

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Reliance Foundation Drishti marks 20 years of vision welfare for vulnerable communities; launches Marathi Braille newspaper**

- Drishti has carried out over 20,500 free corneal transplants
- Marathi fortnightly Drishti's second Braille newspaper after its international Hindi edition
- Over 1.75 lakh people in vulnerable communities reached through multiple interventions

**Mumbai, March 17, 2023:** The holistic vision care programme, Reliance Foundation Drishti, completed two decades of service, marking the milestone with the launch of a Braille newspaper in Marathi. Under the Drishti initiative, over 20,500 free corneal transplants have been performed and vision care provided to over 1.75 lakh people.

"It fills us with joy that Reliance Foundation Drishti has completed 20 years. What started as a dream of bringing light, happiness, and self-sufficiency in the lives of the visually impaired has become a movement today," said **Mrs Nita M. Ambani, Founder-Chairperson, Reliance Foundation**. "In the coming decades, we remain committed to doing all that we can to support our visually impaired communities to lead fuller lives of dignity and independence. As another step in this direction, we are delighted to launch the Braille Drishti newspaper in Marathi, in addition to Hindi, to reach a wider audience and have a greater impact."

Initiated in 2003, Reliance Foundation Drishti promotes awareness, protects sight and promotes inclusivity for the visually impaired. It organises eye screening camps across India and provides spectacles for refractive errors, facilitates cataract removal and corneal transplants to restore or improve vision. The transplants are done in association with the National Association for the Blind, Sankara Eye Foundation and Aravind Eye Care.

Through this initiative, India's only fortnightly international Braille newspaper in Hindi, and now in Marathi, was launched in 2012. Produced in collaboration with the National Association for the Blind, with Shri Swagat Thorat, noted editor and writer as the paper's Chief Editor, the Drishti newspaper covers news and updates from the world of sports, business, education, current affairs and entertainment. The newspaper also features recipes and reader contributions like poems and articles. At the start of every year, a Braille table calendar is distributed to readers of the paper, which has a readership of 24,000 across 16 countries including India. The newspaper's Marathi Braille edition will now reach more audiences.

To create awareness about eye donation, Drishti internally conducts annual essay writing and art competitions amongst children and grandchildren of Reliance employees.

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*Gangaram Sadanande, a 24-year-old from Latur in Maharashtra, one of the many people whose vision was restored through Reliance Foundation Drishti, was born with near blindness in both eyes and had to drop out of school. Until he underwent corneal transplant procedures, he was dependent on his mother for his daily activities. He can now see clearly and earns a living by driving an auto rickshaw.*

Reliance Foundation Drishti works in close collaboration with organisations like Sunrise Candles to support entrepreneurial efforts of those with visual impairment by procuring products like *diyas* and other gifting objects from such enterprises to promote inclusivity.

### **About Reliance Foundation**

Reliance Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Reliance Industries Limited, aims to play a catalytic role in addressing the India's development challenges through innovative and sustainable solutions. Led by Founder and Chairperson Smt. Nita Ambani, Reliance Foundation is relentlessly working to facilitate transformative changes for the overall wellbeing and higher quality of life for all. Reliance Foundation is focused on addressing the nation's development challenges in rural transformation, education, health, sports for development, disaster management, women empowerment, urban renewal and arts, culture and heritage, and has touched the lives of more than 66 million people across India, in more than 54,200 villages and several urban locations. For more information, please visit <https://www.reliancefoundation.org/>

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