

“EYE CAMP” organized for students at Lala Lajpat Rai School, BHU

The “National Eye Donation Fortnight” is celebrated every year from 25th August to 8th September. This fortnight promotes corneal donation by spreading mass public awareness through campaigns and rallies in an attempt to bridge the gap between the immense demand and meagre supply. Creating awareness among the young age group about eye care is equally important to minimise the loss of vision among the young age group due to Vitamin A deficiency, malnutrition, injuries and infections. **Such an initiative was lead by Dr. Mousumi Mutsuddi from the Department of Molecular and Human Genetics, Banaras Hindu University who organized a special “EYE CAMP” at Lala Lajpat Rai School, Sundar Bagiya, BHU on the first day of the awareness fortnight, August 25th, 2018. The guest of honour for the event was Dr. Abhishek Chandra, an internationally acclaimed ophthalmologist, formerly worked at Institute of Medical Sciences, BHU and is currently heading the Chandra Eye Care Hospital at Lanka, Varanasi. The kids of age group 8-12 were made aware not only about the current scenario of blindness in India but also enlightened about the noble virtue of eye donation. Interactive session was organized for the children to emphasize the importance of eye donation and the huge demand for eye transplant. They were provided with pamphlets highlighting the facts about eye donation like the cornea can be donated within six hours post demise and needs to be transplanted within four days.**

Dr. Mutsuddi, who leads research in unravelling genetics underlying severe eye disorders in families in eastern Uttar Pradesh with the help of advanced techniques like whole exome sequencing, which has been pioneered in her laboratory in Banaras Hindu University, shed light about congenital eye disorders and emphasised the importance of eye health and protection. Dr. Mousumi and her team of research scholars, Maimuna, Bhawana, Rituparna and Souradip, educated kids about basic eye hygiene for protecting the eyes and acquainted them with the fruits and vegetables which are rich sources of Vitamin A, critical for a consolidated vision and eye health. The team from Chandra clinic conducted free eye check-ups for the students and surprisingly out of close to 100 children examined around 10% of the children were completely unaware that they had impaired vision. This initiative and campaign was warmly welcomed, managed and applauded by Mr. Awdhesh Shrivastava, the Principal, Lala Lajpat Rai School.

This camp was not just an attempt to create awareness among the young age group but was also to seed the concept of eye donation in their community and families. There is the urgent need to create awareness, about the preventive aspect of corneal blindness and to motivate people to come forward for eye donation post demise. Such endeavors should be targeted to motivate our society and direct the community towards a future with more light.

