

**Project 'Preventing Diabetic Blindness (PDB) in India ' - An IMA- AIOS
joint venture**

Dr NSD Raju

Chairman PDB

There has been an increasing incidence of diabetic blindness in our country and it has become a major cause of concern and a serious health hazard. The estimated population of 66.6 million diabetics in India has now the dubious distinction of being the ' Diabetic Capital' of the world with 66.6 million diabetics. Diabetes is a serious life style disease that can affect various systems in our body producing diabetic complications, most common being Diabetic retinopathy, a leading cause of blindness. Approximately 10 million diabetics in India have Diabetic Retinopathy

Realizing the gravity of the situation, IMA, which is largest society of doctors, and the All India Ophthalmological Society (AIOS), which is the largest ophthalmology society, have joined hands and launched the prestigious project Prevention of Diabetic Blindness PDB in India. The efforts of Dr Marthanda Pillai National President IMA , Dr K. K. Aggrawal, the Honorary Secretary General IMA , Dr Debasish Bhattacharya, President AIOS, Dr Quresh Maskati, past President AIOS and chief coordinator DESC (Diabetic Eye Screening Clinics) were responsible for the formation of this broad based strong platform

The PDB project envisaged dual approach to this problem, one that is directed to measures to create and spread awareness about Diabetic Blindness, and the other that is directed to measures to ensure screening of all diabetics in the country for diabetic retinopathy.

The official launch of the PDB program in Gujarat was held on 19th April at Vadodara in Gujarat. A diabetic awareness program and the diabetic screening clinics were inaugurated by the Worshipful Mayor of Vadodara. The Chairman PDB program released the Information poster and commissioned the web site of the PDB Project.

Diabetic Retinopathy Screening Clinics are now being organized regularly in the various districts of Gujarat and diabetic blindness awareness posters and display boards are being displayed at clinics, hospitals and medical institutes

A Diabetic Retinopathy clinic was conducted on 19 April 2015 at Godhra where 400 diabetics were screened for Diabetic retinopathy. Following the successful launch of the PDB project many awareness programs and screening clinics are now being organised all across the country



MG 8401

DIABETES RETINAL CHEKUP CAMP, GODHRA - 19/04/2015

The first ever High altitude Diabetic Blindness Awareness Campaign

This first ever high altitude Diabetic blindness awareness campaign (Manali to Leh) was undertaken under auspices of Indian Medical association and all India Ophthalmological Society project PDB in collaboration with Akal Eye Hospital, Punjab

Nine screening camps were held en route where free diabetes and diabetic retinopathy were done. This cycling expedition for the cause of preventing diabetic blindness was a great success and has been greatly lauded and appreciated all over the country and abroad



Diabetic Retinopathy Screening and Awareness Campaign Kanpur July 15 2015

Crusade against diabetic blindness - a meeting was held in Kanpur on AIOS initiative. Almost 100 delegates sat through for 6 hours without break and discussed various aspects of diabetic retinopathy, an unprecedented response from local ophthalmic fraternity and the representatives of KOS and UPSOS Diabetic Retinopathy Screening clinic and awareness campaign Kanpur



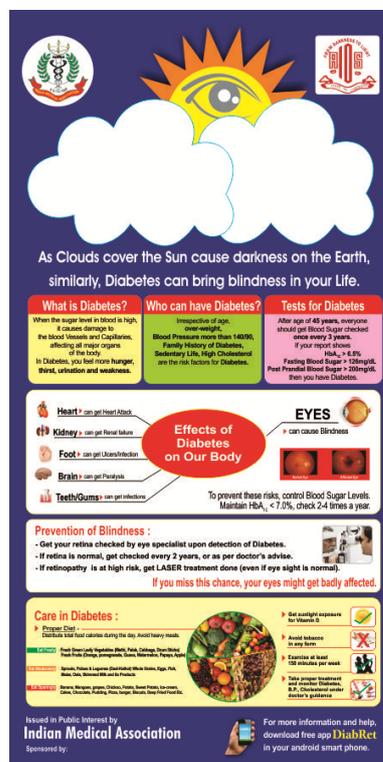
We have made information posters regarding diabetes and diabetic blindness and other complications on display boards and these are being exhibited at Hospitals, diabetic clinics, Laboratories and even in public places like malls, airport and railway stations

5. Regarding creating awareness about Diabetic blindness we also launched an App 'Diabret' for smartphones available free of cost on android platforms from Google play store. Also the information posters are available at www.diabret.com

The following important facts about diabetes and diabetic blindness have been highlighted in the information poster

a) Diabetes is a life style disease and life style modifications are also needed to control it.

b) It can affect the eye causing diabetic Retinopathy which if not detected early and treated appropriately can lead to irreversible blindness



c) Diabetic Retinopathy in the early and even in moderately advanced stages may be symptomless

- d) **All Diabetics should have an eye screening** for diabetic retinopathy upon diagnosis of Diabetes itself and thereafter at periodic intervals as advised by the physician
- e) **Good control of diabetes** prevents, delays or arrests the progress of diabetic complications
- f) **Diabetic blindness is preventable**

IMA Project PDB has a Facebook page where we regularly post all relevant information about diabetes and diabetic blindness. Our Facebook page has become a very popular on the social media with more than 10000 likes within a short period of 3 months. Please visit 'Prevention of Diabetic Blindness in India' (<https://www.facebook.com/preventionofdiabeticretinopathy/>)

We are updating the page by posting valuable information about diabetes and diabetic retinopathy,

First National Steering Committee Meeting was held at Ahmedabad in September 2015

The following are the members of the National Steering Committee

Dr. Marthanda Pillai	National President IMA
Dr. K K Aggrawal	Hony. Secretary General IMA
Dr. NSD Raju	Chairman PDB
Dr. Geeta Menon	International Advisor
Dr. P N Nagpal	National Advisor
Dr. Quresh Maskati	Member
Dr. Pradeep Sheth	Member
Dr. S Sukumar	Member
Dr. Sreejith N Kumar	Member
Dr. Vishali Gupta	Member
Dr. Lalit Verma	Member
Dr. Mahesh Shanmugham	Member

A Steering Committee Meeting of the Indian Medical Association (IMA) Initiative, Preventing Diabetic Blindness (PDB), was held at Ahmedabad 24 Aug 2015. The Committee reviewed the progress made so far in the implementation of the Project and resolved to continue the efforts in both

creating awareness about diabetic blindness and in adopting measures to screen all diabetics in the country.



Also decided to ratify the decision to officially collaborate with All India Ophthalmological Society (AIOS) and carry forward the project as a joint venture from a broader platform. The nationwide diabetic screening clinics to be set up in connection with World Diabetic Day November 2015 will henceforth be a joint venture of AIOS and IMA. Resolved to request the Government machinery to accord sanction and allot slots for regular advertisements on Radio and TV to spread the awareness about diabetes and diabetic blindness. The AIOS endorsed the IMA Initiative and will fully support the same

Odisha state became the second state in India to launch the Prevention of Diabetic blindness program It was inaugurated on 08.11.2015 at Bhubaneswar. The most popular and renowned film celebrity and Member of Parliament, Dr Sidhanth Mohapatra is our brand ambassador for the IMA - AIOS Diabetic blindness awareness project in Odisha. The project was officially

launched by D.Mohapatra at a colourful function attended by hundreds and hundreds of members of the medical fraternity and public. Our Brand Ambassador in his inaugural address underlined the importance of creating and spreading awareness about Diabetes and Diabetic Blindness in the country.

The launch of this prestigious program was organised by Odisha State Branch of the Indian Medical Association in collaboration with the Odisha state branch of the All India Ophthalmological Society. It is gratifying to note that the PDB project is fast becoming popular all across the country as the scheme is being introduced and implemented in all other states in a phased manner as an on-going program. The inaugural session was followed by a Continuing Medical Education Program on Ocular complications of Diabetes and a screening program of all diabetics for diabetic retinopathy, using a non mydriatic camera



Sidhanth Mohapatra Noted celebrity and our brand ambassador inaugurates the PDB Project in Odisha



Odisha PDB launches the project IMA AIOS office bearers with Dr. Siddant Mohapatra

On 16/11/2015 the noted Bollywood celebrity **Karisma Kapoor** launched the nationwide campaign to create and spread awareness about diabetes and diabetic blindness. Inaugural function and Press Conference were arranged in connection with Diabetic Eye Screening Clinics (DESC) organized by IMA and AIOS during the World diabetes Week 14 - 21st November 2015

During the World Diabetes Week nearly 200 DESCs have been set up all across the country organized by AIOS along with IMA. A major Press conference was held by AIOS and IMA at J W Marriot Mumbai on 16 November 2015. Noted Bollywood celebrities Karisma Kapoor and Siddharth Malhotra were the special guests of honour for the function. Karisma Kapoor inaugurated the dedicated website of the DESC. In her address she exhorted all the diabetics to get a Diabetic Eye Screening done for diabetic retinopathy which is the cause for diabetic blindness.



Karisma recounted a sad incident in which an employee of hers fell unconscious during work and was found to have uncontrolled diabetes and had already lost vision in one eye. Her vivid narration of this true story amply exemplifies the need for diabetic retinopathy screening for all diabetics. Siddharth Malhotra noted film celebrity, National IMA President Dr Marthanda Pillai, AIOS President Dr Debasish Bhattacharya, the Chief Organizer and Past President of AIOS Dr Quresh Maskati, the treasurer of AIOS Dr.Yogesh Shah, the Convenor of the Program and Steering committee member Dr Himanshu Mehta and the Chairman of the IMA AIOS Prevention of Diabetic Blindness project in India Dr.NSD Raju also spoke on the occasion and

addressed the Press Conference The function ended on a note of optimism and trust, reaffirming our determination and perseverance to continue our tirade against this ever increasing menace of diabetic blindness in India from a broader and stronger platform of AIOS and IMA.

We have also put up over 200 Diabetes Eye Screening clinics all across the country during the World Diabetes Week 2015 and screened thousands of diabetics for diabetic retinopathy. This indeed a tremendous achievement thanks to Convenor Dr Quresh Maskati, IMA National President Dr Marthanda Pillai and President AIOS Dr. Debasish Bhattacharya

It is quite heartening to note that this initiative PDB, originally conceived and formed by National IMA President Dr Marthanda pillai and subsequently supported and spearheaded by AIOS President Dr. Debasish Bhattacharya, has now become one the most prestigious projects of Indian Medical Association and All India Ophthalmological Society. That the project is being successfully implemented in three states viz, Gujarat, Odisha and Maharashtra within a short period of 9 months, speak volumes for the success of the project. And the other states are following suit. The project is slated to be replicated in all other states in a phased manner in the ensuing year.

So this joint collaboration of IMA and AIOS has given us a very strong and broad platform to implement this program. Being a very comprehensive project we also need to involve both governmental and non-governmental agencies .In fact we have envisaged a major and comprehensive on-going program to continue our crusade against this ever increasing menace of Diabetic Blindness in the country. Similarly Press and Media too have an important role to play. With our persistence and perseverance in the implementation of this prestigious project, the ushering in of a bright new era is in the offing, in our fight against Diabetic Blindness.

I also take this opportunity to thank all the members of the steering committee of IMA and AIOS and all others supported and implemented this program right from its inception. Our aim is to cover all the states in India b by end of 2016 I request all of you to continue your valuable support and help and guidance in implementing this most prestigious Project.