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## Mobile eye surgical unit to be deployed in Jharkhand

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*The facility, Sankara Nethralaya's second, will be launched on Sunday*

Sankara Nethralaya is all set to launch its Mobile Eye Surgical Unit (MESU), developed along with IIT-Madras, outside of the southern region, in Jharkhand at the end of this month.

At a press meet on Thursday, chairman emeritus S.S. Badrinath said the MESU were twin buses connected by a vestibule that had all the facilities required for surgery.

First launched in 2012, the hospital's MESU has travelled across the south, with the team in it performing over 3,000 cataract surgeries in 29 camps.

The second MESU is currently travelling from Chennai to Jamshedpur in Jharkhand, where it is expected to arrive on Friday.

This MESU has a few add-on features too, such as an elevator for patients, and facilities to make coffee and tea for the crew.

The advantages of the MESU, explained P.S. Rajesh, senior ophthalmologist at Sankara Nethralaya, were that it took the hospital's facilities to rural and tribal areas so that patients could be served where they lived and did not have to incur the costs of travels and wages lost.

### Safety ensured

With a reverse osmosis plant for sterile water, an air handling unit for sterile air, hydraulic jacks for the vehicle to maintain stability and a generator set, the MESU is completely equipped and safe to ensure there are no infections, he explained. The surgeries are performed free of cost, and the patients can return home a few hours after the procedure, he added.

Last year, the Union Health Ministry granted the hospital permission to operate on a national basis.

The first State outside of the south will be Jharkhand, where the inauguration will take place on July 31 at the Tata Memorial Hospital, Jamshedpur.

"We have already trained around 15 personnel from there. We chose Jamshedpur as it is surrounded by tribal areas. A good model has been created that can now be replicated across India," Dr. Badrinath said.

Mohan Shankar, head of the Healthcare Technology Innovation Centre at IIT-M, also participated.

***The unit comprises two buses connected by a vestibule that has all the facilities for surgery***

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