



# ANNUAL REPORT



**Nethrodaya**  
LET'S SHARE THE LIGHT

**"Together, We Can"**





## Founder's Corner

C. Govindakrishnan for anyone who is in constant interaction with is a person with vision. Though the eye specialists would have us believe otherwise. He may not be able to see the world as we do, but the world he sees is beyond our vision - A world in which each blind person is capable of living normally and independently as anyone else, where the blind need not have to beg for their survival. Nor live off the generosity of a few good people. He knows that the blind only need to be offered a little space and some encouragement. And they can show the world the incredible capacity of the human spirit, to achieve the impossible, against all odds. Gopi, as he is fondly addressed by all, himself is a living proof of this.

Being declared to have been born with an incurable, deteriorating visual impairment, Gopi has been fighting with fate all his life. His struggles in school and college made him realize the problems that other blind people have been facing for ages. During his Post Graduate studies in Social Entrepreneurship at the Centre for Social Initiatives and Management (CSIM), he got an opportunity that would reveal his destiny to him.



As part of his project, he conducted a study on the blind people who were trying to make a living on the trains of Chennai. He travelled for 30 days with them and what he discovered opened his eyes. Of the 119 blind who were begging, 82 were graduates! The blind vendors too were forced to resign to begging due to insurmountable hurdles they had to face.

It was at this point that Gopi resolved to do something. To bring light to a society shrouded in the darkness of apathy.

On the 2nd of October, 2002, with the image of Gandhiji in his mind and his resolve in his heart, Gopi created **Nethrodaya** with a vision to serve the visionless.

An organization he started with a mere 72 rupees and the courage of conviction, **Nethrodaya** has come a long way today. And its growth has indeed been phenomenal. Each step, each initiative was carefully debated upon and meticulously executed, which is why today **Nethrodaya** has evolved from simply being an NGO for the blind to a multi dimensional organization that acts as an immense source of hope and faith to any one who knocks on its doors.

From blood donation camps to sports activities for the blind and entrepreneurial support to the Visually Impaired, **Nethrodaya** has touched every aspect of the lives of the Visually Impaired. Today it represents a comprehensive support structure for the blind.

What makes **Nethrodaya** special is the fact that it does not offer endless support to the blind in the form of shelter, food, education and basic amenities. Instead it is an organization driven by one goal: To make every member self sufficient and independent in a manner that they integrate themselves into mainstream careers and lives.

While they are in the process of doing so, **Nethrodaya** offers them intermediate facilities till such time they are ready to support themselves independently.



## Supporting the Visually Challenged Students from Poor Background

**Nethrodaya** provides free accommodation, food and other essentials to totally support the education of visually challenged boys and girls coming from poor families in rural areas. This is with the motive that these students will, in turn, emerge successful in their respective fields and support their families in future.

**Tenure of Service: 8 years**

**Total boys and Girls benefitted: 500**



## Supporting the education of children of visually challenged parents:

Affordability decides the impartment of quality education to children. This unfortunately is the hindering block for children, with visually challenged parents. **Nethrodaya** alleviates this problem by supporting these families. Under this project, many such families have got monetary support for education. This Project extends on a yearly basis.



**Total Children benefitted: 950**

## Nethradhenu (Individual Cattle Rearing Unit)

Under this scheme, **Nethrodaya** provides a cow to the Visually Impaired adult in rural areas which augments the total family income. By this, the prestige of these individuals is restored.



**Districts covered under this project in Tamil Nadu: 14**

## Free Medical Helpline

A physical suffering for the visually challenged is just an addition to their already existing heap of worries. Hence it becomes very essential to relieve them of such sufferings. Timely medical intervention is provided in case of accidents involving the visually challenged. It is a pioneer effort of **Nethrodaya** in providing timely quality medical care.

✓ Pushparani, a 28 year old blind pregnant woman deserted by her husband gave birth to a child in the Chengalpet Government Hospital. Due to the fear of the baby being stolen, **Nethrodaya** was approached to provide help to the woman. Timely intervention was provided by **Nethrodaya** by taking Pushparani and her newborn under its shelter and was given the necessary medical attention. **Nethrodaya** also traced the woman's husband, counseled him and they now live harmoniously reunited together as a family.

**Total people benefitted in the last 8 years: 1500**



## Shelter for the Shelter-less

A majority of the visually challenged find it difficult to shell out the initial advance sum though they are capable of paying the monthly rent. **Nethrodaya** bridges this gap by finding a home, paying the advance money and finally handing over the key to the individuals, hence providing a suitable shelter to the homeless rather than continuing to live on the streets.

**Total Persons benefitted in the last 8 years: 125**



## Exclusive Browsing Centre for the Visually Challenged

**Nethrodaya** has 'A State of the Art' Browsing Centre specially equipped to provide browsing services for the visually challenged. This facility is offered free of cost with the sole purpose of giving them the benefits of today's cyber world.

**Total Students benefitted including inmates: 500**



## Expert instructions in Yoga

Twice a week, a qualified instructor comes to **Nethrodaya** and teaches residents simple yoga asanas that help them stay in a state of good health.

**All Inmates of Nethrodaya are benefitted through the programme**



## Free Music Lessons

**Nethrodaya** also offers free music lessons to its residents everyday. Classes are conducted in keyboard, tabla and rhythm pad. Since the profession is commercially sound, the visually challenged are immediately absorbed into the music troops after finishing their training.

**All residents of Nethrodaya are benefitted through the programme**





## Legal Advocacy

For **M. Selvamani**, a Visually Challenged from Namakkal, it was a new sort of darkness when she was arrested for allegedly murdering her grandfather, framed wrongly as a result of a feud with neighbours. Though her warden and co-inmates were fairly sympathetic toward her, she wasn't even in a position to breast-feed her youngest child. With the help of **Nethrodaya**, Selvamani was granted bail by the High Court, twenty eight days later. This new lease of life has made her look at life in a positive perspective.



## State Level Career Counseling and Guidance

State Level Career Counseling and Guidance is regularly organized and conducted by **Nethrodaya** to assist the 10th Std and 12th Std students from Tamil Nadu on various techniques to tackle Board Examinations and also on their prospective career options.

**Total Career Counseling sessions conducted: 6 and 2000 students participated.**



## Promotion of Sports

Presence of impairment is not a limitation. Absence of Imagination is. As an innovative organization, **Nethrodaya** has pioneered a unique form of sports, for the visually challenged. The games are specially packaged and designed for the visually challenged. It is a visual feast to watch how well the fully and partially blind adapt and compete with vigour with a fervent feeling of sportsmanship. Various tournaments for volleyball, chess and cricket are held round the year with great enthusiasm.



### (South India Level)

**Volley ball Tournaments: 5**

**Chess Tournament: 7**

**Cricket Tournament: 3**



## EVENTS & INTERVENTIONS

### Inauguration of Fitness Centre at Nethrodaya

Body, mind and soul are to be fit in order to have an overall development of an individual. It is the very same case for the visually challenged too. To provide them with physical fitness, **Nethrodaya** has started a physical fitness centre, the first of its kind, with excellent infrastructure.

The Centre was inaugurated by Mr.**Suki Sivam**, an eminent orator and **Justice Mani Kumar**.



### Nethrodaya, Sense of Gratitude

There are many who willingly accept help and services in times of crisis. There are, however, only few who remember to pay back. Mr. Radhakrishnan, an Officer at Rane Brake Lining Ltd., is one such kind soul who saw noble sense, rather than a surge of fury, when a vehicle hit him and left him with injuries at the Anna Arch. He requested the Police not to file a complaint against the accused driver. His, humble request, was that the compensation to be paid to him be given to **Nethrodaya's** noble initiatives. His magnanimous act has left a deep impression in **Nethrodaya's** sands of service.



### Vaippugal Book release

A book, just to address the various benefits and welfare schemes offered by the government towards the differently abled. Awareness is the first step. Only then comes action. We are striving to provide this awareness to the differently abled to reap the benefits. The Honorable minister for Information did the honours of releasing the book.



### State Level Chess Tournament for the Visually Challenged

**Nethrodaya** has pride in organising a State Level Chess Tournament in which 200 Visually Challenged players from various districts of Tamilnadu Palayamkottai, Cuddalore, Bargur, Madurai to name a few, compete to win the prestigious title.

The event happens to be the most ideal platform for these contestants who have no access to exhibit their in borne talent that brings forth a lot of excitement and springs in new surprises. This unique event instills confidence in the minds of upcoming chess players belonging to the normal genre and will also inspire the common man to understand the nuances of the game.



Outstanding Visually Challenged Players were honoured by the distinguished Chief Guest



## State Level Felicitation for the Visually Challenged students

**Nethrodaya** conducted a State Level Felicitation Ceremony for the Visually Challenged in which 28 visually challenged students from different districts of Tamil Nadu who secured more than 1000 marks in the 12th Standard Examinations held this year fighting all odds were honoured. For many people disability & poverty becomes a big weakness. These 28 students proved it wrong. They were felicitated by the Chief Guest Honourable Thiru. Justice S. Nagamuthu, Madras High Court.



## 7th Anniversary Celebrations

True initiative is not powered just by intellect. It should be backed with a surge of passion. That was the drive which prevailed over the 7th anniversary celebrations of **Nethrodaya**. A shop catering to every need of the visually challenged providing their very essentials like walking sticks, talking watches etc. to carry on with their normal life was inaugurated as a part of the anniversary celebrations. The very first of its kind in the country with the sole motive to ensure the visually challenged lead a life no different from any other. This shop is open 24 hours providing round the clock service. We believe it is the duty of our well-wishers like you to spread the word so that the true purpose of this initiative is met. **Justice Prabha Sridevan** did the honors of inaugurating the shop.



**Unni Menon**, who also graced the occasion, gave a moving talk about the coming-of-age of the phenomenon called **Nethrodaya**. Having been associated with **Nethrodaya** right from the very beginning, he has witnessed our struggles and our steady progress despite these struggles. He talked from his heart of the inspiration he derived from the founder of **Nethrodaya**, Gopi, who being a visually challenged himself has fought against all odds to create this whole new world of confidence for the visually challenged.

**ADGP Natraj, Akhila Srinivasan** of Shriram Foundation, **Viji Santhanam, Vel Murugan** of Velammal Group of Institutions and **Mahadevan** of Hot Breads were the other dignitaries to grace the occasion.

## Story of Success

**Ashok**, a resident of **Nethrodaya** who hails from a remote village in Villupuram District and had an aim in pursuing his higher education (English Literature)

**Nethrodaya** offered total support in pursuing his dreams and today he is a Teacher in Sembakkam Government Hr. Sec. School earning a handsome sum of Rs. 25,000/- a month and he has happily settled with a caring Wife Rajeswari and lovely child Lavanya who is ten months old now.

We at **Nethrodaya** are proud to see Ashok who has been able to lead an independent and successful life in Society





## Your Share

1. Share your vision for a few hours by providing reading services, guiding in everyday activities and volunteering services for special events.
2. Celebrate your special days with us:
  - Breakfast Rs.1000/-
  - Lunch Rs.1500/-
  - High tea Rs. 300/-
  - Dinner Rs.1500/-
3. Sponsor a Student's expense for a month: Rs.1650/-
4. Donate a Stick for the Blind: Rs.125/-
5. Contribute towards Medical Expenses: Rs. 10,000/-
6. Donate Audio Books
7. Donate Old Clothes, Furniture and Utensils
8. Contribute towards Recurring Expenses like Electricity, Water, Telephone, Salaries, etc..
9. Sponsor Events like The Media Eye Conference and Career Counseling & Guidance Program
10. Sponsor Picnics, Tours and Sports Events
11. Contribute towards the Nethrodaya Corpus Fund

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**Nethrodaya**

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