KSOSConnect

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The Official Newsletter of Kerala Society of Ophthalmic Surgeons

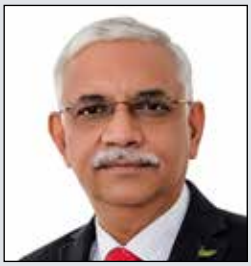
FROM THE OT FLOOR

Beyond the Prism: Ensuring Intraoperative Safety in Strabismus Surgery

The Essential Intraoperative Checklist for Strabismus Surgery

Page 61

PRESIDENT'S NOTE



The presidential project on AI for Ophthalmologists has been especially relevant in today's rapidly evolving landscape. Through focused sessions at both the KSOS level and across district clubs, we have helped our members better understand and begin integrating AI into their clinical practice.

- Dr Rajiv Sukumaran
President KSOS

IN CONVERSATION WITH



A Gandhian in a White Coat: **The Journey of Dr. A V Bharathan**

To watch the interview click the link:
https://youtu.be/1gmrXbUYF5Y

Page 14

What I Wish I Knew Earlier

Sir, when will we have the next one?

Page 57

AI CORNER

Future of AI in Eye

From Sci-Fi to Standard of Care

Page 58

NUMBERS THAT MATTERS

Global and India Vision Loss

Page 63

MICRO PEARLS

Micro Learning in minutes

Page 64

KSOS, CONNECT CROSSWORD

Ready to flex those mental muscles away from the slit lamp?

Page 65

2-13
Messages

14-19
In Conversation with
Dr. A V Bharathan

20-54
Report of District Clubs

55-56
YOSI Activities

57
What I Wish I Knew Earlier

58-60
AI Corner

61-62
From the OT Floor

63
Numbers That Matter

64
Micro Pearls

65
CONNECT CROSSWORD

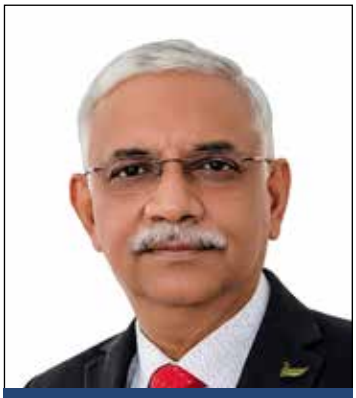
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Dr Rajiv Sukumaran
President KSOS

Message from the President

Respected seniors & colleagues,

After taking over as President of KSOS, I am pleased to share that the past few months have been both active and productive, with meaningful academic and service-oriented initiatives taking shape across our society.

Our two flagship initiatives have made significant progress. The presidential project on AI for Ophthalmologists has been especially relevant in today's rapidly evolving landscape. Through focused sessions at both the KSOS level and across district clubs, we have helped our members better understand and begin integrating AI into their clinical practice.

Our second major initiative—ANBU, focusing on eye examination and treatment for the differently abled—has received excellent acceptance. It is encouraging to see this program being actively implemented across multiple districts with strong support from local societies and hospitals, reflecting our shared commitment to inclusive eye care. More than 14 programmes have been conducted so far.

I would like to place on record my sincere appreciation for our scientific committee, who have worked tirelessly to ensure that our academic programs remain relevant, high-quality, and beneficial. I am also proud to lead an executive committee that is deeply committed, sincere, and hardworking in all its responsibilities.

One of the highlights of this tenure has been the success of the recent Drishti conference, which achieved both academic excellence and a financial surplus of over one crore rupees. It is widely regarded as one of the finest Drishti conferences so far, made possible by the collective efforts of the organizing team and the strong support of our members.

Looking ahead, preparations are underway for the next Drishti in Kannur, to be held at Krishna Beach Resort. With careful planning and the guidance of our LOC and scientific committee, I am confident we will deliver another outstanding event.

We are also focusing on strengthening our community bonds. Our family get-together is scheduled for 9th and 10th May at Lakesong Resort, Kumarakom, with an enthusiastic response so far. I am sure it will be a memorable gathering.

As we move forward, I seek your continued support, guidance, and active participation. Together, we can further strengthen KSOS and continue to make a meaningful impact in both academic excellence and community service.

Thanking you.

മാനവികതയുടെ നിറവാണ് ഒരു മനുഷ്യനെ ആ പേരിന് അർഹനാക്കുന്നത്. സഹജീവികളിൽ ഈശ്വര ചൈതന്യം ദർശിച്ച് മറ്റുള്ളവർക്ക് നന്മ ചെയ്ത് ജീവിക്കുമ്പോഴാണ് ജീവിതം അർത്ഥവത്താകുന്നത്. സ്നേഹം, ത്യാഗം, ക്ഷമ, ഔദാര്യം, പരോപകാരതൽപ്പരത ഇവയൊക്കെ മനുഷ്യനെ ദേവതുല്യനാക്കുന്നു; ഈ അർത്ഥതലങ്ങളെല്ലാം ഒത്തുചേരുന്ന ഒരു പദമാണ് 'അൻപ്'. ഓരോ കുഞ്ഞും അവരുടെ മാതാപിതാക്കളുടെ സ്വപ്നവും സമൂഹത്തിന്റെ പ്രതീക്ഷയുമാണ്. ഭിന്നശേഷിയുള്ള കുഞ്ഞുങ്ങളുടെ സമഗ്രമായ വളർച്ചയ്ക്ക് പൂർണ്ണവും വ്യക്തവുമായ കാഴ്ച അത്യന്താപേക്ഷിതമായതിനാൽ, ആ ലക്ഷ്യം മുൻനിർത്തി കേരളത്തിലെ നേത്രരോഗവിദഗ്ദ്ധർ ആവിഷ്കരിച്ച സ്വപ്ന പദ്ധതിയാണ് 'അൻപ്'. ഇത് അവരുടെ ഹൃദയത്തിൽ നിന്ന് ഉദിച്ച കാരുണ്യത്തിന്റെ കരുതൽ കൂടിയാണ്.

മനുഷ്യസ്നേഹത്തിന്റെ കാലിഡോസ്കോപ്പിലൂടെ നോക്കുമ്പോൾ ഈ സംരംഭം നമ്മുടെ സേവനമേഖലയെ കൂടുതൽ ഔന്നത്യമുള്ളതാക്കി മാറ്റുന്നു. മറ്റുള്ളവർക്ക് ഒരു നന്മയെങ്കിലും ചെയ്യാത്ത ദിവസം തികച്ചും അർത്ഥരഹിതമാണ്. നേത്രരോഗവിദഗ്ദ്ധരായ നാം കൈകാര്യം ചെയ്യുന്നത് മനുഷ്യശരീരത്തിലെ ഏറ്റവും സൂക്ഷ്മവും വിലപ്പെട്ടതുമായ അവയവത്തെയാണ്. ആ ഒരു സൂക്ഷ്മത നമ്മുടെ ജീവിതത്തിന്റെ എല്ലാ രംഗങ്ങളിലും പടരേണ്ടതുണ്ട്. ആർഷഭാരത സംസ്കാരത്തിന്റെ അടിസ്ഥാനം പരസ്നേഹമാണെന്നും അപരനെ സ്നേഹിക്കുന്നത് ഏറ്റവും വലിയ ഈശ്വരാരാധനയാണെന്നും നാം തിരിച്ചറിയണം. ഭിന്നശേഷിയുള്ള കുട്ടികൾ, പേര് സൂചിപ്പിക്കുന്നത് പോലെ തന്നെ വിഭിന്നമായ കഴിവുകളുടെ ഉറവിടങ്ങളാണ്. അവരുടെ പരിമിതികളെ ഉൾക്കൊണ്ട് അവരെ സമൂഹത്തിന്റെ പൊതുധാരയിലേക്ക് കൈപിടിച്ചു കൊണ്ടുവരികയെന്ന പുണ്യപ്രവൃത്തിയാണ് 'അൻപ്' ലക്ഷ്യം വയ്ക്കുന്നത്. പാർശ്വവൽക്കരിക്കപ്പെട്ട കുട്ടികളെ സഹായിക്കുകയും അവരെ ജീവിതത്തിലേക്ക് പ്രോത്സാഹിപ്പിച്ചു കൊണ്ടുവരികയും ചെയ്യുമ്പോൾ നമ്മുടെ പ്രവൃത്തികൾ പുണ്യമായി മാറുന്നു. സമൂഹം ഒരു ഡോക്ടറിൽ നിന്നും പ്രതീക്ഷിക്കുന്ന നന്മ സങ്കൽപ്പങ്ങൾക്കും അതീതമാണ്. സമൂഹത്തിന്റെ സങ്കൽപ്പത്തിലെ ഡോക്ടർമാരായി മനസ്സുകൊണ്ട് പ്രവർത്തിച്ചുയരാൻ 'അൻപ്' പോലെയുള്ള സാധ്യതകൾ നമുക്ക് മുന്നിൽ പുതിയ വഴികൾ തുറക്കുകയാണ്.

The Presidential Project 2026

Dr Rajiv Sukumaran
President KSOS

Penned by Dr. Ann Tresa Antony



Dr. Mallika O.U.
General Secretary, KSOS

General Secretary's Message

Dear Esteemed Members,

I am proud to share a summary of our key activities and achievements from January to March:

1.AIOC 2026, Jaipur: KSOS bagged the Best State Society Award in the 1500+ members category. We also received the Best Session Award in our category. Our members led numerous Instruction Courses, and we congratulate Dr. Marian Pauly for entering the finals of the prestigious Col. Rangachari session. Under the guidance of Dr. Praveena Shyam, our TOTs Dr. Sneha Pius and Dr. Priyanka Nair reached the finals of the "Teachers of Tomorrow" program. Dr. A. Giridhar was conferred with the Padmabhushan S.S. Badrinath Endowment Award.

2. Membership and Administration: Our KSOS family continues to grow, with approved membership now reaching 2,800. I am happy to report that the 12A registration renewal has been completed successfully. To ensure transparency, the Drishti Audit was conducted on March 8th. The Administrative Audit is scheduled for March 24th, followed by the Internal Audit on April 12th. Vision enhancement committee met on Feb 10th

3. Academic and Community Initiatives: We successfully conducted 14 CMEs under the aegis of KSOS, furthering our commitment to continuous medical education.

4. Presidential Projects: Artificial intelligence and Anbu for differently abled children are being implemented across district clubs with great energy, reflecting our grassroots strength.

5. Significant efforts are underway, led by members including Dr. Devin, to include Anti-VEGF injections in the MEDISEP scheme, which will be a major boon for patient care in Kerala.

6. Family Meet: Mark your calendars for our upcoming Family Meet on May 9 and 10 in Lake Song, Kumarakom. We look forward to seeing you there with your families.

7. Drishti Venue: Following a thorough inspection of venues on Feb 1st , the Krishna Inn Beach Resort has been finalized as the venue for Drishti 2026

8. World Glaucoma week was observed by all district clubs and individual hospitals with different activities like walkathon, flash mobs, awareness talks, photography contests etc

I would like to thank each one of you for your unwavering support.

Warm regards.

Summary of Decisions of First Combined Executive Meeting of KSOS 2025-26 held in IMA House Kochi on 4th January 2026

- Presidential Projects, aimed to conduct screening camps in 328 schools for differently abled children and address the rising numbers of juvenile diabetes. Each of presidential project work will carry 10 points while assessing district clubs for best club award.
- For the AIOS Pegasus programme in Bengaluru KSOS nominated Dr Jayasree PV, Dr Nayana Sebastian and Dr Anubhav Goyal.
- Administratively, the society is in a strong position following Drishti 2025, which saw over 1,200 delegates and generated a preliminary profit of approximately 1 crore.
- The Scientific Committee, led by Dr. Sujith Nayanar, announced a robust 2026 calendar featuring an International Masterclass series, monthly subspecialty focus sessions, and a year-long AI Certificate Course culminating in a physical meeting in November.
- Instead of AMN Mr Ankit was given work of bulk mails and zoom.
- Change of office bearers were notified at the society registrar office with the help of Dr Vinodkumar
- Social media contract to ORMEON was terminated and Dr Preethy Prasanth will take care of KSOS social media handles officially.
- Under Editor Dr. Sanitha Sathyan, the Kerala Journal of Ophthalmology (KJO) is pushing for PubMed indexation by prioritizing original research and introducing sessions to assist members to publish.
- Awards & National Representation: Dr. A. Giridhar was nominated for the AIOS 2027 Lifetime Achievement Award, while Dr. Marian Pauly was confirmed to represent KSOS with the best paper at AIOC 2026..
- The Family Meet was finalized for May 9-10 at Lake Song, Kumarakom, while the venue for Drishti 2026 was narrowed down to Krishna Inn Beach Resort or Nayanar Academy pending a final inspection.
- Matters arising out of GB. Regarding voting rights of KSOS members. They have to be domicile of Kerala. The following are accepted as evidence for voting rights 1. Masked Adhaar with Domicile of Kerala address 2. Place of working ID card or certificate verified by district club secretary or executive member of KSOS. Voters list finalisation should be done before September 30th.
- **Formation of Committees**

a. Administrative Audit Committee (AAC): Dr V Sahasranamam (

Chairman), Dr Bastin V A, Dr Soumya Narayanan - Invitee

b. Internal Audit Committee (IAC): Dr P I Mohan (Chairman), Dr S Sasikumar, Dr Thomas George, Dr Ambika Shetty - Invitee

c. Vision Enhancement Committee (VEC): Dr K Mahadevan(Chairman) , Dr Shiney Nepolean, Dr Haripriya H

d. Byelaw and Manual revision committee: Dr Saikumar SJ (Chairman), Dr Biju John C, Dr Thomas George, Dr Thomas Arun Varghese, Dr Merine Paul

e. e. Ethics Committee (EC): Dr Rajiv Sukumaran, Dr Mallika O U, Dr Mahesh G, Dr Thomas Cherian

f. f. Crisis Management Committee (CMC): Dr Saju Joseph(Chairman), Dr Padmaja Krishnan, Dr Ashok Nataraj, Dr Alex Baby

g. g. LDP Committee – Dr Natasha , Dr Ambika Shetty , Dr Bindu Ajith , Dr Priyanka Thilak

h. h. AIOS Manging Committee – Dr Thomas Cherian and Dr Sreeni Edakhlon

- TK Alexander oration award will be given to Dr V Sahasranamam
- Lifetime achievement award – Suggested persons were Dr Vasantha Damodaran from Kannur and Dr Rajan Cyriac from Wayanad.
- Problems faced by small eye hospitals were brought to the attention of executive by Dr Preethy Prasanth and Dr Sanitha Sathyan. It was decided to address the issues by a committee headed by President. Suggested members were Dr Preethy Prasanth, Dr Sanitha Sathyan, Dr Devin Prabhakar, Dr Anish Madhavan Dr Sameera VV
- Dr Bastin suggested that the award certificates and participation certificate should be signed by the outgoing president . This is supported by the fact that all the activities were during that president's tenure. This was referred to GB since the current protocol was approved in GB
- **Best Club Award Point system**

1. Monthly scientific meeting 5 points each
2. Flagship CME after 3 years or 3 times under the aegis of KSOS 15 points (more than one flagship CME is there only one will be considered)
3. Other CME conducted by club 5 points maximum if there is no flagship CME
4. CME by members of club 1 point if under the aegis of district club and KSOS
5. Oration/Lecture by club 15 points in addition to flagship CME 15 points
6. PG training full day 5 hours 15 points each up to a maximum of 3
7. Eye camps by club directly with participation of more than 1 hospital with club banner with at least one office bearer 10 points each
8. Awareness programme done by club 5 points. Multiple hospital should take part and banner and brochure should contain club name. One club office bearer should be present
9. Regular eye clinic monthly for 12 months. Total of 10 points
10. Each presidential project – 10 points EACH e.g. each differently abled school camp (maximum 1 camp per school) will have 10 points
11. Attendance of district club representative in ECM 10 points each. Excluding Drishti time executive meetings. Maximum 30 points
12. Observation of days directly by club with office bearers of club. White Cane day, Glaucoma week, Eye donation fortnight, World sight day 10 points each
13. Reporting. Monthly 5 points each. Quarterly 10 points each. Suggested everyone should report monthly. Everyone agreed.



Dr Merine Paul
Joint Secretary, KSOS

Joint Secretary's Message

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you, All, for giving me the opportunity to serve as the Joint Secretary of KSOS .It has been my pride and privilege to bring out this edition of Connect. KSOS Connect has always been more than a newsletter—it is a reflection of our society, our shared journey, and the many voices that shape Ophthalmology in Kerala. As the community evolves, it felt only right that the newsletter should evolve with it.

With this refreshed edition, we have tried to give KSOS Connect a new visual and editorial energy—cleaner in design, easier to navigate, and hopefully more engaging to read. The idea was not to change its soul, but to present it in a way that feels more contemporary, relevant, and enjoyable.

At the same time, much of what our readers value most, remains very much intact. The interview with a senior ophthalmologist from our State, continues to be an important part of the newsletter, as do the messages from our office bearers and reports from club secretaries, though now presented in a more edited and reader-friendly format.

Alongside these familiar sections, we have introduced a few new features to make KSOS Connect more lively and useful. These include The Connect Crossword, Tips from the OT Floor, AI Corner, What I Wish I Knew Earlier, Micro Pearls and Numbers that Matter—sections intended to inform, engage, and occasionally make us pause and smile. I am ably assisted in my mission by my dynamic and enthusiastic team of associate editors. As always, the Executive team led by our President has been more than supportive.

This is not just a redesign, but the beginning of a more dynamic and participative newsletter. I hope many more of you will see KSOS Connect not only as something to read, but also as something to contribute to and shape. I look forward to your comments, critiques and suggestions, which should be sent to ksosjointsec@gmail.com.

Warm regards.



Dr Aneeta Jabbar
Treasurer, KSOS

Treasurer's Report

Dear Friends,

As I write my first report as Treasurer, I sincerely thank each one of you for your trust and for giving me this opportunity to serve.

I would like to acknowledge the constant support and guidance I have received from my predecessor, Dr. Thomas George, our President, Dr. Rajiv Sukumaran, and our Honorary Secretary, Dr. Mallika O. U.

From the finance desk, I am happy to report that as we approach the close of the financial year 2025-26, the accounts are well in order. The district club affiliation fees have been duly remitted by all district clubs. One significant achievement at the beginning of this year is the successful renewal of our 12A registration till 2036–37, clearly reflecting the proper and transparent utilisation of funds over the years.

The Award Fund of 5 lakhs for the Dr. Eapen Posterior Segment Poster Award has been generously contributed by the Little Flower Alumni.

The venue inspection for Drishti 2026 was conducted at Kannur Krishna Beach Resort on February 1st. The internal audit for Drishti 2025 was held on March 8th at IMA House, Kochi, attended by Dr. Rajiv, Dr. Sasikumar, Dr. Mallika, Dr. Aneeta, Dr. Thomas George, Dr. Bastin, Dr. Anish, Dr. Shiney, Dr. Sreeni, and Dr. Ambika Shetty. The committee verified vouchers, receipts, Drishti income/ expenditure statements, GST details, Tally statements, bank statements and the audit is expected to be completed by the end of this month.

The CME calendar is bustling with academic activities. The President's projects are being actively executed by the scientific committee and district clubs.

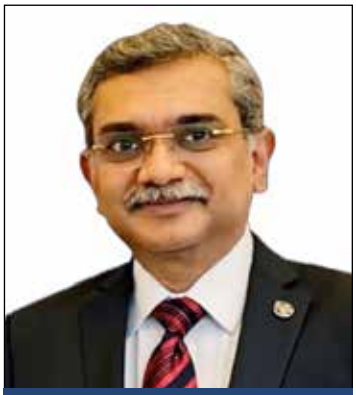
The Super Saver registration phase for Drishti 2026 has concluded successfully with 141 registrations. The KSOS Executive Committee and the Local Organizing Committee are working in close coordination to make the conference a grand success.

GST and Income Tax filings are progressing smoothly, thanks to the dedicated efforts of our accountant, Mr. Dhiraj .

The Internal Audit Committee is scheduled to meet on April 12th at IMA House, Kochi.

Thank you all once again for your continued support.

Warm regards.



Dr V Sujith Nayanar
Chairman, Scientific Committee-KSOS

Scientific Committee Chairman's Message

I am privileged to submit the activity report of the Scientific Committee for the first three months of our tenure, from January to March 2026. I would like to begin by expressing my sincere gratitude to the society and its members for entrusting me with this prestigious responsibility. The confidence placed in me and my committee serves as a strong foundation for the initiatives we have undertaken.

This report outlines the key educational activities conducted during this period, which have been strategically planned to align with the society's goals of academic excellence, international collaboration, and the integration of emerging technologies into ophthalmic practice.

One of our primary objectives was to establish a consistent, high-quality academic calendar. We conceptualized and launched a bi-monthly activity plan, which includes two distinct program formats: the International Master Class and the Xpert Talk. During this period, we successfully conducted two programs under each category. We had sessions by eminent International Speakers like Prof Harmindar Dua(University of Nottingham, UK) and Prof Saurabh Jain (UCL Medical School, UK)under the International Master Class Series. Under The Xpert Talk series we also we had 2 sessions , one by Prof Pradeep Venkatesh (AIIMS , New Delhi) and another by Dr Soosan Jacob (Aggarwals Group of Hospital ,Chennai).

All four programs were met with an overwhelming response, characterized by high attendance and active engagement from the participants, validating the demand for such curated academic content.

In line with the President's vision, the Scientific Committee took the lead in executing a flagship project aimed at improving Artificial Intelligence (AI) literacy among our members. We designed a comprehensive AI Training and Certification Course, structured as 10 monthly modules to provide a deep, systematic understanding of the subject. The first two modules have been successfully completed. The response has been extraordinary. Nearly 380 members have enrolled and are actively participating in the course. The demand was so high that we had to conduct a repeat session of the first module to accommodate the overwhelming interest, underscoring the interest of our members to upskill in this critical domain

For the first time in the society's history, we successfully obtained accredited credit hours from the Medical Council for our online webinars. Both Xpert Series talks are accredited with 1

(One) credit hour each and one session of AI training class also got sanction for 1 credit hour . So total of 3 credit hours could be attained in 3 months of academic activities. This achievement represents a significant step forward in enhancing the academic value of our digital programs and incentivizing member participation.

We also conducted one program in association with Young Ophthalmologist group of Kerala-YOLK and their national forum – YOSI. This was targeted for our PG students and Young Ophthalmogists who wish to give FAICO exams. This was based on Tips for preparation for FAICO -Cornea exams. It was also well attended by members of that targeted group. I thank YOLK members and office-bearers for conducting it under Scientific Committee and we wish to associate more in future to help good quality programs for our young members.

In parallel with our ongoing educational series, the committee has commenced planning for our flagship annual event, Drishthi 2026, with preparations and promotional activities officially kicking off on April 1st, 2026. On the same date, the official call for Submissions for Instruction Courses will open, and in a move to streamline the submission and selection process, we have revised and published the updated rules for Instruction Course submissions on the KSOS website—changes designed to improve clarity and efficiency for all prospective contributors, thereby laying strong groundwork for a successful conference.

To summarise -The first quarter of our tenure has been highly productive (with nearly 20 hours of Online academic teachings), marked by the successful establishment of a popular bi-monthly academic series with international and national faculty, the historic achievement of securing medical council credit hours for online sessions(3 hrs), the launch of a pioneering AI literacy program with a remarkably high participation rate(~400 enrolled members), and the initiation of robust planning and process improvements for Drishthi 2026. The Scientific Committee remains committed to delivering high-quality academic content and looks forward to building on this momentum in the coming months, welcoming feedback and continued support from the Executive Council and the membership at large.

JAI KSOS



Dr. Sanitha Sathyan
Editor in Chief, KJO

KJO Quarterly Activity Report (January – March 2026)

The first quarter of 2026 marked a productive phase for the Kerala Journal of Ophthalmology (KJO), with focused efforts to streamline editorial processes, strengthen peer review quality, and promote academic excellence.

Editorial Initiatives

1. Editorial Board Training Session

- Date: 21 January 2026
- Facilitator: Wolters Kluwer Team
- Objective: To orient editorial board members on the efficient utilization of the KJO Dashboard.
- Outcome: The session witnessed active participation from the editorial team and was widely appreciated for its practical approach to managing manuscript submissions and workflow.

2. Online Reviewer Orientation Programme

- Date: 30 January 2026
- Resource Person: Dr. Sabyasachi Sengupta (Director, Sengupta Research Academy)
- Moderator: Dr. Smitha Narayanan (Former Editor, KJO)
- Objective: To guide reviewers through a structured and systematic approach to evaluating scientific manuscripts.
- Outcome: The session offered valuable expert insights into high-quality academic reviewing, reinforcing a robust and rigorous peer review process for the journal.

Research Proficiency Initiative (KJO-RPI)

KJO launched the Research Proficiency Initiative (RPI), a dedicated online series aimed at consolidating journal-based mentorship activities and enhancing research skills among contributors.

- Session 1 (27 February 2026): "How to Write a Case Report"
  - Mentor: Dr. Ramesh Venkatesh (Senior Retina consultant,Narayana Nethralaya)
  - Moderator: Dr. Biju S. Raju (Senior Retina consultant, NSD Raju Eye Hospital, Kochi)
- Session 2 (26 March 2026):"Literature Review and Reference Management"
  - Mentor: Dr. Rashmi Deshmukh (Consultant in Cornea, LVPEI, Hyderabad)
  - Moderator: Dr. Divya Alex (Consultant in Vitreo-retina, Ahalia Eye Hospital, Kochi)

These sessions were well-received and contributed significantly to building research competency among participants.

Other Activities

- Cover Image Contest: Conducted from 06 February to 12 February 2026, inviting submissions of high-quality clinical photographs for consideration as the KJO front cover image.
- Digital Membership Drive: Initiated to promote environmentally sustainable practices by encouraging members to opt for digital copies of the journal, thereby reducing reliance on printed versions and minimizing the journal's carbon footprint.

Warm regards.



Dr Natasha Radhakrishnan
Website Editor

Website Editor's Message

Hello dear KSOS,

Its a great pleasure to address you all in this very first edition of KSOS connect this year.The website has been actively updated with timely content as well as keeping alive all the facilities available to KSOS members as before.We have both the Scientific Committee Events and KJO Editor's Events regularly updated for your convenience. The Drishti Instruction Course submission portal will go live from April 1st .

However, the last 3 months, I have been actively working on a functional face-lift for the website whereby we can improve both the aesthetic appeal and the accessibility and ease of operating in one go.As the initial part, I had done a survey among KSOS members to gather their thoughts and suggestions.I got many valuable insights and suggestions through that and I have been in discussion with the website team to implement them.

As you can imagine, revamping the website like ours requires significant thought and repeated models to finalise the "new look" and our team is actively working on it.

We are also looking into how we can incorporate AI into our website in line with our Presidential project .

I am confident that in a month or two, the new revamped and face-lifted website will be ready for you.

In the meantime, I request all to actively use the website and continue to give me feedback to improve the website because your feedback matters the most.

Jai KSOS

In Conversation with



The idea of conducting this interview first voiced to me by Dr. Sreeni Edakhlon, and from that very moment, it was clear that this would be a rare and momentous occasion. Interviewing a senior ophthalmologist like Dr. Bharathan, known as much for his values as for his professional journey was an invitation that was accepted without hesitation. Soon after, Dr. Merine Paul called to convey the same, and the author readily expressed her willingness to take this forward. In preparation, conversations with colleagues and seniors, including Dr. Suresh Babu, offered deeper insights into Dr. Bharathan's life and work, adding layers of anticipation to the meeting. One fine morning, the author travelled by train to Kasaragod to meet him at his home, a journey that mirrored the tone of what was to follow: calm, reflective, and quietly enriching. This conversation offers a glimpse into a life lived with clarity, conviction, and compassion.

Interviewed by: ***Dr. Remya Edachery***

A Gandhian in a White Coat: The Journey of Dr. A V Bharathan

During my childhood, I was deeply impressed by the free mega cataract surgery eye camps.

Sir, where did your story truly begin?

I was born in 1951 at Karivellur village in Kannur district. My father was KV Raman and my mother was AV Paatty Amma. I have three siblings—one elder brother, one elder sister, and one younger sister. Ours was a family traditionally dependent on khadi weaving and paddy farming for livelihood. I had my school education in the local schools of the area and completed my pre-degree from Payyanur College. In 1968, I stood first among the second group (Biology) students of that college. I always remember with deep gratitude four teachers who greatly encouraged and influenced me during my school and pre-degree years: Late P. Chiri of LP School, K. Gopalakrishnan of UP School, Late K. Raghavan Nair of High School, and Late Prof. John C. Jacob, the founder of SEEK, the first Environmental Education Society in Kerala.

What was your ambition as a child? When did the thought of medicine enter your life - as a dream, calculated decision or destiny?

Honestly, I had no clear ambitions during my early childhood. When I reached high school, probably influenced by my wonderful teachers and also by my elder brother Sri Raghavan, who was a UP School headmaster in the same school where I studied, I began dreaming of becoming a teacher. Studying medicine was never a dream or a calculated decision for me. When I got admission to the MBBS course purely on merit, it gradually became clear to me that medicine was my destiny.

What attracted you towards ophthalmology? Who were your early mentors?

During my childhood, I was deeply impressed by the free mega cataract surgery eye camps conducted every two years by the legendary Padmabhushan Dr. M. C. Modi of Bangalore, organised by the Lions Club of Payyanur, my hometown. Those surgeries were done with very primitive facilities and techniques, and the visual outcomes were naturally limited. But the sheer joy on the faces of elderly people—coming out of total darkness into light—and their gratitude towards Dr.Modi left a lasting impression on my mind and drew me towards eye care.

They taught me the true essence of the sacred relationship between a doctor and the community he serves.



My real mentor in ophthalmology was Dr.M. Prabhakaran, who was then Professor of Ophthalmology at Calicut Medical College. His simple, elegant way of teaching and demonstrating cases in the OP made ophthalmology my favourite subject throughout MBBS. I remember him today with utmost respect and gratitude.

Sir, Tell us about your early days of practice.

I began my medical career as a general practitioner at a cooperative hospital in a rural area called Nediyirippu in Malappuram district. Later, I started my own clinic at Kalikkadavu, near my native place. In 1977, I joined the Kerala Health Services as an Assistant Surgeon. My first posting was at Panathur, a very remote hilly rural area, where I worked for more than three years. Even today, I consider those years the most fruitful period of my medical life. They taught me the true essence of the sacred relationship between a doctor and the community he serves.

I was a founder member of the Medico Friend Circle (MFC), an all-India organisation whose motto was, "Go to the people, live with them, love them, and learn from them." I was fortunate to experience this philosophy firsthand during those years.

Later, I worked at the Government Dispensary in the seaside village of Uduma for four years. Being the only medical officer in a 20-bedded centre with many deliveries, I had extremely hectic days and nights, including holidays. Still, I managed to cope without compromising my family commitments.

In 1985, I joined the postgraduate DO course at Government Medical College, Kozhikode, as a service candidate. Prof. K. B. Venugopal was the Head of the Department, with Prof. M. S. Venkatachalam as Associate Professor. After postgraduation, I served in the eye units of Government Taluk Hospitals at Koyilandy and Kasaragod for about 12 years. While serving as District Medical Officer of Kannur, I took voluntary retirement to work abroad.

I then moved to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, where I worked for 21 years as Medical Director cum Registrar in Ophthalmology at New Safa Makkah Polyclinic. For the past four years, I have been working at a relaxed pace in an eye clinic at Kasaragod.

You have published a book compiling the government rules. Can you throw more light on that?

I served as the Chief Editor of the Kerala Government Medical Officers' Association (KGMOA) Journal during 1996–97. During that period,



I feel deeply gratified knowing that somewhere in almost every corner of the world, there may be someone whose vision I had the privilege to restore.



I undertook the task of collecting scattered government orders related to Kerala Health Services spanning 30 years—from 1966 to 1996. These were compiled into a handbook and distributed to all KGMOA members. It was also widely used in Health Services offices to clarify administrative doubts. The history of KGMOA was serialised during that period by veteran leader Dr. V. C. Velayudhan Pillai through the journal's monthly issues, which was highly appreciated by members.

After retirement you decided to go to Gulf. What was the thought behind that decision?

Like many others, my primary motivation was better financial security for the future. Many friends working in Gulf countries also encouraged me, feeling that the working atmosphere there would suit my temperament. During my 21-year tenure in Saudi Arabia, I realised that they were absolutely right. Polyclinics there, staffed by Indian doctors across specialities, are always crowded with expatriates from all over the world. When I look back today, I feel deeply gratified knowing that somewhere in almost every corner of the world, there may be someone whose vision I had the privilege to restore. Many of them still keep in touch with me through WhatsApp and other means.



How is Dr. Bharathan beyond his professional life?



That is difficult for me to answer—it is really for others to judge. Still, I feel that though I am somewhat introverted, I have always maintained cordial relationships with people around me. I have never intentionally hurt anyone and believe I have done justice to my family and society.

You are known as an avid practitioner of art of living. How is this in uenced you in your approach to patients as well as day today activities?

I have been practising Art of Living—yoga and meditation—founded by Guruji Sri Sri Ravishankar, for nearly 25 years. From my experience, it has played a major role in maintaining my mental and physical well-being. The wisdom shared by Guruji through his talks and interactions has helped me cultivate positivity and inner calm, especially during difficult situations in both my professional and family life.

Many describe you as a pure Gandhian leading a simple life. What does simplicity mean to you?

Medicine has witnessed truly miraculous developments across all branches over the last three to four decades.



I may hesitate to call myself a Gandhian, but Mahatma Gandhi has been my life mentor from childhood. This influence probably came from my father, a khadi weaver and ardent admirer of Mahatmaji. People often feel that one needs special qualities to earn the title of a Gandhian. Gandhiji, to me, belongs to the same exalted league as Jesus Christ and Sree Buddha. As writer Kalpatta Narayanan beautifully said, "There is no special makeup needed to become a Gandhian; one only has to abandon the makeup."

For me, a Gandhian is someone who believes in truth and non-violence, ensures that the means and the end justify each other, and practises what they preach. Such a person will naturally be content with what they have, leading a simple and meaningful life.

Can you tell us about your family?

My wife, Mrs. Prameela EK, is a homemaker with special talents in cookery, gardening, and vegetable cultivation. We are blessed with three daughters—Nimitha, Sumitha, and Pramitha. Two are engineers, and one holds a PhD in stem cell research. They are married to Sujesh, Neeraj, and Aneesh respectively, and all are well settled in Ernakulam and Bangalore. We are also blessed with four grandsons.

Medicine has evolved rapidly What changes have excited you and which ones worry you? what are the values which are everlasting for a medical practitioner?

Medicine has witnessed truly miraculous developments across all branches over the last three to four decades. Ophthalmology, especially cataract surgery, is a classic example. From the days of general anaesthesia, large limbal incisions, manual lens expression, tight bilateral eye bandaging, week-long hospital stays, and unpredictable visual outcomes, to today's era of topical anaesthesia, micro-incisions, sutureless phaco or laser surgery, and excellent visual recovery as a day-care procedure—the transformation has been revolutionary.

Similar advancements have occurred in the management of other eye diseases, and advanced eye care facilities are now available across most parts of our state. However, rising treatment costs, emerging unethical competition, corporate takeover of eye hospitals, and dilution of ethical practice through mixopathy are concerns we must address. Regardless of technological progress, a medical practitioner should never deviate from ethical and humanitarian values

Is there any personal experience which left everlasting impression on you?

Quite naturally, there were many major and minor, good and bad experiences which have influenced my personal life and professional career of 51 years. When I am prompted to narrate the most outstanding one in my memory, I would like to recollect this one.

The veteran socialist and Sarvodaya leader, the hero of the Quit India Movement of our freedom struggle in 1942, Jayaprakash Narayan, had

This interview, opening our series for 2026, stands as a gentle reminder that medicine is ultimately a moral and deeply human endeavour. Through five decades of service across rural India and abroad, Dr. Bharathan exemplifies how professional excellence can coexist with humility, simplicity, and a strong sense of social responsibility. His journey offers enduring lessons for generations of doctors to come. We sincerely thank Dr. Bharathan for generously sharing his life and reflections with us—it has truly been a privilege to listen to his journey.

founded an organisation for youth named Tarun Shanthi Sena (Youth Peace Corps) at the national level to engage them in constructive and peace activities. I was the North Zone, Kerala, coordinator for the same. We had active units in all colleges in Calicut city and its surroundings.

In 1974, when JP visited Calicut, a youth meet was held at Kozhikode Town Hall. More than 150 youngsters participated in that meet. There, he administered an oath to them. The essence of the oath was that they fight all social evils in society like bribes, dowry, corruption, sexual discrimination, communal hate, etc., and always uphold the values of truth and non-violence.

I had also taken that oath in his presence, and that oath has been the guiding principle of my life so far.

When you look at the journey thus far, is there anything which you would have done differently?

I am happy and satisfied with what I have done so far. Even then, often a thought like this used to flash in my mind: "I could have done better service to the society and future generations if I had secured a teaching service in ophthalmology at any Government Medical College in our state." On the contrary, in that case, I would have lost the joy of my long rural service.

As you look ahead are there any professional or personal dreams you still wish to pursue and how would you like to be remembered by your patients and colleagues?

As already stated, I am totally satisfied with what I could do so far, and I feel it was my 100 percent. After professional retirement, I would like to go back to my passionate hobbies of reading books, vegetable and fruit cultivation, and some voluntary social activities.

What is your advice for young ophthalmologists?

It is really a blessing in life to be a part of the most beautiful speciality in the whole of medical science, i.e., ophthalmology—a speciality dealing with the most valuable gift to human beings: eyesight. Definite diagnosis, specific management, and impressive prognosis are seen in most cases. Also, the fast-fading glory of the doctor–patient relationship is still retained to a major extent in this speciality. Let "empathy towards our patients, humility in behaviour, and commitment in work" be the leading principles in your career.

Let me quote Prof. B. M. Hegde: "No machine (AI in the present context) can replace a good doctor."

Before concluding, let me express my heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Rajeev Sukumaran, President KSOS, and his team of office bearers for giving me an unexpected opportunity like this to expose myself on the KSOS platform. Special thanks to Dr. Sreeni Edakhlon and Dr. Merine Paul for considering me a fit candidate for this event. I am really grateful to Dr. Remya, the budding ophthalmologist from my own native place, for the strain and time she has taken to arrange and conduct this programme.

Once again, good wishes to all. Jai KSOS!



Report of District Clubs

TRIVANDRUM OPHTHALMIC CLUB (TOC)

This year's program focused on "preferred practice protocols"

JANUARY 2026

Annual CME of TOC, REFLECTIONS, was held on the 18th of January 2026, at Hotel Residency Towers, Trivandrum.

This year's program focused on "preferred practice protocols" for perplexing ophthalmic conditions which may be encountered commonly in our day-to-day clinical practice.

The most prestigious Dr. KGR Nair memorial oration award was presented to the founder faculty and Vice president Emeritus of LV Prasad Eye Institute, Dr G. Chandrasekhar, senior glaucoma consultant.

Every year TOC acknowledges experienced senior ophthalmologists of our club with lifetime achievement awards. This year we recognised Dr Krishnamohan and Dr Abraham Kurian for their invaluable services rendered.

TOC gold medal was given - First prize – Dr Anjana P (Chaithanya eye hospital), second prize - Dr Deepthi Roy (RIO) and third prize - Dr Shahna NA (Chaithanya eye hospital).

MARCH 2026

Glaucoma walk conducted by TOC on March 8th 2026, as a part of world glaucoma awareness week. Flag off done by Sri V V Rajesh Mayor Trivandrum, and the chief guest was Mr Rajeev Devraj Editor Mathrubhumi news.

Along with walk there was a flash mob and Zumba dance. All the senior faculty of Trivandrum ophthalmic club participated in the program and there was awareness talk by most of them to the public.



Statewide webinar was conducted by Indian Medical Association as a part of world glaucoma week

PUBLIC AWARENESS AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Statewide webinar was conducted by Indian Medical Association as a part of world glaucoma week on Tuesday 10th March 2026 at 8am.

Topic of discussion was "Glaucoma Demystified" by Dr Kiran Gopalakrishnan. Inauguration was done by Dr M N Menon, President IMA Kerala State Branch.

Gitanjali Eye Hospital conducted a world glaucoma week car rally from Trivandrum club to Shangumugham beach as a "Hit the road to raise the awarenesss for the silent thief of sight".

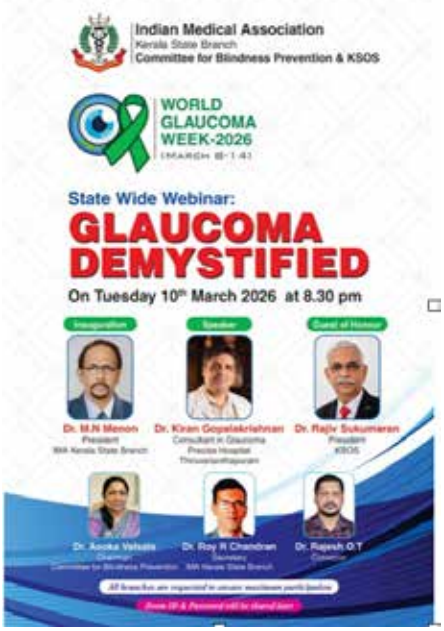
Free eye check-up and IOP screening camp for the public including the free eye pressure testing, optic nerve evaluation and expert glaucoma counselling conducted during the week by member hospitals of TOC.

Dr Veena Viswam conducted an awareness talk in Akashavani Trivandrum on 9th March.









KOLLAM OPHTHALMIC ASSOCIATION (KOA)

A prestigious KSOS Presidential visit by Dr. Rajiv Sukumaran, who officially inaugurated our 2026 activities

January 2026

- A Grand Inauguration: KOA kicked off the year on January 29th with a prestigious KSOS Presidential visit by Dr. Rajiv Sukumaran, who officially inaugurated our 2026 activities and discussed the upcoming implementation of the KSOS Presidential Project.
- CME Series – 1: We hosted impactful scientific sessions featuring "AI in Ophthalmology" by Dr. Rajiv Sukumaran and "Optimising Anti-VEGF Therapy in DME and AMD" by Dr. Ashok Nataraj.
- Charting the Future: The General Body Meeting successfully concluded with the selection of our dynamic new office bearers for the 2026 term.

February: 2026

- Passing the Baton: During our February 20th meeting, the KSOS President officially installed the new office bearers, setting a forward-looking course for the year. The General Body also officially approved our amended Bye-laws in accordance with the Kerala Societies Registration Act.
- CME Series – 2 : Highlights: Dr. Divya Kishan delivered a comprehensive presentation on the KSOS Presidential Project - ANBU, outlining its scope for screening physically disabled children across thirteen schools in Kollam. This was paired with an insightful, interactive session on Paediatric Refraction.
- Growing Our Family: We proudly expanded our clinical community by welcoming new members Dr. Chithra Raghavan and Dr. Krishna R Nath during a successful membership drive.









MARCH 2026

- ANBU Project Soars: We officially launched and implemented the ANBU vision screening initiative on March 5th at Vimala Hridaya Special School, inaugurated by the Honourable Mayor of Kollam. The dedicated medical team, headed by Dr. Rani Balamurali and Dr. Joyce from Amardeep Eye Care and Dr. Yasmin Ali from Ozanam Eye Centre, Bishop Benziger Hospital, assessed 55 children.
- Expanding Reach: The momentum continued with our second screening camp on March 17th at SEIREI Asha Bhavan, Punalur. Conducted by a dedicated team from Shankar's Eye Hospital and Sabitha Eye Care, the camp successfully screened 34 children, identifying 26 requiring spectacles and several cases needing further ophthalmic care.
- World Glaucoma Week Success: KOA made a massive public impact to "Save Vision" Our extensive activities included a Walkathon flagged off by MLA Shri M. Noushad. This was supported by an informative radio talk on Radio Benziger by Dr. Kiran Balagopal, and a widespread online video campaign on Kollam Stories led by Dr. Mini Jayachandran
- Uniting Hospitals for Glaucoma Awareness: Multiple institutions actively championed the cause across the district:
- CME Series – 3 & GBM: Held on March 24th, this gathering featured an enriching session on "OCT for Comprehensive Ophthalmologists" by Dr. Shishir Varghese. Additionally, the General Body planned the formation of a Local Audit Committee to help ensure proper verification and monitoring of our ANBU project funds moving forward.











OPHTHALMIC SOCIETY OF PATHANAMTHITTA (OSP)

KSOS Presidential initiative - Anbu - Karunya eye hospitals Adoor and Pandalam conducted eye screening camp

January 2026

Radio talk at RADIO MACFAST on January 4th - World Braille Day to spread the awareness and importance of Braille in the lives of visually impaired.

Dr Priyanka Thilak presented on Braille and its significance.

OSP launched their free Monthly Eye Clinic at Grace Villa, Kallupara, Thiruvalla on 25-01-2026.

Dr Cheriyan Shane Mathew, Dr Rachel Jose, Dr Priyanka Thilak, Dr Ann Tresa Antony were present. KSOS Presidential Initiative - ANBU

Vision Screening Camp was organized on January 28th,2026 at YMCA Vikas School, Thiruvalla. The program was dedicated to providing specialized eye care services to differently abled children.

MONTHLY Scientific Meeting was conducted on 29th January 2026 at KGA Elite Continental Hotel, Thiruvalla. Dr Satish Thomas - Professor & HOD, Believers Church Medical College Hospital spoke on "ATROPINE - Should we administer for progressive Myopia?" The meeting was attended by 35 members, and was well recevied.

February: 2026

OSP organized its Annual Family Day on February 1st, 2026. The tranquil and scenic backwaters of Champakulam was chosen for a day of relaxation and fun. The venue, Blue Jelly Cruises, provided an ultra- luxury houseboat experience, with traditional Kuttanadan culinary experience on board. During the informal briefing held on deck, the OSP leadership highlighted the society's rapid growth since its formal registration in 2023.

In honor of Low Vision Awareness Month, OSP released an educational video featuring Dr. Shyma Markose. The video highlights how specialized low vision aids and tools can help patients with irreversible loss of vision navigate daily life.

KSOS Presidential initiative - Anbu - Karunya eye hospitals Adoor and Pandalam conducted eye screening camp for the differently abled children at Deepthi Special School, on the 19th of February 2026. A total of 98 students were examined.

PHACO 360 Degrees Workshop - Structured Phaco training Wetlab for PGs and Fellows was conducted on 21st Feb 2026, by Dr Verghese Joseph & Dr Amita Verghese with Dr. Aaditya Ganesh Joshi as the trainer.


OPHTHALMIC SOCIETY OF
PATHANAMTHITTA (OSP)
KSOS PRESIDENTIAL INITIATIVE
അരുപ്
Inauguration by : Dr. Rajiv Sukumaran
(President, KSOS)

















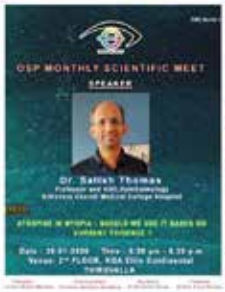





OPHTHALMIC SOCIETY OF PATHANAMTHITTA
PG UPDATE PROGRAM
PHACO 360° WORKSHOP
A program for beginner phaco surgeons
MENTORS
PROGRAM
- WET LAB
- Phaco Fundamentals lectures
- OT Experience
Register






OSP MONTHLY SCIENTIFIC MEET
SPEAKER
Dr. Sanish Thomas














MONTHLY EYE CLINIC
OSP Social Initiative











MARCH 2026

OSP De Novo – AI Workshop

Conducted on March 1st 2026 at KGA Elite Continental, Thiruvalla.

The event was led by Dr. Sharon Basil, who explored the practical uses of AI in ophthalmology, followed by an innovative session by Dr. Prithivi Chandrakanth on "Do-It-Yourself Innovations: AI for Ophthalmology Education." The event concluded with an insightful talk by Mr. Salim A.M, CEO of Blooray IT Solutions, who shed light on AI integration in Electronic Medical Records (EMR).

Glaucoma Awareness Week - March 8th to 14th, 2026

Multiple events were conducted by OSP to raise awareness about Glaucoma in the community. Few such events are -

- Glaucoma Awareness Walkathon conducted at Adoor by Precise Eye Care on March 8th Radio Talk on Glaucoma awareness was given by Dr Gopisree Nair at Radio MACFAST. Glaucoma Awareness Video - featuring Dr Ann Mary Mathews
- Glaucoma Screening camps were organized at Hotel Ashok, Thiruvalla and Mallapally Police Department, Thiruvalla.
- Glaucoma Awareness poster competition
- A vibrant glaucoma awareness FLASHMOB was held near the International Complex, Thiruvalla



KOTTAYAM OPHTHALMIC SOCIETY (KOS)

DECEMBER 2025

The 107th Kottayam Ophthalmic Society meeting was held on 19th Dec, 2025 at Hotel Indraprastha, Kottayam.

Dr. Shishir Verghese, Amita Eye Care Hospital, Tiruvalla was guest speaker. He delivered Keynote sessions on Retinal Lasers for Comprehensive Ophthalmologists.

Meeting was attended by 30 members.

Keynote sessions on Retinal Lasers for Compre-hensive Oph-thalmologists.





The ANBU Privilege Card Project, a free treatment initiative for differently abled children

MARCH 2026

GLAUCOMA WEEK ACTIVITY:

- Dr. Asha James, consultant Izara Eye Hospital, Kottayam delivered Glaucoma awareness talk at MG University
- New Vision Eye Hospital conducted a glaucoma screening camp in association with IMA Kanjirappally

KSOS PRESIDNTIAL PROJECT:

The KSOS Presidential Project "ANBU Vision Screening Camp" was successfully conducted at Shalom DCMR Special School, Puliyannoor, Pala.

The camp was organized by Alphonsa Eye Hospitals, Pala.

The ANBU Privilege Card Project, a free treatment initiative for differently abled children and their parents was launched by Dr. Rajiv Sukumaran.

Dr Indhu conducted an awareness session for parents.

The clinical team included Dr Indu, Dr Teena, along with 3 optometrists and 3 nurses who provided comprehensive care to the children.

A total of 38 children were examined:

8 children were prescribed spectacles

10 children were referred to the hospital for detailed evaluation

Free treatment cards were distributed to all children and their parents as part of the ANBU initiative.







IDUKKI MALANAD OPHTHALMIC CLUB (IMOC)

Workshop on Artificial Intelligence in Medical Education

Academic Excellence & Monthly Meets

IMOC maintained a robust academic calendar with monthly meetings held at Kabani Palace, Muvattupuzha

December: Dr. A.C. Raghu discussed ocular injuries and its medico-legal aspects, an insightful session, which was followed by a cultural potpourri to conclude the year end with joy and gratitude. January: Dr. Sumitha Jacob addressed the impact of screen time on the eyes and the brain for both the young and the old: "Use technology wisely—practical insights to protect your eyes; preserve your mind" which was followed by an interactive session.

February: Dr. Kala Baby Thottam presented an impacful session on modern refractive surgery (where does SILK fit), followed by a session on personal growth- "Food for Thought: Life Lessons that Inspire Growth," by Dr. Sumitha Jacob; followed by a General Ophthalmology Quiz by Dr. Treesa

March: Dr. Neena R. provided insights into Pediatric cataract, its management for general ophthalmologists,and was followed by a spirited glaucoma quiz led by Dr. Treesa.

Ascend '26: Hands-on AI Workshop

A major event was Ascend '26 held on March 8th, a full-day workshop on Artificial Intelligence in Medical Education, Clinical Practice and Research along with highlight on Smart Phone Photography in Ophthalmology & Clinical practice.

Led by Dr. Sharon Baisil and Dr. John Davis Akkara, the event drew 73 delegates and was graced by KSOS State President Dr. Rajeev Sukumaran as the Guest of Honour.

IMOC -CARE Project taking forward the KSOS Presidential Project (ANPU)

IMOC demonstrated a strong commitment to community welfare. Through the KSOS ANPU initiative, our IMOC CARE Project-കൺമണിക്ക് കരുതൽ-provided comprehensive eye evaluations for differently-abled children, Led by Drs. V.J. Jacob, Sumitha Jacob, Ashwin Somarajan eye evaluations were conducted for the special children at Nirmala Sadan School, Muvattupuzha and Pratheeksha Bhavan Thodupuzha. IMOC-REACH project: Drs. Sumitha Jacob, Ashwin Somarajan conducted awareness sessions on various community relevant topics at Nirmala College of Pharmacy & Vimala Early Intervention Centre, Muvattupuzha

Know about glaucoma and the importance of early detection

World Glaucoma Week 2026

On March 13th, IMOC led awareness talk by Dr. V.J. Jacob for the staff and students of Pratheeksha Bhavan, focusing on what both young and old need to know about glaucoma and the importance of early detection and screening. Throughout the week, member hospitals of IMOC actively engaged the public through various creative and clinical programs.

Strengthening Our Bonds

Our IMOC Family Meet on January 25th offered a serene escape to Kumarakom. Members and their families enjoyed a beautiful houseboat experience and cultural activities, fostering the personal connections that make our professional community so special.



Optic Nerve head evaluation and medical management of glaucoma

ALLEPPEY OPHTHALMIC CLUB

JANUARY 2026

The Alleppey Ophthalmic Club organized it's first ever family get together on 18 th January '26 on a palatial house boat. Around 50 people were on board for the cruise cum family meet. The Secretary of KSOS Prof Mallika OU and one of the senior most members of the club Dr Mohammed Nazeer cut the cake to inaugurate the event and they were also honoured during the meeting by Dr Anil Deth former President of the club. It was a day well spent with good bonding amonst the members.

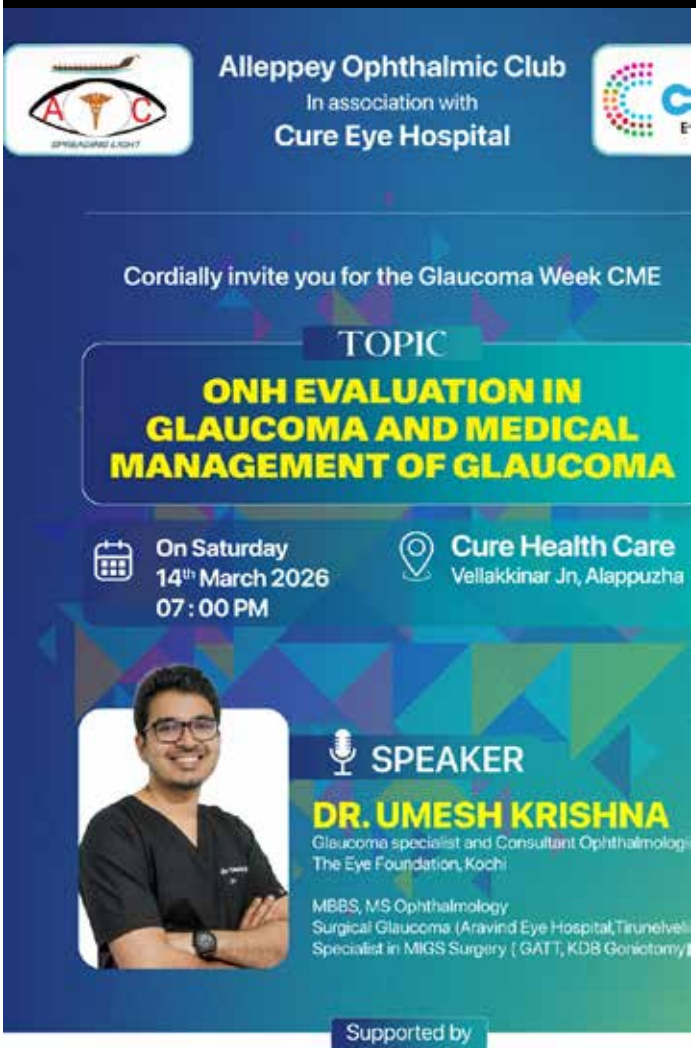
MARCH 2026

A CME programme was conducted at Cure health centre , Alappuzha under the aegis of Alleppey ophthalmic club as a part of glaucoma week celebration. The speaker was Dr Umesh Krishna, glaucoma specialist, The Eye foundation, Kochi. The topic was "Optic Nerve head evaluation and medical management of glaucoma". It was a well attended CME with active interactive sessions with the members.

World Glaucoma Week 2026

- Glaucoma awareness classes conducted for patients attending OPD at MCH, Alappuzha.
- Poster presentations on glaucoma by students were also there. Screened 250 patients for glaucoma. An awareness class was taken by dr Moby for NCD patients as a part of glaucoma week celebration. Glaucoma screening was done for Op patients at District Hospital, Alappuzha
- At Cure eye Hospital, Vellakinar Junction, Alappuzha, a glaucoma awareness class for patients was conducted, to improve their insights on the disease. Patients were able to clear their doubts with an ophthalmologist.
- At Cherthala - glaucoma awareness class was taken by Dr Sobha on the eve of glaucoma week on 13/3/26 at THQH, Cherthala. Posters about glaucoma awareness was displayed by Nursing students of KVM, Cherthala.
- Glaucoma week was celebrated at THQH ,Haripad. Awareness class was taken by Dr Letisia, and glaucoma screening was done for patients attending the Op.
- Glucoma week celebration and screening for Op patients was done at Dist Hospital ,Mavelikkara. Class about glaucoma awareness was taken by Dr Lekshmi for Op patients.




Alleppey Ophthalmic Club
In association with
Cure Eye Hospital
Cordially invite you for the Glaucoma Week CME
TOPIC
ONH EVALUATION IN GLAUCOMA AND MEDICAL MANAGEMENT OF GLAUCOMA
On Saturday
14th March 2026
07 : 00 PM
Cure Health Care
Vellakkinar Jn, Alappuzha
SPEAKER
DR. UMESH KRISHNA
Glaucoma specialist and Consultant Ophthalmologi
The Eye Foundation, Kochi
MBBS, MS Ophthalmology
Surgical Glaucoma (Aravind Eye Hospital,Tirunelveli
Specialist in MIGS Surgery (GATT, KDB Goniotomy
Supported by


Glaucoma week awareness program

COCHIN OPHTHALMIC CLUB (COC)

More than meets the Eye" : The Role of Gut Microbiome in systemic and ocular disease

JANUARY 2026

The Dr.NOEL MONIZ memorial lecture 2026 was held on the 4th January, 2026.

The Oration was "More than meets the Eye" : The Role of Gut Microbiome in systemic and ocular disease by Dr Rajeev Jayadevan.

The CME was graced by the presence of many experts with enriching lectures and discussions.

IGNITE - Ocular Inflammation CME conducted on January 10th 2026.

Organising Secretary - Dr. Natasha Radhakrishnan. Chief Guest - Dr Gopal S Pillai, VP, KSOS

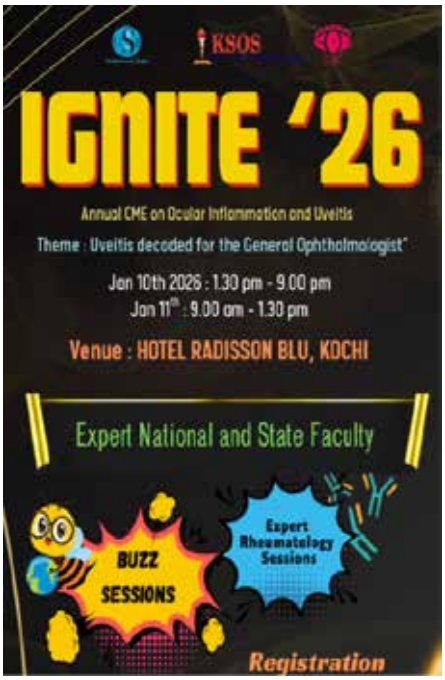
Guest of honour Anjali Uthup Kurien, CUBS Trustee and RJ Radio Mango

Event graced by Dr Abhilasha Baharani, Treasurer USI, Dr Thomas Cherian, President COC, Dr Suma Balan, Treasurer, IRA Kerala Chapter.

Anjali Uthup spoke on the CUBS activities for the last year and was a energetic presence for the function with her characteristic way with words and won the audience .

The Uvea Rheumatology Interface that followed was a great interactive learning experience









A Free Vision Screening Programme was conducted by Dr.Tony Fernandez Eye Hospital, Aluva on January 29th 2026 for the differently abled Chidren of CSI Karunalayam.

Dr Vasmiya, phacorefractive fellow at Chaithanya Palarivattom got Judges Runner up

Dr John Davis Akkara got audience poll runner-up *Catateach Cataract Video Competition - 2nd edition*

FEBRUARY 2026

The monthly meeting of COC was held on 13th February 2026, at IMA house.

The CME was based on - A.I. in ophthalmology (as a part of KSOS Presidential project)- titled "Back to future -Disruptive Research to change the way we practice" presented by Dr. Gopal S Pillai.

It also included talks by Dr. Anubhav Goyal and Dr. Umesh Krishna.

Back to future - Disruptive Research to change the way we practice



Felicitation of the newly appointed KSOS office bearers



Dr. Gopal. S Pillai
Vice President



Dr Natasha Radhakrishnan
Website Editor



Dr Vinay - General
Secretary, CSI

Individual Achievements of COC Members

FAICO Awardees



Dr. Kala. B. Thottam
Refractive Surgery



Dr. Neenet Jose
Pediatric Ophthalmology



Dr. Anna Kurian
Oculoplasty



Dr. Shebin Salim
Oculoplasty



Dr. Manju
Glaucoma



Dr. Anju Raju
Uvea



Dr. Preetha Nair
Oculoplasty



Dr.Marian Pauly, Giridhar eye Institute was honoured by AIOS for her outstanding academic contribution to Ophthalmology at AIOS Gurusangam held on February 1, 2026.



Dr Sanitha Sathyan was awarded MBA in Healthcare Management.

COC at APAO conference 2026, Hongkong



Dr Sarah S George presented a poster on OHT and glaucoma post PDEK



Dr. Anju Kuriakose- Runner up in APAO Photography competition
Dr. John Davis Akkara- Second Runner up in APAO Quiz



Dr. Vasmiya, Dr. John Davis Akkara and Dr. Mathew Kurian at Chaithanya Eye Hospital, Palarivattom won 5th place in IMA MedTech Ideathon 2026, organized by IMA and Kerala Startup Mission on February 22, 2026.

'Beyond the cup- Unmasking Glaucoma with OCT'

Presentations at KSOS



Dr. Thomas Arun Varghese was a speaker at Precision CME of Precise Eye hospital, Trivandrum on February 8, 2026



Dr. Kala Baby Thottam was a speaker at Idukki Malanad Ophthalmic Club CME at Muvattupuzha on February 19, 2026

Publications by COCians

- Dr. Neena R, Dr. Trisha Yadau and Dr. Soumya Ranjan Malla- Not every squint needs a scalpel- Sometimes it needs a scan- Case report in Indian Journal of Neuro-ophthalmology
- Dr. Greeshma M Sebastian, Dr. Revati Ramesh and Dr. Sheena Liz Mani - Unilateral disc edema in idiopathic intracranial hypertension: A rare case report from India- Indian Journal of ophthalmology Case reports

MARCH 2026

The monthly meeting of COC was held on 6th March 2026, at Grand Hotel, Kochi. The main speaker was Dr. Girija.K, Senior consultant and head of glaucoma services from Little Flower Hospital, Angamaly who delivered a talk titled 'Beyond the cup- Unmasking Glaucoma with OCT'

There was also an informative session by Dr.John Davis Akkara on MIGS.

In addition, case presentations were done by Dr. Hari Govind and Dr. Rachael.

The scientific session was chaired by Dr.Saikumar S.J, Dr. Dhanya C A and Dr. Litta George.

A glaucoma awareness video with lyrics written by Dr. R. R.Varma and performed by Dr. Dhanya and team was screened.

The meeting was attended by 130 members.






Street play on Glaucoma awareness

Glaucoma Week activities by COC

As part of World Glaucoma Week, Glaucoma walkathon was conducted on 6th March 2026 around Jawaharlal Nehru stadium Kochi.

Street play on Glaucoma awareness by the doctors of Chaithanya Eye Institute, Palarivattom.

AIR Healthline program in connection with World Glaucoma week by Dr. Jacob's Eye Care hospital was aired on March 8, 2026.

Various hospitals and institutes in Kochi conducted Glaucoma screening and Awareness Camps, Walks, Poster competitions etc.

Chaithanya Eye Institute conducted a dedicated glaucoma CME: "Glaucopedia 2026" on 29 March, 2026 at IMA House Kochi.



KSOS Presidential Initiative

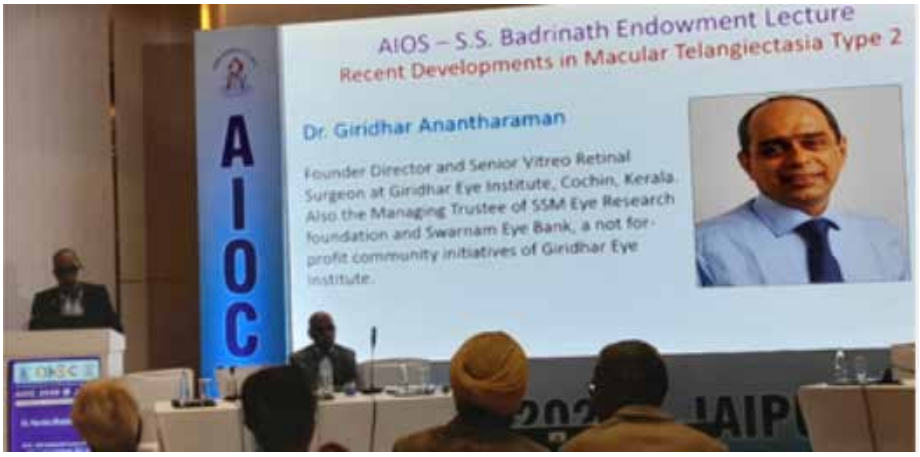
A Vision Screening Programme was conducted by Chaithanya Eye Institute on March 12 at Amrita Institute for the Differently Abled, Thoppumpady as part of KSOS Presidential Initiative. Dr.Liji, Executive Member of COC, attended the camp.



Dr Giridhar was awarded the AIOS Dr SS Badrinath Endowment Award 2026 at the AIOS Conference in Jaipur

Individual Achievements of COC Members

Dr Giridhar was awarded the AIOS Dr SS Badrinath Endowment Award 2026 at the AIOS Conference in Jaipur.





Elsevier's responsible AI award - For AI algorithm to detect CAD and stroke from retinal images

THRISSUR ACADEMIC CLUB OF OPHTHALMOLOGY (TACO)

JANUARY 2026

TACO monthly academic programme was held on 22nd January at Hotel Casino, Thrissur. Academic session included two lectures - "Challenges in ocular Allergy management - A stepwise approach" by Dr. Bhasker Sreenivasan, Code Eye Hospital, Chennai, and

"The collapsing patient - Rapid response essentials" by dr Jobin Jose, Prof & HOD of emergency medicine, Amala institute of medical sciences.

Challenges in ocular Allergy management - A stepwise approach





Certificate of appreciation to TACO neos

KSOS PRESIDENTIAL PROJECT - ANBU:

Vision screening program for differently abled children as part of presidential project .35 students, 10 teachers were examined. Senior TACO member Dr K.C Joseph representing TACO at the ANBU camp.

FEBRUARY 2026

TACOPSIA news letter was released by TACO President Dr Lathika V K, and received by Dr Babu Krishnakumar in the presence of Dr Raghu A C, Editor - TACOPSIA.

4 Camps conducted directly by TACO



4 Camps conducted directly by TACO in February (3 Anbu camps in Association with Nethra Eye Hospital and one cataract screening camp in association with AIMS Thrissur, all involving members from multiple hospitals).







Biosimilars in Retina practice: The promise & the peril

MARCH 2026

TACO Monthly academic program was held on 27th March at Hotel casino, Thrissur. Academic session was by our TACO president Dr Lathika VK (senior consultant medical Retina services & HOD ophthalmology Amala Institute of medical sciences) on "Biosimilars in Retina practice: The promise & the peril".

There were 2 retina case presentations-

- A case of Paediatric endophthalmitis by Dr Arathi Anand, Consultant VR surgeon from I-vision eye hospital
- A case of PAMM by Dr B. Thejasvi, Junior Resident from Govt medical college, Thrissur

Cash prize of Rs. 5000/- and certificate was awarded to TACO SMART POSTER winner Dr Nimmy by Dr Lathika VK.



CME on Refraction on 22nd march 2026 – Refraction, Concepts and Challenges by Govt medical college, Thrissur - Under the aegis of TACO & KSOS .

CME was attended by 150 delegates which included hands on workshop also.



WORLD GLAUCOMA WEEK - MARCH 8TH - 14TH 2026

TACO and it's member hospitals were involved with multiple activities in the communites to raise awareness about Glaucoma - some of which included a Glauco Drill , glaucoma Awareness dance show, TACO Poster Contest which was won by Dr Nimmy J, with Dr Liz Mary Santhosh as runner up. Multiple screening camps were conducted by TACO member hospitals.



Glaucoma – beyond IOP control



Glaucoma meet conducted at I-Vision eye hospital under the aegis of TACO.

Classes were taken to the public by Dr Anjana, Dr Lavanya & Dr Sibilia on the importance of detecting glaucoma early, the need for regular follow up and correct method of applying eyedrops.







CME was conducted at IMA Kodugallur by Dr Geethu Gopakumar - glaucoma specialist at Netra eye care center - talk about "Glaucoma – beyond IOP control".

An awareness talk was given at ICAI Bhavan on 10th March by Dr Merine Paul.



KSOS Presidential initiative - ANBU

TACO camp for downs syndrome children inaugurated by KSOS president Dr Rajeev Sukumaran.



Multiple Camps were conducted under the Presidential Initiative by TACO member hospitals during the month of March for the screening of Differently Abled Children





TACO Members' Achievements at AIOC Jaipur





Multiple Camps were conducted under the Presidential Initiative by TACO member hospitals

Dr Lathika was a coinstructor in the official IC of KSOS. She presented on OPD Disinfection protocols.

She was also a faculty at the DSTC session on OCT Macula. Participated as faculty in SSTC for Trabeculectomy and DSTC for RNFL OCT.

Dr Aneeta Jabbar - Free paper in Community Ophthalmology Instruction Course : Cornea as Chief Instructor

PEARLS AND PITFALLS Physical poster

Judge - Comprehensive Ophthalmology

Co Convener Session on Comprehensive Ophthalmology

Dr Merin Paul - Faculty in SSTC in Phacoemulsification / SICS

Dr Jayasree PV- Participated as faculty in SSTC for Trabeculectomy and DSTC for RNFL OCT .



PALAKKAD SOCIETY OF OPHTHALMIC SURGEONS

Pediatric DCR: Evaluation of Efficacy, Complications, and Long- Term Outcomes

DECEMBER 2025

The Palakkad Society of Ophthalmic Surgeons (PSOS) successfully conducted its monthly meeting, combining organizational transition, academic enrichment, recognition of member achievements, and festive fellowship.

The scientific Session was on the topic - Pediatric DCR: Evaluation of Efficacy, Complications, and Long- Term Outcomes, by Dr Naveen Ranjith, Orbit and Oculoplasty Consultant, Ahalia Foundation Eye Hospital, Palakkad.

The meeting concluded with Christmas and New Year celebrations, featuring:

Carol singing and Christmas message by the PSOS members' team

The cultural segment was led by Dr Manu Thomas and Dr Rose Mary, fostering camaraderie and festive spirit among members.

JANUARY 2026

The January 2026 meeting, held at Hotel Indraprastha, Palakkad, focused on academic discussions and society development.

Key highlights included a case-based session on disc edema in comprehensive ophthalmology practice by Dr Rose Mary Tomy, Consultant at AFEH, Pattambi and a rare case presentation of bilateral congenital dacryocystocoele by Dr Remya Jayasree, DNB resident, AFEH, Palakkad. The session emphasized



practical clinical approaches and active academic interaction among members.



FEBRUARY 2026

The February 2026 meeting, conducted at the Palakkad Cosmopolitan Club, witnessed strong participation and featured two focused scientific sessions.

Dr Anup Chirayath, Medical Director, iVision Hospital, Thrissur, delivered an insightful talk on presbyopia correcting intraocular lenses, covering evolving technologies and real-world clinical considerations.

Presbyopia correcting intraocular lenses, covering evolving technologies and real-world clinical considerations

This was followed by a presentation by Dr Anu, DNB resident, District Hospital, Palakkad on drug- induced secondary angle closure glaucoma, highlighting

recognition and management strategies.

The month also included planning for World Glaucoma Week and the society's flagship CME programme, Summer Spice 2026.



MARCH 2026

March 2026 was marked by a combination of academic activities, community outreach, and national-level participation.

As part of World Glaucoma Week, PSOS organized a glaucoma awareness walkathon in collaboration with the District Blindness Control Society (DBCS) and the Fort Walkers Club, with participation from ophthalmologists, community members, and nursing students from Govt Nursing College, Palakakd. This was followed by an awareness programme and a glaucoma quiz, along with a screening initiative in which 65 individuals underwent evaluation including intraocular pressure assessment and optic disc examination using AI-enabled fundus imaging.

PSOS also extended support to the ANBU programme, a state-level initiative focused on visual screening and rehabilitation for differently abled children, with a screening activity conducted by Dr Geetha and her team at Jyothi Nilayam, Palakkad.



The March monthly scientific meeting featured sessions by Dr Jayasree P V, Senior Glaucoma Consultant, Thrissur, on a case-based approach to angle closure disease and by Dr Mahesh Bharathi, Glaucoma Consultant, AFEH Palakkad, on laser peripheral iridotomy, both of which were well received.

PSOS AT AIOC JAIPUR 2026

At the national level, PSOS members actively participated in the annual conference of the All India Ophthalmological Society, where Dr Mahesh Bharathi presented on the "Role of OCT in Glaucoma," reflecting the society's academic contribution beyond the regional level.

KOZHIKODE OPHTHALMIC SOCIETY (KOS)

Focusing on awareness of visual impairment in differently abled children

January 2026

Installation of new office bearers was conducted on 9th January 2026 at Hotel Hyson Heritage, Kozhikode.

Dr Bindu S Ajith (President), Dr Dahlia (Vice President), Dr Lakshmi C (Secretary), and Dr Preetha K (Treasurer) assumed office. Administrative discussions included renewal of society registration. The meeting concluded with a family gathering featuring cultural activities.





February: 2026

The Scientific Committee was constituted and planning initiated for the Presidential Initiative focusing on awareness of visual impairment in differently abled children. The official Instagram page of KOS was launched.

The monthly meeting included a scientific lecture on keratoplasty, award-winning presentations from Drishti, and PG case discussions.

As part of the Presidential Initiative, an awareness programme on cerebral visual impairment in children and the importance of early detection and intervention was conducted on 24th February 2026 at Malabar Medical College, Kozhikode, in association with the Departments of Paediatrics and Ophthalmology.

The meeting also featured an Ifthar gathering, fostering camaraderie among members.





Annual CME 'A Corner for Cornea'

MARCH 2026

World Glaucoma Week (March 8–14) was marked by multiple awareness initiatives including a cyclathon, reel competition, social media campaigns, and public awareness programmes across various institutions. An article on glaucoma awareness was featured in Manorama Arogyam magazine. The monthly meeting on March 31st included a talk on anterior uveitis, award-winning paper presentation, and interactive academic activities.

Annual CME 'A Corner for Cornea' was conducted at KMCT Medical College.

Special Activity – Presidential Initiative

An eye camp for patients with Down syndrome was organised by Comtrust Charitable Trust Eye Hospital under the aegis of KSOS and KOS. The camp was conducted on 21st December 2025 at Comtrust Eye Hospital, Calicut, providing focused ophthalmic evaluation and care for children with Down syndrome.



WAYANAD OPHTHALMIC CLUB (WOC)

Refractive surgery Today - From corneal lasers to phakic IOLs

The seventh meeting of Wayanad Ophthalmic Club (WOC) was held on 06/02/2026 at Hotel Copper Kitchen, Muttil.

The meeting began with moment of silent prayer with Dr. Maya Paul as the compere, followed by a welcome speech delivered by Dr. Nayana Sebastian, WOC President .

This was followed by presentation on topic 'Refractive surgery Today - From corneal lasers to phakic IOLs' by guest speaker Dr. Resmi.S, Senior consultant - cataract and refractive surgeon, The Eye Foundation, Calicut.

Few cornea case scenarios were also discussed . The meeting was later open for discussion and queries answered.

The meeting was then concluded with vote of thanks by Dr. Bibi Joseph, WOC vice president followed by dinner.



OPHTHALMIC SOCIETY OF KANNUR (OSK)

Scientific session was conducted as a "Drishti Recap",

DECEMBER 2025

The monthly meeting of Ophthalmic society of Kannur was conducted on 19th of December 2025. The meeting commenced with a warm welcome address by the OSK outgoing President, Dr. Suchitra Bhat. This was followed by the announcement of the office bearers for the term 2026–27 by the President.

The scientific session was conducted as a "Drishti Recap", wherein members who had presented papers at Drishti shared their presentations once again. The session included talks by Dr. Sajini M, Dr. Swetha K, Dr. Nikhil K, Dr. Suchitra Bhat, and Dr. Remya E. The session was highly interactive and well appreciated by the audience.







JANUARY 2026

The Installation ceremony of the newly elected office bearers was conducted on 31st of January 2026.

The program began with a welcome address by the past President Dr Suchitra Bhat, followed by the introduction of chief guest by Dr Sreeni Edakhlon. Subsequently the Past Secretary Dr Remya E presented the activities of the society for the previous 2 years.

The installation ceremony was carried out by KSOS President Dr Rajiv Sukumaran, followed by his address. This was succeeded by the address of the incoming President Dr Sharmil Gopal. The Vote of thanks was delivered by the incoming secretary Dr Swetha K.

The events organized as a family get together, with enthusiastic participation from members and their families. Children and members

showcased various cultural performances, and engaging games added warmth and cheer to the occasion, making it a memorable evening.



Case Files in Pediatric Ophthalmology– Practical Lessons

FEBRUARY 2026

The monthly academic meeting of the Ophthalmic Society of Kannur was conducted on 20th February 2026 at Hotel Benale International, Kannur.

The scientific session featured case-based discussions under the theme:

"Case Files in Pediatric Ophthalmology – Practical Lessons" by Dr. Remya Edachery, Pediatric Ophthalmologist , Cooperative Eye Hospital, Payyanur.

"The Mystery of the Contact Lens–Related Ulcer" by Dr. Jayan Thomas, Ophthalmologist, Cannore Eye Hospital.

Both talks were clinically relevant and practice-oriented, generating active participation and meaningful discussion among the 38 attendees.



OSK REPRESENTATION AT OTHER CMEs -

The Women Ophthalmological Society meeting was held on 22nd February 2026 at Hotel Hyacinth, Thiruvananthapuram.

Three OSK members participated as invited speakers:

- Dr. Simi Manojkumar, Comtrust Hospital, Thalashery – "Endophthalmitis Reported: The To- Dos Beyond Patient Care"
- Dr. Remya Edachery, Cooperative Eye Hospital Payyanur– "Arresting Myopia Progression"
- Dr. Swetha K – Jyothis Eye Care - Debate: "Career versus Family – Can One Thrive Without Compromising the Other?"

On 28th February 2026, OSK member Dr. Soumya P.P. , Glaucoma and cataract surgeon, Agarwals Eye Hospital , Kannur attended the Kasaragod Ophthalmic Society meeting at Gateway Bekal, Kasaragod as an invited speaker.

Her presentation on "Advancing glaucoma care and preserving quality of life" were well received and appreciated for their clinical relevance.

MARCH 2026

ANNUAL CME 2026

The month commenced with an Annual CME conducted by Pariyaram Medical College - "OCULUS KAN 26"






at Hotel Benale international , Kannur on MArch 1st 2026.

The CME evolved into an excellent scientific extravaganza, receiving great appreciation from attendees. A total of 74 members participated.

World Glaucoma Week Activities (March 8-14)

OSK actively participated in World Glaucoma Week with multiple awareness initiatives:

- A Beach Walk was organized with participation from 30 members. The event was flagged off by Dr. Rajesh OT, Convenor of the Blindness Prevention committee, IMA Kerala. Dr. Sharmil gopal, Dr. Swetha, and Dr. Karunan, addressed the public on glaucoma awareness. Educational pamphlets were distributed during the walk.
- Free Glaucoma Screening - A total of 14 hospitals participated in free glaucoma screening camps conducted at their respective centers.

Participation in National Conference (AIOS Jaipur)

Members actively participated in the All India Ophthalmological Conference. Notable academic contributions:

- Dr. Swetha K
  > Co-instructor in an Instruction Course: When to Operate and What to Avoid as a Beginner in Glaucoma"
  > Presenter in a case-based discussion at the Glaucoma Society of India
- Dr. Soumya PP
  > Successfully completed LDP Graduation Participated in a debate on gender bias

Monthly Academic Meeting

The monthly academic meeting titled "Science & Symphony" was conducted on March 21st 2026 at Harleys Residency , Thalikkavu, Kannur.

Guest Speaker: Dr. Fairooz P.M, Oculoplastic surgeon, Horus Speciality Eye Care , Banglore Topic: "Proptosis – What Lies Behind the Bulge"

The session was highly engaging and well appreciated, attended by 43 members.

The academic session was followed by a musical evening with karaoke performances, adding a unique and lively dimension to the gathering.








KASARAGOD OPHTHALMIC SOCIETY

Advanced glaucoma care with Brimonidine and Timolol fixed-dose combinations and strategies to improve sight years and quality of life

FEB 2026

The Kasaragod Ophthalmic Society conducted its Installation Ceremony and CME program on 28th February 2026 at Hotel Taj Bekal Gateway, Bekal.

The event began with a silent prayer, followed by a welcome address by the outgoing President, Dr. Bharathan AV. The incoming President, Dr. Sunil N, delivered his presidential address outlining future plans.

The CME session, moderated by Dr. Kishore Krishna, covered topics including advanced glaucoma care with Brimonidine and Timolol fixed-dose combinations and strategies to improve sight years and quality of life.

The guest speaker, Dr. Soumya PP, delivered an informative presentation, followed by an interactive discussion.

A memento was presented to Dr. Soumya PP by Dr. Thressiama.

The program concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. Aparna.

MARCH 2026

Glaucoma week was observed March 8 th to March 15 th 2025

Various activities were conducted across the week in the district .

Free glaucoma screening was offered to the IMA members and family members

Many awareness classes were conducted for the public and hospital staffs across the district.






YOSI ACTIVITIES

1.KSOS -YOLK and YOSI in collaboration conducted webinar on FAICO cornea - exam preparation tips

There were two speakers and four panelists who all were FAICO cornea recipients -the session was well received and was streamed on YouTube and zoom platforms.

FAICO Cornea Exam Easy cracking Tips



2. Total of 10 Young ophthalmologists from Kerala attended APAO Hong Kong and were part of paper poster and video presentation at the international platform.

Dr John Davis Akkara , Dr Shishir Varghese , Dr Rakhi D'Cruz , Dr Prithvi Chandrakanth,Dr Anju Kuriakose bagged awards for posters,videos and photographs at the international conference

Start strong as an independent surgeon across specialities



3. AIOC 2026- Dr John Davis Akkara bagged best poster award and also international hero award







4. An instruction course submitted by Dr Rakhi D'Cruz was accepted at AIOS forum which included only young YOLK members as speakers

Topic of the session was how to start strong as an independent surgeon across specialities and was attended well.

Dr Sruthi R S received the best free paper award for Oculoplasty of last year 2025.

Instruction course talks at AIOC by more than 15 young ophthalmlogy members from Kerala





What I Wish I Knew Earlier

24th of November, 2017. I, along with eight of my friends from Cochin Ophthalmic Club were waiting anxiously behind the stage. We were about to put on the first ever skit for a Drishti Cultural Nite.

Cultural ethos of KSOS was dowdy and drab. We wanted to change it. We had written the skit ourselves. It was about the difficulties of getting NABH accreditation, which was the current trend. Getting nine busy consultant Ophthalmologists together for rehearsals was tricky. But we did it. We had butterflies in our stomach as we waited.

Finally came our turn. The lights were dimmed. We all got on the stage. Suddenly everything fell into place. What we had rehearsed assiduously, came to us. All performed beautifully. As the director, I had the smallest part with no dialogues.

The audience enjoyed our jokes and the applause came at the expected spots. Finally the curtain came down for the last time and we all took a bow.

Since there was no precedence we had thought of a one off programme. Do it and forget it. But the adulation by the audience, the thunderous applause at the end, the curtain calls and above all the adrenaline rush of a live stage performance all got to us. Everyone crowded round me back stage. And asked :"Sir, when will we have the next one?"

I wish I knew it; I thought of it; I did it earlier.

Dr R.R.Varma



AI Corner

FUTURE OF AI IN EYE

Dr. John Davis Akkara

The field of Ophthalmology has always been at the forefront of cutting-edge technologies with many more cool gadgets and lasers than any other medical field.



Figure 1: AI generated image showing an imaginary future eye testing facility

From Sci-Fi to Standard of Care

The future is getting closer one second at a time, but the pace at which Artificial Intelligence (AI) is advancing makes it feel much faster than that. What was previously considered science fiction is becoming reality in bits and pieces.

The field of Ophthalmology has always been at the forefront of cutting-edge technologies with many more cool gadgets and lasers than any other medical field. Large amounts of data from which to create information is the fodder for AI, and the large volumes of imaging data in ophthalmology are perfect for this. Having explored various facets of this revolution in several articles for the Kerala Journal of Ophthalmology (KJO), it is clear that we are no longer just "watching" the future; we are coding it into our clinical practice.

The Diagnostic Engine: Glaucoma and Retina

Our journey into AI began with its ability to "see" better and faster than the human eye. In glaucoma, AI has transitioned from a research novelty to a robust clinical ally. By analyzing visual fields and optical coherence tomography (OCT) scans, machine learning models can now detect progression with a level of statistical granularity that assists even the most seasoned specialist.

Similarly, the retina has become a "window" to more than just ocular health. AI algorithms are now capable of performing "retinal revelations," identifying not only diabetic retinopathy or age-related macular degeneration but also systemic markers. We are entering an era where a simple fundus photo, processed

Today's assistive technologies can navigate a visually impaired person through an unfamiliar street, recognize the faces of loved ones, and describe the environment in natural language

by AI, can offer insights into a patient's cardiovascular risk and even neurodegenerative patterns, effectively turning the eye into a non-invasive biometric dashboard.

Precision in the Operating Theater

The surgical suite is perhaps where the "science fiction" elements feel most tangible. In cataract and refractive surgery, AI is revolutionizing how we plan and execute procedures. We are moving away from standardized formulas toward "precision planning," where AI analyzes topography, lens density, and pupil mapping to suggest the ideal IOL power or incision site.

Beyond planning, "cataract coaching" through surgical video analysis is becoming a reality. AI systems can now evaluate a surgeon's microsurgical skills objectively, providing feedback on tissue handling and instrument fluidics. This doesn't replace the surgeon; it sharpens the blade, ensuring that the "clear eye" we promise our patients is achieved with unprecedented repeatability.

The Digital Backbone: EMRs and Big Data

While less glamorous than lasers, the integration of AI into Electronic Medical Records (EMRs) and registries is the engine room of modern practice. The "Economics of Big Data" dictates that our clinical notes are no longer just static text; they are dynamic assets. Generative AI is now beginning to assist in clinical documentation, transcribing patient encounters into structured data in real-time. This reduces the administrative "burnout" and allows us to focus on the person sitting across from us, rather than the screen.

Empowering the Patient: Apps as Eyes

Perhaps the most heartening advancement is in the realm of low vision and rehabilitation. The transition of "apps as eyes" has moved from simple text-to-speech tools to sophisticated multimodal AI. Today's assistive technologies can navigate a visually impaired person through an unfamiliar street, recognize the faces of loved ones, and describe the environment in natural language. By harnessing this tech, we are extending our care beyond the clinic walls and into the daily lives of our patients, fostering independence that was once thought impossible.

The Human-AI Partnership: Can We Trust It?

As we look forward, the question of trust and supervision remains paramount. Is human supervision needed? Absolutely. AI is a powerful tool, but it lacks the ethical compass and "clinical gut feeling" of a trained physician. The future of ophthalmology is not a replacement of the doctor by a machine, but a symbiotic partnership where AI handles the data-heavy lifting, leaving the ophthalmologist to handle the complex, the empathetic, and the surgical.

The "Rise of Machine Learning" is here, and it is our responsibility to guide its evolution, ensuring that these "insightful visions" translate into better outcomes for our patients.

AI is a powerful tool, but it lacks the ethical compass and "clinical gut feeling" of a trained physician

Suggested Reading

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5. Akkara JD. Artificial intelligence in ophthalmic electronic medical records, health records, and registries. Kerala Journal of Ophthalmology. 2025;37(2):219.
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Acknowledgments

This article and the image used were partly generated with the heko of Artificial Intelligence service Google Gemini and nanobanana.

From the OT Floor

BEYOND THE PRISM: ENSURING INTRAOPERATIVE SAFETY IN STRABISMUS SURGERY

Dr. Nirmal A J

Strabismus surgery is a unique blend of mathematical planning and tactile finesse

From the OT Floor: The Essential Intraoperative Checklist for Strabismus Surgery

Strabismus surgery is a unique blend of mathematical planning and tactile finesse. While our preoperative measurements dictate the plan, the "OT floor" is where variables can shift. To ensure a safe, predictable outcome and to mitigate the inherent risks of extraocular muscle manipulation, a systematic intraoperative checklist is indispensable.

1. The Pre-Flight Check: Data and Positioning

Before the first incision, ensure your "navigation system" is visible. The Prism Cover Test (PCT) measurements and any relevant MRI imaging should be displayed on a board in the OT, not tucked away in a folder.

A final "Time Out" is mandatory: Verify the deviation type (Eso/Exo/Hyper/Hypo) and confirm the operative eye. Once the patient is intubated, positioning is key. A head ring and a slightly extended neck provide the best exposure. In bilateral cases, remember to tape the non-operative eye to prevent the silent complication of exposure keratopathy.

2. The Anesthetic Dialogue

Communication with the anesthesiologist is a safety requirement, not a courtesy.

- The Oculocardiac Reflex: Inform them before you begin muscle manipulation. Pulling a muscle can trigger sudden bradycardia.
- The Peribulbar Advantage: Even under GA, a peribulbar block can dampen the oculocardiac reflex and significantly enhance postoperative patient comfort.
- Local Anesthesia Vigilance: If the patient is awake, they must be warned about the "pulling" sensation to prevent a startle reflex. Conversely, ensure they do not drift into a deep sleep; a sudden, involuntary movement during a critical scleral bite can be catastrophic.
-

3. Diagnostic Confirmation: The Forced Duction Test (FDT)

Never skip the FDT, even in "routine" cases. Performing it before the incision allows you to identify restrictive elements that may necessitate an immediate adjustment of your surgical plan.

The surgery isn't over when the last knot is tied. Stay in the OT until the patient is safely extubated.

4. Incision and Exposure

Take a moment to inspect the conjunctiva, especially in re-operations. Marking your incision sites on the conjunctiva before you cut ensures that the wound is approximated perfectly during closure, preventing unsightly scarring or cysts. If your assistant is inexperienced, a traction suture is your best friend—it provides the stability needed for precise maneuvers.

5. The Critical Steps: Dissection and Reattachment

As you dissect, stay mindful of the muscle capsule and the muscle's natural course. When it comes to the most high-stakes part of the procedure—the scleral bite—don't hesitate to turn up the microscope magnification. High-resolution visualization is your primary defense against scleral perforation or an inappropriately shallow bite.

6. Closing the Loop

The surgery isn't over when the last knot is tied. Stay in the OT until the patient is safely extubated. This ensures you are present to manage any immediate concerns as the patient transitions out of anesthesia.

Conclusion

Safety in squint surgery is not about avoiding the difficult cases; it is about building a repeatable, rigorous environment where "human error" has no room to breathe. By incorporating these steps into your routine, you protect both your patient's vision and your own peace of mind.

The Strabismus Surgeon's Intraoperative Safety Checklist

Phase	Critical Safety Steps
I. Pre-Incision	• Data Check: Prism Cover Test (PCT) & MRI visible on OT board. • Verification: Confirm deviation type and correct operative eye. • Positioning: Head ring secured; neck slightly extended. • Protection: Tape the non-operative eye (prevents exposure keratopathy).
II. Anesthesia	• Communication: Alert anesthetist to risk of Oculocardiac Reflex. • Sedation Check: Ensure patient is either fully awake or fully under (prevents sudden movement during scleral bites). • Reflex Control: Consider peribulbar block for bradycardia prevention and post-op comfort.
III. Surgical Prep	• Equipment: Confirm cautery is functional before starting. • Diagnostics: Perform Forced Duction Test (FDT) on all cases. • Anatomy: Observe conjunctiva for old scars; mark incision sites for better wound approximation.
IV. Execution	• Stability: Use traction sutures if assistant is inexperienced. • Dissection: Respect the muscle capsule and anatomical course. • Precision: Increase microscope magnification for scleral bites.
V. Closure	• Vigilance: Remain in the OT until successful extubation. • Confirmation: Ensure stable vitals and immediate post-op comfort.

Global and India Vision Loss: Numbers That Matter

GLOBAL BURDEN: A SOLVABLE CRISIS

2.2 BILLION
People Affected
Total people globally living with vision impairment or blindness.



1 BILLION+
Preventable Cases
More than half of global vision loss cases could have been prevented or are yet to be addressed through existing interventions.



90%
Concentrated in LMICs
The vast majority of unaddressed vision impairment occurs in low- and middle-income countries.



800 MILLION
Struggle with Near Tasks
This population lacks the necessary near-vision correction (spectacles) required for daily activities.

INDIA IN CONTEXT

70 MILLION
Total Cases in India
India is home to 8 million people who are blind and approximately 62 million who are visually impaired.



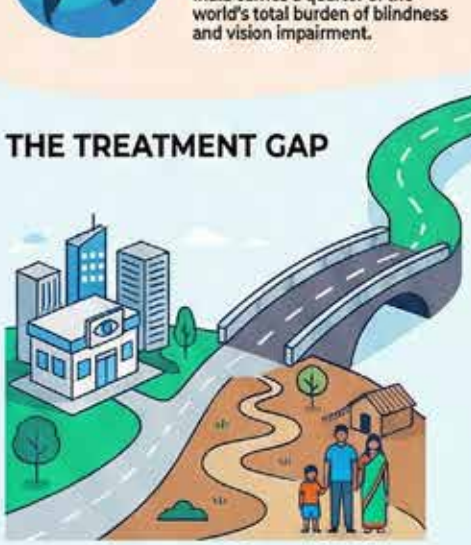


CATARACT: The Leading Cause
For Indians aged 50 and older, cataract remains the primary cause of blindness and a major public health responsibility.

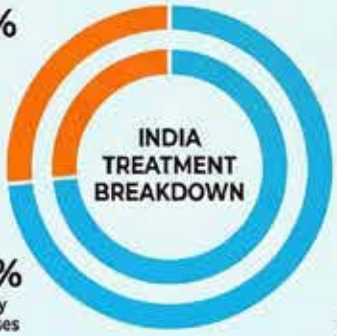


25%
of the Global Burden
India carries a quarter of the world's total burden of blindness and vision impairment.

THE TREATMENT GAP



27.5%
Untreated Cataract Cases



28.0%
Ineffectively Treated Cases



Rural and Socioeconomic Disparity
Access to care often falls in rural areas and among lower socioeconomic groups, even when treatment options exist.



Beyond Surgical Excellence
The "next frontier" for Indian ophthalmology is ensuring equitable delivery and effective outcomes rather than just clinical capacity.

NotebookLM

MICRO PEARLS

Clinical Pearl #001

How to find eccentric fixation using Direct Ophthalmoscope?

Foveal reflex at the center of the fixation star

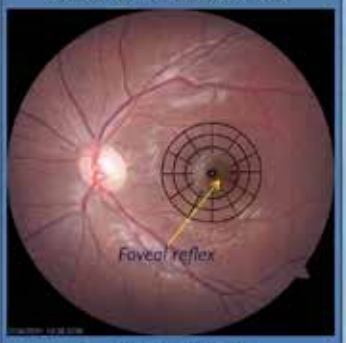


Central fixation



Direct ophthalmoscope fixation star helps in locating the fixation point

Foveal reflex away from the center of the fixation star



Eccentric fixation

* Foveal reflex at the 1st circle indicates 2Δ eccentric fixation.
1Δ increment from the second circle onwards (Heine beta instrument).

CONNECT CROSSWORD

Ready to flex those mental muscles away from the slit lamp? Welcome to the inaugural CONNECT Crossword!

Put your clinical acumen to the test and see if you can crack these classic ophthalmic head-scratchers. Whether you're sipping your morning coffee or taking a quick break between patients, it's time to see how sharp your trivia skills really are.

The Race is On! Think you're fast? The first three readers to send in the fully correct answers will win ultimate bragging rights and a special shoutout in our next edition of CONNECT.

Send your completed grid to: janekoshy.ksosconnect@gmail.com

Good luck, and happy solving!

Prepared By: **Dr. Jane Koshy**

ACROSS

1 - Posterior Embryotoxon

4 - Painful ophthalmoplegia

6 - Focal RPE infarcts in malignant hypertension

8 - Gold standard for field analysis

10 - Globe retraction on adduction

12- Beaten metal appearance of cornea

13 - Hereditary optic neuropathy

14 - Pupillary margin nodules in uveitis

DOWN

2 - Peripheral retinal vascularisation

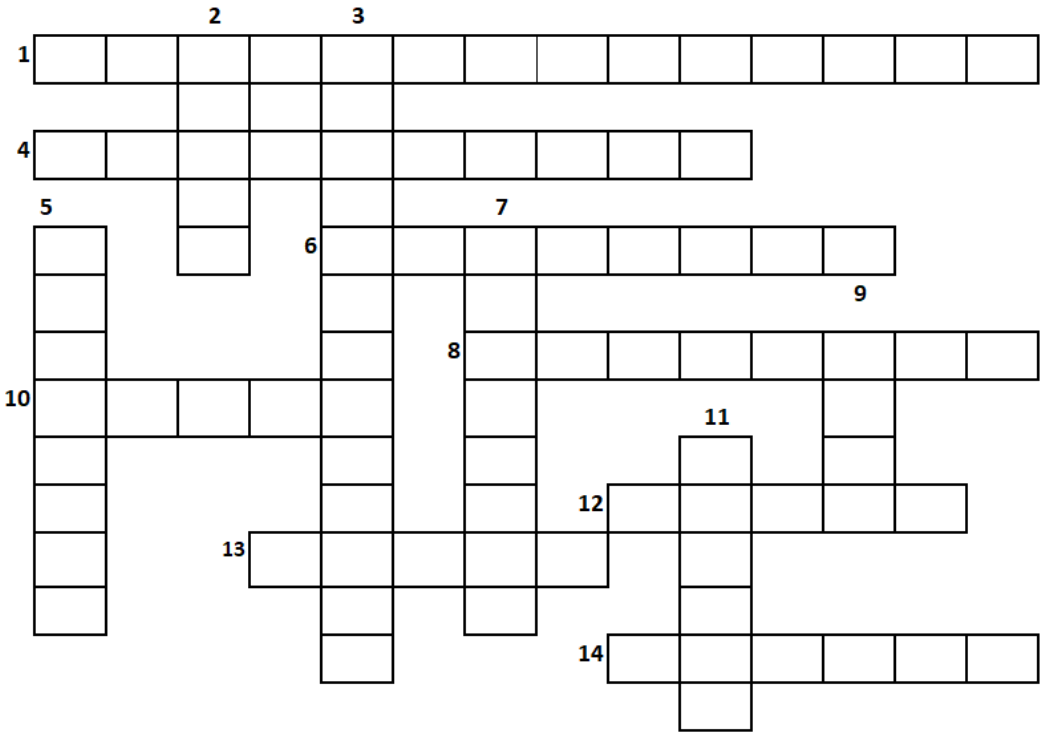
3 - Ipsilateral optic atrophy with contralateral papilloedema

5 - Gold standard for IOP testing

7 - Tear production test

9 - White centered retinal hemorrhages

11 - V-shaped lower lid on downgaze



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Please reach out to us if you wish to contribute to any article in Connect.

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KSOSConnect

The official newsletter of Kerala Society of Ophthalmic Surgeons

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