

Tissue donation in Manipur

Testament Towards a New Journey of Corneal Transplant & Donation in Manipur

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When MOHAN Foundation commenced its efforts in Manipur in Northeast in 2019, an exceedingly underserved region, only one private hospital conducted renal transplants. Collaborating with Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Medical Sciences (JNIMS), the state government hospital, the Foundation assisted in initiating their renal transplant

program. Over the past two years, the hospital has successfully performed 51 transplants. When our team facilitated the first deceased organ donation in August 2023, the absence of an eye bank prevented corneal retrieval. It was disheartening to realize that, even in 2024, eye donation was not feasible.

Given the importance of corneal transplant, MOHAN Foundation started coordinating with National Programme for Control of Blindness & Visual Impairment (NPCBVI) under National Health Mission, Manipur since April 2022. They then joined hands with L V Prasad Eye Institute, Hyderabad for training and other expertise. A formal tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the three organisations and the first eye bank of Manipur called "Manipur State Eye Bank" at State Ophthalmic Cell was inaugurated on November 29, 2023.

"My left eye has been impaired for the past 30 years due to an injury during the National Cadet Corps camping, and I have lived half of my life in darkness. The recovery process was more emotional than I expected as if I had been walking around underwater, and now I was above the surface", **Yumnam** shared with happiness.

On January 18, 2024, with corneas generously provided by LVPEI, Manipur State Eye Bank conducted the first corneal transplant. 47 years old, Yumnam Surjit underwent the first corneal transplant.

Just one month after the first transplant, on February 12, 2024, Manipur hit history again with the first corneal donation. The donation was done at JNIMS: the corneal retrieval was done by the Manipur State Eye Bank team. With the retrieved cornea, a 38-year male underwent corneal transplant on February 15, 2024. The donation was closely coordinated by MOHAN Foundation team.

"It was indeed a proud moment for Manipur to establish Manipur State Eye bank and Corneal transplant centre in Manipur at State Ophthalmic Cell, Lamphel. We are highly grateful to the Government of Manipur, Directorate of Health Services, NHM, NPCB, LVPEI and MOHAN Foundation for all the supports and guidance in making this dream come true. We have done nine Keratoplasty till date with satisfactory results", said **Dr Vikram Singh Khoisnam, State Programme Officer, NPCB, Manipur.**

"It was a big milestone to receive the first ever eye donation in our eye bank as well as for the state of Manipur. The retrieved corneal buttons were successfully transplanted. I could not thank enough the donor families who took the brave decision. Further, we are looking forward for more developments and awareness to the public to facilitate more eye donations so that we can fulfil the needs for corneal buttons in our region", **Dr Ningombam Reagan Singh, Director In-Charge, Manipur State Eye Bank** shared with immense pleasure.

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