medical intervention for her delivery.



This heartwarming outcome reaffirms our commitment to supporting vulnerable communities.

Nethrodaya has addressed the much-felt medical need by rescuing **Dhivya**, a visually impaired girl in her critical stage where she was affected by pulmonary thromboembolism. We provided her with the required oxygen concentrator, and we are extremely happy to share that she is hale and healthy.

Unable to meet the medical expenses, we then admitted her to Meenakshi Hospital, Chennai where Elsi gave birth to a healthy baby boy, bringing immense joy to the family.

Nethrodaya's timely intervention has made the mother and baby safe and secure.

Meet **Shahnawaz Begum**, a courageous visually impaired woman who faced a severe gynaecological issue. Her husband, who is also visually impaired, struggled to make both ends meet, and the financial burden seemed hopeless.

Through Nethrodaya's Medical Helpline, we intervened and provided crucial medical assistance at Apollo First Med Hospital by bearing all medical expenses.



Nethrodaya provides Hearing Aid to a poor Visually Impaired, **Sivakumar**, who belongs to Trichy District.

Sivakumar's wife is also visually impaired and struggled to communicate with him as he was suffering from total hearing Loss.

We are overjoyed to witness the moment when her prayers were answered, and her husband can finally hear her voice.



Nethrodaya's self-employment schemes for Visually Challenged Families

Each year, many visually challenged individuals move to the city in search of livelihood opportunities, often finding themselves resorting to begging at Suburban trains and bus stops. To combat this issue, Nethrodaya launched a program 22 years ago that provides seed capital in the form of marketable products to be sold on the suburban train network. This initiative allows them to earn a sustainable daily income, enabling them to live with dignity. Over the years, this scheme has positively impacted thousands of visually impaired individuals.

E. Jagannathan, a visually impaired individual from a poor family in a remote village in Tiruvallur District, struggled to support his family due to unemployment.

With the help of Nethrodaya, which provided seed capital for him to start a small-scale business, he was able to turn his situation around. Today, he earns a steady income, allowing his wife, Usha, and their children, Saranya and Dilibabu, to lead a life of dignity and self-reliance.



Assistance to Educate the Children of Visually Challenged Parents

Nethrodaya aims to dispel the myth that visually impaired couples can only have visually impaired children. Recognizing the challenges faced by visually challenged parents in raising their children, Nethrodaya supports them not only in sustaining their livelihoods but also in meeting their children's educational expenses. Through a dedicated scheme, Nethrodaya provides assistance to visually impaired parents by sponsoring their children's education. As a result of this noble initiative, thousands of children receive quality education, and in turn, these educated individuals often provide excellent care for their visually challenged parents in the later stages of their lives.

One such family is **Nagraj**, a Visually Impaired, father of three children unable to educate his children due to poverty. With our timely intervention, these children are admitted to reputed neighbourhood schools to pursue their school education



Cow Project

Nethrodaya extends support to uneducated visually challenged families living in remote villages of Tamil Nadu who struggle to make ends meet. We identify these families in rural areas and provide them with a cow and a female calf. These cows are purchased with the guidance of cattle experts and knowledgeable locals. Nethrodaya also connects these families with reliable milk procurers in their villages. Additionally, the cow and calf are insured, providing families with a sense of security. This initiative not only offers an asset but has become a vital source of livelihood for hundreds of visually impaired families in rural areas.



Maai, a Visually Impaired and illiterate who hails from Chekkanurani Village of Madurai District had no source of Income. Nethrodaya provided a Cow and a female Calf. The new source of livelihood changed their life. Now, he and his old-aged mother feel secure with a stable income. Female Calf Lakshmi has become an integral part of the family!

Ramesh and Kavya, Visually Impaired siblings from Melur village, were trapped in a cycle of poverty. Nethrodaya provided a cow and calf, Lalitha, who shattered those chains! Now, their family enjoys a steady income, and a brighter tomorrow. The neighbours' welcome to Lalitha reflects the power of kindness and compassion.



Monthly Free Grocery Distribution Scheme

Many visually challenged families struggle to provide their children with three daily meals due to financial difficulties. To address this pressing need, Nethrodaya offers free monthly grocery provisions, delivering essential support to these families and helping to ensure that their children receive consistent and nutritious meals. A lot of families from rural villages of Tamil Nadu have benefitted from this on a monthly basis.

Honouring the Visually Impaired Achievers – 2023-2024

Prof. Anil Kumar Aneja:

Prof. Anil Kumar Aneja, has done a Ph.D. in English and is the Head of the Department of English, University of Delhi. Nethrodaya proudly presented him with the Award of Eminence 2024 as a Role Model in Education.



Mr. Vetrivel Murugan :



Mr. Vetrivel Murugan has earned his M.Phil from the New School of Social Research – New York and works at Cisco Systems Pvt Ltd as an HR professional. His wife Mrs. Vidhya too is Visually Impaired. Nethrodaya proudly honoured the couple with the Award of Eminence 2024 as Made for Each Other Couple.

Mr. T.D. Chakkaravarthy

Mr. T.D. Chakkaravarthy was appointed as Senior Civil Judge in Madras High Court and he is the only Visually Impaired selected on grounds of merit. He is an inspiration for many to follow in the field of Judiciary. Nethrodaya proudly honoured him with the Award of Eminence as a Role Model in Judiciary.



Mr. Rishikesavan:



Mr. Rishikesavan has completed his M.Sc and is the founder and chief trainer of “Third Eye Memory Empowerment” and secretary of “Tamil Nadu Memory Sports Council”. Nethrodaya proudly honoured him with the Award of Eminence as a Trend Setter in Skill Development.

Nethrodaya has honoured three Visually Impaired Student Achievers who have scored centum in Xth and XIIth Board Examinations held in March 2024.



Nivedha and Hemadharini scored centum in Computer Applications in their XIIth Exams. They were honoured and rewarded with cash awards for their outstanding academic performance.



Aswini scored centum in Maths in her Xth Exam and she was awarded a cash prize for her exemplary achievement.



Dinesh:



Dinesh a Visually Impaired Student hails from Vellore district. Due to poverty, his family struggled very hard to provide him basic education. They learnt about Nethrodaya and sought help. Soon Dinesh was given free admission to Nethrodaya's Free Residential Higher Secondary Special School. With consistence performance in academics and extra-curricular activities, he completed his XIIth in March 2024 and was honoured as Outstanding Student of the Year. We at Nethrodaya wish him great success in the days to come.

Success Stories:

Vijay is a student of Nethrodaya who hails from Theni District but lost his sight at a later stage. He approached Nethrodaya to pursue his graduation. After its successful completion, he was placed in a reputed parlour as a Reflexologist. Today he leads a dignified life and is able to support his family.



Advocacy

Nethrodaya complains against T.N. govt. officials for 'brutally insensitive' remarks on employees with visual impairment

The "brutal" remarks made by top bureaucrats go against the very principle of social justice being championed by the Dravidian model of government, says its founder Nethrodaya

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By: NETHRODAYA



The photo shows people with visual impairment working at a computer in Chennai. (Photo: Nethrodaya)

Nethrodaya, a social service institution based in Chennai, has lodged a complaint with the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities (CCPWD) in New Delhi over the "brutally insensitive and hostile" remarks made by the Commissioner of Chennai and the Director of the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board (TANGEDCO).

Nethrodaya passionately advocates for the rights of differently-abled individuals, believing that strong, impactful advocacy is crucial for meaningful change. Through steadfast efforts, it has secured landmark rulings from the Madras High Court and favourable orders from the Government of Tamil Nadu, benefiting thousands in the differently-abled community.

With a focus on driving transformative change, Nethrodaya remains committed to empowering persons with disabilities and making a lasting difference in their lives.

The remarks dismissing welfare measures for the Differently Aabled as flawed and unfair to non-disabled individuals, while stereotyping Visually Impaired persons as "non-productive and quarrelsome," are highly offensive and violate Section 92(a) of the RPWD Act, 2016. Such statements undermine the principles of social justice and inclusivity upheld by the government.

It is concerning that these views have been supported at an administrative level, betraying the trust of the Differently Aabled community. We urge immediate action, including accountability for those responsible, a public apology, safeguarding welfare measures, and cancelling GO No. 21 dated 20th September 2024 to uphold the dignity and rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Our legitimate demand was carefully considered by the honourable Chief Minister who withdrew the Government Order on 19.10.2024.

Our sincere thanks to the Government for addressing the issue on a priority basis.

Luxury apartments and Premium villas enjoy exemptions from Fixed Charges, Peak Hour Charges, Network Charges, and Electricity Tax, along with a 100-unit free electricity allowance. Similarly, 23 Lakh farmers owning vast acres of land benefit from free electricity, regardless of their economic background.

In sharp contrast, institutions dedicated to providing free services to the disabled are unfairly burdened with Fixed Charges of Rs. 214/- per kW, a 5% Peak Hour surcharge on electricity consumption, and an Electricity Tax of 5.28% on total usage. Moreover, institutions with solar panels are charged a 21% Network Fee on the total Solar Energy generated.

This discriminatory practice by TANGEDCO (Tamil Nadu Electricity Board) is deeply unjust and unacceptable.

We earnestly appeal to the Dravidian Model Government to address this inequality and extend equitable policies to institutions that selflessly serve the Differently-Abled community.

Our representation was forwarded by the Director for Welfare of Differently Aabled to the Chairman of Tamil Nadu Electricity Board for kind consideration.

From Director for Welfare of the Differently Aabled, Directorate for Welfare of the Differently Aabled, Jaffar Wellingdon Campus, No.5, Karamajar Road, Chennai-06.	To The Chairman, Tamil Nadu Electricity Board, Anna Road, Chennai-05.
PWOC, BOC, No.00259/A42/2024. DATE: 05.07.2024	
Re,	
Subj	Directorate for welfare of the Differently Aabled, Chennai - 05- Representation received from Nethrodaya Institution - Free electricity to the Physically Challenged - Request for kind consideration - Reg.
Ref	Letter from the Founder, Nethrodaya dated 05.06.2024. (Submitted to Hon'ble Chief Minister, copy mailed to this office). *****
In the reference cited above, Founder, Nethrodaya has given representation for provision of free electricity to the institutions run for / by the Physically Challenged (Institute / Hostel run for Disabled Persons) which is cost free. The petition is forwarded for kind consideration and necessary action. The action taken in this regard may kindly be communicated to this office.	
D.V.D. M. LALITHA Director	
Copy to: 1. Thiru. C. Govindarajam, Founder, Nethrodaya No.07/1, Phase II Nethrodaya, Mogamur West, Chennai - 07.	
// By order //	
Assistant Director (ADMIN)	

Events

21st Anniversary Celebration of Nethrodaya

Nethrodaya completed 21 years of its dedicated services for the welfare of the Visually Impaired Community and celebrated its 21st Anniversary on 23rd March 2024.

This event was graced by the Hon'ble Justice of Madras High Court Thiru. R. Subramanian, who lauded the way Nethrodaya had progressed and its commitment towards the differently abled community through its various services for their welfare. Hon'ble Justice of Madras High Court and Patron of Nethrodaya Thiru. P.N. Prakash, said it was an honour for him to be a part of the event in which Visually Impaired from all over Tamil Nadu participated. Thiru Lincoln R. Prabhakaran, Chairman LGLC, said his noble effort has been to obtain favourable orders for the Welfare of Persons with Disabilities from the judiciary has benefitted marginalized differently abled communities at large. Further, he added, "I am really proud to be part of this noble mission of Nethrodaya". Nethrodaya's constant supporter Thiru. Dinesh, Director, Kovai Pazhamudir Nilayam said "I am happy to donate vegetables and fruits to the Differently Abled children of Nethrodaya on a regular basis which gives immense satisfaction and real meaning to my life". On the rarest occasion of Nethrodaya's history renowned playback singers from the same family, Thiru. Tippu, Tmt. Harini and Mr. Sai Abhyankar mesmerized the audience by rendering their all-time favourite hits. Further, they expressed their sincere gratitude to the almighty for giving them an opportunity to be a part of Nethrodaya's Family.



State-Level Felicitation of Visually Impaired Achievers

The State Level Felicitation of Visually Impaired was held on 24th August 2024.

This event was graced by the Hon'ble Senior Justice of Madras High Court Thiru. S.S. Sundar, who commended Nethrodaya's remarkable contribution to the welfare of the Visually Impaired. Thiru. K. Jayasankar, Secretary- THECOS lauded Nethrodaya for its exceptional commitment towards empowering the Visually Impaired and Renowned Playback Singer Thiru. Ranjith captivated the Visually Impaired audience with his soulful singing at Nethrodaya's event, bringing happiness and joy and making the event memorable.



Appeal for Volunteers:

- To read text book.
- To Write Assignment
- To record Study Materials
- Be a Scribe for their Exams
- Volunteering for Events

Appeal for Support in Kind

Donate Old Furniture, Utensils and Clothes
Donate provisions, groceries and Sanitary Essentials

Celebrate your special days such as Festivals, Birthdays, Wedding Anniversaries & Remembrance Day with us:

Breakfast :	Rs. 2,500
Lunch :	Rs. 4,500
High Tea :	Rs. 1,000
Dinner :	Rs. 3,000

Donate a stick for Visually Impaired Person: Rs. 125/-

Sponsor a Student's Monthly Educational Expenses: Rs. 2,000

Donate a Cow to a poor Visually Impaired family (for their Self Employment): Rs.40,000/-

Donate Towards Monthly Medical Expenses: Rs. 10,000/-

Donate towards Seed Capital for Self-Employment of Visually Impaired Small-Scale Vendors, Per Person: Rs. 5,000/-

Donate for performing final rites of Poor Visually Impaired Deceased: Rs. 10,000

Nethrodaya's Corpus Fund:

To strengthen our financial resilience in times of crisis, we have established a permanent/capital fund called the Corpus Fund. It is different from every other type of donation or sponsorship as its sole purpose will come into play only in times of emergency. A corpus fund money cannot be utilised directly, rather the interest earned on it allows an organization to run its most essential program without any interruption. By donating to this endowment, you

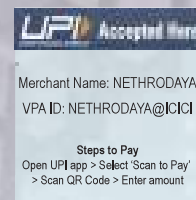
ensure that our organisation can sustain in critical hours of need. In essence, our children will have quality care on a regular basis.

How to Donate:

Cheque or Demand Draft to be Drawn in F/o Nethrodaya

Or online through QR Code or UPI ID (Emboss QR Code and UPI ID)

All Donations are Exempt Under Sec. 80G of IT Act. Registered U/S 12A Appn # 2(213)/02-03



Organisation Structure

Chief Functionary : Mr. C. Govindakrishnan, Founder Trustee

Board of Trustees Mr. C. Govindakrishnan, Managing Trustee

Mr. V. Ganesh, Trustee

Mr. S. Sampath Kumar, Trustee

Patron: Commodore R.S. Vasan(INS Retd)
Hon'ble Justice P N Prakash, Madras High Court

Advisory Committee: Mr. Dinesh M.D. Kovai Pazhamudir Nilayam
Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pugazhendhi, M.D. Hi Proteins
Mr. P.K. Vinod Kumar, M.D. Pearl Patch
Mr. Harinandan, CEO BUILTTECH ENGINEERS & CONSULTANCY
Mr. M. Karthikeyan, Director Projects – Cognizant
Mr. P. Harikumar – Former VP, Carboline India Pvt Ltd.

Statutory Auditors: JVS & Co., Chartered Accountants

Legal Advisor: Lincoln R. Prabhakaran, Advocate Supreme Court of India

Architect: BUILTTECH ENGINEERS AND CONSULTANTS

Motto: Let's Share the light

Core Values and Belief: Empowerment is the true development for enabling the differently abled. Nethrodaya believes that Visually Challenged persons can contribute to the society and the impression that they are to be sympathised and pitied is a misconception. Nethrodaya feels that if they are enabled given a level playing ground, they can be as productive as anybody else in the society.

Non-Discrimination Policy: Nethrodaya does not discriminate anybody on the basis of Caste, Religion, Creed, Race, Colour, Gender Orientation, disability & belief.

Quality Policy: Nethrodaya is committed to help Visually Challenged and Orthopedically Handicapped by empowering them to have an equal participation in the society. This is achieved by providing them appropriate rehabilitation services of excellent quality and continuously improving the same.

Name of The Organisation: Nethrodaya
Year of Establishment : 2002
Place : Chennai
Registered as : Public Charitable Trust
Registered on : 21st June 2002
Trust Registration No. : 430/2002/4
Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act Regn No : 473/2022
Nethrodaya Higher Secondary Special School (VI & LD).
Recognised by Govt. Of Tamil Nadu: 3357/Adm.7/2022
Darpan ID : TN/ 2018/ 0218171
Permanent Account No. : AAATN4396E
12A Certificate Unique Registration No.:AAATN4396EE20216
80G Certificate Unique Registration No.:AAATN4396EF20214
FCRA Registration No.: 075901108 dated 13.09.2006
CSR Registration No. : CSR00017927

Details of The Organisation:

Vision: Creation of a suitable environment for nurturing the abilities and talents of the Visually Challenged by means of which they would be able to live their lives with a sense of dignity and self-worth as productive members of the society.

Mission: To light up the path of Visually Impaired by enabling fulfilment of their true potential



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