



## July & August 2024

### SAARTHI 7.0



8th July marked a special day with the closing ceremony of the 7th edition of the Saarthi mentorship program by HSBC, the Blind Relief Association Delhi, and the Youth 4 Jobs Foundation. The 3-month journey was a fruitful mentorship program with 93 mentees and 70 mentors.

The event was filled with heartfelt moments such as trainees sharing their inspiring reviews, mentees and mentors bonding over a lively antakshri session, certificates distribution, and soulful song performances.

The closing ceremony was graced by esteemed guests, including leaders from HSBC and the Association's team. As a gesture of support, HSBC donated 200 canes to the Association.

### JLPT EXAMS & PIZZA PARTY

On July 7, five students from the Sawaru Nihongo Group successfully took the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT). To celebrate that alongside the research fellowship secured by a volunteer-teacher Nishtha sensei, she organized a fun pizza party on 8 July.

At the party, students shared laughter and fond memories from their classes. They also showcased their skills by singing Japanese songs they had learned and reciting haikus they had created with the guidance of Prof. Azuma sensei. The students and volunteer-teacher Varun sensei wished Nishtha sensei good luck with her research work.

Nishtha sensei, a very dedicated teacher for the Sawaru Nihongo Group, is a PhD scholar embarking on a year-long research journey in Japan. She thanked the students and expressed her enthusiasm to join the classes online from Japan.



## FAREWELL TO SEKI SENSEI

The Association bid a heartfelt farewell to Hisashi Seki sensei, a dedicated JOCV (Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer) who spent two years with the Blind Relief Association.

To mark the occasion, a warm farewell ceremony was organized on 12 July, graced by esteemed guests from JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency): Mr. Saito Mitsunori, Chief Representative; Mr. Yazawa Kuniaki, Volunteer Program Coordinator; and Mr. Joyanto Rabha, Administrator.

The ceremony honored Seki sensei's invaluable contributions as a Shiatsu Massage Expert and Trainer, with colleagues sharing heartfelt experiences of working with him. The program also included the distribution of certificates and livelihood kits to Multi-Skill and Relaxation Massage trainees.

To add a touch of Japanese culture, one of the program anchors dressed in a traditional kimono.



## SUBODH TROPHY!

The Subodh Trophy, an annual cricket tournament organized by Class IX, was successfully held from August 1 to August 3, 2024, despite various challenges. The tournament, which features cricket matches, has a long-standing tradition dating back to the 1990s in memory of Subodh, a passionate cricketer and student of the JPM School who passed away at a young age.

This year's tournament was organized by Class IX, who faced several challenges, including a weather forecast predicting heavy rain on the first day of the tournament. However, the team's determination and hard work paid off as they worked tirelessly to clear the pitch, which was flooded with knee-deep water, and ensured the tournament began on time.



The tournament saw three teams - Royal Strikers, Team Partnership, and Silent 11 - competing against each other. Royal Strikers emerged as the champions, winning the final match against Team Partnership with a stellar performance from Vikas Kumar of Class IX.

The Subodh Trophy 2024 taught valuable lessons in coordination, resource management, and teamwork. It was a new and enriching experience for the organizers and participants, and the tradition is expected to continue in the future.

## JAPANESE SENIOR DIPLOMATS VISIT THE ASSOCIATION

The Blind Relief Association was delighted and honored to welcome a delegation from the Embassy of Japan led by Economic Minister Ms. Kyoko Hokugo, accompanied by Economic Counselor Mr. Jiro Kodera, and their team on 7 August.

During their visit, the dignitaries toured the various facilities of the Association, gaining a deeper understanding of our work and expressing their appreciation for our efforts. They also engaged with the Sawaru Nihongo Japanese Language students, who impressively conversed with the team in Japanese.



Additionally, the team visited the relaxation massage kiosk at the Shivaji Stadium metro station, which was established with the support of JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency).

## INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS

On August 14th, the Blind Relief Association's flag-hoisting ceremony was filled with excitement. The school band's energetic drumbeats and trumpet fanfares filled the air.

Prof. Yogesh Kumar Gupta, a distinguished alumnus of JPM Senior Secondary School and the Association's Teacher Training Center, now a faculty member at Motilal Nehru College, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest.



As the flag was hoisted, a vibrant cultural program unfolded, showcasing the creative talents of students and trainees. With great enthusiasm, they presented group songs that instilled a sense of national pride, speeches that highlighted the significance of independence, instrumental tributes, and a skit and more!



On August 15th, the students, trainees, and in-house staff of the Blind Relief Association proudly commemorated the 78th Independence Day by hosting the national flag.

On this occasion a Kavi Sammelan (Poetry Recitation) event was organized. The event, which started at 2:00 pm in the Gandhi Hall of the Association, brought together a diverse group of visually impaired poets.

Presided over by the esteemed poet, Prof. Dr. Dayal Singh Panwar, the Sammelan was coordinated by Mr. Rajesh Patel, with the stage managed by Mr. Rajnish 'Rajat.'

The poets who recited their compositions included Mr. Chandraveer Singh, Mr. Manoj Vajpayee, Mr. Udaypal Singh Chauhan,

Mr. Shailendra, Ms Vimala Negi, Mr. Amresh, Mr. Deepak Gupta, and Mr. Nikhil Shrivastava.



The Kavi Sammelan was nothing but a fitting tribute to the spirit of independence and a celebration of the power of poetry!

## LAUNCH OF PYTHON CODING COURSE!



The Blind Relief Association launched a Python programming course for visually impaired students and trainees. This pilot project aims to empower individuals with the skills to pursue further education and career opportunities in technology.

The program was formally inaugurated on 16 August 2024 by Shri K. C. Pande, Executive Secretary who introduced the trainees to Python programming and its advantages. Mr. Arman will serve as the guide for the course.

The Python programming course is free and will run until March 2025. The course is divided into two batches - Batch One: JPM School students from Class IX to Class XII and Batch Two: Visually impaired individuals with prior knowledge of basic computer skills.

By providing training in Python programming, the Association aims to equip participants with specific knowledge that can help them gain secure job positions in this area of technology. Thanks to Ameya Meattle for helping in design and implementing this training program

## JANMASHTAMI CELEBRATIONS

Krishna Janmashtami is a very special occasion celebrated with two days of festivities organized by the students of Class XII of JPM Senior Secondary School. The festivities commenced with a havan on the 25th of August evening followed by a 24-hour recitation of the Ramcharitmanas. The students, alumni, volunteers, and staff took turns enthusiastically reciting the sacred text accompanied by music.

Participating in the Janmashtami festivities at the Association is greatly looked forward to by a large B.R.A. community, especially the JPM alumni. Around 300 of them including some accompanied by their family members came this year on 25th and 26th August, perhaps a record number.

The celebrations included an exciting Dahi Handi event, the captivating enactment of leelas of Lord Krishna, while the non-stop recitation of Ramacharitmanas continued till late evening. Thereafter, began the main Janmashtami pooja, with the singing of melodious bhajans which went on till midnight. The festivities concluded with the distribution of Panchamrit and Prasad prepared by the students.



## HEALTH CAMP

A health camp was organized in the Blind Relief Association on 22 August by a collaborative effort of the Rotary Club of Delhi West, Rotary Club of Delhi Safdarjung, and Rotary Club of Delhi Khubsurat in partnership with Indraprastha Apollo Hospital.

Held at the Association's Gandhi Hall, the camp offered pediatric, gynecology, and dentistry consultations, as well as checkups of blood pressure and blood sugar availed by the students, trainees, and staff members of the Association.

Additionally, Dr. Ajay Gupta, Senior Consultant in Medical Oncology conducted a cancer awareness session.



## VISITORS FROM THE NATIONAL DIET OF JAPAN

On 29 August 2024, Honorable Mr. Kazuhiko Aoki, Mr. Shigeharu Aoyama, and Mr. Kaneshige Wakamatsu, members of the House of Councilors from the National Diet of Japan visited the “Power of Touch” Massage Kiosk at Shivaji Stadium Metro Station, New Delhi to see the activities of the visually impaired masseurs trained by the Blind Relief Association, Delhi.

The Kiosk space has been made available courtesy of Delhi Metro which has been a recipient of Japanese ODA (Official Development Assistance) extended through JICA (Japan International Corporation Agency).

The masseurs working in the Kiosk have received training in Shiatsu from a Japanese trainer Mr. Hisashi Seiki a Senior JOCV dispatched by JICA for 2 years. The “Power of Touch” Massage Kiosk thus represents a small but unique symbol of India-Japan cooperation in the area of skill development and empowerment of persons with visual disabilities.

The delegation was accompanied by officials of the Embassy of Japan and JICA and was received by Mr. K.C. Pande, Executive Secretary; Mr. David, Dy. Executive Secretary (Operations) and other team members from the Association.

The members also availed themselves of the head, shoulder, and foot massage. They were greatly impressed by the expertise of the masseurs Mr. Ambika Prasad, Mr. Mohammad Walid Khan, and Ms. Manisha Ghimire.



## DONATION CEREMONY OF ANNIE DEVICES

The JPM Senior Secondary School for the Blind received 13 'Annie' devices from Thinkerbell Labs, made possible through the generous CSR support of Allegis Group.

Thinkerbell Labs a company dedicated to enhancing learning experiences for students with visual impairments, designed the innovative 'Annie' device to enable independent Braille learning.



On August 30, Shri Rajesh Aggarwal IAS Secretary of the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India graced the occasion as the Chief Guest for the device handover ceremony. Shri Prathmesh Sinha, Brand Ambassador of Thinkerbell Labs, interacted with Shri Aggarwal and demonstrated the device to the students. Shri Amit Bhagat, Business Operations & Sales at Allegis Group, and Shri Akarsh Shroff, Project Lead at Thinkerbell Labs, were also present on the occasion.



## LET'S JUMP A LITTLE HIGHER!



We're very grateful to Mr. Devender Goel for thoughtfully donating a trampoline for our children.

Our kids have been bouncing so high since it arrived, and we can't get enough of their giggles and grins. It's like a daily dose of pure joy!

Thanks again, Mr. Goel, for bringing the fun and freedom of playing on a trampoline to our naughty bunch of adorable children.

## Catch up on social media

