The large and diverse gathering assembled at the ‘Confluence’ - Banquets & Resorts’ the grand venue of the Elite School’s International Vision and Optometry Conference, on the 14th of August 2015 was a shining testimony to the great success of the institution’s basic endeavour of bringing ‘Optometry,’ the arithmetic, art and science of light and vision, centre stage and find a glorious place for it in the rarefied realm of academia, the dream of its founding fathers. The large gathering comprising students, practitioners of optometry, veteran tutors, the participative agenda, the celebrations planned as a retreat on the lighter side were a sign of the tireless efforts, meticulous planning and enthusiasm of the organizing team consisting of optometrists, lecturers and students of the Elite School of Optometry led by its vibrant Principal Dr R.Krishna Kumar.

The most keenly awaited program started on the dot of schedule with a most mellifluous invocation by Ms. Shwetha Mohanakrishnan, who runs a school of music in the neighbourhood. Indelible memories and great moments from the
glorious history of the institution including its inception were shared by Dr T.S Surendran, Vice-Chairman, Sankara Nethralaya and Professor Lakshminarayanan, two veterans who had played a pivotal role in the formation of the institution. They captured the momentous events and the contribution of key architects like Shri Ravi Shankar, Professor Ramasami, Professor Veeraraghavan, Professor PP.Santanam, Professor Sumathi Narayanan, Professor E.Vaithilingam and Professor Enoch which led to the seed idea of the great visionary Dr. SS.Badrinath to start a world class institution of optometry in India a reality. Professor Lakshminarayanan also gave an interesting account of year 2015 being declared as the ‘Year of Light’ by the United Nations and celebrations of the same across the globe.

The moving force and prime architect of the international conference, Dr. Krishna Kumar, Principal ESO and Chairperson EIVOC-2015 started his address on a vibrant note quoting late Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam’s immortal lines from his epic work ‘Wings of Fire’, he recalled the vision of Dr SS.Badrinath to set up an exclusive institution for optometry and the selfless work of Dr T.S.Surendran and other stalwarts in making his vision a reality. The Head of ESO quickly summarized the objectives of the EIVOC-2010 as an update on ophthalmic rehabilitation, vision assurance and the current EIVOC-2015 as a spotlight on optometric education and growth of optometry. Expressing his satisfaction at the impressive growth of the institution and its services he observed that it still had miles to go. He concluded his talk with the observation that the best tribute to the founding fathers of ESO would be to explore indigenous, affordable eye care, become socially accountable, interactive and take the benefits of optometry to humanity at large.

Exhibiting a rare mastery over the ancient scriptures Srimathi Akila Ganesan, Senior General Manager, Sankara Nethralaya quoted with felicity from the Vedas the ancient treatises of wisdom to underline her point that ‘desire’ is the driving force of everything, which included the journey from darkness to light. Showering praise on the authors of the three books being released on the occasion, she lauded Professor P.P.Santanam as the ‘Father of Occupational Optometry’ in India, she fondly recalled her association with Dr. Rajeswari Mahadevan as her student and colleague and had a high word of praise for Srimathi Sarika Gopalakrishnan, Head of the Low Vision Clinic at Sankara
Nethralaya for imbibing the scientific temperament and spirit of late Dr. E. Vaithilingam. The senior management member made a fervent appeal to the optometrists gathered to ask the question ‘How can I improve the quality of life of my fellow human beings’ to themselves everyday and ended her talk with the lines from the Vedas ‘May our Study be Enlightening’.

The spiritualist, master, celebrated personality development guru and Founder of ‘Infinitheism’ and Chief Guest of the day Shri Mahatria Ra started off his address with an exuberant Happy Evening!! to the audience, he created a ripple with his opening statement that Doctors must be ‘Felt’ more than being seen; they and their clinics, he expressed emphatically must exude positive energy and confidence which could be felt. He expressed his high respect for Dr. SS. Badrinath and Dr K.V. Thiruvengadam for their humility and down to earth attitude not affected by their Himalayan achievements. Shri Mahatria Ra underlined the importance of inculcating leadership as a quality, standing apart from the crowd and not compromising on anything in life, adding that if not for these qualities the world would have had a good eye surgeon in the form of Dr SS. Badrinath but not Sankara Nethralaya the institution he founded. He cautioned that unless we are tough on ourselves the world will get tough on us. The star speaker shared his knowledge in pearls of wisdom explained in a simple manner, he advised the audience to keep the student in them live by making learning a lifelong process, he advocated the audience to look at the bigger picture by linking their individual growth with the society’s growth, setting the most exacting standards in their professional lives, inculcating high work ethics beyond the call of HR compliance.

The momentous inaugural function marking the beginning of three days of scientific deliberations, lectures, debates and exchange of ideas combined with a cultural retreat and lot of fun, interaction and sightseeing came to an end with a warm Vote of Thanks by Shri S. Viswanathan, DGM Optical services and Optometry, he expressed his sincere thanks to the eminent Chief guest, dignitaries from all over the world, the corporate sponsors for their patronising the event and the organizing team of the Elite School of optometry for the memorable event.

The three day session that followed at the picturesque venue by the sea was attended by more than 1250 participants, 82 speakers, witnessed 11 plenary
talks, 36 talks in symposia, 17 workshops and 13 expert interaction sessions, the conference was on par with international standards. Keeping up with the theme of the conference ‘Tamasoma Jyothirgamaya, which means “From darkness unto Light“, every session was planned to enlighten the delegates and upgrade them from their current practice. In-depth sessions were held on new areas like Neuro-Optometry and Occupational Optometry, introduced for the first time in India by the ESO. A group of 13 universities from India and abroad briefed the students on higher education through the session “Golden opportunities globally”. A total of 112 posters and 43 papers were presented and the Best scientific presentation prizes were bagged by Ms. Neha Gupta, Elite School of Optometry in the student category and Mr. Vinay Nilagiri, L.V Prasad Eye Institute in the regular category.