

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23



**THE BLIND RELIEF ASSOCIATION, DELHI**



The world has transitioned into what we can confidently label as a post-COVID era, where operations and functions have been restructured with numerous valuable lessons drawn from the pandemic. These lessons have not only impacted big businesses and individuals but have also greatly influenced the development sector, reshaping how we care for the vulnerable in ways that were not previously evident.

At the Blind Relief Association, Delhi we take pride in our ability to think innovatively and develop new programs and initiatives aimed at the welfare and empowerment of individuals with visual impairments. This report highlights the Association's unwavering dedication to serving the visually impaired in a manner that aligns with the contemporary needs.

On 26 February 2023, the Blind Relief Association marked its 79th year of existence. The journey began humbly in 1946, with a small Industrial Home and School for the Blind located in rented premises at Lal Kuan, Badarpur, accommodating just two students - Daya Ram and Murli Dhar. However, over the years, our scope of services and the number of beneficiaries have multiplied, and we have now established our own expansive campus in the heart of New Delhi. Today, our organization serves nearly 400 visually impaired children and adults across various units.

Our multi-faceted activities encompass a wide array of services, including school education tailored for visually impaired children, special care programs for those with learning disabilities, teacher training, computer education, vocational training, job placement services, production of resource material in Braille, audio formats, and E-books, orientation and mobility training, consultancy, and awareness campaigns.

## JPM SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Jormal Periwal Memorial (JPM) Senior Secondary School for the Blind, established and administered by the Blind Relief Association, has crafted its own niche when it comes to empowering children with visual impairment through formal school education.

Recognized and aided by the Directorate of Education, Government of NCT since 1969 and affiliated with the esteemed Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) since 1974, JPM has become a torchbearer of excellence

in the realm of special education. It offers free education, board & lodging, assistive devices, books, and other services to its students from Class I to XII.

Apart from academics, the school provides enough opportunities for its students to succeed in sports and co-curricular activities. The remarkable journey of Arjuna Awardee Ankur Dhama, a proud alumnus of JPM School who became the first Indian visually disabled athlete to take part in the Rio Paralympics 2016, is an outstanding example.



“A lot of good learning happens here. Our teachers work very hard with the students. Students also work hard and get admitted in good colleges. Some of them become managers in bank and some of them are officers in CBSE. There are also a few who passed UPSC and entered senior civil services.”

Ashok Kumar (Teacher)

### School Life:

A day at JPM would usually start with the students practising yoga and aerobic activities creating a vibrant environment conducive for learning. The pursuit of knowledge is never put on hold, and students transfer smoothly into the world of spoken English and general knowledge after this. Other academic subjects along with computer classes occupy them through the day.

### Examinations and new admissions:

To the delight of the school, twenty-two students successfully cleared their Class XII examinations and

were given farewell on 21st March 2023. Moreover, training was provided to prepare them for the Common University Entrance Test (CUET). On the other hand, twenty-one students passed their Class X boards.

For the session 2022-23, the school welcomed a total of 37 new students from Class I to IX.

### Co-curricular Activities:

Co-curricular activities never take a back seat at JPM School. For visually impaired students, sports and co-curricular activities hold a lot of significance and it gives them the space to explore themselves better. It arouses their creative abilities, vital for their holistic development.

In addition to the 12 intra-school events, the students also took part in other events organized by the Directorate of Education, Delhi. The school students participated in a total of 60 activities like Vocal Music, Poetry Recitation (English and Hindi), and Debate etc., through the year and secured 9 prizes at Zonal Level, 7 at District Level and 3 at State Level competitions organised by the Directorate of Education, Delhi.

Apart from these, students were also engaged in various meets held all over the national capital, such as the Green



India campaign organized by Tata Power, audio-described movies event organized by Saksham Trust, and other braille reading writing competitions to name a few.

Pratyush Kumar of Class X won the Excellence in Education Award 2022 instituted by the Directorate of Education to honour meritorious students.

“I feel so good in school. The way our teachers teach is amazing. They also support us in other activities along with our education. There are many things to learn here like sports and music and I also get to participate in competitions.”

Tarun Kumar (Student)

enthusiasm and vigor. The winners were later awarded certificates.

- Amaan of Class X bagged bronze medal in Long Jump in the zonal level competition organized by the Directorate of Education.

- The Paralympic Committee of India organized State Level competitions and the students secured 8 Gold, 5 Silver and 4 Bronze medals.

### Sports events:

While the Blind Relief Association is keen on empowering students with education and skill training, sports is also given equal importance to their growth and development. Along with their academic subjects, the school students also participate in dedicated physical training classes during the week.

- **Nayar Kabbadi Championship**

Deviating from its usual cricket tournament, this year the JPM School students organized the Nayar Kabaddi Championship. Two teams - JPM Stars and JPM Super Giants competed and in the final match held on 2 August, JPM Stars emerged as winners and bagged the trophy. Prince from JPM Stars and Govind from JPM Super Giants won the Man of the Series title under the B1 and B2 categories respectively.

- **Sports Day**

The JPM Senior Secondary School held the Annual Sports Day on the 18 and 19 of November, for the first time after the pandemic. While the events for the junior boys included the 100 m race, frog jump, and musical chair, the senior boys competed in the 200 m race, long jump, and shot put. The boys participated in the events with great

- Harshit Saxena of Class XI participated in 100, 200 and 400 metres track events in the 21st National Para Athletics Championship held at Pune in March 2023.
- The School facilitated a friendly football match between JPM School students and Birla Vidya Niketan Public School students on 19 November 2022.

### Donation of Tactile Books

200+ tactile books were donated to the JPM School by Raised Lines Foundation, a not-for-profit incubated out of IIT Delhi. The team from Raised Lines Foundation and Vehant Technologies (Funding Partner) visited the Association and interacted with the school staff and students before donating the books on 30 April 2022.

### Hands-on Training for Special Education Teachers:

To further lead the way in special education, JPM School hosted in-service training for Special Education Teachers of the Directorate of Education, Delhi in February and March 2023. Around 150 teachers, grouped into 5 batches, were trained in visual impairment for 5 days each.



## Love for languages

Nikesh, from Faridabad, Haryana is a Class IX student at Jormal Periwal Memorial School. What sets Nikesh apart is his remarkable passion for languages. Recently, he achieved a significant milestone by clearing the JLPT (Japanese Language Proficiency Test) level 5 exam after taking classes from the Association's Sawaru Nihongo Group run by alumni and volunteers.

What's even more interesting is that Nikesh is not stopping there. He's now all set to learn German. He is the type of person who thrives on challenges, and the complexity of the German language only fuels his determination.

Beyond his linguistic pursuits, Nikesh is a true all-rounder. He's an avid cricket player and when he's not perfecting his cricket skills, you can often find him nose-deep in novels or enjoying some soul-soothing music. Nikesh has showcased his love for various art forms by participating in various dance and singing competitions.

As for his dreams for the future, Nikesh aspires to become an interpreter or an English professor.



## “Each tiny victory is monumental”

For Dr. Manoj Kumar who was formerly Corporal Manoj Kumar in the Indian Air Force and now a teacher at the JPM School, teaching isn't just a job, it's a mission. As a Corporal, Manoj Kumar lost his eyesight in 1998 after suffering a severe injury while on duty.

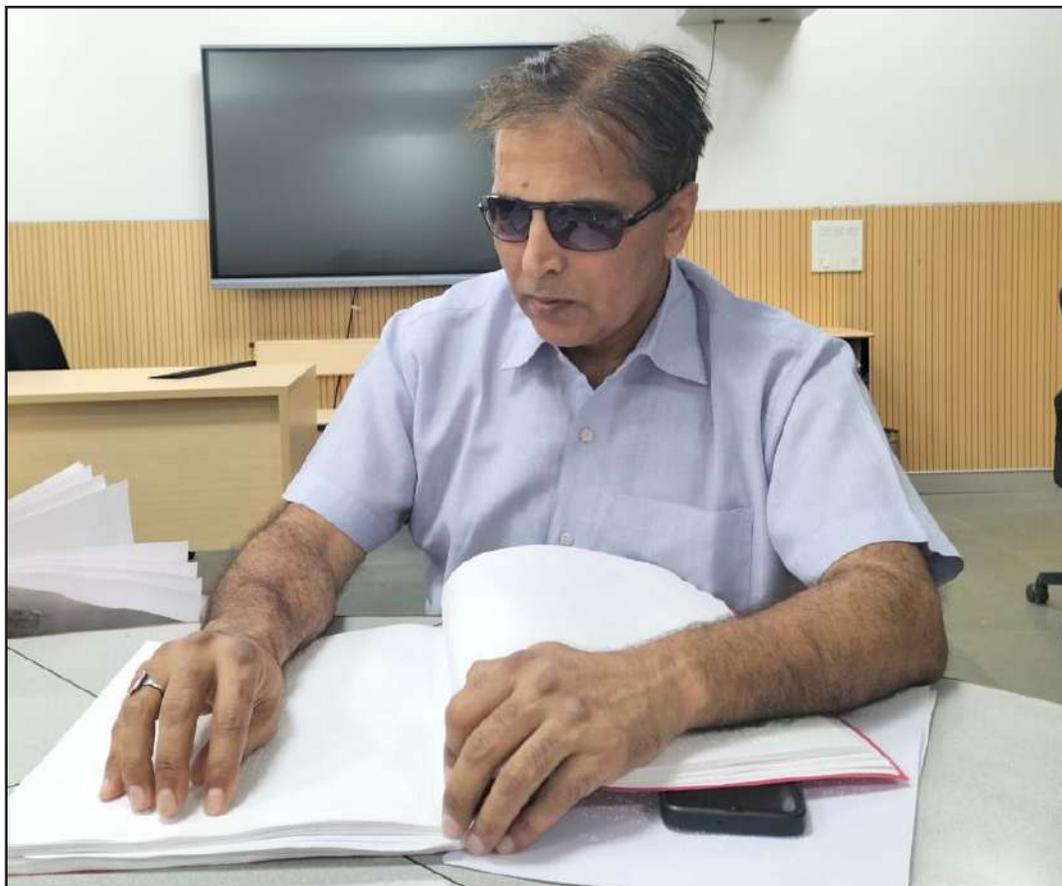
Today as a teacher he says he finds the freedom to tailor his teaching methods to suit each visually impaired child's unique needs each day. He finds that to be the most fulfilling part of his job. In his own words, “I cherish the opportunity to think creatively, finding ways to make subjects interesting and addressing my students' weaknesses comprehensively.”

He recognizes the profound impact of family love on a child's development and empathizes deeply with students who haven't experienced it. Over the decade he spent at the Association, he came to understand the struggles his students face, from grip strength to brain-hand coordination. Each tiny victory, like a child learning a new word, feels as monumental as Chandrayaan's lunar landing to him.

What makes JPM special according to Dr. Manoj is not just the education rather the environment. The facilities provided at the Blind Relief Association go above and beyond. From hostel amenities to study material and mess facilities, everything is exceptional. The assistive technology available here is top rated which makes the JPM students technologically advanced.

But what truly fills Mr. Manoj's heart with pride is seeing his students' success stories – those who now work in banks or become teachers themselves among others. Their achievements reflect the nurturing environment provided at JPM, where every child is given a chance to thrive, regardless of his challenge.

Dr. Manoj is also an author of five books.



# DURGABAI DESHMUKH COLLEGE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION (V.I.)

With a commitment to shaping a brighter and more inclusive future, the Durgabai Deshmukh College of Special Education (V.I.) was established in 2005. The College, affiliated with the University of Delhi, has since trained and provided education to many trainees, who are now working as special educators in various schools in Delhi and other states across the country. Their journey highlights the power of education as a tool to create profound change in the world.

“When I entered the college as a fresher, I did not know about anything related to blindness though I am visually impaired myself. I had studied in regular schools and was never associated with any kind of NGO or special school for the blind. I did not know how to use a cane or I did not know how to read or write Braille. As a student of Durgabai Deshmukh College of Special Education, I was able to learn these skills. These have helped me in my academic career as well as in other aspects of my life”

Ankita Sahadev (Trainee)

## Annual Results

Academic excellence is a hallmark of the college and the examinations constitute its key component.

All 32 trainees of the 2020-2022 batch cleared the final examination in flying colours and secured First Division. Three women - Anjali, Simran and Shefali - were the top three achievers. All first year trainees of the 2021-2022 batch cleared their annual exams and were promoted to the second year.



## Admission

The College welcomed a total of 31 trainees for the 2022-2024 batch based on the entrance test conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA). 12 (5 women and 7 men) of the trainees are visually impaired.

## Major Activities:

Apart from academics, co-curricular activities form a vital element in the College. Opportunities are provided to the trainees to participate in various activities to help them develop holistically.

- On 29 April 2022, an inclusive football match was organized in the new football ground of the Blind Relief Association, Delhi. The team consisted of both sighted and visually-impaired trainees of the college. The sighted trainees played the match blindfolded and it ended in an entertaining draw.

The College is also known for providing support to other colleges and NGOs working collaboratively in various capacities.

- On 6 June 2022, faculty members and trainees of B.Ed. Special Education (ID) course of Lady Irwin College (University of Delhi) visited the College.
- The College provided special support to the Helen Keller Trust and the Blind Relief Association to celebrate Helen Keller Day on 27 June 2022.
- The College also took the initiative to organize 'World White Cane Day', and 'World Down Syndrome Day' at the Association's premises.

## Trainees' Achievements

The College provides an ideal environment for trainees to explore their talents and abilities. The achievements of trainees in various fields are a testimony to it.

- Sunita Shukla, a visually impaired trainee in her second year, participated and stood 6th in the National Open Women Chess Tournament for the visually challenged held at Punjab University.
- Ankita Sahadev had the chance to interact with the Under Secretary General for UN Peacekeeping

Operations, Mr. Lacroix about the role of persons with disability in maintaining world peace. She was also one of the speakers at the Smart Solutions Challenge and Inclusive Cities Awards Ceremony, and was among the panelists at the Voice of Youth Panel organized by SRF Capgemini.

- A few trainees of the college participated in the one-day International Seminar on 'Improving Accessibility to Cultural Heritage for the Persons with Print Disabilities' organized by the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts.
- Akashdeep Bhandari received a Certificate of Appreciation by Govt. Sarvodaya Bal Vidyalaya for his excellent work in drafting and editing the school magazine.
- Sonali participated in the Indusland Bank Women's National T20 Cricket Tournament for the Blind.

## Library development

Total No. of Books (Print + Braille)	4599
Total No. of Titles (Print + Braille)	2344
Print Journals on Education & Special Education	11
Total No. of Books added during 2021-2022	38
Total No. of Talking Books (DAISY+ MP3 format)	134
Total No. of Braille Books	396
Total No. of Braille Magazines	5

## Faculty Members-Engagement

The faculty members of the College have been engaged in major activities over the year. They have participated and acted as resource persons and keynote speakers in national and international conferences, and also authored academic books and published research papers.

## Dr. Sudeep Kumar Dubey (Course Director)

Dr. Dubey joined Durgabai Deshmukh College in 2006, and since then has played a pivotal role in the institution. With a deep passion for teaching and a keen interest in his students, he has excelled both in the classroom and in administrative positions.

Recently appointed as Course Director, Dr. Dubey has taken on additional administrative responsibilities along with his regular teaching activities. As the Course Director, his main focus has been on streamlining the college's activities, ensuring that programs run on schedule and that activities are efficiently executed.

Dr. Dubey vividly recalls a Morning Prayer session in which visually impaired students were asked to "stand straight." The confusion was palpable until one student astutely pointed out that they couldn't discern what "straight" meant. This experience left an indelible mark on Dr. Dubey, emphasizing the significance of providing precise instructions tailored to the needs of visually impaired students.

Dr. Dubey's attitude toward blindness has evolved positively over the years. He is dedicated to making a meaningful impact on the lives of his students.



# COMPUTER TRAINING CENTRE

In today's technological age, the knowledge of computers has become a necessary life skill. Basic computer skills are vital for employability and efficiency in many sectors. The Blind Relief Association, in 1996, launched its Computer Training Centre making it one among the pioneering institutions in the country to introduce computer literacy programs for persons with visual impairment.

The Centre today runs long and short-term computer training programs for the visually impaired in addition to supporting the computer-related curricular needs of the JPM School.

## **Diploma in Computer Education (V.I.):**

The ten-month academic course named Diploma in Computer Education (Visual Impairment) equips both sighted and non-sighted individuals to provide education in computers and related services to the visually impaired. The trainees are encouraged to keep abreast with the technological advancements in the IT and Communication sectors.

“In the initial days of my joining, I just knew about the computer course being offered at BRA, but gradually I got to know about special education and psychology, which I had no idea about.

Even other facilities like that of accessibility were so fascinating to me. The trainers here are so approachable that I feel extremely comfortable with them.”

Sumit Mahto (Trainee)

Designed by the Association and started in 2014-15 as a pilot project, the course was regularized in 2016 and enlisted among the recognized courses by the Rehabilitation Council of India.

The 8th batch (2022-23) had 18 trainees of which 9 cleared the examinations. Sumit Mahto topped the batch and was awarded a laptop by Smt. Prabhjot Menon, in memory of her late mother. He is currently employed in the Blind Relief Association as a computer

trainer for the Association's school students. The 9th batch (2023-24) admitted 16 trainees, all visually impaired.

## **Computer Training and Office Operations Course:**

Launched in July 2019, this six-month training cum work experience program prepares trainees to be able to work on computers and perform diverse office tasks including tele-calling. They are familiarized with the diverse office



operations through hands-on experience in different units of the Association.

The 6th batch had 12 trainees commencing training in January 2023. 10 trainees completed the training. One got selected with bank and one could not finish due to health issues. The 5th batch comprising 8 trainees completed training in December 2022.

### Short-Term Trainings:

A four-month training “Basic Computer Training” held from January – April 2023 trained 5 trainees. This is generally meant for trainees who are preparing for banks, PSUs etc.

### JPM School:

The school children are also provided regular training in computers from Class IV onwards. With a dedicated trainer and a period each day, the students are familiarized in assistive technological devices such as Orbit too.

The Centre oversees DAISY and other e-book production besides looking after the operations of IT and communication facilities of the Association.

“My words would fall short to say anything for the Blind Relief Association. I came here in my childhood as a school student and have also been working here as a trainer now. We as teachers and trainers are constantly striving towards betterment of our students.”

Rajpal (Trainer)

### New Acquisition:

In February 2023, the Centre’s labs and classrooms were shifted to the newly constructed Manju Bharat Ram Block. Corporates such as HCL and Optum Technologies supported the procurement of new desktops, laptops, and tablets for the classroom. Rotary Havant, UK donated an interactive smart board which is installed in the new lab.

### KIBO Workshop

The Diploma in Computer Education (V.I.) team of the Blind Relief Association organized a workshop on the Usage of KIBO Device on 28 June for the vocational trainees and the teacher trainees of Durgabai Deshmukh College of Special Education, with Mr. Nityanand, Marketing Associate from Trestle Labs as the speaker.

KIBO is a handy technological device that can scan, convert and speak text into various Indian Languages. These E-texts can be voice-read by visually impaired persons on their computers, tabs, and mobile phones.



## VOCATIONAL TRAINING

### Multi-Skill Training:

The Multi-Skill Training, a one-year comprehensive training program introduced by the Association in 2014, caters to adults with visual impairment regardless of any additional disability they may have. This unique program with its holistic approach goes well beyond skilling. There is no minimum educational qualification, thus those with incomplete or inadequate schooling can also apply. The range of skills of the training seek to equip trainees with the skills necessary to pursue self-employment or employment in factories and a number of other settings. The training program allows flexibility, to adjust to the trainee's capacity, interests, and talents.

The range of skills taught include bookbinding and paper crafts, chair-recaning, candle making, operating light machines, packaging, sewing, paper-mâché crafts, basic massage, soap making, baking, etc. Exposure to such

diverse vocational activities helps the trainees realise their potential and instil confidence in their capability.

### 1. Candle-Making:

The production-based training activity includes practical instruction and experience in diverse candle making procedures. The Candle Unit produces a wide variety of candles in different shapes and sizes which are available on sale throughout the year, besides the Association's famous Diwali Bazaar. The trainees joined by dedicated volunteers assist in the production work, diya painting, and packaging tasks. The Unit also helps other NGOs by providing trainer-training and logistical advice for implementing such programs in candle making.

### 2. Paper Craft

In what started as a book binding section in 1994 set up for marginally educated visually impaired persons,



the Paper Craft section gradually widened its activities and was integrated into the Multi-Skill Training program. The Unit took the initiative to train the visually impaired in making environment friendly products such as carry bags, envelopes, packaging boxes etc. made out of recycled paper.

Instead of selling away old Braille books and newspapers as waste, the paper is recycled to make attractive bags, utilised in creative ways for packaging beautiful candles and diya boxes, substituting plastic and having cost-saving benefits. Similarly the waste paper is utilized for training in the skill of making paper-mâché items like bowls, plates, pen holders, pots, etc. This way the Unit is also striving to make a modest positive impact on environment and waste management.

### 3. Sewing:

Sewing Unit has acquired an important place in the Multi-Skill Training program of the Association. The

“My most loved section is that of sewing in the Multi-Skill Training. I knew nothing about it before joining the Blind Relief Association. I previously had an experience with an institution where I was told I can't learn to stitch since I am blind. But the trainers here gave me the confidence to start and gradually I built my faith in being able to do it. I have come to firmly believe, one must never lose confidence before initiating anything. If confidence is nurtured, you will definitely be able to do it.”

Meena (Trainee)

training curriculum was created and evaluated by the USHA Silai School. The trainers work one-on-one with the trainees to help them understand the functioning of sewing machines and develop sewing skills. They learn to make articles like sling bags, coin purses, zip pouches, shoe bags, and saree covers. Worn clothes and discarded cuttings are converted into decent useful articles. During the year several new products like laptop bags, ring bags, palazzo, potlis, organisers, dining table rollers, and vanity boxes were introduced. The Unit also received bulk orders from companies and other organizations. Orders from Primal Grey, Kapook Canvas and Earth First were executed

successfully.

### 4. Bakery

Through partnership with Pladis Global - an international snacking company - baking training has been regularised into the Multi-Skill Training program. This collaboration, initiated in 2021, remains ongoing with professional



bakers visiting on a weekly basis to assist trainees in mastering the art of baking cookies, cupcakes, muffins, besides preparing sandwiches, burgers, ice tea, and cold coffee.

## 5. Basic Relaxation Massage for female trainees of the Multi-skill Training

Basic Relaxation Massage is also a part Multi-Skill Training (MST), availed mostly by male trainees. A need for a female massage trainer was being felt to encourage female trainees to learn the skill. To achieve this, the Blind Relief Association in collaboration with Blossom Kochhar Aroma Magic (BKAM), a known aromatherapy brand in India, started training for the female MST trainees. Guided by the expertise of professionals from BKAM and using the training consumables provided by them, the trainees successfully underwent the training and received certificates from BKAM on completion.

## 6. Takli and Charkha Spinning

Beginning January 2023 on Saturdays every week classes are being regularly conducted by trainers sent by Harijan Sevak Sangh. The trainees are learning the skill of spinning out cotton threads using the traditional Takli and also using Amber Charkha. Several of the Multi Skill trainees have acquired this commendable skill. Threads spun by them are being utilised as candle wicks, making Rakhis and other products. Requiring intense concentration,

doing hand-spinning is a virtual meditation, besides being an excellent locomotor exercise. Also, Charkha was an important symbol of India's freedom movement and rural self-reliance. The age-old skill connects us to the history and ancient heritage of India.

## 7. Rakhi Making:

Making "Rakhi" – the sacred thread of love between brothers and sisters - was introduced this year. Trainees, especially the female, lovingly crafted colourful Rakhis for being sold for the Raksha-Bandhan festival in August. Available in different designs, the Rakhis were put on sale at the Association's counter as well as at the stalls set up by corporates like Healthians in their premises.

The Multi-Skill Training program places equal importance on soft skills such as mobility, daily living, personality development, English conversation, basic computer skills, Braille, and music. Trainees, often school dropouts, are encouraged to complete their education through open-school options while undergoing vocational training. This holistic approach aims to build confidence in trainees and prepare them for independent living.

Workshops conducted to provide exposure to the trainees:

- Art Workshop by Indian Hobby Ideas and Prosper Humanity Trust (July '22)

## Yogesh's Dream of a Cafe

A charming smile is all we see, but going through depression for years is something that only Yogesh might know.

Hailing from Ramsin, in Rajasthan, Yogesh grew up like a healthy child until he was 16. His sudden loss of vision left him with a future that he never imagined for himself. As a child, art interested Yogesh and he always wanted to be an artist. But his dreams shattered too quickly.

Yogesh completed the Multi Skill Training at the Blind Relief Association in 2022 and equipped himself with skills that revived the artist in him. Of the skills learned, baking interested Yogesh so much that he aspires to be an entrepreneur and run a cafe in his hometown. "I can bake cookies and cupcakes; I also specialize in making mint tea," says Yogesh with a proud smile.



“The trainer guided me very well, he taught me acupuncture and many kinds of massage. Apart from this, I also learned Shiatsu massage. I was able to find a job because of the Blind Relief Association. Earning by offering massage services has become easier than before. My financial problems are sorted and I can manage my expenses well.”

Harish (Trainee)

- Crochet Making Workshop by Insha-e-Noor (January ‘23)
- Operation of Sewing Machine Workshop by Usha (January ‘23)
- Embroidery skills explored at Sahiba’s Boutique (January ‘23)
- Soap Making Workshop by Connecting Dreams Foundation (Oct ‘22-April ‘23)

Timeline		No. of Trainees
As on 1 April ‘22		20
April ‘22 – March ‘23	New Admissions	34
	Dropouts	5
	Completed	18
As on 31 March ‘23		31

## BENEFICIARIES STATISTICS (2022-23)

### Relaxation Massage Training:

This facility provides a six-month training program to get visually impaired people ready to work as professional masseurs and therapists. Along with aromatherapy, head, and face massages, the program covers Thai, Swedish, and Japanese massages. The trainees also learn about human anatomy and physiology, Sujok therapy, and foot reflexology pain management techniques.

Shahnaz Husain International Beauty Academy, which collaborates on the training and provides an instructor and all essential material gratis, sponsors the training.

“I am 62 years old and I came to the Blind Relief Association, Delhi as a volunteer through JICA. I specialize in the Shiatsu massage which originated and developed as one of Japan’s traditional manual therapies centuries ago. From technical massages using traditional Japanese method by using low pressure points to focusing on using appropriate techniques I cover all aspects of performing a shiatsu massage.

Shiatsu is a form of massage that utilizes the hands, thumb, or other body parts, to apply direct pressure on various points or channels in the body. It is performed through loose clothing and does not use oils. The massager uses deep pressure points to get rid of pain and improve the functioning of the human body. It heavily utilizes the body weight as massaging power rather than using power generated by hands, which means that the hands of the practitioner are gentle in nature.

In order to teach the visually impaired about how to perform a massage correctly, I needed to learn how to lead through example, communication and touch. Visually impaired people are not able to see how to correctly perform the massage, due to which I cannot show them videos or show examples from my past experience. But I am able to teach how to perform massage through touch. I let my students perform the massage on my arm as an example.

My colleagues at Blind Relief Association and my co-workers have been incredibly friendly and helpful. They helped me by teaching Hindi and in exchange I taught them Japanese. With them I am able to be myself as they are never too formal and tight. They know how to be professional but friendly.”

Seki Hisashi (JOCV Trainer)

I am thankful the Blind Relief Association; I could not have found a job if I had not come here. Apart from Relaxation Massage, they have trained me in the use of mobile phones, and in mobility, computers, and spoken English.

Sumit (Trainee)

Both current and former trainees get the opportunity to demonstrate their skills to the public at the Association’s Diwali Bazaar, Army Golf Club, Furfest, National Crafts Museum, etc.,

Mr. Seki Hisashi, a JOCV (Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer) sent by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) supports the Association’s Relaxation Massage Training as a Shiatsu Massage Instructor since August 2022.

### Public Engagement

- Select City Walk, Saket

The trained masseurs continue to put their newly acquired abilities to practice and boost their confidence through the Select City Walk project. The number of masseurs participating and offering their services to customers at Select City Walk Mall in Saket has been on the upward rise.

- The Shri Ram School

In June 2022, the famous Shri Ram School started offering relaxation massage services to its faculty, administration, and support staff on its campuses in Moulisari, Vasant Vihar, and Aravali by hiring masseurs from the Blind Relief Association. The masseurs visit the campuses twice a week to encourage well-being and reduce stress among the faculty and staff of the institution.

- Anand & Anand Associates

A well-known Noida legal firm called Anand & Anand Associates has started a special wellness program for its staff members. Two massage therapists from the Blind Relief Association make regular Friday visits since February 2023.

- Diwali Bazaar

The Association’s masseurs set up two relaxation massage stalls where they offered foot, head, and shoulder massages at affordable prices. A sizable number of visitors stopped by the kiosks and left complimentary remarks regarding their first encounter with our masseurs.

### BENEFICIARIES-STATISTICS (2022-23)

Batches	Admissions	Drop Outs	Passed
Jan '22 - Jun '22	7	2	5
July '22 - Dec '22	14	2	12



The new batch that began in January 2023 has 11 trainees under training (as on March '23)

### Adjustment Training:

A three-month adjustment training program is specially designed to cater to the specific needs of individuals who have recently become blind or visually impaired. This program is tailored to their qualifications and abilities prior to their loss of eyesight. The training includes orientation and mobility, daily living skills, and computer proficiency. This year, 4 trainees underwent Adjustment Training.

The Livelihood Project was initiated in response to the challenges posed by the devastating second wave of the COVID pandemic. While trainees continued their education and training to the best of their abilities, finding employment became increasingly difficult. Many of the trainees undergoing Multi-Skill Training at the Blind Relief Association hail from low-income rural backgrounds, making it challenging to secure jobs in a city like Delhi. Additionally, some female trainees are mothers, which further complicates their prospects of sustainable employment in metropolitan areas.

Given these circumstances, the Association took the initiative to promote an entrepreneurial spirit among vocational trainees by launching the Livelihood Project, aimed at encouraging self-employment and small-scale businesses.

The Livelihood Project currently provides three pathways for small-scale businesses:

1. Sewing Machine Kit: Producing pouches, bags, and hair scarfs.
2. Relaxation Massage Kit: Offering mobile massage services.
3. Atta Chakki Machine (2 HP) & Masala Grinding Machine (1 HP) kit: Operating small-scale food processing.

The Association's team identifies and recommends trainees who have completed their training at the Association's Vocational Training Centre and are awaiting employment. These trainees receive additional training and are provided with Livelihood Kits to start their small businesses. This year had 8 trainees selected and trained under the Livelihood Project.



## PARTNERSHIPS:

### Mentorship with Mercer

The Blind Relief Association started a Mentorship Program with Mercer, a leading Management Consulting firm, who are also sponsors of the Multi-Skill and Relaxation Massage Training. On 1 June '22, the vocational trainees were introduced to their mentors via an interactive zoom session coordinated by Mr. Rohan Khanna from Mercer. 30 trainees receive counseling, guidance and support from their mentors every Saturday through a one-on-one online meeting.

### Partnership with Project Prakash

The Project Prakash Foundation partnered with the Blind Relief Association in 2021 to help those who are visually impaired and require education and vocational rehabilitation. In addition to a host of other services, the Foundation provides free eye treatment to children who cannot afford it or are not aware that their illness can be treated. To maximize the impact of sight onset on children's lives, Project Prakash has been supporting the education of a few youth who were treated as part of this initiative. The youth recommended by the team of Project Prakash are enrolled in the Multi-Skill and

Relaxation Massage Training. Twelve such youth have been trained in the past two years at the Association and this year has 8 trainees.

Dr. Pawan Sinha, the Director of Project Prakash, along with Dr. Priti Gupta, Research Scientist, and Ms. Dhun Verma, Research Assistant visited the Blind Relief Association on 19 October and interacted with the vocational trainees, sharing wishes ahead of Diwali.

### Partnership with Youth4Jobs Foundation:

Since its collaboration with the Blind Relief Association in 2017, the Youth4Jobs Foundation has remained dedicated to empowering visually impaired youth in the following areas:

- Functional English Communication
- Digital Literacy
- Life Skills
- Interview Skills
- College Admission Tests
- Government Exams Coaching
- Open School Exams (Class X & XII)
- Mentorship

## Monika Khanna, Social Impact India Manager - Mercer

As a dedicated CSR partner, our journey serves as a testimony to the remarkable potency of collaboration and a shared sense of purpose. Since the year 2016, we've had the privilege of working hand-in-hand with you, and this collaborative effort has been genuinely transformative.

Our commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) extends well beyond traditional philanthropy; it revolves around leaving a profound and enduring impact on the lives we have the privilege of touching. Beyond providing financial support, a pivotal component of our partnership has been our active involvement in volunteering at the Centre. This experience has bestowed upon us invaluable insight into empathy, compassion and the remarkable potential for positive change when we engage directly with these exceptional individuals. Every volunteering session has reiterated the importance of treating all individuals equally and has allowed us to witness their remarkable transformation, fostering a sense of inclusivity in our shared journey.

Through our collaborations, we've been profoundly inspired by the indomitable spirit and resilience of the visually impaired individuals who confront life's challenges with unwavering determination.

One of the most gratifying aspects of our CSR voyage has been the palpable transformation we've observed. Whether it's our support for educational initiatives that empower visually challenged individuals or our contributions to sustainability efforts that enhance their participation in local economies, each project has left a lasting imprint. Notably, projects like Multi-Skill Training and Relaxation Massage Training embody our shared commitment to fostering positive change. As we come together to celebrate the significant impact of our invaluable partnerships, we remain acutely aware that our mission is far from being accomplished. Together, we will continue to make a difference to pursue a future that is more equitable and inclusive for all.

Programs were implemented to comprehensively prepare students for meaningful employment, including:

### 1. PEHEL: Continuing Education

Vocational trainees, many of whom are school dropouts, receive support to complete their school education. With the help of volunteers, 11 students (5 for Class X and 6 for Class XII) successfully appeared and cleared the CBSE board examination conducted in March 2023.

S. No.	Name of Training	No. of Trainees
1.	Relaxation Massage	31
2.	Multi-Skill Training	67
3.	Basic Computer (Spoken English Classes)	26
4.	Adjustment Course (Basic Computer – 3 months)	4
5.	PEHEL 6.0	11
6.	Saarthi 5.0	45

### 2. Multilingual Computer Usage

The trainees are taught computer in both Hindi and English, equipping them with the skills needed to qualify for government jobs and exams.

### 3. Internet Applications

The trainees receive training on internet browsing and accessing information from various online portals and service providers. Learning to use internet applications empowers the trainees to independently explore a wide range of topics. They are also taught the usage of virtual communication and payment tools. Depending on their

individual learning interests and pace, trainees also receive help in using different mobile phone applications.

### 4. Applicants for Government Jobs

After ensuring that candidates were adequately prepared for government positions, online coaching sessions were initiated with a dedicated government coaching team. These sessions, conducted online, aim to prepare trainees for various entry-level government job examinations. In the current year, a total of 16 candidates have been enrolled for 23 different government job opportunities.

### 5. Interview Preparedness

In line with preparing candidates for employment, Youth4Jobs Foundation organizes mock interview sessions at regular intervals. These sessions focus on grooming, etiquette, effective responses to questions, and workplace awareness, including preparation before, during, and after the interview process.

### 6. Saarthi: Mentor4Inclusion

The Saarthi 5.0 mentorship program took place in a hybrid format from September - December 2022. HSBC successfully matched 45 mentors with trainees, facilitating continuous sessions and interactions over a three-month period. Notably, several HSBC’s global leaders participated in the opening and closing ceremonies.

In addition to one-on-one mentoring, the mentors also organized centralized sessions on Digital Enablement and Interview Skills to benefit all participating trainees.

Beneficiary trainees during the period April ‘22 - March ‘23:



## SERVICES

### Placement

Over the years, the Blind Relief Association has educated and trained thousands of visually challenged persons, leaving an indelible mark on society. The former students of JPM Senior Secondary School today are the driving force behind positive change and hold responsible positions as college professors, school principals, teachers, lawyers and civil servants, and have found gainful employment in both private and public sectors. Similarly, hundreds of teachers trained at the Durgabai College of Special Education serve as teachers and principals in schools all over India. The trainees completing computer programs have been employed by corporations such as Microsoft etc. Many vocational trainees have been exposed to learning multiple skills, placed in companies, and have also found means of self-employment.

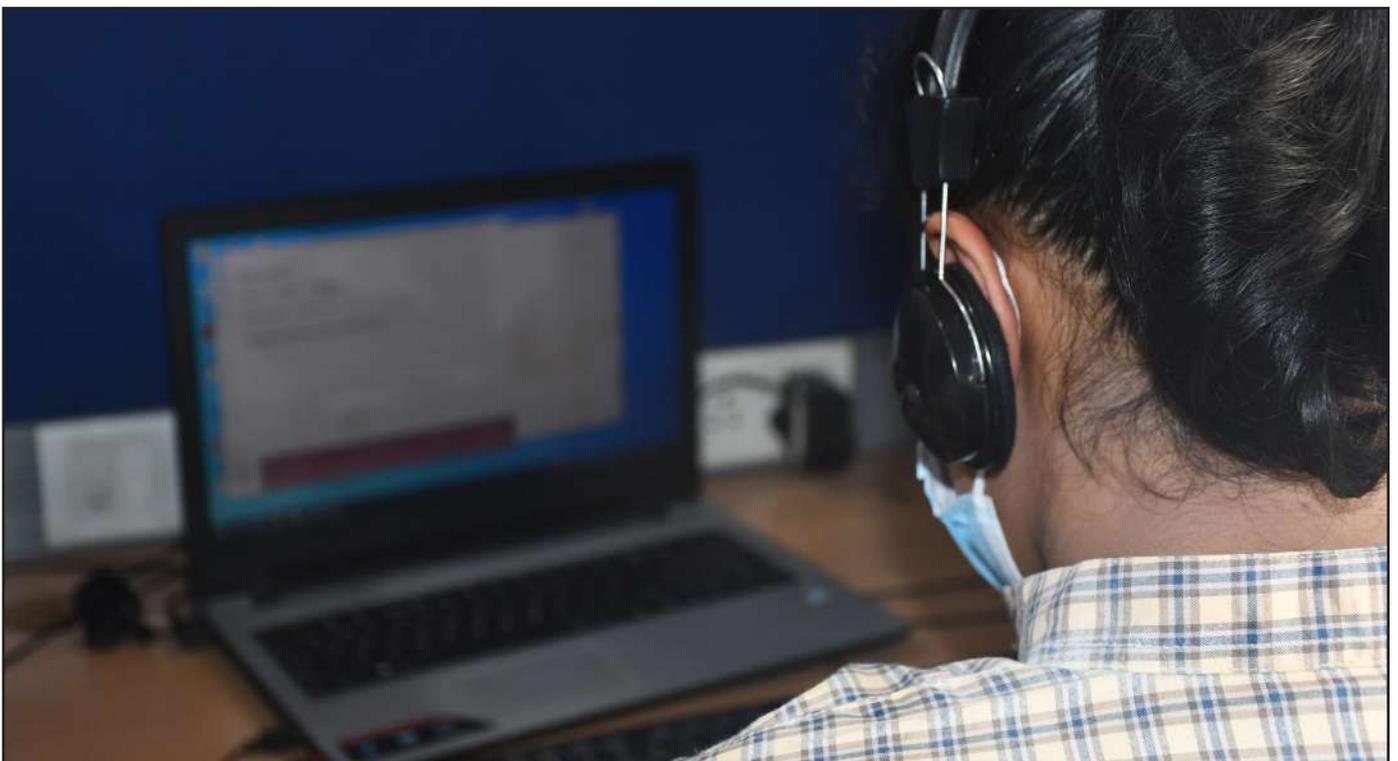
I hadn't attended any school before coming to the Blind Relief Association. The Association marked the beginning of my first journey in education and personal development. As a significant outcome of my one-year Multi-Skill Training, I am employed at Subros Pvt. Ltd. Although people used to say that I cannot do anything, I was able to achieve my current position and status because of my determination and support I received from the Association.

Anoop (Trainee)

The Placement Unit of the Association performs the important task of securing suitable and appropriate employment opportunities for the trainees after graduating from their respective training courses. The representatives of the Unit visit and interact with various industrial associations and potential employers, in addition to utilizing networks of individuals and organizations to identify and ascertain suitable available opportunities for employment for the visually challenged candidates. The Unit matches the skills of the

candidates with the job requirement and accordingly recommends suitable trainees for employment at such job positions.

Further, the Unit facilitates the newly-employed in getting familiar with their new work and the workplace environment. The Unit ensures that the newly-employed



are well settled in the new place. Towards this the newly employed are provided necessary orientation and possible support, such as finding residential accommodation; providing basic requirements like beddings, utensils; and guidance on commuting to their workplace. The Unit maintains contact with the employers and the trainees to help sort out any difficulty that they may face.

It may also be mentioned that besides serving the trainees and students of the Association, the Unit also extends all possible assistance to other visually challenged individuals approaching for assistance.

During the period from 2022 - 2023, the Placement Unit placed trainees in various industries and establishments. 25 trainees were successfully employed in institutions and 22 masseurs were guided and provided help in their quest for self-employment.

“I am placed as a receptionist in Shri Ram School and I like my job very much. Now I am completely independent and never feel like I have to rely on someone. My mother always supported me but my father was afraid about my future. Now both of them are very happy and very proud of me.”

Goldi (Trainee)

## Braille Printing

The unique ability to provide literacy and information access to persons with visual impairment is what makes Braille - the tactile script - so significant. The Association was among the first institutions in the country to introduce a computerized Braille printing facility in 1990. The Association's Braille printing facility caters to the needs of Braille educational and other resource material of its students and trainees, as well as, specific requests from outside, mainly in Hindi, English and Sanskrit.

Significantly, study material in Japanese Braille is also being prepared for visually impaired students studying Japanese language in the Association. Volunteers play a key role in preparing e-text to be transcribed for Japanese Braille.

Braille versions of general interest reading material including novels, poetry, and other articles are occasionally transcribed. A total of 111 titles in Hindi, English and Japanese amounting 1300 volumes were transcribed throughout the year.

## Audio Recording

In order to provide accessible educational material to students, the facility for recording audiobooks was established in 1982. All recordings are done by volunteers who offer their services without a fee. The recordings are available in digital MP3, Daisy, and e-text formats. A few recordings are shared on Sugamya Pustakalaya.

A large number of college and other students from Delhi and elsewhere are offered recorded study material upon request, in addition to the Association's own students and trainees. The recordings include textbooks for schools and colleges, works of fiction and non-fiction, study guides for competitive exams, and publications on current affairs and personality development.

The Association's studio has produced a total of 944 titles since its establishment, in Hindi, English, and Sanskrit. This year added 17 new titles (13 in Hindi and 4 in English.) Students and trainees received 378 GB worth of data on MP3 players.

## E- Text Production

A recent development is the production of e-texts that is largely facilitated with the help of KIBO Scanner, a convenient technological device that can scan, convert into e-text, and speak out printed and handwritten text in several languages. The converted e-text can be voice-read on computers, tablets and mobile phones, as well as, transcribed into Braille. The e-text produced by scanning printed or handwritten material using KIBO is then manually edited by the staff and volunteers.

Besides the in-house production of e-text, educational and other material of interest is also sourced from available resources and provided to the students of the Association and to those who approach from outside.

## Health Care

The Association has facilities to monitor and provide primary medical and health care to its students and trainees. The health care team comprising a visiting physician, a round-the-clock male nurse, and an assistant form the core of services. Regular medical check-ups are conducted and medicines are provided free. There are arrangements with reputed hospitals and health centres such as Dr. Shroff Charitable Eye Hospital and Sai Bhakta Samaj Polyclinic for specialized diagnostic assistance and treatment.



### **Dental Care**

The Department of Public Health Dentistry, SGT University, Gurugram has set-up a dental clinic in the Association's premises. The clinic provides regular dental care services to the school children, trainees, and staff since 2009. On 9 April '22 the Department organized an oral health awareness, check-up, and treatment camp in the Association bringing their state-of-the-art mobile dental van.

### **Board and Lodging**

The Association operates large hostels in its premises, offering free board and lodging services to nearly 300 visually impaired individuals, including school students, teacher trainees, vocational trainees, and visually impaired employees. The Association also has a spacious dining hall and a well-equipped hygienic kitchen that serves three nutritious meals (breakfast, lunch, and dinner), along with afternoon tea.

### **Awareness and Consultancy**

Creating and spreading awareness in the society about the importance of inclusion, equal rights, and the capabilities of individuals who have physical or sensory disabilities, particularly visual impairment, is an important mission

of the Association. From time to time the Association's school students and the vocational trainees participate in different events and present and prove their talents on equal footing with their counterparts.

The Association liberally shares its expertise with other institutions and organizations seeking guidance on establishing disability services, and also provides training to the trainers from such institutions. The faculty members from the Association's JPM School and Durgabai Deshmukh College of Special Education, as well as the vocational trainers are frequently invited as experts in advisory committees and as speakers/panellists in webinars and media broadcasts focused on disability-related topics.

### **Internship**

Several students pursuing courses in Social Work in Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar College, Department of Social Work, University of Delhi, IGNOU, Jamia Millia Islamia University and other institutions are assigned to the Association for their practical field training. This provides them with the opportunity to gain insight into the operations of a non-governmental organization. During their time here, they have the chance to observe and engage with our visually impaired students and trainees, thereby gaining a broader understanding of various aspects of disability.



## Volunteering

The Blind Relief Association is fortunate to have a large number of dedicated individuals who generously volunteer their time and expertise. They contribute their efforts in various areas, including the recording studio, dining hall, vocational training workshops, school, medical unit, teacher training college and the Association's office. Every year, the Association welcomes volunteers from diverse background who are motivated by their desire to contribute to a noble cause and they make valuable contributions in numerous ways.

The Association attracts a large number of corporates to hold their CSR volunteering events. We thank Puma, Turner & Townsend, Mercer, and Pladis Global for holding such events through this year. These engagements becomes a win-win situation since the Association benefits from the corporate employees' contribution and it also becomes an opportunity for them to understand and recognize the abilities and determination of persons with visual disabilities.

## Partnership with KARM Fellowship

*"It has been the KARM Fellowship's privilege to partner with the Blind Relief Association over the last two years. Under the able guidance of David Absalom and the team, this collaboration has given wings to the Fellowship's community service pillar - KARM Sahyog.*

*The purpose of the engagement is holistic – to expand the Fellows' worldview, build a mindset that celebrates and supports diversity, instill the value of giving back and therefore become empathetic leaders. So far, 20 Fellows have each completed 50-hours of community service and another 24 Fellows' community engagement is currently ongoing.*

*In an anonymous survey conducted this year, 95% of the Fellows ranked their engagement with the Association at the highest level of satisfaction. Additionally, the cohort that has completed the Association engagement reports higher levels of shifts in values, teamwork & cooperation, and worldview compared to cohorts who have not yet completed their engagement. This is supported by our own observations - with many Fellows voluntarily extending their engagement, and encouraging their peers to volunteer due to the supportive environment that they received.*

*We would like to thank the Blind Relief Association for its careful design and facilitation of this program that ensures maximum impact for all stakeholders – the Fellows, the Association and its beneficiaries. We look forward to a sustained and meaningful collaboration over the years."*



“The chapter of Association in my life will stay with me forever for the invaluable lessons and values I gained, earned and exchanged. If today I know the difference between sympathy and empathy, it is because of my visually impaired friends. This period of delivering community service and working at the Association has helped me learn some vocational skills; I learned to do the tasks with utmost diligence and focus. This phase of my life also helped me learn some aspects of professionalism like integrity, respecting everyone and staying professional under pressure.” - KARM Fellow

“This is the first time we are visiting an NGO with a huge setup. It is an extremely overwhelming experience for all of us” - Sonali, Puma

“Working with the visually impaired at the Blind Relief Association has deepened my empathy and appreciation for their unique perspectives and contributions. I’ve gained insight into the importance of creating an inclusive work environment that accommodates diverse needs. Witnessing their fulfillment and enthusiasm in their roles has emphasized the value of equal opportunities and the potential for personal growth through empathy and understanding.” - KARM Fellow

## EVENTS

### Running Event with Adobe India

Adobe India organized a running event in its Noida office on 9 June and invited the vocational trainees of the Blind Relief Association to be a part of it. The runners (staff of Adobe) were given the opportunity to walk blindfolded, hand in hand with the visually impaired trainees. Trainees undergoing Multi-Skill training, namely Anoop, Pankaj Sharma, Yogesh Rawal and Malti Kumari Sahu participated in this event.

### Self Defense Training for Female Trainees

Focusing on the safety of visually impaired women, the Blind Relief Association requested Delhi Police to conduct Self Defense Training for the trainees of the Association under its SASHAKTI - Self Defence Summer Camp 2022.

20 female trainees were trained by three officers from the Special Police Unit for Women & Children for two hours every day from 13-26 June 2022 in the Gandhi Hall of the Association. The trainees also participated in the closing ceremony of the Camp held at Thyagaraj Indoor Stadium on 27 June. The Commissioner of Police, Delhi - Shri Rakesh Asthana, interacted with the participants and also presented a memento to the Association, received by Mr. David, Dy. Executive Secretary (Operations).

### International Yoga Day

On 21 June, the vocational trainees being trained by Acharya Suresh Dutt Sharma from Nature's Healing Trust performed different yogic exercises in the presence of the Chief Guest Smt. Seema Bhupinder Malik, Municipal Councillor, SDMC; Dr. Aparna Gautam, Founder of Nature's Healing Trust and Shri Pankaj Rastogi.

### Helen Keller Day

The 142nd birthday of Helen Keller - Helen Keller's Day was jointly organized by the Blind Relief Association and Helen Keller Trust on 27 June 2022. Mrs. Amita Dutta and Mr. Charu Dutta, a hearing-impaired couple were invited as special guests to the event.

A photo exhibition portraying the life of Ms. Keller was organized, along with the screening of interesting videos on her life and accomplishments. The captions of the photographs, along with quotes and short stories about Ms. Keller were made available in Braille.

The teacher trainees of the Durgabai Deshmukh College of Special Education performed a skit on the childhood days of Ms. Keller and her association with Anne Sullivan, Keller's teacher and lifelong companion, and conducted simulation exercises for the participants.





### **Celebrating HPCL's Founders Day**

The Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited celebrated its 48th Founders Day with the students and trainees of the Blind Relief Association on 15 July 2022.

The Association is grateful for HPCL's meaningful gift of folding canes, Braille sheets and tree saplings that were planted by Mr. Rajesh Mehtani, Chief General Manager North Zone, and Mr. Siddhartha Misra, General Manager Delhi Retail Region. The team also visited the different training units of the Association.

### **Independence Day Celebrations**

Pre-Independence Day celebrations were held at the Blind Relief Association on 13 August with a flag hoisting followed by a cultural program by the school students and trainees of the Association. Dr. Dayal Singh Pawar, Associate Professor at Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri National Sanskrit University and a distinguished alumna of JPM School graced the occasion as the Chief Guest and hoisted the national flag. The cultural program at the Gandhi Hall included poems, speeches, patriotic group songs, orchestral performances and a play on women empowerment "Lajja" enacted by the vocational trainees.

Again on 15 August, the students, trainees and in-house staff gathered for flag hoisting. Following this, Prof (Dr.)

Minu Bakshi - a popular singer, poet, linguist, social worker and philanthropist presented a music concert in the Association's Gandhi Hall. Her presentation comprising a range of patriotic songs was immensely enjoyed and cheered by the students that brought life to celebrating 75 years of Indian Independence.

### **Janmashtami Celebrations**

Janmashtami is a very special festival that the students and alumni of the Association eagerly look forward to. Besides celebrating the birth of Lord Krishna, it's also a time when the alumni, present trainees and students meet and spend a day together in the Association. It's a two-day event of festivity which began on 18th August night concluding on Janmashtami night of 19th. The alumni and students took turns to read from Braille copies of the Ramcharitmanas round the clock, culminating with Janmashtami Pooja and the singing of bhajans. The program was organized and managed by the Class XII students of JPM School.

### **Teachers' Day**

5 September is the day of the year when students of JPM School become teachers, principal, and vice principal. In celebrating teachers' day, the one-day teachers are in charge of everything: from conducting the morning

assembly to taking classes for the junior school students. Class XII students Rudransh Rastogi and Aviral Pratap Singh were the Principal and Vice Principal respectively for the year. The school also organized a cultural afternoon where the students displayed musical performances and speeches as a tribute to their dear teachers. Mr. Virender Singh, an Administrative Officer at Dyal Singh College and distinguished alumnus of the School graced the occasion as the Chief Guest.

The computer trainees and vocational trainees also thanked their respective trainers/ teachers in separate events organized by them.

The Blind Relief Association appreciates the service of all its dedicated teachers/trainers.

### **Walking in the Footsteps of Gandhi**

On 2nd October, a group of students, trainees, and volunteers of the Blind Relief Association undertook a 12 km walk across South Delhi to appreciate the diverse faiths that peacefully coexist in our country, the idea Mahatma Gandhi so passionately stressed.

The event called “Walking in the Footsteps of the

Mahatma” began at the Association’s premises where the group gathered at the Shanti Niketan Park of the Association and listened to prayers of different faiths such as Parsi (Zoroastrian), Jainism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Hinduism recited by the Hony. Executive Secretary Mr. K.C. Pande.

The group then headed towards Gurudwara Damdama Sahib, near Humayun Tomb chanting along the way Bapu’s favorite bhajan “Vaishnava Jana to.” From the Gurudwara, the group proceeded to the Centenary Methodist Church, Lodhi Road and then to the Mosque at Pandara Road. Around noon, the group was received by Rev. Ezekial Isaac Malekar at the Judah Hyam Synagogue, Humayun Road, and finally visited the Radha Krishna Temple near Khan Market.

In every place of worship, the group was very warmly welcomed and also provided refreshments. They spent considerable time exploring the different ideologies and practices.

Volunteers from the Delhi School of Social Work, Bhim Rao Ambedkar College and Jamia Millia Islamia accompanied the group.





the empowerment of persons with disabilities. The award was conferred to him by the Honourable President of India on 3rd December 2022.

Mr. Abhishek Thakur completed his schooling at the Blind Relief Association's JPM Senior Secondary School during 1997- 2006. He holds an M.Phil and Master's Degree from TISS - Tata Institute of Social Sciences. He is also an alumnus of the Prestigious St. Stephen's College, University of Delhi. He now works as an Assistant Professor at the Department of Social Work, University of Delhi.

### **Award for Mr. K. C. Pande**

The Association's Executive Secretary, Mr. Kailash Chandra Pande was conferred

the NAB Sarojini Trilok Nath National Award by National Association for the Blind, Delhi in the 'Best Individual' category.

The felicitation ceremony MEDHA 2022 was organized by NAB, Delhi on the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on 3rd December in Tamil Sangam Auditorium, New Delhi. The award was presented in honour of Mr. Pande's selfless service and for dedicating his life to working for the empowerment

### **National Award for Mr. Abhishek Thakur**

Mr. Abhishek Thakur, an alumnus and Managing Committee Member of the Association was honoured with the National Award for the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment for the year 2022. This award was in the category of Individual Excellence – Shresth Divyangjan in recognition of the work he has done for





## Diwali Bazaar

The Blind Relief Association's Diwali Bazaar, popularly known as "Blind School Diwali Mela" was held this year from 15-21 October 2022 from 10:30 am - 08:00 pm in the Association's premises. Except for the interruption caused by COVID in 2020, the Association's Diwali Bazaar has been organized as an annual event for 42 years now since 1980.

The Bazaar housed more than 230 stalls with vendors from across the country stocking a sweeping assortment of dazzling designer wear, eye-catching footwear, coveted jewelry, fancy handbags, elegant home décor, traditional crafts, gift items, toys for kids, gardening material, in-demand herbal products, mouth-watering ready-to-eat and packaged food, etc. Besides the stalls, the Bazaar also hosts NGOs at no charge to exhibit and sell products made by persons or artisans with disabilities from underprivileged background.

To the range of eighty varieties of candles and diyas made by the Association, a new addition was the scented candles made with soy wax, available in 4 fragrances. A diverse collection of paper products comprised bags,

envelopes, gift tags, notebooks, cards, papier-mache plates, cups, planters and lampshades. To its existing array of cloth products, this year had new additions such as organisers, ring bags, laptop bags of two types - quilting and zipper, sling bags, shoe bags, palazzo pants and dining sets.

In observing White Cane Day - on 15 October, the teacher trainees of the Association's Durgabai Deshmukh College of Special Education invited the public visiting the Bazaar to try using the white cane with a blindfold. The trainees also walked around the bazaar with the white cane to sensitize the public on the importance of a white cane in the lives of persons with visual impairment.

Two Relaxation Massage corners were available where the Association's masseurs provided foot, head, and shoulder massage at reasonable rates. A good number of visitors who availed the relaxation massage service shared positive feedback on their first time experience with our masseurs.

An added colour to the Diwali Bazaar were the two shows of Ramp Fashion Walks by the trainees of the Blind Relief Association on 16 and 20 October. The participant trainees



were from Multi-Skill Training, Computer Training, and Teacher Training of the Association. The walks received thundering applause from the audience. The outfits were sponsored by Vivaan Creations and designer duo Mrs. Monty and Mrs. Richa Shaktawat.

### **Participation in Kizuna 2022**

The 'Sawaru Nihongo' Group of the Blind Relief Association participated in KIZUNA '22 - Japanese cultural festival, organized by Centre for Japanese Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University on 11 November 2022.

"Sawaru Nihongo" meaning Touch Japanese is a group working under the aegis of the Blind Relief Association to teach Japanese language to the visually impaired using Japanese Braille. The group of 17 students presented 2 Japanese songs - "Shiki no Uta", a Japanese seasonal song, and the popular patriotic bi-lingual "Sare Jahan Se Achha" (doko yori mo) translated in Japanese by Prof. Satoshi Hata of Ritsumeikan University of Japan.

Hisashi Seki, a volunteer- teacher from JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) currently teaching SHIATSU (massage) in the Blind Relief Association Delhi gave a demonstration of the Japanese martial art Aikido.

### **Make Happy, Be Happy**

The team from Pladis Global which is supporting the bakery classes of the Multi-Skill Training celebrated their "Make Happy, Be Happy" day with the Blind Relief Association on 17 November.

The Pladis team underwent experiential exercise in which they were blindfolded and asked to reach a certain destination within the campus. The team also conducted a baking competition in the morning and the winning teams were presented gifts in the ceremony. Along with this the staff members also engaged in storytelling and interacting with the Multi-Skill trainees. The trainees presented a group song for the guests.

### **Mohan Veena Recital**

Pt. Vishwa Mohan Bhatt, a Grammy & Padma Vibhushan Awardee under the aegis of Spic Macay gave a Mohan-Veena Recital on 8 December 2022 in the Blind Relief Association on 8 December 2022. Pt. Ram Kumar Mishra accompanied him on the Tabla. The students found the lec-dem greatly educative and enjoyable. Pandit ji also answered many questions from several keen students.

## Humayun: A King in Exile, a Heritage Walk

The sensory exploration event “Humayun: The King in Exile” to honour the International Day of Persons with Disabilities organized on 17 December 2022, drew Multi-Skill trainees to actively participate in the inclusive Heritage Walk in partnership with Soulful Safaris, Gurugram Hub, ICOMOS India and Tradition Heritage Ecology (THE). They were immersed in the historical narrative of Humayun and his exile and were given the opportunity to experience the heritage beyond visual sight through audio descriptions, tactile interactions and engaging storytelling, fostering a stronger bond with their cultural heritage.

## Film Festival

It was a memorable week for the visually impaired trainees and students when they had the opportunity to attend a special screening of movies at the Indira Gandhi National Centre Arts’s Samvet Auditorium from 19 to 22 December 2022. The screening was organized by Saksham Trust, a non-profit organization that works to empower people with disabilities. To make the movies accessible

the films had audio descriptions that narrated scenes, actions and emotions in detail. The audio descriptions filled the gaps of silence and helped the visually impaired audience to understand and appreciate the story better.

## Christmas & New Year Celebrations

The Blind Relief Association strongly believes in bringing smiles to all its vocational trainees with various initiatives. We make it a point that each resident undergoes a normal routine of life and enjoys all the festivities.

Keeping this in mind, the Association celebrated Christmas on 23rd December with all the trainees. The program was organized on the lawns of the Association on a bright sunny morning with games like spoon race and passing the ball. Christmas carols and other songs were played to which the trainees enjoyed dancing. The cake baked in-house gave a special touch to the celebrations.

On New Year’s Eve, a musical program was organized in which a few of our students, learning guitar from a volunteer Arhan of Class X, played some melodious songs. The trainees shared their wonderful experiences of learning guitar. Arhan and his parents were also present



for this program. After this program, the support staff took the students for a picnic at Sunder Nursery where they thoroughly enjoyed long walks, swings, games and delicious food.

Mr. K.C. Pande, Hony. Executive Secretary who was also a part of both these events strongly believes in practical and outdoor learning for these students which prepares them for their future life.

### **World Braille Day**

The 214th birth anniversary of Louis Braille, commonly observed as World Braille Day was celebrated at the Blind Relief Association on 4 January 2023. Mr. Rajendra Das, an alumnus of JPM Senior Secondary School and retired Principal of Govt. Senior Secondary School was invited to be the Chief Guest for the occasion.

At the event, prizes were given away to the winners of the Braille reading and writing competitions. The trainees from Durgabai Deshmukh College of Special Education, Computer Training Centre & Vocational Training Centre shared the different aspects of Braille. Megha Thakur, B.Ed II year trainee shared the biography of Louis Braille and Rishika Rana, a B.Ed II year trainee highlighted the relevance of Braille. Sulekha, a trainee pursuing Diploma

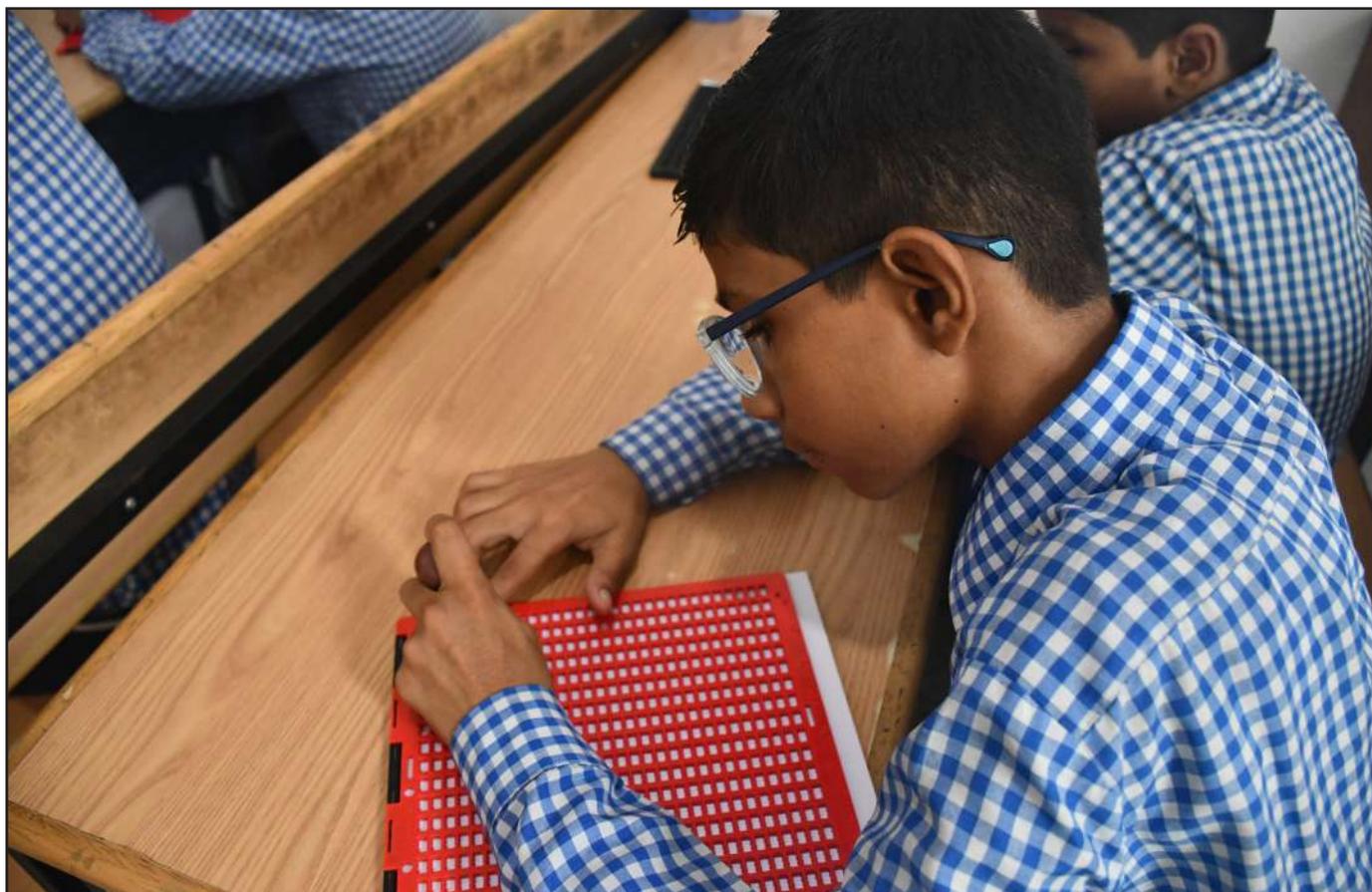
in Computer Education recited a poem and Mr. Sumit Mahto, Computer Trainer facilitated a discussion on Braille and Technology. The event also engaged the audience comprising the students of JPM School, trainees of different units, and the staff through a quiz.

### **Martyrs Day**

On 30 January - Martyrs Day, the Blind Relief Association's students, trainees, and staff gathered together in the evening to observe the death anniversary of Gandhiji and other freedom fighters. Along with reciting prayers of seven different faiths such as Zoroastrian, Jain, Buddhist, Hindu, Islamic, Christian and Sikh, the gathering observed a minute of silence at 5:17 pm when Gandhiji was assassinated.

### **StoryHour**

The Blind Relief Association was excited to join hands with StoryHourUK - an initiative by Ms. Neelima Penumarthy, in offering its visually impaired students to lend their voices for the Hindi edition of their latest audiobook on the Indian Independence titled - "A Brief History of Indian Independence - From The Mughals To The Mahatma" written by two teenagers - Ayur Pulle and Aarush Kumbhakern.





Ankit Kumar Singh, a Class XII student in JPM Senior Secondary School, and Rishika Rana, a second-year student of Durgabai Deshmukh College of Special Education were shortlisted and trained to narrate the audiobook.

On 30 January the Hindi audiobook was launched in the Gandhi Centenary Hall of the Association. The special guests for the evening were Ms. Varsha Das, writer; Shri Sopan Joshi, author; Ms. Radhika Bharat Ram, Jt Secretary (B.R.A.) and Shri Sanjay Rai, General Secretary, Harijan Sevak Sangh.

The guests along with Ms. Neelima Penumarthy, Producer - StoryHour UK, Dr. Sharda Manocha, Translator; and the two narrators - Ankit Singh and Rishika Rana shared their journey of having worked on the book. The well-known author and Director of London's Nehru Centre, Mr. Amish Tripathi conveyed his greetings and wishes online from UK. The authors of the book (in English) Ayur Pulle and Aarush Kumbhakern also joined the program online.

The English version of the audiobook was launched on 8 August at Triveni Kala Sangam auditorium by Mr. Sanjoy K Roy - Entrepreneur and Producer of Jaipur Literature Festival.

### Visit to Amritpex

The prestigious Amritpex 2023 National Philatelic Exhibition, held from 11 – 15 February invited the visually impaired trainees from the Blind Relief Association. This impressive celebration, held as part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav Celebrations, was intended to honour the values of inclusivity and independence.

As part of its commitment to fostering an inclusive environment, Amritpex 2023 made sure that attendees who were blind or visually impaired were taken care of at the event. The trainees had the chance to investigate many philatelic topics and discover the relevance, artistry and history of stamp collecting. Additionally, a unique Braille letter-writing contest was organised, giving trainees a chance to showcase their talents and originality.

## Annual Picnic

The excitement of getting to go for the annual picnic after two years woke our boys as early as 3 am on 4 February!

The Annual Picnic of the Blind Relief Association is nothing less than a jumbo event where the students, trainees, staff, alumni, volunteers, families and friends numbering close to 800 people gather for a day-long fun.

This year, the picnic was organized at Nehru Park in Chanakyapuri where the wide lawns and the warm winter sun embraced us for a pleasant day. Games, music, dance, walks, chats, photographs and food with the Association's iconic carrot halwa were some of the highlights of the day.

On 29 March 2023, the Union Ministry of Social Justice organized a special visit for approximately 13,000 people with disabilities, who were invited to witness the beauty of Amrit Udyan. The entire place was made accessible for everyone, including the provision of Braille books and audio recordings that described the gardens. Moreover, Braille boards were put up to explain the various plants and flowers that adorned the place.

The President was delighted to interact with the trainees and offered them words of encouragement, urging them to pursue their studies and focus on their careers. The trainees were overwhelmed by the experience and felt deeply grateful for this incredible opportunity.



## Livelihood Kit Distribution Ceremony

The third Livelihood Kit Distribution Ceremony was held on 25 February in the New Block of the Blind Relief Association. In this Ceremony, 17 Massage Kits & 2 Sewing Machines were given to vocational trainees who completed their training. In addition to this, 29 vocational trainees received their training completion certificates.

Ms. Rupa Tete from Usha Silai School and Mr. Sanjay Rai from Sant Nirankari Charitable Foundation graced the occasion. The Ceremony also served as an opportunity to honor the volunteers - Ms. Jolly and Ms. Alka, who have been assisting the trainees. Ms. Jolly has been teaching anatomy and physiology to relaxation massage

trainees since 2016 and Ms. Alka has been teaching communication since 2021.

A few trainees also shared their experience at the training and expressed their gratitude to the Association.

## Visit to Amrit Udyan

The trainees undergoing Multi-Skill Training at the Blind Relief Association, Delhi were given a unique opportunity to explore the exquisite Amrit Udyan, which was previously known as the Mughal Gardens, situated in the Rashtrapati Bhawan. They were thrilled to meet the esteemed President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu, who warmly greeted them.



## NEW BUILDING – MANJU BHARAT RAM BLOCK

Marking a major expansion of its facilities, a New Block of Building of the Blind Relief Association was inaugurated by Shri Hardeep Singh Puri, Hon'ble Minister of Housing & Urban Affairs and Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India on 16 February 2023.

The New Building named 'Manju Bharat Ram Block' is dedicated in memory of the Association's former Hony. General Secretary (Late) Smt. Manju Bharat Ram. This is in honor of her long involvement and distinguished services on various fronts of the Association. Her headship and keenness serve as a firm pillar of strength in the development and progress of the Association.

The 800 sq. m. new block has been designed using sustainable architectural principles. While the first and second floors are utilized for educational and vocational training activities, the third floor caters to the requirements of women with visual disability. The new block also houses a library and resource centre for educational and multi-disciplinary research and development activities.

Shri Arun Bharat Ram, President along with the other Managing Committee Members of the Association were also present on this occasion. The gathering also consisted of friends and well-wishers of the Association.



# INDIAN BLIND SPORTS ASSOCIATION

The Association is proud of having played the key role in the establishment of the Indian Blind Sports Association (IBSA), a national level body for the promotion of sports for the blind in 1986 and in consistently supporting its activities. With 243 institutions and organizations from 27 states as its members, IBSA is one of the oldest, largest and most active disability sports organizations in the country. It represents India in the International Blind Sports Federation, the apex sports body for the visually impaired, and is affiliated with the Paralympic Committee of India. With support from the Blind Relief Association, IBSA organizes national-level sports meets and coaching camps in athletics, powerlifting, football, kabaddi and chess, besides identifying and sending talented athletes to participate in international sports events. IBSA has also been entrusted by the Paralympic Committee of India the responsibility of conducting sight classification tests for the para-athletes.

## International Blind Sports Federation - IBSA Asia Oceania Blind Football Championships

The 2022 International Blind Sports Federation- IBSA Blind Football Asia-Oceania Championships was organized in Kochi by the Indian Blind Football Federation, an affiliate of Indian Blind Sports Association. Held under the aegis of IBSA, the Championships lasted from 11-18 November in Kochi, Kerala. This was the first time in India that a para-football event had 10 men's teams and 2 women's teams. The event was a qualifier for the World Championships Birmingham 2023 and Paris Paralympics 2024.

The Championship was won by China and Japan respectively in the men's and women's category. However, on the basis of performance the women's team of India was also qualified for the first IBSA World Women's

Championships '23 to be held at Birmingham, UK.

## IBSA 22nd National Athletics Championship for the Blind

The 22nd IBSA National Athletics Championship for the Blind was organized from 14 – 16 December 2022 at the Thyagaraj Stadium, New Delhi. This event was organized in collaboration with USHA.

At the Championships, there were 550 participants from 19 states including Tripura, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Andhra Pradesh and Chandigarh. A total of 59 (31 for men, 28 for women) track and field events were organized under three categories- B1, B2, and B3.

The Meet was inaugurated by Hon'ble Smt. Meenakshi Lekhi (Minister of State for External Affairs and Culture). Dr. Deepa Malik, President - Paralympic Committee of India was the Guest of Honour.

## Play of Dots

IBSA published a book that highlights the accomplishments of visually challenged athletes whose struggles are often overlooked. Despite congenital disabilities (since birth) or life-altering injuries caused by accidents or disorders later in life, the athletes have shown remarkable grit and self-confidence to transform themselves into some of the most accomplished athletes.

The book was released by Smt. Meenakshi Lekhi and the first copy of the book was handed over to Ankur Dhama, the first Indian blind athlete to take part in the Rio Paralympics 2016, nurtured and trained by IBSA.



## FAREWELL

Shri Gopal Singh who served for 37 years as a Cook in the Association's Mess, and Shri Moolchand who served for 30 years as the Physical Education Teacher in the JPM School were given a warm farewell on 31 July 2022.

Smt. Rajbala Sharma, Vice Principal of the JPM Senior Secondary School for the Blind was given a warm farewell on 30 September upon her retirement after serving 30 years.

They were presented mementos and gifts by the Association, teachers, and staff, as a token of appreciation for their service and friendship.



## OBITUARY

Shri Magar Lal, an old trainee of the Association passed away on 12 August in the hostel of the institution after a prolonged illness. He was under the care of the Association. A havan ceremony was held in the Association's Gandhi Hall on 24 August 2022.

Brigadier V.K. Chawla, Life Member and former Joint Secretary of the Association, and former Manager of JPM Sr. Sec. School passed away at his residence on the morning of 3 April 2023.

The Blind Relief Association offers heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Although a few faces and hands within the Association are visible to the public, it's vital to recognize that the organization's activities are made possible through the generous support and care of numerous well-wishers, including individuals and organizations both within India and abroad. These supporters take the form of donors, volunteers and more. Failing to acknowledge their contributions over the past year would be a grievous mistake. The Association owes an immense debt of gratitude for the invaluable cooperation and warm assistance that these individuals and groups have provided throughout the year. Without their involvement, achieving all that we have would have been impossible.

### Government

- Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India.
- Rehabilitation Council of India
- Department of Education, Government of NCT of Delhi
- Department of Social Welfare, Government of NCT of Delhi
- New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC)
- National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Visual Disabilities (Divyangjan), Dehradun
- National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation (NHFDC)
- Dr. Rajendra Prasad Centre for Ophthalmic Sciences, All India Institute of Medical Sciences for referring visually impaired persons for skilling.

### Corporate Supporters

- SRF Foundation for the generous support towards laying of Synthetic Track in the Sports Arena.
- Mercer Consulting (India) Pvt. Ltd. for supporting the Multi-Skill Training & Relaxation Massage Training program.
- Optum Global Advantage for supporting Diploma in Computer Education course and equipping the new computer lab with desktops, laptops, and tablets.

- EPIC Foundation for having donated 20 tablets to the Computer Training Centre.
- Rotary Havant, UK donated an interactive smart board for the Computer Lab.
- Compro Technologies Pvt. Ltd, Uday Park for donating 25 computers to the Blind Relief Association, Delhi.

### NGO Supporters & Partners

- Youth4jobs Foundation for their support in skilling the visually impaired youth.
- Project Prakash for their financial support in training the visually impaired.
- Military Order of the Collar Charitable Foundation, Switzerland for the sustained support to the Association's varied activities, namely Special Care Unit, Braille Production Centre and Recording Studio.
- MOC Terra Nordica, Sweden for the financial support to the Placement Project.
- Smt. Kamla Devi Charitable Trust run by INOX Group for supporting the Computer Training and salaries of two computer instructors.
- Raised Lines Foundation, a not-for-profit incubated out of IIT Delhi for donating 200+ tactile books to JPM School.

### Partners & Well-wishers

- Shri S K Misra & Family for the generous support towards landscaping of the Inner Courtyard.
- Smt. Prabhjot Menon for donating laptop, year after year, to the topper of the Diploma in Computer Education (V.I.) course.
- Shahnaz Husain International Beauty Academy for fully supporting Ayurvedic Massage training with the free services of a trainer and required consumables, and also providing a female trainer for the Multi-Skill trainees.
- Pladis Global for assistance in baking course for the Multi-Skill trainees.
- Japanese language volunteer teachers Mrs. Naomi Furampu, Ms. Himani, Ms. Anupreet Kaur, Mr. Yogesh Dayal (based in the USA), Mr. Varun and

alumni Mr. Ramdas, Mr. Deepak Gupta, and Mr. Ajay Gupta for continuing classes.

- Yuva Unstoppable for donating 50 tables to the visually impaired trainees of the Association, under the guidance of Shri Hardeep Singh Puri, Hon'ble Minister of Housing & Urban Affairs and Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, GoI.
- P. Arora & Associates, an architectural firm for completing Phase II of the Association's New Block.

- Ekta Khanna Design Studio for helping in designing the interiors of the New Block.
- Shri Manish Yadav, Architect - Srijan Consultancy Services for advising on landscaping and other infrastructural changes in the premises.

A dearth of space does not permit us to acknowledge the contributions of each volunteer, donor, and supporter. However, the Association expresses its deepest gratitude to all of them.



Life should never come to a halt for any individual due to a disability. However, this is precisely how it can feel when a person isn't equipped to navigate a world when he/she does not have access to the necessary education and training. As long as disabilities persist, our mission continues, year after year, decade after decade:

- To ensure persons with visual disabilities are educated, employed, and empowered
- To educate and sensitize the public to treat them with empathy and equality by creating an environment that's inclusive and kind.



## HOW CAN YOU HELP

For running such a large number of programs and services for the visually impaired, the Association depends largely on the goodwill and philanthropy of the society. You too can lend your support to us in a number of ways:

### Buy our products

All proceeds from the sales will go towards supporting the education/ training of the visually impaired. Visit our shop or online store.

### Volunteer with us

You can share in the joy of serving by rendering your expertise in an area of your choice. Fill out the form found by scanning the QR code.

### Provide employment

Contact or visit us for a spot assessment of our trainees or allow our representative to visit you to help identify places where you can gainfully employ persons with visual disability and make yours an inclusive establishment.

### Corporate funding (CSR)

Our intentional approach to cater to visually impaired children and adults in every facet has resulted in various programs. Partner with us by supporting one of them.

### Donate

(Monetary donations to the Association are exempt under Section 80G of the Income Tax Act 1961)

**1. Online donation - <https://blindrelief.org/donate/>**

**2. Bank Transfer (Indian Citizens):**

Bank: State Bank of India, IOC Branch, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003

Account Holder: The Blind Relief Association, Delhi

Account No: 30003044419

IFSC Code : SBIN0006564

**3. Cheque**

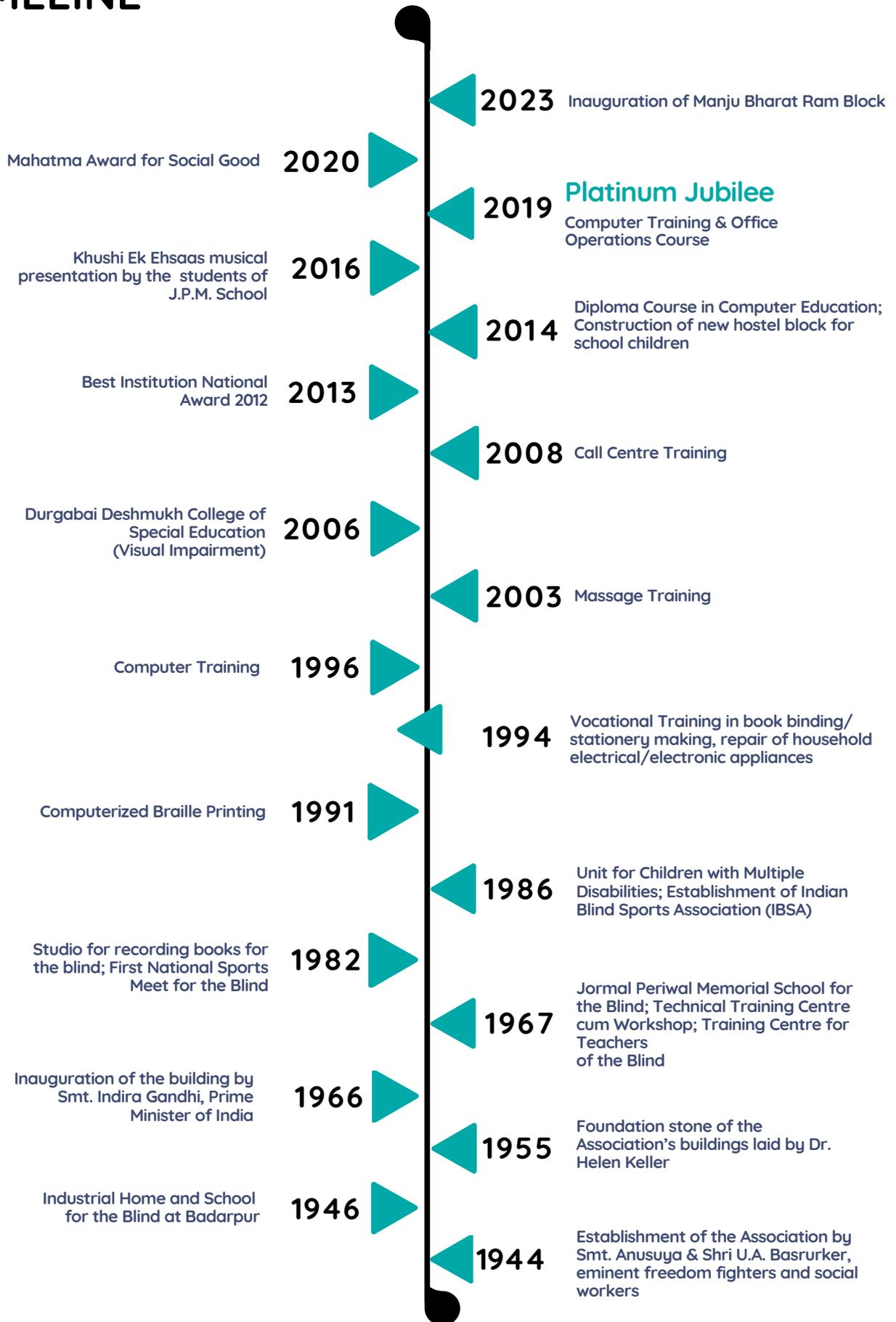
If you would like to pay by cheque/ DD, kindly make your contributions in favor of "The Blind Relief Association, Delhi" payable in New Delhi.

NRI/ Foreign citizens willing to support may contact us at [info@blindrelief.org](mailto:info@blindrelief.org)

For donations in-kind, please call 8595909408.



# TIMELINE



## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Arun Bharat Ram	Chairman & Life Trustee
Ranjit Puri	Life Trustee
Lalit Nirula	Life Trustee
Benu Nath	Life Trustee
Radhika Bharat Ram	Life Trustee
S K Misra	Elected Trustee
Sanjeev Anand	Elected Trustee

## MEMBERS AND OFFICE BEARERS OF THE MANAGING COMMITTEE

NAME	DESIGNATION	OCCUPATION
Arun Bharat Ram	President	Industrialist & Philanthropist
Ranjit Puri	Vice President	Company Chairman
Lalit Nirula	Vice President	Social Worker
Benu Nath	Hony. General Secretary	Social Worker
S.K. Misra	Hony. Treasurer	Social Worker
Radhika Bharat Ram	Hony. Joint Secretary	Founder, KARM & Vice Chairperson, The Shri Ram Schools
Kailash Chandra Pande	Hony. Executive Secretary	Social Worker
Sanjeev Anand	Member	Senior Advocate
Anil Kohli	Member	Dental Surgeon
Sushil Ramola	Member	Social Entrepreneur
Chander Prakash	Member	Addl. Member/Project (Rtd.), Railway Board
Navin Bahl	Member	Chartered Accountant
Ajay Kumar Dixit	Member	Retired
Mahender Kumar Sarin	Member	Chartered Accountant, Ex-Consultant -World Bank, Africa
Amitav Virmani	Member	Educationist
Abhishek Thakur	Member	Asst. Professor, Department of Social Work, University of Delhi



## **The Blind Relief Association, Delhi**

(Registered under Societies Registration Act XXI, 1960)

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