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Stem cell bank gets off the ground... slowly

Staff Reporter

Jeevan Blood Bank celebrates anniversary

CHENNAI : They're dreaming big: a stem cell bank that will ensure life-saving treatment at any time. And making 3,000 people donate blood every month over the next 10 years.

Jeevan Blood Bank, set up in 1995, has in 10 years received donations from 46,687 people. It has received so far 81,057 units of safe blood and blood components. These have been given to people suffering from burns at Kilpauk Medical College, the needy at Sundaram Medical Foundation and to hundreds of others.

The blood bank set up on September 24, 1995, celebrated its 10th anniversary on Wednesday by honouring all those who had helped achieve its aim.

Short film

A short film took the viewers back in time. It was not an easy initiative that P. Srinivasan and his team had embarked on. Though they were able to procure blood they were shocked to find that quite a few of the whole blood they received tested positive for leptospirosis.

It was a turning point in the blood bank's life. Blood began to be tested for all common and uncommon ailments before it was stored for use.

The bank helped Sundaram Medical Foundation set up a satellite blood bank on its premises.

Jeevan was given ISO certification in 1999, placing it on par with international blood banks.

Dr. Srinivasan says setting up a stem cell bank will require Rs. 4 crore, of which Rs. 1 lakh was given by a donor on Wednesday. Two other unnamed donors gave around Rs. 90,000 to the cause.

The proceeds from a photography exhibition to be held in the city will go to Jeevan for its project.

Arjun Rajagopal, medical director of SMF, thanked Jeevan for its help. Major IT companies, hotels and national and international banks, Anna University, the Indian Coast Guard and Tidel Park received special mention at the function.

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