

The Rustomji Merwanji Alpaiwala Memorial Awards

Professional Category



Smt. Swaran Suresh Ahuja



Shri. Shailendra Kumar Sonkar

Voluntary Category



Smt. Sushma Pramod Gupta, Faridabad, Haryana

Neelum Khurshed Kanga Memorial Awards



Ms. Tiffany Maria Brar, Trivandrum, Kerala



Dr. Vijeta Kapur, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

Shri Sachin Bhau Ahir, Activist & Former Minister, Govt. of Maharashtra was the Chief Guest, Shri Ashok Mahajan, Past Rotary International Director was the Guest of Honour and Shri John Abraham, Ambassador of NAB, India was present for the function. Mr. Hemant Takle, President, NAB, India – Mr. Satyakumar Singh, Hon. Secretary General, NAB, India – Prof Bhaskar Mehta, Chair Person, NAB Awards Committee and Ms. Ferzin Alpaiwala were present during the function.

World White Cane Day



Elphinston Junction



Regal Cinema



Regal Cinema



Worli Seaface



Worli Seaface



Prabhadevi



Vol.59 No. 3 December 2018

ISSN: 0006-4823

Published thrice a year, in
April, August and December



Editorial Consultant

A. S. Athalekar

Honorary Secretary, NAB, India

Editor

Archana Joshi

Deputy Director

NAB Louis Braille Memorial Research Centre

Published by

National Association for the Blind, India

11, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan Road

Worli Seaface, Mumbai 400 030

Phone: 24935365 / 24932539

E-mail: contactus@nabindia.info /

publications@nabindia.info

Website: www.nabindia.org

The opinions expressed in this magazine
are the views of the authors and not
necessarily those of the Editor.

Blind Welfare is also published in Braille

Subscription Rates:

		Inkprint	Braille
India	Annual Single copy	Rs. 150/- Rs. 50/-	Rs. 120/-
Asia/ Africa	Annual	\$25/-	\$10/-
Europe/ Australia	Annual	\$25/-	\$10/-
USA	Annual	\$25/-	\$20/-

Readers interested in receiving "Blind Welfare" in E-format may
send in their E-mail IDs to the Editor.

Donations to NAB, India are eligible for Tax Exemption under Section 80G of Income Tax Act, 1961.

C O N T E N T S

Editorial	04
Goldenly Old	05
NAB, India Foundation day 19th January, 2019	07
<i>Arvind Narvekar</i>	
Rustom Merwanji Alpaiwala Award Winners' Citations	08
Response of Awardee.....	11
<i>Swaran Ahuja</i>	
About Neelum Khurshid Kanga Award & the Winners' Citations	11
<i>Swati Thakurdesai</i>	
Aesthetics of the Non-visual	14
<i>Urvi Jangam</i>	
Car Rally for the Blind 2018.....	18
<i>Pallavi Kadam</i>	
World White Cane Day Event	20
<i>Pradnya Upadhye</i>	
Report – 210th Birth Anniversary of Louis Braille	20
<i>Dr. Vimal Kumar Dengla</i>	
भारत के हम बच्चे है	21
<i>शुभांगी कुडाळकर</i>	
Identification of New Currency by Blind and Visually Challenged: Challenges and Solutions	22
<i>Swati Thakurdesai</i>	
Marufah Bano- Our Shining Star	24
<i>Shalini Khanna</i>	
Alay Patel-Contributing Member of Family	25
<i>Krupa Velani</i>	
Journey of Sanika	26
<i>Ujwala Kharat</i>	
कान्हा, जबलपूर, भोपाल एक यादगार सफर	27
<i>नीता केळकर</i>	
News from the Media	29

This is the last issue for the year 2018. During these months lots of events took place at NAB, India. In January 2019 NAB, India celebrated its 68th foundation day and Award Ceremony on same day. You can get to know about the details of awardees & response from the awardee also. Car rally was organized on 18th Nov, 2018 which gives the visually challenged person chance to interact with the civil society and vice a versa.

4th Jan is declared as Braille Day by UNO, it was celebrated all over the world. We at NAB, India also celebrated the same the report is incorporated in this issue. Ms. Urvi Jangam was an ex student of Integrated Education Programme run by our Education department. She has achieved a great success in her carrier. We feel proud that during her journey of education NAB, India was there in her schooling time.

Three success stories from three different locations are incorporated in this issue. You will be able to understand about the currency and the problem faced by our visually challenged friends. It is a Compiled article by giving comparison of different countries.

Like every year students from Mumbai I. E. Programme had thrilling experience of the outing to Kanha tiger reserve and other places, the teacher has word bounded to journey.

You will find fom yester year that 50 years before also in the conference held in Manila, the capital of Philippines the importance of Integrated Education of V.I. children was highlighted.

Archana Joshi

Goldenly Old

This column contains excerpts from the articles as they appeared in the Blind Welfare December, 1968 issue. This will enable the present readers to understand how progress was made in the welfare activities 50 years back. (Ed.)

Editorial

Yet Another Landmark

Manila, the capital of the Philippines, played host to the delegates of the Third Asian Conference on Work for the Blind from Monday the 26th August to Saturday the 31st August 1968. About 15 nations attended the Conference which turned out to be a real business-like convention.

The Conference devoted its attention to the entire sphere of work for the blind. Integrated education, it was pointed out, was the only answer to providing educational opportunity to thousands of blind children in the Asian continent. The curriculum for the training of the teachers of the blind and its relationship to general and other areas of special education and locating, identifying and assessing blind children for educational programme was discussed threadbare and concretized in the form of two resolutions.

The Conference also under-scored the need of establishing realistic vocational goals and to achieve this, it was indicated that proper guidance be made available to blind students at secondary educational level. The conference recorded its appreciation of the fact that several Asian countries had begun to recognize the need for assessment and evaluation as a part of the rehabilitation process and programme. In order to accelerate this development, the Conference recommended that assessment and evaluation techniques be evolved and tests devised. For this purpose, it was recommended that the knowledge and experience of international agencies in this field be made use of.

For the first time the importance of orientation and mobility in the total rehabilitation of the blind was discussed. Emphasising the vital role which

independence in mobility can play in the socio-economic rehabilitation of the blind.

The delegates and observers to the Third Asian Conference come away with a lasting impression that yet another landmark was laid in the direction of finding a better life for the blind of Asia. There was a growing recognition of tackling the problem of the visually handicapped on systematic and scientific lines. The Conference also indicated that the number of professional personnel of Asian origin was slowly but steadily increasing and that there was a sense of awareness on the part of voluntary and Governmental organizations about the need and utility of increasing trained personnel for promoting the welfare of the blind.

Rehabilitation through treatment and education

Introduction

Rehabilitation – a word so inextricably used whenever the welfare of the handicapped is considered; yet, how few of us really understand what this word implies. To some, rehabilitation means finding the disabled person a job. Others think that it refers to medical treatment. Yet others say it means training him in a workshop to do a job. They are all right for rehabilitation means all of these things, and more. Taking it in its widest application, Rehabilitation is the process of restoring the handicapped individual to the fullest physical, mental, social vocational and economic usefulness of which he is capable.

Foreign News

Some Figures about the Blind Population in England and Wales

Great Britain has the best registration of the blind in the world, and, therefore, an example to be followed by every country.

At the end of 1967, the total registered blind population was 102,597. Most of the age groups showed an increase, the highest being in the 85-89

age groups. The greatest decreases were in the 11-15 and 50-59 age groups.

The number of blind persons employed was 9,728. Of these there were 6,509 in open employment; 2,421 in sheltered workshops; and 756 employed as home workers.

Braille Text by Computer First Book in Preparation

The first book to be converted to braille with a new system developed by the Royal National Institute for the Blind is in preparation. It marks the completion of one research project for faster reproduction of newspapers, magazines, and books for blind people.

Translation of the text is done on a computer which automatically produces punched cards containing the information in braille code.

To produce printed material a computer programme has been written so that a pack of punched cards containing a text can be fed into a computer. Once translated into coded format, a new set of cards are made which will operate a transcribing machine, which cuts a metal plate. This is the plate that goes into the special braille printing machines.

NAB News Notes

Placement Service expanded: The National Association for the Blind has been running a Placement Service for the blind since 1954. In the past 14 years approximately 350 blind persons have been placed in a variety of jobs in open industry.

With a view to stepping up the pace of placements it was decided to expand the service in Bombay and to make a beginning in Ahmedabad, the capital of Gujarat. The American Foundation for Overseas Blind and the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind who were approached for financial assistance

very kindly agreed to help with part of the expenses. On September 1, 1968, 3 additional Placement officers were appointed in Bombay and 2 Placement officers were appointed in Ahmedabad by the Gujarat State Branch of the National Association for the Blind.

In order that the Placement Officers are adequately equipped for their work, a training course of 2 months duration was conducted at Bombay.

The training course included a series of lectures on work for the blind and the special problems of placement, practical work at the Workshop for the Blind, Worli, Bombay, and field work.

Bus concession for the Blind: The Bombay Electric Supply and Transport Undertaking have agreed to give concession to blind persons in City buses on production of a certificate from an institution for the blind. The blind person will be able to travel on payment of half the adult fare. Escort will have to pay full fare.

The National Association for the Blind had taken up this matter with the BEST authorities some ten years ago and finally the efforts have been well rewarded by the granting of this concession.

Special awards for the Employers of the Handicapped

The Government of India, Department of Social Welfare, has decided to give awards, one each annually to outstanding employers of the blind, the deaf, and the orthopedically handicapped. Similarly, one award each will be made annually to most efficient blind, deaf, and orthopedically handicapped worker. Thus six awards will be made every year; each award for the handicapped worker will consist of i) a cash prize of Rs. 500/- and ii) a citation. Similarly, each award for the best employer of the handicapped will consist of iii) a shield or bronze medal and iv) a citation. These awards are to be instituted on a national basis.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND, INDIA

Report on Foundation Day 2019

Arvind V. Narvekar
Convenor
NAB Awards Committee

The National Association for the Blind, India celebrated its 68th Foundation Day on January 19, 2019 at 11.00 a.m. at the Blue Sea Banquet Hall in the premises of the National Association for the Blind, India, 11-12 Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan Road, Worli Seaface, Mumbai 400 030. The prestigious Rustom Merwanji Alpaiwalla and Neelum Khurshed Kanga Memorial Awards were presented to those who have rendered yeoman service to the Visually Challenged under Voluntary/Professional categories and to those Visually Challenged women who have achieved excellence by way of outstanding performance and contribution.

Shri Sachin Bhau Ahir, Activist & Former Minister, Govt. of Maharashtra was the Chief Guest, Shri Ashok Mahajan, Past Rotary International Director was the Guest of Honour and Shri John Abraham, Ambassador of NAB, India was present for the

function. The above Awards were presented by the auspicious hands of the abovesaid dignitaries.

The recipients of the NAB Rustom Merwanji Alpaiwalla Memorial Awards under the Professional Category were – Smt. Swaran Suresh Ahuja, Mumbai, Shri Shailendra Kumar Sonkar, Dy. Commissioner (PwD), Uttar Pradesh and in Voluntary Category were – Smt. Sushma Pramod Gupta, Faridabad, Haryana.

The recipients of the Neelum Khurshed Kanga Memorial Awards were Ms. Tiffany Maria Brar, Trivandrum, Kerala and Dr. Vijeta Kapur, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.

The Visually Challenged Candidates from Nayan Foundation performed a Cultural Programme which was enjoyed and appreciated by the audience.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND, INDIA

To

Smt. Sushma Pramod Gupta

A perennial source of inspiration with an illustrious record of dedicated service to the Society, you have been associated with the Visually Impaired and the National Association for the Blind, Haryana State Branch, Faridabad. Born on 21st of January, 1967 at Hoshiyarpur, Punjab you are married to Shri Pramod Gupta and reside at Faridabad. You, by your commitment and dedication to social work have fully justified your Post Graduation in Social Work/Service. Your social services are all encompassing and include not just the Visually Impaired but others too. Welfare of the blind is very close to your heart and you successfully strive to better their prospects, whether be it through financial assistance, educational help, marriage of Visually Impaired couples, to mention a few.

You are the Honorary Vice President at the Haryana State Branch of NAB, India that has greatly benefitted from your 22 years of association. As an Office Bearer you are involved in and shoulder numerous responsibilities, looked after the Home Science Course, taught the Visually Impaired girls, their dining facilities, the store and other regular and routine activities. On the 4th of January 2016, Louis Braille Day the newly renovated kitchen for Home Science Course was inaugurated. Expenses were sponsored by you for which NAB Haryana

Branch is indeed very grateful. You are actively involved in Campaigning and Fund Raising for the Branch. You have also sponsored higher education for 15 of our Visually Impaired girls be it B. Ed or M. Ed. Ever creative, you conceive novel ideas for the progress, welfare and benefit of the Association. Your generosity also reaches out to embrace other underprivileged people by providing services that bring relief, for instance extending help for medical treatment, arranging accommodation for patients and escorts.

Your social services also include working for numerous Organizations, to name a few, Muskan Social Welfare Society where you hold the President's post and motivate the underprivileged girls to take up education. As Executive Office Bearer with the Indian Red Cross Society – where you have taken over charge of Nasha Mukti Kendra and as a Member Campaign for Beti Bachao Andolan.

All your determined efforts, accomplishments and achievements have been appreciated and recognized. In 2015 you were honored with the State Award for Women's Empowerment. 4 times recipient of Awards by the hands of the Governor of Haryana and 3 times was honored with District Awards.

In Recognition of your Outstanding Contribution as a “Voluntary Worker” to the

Welfare of the Visually Challenged

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND, INDIA

has pleasure in awarding you the

**RUSTOM MERWANJI ALPAIWALLA MEMORIAL AWARD – 2019 given in
Mumbai on this Nineteenth day of January 2019 on the occasion of the**

68TH FOUNDATION DAY OF NAB, India

Shri Hemant P. Takle
President
NAB, India

Shri Satya Kumar Singh
Honorary Secretary General
NAB, India

Prof. Bhaskar Y. Mehta
Chairperson
NAB Awards Committee

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND, INDIA

To

Shailendra Kumar Sonkar

Deputy Commissioner, (PwD), Uttar Pradesh

Born on 10th of September 1968 you hail from Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh. Though Small Pox robbed you of your vision at a very young age still your determination was focused on a goal where no barriers existed. Your parents saw your unquenchable thirst for learning and admitted you to the National Institute for the Visually Handicapped, Dehradun in 1979 where you excelled in academics as well as in extra-curricular activities.

Your participation in an Exhibition for the Blind in 1982 brought you great honour at the hands of the then Prime Minister of India, Smt. Indira Gandhi. In 1984 at the National Sports Meet organized by ONGC you won 2 Gold and 4 Silver Medals creating history in the field of Sports for the differently abled. This honor came to you at the hands of the then Prime Minister of India, Late Shri Rajiv Gandhi. The same year at NASEOH's Sports Meet you were honored by Smt. Jaya Bachchan for your laudable participation. You excelled at debate and were an impressive Speaker. In 1987 you passed your High School Examinations with 1st Class followed by your intermediate from AISSCE (CBSE) in 1989. In 1994 you received your first Masters, in Political Science from DAV PG College, Dehradun and in 2011 second Masters in Sociology from Purvanchal University, Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh.

An Outstanding and Extraordinary Performer as a student you excelled at your work in your professional career that won you accolades and applause and brought you Awards in appreciation. In 2011 you received State Award from the Government of Uttar Pradesh for being an Outstanding Employee with Disability. 2013 brought you NIVH EXCELLENCE AWARD. You received public recognition for Outstanding performance as the most Efficient Employee in the category of Blindness receiving the NATIONAL AWARD FOR THE EMPOWERMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES – 2015.

Since 2011 you are the Deputy Commissioner, Persons with Disabilities at the Commissioner's Office/Court Under the State Government of Uttar Pradesh. Your other past designations and affiliations have been: Chief Project Officer at Dehradun Unit of 'Jan Kalyan Sewa Samiti, Jaunpur. Manager (Handicapped Welfare) at 'Maa Shyamadevi Yuva Smekit Viklang Punarvas Kendra, Jaunpur. Managing Director at 'Krishna Drishtibadhitarth Evam Shikshan Sansthan' Jaunpur and as Placement Officer at the National Federation of the Blind, New Delhi and Uttar Pradesh. Your ardent wish in life is to utilize your knowledge, experience and personal attributes for the welfare of the Society in general, with focus on the less privileged class including Persons with Disabilities.

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND, INDIA

To

Smt. Swaran Suresh Ahuja

Born on 2nd of January 1932 you are one of the longest serving Well-Wisher of National Association for the Blind, India. You associated with NAB, India as a dedicated generous giver of services and as the better half of our much loved and respected Executive Director, Late Mr. Suresh Chandra Ahuja. Your educational qualifications are equally impressive, a BA Honours (Hindi), University of Delhi, Certificate of Proficiency in Teaching of the Blind from College of Teachers for the Blind, London, UK and Diploma in Teacher of the Blind from none other than the world renowned, Perkins School for the Blind, Watertown, Massachusetts, USA.

Your professional career spans more than 50 years from 1959 – 2017. Starting as a Teacher in 1959 at Dadar School for the Blind, Mumbai, on to a Lecturer at Government of India's Regional Training Centre for Teachers of the Visually Handicapped, Mumbai, then as Vice Principal of Dadar School for the Blind, Mumbai and a Guest Lecturer for B.Ed Teacher Training Programme at NIVH, Dehradun and SNTD University, Mumbai.

Due credit for helping NAB, India establish its first National Academy of Teachers of the Blind at Palyankottai. You were and still is a Member of the following prestigious Associations, Committees and more, just to name a few; World Braille Council, National Committee on Braille Development, Braille Council of India and National Committee on Review of Bharati Braille, NIVH, Dehradun with

Chairperson of its Sub Group on Review of Marathi Braille. Also served as Assistant Secretary, International Council of Educators of the Visually Handicapped, as Examiner and Paper Setter for National Academy for Teachers of the Blind (NATB) & Training Centre for the Teachers of the Visually Handicapped (TCTVH) and is on several Government and NGO Committees for the Visually Impaired and have participated in numerous National, International Conferences, Conventions, Seminars, Workshops with few paper presentations.

To your credit are several valuable publications, some of them by NAB – Bharti Braille Shikshak, Drishtiheeno ka Shikshan tatha Punarvasan – Prarambh ka Vikas (a history of education and rehabilitation of the blind in the past 200 years), Yadi aapki kaksha me drishtiheen / drishtibadhit balak ho: shikshako ke liye sujhav (a translation and adaptation of a book by American Foundation) and others include, Drishtiheen aur Samaj Aadharit Punarvas on CBR, Taylor Frame Ganit Paati ya Bonham Bhoomiti Sadhan – Prayog Vidhi (NAB), Hamare Bacchhe – Drishtiheen, a pamphlet (AICB), 2 chapters of Shikshak Prashikshan Lekhmala (AICB), as Chief Editor, Braille Gyan Kosh (NIVH). Developed distance teaching lessons for parents/volunteers (NIOS & NIVH) and have even scripted a Video film on teaching Braille (BCI).

Words, with limited boundaries, cannot encompass your dedication and contributions in this field, of your expertise and moral commitment.

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Response of Awardee

आज NAB ने समय के पट खोल कर मुझे अतीत में पहुँचा दिया है। मुझे याद आ रही है। 1952-53 के उस दिन की जब मैं पहली बार श्रदेय श्री आर. एम. अलपाईवाला जी और उनकी धर्मपत्नि तहमीना जी से मिली थी। आज 65-66 वर्ष बाद भी उनकी स्नेह भरी छवि-उनका अपनापन सजीव हो उठता है - मन को छू जाता है ! नहीं पता था तब, कि भविष्य में इनकी स्मृति में, इन्हीं की संस्था में सम्मान की पात्र बनूँगी।

आज मैं उन्हें श्रद्धा-सुमन अर्पित करती हूँ। उन्हें सादर नमन करती हूँ।

जब से भास्करजी ने A ward की बात की तब से मेरे मन में एक प्रश्न बार-बार आता रहा है। सोचती हूँ ऐसा तो कुछ विशेष नहीं किया मैंने, जिसके लिए मुझे A ward दिया जाए-विशेष सम्मान दिया जाए। मैंने तो वही किया जो मेरा कर्तव्य था - जो मुझे करना चाहिए था। वही किया जो मुझे अपनी जिम्मेवारी निभाने के लिए करना आवश्यक था।

यह NAB का बड्डुपन है जो मेरे कार्य में कुछ विशेषता देख कर मुझे सम्मानित कर रहे हैं। इसके लिए मैं हृदय से NAB को धन्यवाद देती हूँ - आभार प्रगट करती हूँ।

मैंने कभी सोचा भी नहीं था कि मैं शिक्षिका बनूँगी। 'ब्रेल' का तो नाम भी नहीं सुना था। परन्तु सुरेशजी के साथ संबंध - उनकी प्रेरणा, उनका प्रोत्साहन, और फिर ऐसे संयोग कि सब अपने आप होता चला गया। पता ही नहीं चला !

मैं ईश्वर की आभारी हूँ - मेरे प्रेरक सुरेशजी की आभारी हूँ - अपने गुरुजनों की आभारी हूँ - दृष्टिवंचित बच्चों और मित्रों की आभारी हूँ जिन्होंने मुझे इस क्षेत्र के योग्य समझा और काम करने का अवसर दिया।

विशेष बात जो मैं कहना चाहूँगी तो यह कि :

Challenged. I have really enjoyed my work espically enjoyed woring with children who were my real teachers - real गुरु in many ways. I have very happy and unforgettable memories of working with visually impaired children, my V.T. friends, colleagues, teachers & teacher-students many of whom are holding very responsible posts today. I am very proud of them.

For me it has been a joy and privilege working in this field. सच पूछिए तो इस अ एरद के वास्तविक अधिकारी - खरे अधिकारी दृष्टिवंचित बच्चे और मेरे अनेकानेक मित्र हैं जिन से मैंने बहुत कुछ सीखा हैं। पुस्तकों में बहुत कुछ पढ़ा था। परन्तु वास्तव में सीखा उनसे जिन्होंने दृष्टिबाधिता को अपने जीवन में कभी बाधा नहीं बनने दिया इतना ही नहीं उन्होंने औरों को भी राह दिखाई।

इस लिए यह A ward मैं उनको समर्पित करती हूँ।

धन्यवाद !

स्वर्ण सुरेश अहूजा

About Neelum Khurshid Kanga Award & the Winners' Citations

Swati Thakurdesai

Honorary Secretary, NAB, India

ABOUT NEELUM KHURSHED KANGA:

NAB Department of Women's empowerment carry over different activities to support visually challenged women in their over all development. Many hands were joined with NAB in this endeavor. One of the names is Ms. Neelum Khurshed Kanga. Ms. Kanga was an ordinary lady with an extra ordinary achievement and enlightened with the goal to work voluntarily towards the welfare of the blind. Working full time in a travel agency. Ms. Kanga got involved in voluntary work with the blind in 1948. She was with NAB, India since its inception rather before that. She actively engaged with fund raising committee.

ABOUT NEELUM KHURSHED KANGA AWARD:

Ms. Palkhiwala, a best friend of Ms. Kanga, dedicated a fund to NAB in the name of her dear and selfless friend. This fund benefits visually challenged women in need of medical treatment, education, vocational training, employment and

economic resettlement. NAB initiated a 'Neelum Kanga Prize', (then upgraded to the Award) routed through Department of Women's Empowerment and decided to give it to three deserving blind women every year who have outstanding achievement especially in unconventional areas and contributing to the society meaningfully despite of their disability. The objective was to encourage other visually challenged women to accept the challenge to take up new fields. Since its inception (1983) till date (2019) 94 visually challenged women from various challenging fields like Education, Law, Medical practitioner, Physio-Therapy, MBA, Bank Manager, women Activist and many more are honored with this prestigious Award. The award consists of shied, citation and cash.

The very first recipient of the Prize in 1983 was Ms. Kaushalya Balid from Education field, and this year i.e.in 2019 recipients are Dr. Vijeta Kapur, a physiotherapist and Ms. Tiffni Brax, a promoter of education of Visually Challenged.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND, INDIA**To*****Tiffany Maria Brar***

“The courageous daughter of India” is what our Honorable President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind aptly called you when he conferred on you the National Award of Being the Best Role Model. Your career and personal objective “To be a good Special Educator and empower the blind” requires unflinching faith in yourself, determination and an indomitable spirit indeed without 'borders'. You are a perennial source of inspiration, ever smiling and radiating positive vibes that are contagious, affecting people of all ages globally.

Born on 14th of September 1988 the doctor's negligence cost you your vision soon after birth. After early years of education in Great Britain you returned to continue it in India. The segregation, discrimination and callous attitude in class and on sports field towards the Visually Impaired appalled and outraged you leading you to your mission in life, to bring about the necessary changes. Despite all hurdles your disability created you topped the CBSE Board Examinations in your school. You always detained 1st Class position throughout your education till Post Graduation in Special Education (Visual Impairment). You attained expertise in Access Technology too.

Your professional life started in 2009 as 'Receptionist cum Braille Assistant' at 'Braille without Borders Kanthari International Institute for Social Entrepreneurs'. Thereafter in 2012 you worked as 'Project Coordinator' for Jyothirgamaya Mobile Blind School initiated by you at the same

institute. In 2015 you founded Jyothirgamaya Foundation a realization of your dream that has since then grown and flourished.

You are the recipient of innumerable Awards globally and invited for several Programs and Workshops too. To name a few: In 1997 Child of the Year National Award at Kolhapur for Bharatnatyam, Job Day Foundation Award, Phoenix Award, Women Vision Award, Kerala State Disability Award 2012, Woman of the Year Award from Hope Trust 2015, SarthakNari Award 2016, Rotary International Award 2016, Vocational Excellence Award by Rotary International 2018 and National Award for The Best Role Model 2017.

You have been felicitated a host of times by National/International Organizations and celebrities, our revered Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam being one of them. This limited space cannot do justice to your achievements. Suffice it to say there have been Camps and Workshops, Sensitization Programs and Special Training Sessions, varied activities and skills that gave the batches at Jyothirgamaya Foundation a comprehensive, all rounded education cum training making them confident and self-reliant. To live a life of self-respect and dignity with the head held high and to realize the most impossible sounding dream is what Jyothirgamaya Foundation achieves. You are blessed with volunteers from India and abroad whose selfless services are gratefully accepted and appreciated.

In recognition of your Outstanding Achievement in your

Professional Career

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND, INDIA

has pleasure in awarding you the

NEELUM KHURSHED KANGA MEMORIAL AWARD – 2019

Given in Mumbai on this Nineteenth day of January 2019 on the occasion of the

68TH FOUNDATION DAY OF NAB, India

Shri Hemant P. Takle
President
NAB, India

Shri Satya Kumar Singh
Honorary Secretary General
NAB, India

Prof. Bhaskar Y. Mehta
Chairperson
NAB Awards Committee

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND, INDIA

To

Dr. Vijeta Kapur

Born on 29th December 1979, your name, Vijeta aptly describes your spirit, a Winner all the way. Life was cool for you in your prime of youth till in your 22nd year Retinal Detachment took your vision away leaving you in dark anguish. But the physical darkness did not diminish the bright light of your spirit within.

Life moves on and so did you. Loss of vision was not a deterrent but an impetus that led you on to Bachelors in Physiotherapy (B.P.T.) in 2005 followed by a PGD (PPHC) from Apollo Hospital. At present, you are working as a 'Senior Physiotherapist' at Physio-Rehab Point, Lucknow and is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) at Indic Institute, Lucknow.

Not content with a fulfilling professional life you have reached out to those Visually Impaired who wish for assistance in finding their footing in Life by preparing accessible books for them. You also provide support to those aspirants who are seeking career in Banking and Civil Services. You are fortunate to have a husband, who is supportive and encouraging, himself working in the field of the differently abled.

It's an incredible and laudable attitude to have vision, and then to lose it, yet remain positive about yourself and others in this field. To seek and achieve a rewarding career and extend your optimistic spirit to others. A Self-Empowered Woman, empowering others!

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Aesthetics of the Non-visual

BY Urvi Jangam



About the author:

Urvi Jangam is currently Ph. D. Research Scholar at the department of German, University of Mumbai. Born on 14th October 1988 in Mumbai, the author turned blind as a premature baby while in the incubator. Her parent's decision

of educating her in a regular school in the Integrated Education Program of National Association for the Blind, India has contributed significantly to her all-round development. She perceived B.A from Fergusson College, Pune (Junior college) and Patkar Varde College Mumbai in History and English literature. Parallel she decided to perceive German language-training from Max Müller bhavan Mumbai, In 2009 she began with her M.A in German studies at University of Mumbai. In 2011 the author was selected for the Wertewelten scholarship for her essay titled 'my values' which was ranked amongst top 10 texts worldwide and later published in their respective anthology in Germany. The same scholarship provided her the opportunity to travel to Germany for the first time and spend an entire semester at the university of Tübingen, which opened the door to a new world. After her return to India she worked for a MNC Lionbridge technologies PVT.LTD as a language lead. In the same year she cleared UGC national eligibility test (NET) in first attempt and also secured JRF on the second go. From 2012 to 2014 she worked as a translation lecturer for the M.A German Studies at Department of German, University of Mumbai. In 2014 she received the DAAD Ph.D. Scholarship for research at University of Göttingen. This article gives an overview of her Ph.D. Research topic.

Aesthetics of the Non-visual

Is aesthetics, as a science of perception, incomplete if one of the five senses, namely the visual sense is left out? This doctoral research delves into the possibility of conceptualizing aesthetics without the visual sense. This research is conducted by a blind researcher who undertakes the analysis of literary texts written by blind writers to derive the elements of the aesthetics of the non

visual. In this sense, it is research by the blind on the blind, of the blind, for the blind as well as for the sighted. Therein lays the uniqueness of this rare study.

An overview of western aesthetics shows, so far aesthetics could largely not do without the visual sense. Indian aesthetics of Rasa on the other hand seems to put the sense of taste as a primary sense, which as the analysis reveals, however does not hold true either. This gives rise to the need for a new concept. And yet the methodological premise of the Rasa was selected with the aim of adding on to the existing framework, in order to make space for the aesthetics of the non-visual, which hardly seems to be addressed in the present rasa concept or aesthetics by and large.

While attempts were made to analyze the literary text, many difficulties were faced due to predominantly visual nature of the prevalent aesthetic theories. Though the concept of rasa seems to derive its essence from the sense of taste, the aesthetic process, elements leading to aesthetic pleasure are primarily visual. This could be explained with the help of examples in portrayal of Sringara rasa (love). Most of the stimuli used in order to invoke this rasa are visual. So is the case with responses, which manifest themselves in form of gestures, looks, costume, embraces etc. which are difficult to perceive in absence of the visual sense. This leads us to the question how is it possible for a blind spectator to understand, empathise the tenderness of the emotion portrayed on the stage? The alternative of live audio description during the actual play, which facilitates a detailed description, is hardly explored in Indian theater. The audio description theater projects widely popular in the USA and Europe are worth mentioning at this point. This process includes the equipment for audio description (typically a hand-held receiver with volume control and other knobs and a headset), which enables the blind and visually impaired spectators to follow the chain of visual events. No sooner the receiver is switched on; the blind spectator can listen to the description about stage layout and characters even before the beginning of the play.¹ The best possible solution to fill up the

¹<http://www.acb.org/adp/theatres.html> [10.12.2018]

visual gaps as far as the Indian theater is concerned, is description offered by sighted counterparts parents, siblings, partner, children, relatives, friends accompanying the blind audience. The awareness required for describing the visual aspects in an effective way to convey various aesthetic shades to blind spectator is missing. Furthermore, the sighted companion could forget to describe the scene, props on the stage while her-his attention is focused on the play. On the other hand frequent questions by the blind and visually impaired spectator could be a disturbance to their sighted companions. Thus, it could be only guessed how unfulfilling the aesthetic experience would be for a blind spectator who fails to grasp the play in its entirety due to lack of visual input. Not all scenes are portrayed through dialogs. To what extent is it possible to convey the intensity of the nonverbal elements such as a light smile, embraces, and fine gestures of the eyebrows, sneaking glances and looking sideways etc word to word? The description is an important source to gain insights into the protagonist's looks, appearance, costume, jewelry, and other apparatus used on the stage.

Besides, the constraint of getting into vivid details related to love scenes in presence of parents, teachers etc. existing as a taboo has to be taken into account.

Furthermore, it is not the mere absence of visual input that proves to be a hindrance, but the inability to activate the imagination which remains the area of concern. The awareness required to invoke the imagination, non-visual pictures is missing. The very realisation that imagination plays a different roll, which in turn leads to the aesthetic perception of the blind and visually impaired is absent. Fortunately, the description provided by the sighted companions is not the sole means for a blind and visually impaired spectator to enjoy the play. With help of voice, such spectators gain a deeper understanding of the characters. Due to optimum utilisation of the auditory sense, gentle, mellow voices and delicate words enable them to experience the intensity and kindling of love. So when the feelings are primarily expressed through the medium of voice, the blind spectator has an upper hand. Since these spectators are in a position to feel, grasp much more through dialog in comparison to the fellow human beings who majorly perceive through body language. These reasons depict the vitality of the coming up with an

independent concept of Adrishya rasa. Hence, it was absolutely necessary to come up with a theoretical framework which could make space for the due interpretation of the selected texts and poems without questioning their validity.

It is to be noted that aesthetic experiences are not formed in a vacuum but are largely dependent upon positive and negative experiences (in case of blind and visually impaired writers) on personal as well as social fronts. A simple reason for this is the writer's reliance on sighted assistance for clear, precise and in-depth understanding of different phenomena. These factors in turn go on to develop a unique aesthetic perspective and mould the blind subject's creative independence through writings. Adrishya rasa or the aesthetic pleasure of the non visual is not a mere outcome of the lack of visual sense, or a compensation of remaining four senses. Neither is it supposed to be supernatural, nor is it a heightened state of other senses in the absence of visual sense. The lacking visual sensory perception may actually mean a different potential deriving from the optimum utilization of the four senses, namely hearing, touch, smell, and taste coupled with unparalleled imagination and empathy. This aesthetic perception is cultivated since childhood in case of readers, spectators who are blind by birth. This holds true for late blind individuals as well: the only difference being that they have to train themselves to this unique way of perception, which depends on various factors such as acceptance of their disability, adaptability, shifting the focus to senses like hearing and touch which has been so far occupied by the visual sense, the extent of loss of vision etc. Thus it is also an outcome of the given senses coupled with imagination, empathy and the influence of visual memories. Such aesthetic perception cannot be stimulated temporarily by a sighted person. It is to be taken into consideration that this area of aesthetic pleasure is shaped essentially owing to a differing role of imagination for a blind and a sighted aesthete. Along with the four senses and their combination, the imagination for a blind individual serves the purpose of coming closer to the perceived reality, to fill in the gaps, and to complete a picture (a perception that is not to be equated with or aspired that of a sighted spectator). Thus this form of aesthetic perception would distinguish itself owing to unique patterns of imagination, whereas for a sighted aesthete imagination at times serves to take a flight from the perceived reality. This proves that the aesthetic perception in case of both sighted and blind is

कान्हा, जबलपूर, भोपाल एक यादगार सफर



कान्हा गेस्ट हाऊस



जंगल सफारी



कान्हा म्यूजियम



नेचर ट्रेल



कान्हा म्यूजियम



कान्हा म्यूजियम



सांची स्तूप



सांची स्तूप



भोपाल राज्य संग्रहालय



भोपाल राज्य संग्रहालय



भोपाल जन जातीय संग्रहालय



नौका विहार - बेढा घाट जबलपूर

intrinsically of a different kind: for the sighted from the normal reality to imagination and for the blind from constricted perception to wider imagination of pitching in for the missing visual stimuli and sharper use of the other four senses to a qualitatively different perception.

When the visually impaired can be artists and writers as well as connoisseurs and readers, conceptualizing aesthetics without the visual sense should bring new insight, particularly, is as is the case here substantiated by travelogues, short prose and poems by blind writers which form the primary text corpus for this doctoral thesis. Conception of a new rasa namely Adrishya rasa, in order to cater to the unique aspect of selected texts and a critical appreciation of literary texts written by blind writers leads to an alternative aesthetics, which has so far hardly been conceptualized. This aesthetic perspective is an attempt to effectively dissect the role of 'non-visual' perception, i.e. all other sensory organs except eyes and it's prioritization in contrast to prevalent aesthetic theories where visual perception is pivotal.

Different modes of 'seeing', such as 'seeing' with fingers and ears, are less familiar and relatively less explored. Unfortunately, the power of other senses besides the visual sense is underestimated even today. Consequently, the capacity of a blind and visually impaired individual to observe and perceive the world especially through travelling continues to be undermined. This thesis attempts to unearth the crucial aspect and aesthetic value closely associated with such experiences. Critiquing the conventional position of 'sight' in the branch of aesthetics constitutes an important motivation for this research.

Observation is closely associated with perception and primarily with visual perception. Perception enables us to come to terms with various phenomena around like the beautiful, picturesque, attractive, discrete, stunning and the ugly amidst others. In this process we assign an aesthetic value to an object. Yet another significant question in this case: how is aesthetics based on non-visual sensory perception shaped and structured i.e. how does a person who is blind by birth perceive aesthetically? Or how does a person confronted with the loss of sight, which till the given moment occupied an indispensable position in her/his life, come to terms with this grave loss? Do the erstwhile pictures and images then in due course of time take up a non-visual form such as tactile or the auditory

form, or the combination of the remaining senses? To what extent does the visual element preserved through memories determine the nature of new pictures? In other words how strongly could the impact of the visual aspect be felt even when the sensory input on this front remains absent.

These questions shall be answered on the basis of the analysis of the chosen literary texts applying the newly conceptualized Adrishya rasa.

Car Rally for the Blind

Pallavi Kadam
Executive Director
NAB, India

The National Association for the Blind, India in association with the Rotary Club of Mumbai Elegant and Indian Automotive Racing Club (IARC) had organised a Car Rally on 18th November, 2018.

The objective of organizing Car Rally was to create awareness amongst the society about the capabilities of the Visually Challenged Persons. The Visually Challenged participants also get a chance to interact with the Society which in turn creates employment opportunities in the mainstream society.

There were 78 Visually Impaired Navigators from NAB, India and 78 Drivers from Rotary Club of Mumbai Elegant. The whole event was coordinated by NAB, India and IARC.

On 18th November, Sunday morning at 8.00 a.m. at Worli Police parade ground our ex-cricketer Mr. Umesh Kulkarni and well-known T.V serial actress Ms. Parul Chaudhari flagged off first car. After one minute gap 78 Cars were on track. Dignitaries from NAB India as well as from Rotary Club of Mumbai Elegant were there to witness the flag off ceremony. By 11.00 a.m. Cars started coming back to NAB Head Office by completing thirty five k.m. distances as their targets. All the cars reached by 12.00 to 1.00 p.m. Ms. Kusum Gajarmal, Visually Impaired lady was the first winner declared followed by Mr. Shivam Patil as 2nd Winner and Mr. Dyaneshwar Mardhe was the third. They were honoured by well known film actor Mr. Jacky Shroff and famous National Bowler Mr. Harbhajan Singh giving Trophy and Cash Prizes.

NAB, India's Hon. Secretaries Mr. A.S. Athalekar, Mr. Suhas Karnik, Mrs. Swati Thakurdesai, Executive Council Member Mr. Ramakant Satam, Executive Director Mrs. Pallavi Kadam was present. NAB's

Brand Ambassador and famous actor Mr. John Abraham's Parents were Special Guests for the programme. Mrs. Anjali Pansari, President, Mrs. Savita Dalmiya, Secretary and other members of Rotary Club of Mumbai legend were among the dignitaries. Mr. Ketan Mehta and his team from

IARC were also present for the event. There were around 400 persons present for the event.

Overall the event was a grand success and Navigators as well as the Drivers both enjoyed the ride.

Received various reply in Social Networking site through Whats'app



**Reply received from Ms. Chetna More,
a Visually Impaired girl.**

Hello, my name is Chetna More. I work with Canara bank. I am very excited to participate in this event as always. I had participated previously and won as well. It's kind of an adventure for me whereby my navigation, a participant finds write path in specific timeframe. Besides that, I get acquainted with new people and be friends with them as well as I get to meet my old friends afterwards. I don't need to do any such preparation because the Braille map sheet is given on the spot and I manage reading Braille quite well. Sent I don't foresee any challenges from my side provided the participant listens to given instructions carefully and drives safe.

World White Cane Day Event

Pradnya Upadhye
Director, NAB, India

On 15th October, 2018, NAB Department of Rehabilitation, Mahalaxmi and other Departments of NAB conducted awareness programs at various traffic junctions in Mumbai.

The first site was Near Braille Press, Worli Seaface at 10 a.m where all the officials from NAB (I)-along with Mr. A. S. Athalekar, Hon. Secretary, Ms. Swati Thakurdesai, Hon. Secretary, Ms. Pallavi Kadam, Executive Director, NAB(I) were present and flagged off the event. A small awareness program alongwith crossing of the roads by the officials and visually challenged persons was held.

Thereafter, the team of NAB officials from NAB – Department of Rehabilitation, Mahalaxmi proceeded to the site at: Elphinstone Station, Near India Bulls at 11.30 a.m. where few RTO officials had joined the program and similar awareness program was conducted, with crossing of the roads.

The third site was near Regal Cinema, Mumbai at 12.30 p.m. where the dignitaries of Taj Palace Hotel had also joined and they flagged off the event at the culminating site. Similar awareness programs were held there along with the dignitaries, by providing tips on helping the visually challenged persons, by crossing of the roads along with the officials. Sponsorships of T shirts, Caps, snacks, food, white canes etc. were arranged by individual donors. To make the above occasion a success, we receive support from the Mumbai Municipal Corporation, the R.T.O., the Commissioner of Police, B.E.S.T. and other local authorities.

Other Departments of NAB also conducted same

awareness programs at different sites viz. Siddhivinayak Temple, Century Bazar, Kalachowkie junctions etc.

**REPORT – 210TH Birth Anniversary of
Louis Braille – January 4, 2019**

Dr. Vimal Kumar Dengla
Honorary Secretary
NAB, India

It is a matter of pride for all of us that United Nations has acknowledged the contribution of Robert Louis Braille for the millions of visually impaired persons through out the world. 4th January 2019 is declared as first World Braille Day by United Nations. On this occasion, National Association for the Blind, India organized various functions throughout the country in all its State Branches and various activities. Programmes were organized in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Delhi, Haryana, etc. We are forwarding herewith the brief report of the function at organized at headquarters of National Association for the Blind, India, Mumbai.

Every year on 4th January, National Association for the Blind, India celebrates Braille Day to commemorate the Birthday of Louis Braille.

National Association for the Blind, India, Sir J. Duggan Braille Press organized a function on Friday, January 4, 2019 at 11.00 a.m. at the entrance of the NAB Braille Press Building, Worli Seaface Complex, to commemorate Louis Braille's 210th Birth Anniversary. The Head of NAB Departments - Staff and visually impaired trainees/persons were present on the occasion. Mr. Hasmukh Shah, well wisher and life member of NAB, India was also present.

The function started with the lighting of the lamp. The trainees of NAB TCTVH Centre gave tributes to Louis Braille by briefing the audience about Louis Braille's great contribution by inventing the script "Braille" for the visually impaired. Poems on Louis Braille were recited by the trainees.

Mr. Hasmukh Shah spoke the importance of braille script which helped him considerably in running his business successfully. Mr. Hasmukh Shah paid floral tributes to Louis Braille. The importance of braille script was highlighted in this function.

Two braille books "Braille Teaching Course - 1" in English and "Abacus" in Hindi were officially released on this occasion. Mr. Vijay Nawale thanked all those who were present for the function and also the staff who helped in organizing the function.

भारत के हम बच्चे है

शुभांगी कुडाळकर
नॅब,टी.सी.टी.वी.एच.
डीएड. प्रथम वर्ष

भारत के हम बच्चे हैं,
औरो से भी हटके हैं,
लुई ब्रेल से सीखे हैं,
फिर भी लडते हटके है,
नेत्र ज्योति का नही असर
ब्रेल लिपी भरती है कसर
अब हमे नही हैं डर
पैदल चलते हम हैं घर
भारत के हम बच्चे हैं
औरो से भी हटके हैं

हाथ मेरी आँखे है।
स्पर्श मेरी परछाईं
लुई ब्रेल अगर न होते
रह जाते हम हरजाईं
जीवन मे है रोशनी आई।
अंधेरा थी परछाईं फिर नई सुबह आई,
घडी खुशीयों की लाई।
भारत के हम बच्चे हैं
औरो से भी हटके है।

दिन — रात जो एक किया।
मौंका उन्होने पाया,
ब्रेल लिपी का प्रसार किया।
जनक ब्रेल का गुजर गया।
भारत के हम बच्चे है
औरो से भी हटके है।

Identification of New Currency by Blind and Visually Challenged: Challenges and Solutions

Swati Thakurdesai

Honorary Secretary

NAB, India

Introduction:

Legal tender/currency is a part and parcel of our everyday life. For almost every commodity exchange we require currency. Like in India, in most of the countries this currency is available in the form of paper notes and coins of various denominations. Each country has their own endorsed economic establishment to make a decision on the currency related issues. In India, we have Reserve Bank of India as an apex body to decide the issues on currency.

Present scenario:

In India, the present government, through Reserve Bank of India, has developed the new currencies which are totally different in design than the previous one. The previous currencies were different either in shape, size, thickness, length and/or width for e.g. a note of Rs.500/- was longer than that of Rs. 100/-. The notes of Rs. 50/- and Rs. 20/- were similar in length but were distinct in width. Coin of Rs. 1/- was thicker than that of Rs. 2/- though it was similar in size. So it was easy even for ordinary person to differentiate between the currencies even without looking at it. Obviously it was easy for a visually impaired person also to recognize the currency without vision.

Whatever reason there may be but the present government has come up with a new design of currency notes/coins on the ground of foreign currency which is almost similar in shape, size, length, width, texture, thickness, weight etc. The colours of the notes are different and attractive and varying by denominations. A low vision person with better vision can identify it to certain extent but as there are no other identification marks on these notes or coins for discrimination so it is becoming very difficult for a totally blind or low vision person with poor vision to recognize it and that is a big challenge in front of us today. There are two options to overcome this problem:

1. To make the currency blind friendly or
2. To find out the appropriate solutions to enable visually challenged person to recognize the currency easily.

Out of these, for the first option i.e. making the currency blind friendly there should be some changes or adaption in the currency printing system where the policy decision is involved and steps to be taken at the apex level in the Reserve Bank. National Association for the Blind, India, being a largest organization in the field of Visual Impairment, has already filed a PIL against this in High Court. The case is in the conduit.

How Other Countries Help Blind To Recognize The Currency?

Let's have a glance on the scenario in other countries:

United States: As per a study only two major countries issue notes that do not vary in size by denomination-Canada and United States. However Canadian paper currency, unlike US banknotes, feature tactile marks that helps blind and visually impaired to make the difference by touch.

In US an interim solution that is used to identify currency is mainly based on technology. They are the currency readers those identify and announce the denomination of a note inserted into a sensor on the device. This includes:

1. The iBill Talking Bank Note Identifier: It's a compact device that can be easily inserted into a side pocket. It recognizes all US currencies provided the currency is not too crumpled or otherwise damaged. It announces the denominations in three ways:

It can speak the each denomination;

It can produce a different pattern of tones for each denomination; or

It can vibrate silently when you count your change.

This device is now available free of cost from Treasury Department to any US citizen who is blind or visually impaired.

2. A Mobile Solution: Along with iBill currency identifier, Treasury Department has also developed a pair of mobile apps that use your Android or iOS device's camera to identify US currency. The Android version, named IDEAL Currency Identifier, is available on the Google Play Store. The iOS version, called EyeNote is available from the iTunes App Stores. Once you start any of these apps, just point your phone's camera at the currency you need to identify. After a few seconds it will inform both, the amount and whether you are showing front or back view of the currency.

3. Other Solutions: besides these the LookTel Money Reader for Apple iPhones, iPads and newer models of the iPod touch is available from iTunes Store for \$9.99. One can also use his Mac desktop or laptop to identify currency with the OS X version, which can be purchased from Mac App Store.

These apps operate similarly to the free version offered from the Treasury Department, but LookTel Money Reader identifies currency from 21 different countries and is absolutely useful for international travelers.

Likewise there are several apps available on payments ranging between \$5 - \$20 which are useful for the cause.

Australian Dollar: The Australian dollar tackles the accessibility issues in a very simple method, by making larger denominations not simply larger but longer. They also have strong colours and contrasts for the visually impaired.

Euro: the Euro bank notes were designed with heavy input from Blind organizations and have a very simple distinguishing feature: big denominations are big whereas little are little. The notes have some intaglio printing, which gives them relief marks that can be felt. The €200 and €500 notes have special tactile marks on them as well, to avoid confusion and for security purpose.

Canadian Dollar: Canada: Like US Canada also

has all banknotes of same size but they have added a tactile mark on the currency. Like most other currencies, different denominations are coloured differently to help visually impaired too. The Canadian currency tactile feature indicates the banknotes denomination in the upper left corner of the face side of the banknote using a series of raised dots. The dots are similar in appearance to Braille, it differs from Standard Braille. The banknote uses full Braille block/cell of 6 dots. The \$5 has one cell and added one more cell than the previous one with the increasing denominations of \$10, \$20 and \$50. The \$100 note has arranged two cells with empty space in between.

It has been done in consultation with the experts in the field of visual impairment.

Hong Kong Dollar: Hong Kong's very cool currency—a lion—has three of the hallmark features typically seen; intaglio printing, different sizes and different colors, which is most convenient for visually challenged to differentiate between the denominations.

Japanese Yen: Japan also uses special intaglio-printed tactile marks and each note is in different size.

Swedish Krona: Sweden has different colours for visually impaired and different sizes for the blind.

Swiss Franc: Switzerland: the Swiss currency has a lot in common with the Euro with its different colours and sizes for its Francs. However, the Swiss go one step further adding intaglio marks and a perforated number that you can feel.

British Pound: British banknotes are differentiated by size and to a certain extent, by colours. They also have large numbers like US dollars so that the people with bad eyesight can easily differentiate between the denominations.

Paper used for printing of Notes by different countries:

Polymer, Plastic, Silk and Cotton.

NAB I's submission to the court:

As mentioned earlier, NAB I has already filed a PIL in the High Court. The requisition made in this PIL is:

1. There should be a device designed currency readers that identify and announce the denomination of a note inserted into a sensor on the device. The device should be compact enough to slip into a side pocket. It should have talk back in English as well as local languages. As it should be useful and economical to the end users who are from weak financial background. It announces the denomination in your choice of three of three ways: It can speak the amount; it can produce a different pattern of tones for each denomination; or it can vibrate silently which may be helpful in keeping your financial information private when you use the device at a cash register or count your change.
2. As per technological move mobile apps to be developed which will speak in local languages and should be economical.
3. Braille cells or raised marking which is easily read by visually impaired. Paper texture should be non tearable wherein Braille dots are not erased easily. Intaglio marks also will help for identification.
4. Coins should be of different shapes and size which was in the olden times that were easily identified by blind as per their shapes and sizes.

Conclusion:

In short we can say that, in India, either we can design the blind friendly currency by making variations in shape, size, length, width, thickness, texture and colour contrast, tactile intaglio marks etc. or we can develop an accessible and appropriate currency identifying system which is most easier for a blind person, irrespective of his education and socio-economic background, to identify the currency with no/less difficulty.

Source : Through Google

Ps: We are happy to inform you that our Hon. Finance Minister has recently announced that the government will come out with the first ever Rs. 20 coin which will be shaped like a 12-edged polygon and new series of Rs. 1, Rs. 2, Rs. 5 and Rs. 10 coins will also contain design features which will be of great assistance to V.I. persons

OUR SHINING STAR - Marufah Bano

Ms. Shalini Khanna
NAB India, Centre For
Blind Women & Disability Studies, Delhi



Marufah Bano has been placed as a `Masseur at corporate `PayU Money in Bangaluru from June 2018.

A role model defying all barriers and limitations, Marufah hails from Jharkhand and belongs to a marginal farmer's family. Never sent to any formal school for education or skill building till 18 years of age, Marufah was married to a visually impaired boy in 2017, and after three days of her marriage, she was admitted in the centre for learning cooking so that she could support to run her home.

This bright girl not only trained herself in necessary life skills of home science, mobility and Braille but also equipped herself quickly in the profession of `Spa and Massages, without any formal education. A lot of effort was put on her grooming and communication skills as she did not even know proper Hindi language when she came from home. After finishing her training in Spa and Massage in December 2017, she was taken as `On the job trainee to train in other girls in the same skill from January 2018-May 2018.

The girl had to strive and fight with her parents, in-laws and husband to convince them that she will be able to manage on her own her life and job even in another part of the country due to her skill building at the centre. Finally, with the centre's support, she was settled in Bangaluru with accommodation near her workplace. Today, Marufah commutes independently and is managing herself well in the working women hostel. She is the bread earner of the family as the husband is still studying.

Alay Patel-Contributing Member of Family

Krupa Velani

Blind Peoples Association, Ahmedabad



Let's Meet Alay Patel. He is young and handsome man. He is currently working in Vocational training Centre at BPA. He is getting around Rs. 5000 stipend per month. He comes regularly to the vocational centre by local bus independently. He communicates with other trainees and participates in other activities of the centre. When he is travelling by bus if he was sitting and he see any old or disabled person, he will call them and give his sit so he has sense of responsibilities.

His birth date is 12th October 1992. He is staying with elder sister. She is working as an assistant teacher in centre for persons with deafblindness. Father was working in Bank of Baroda as a peon. Mother was house wife but she was busy in making dry snacks and sold in houses.

Alay was Pre mature delivered by his mother, he was in incubator for 1 month and 10 days, jaundice, Epilepsy, bilateral congenital cataract, and He was operated for his cataract. At 1 yr. Age disability was identified. Ophthalmic dept. Civil hospital, Ahmedabad, referred him to school for blind.

He was brought to school for the blind at BPA. As Alay along with his vision problem had severe communication problem due to hearing impairment. Authorities at Blind school found it difficult to admit him in the school. That was the time BPA just had started centre for children with dual sensory impairment. Alay was referred to the

centre and he was admitted for his training and education.

Before joining the programme, Alay had severe Nystagmus in his both eyes. He did not like to wear glasses. His attention span was very short. He had poor neck control. He ate only semi solid food. He was totally dependent on his mother. After joining the programme Initial focus of training for Alay was activities of daily living and communication. He learnt to eat, groom himself, use toilet and play with other children. He started responding meaning fully to gestures and few signs.

Within first one year teachers identified Alay's abilities to learn to read and write. He was taught basic reading writing skills along with his training in mobility skills. The team re-approached authorities of the school for the blind to admit him. Alay passed his 7th std. from same school with support from teachers of deafblind unit. He joined one year course in carpentry from technical school for the blind. He mainly learnt through drawings, pictures and signs.

Along with his academic achievements Alay started participating in co curricular activities like dance & drama. He won the several medals in drawing competition and sports. Daya was his only friend till he was in school. Now he has many friends in vocational training centre. He also joined Kaushlya Vardhan Kendra, 3 months course in Art & Craft, recognized by the dept. of employment and training Govt. of Gujarat. Today Alay is master in making fancy paper bags, tie and dye work and jewelry. He also works as a Master trainer to other deafblind students.

He always helped his mother in her household work. Like cleaning vessels, swiping and mopping. Mother was always proud of him. Unfortunately he lost her four years back. She was suffering from cancer. Alay used to be confused about her condition. Teachers, sister and mother herself tried to help him to understand and cope with the same. It was big struggle to make him understand concept of death. He performed all the rituals the son is expected to do. The family was happy with that but it brought more and more confusion to Alay's mind. It took almost year to help Alay to understand and accept mother's death. He had started showing irrelevant tantrums at home and school.

He likes to teach skills like paper bag making, tie & dye work to other students and teachers. He likes to wear new clothes and collect money. He loves to take care of his niece. Recently his father died due to cancer. Alay was taking care of him, i.e. giving medicine on time, feeding him liquid through food pipe. He also knows at what time and how much (quantity) food to be given to his father. Sometimes he is having an argument with his father when father says “no” to food, he communicate with him through sign that food is must for you to get well soon. When the relatives or known persons visits his home to meet his father Alay through sign communicates with them and explain what happen to his father.

He knows his stipend given by cheque so teacher showed one time to fill the bank slip, he copied same and he knows to give this cheque to bank officer and he see the passbook entry.

Initially the educator had problem in teaching in meaningful communication through signs, with the consistent efforts, training. The teachers used total communication method and taught practically. It took long time to help Alay to develop expressive communication. He very selectively communicates the teachers and known people.

Teachers are saying Alay is one of our first student admitted to the Deafblind unit. We never dreamt of Alay acquiring skills certificates, medals. We all are proud of Alay of achieving medals in sports, drawing competition, passing his school exams and vocational courses.

His sister says “We never expected that Alay can independent in his life. Today not only he is able to take care of himself but is important contributing member of our family.”

Journey of Sanika

Ujwala Kharat
Co-ordinator MHB Unit
NAB, India

Sanika is a 2nd child of Mr. Sunil and Mrs. Devyani Patil. Born on 5th Nov, 2002, Sanika seems to be quite normal as her elder borther. Patil family being a joint family was very happy with Sanika's birth. The large joint family stays under one roof at Worli gaon, Mumbai.



Sanika was growing up as a normal kid amongst the other normal children from the family. By age of two the Parents had doubt about Sanika's vision and they consulted the ophthalmologist from Mumbai. He gave report about her vision loss, which was a direct shock to the family. Nobody had thought of it in a dream also. It took some years to the family to come out of this shock & think about Sanika's future, education etc.

They approached NAB Department of Education to get support. Once she was enrolled with us our teacher started working with her on different skills needed for any blind student to study. Till that time sanika was at home with support from family as well as our teacher, She started attending Mata Lachmi Nursery for the Blind at Sion. Mean while during home visits she learnt to do her daily chores like brushing, bathing, dressing etc.

At Mata Lachmi with support of the teachers there she started muttering nursery rhymes, her mobility was improved. Here she started accepting new persons, sounds, etc. which was not there before.

During these days parents specially her father observed that she is very fond of music & pics ups to tune very fast otherwise due to the autistic characteristics ingrained in her she hardly speaks or initiate conversation.

Father bought the music system with that support sanika develop her habit of singing. By listening to the music she herself tuned to songs she likes and she sings the songs exactly with proper wordings. She herself learnt to sing in duet voices.

She practices on her & result is she grabbed All India Radio Uddan Idol Award this year. We are very proud of sankia & wish her very success in this endeavor.

कान्हा, जबलपूर, भोपाल एक यादगार सफर

नीता केळकर

परिभ्रामी अध्यापक, नॅब मुंबई एकीकृत शिक्षा योजना

दिनांक २४ दिसंबर २०१८ की रात को १०.३० बजे ४० छात्र तथा १३ अध्यापक मुंबई के लोकमान्य टिळक टर्मिनस पर एकत्रित हुए। लगभग एक हफ्ते के लिए घरसे दूर रहने वाले थे तो कुछ माता पिताओं का दिल भर आना स्वाभाविक था। अपने बच्चे को सुचना देना शुरू था। विशाखा पट्टणम ट्रेन से हमने प्रस्थान किया। बच्चों का उत्साह पहले दिन से ही चरम सीमा पे था। निर्धारित सीट पर हर बच्चे को सुलाके टिचर्स भी अपने सीटों पर जा बैठे। सुबह हर कोई बहोत ही उत्साहित था। चाय के साथ थपले अचार का नाश्ता किया। दोपहर का भोजन भी ट्रेन मे ही किया। दोपहर ४.३० बजे हम सब गोंदिया स्टेशन उतरे। मुंबई की तुलना में यहाँ की ठंड कुछ जादा ही महसूस होने लगी। गोंदिया से कान्हा जाने के लिए स्टेशन पर दो बस और दो छोटी गाडियाँ साथ थी। बच्चों को बस, गाडी में बिठाकर हम कान्हा की तरफ निकल पडे। रास्ते में चाय, नाश्ता लेकर रात ९ बजे हम कान्हा टायगर रिझर्व में पहुँचे। हमारे स्वागत के लिए श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार खरे (असिस्टन्ट डिरेक्टर) और उनके सहकारी उपस्थित थे। जैसे ही हम प्रेश होकर इकट्ठा हुए वैसे ही वहाँ के लोगों की पहचान करवायी गई और दुसरे दिन का कार्यक्रम बताया गया। रात का खाना बच्चों ने बडे चावसे खाया। दुसरे दिन सुबह ४.३० बजे ही उठना था इसलिए हम सारे जल्दी ही सो गए।

सुबह हमारे दो ग्रुप बनाए गए एक था जिनको थोडा दिखाई देता है ऐसे मंद दृष्टी वाले बच्चे और दुसरा पूर्णतः दृष्टीहीन बच्चे। मंददृष्टी वाले बच्चे छोटे छोटे ग्रुप में जिप्सी में बैठकर जंगल सफारी को निकल पडे। हर जिप्सी में एक एक गाईड भी दिया गया था। इस सफारी का अनुभव काफी अनोखा रहा। चुभने वाली ठंडक और जंगल की शांती सबको बहुत पसंद आयी। बच्चो ने हिरन, बारसिंगा, मयूर, हाथी आदी पशुओं को काफी नजदीकी से देखा। जंगल घूमते घूमते काफी पंछीयों के आवाज बारिकीसे सुनने को मिले। जंगल सफारी समाप्त करके बच्चे संग्रहालय देखने गए। यह संग्रहालय में बहुत सारे पशुओं की प्रतिमा रखी गयी है। साथ ही उनके बारे में जानकारी भी लिखी हुआ है। संग्रहालय में दुसरी ओर शेर किस तरह से शिकार करता है तथा शेर की आवाज आने के बाद बाकी पशु पंछी एक दूसरे को अपनी आवाज के जरीए किस तरह सूचित करते है इस बारे में प्रतिमारुप से तथा श्रव्य के जरीए दिखाया गया था। यह देखना काफी अनोखा और

अविस्मरणीय अनुभव रहा। इसी समय जो बच्चे नेचर ट्रेल के लिए गए थे उन्होंने भी अनेकानेक अनोखे अनुभव पाये। उन्होंने अनेक नयी नयी वनस्पती देखी, बडे पेड, छोटे पौधे इनमें अंतर क्या होता है यह हमने देखा। पशुपंछीयों के आवाज नजदीक से सुने। दोपहर को दोनों ग्रुप हॉटेल पर लौटकर खाने के पश्चात हमें वन अधिकारियों के साथ मुलाकात का मौका मिला, जहाँ जंगल वहाँ का जीवन इसके बारे में बच्चो ने अधिक जाना। श्री एल कृष्णमूर्ती (फिल्ड डिरेक्टर) को बच्चों ने काफी सवाल किये। हमारे बच्चों की ये तैयारी देखकर वो भी खुश हो गये। उन्होंने बताया की इस प्रकार के सवाल कोई कभी पूछेगा यह मैने कभी सोचा ही नहीं था, और आपके यह बच्चे बहुत ही उत्सुक है। सारे अधिकारी हमारे बच्चों से और उनके प्रश्नों से हैरान रह गये। दुसरे दिन भी बच्चो ने जंगल सफारी और संग्रहालयका अनुभव लिया। इन बच्चों के लिए खेल के माध्यमसे पेड की पहचान पशु पंछीयों की आवाज की पहचान करायी गयी। बच्चों ने वहाँ कॅंप फायर किया, गाने गाये, टायगर रिझर्व के अधिकारी और सारे स्वयंसेवक भी उसमे शामिल हुए। २८ डिसेंबर की सुबह सब लोग जबलपूर प्रस्थान के लिए तैयार थे। तीन बस और तवेरा गाडीयों में बच्चों को सामान के साथ बिठाकर हम भेड़ा घाट और धूँवाधार देखने निकले। नर्मदा नदी पर भेड़ा घाट है। रोपवे से बच्चे उस धूँवाधार के काफी नजदीक पहुँच पाये। रोपवे का सफर काफी रोमांचक रहा क्योंकि काफी बच्चोंका रोपवे का यह पहला अनुभव था। गिरते हुआ पानी और उसके उडते उडते तुषार मनको प्रसन्नता दे रहे थे। इतनी कडी ठंडी में भी बच्चे वहाँसे हिलने का नाम नहीं ले रहे थे। ऐसे मौसम में गरम चाय और गरम गरम पकोडे का स्वाद क्या कहे। बच्चोंने उसका भी आनंद उठाया। जबलपूर का एक जैन मंदिर देखकर वहाँ के एक बगिचे में बच्चोने काफी भागदौड की, दौड लगायी और पश्चात हम स्टेशन पहुँचे भोपाल जाने के लिए। २९ डिसेंबर सुबह कडी ठंडी में हम भोपाल पहुँचे। भोपाल के कृष्णायन हॉटेल में हमारी ठहरनेकी व्यवस्था की थी। उस व्यवस्था को कुछ बच्चे देखतेही रह गये। शायदही वो इस प्रकार के बडे होटल में गये थे। नाश्ता करके बच्चे भोपाल घूमने फिर निकले। राष्ट्रीय संग्रहालय में अनेकाअनेक मूर्तियों को बच्चोने स्पर्श द्वारा अनुभव किया। दुसरे संग्रहालयमें प्राचीन समय के अस्त्र, शस्त्र, अवजार, बर्तन इसकी जानकारी ली। दोपहर भोजन उपरान्त सांची स्तूप देखने गये। भोपालसे हमे ३० दिसंबर की सुबह पचमढी निकलना

था। पूरे रास्ते में बच्चों ने बस में खूब शोर मचाया, अन्ताक्षरी खेली।

पचमढी में सनसेट पॉइंट, शंकरजी का मंदिर और हंडी खो पॉइंट देखे बी फॉल देखने के लिए काफी नीचे उतरना पडा। रास्ता बहुतही खराब था लेकिन बच्चों ने वो भी पार किया। रात को इटारसी स्टेशन पर मुंबई वापस आने के लिए ट्रेन पकडने के लिए हमने पचमढी से प्रस्थान किया।

२०१८ साल को अलविदा और उगते २०१९ का स्वागत हमने इटारसी स्टेशन पर केक काटकर किया। ३१ दिसंबर रात को इटारसी से निकल कर १ जनवरी २०१९ को दोपहर १२.३० बजे दादर पहुँचे।

यह सफर खतम हुआ यह मानने के लिए बच्चे तैयारही नहीं थे। शिवानी और मौवक्ष तो ट्रिप खतम होने पर इतने भावुक हुए कि स्टेशन पर ही रो पडे। सारे अभिभावक अपने बच्चों को मिलने के लिए बेताब थे।

यह एक मौका है इन बच्चों के लिए नये दोस्त बनाने का, रोज की जिंदगी से हटकर नये नये अनुभव लेने का, घर, स्कूल, पढ़ाई के अलावा दुनिया क्या होती है ये देखने का, जो आनंद उन्होंने पूरा पूरा उठाया।

हमारी यह कान्हा सफर तो सफलता से संपन्न हुआ। भविष्य में और नयी सैर करने का वादा लेते हुए हमने एक दुसरे को अलविदा किया।

छात्रोंकी कुछ प्रतिक्रियाएं

जानव्ही भुछडा ने कान्हा के बारे में बताया की, सुबह जंगल सफारी में ऐसा लगता था की किसी फिल्म का शूटिंग शुरू है। कान्हा मे भोजन व निवास की व्यवस्था इतनी उत्तम थी की घर जाने के लिए मन ही नहीं करता था। मेरे दोनो पावोंका प्रॉब्लेम है। मैं ठिक से चल नहीं पाती इसलिए मैंने कभी भी दौडने की होड में भाग नहीं लिया है। लेकिन यहाँ मुलायम घास था। इसलिए मैंने टिचर के साथ दौडने की रेस लगायी और मैं जीत गयी। इस बात का मुझे बहुत आनंद हुआ। हम भोपाल मे हॉटेल कृष्णायन मे रहे थे। वहा हॉटेल मे रहने की व्यवस्था उत्तम थी। वहाँ एसी, टिच्ही, शॉवर सब कुछ था। ऐसे हॉटेल मे जिंदगी में किसी न किसी एक दिन रहने की मेरी बहुत दिनोंकी इच्छा पूर्ण हुआ।

कंचन चौहान कहती है की पहली बार जबलपूर में वो नाँव मे बैठी। जब नाँव चली तो पहले बार थोडासा डर लगा, लेकिन बादमें बोटींग बहुत

मस्त लगा। भोपाल का उतना बडा हॉटेल हमने टिच्ही सिरीयल में देखा था। वह प्रत्यक्ष देखा व अनुभव किया। मैं जब बेड पर बैठी थी तो बेड उछल रहा था। मुझे ऐसे लगा की वहाँसे बाहर ही ना निकलू। जबलपूर में रोपवे सफर भी बहुत अच्छा लगा। उपर से पूरी आजुबाजू की जगह दिख रही थी। जिस सफर मे पहले मेरे जानेका मन नहीं करता था वही सात दिन के बाद वापस आने के लिए मन नहीं करता था।

युवराज पंडीत ने बताया की, 'कान्हा जंगल के संग्रहालयमें एक डार्करूम थी। वहाँ पशु-पंछियों की, जैसे कौआ, कोकिल, मयूर, शेर इनकी अलग अलग आवाजे आ रही थी। उनकी आवाज पहचानने मे बहुत मजा आ रहा था। पचमढी मे बहुत ठंड थी। हम टिदूर रहे थे परन्तु पिकनिक और घूमने के उत्साह में सब अच्छा लग रहा था। पचमढी मे बी फॉल देखने के लिए हम सौ सिद्धिया उतर के निचे गये। वहाँ झरना था और झरने की कलकल आवाज व ठंडी हवा बहुत अच्छी लगी।”

तनय मोरे बताता है की, 'कान्हा जंगल में अलग अलग प्रकार के पशु-पंछी जैसे की मयूर, हिरण, हाथी, बारसिंगा देखे। खुले जंगल में हाथी को उसके बच्चे के साथ पहली बार देखा। हाथी इतना बड़ा होता है यह देखके मुझे अजुबा हुआ।”

पियुष राठोड बताता है की, 'मध्य प्रदेश राज्य संग्रहालय में हमने अलग – अलग तरह की पत्थर की मूर्तियाँ देखी। वैसेही हमने संग्रहालय में लकड़ी की वस्तुएं देखी जो हमने जीवन में पहली बार देखी है।”

सिद्धी आंबेकर ने कहा, 'इस सैर में हमे नयी नयी चीजे सिखने को मिली। नए नए अनुभव मिले, नये दोस्त मिल। उनके साथ बाते करना, गप्पे लगाने का आनन्द मिला। पूरा सैर मन को बहुत भाया।”

जुईली घरत ने बताया, 'जब हमने जिप्सी में से जंगल सफारी की तब एकदम नीरव शांतता थी। यह शांतता का अनुभव मैंने पहले बार किया। ऐसी शांतता बंबई मे कभी नहीं होती है। हमने सिर्फ पशु – पंछियों के नाम सुने थे। यहाँ हमने उनकी अलग-अलग आवाज सुनी। लेकिन जब प्राणियों के हड्डियों को स्पर्श किया तब ऐसा महसूस हुआ की मनुष्य की हड्डियांभी ऐसी ही होंगी। संग्रहालय मे बाघ और उसके बछडी की प्रतिमा थी। उसको हाथ लगाने के बाद बाघ कैसे होगा उसका अनुभव मिला।”

अजय गुप्ता ने बताया, 'जिप्सी कैसी होती है यह पहली बार देखा। बी फॉल मे झरने की आवाज पहले बार सुनी। सांची स्तूप बहुत बड़ा था। रोपवे की सैर बहुत अच्छी लगी।”

News from the Media

These visually challenged kids are learning to click pictures with a regular camera

Learning photography has made these visually impaired children more confident at an early age. Express Parenting met fashion photographer Richa Maheshwari, who is helping these kids express their love for photography, fuelled by the desire to be seen on social media.

At the National Association for the Blind (NAB), a young boy came up to me and urged me to go through his social media page. A student of class 11 or 12, the boy eagerly scrolled down the page on his smartphone to show quite a number of photographs of monuments, birthday parties and those of friends and family. All the photos were clicked and uploaded on social media by the boy himself, who is visually impaired. Further into the conversation, the boy revealed that he composes songs, raps, and runs his own YouTube page.

On a bright Sunday morning, Express Parenting had reached the institution to meet some visually challenged girls and boys, of class 8-12, who have been learning the art of photography from award-winning fashion photographer Richa Maheshwari. Flaunting their prowess, the kids asked some of us to pose, tell them our exact location, after which they adjusted their camera accordingly with some help from Maheshwari, and kept clicking photos and selfies too. And one wouldn't have been able to tell they were clicked by visually disabled children unless one witnessed it firsthand.

The kids love their guru of photography and the feeling seems mutual. "I have been associated with NAB for a couple of years. The kids are really inspiring, in the way they love life. Their positivity moves me every time I meet them. Initially, they kept asking me about my photo shoots and were in awe of the glamour attached to it. I always wanted to do something for them and the best way to do that was to teach them photography," Maheshwari told Express Parenting.

How social media inspired photography

Most of the kids are very active on social media and they love to upload their pictures on online platforms. They have their own Facebook and Instagram pages like every other teenager. The feeling of sharing moments captured in self-created frames and the instant reaction on the photos excite them. And their parents and friends

are equally enthusiastic and extremely supportive, the children said. After all, the virtual world is among those few spaces that can blur differences between people, in this case, the difference in physical (dis)ability. Initially, these kids clicked pictures only on their mobile phone but they were eager to learn more. And the attraction of social media is what marked their journey from the mobile phone to the camera.

How to click

For a layman, to comprehend how visually-challenged people click photographs, an art that has much to do with one's visual perception, is difficult and one has to actually see them do it to understand. The kids at NAB operate the regular, digital, point-and-shoot cameras, which they use with utmost ease. "All the cameras used by these kids are point-and-shoot cameras so that they don't have to go through the whole process of setting up things manually. The kids picked up the art very fast. Of course, you cannot instill the idea of a frame in every kid—it is a personal sense of aesthetics—but I taught them the basics of photography," Maheshwari said.

Besides Maheshwari's guidance, the children are also assisted by mobile apps and softwares like Screen Reader, which help them monitor the frame, distance of the object, colour or the amount of light while clicking a photo. After clicking a photo, they also edit it on a regular computer and upload it on their Facebook or Instagram page. Of course, they have a verbal software guide that helps them in the process but their speed is no less than any sighted individual. "These kids have a very vivid imagination of things in the world and an amazing sixth sense. They have an understanding of colours, of night and day. They have their own set of visual vocabulary. They are technologically very sound," expressed the proud teacher.

'Photography is the best tool of expression'

Children, as young as seven or eight years old, can start learning photography, as long as they can handle the weight of the camera and understand instructions, said Maheshwari.

"A lot of children in their growing up years are not able to effectively communicate much of their feelings and thoughts. Photography is the best tool

to express oneself. It's the best tool for expressing ideas and imagination. Photography is the eye through which kids can translate their imagination into something tangible," asserted Maheshwari.

Maheshwari also talked about how photography has made the visually-challenged kids even more confident. "I have seen their confidence rising along with their hunger to learn more," she expressed. "If you want to pursue an art form seriously, you will have to put your heart and soul in it. As for these visually impaired children, I have seen them putting in double the effort. They take an entire day to do one assignment and it only speaks of their dedication and level of creativity," she added.

Source : indianexpress.com

Cuttack's therapeutic chair that cares for cerebral palsy patients

By S N Agragami

CUTTACK: On Monday, President Ram Nath Kovind will present the National Awards for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, 2018 in New Delhi. Among the recipients will be Senior Occupational Therapist from Swami Vivekananda National Institute of Rehabilitation Training and Research (SVNIRTAR), Cuttack, Subrata Kumar Haldar. Haldar has been selected for developing an adaptive seating device that promises to transform lives of children suffering from cerebral palsy (CP).

The Postural Correction (PC) Chair, as it is called, is an innovation that not only ensures postural improvement in CP children but also accommodates their physical growth and encourages changes in physical activity. It is cost-effective and at the same time provides a single therapeutic aid for all the different disabilities manifested in CP.

Cerebral palsy is the most common locomotor disability in children with an estimated prevalence of 2.5-3 per 1,000 live births. It results in impaired muscle coordination and movements but the disabilities vastly differ from child to child.

"The PC Chair is one-of-its-kind in the world as it can be adjusted to all kinds of CP impairments and helps posture correction of different manifestations be it muscular weakness, paralysis, floppy and rigid limbs and necks or exaggerated reflexes. Further, it works long-term through the child's growth from 2 years to 10 years", said Haldar. Though he had conceptualised the appliance in the 90's, he started working on it in 2016 and finished it in March 2017.

The adjustable chair comprises a seat, an adjustable back rest, an adjustable foot rest, an adjustable pair of arm rests, an adjustable pair of shoulder guards, two backwardly inclined back legs, two front legs, a cut out tray, an adjustable pommel, adjustable C shaped pelvic supports and fixtures. It holds the user in a desired position to achieve quick improvement in posture correction and controlled limb and trunk movements.

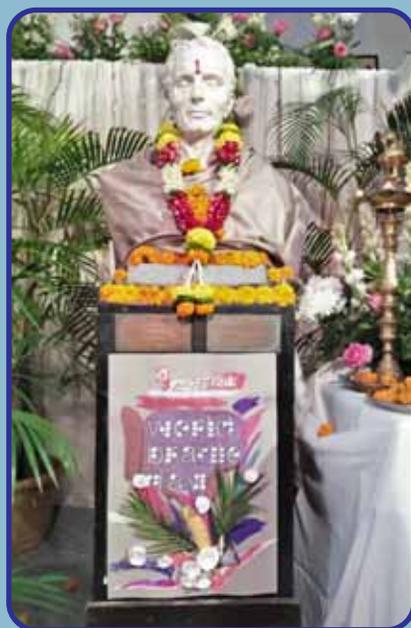
"Besides CP, the chair is also beneficial for down syndrome, spina bifida, brain injury or other neurological motor disabilities. We have tested it with over 30 children with very successful results. My patent application for this product has been accepted by the World Intellectual Property Organisation and it is expected soon", he said.

The PC Chair will go into mass scale production after patenting. It will cost only around Rs 7,000 to Rs 8,000 so that all sections can afford, Haldar stated. Recognising the innovation, the PC Chair has been selected in the category of 'Best new cost effective product development aimed at improving the life of persons with disabilities' for the National Award.

Source : indianexpress.com

World Braille Day

210TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF LOUIS BRAILLE - JANUARY 4, 2019



Car Rally for the Blind 2019



Car Rally being flagged off



Blind Navigators and Drivers getting ready for the race



Ms. Kusum 1st winner



Mr. Dnyanoba Marde -3rd winner



Mr. Shivam Patil 2nd winner