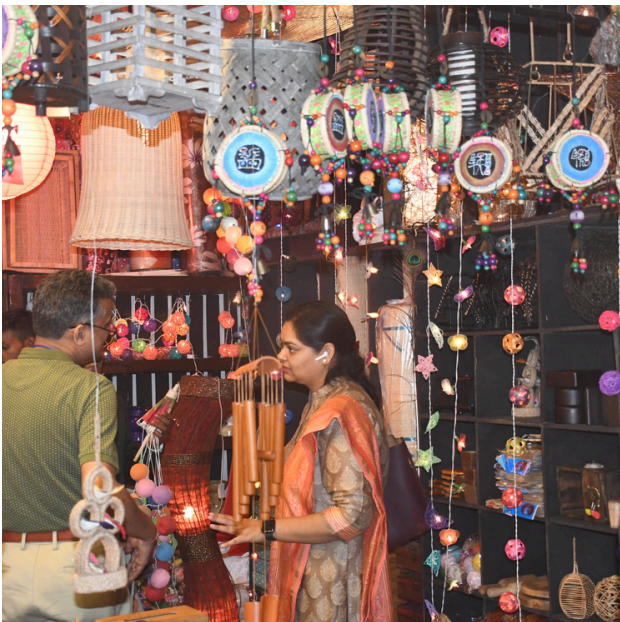


THE BLIND RELIEF ASSOCIATION, DELHI

79 years of empowering persons with visual impairment (1944 - 2023)



November & December 2023



DIWALI BAZAAR

Just as Diwali is one of India's most eagerly anticipated festivals, the Blind Relief Association's Diwali Bazaar is an event that many Delhites look forward to. For some families, it has become a cherished tradition over the years. Commonly called the "Blind School Diwali Mela," the popular Diwali Bazaar is one of Delhi's oldest annual events, having been consistently held for 43 years, except in 2020. This year's Bazaar was again a week-long event held from 3-9 November 2023 from 10:30 am - 08:00 pm in the Association's premises.

A new addition to the products was "Rangat," a range of handmade soaps crafted by our Multi-Skill Trainees, born out of their entrepreneurial initiative. These soaps are available in three delightful fragrances: orange, lavender, and jasmine, with lavender emerging as the favorite among customers.

Relaxation Massage – Offered by Visually Impaired Masseurs

The Bazaar provided a grand exposure to the visually impaired masseurs trained at the Association to demonstrate their skills. Tired visitors enjoyed soothing head, shoulder, and foot massages at a reasonable cost.

Café Mast - Run by Visually Impaired Trainees

A recent initiative is the establishment of a café, operated by trainees enrolled in the Multi-Skill training program. These trainees receive training in baking, enabling them to prepare a wide range of tasty sandwiches, burgers, cheese open toast, cookies, muffins, and a variety of hot and cold beverages. Their creations were available for purchase at the Association's Diwali Bazaar. The Café was entirely managed by the trainees themselves, handling customer orders, and cash transactions, and providing excellent customer service.



Besides the products made by the visually impaired, the Bazaar hosts about 250 stalls that sell a range of innumerable items that shoppers find fascinating as well as enjoyable. These stalls put up by vendors from across the country stock a sweeping assortment of designer wear, footwear, jewelry, home décor, traditional crafts, mouth-watering ready-to-eat and packaged food, etc.

Besides the stalls, the Bazaar also hosted NGOs at no charge in its Gandhi Hall to exhibit and sell products made by differently-abled persons or artisans from underprivileged backgrounds.



Mr. Rajesh Aggarwal, Secretary, Dept. of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, (Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Govt. of India) visited the Diwali Bazaar on 5 November, along with his wife. Mr. Aggarwal visited the various stalls and took an interest in the NGO Bazaar set up in the Gandhi Hall that offers other NGOs an opportunity to exhibit their products and promote their cause. He also went around the Association's training units and was very impressed by the activities, especially the vocational and computer education in the Association.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Durgabai Deshmukh College of Special Education organized a Webinar on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on 3rd December 2023.

The speakers of the webinar were the Course Director of the college Dr. Sudeep Kumar Dubey, Honorary Executive Secretary of the Blind Relief Association Shri K. C. Pande, and Mr. Kamalbeer Singh Jaggi, Head of Academia Planning and Research of B.R.A who shared his personal experience.

Similarly, the students of Basic Computer & Officer Operations has also organized a program in the noon to commemorate the significant day.



On the occasion of World Disability Day, a Round-Table discussion on the topic "Educational and Employment Challenges Faced by Persons with Disabilities in the Era of Artificial Intelligence" was organized by the Sawaru-Nihongo Team (Touch Japanese) of the Blind Relief Association, Delhi. Present at the event were Mr. K. C. Pande, Honorary Executive Secretary of the Blind Relief Association; Mr. Kamalvir Singh Jaggi, Academic Head of the Blind Relief Association; Mr. Ramdas Shivhare, Under Secretary at CBSE; Mr. Deepak Gupta, Assistant Professor at MLNCE (University of Delhi); Mr. Shivam, a Japanese language educator; Ms. Riko, a visitor from the Embassy of Japan; and a few student participants, all of whom shared their thoughts.

Following an intensive discussion, the following points emerged:

- Artificial Intelligence (AI) is poised to transform the job market, both in the government and private sectors, leading to a significant reduction in workload and a paradigm shift in the nature of work.

- Persons with disabilities must update their skills to align with emerging trends in AI and information technologies.
 - Traditional educational degrees and teaching methods are inadequate to address the changing scenario.
 - Competitive exams need to be more transparent, fair, and accessible for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), allowing them to independently attempt papers without undue disadvantages.
 - Recent trends suggest a decline in government-sector jobs, making the private/corporate sector the primary job provider.
 - In addition to classroom learning, PWDs need to acquire new skill sets to meet the demands of the corporate sector and secure employment in the evolving tech world.
 - The recent increase in Disability/Diversity Hirings in the private sector offers some hope regardless of disability, the new tech world welcomes individuals with diverse capabilities!
 - Disability activists should advocate for adequate social security, economic stability, and appropriate pensions for a sizable segment of the disabled population, while disability movements should persist with a rights-based approach.
 - The future of the disabled community will depend on their ability to adapt to the fast-changing socio-economic world order.
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AWARD FOR SHRI DAVID



Mr. David, Dy. Executive Secretary (Operations) of the Blind Relief Association, Delhi was awarded for Championing the Cause of Disability by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Government of NCT of Delhi.

The award and certificate were handed over by Mr. Rajesh Aggarwal (IAS), Secretary of the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities at the Divya Kala Mela on 4 December held at Thyagaraj Stadium. Congratulations, Mr. David!

CSR ACTIVITIES

ESG BOOK

The cold morning of 21st December saw a flock of 18 warm faces from ESG book India Pvt. Limited.

As a part of their CSR activity, the team spent their day at our premises, The Blind Relief Association, Delhi.

They interacted with our trainees worked alongside in different units of Multi Skill Training and helped label and organize our braille books in the school library.

They contributed their time and enthusiastically supported and encouraged our trainees in their various sections.



TURNER & TOWNSEND

The Blind Relief Association welcomed 35 volunteers from Turner and Townsend on 22 December as a part of their CSR activity.

The team spent their day working alongside our trainees in the library and candle, sewing, and paper unit.

It was a day filled with activities and a friendly game of football and cricket amongst the team and our trainees.

We are grateful for the material donated to the cafe by the team.



CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS

On 22 December, 10 trainees from the Blind Relief Association visited ITC, Gurgaon to celebrate Christmas. The Multi-Skill trainees practiced their caroling skills for weeks before the visit. On the day, the trainees sang popular carols for an audience of almost 100 employees as they danced in the holiday spirit. Their talents were very much appreciated by the audience. As part of the day's events, the employees also participated in team-building exercises and games along with the trainees. The trainees were gifted gifts and trinkets as a token of appreciation. Facilitated by Ms. Jesinta Mary, Massage Trainer, the trainees were trained by K2 Band.



FREE DISTRIBUTION OF ASSISTIVE DEVICES

It was a very special occasion for the Blind Association to host on 28 December a mega function for the Free Distribution of Assistive Devices under the CSR initiative of Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) and organized by Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation Limited (ALIMCO) the project implementing agency.

The Chief Guest of the function was Smt. Meenakshi Lekhi, Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs and Culture. She handed over the devices to over 350 beneficiaries with diverse disabilities, including a large number of students and trainees from the JPM School, Durgabai Deshmukh College, and other units of the BRA. Guest of Honour Sri Manoj Kumar Gupta, Executive Director; Sri.Kailash Pangtey, GM, IOC and Sri.Ajay Chaudhari, GM, ALIMCO were the other distinguished guests present.

Sri.K.C.Pande, Executive Secretary, Sri.K.J.Kuriyan, Principal, JPM, Sri.Kamalbeer Singh Jaggi, Sri.C.P.Mohanan, Sri. A. David and Sri.M.K.Gupta from the Association were among others present.

Smt Lekhi made a passionate speech citing her close association with the Association and involvement in activities related to disabilities. She mingled with the beneficiaries and heard them with patience. A highlight of the event was the taking of the Vikasit Bharat Sankalp oath led by Smt Lekhi in which all those present participated. The JPM School students, trainees from Durgabai Deshmukh College, and vocational trainees from different units numbering 193 received devices like Braille kits, smart canes, and smartphones.



DEMISE OF SHRI RAJKUMAR



Shri. Raj Kumar, a retired Candle Worker passed away on 7 November.

Associated with B.R.A. in 1965, as a boy of just eight joining the Industrial Home for the Blind in Badarpur, Rajkumar chose to stay with the BRA for the rest of his life. First as a student of JPM Senior Secondary School, then as a trainee in vocational training, and later as a staff of the Blind Relief Association for 40 years!

Catch up on social media

