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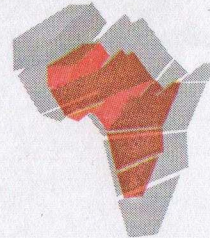
ELIMINATING BLINDNESS

*Four Liberians Benefit from
Free Eye Cornea Transplant*



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ELIMINATING BLINDNESS

Four Liberians Benefit from Free Eye Cornea Transplant

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Monrovia

At least four Liberians with damaged cornea has been replaced by the LV Prasad Eye Institute at John F. Kennedy Medical Centre (JFKMC).

The transplant was successfully done by Dr. Pravin Krishna Vaddavalli, an Indian doctor who spent over seven months working to replace damage corneas.

In an interview Thursday with Journalists, he said many Liberians are having problems with their cornea that is leading to the increase of blindness in the country.

He said his stay in the country is to remove and replace damaged corneas with good ones.

Dr. Vaddavalli added that the transplant was successful through an organization named Satellite which helped to ship new corneas to Liberia.

"These tissues are used to transplant into patients that have problems with their eyes, meaning they can't see and patients who have critical eye problem," he said.

"We did four transplants Wednesday, an 11 year old boy who had injury in his eyes, infection and a hole in the cornea that needed to be sealed was done successfully."

He revealed the youngster has promised to be an ophthalmologist to help reduce the risk of getting blind in Liberia.

Dr. Vaddavalli said the second patient was a lady, who could only see with an eye since the



other was damaged.

He added that some of the cells were differential to the cornea, so the eye center did a cutting-edge surgery transplant and replace the damage cornea.

"We did transplants for two other patients, one had a damaged tissue in the eye and the other had infection and we also replace the cornea with new one," he said.

Dr. Vaddavalli added that the transplant is in continuation of the efforts to restore vision in patients who have cornea diseases in Liberia.

Last year, LV Prasad was open in Liberia where many health officials attended.

He said 10 Liberians are currently in India undergoing training, sponsor by Satellite; something he says, will bring improvement to Liberian health sector.

Dr. Vaddavalli named

infection in the cornea, injury to the cornea, white spot in the cornea, patients with abnormal shape in the cornea, cornea that are thick and whitish because of abnormal service and the damage of the cornea which result to poor vision as major cases at the eye center.

He said the treatments were done free that are part of the unique initiatives.

"What we do is to eliminate global cornea blindness and this should be fulfill in respective of the fact that a country patient can pay or not."

The eye center brought a major boost to the health sector after over 700 patients were attended to, according to Nikhil Naik, a consultant optometrist.

He said many of the staff at the center are Liberians, adding that they are being train to become self-sufficient and improve Liberia.