

BLIND PERSONS' ASSOCIATION, MUMBAI

(Registered under the Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860, Bombay
Public Trust Act, 1950 & FCRA, 1976)
(Registration No.1581 of 1947- 48 under Societies Act and F-114 (Bom)
under Public Trust Act)

C/o National Association for the Blind, Rustom Alpaiwalla
Complex,124/127,Cotton Depot,
Near Reay Road Rly. Station (East), Cottongreen, MUMBAI-400 033

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2016-17

Blind Persons' Association, Mumbai (BPA) is a voluntary charitable organization working since October 1947 for the betterment of blind individuals residing in Mumbai and its suburbs, Thane, Palghar and Raigad Districts with focus on the needs of non-institutionalized blind persons. The Executive Council of BPA presents with great pleasure the Annual Report of its activities for the year 2016-17.

MEMBERSHIP

The present strength of members has gone up to 1155 after inclusion of 43 new Life Members. (Here BPA would like to clarify that the benefits are open to all Visually Impaired in and around Mumbai and not limited to its members only)

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

During the year, the Executive Council met 4 times. The Working Committee met 5 times. We are happy to note that committee members had active participation in the meetings, they gave their valuable suggestions and efficiently undertook the task assigned to them.

ANNUAL GENERAL BODY MEETING

The 69th Annual General Body Meeting was convened on Saturday, 24th September 2016 at Shrimati Kamla Mehta Dadar School for Blind, Dada Saheb Phalke Road , Dadar (East), Mumbai 400 014. This was attended by 63 members.

ACTIVITIES

BPA has many programmes and schemes like Scholarship and Educational Assistance, Help the Aged, Medical Assistance, Need Based Financial Assistance, House Repair, sale of Aids and Appliances at subsidized cost, Counseling Services, etc. It also organizes functions , competitions like

Reshimbandh (which is specially meant for visually impaired youth), Hawkers' Day, Foundation Day, Annual picnic, Women's Day etc. Apart from these regular activities, BPA would like to highlight its new venture of **Volunteer Bank** during the year.

Detailed Reports are as under :

MEDICAL CORPUS

BPA already has a Medical Assistance Scheme wherein approximately Rs.1,10,000 /- is disbursed annually to the beneficiaries. It covers clinical tests, treatment of ailments, purchase of medicines; surgery etc. The Working Committee decides the amount of assistance on case-to-case basis on submission of Prescriptions, Bills and Medical Reports.

As the medical treatment is getting costlier day by day, we thought that this amount is inadequate and decided to increase it substantially. A target of Medical Corpus of Rs.10,00,000/- was aimed at initially, so that interest accrued upon would be available for needy beneficiaries. Last year we could collect Rs.10,00,000/- for this Corpus. However, due to reduction in interest rate on investments, it has been decided to increase the medical corpus to the tune of Rs.15,00,000. We are extremely happy to announce that donors and well-wishers, sighted as well as blind, have responded generously to our appeals.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME

BPA has two schemes to promote education amongst **SIGHTED children of BLIND parents**

- Free distribution of school material for Pre & Primary School going children.
- Educational Assistance in the form of Scholarship to the children studying from primary to higher education and vocational training.
- BPA also offers educational Assistance to **College Going BLIND students**

On 18th June 2016, BPA distributed school material such as school bags, lunch boxes, water bottles, pencils, notebooks, sharpeners, erasers, scales etc. This Project was sponsored by Basant Agro Chem.Ltd and Notebooks were sponsored by Shri.Hitesh Mehta who is a regular donor . 80 sighted children of 63 blind parents were given away educational material at the auspicious hands of Shri.Vishal a Partner of Basant Agro Chem Ltd in BPA's office premises. Scholarships worth Rs.94,700/- was distributed by way of cheques on Saturday 19th November 2016 to 121

sighted children of 86 blind parents at the hands of Ms.Sampada Shevde Director of Voice Vision.

An amount of Rs. 85,500/- was distributed as Scholarships by way of cheques to 70 college-going blind students on 3rd December 2016 on the occasion of World Disabled Day in the auditorium of Siddhivinayak Temple at the hands of Mr. Narendra Rane President of Siddhivinayak Temple Trust. Mr.Nitin Kadam Trustee, Mrs.Surekha Kewale Managing Committee Member and other Trustees of the Temple Trust were also present on the occasion.

The Trustee of Prem Punita Trust distributed folding sticks to the students .On this occasion to motivate and encourage the blind students, visually impaired achievers shared their success stories .Shri Harish Kotian Asst.General Manager, Reserve Bank of India, Shri.Vishal Jain HR Manager of TATA Motors Ltd, Shri.Rajesh Mehta HR Manger IBM International and Ms.Anagha Modak R.J. from All India Radio interacted with the students. Mrs.Swati Thakurdesai Hon. Secretary of NAB India interviewed Ms.Anagha Modak .This programme received overwhelming appreciation from the students.

Under the educational programme, the Association had spent a total amount of Rs.1,88,510/- during the year.

Reading without seeing Seminar

Reading without seeing seminar was organized on Sunday the 24th April 2016 & 29th May 2016 in collaboration with XRCVC at their centre at Viviana Mall Thane.It received overwhelming response from the members which was found to be very interesting and fruitful. There were 25 participants on each occasion and they were introduced to latest access technology available to the visually impaired.

Classes for competitive examination

Realising the need of the hour, BPA conducted coaching classes for the aspirants of various competitive examinations .The classes were conducted at Chabildas Boys High school Dadar (west) from April 2016 to October 2016 in the evening thrice in a week.30 students were benefited by this initiative and many of them successfully passed competitive examinations by different Public Sector Undertaking .This project was ably supported and sponsored by Rotray Club Of Dombivali & Dhruv Academy .Shri.Vinod

Deshpande was the Course co-ordinator who monitored the progress of students closely by keeping personal contact with each of them. This project was a feather in the cap of BPA and has received many requests from students to conduct another batch.

BPA-BPCL SCHOLARSHIP

For the academic year 2016-17, Scholarships worth Rs. 72,000/- was given to 10 sighted school and college going wards of blind parents. Courtesy Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd.(BPCL) Our profound thanks to BPCL for their consistent support to our cause.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

During the year, medical assistance worth Rs.47,310/- was provided to 22 clients.

NEED-BASED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Under this scheme, BPA offers partial financial assistance to needy blind persons to acquire household articles such as Cots, Mattresses, Gas connections, Cupboards, Kitchen Racks, Utensils etc. BPA also provides financial assistance to needy blind persons to meet unforeseen expenditure caused by fire, flood, building collapse, sudden death of earning member of the family etc. Total assistance of Rs 13,400/- was disbursed to 06 clients.

HOUSE REPAIR

BPA extends a helping hand to the needy blind persons residing in hutments and dilapidated dwelling units, to get their houses repaired the help is given in the form of building materials such as cement, sand, doors, windows, asbestos sheets, tiles etc. The total assistance of Rs.12,000/- were provided to 6 beneficiaries..

HELP THE AGED SCHEME

With the help of financial assistance of Rs. 1,95,000/- received from AICB the quantum of assistance under the help age Scheme was increased from Rs.300 to Rs.500 for gents & Rs.500 to Rs.1000 for ladies, per month, to meet their expenses for medicines, grocery, toiletries, clothes etc.. This aid is provided at their doorsteps, which builds up good rapport with them..Thus during the year, 23 males and 15 females were assisted to the tune of Rs.2,77,800/-.

The total amount spent for female clients in the above-mentioned schemes is reflected in the audited statement of account of BPA Thackersy Fund for the Rehabilitation of Blind women.

EQUIPMENT BANK

Last several years BPA has been running Equipment Bank for the blind. This is a unique scheme and probably the pioneer scheme of its kind in Maharashtra. Special aids and appliances such as White Canes, Chess Boards, Playing Cards, Writing Slates, Signature Guides, Weighing Scales etc. are made available at highly subsidized cost to needy clients. During the year, 70 blind persons availed this facility by purchasing various above-mentioned appliances. The sale of these aids fetched us Rs.4,690/-

BPA THACKERSY FUND FOR THE REHABILITATION & EMPOWERMENT OF BLIND WOMEN

BPA has established this benevolent fund for rehabilitation of blind women with kind courtesy of Thackersy Charitable Trust. During the year, 2016-2017 blind women were assisted in their hour of need to the tune of Rs 2,24,150/-.

REFERRAL SERVICE

Although BPA has been running many schemes to help the clients, at times it is not possible to give the assistance fully, due to paucity of funds and our limitations in some areas. Under these circumstances, BPA refers its needy clients to various Sources / Agencies / Hospitals etc. for assistance as per their requirements.

This year we have referred 100 clients to such agencies which were proved fruitful, the details are as follows:

- 20 clients were recommended to insurance company for getting insurance benefit to blind govinada pathak.
- 6 clients were referred to Lotus Eye Hospital for eye treatment
- 20 clients were recommended to Indian Railway for issuance of confirmed ticket for participation in various sports, conferences, workshops etc.
- 1 patient was recommended to Kirit somayya Trust for heart surgery.
- 51 clients were provided with volunteers for several competitive examinations as scribes..

- 2 clients were referred to Mr.P.N.Shah for scholarship who in turn adopted them for their entire education.

PERFUMERY TRAINING PROGRAMME:

CPL Aromas conducted Smell Capacity Test survey amongst Visually Impaired Persons. Thereafter, BPA and CPL Aromas decided to train selected candidates for training programme in perfumery. Department of Cosmetics and Perfumery of KET's V.G.Vaze College, Mulund held a training programme for the Fourth batch of 7 candidates in the year 2016-2017.

Those candidates who completed the training successfully in past were provided placements.

HAWKERS' DAY

The 8th Hawkers' Day was celebrated on 1st May 2016 at Shri.Nathuram Chimanlal High School Santacruz (E) in collaboration with Chajjed Foundation & Mahavir International Trust. On this occasion a medical camp was organized. Participants availed benefits of this opportunity, later on in the afternoon regular function was held in auditorium of the said school, in which 4 hawkers viz Keshav Pujari, Ms.Rani Narang, Mrs.Urmila Chawda and Mr.Anil Suryavashi were felicitated with 20 gram silver niranjan at the hands of Mrs.Suvarna Joshi, Mrs.Suleena Suryavanshi and Dr.Veena Sakhtivel, guest from Inner Wheel Club, Parle. They sponsored umbrellas as common gifts to participants.

Special Camp for disability certificate at J.J.Hospital

BPA organized a special camp on 5th August, 2016 at J.J.Hospital for getting disability certificates. In spite of heavy rain in the city, 15 clients were examined and were issued disability certificates on the same day. Dr.T.P.Lahane Dean of J.J.Hospital had taken initiative to organize the said camp. The Association is grateful to Dr Lahane and his team for their valuable assistance.

Reshimbandh Event :

Introduction

This event is a part of BPA Recreational and cultural Programmes for the last 4 years.

The objective of Reshimbandh: This competition is particularly for the visually impaired youths to promote their hidden skills and art and provide them with a platform to exhibit the same.

This event is sponsored every year by different donors and generous contributors, but this year it was entirely sponsored by Lions club of Kurla.

This year Reshimbandh programme was organized on Saturday 27th August 2016 at the auditorium of Sheth Dhanaji Devshi Rashtriya Shala, Ghatkopar (East)

The programme began with the lighting of the lamp by Rakesh Chauhan, Jagruti Vira and other Lions Members and Welcome Speech and the introduction of the Chief Guests were done by Ramdas Nikam

The Event was divided into 3 sessions.

- I. Workshop on Android Smartphones
- II. Folk Song Competition
- III. Prize Distribution

The first activity was divided into three parts

- a. basic android introduction,
- b. screen reader
- c. applications of the system

The session was co-ordinated by Gopal Suryavanshi, Kiran Kadam, Khandu Bhandari and Nikhil Yogi. Various medias for communication like Demonstration, Talks, Audio were used. The audience were allowed to ask questions, doubts and the speaker enthusiastically responded to them. It was a very interactive, and participative session. The next activity was the folk song competition. There were 30 competitors for this event.

Well-known singers Ms.Geeta Dhrod and Mr.Shravan Kumar were the judges for the competition.

The participants were confident, vibrant and enthusiastic to put forward their lovely voice and this made the programme entertaining and lovely. Thereafter Shri.Suhas Karnik, Mohdd.Raza and Vijay Gujar presented a Special Performance by rendering Patriotic songs.

At last prizes were announced. Pradeep Singh, Kavita Shinde and Jyoti Mane received first, second and Third cash prizes respectively, at the auspicious hands of Shri.Chandrakant Shah former Governor of Lions Club. Shri.Vinod Deshpande and his colleague from Dhruv Academy Dombivali who successfully conducted classes for competitive examination were also felicitated.

At the end of the function the participants were served delicious dinner and were also given a T-shirt as goodwill gift.

World White Cane Day

On 15th October, World White Cane Day was observed at Siddhivinayk temple at Prabhadevi. The Trustees of the Temple Trust distributed 80 folding sticks to needy blind persons. Shri. Y.D.Zope Hon. Gen. Secretary, Shri.C.A.Patu Vice president and Shri Hiranman Shinde Joint Secretary were present on the occasion.

FOUNDATION DAY

69th Foundation day of BPA was celebrated with grandeur on Saturday the 22nd October 2016. The day was buzzed with lot of activities and competitions. In the beginning a quiz contest was organized pertaining to current affairs. Thereafter impromptu Elocution competition was held. The participants were given topic at the last moment and the participants expressed their views very effectively. Before the lunch break a humorous mono acting competition was organized. The lunch was sponsored by Akshay Shakti.

Shri Swagat Thorat and Prof. Rohini Govilkar were judges for the competition. After lunch interval a visually impaired musician presented a spellbound music performance by rendering popular song. Afterwards Padmashree Dr. Rajendra T. Vyas memorial award function was conducted. Mrs.Sarla Dedhiya a well-known social worker was the Chief Guest and Dr.Madhura Kulkarni Asst. Director of the Distance Education Mumbai University was the Guest of Honor for the function. This year the award was conferred upon Mrs.Pranjal Patil a totally blind girl who successfully passed the UPSC examination by securing 773rd rank. She was given a citation along with a cash award of Rs.5000/-. In her absence her parents received the award and her mother responded to the award with emotion. Lastly after the function a "Garba" dance performance was organized. This was received overwhelming response. Mrs.Jagruti veera and her colleague from Lions Club, Kurla judged the performance of the participants. A day long celebration was concluded with sumptuous dinner.

Distribution of Sweets & Gifts

On Monday the 24th October 2016 on the festive of occasion of Diwali BPA distributed Sarees and Shirt pieces with some sweets to 180 needy poor blind persons. Smt. Bindu Bajaj donated a sum of Rs.10,000/- for this project.

National Conference of Blind Women at New Delhi organized By All India Confederation of the Blind

The delegation of BPA comprising Mrs. Anubha Dixit Vice president, Mrs. Mona Tailor, Mrs. Rama Shashidharan, Ms. Nisha Khare and Ms. Sushma Sonavane along with Mrs. Ruchi Chaudhari and Mrs. Savita Zende attended the National conference of Blind Women at New Delhi on 11th & 12th November 2016. The theme of conference was empowerment of Blind women. The plenary sessions were very informative and thought provoking. The delegates got an opportunity to interact with visually impaired woman who had come from different parts of India.

Participation in Sports Events

A team from BPA participated in the athletic championship organized by Blind Relief Association at New Delhi on 14th & 15th December 2016. Another team had participated in the sports competition organized by NAB Kolhapur District Branch. Mrs. Sarita Kataria secured prizes in the chess tournament and discus throw.

FREE DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD GRAINS ETC.

On Republic Day, January 26, 2017, BPA conducted a Free Distribution of food grains and blankets to needy poor blind persons with the support of Mrs. Salion at Kandivali. About 70 needy and deserving blind persons were benefitted by this programme. The management wish to express their sincere thanks to Mrs. Salion for her kind gesture and appreciated the efforts put in by Mrs. Savita Zende for short listing the beneficiaries and arranging their travels from Kandivali Station to Venue and back.

ANNUAL FAMILY PICNIC

Annual Picnic was organized on Sunday, the 5th February 2017, at, Shree Swami Samarth Math Palasdari District Raigad in which 114 persons including their families, volunteers and staff members of BPA had participated.

The Participants were served with Breakfast, Tea, sumptuous Lunch and evening Tea. Picnic spot was religious one. Participants attended Mahaarati. In the afternoon after lunch a few participants played 'Housie game'. Thereafter winners of the games and lucky draw, received prizes at the hands of a host of picnic Mr. Sainath Vaidya and Mr. Sudhir Potdar and his group who organized the picnic at a very economic cost. It was

through the efforts of Mr.Patu (Vice President) we could contact the said group .

Donations for this picnic were received from Shree Swami Samarth Math Dadar Rs.10,000/- , Mr.Indrajeet Pandya Rs.5,000, and Mr.Hasmukh Shah Rs.1, 000/-..

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

The 7th International Women's Day was celebrated on 11th March 2017 at Smt.Kamla Meheta Dadar School for the Blind, Dadar from 10 am to 6 pm.

Ms.Rashmi Warang , Ms.Rashmi Amdekar-RJ , Mrs.Kunda Ajgaonkar , Mrs.Anubha Dixit Vice President. and Mrs.Archana Shinde inaugurated the event, by lighting the lamp.

On the occasion various competitions were organized such as making chains with U clips, singing or saying jingle which appears on TV & Radios and Role Play .4 groups containing 5 members each, were made for presentation of role play. Different imaginary situations were given before 1 hour to the participants .Approximately 70 women took part in the above competitions .Ms.Ruta Dixit , Ms.Rashmi Amdekar , Ms.Rashmi Warang and Mrs.Sampada Kulkarni Joglekar were the judges for various competitions. Attractive prizes for winners of the competitions were given away at the hands of chief guest Mrs.Sampada Kulkarni - Joglekar an actress and Mrs.Surekha Kewale an active Managing Committee Member of Siddhivinayak Temple Trust .Ms.Rashmi Warang and Ms.Rashmi Amdekar shared their experiences while working as RJ .It was appreciated by everybody. Ms. Nidhi Goyal had given a lecture about Women Empowerment, which was very much interesting and informative for inspiring the blind women.

On the occasion of International Women's day, Ms.Yogita Tambe and Ms.Karupamal were felicitated by Chief Guests for their successful journey of life in spite of visual impairment and all other obstacles in life.

At the end, refreshment was served to all and the women participants and they were presented with the token gifts of lunch box along with a English into Marathi audio dictionary in CD format which is prepared by NAB Kaka Patil Centre. The vote of thanks was given by our EC member Mrs. Archana Shinde.

The programme concluded with national anthem. The Women's Day celebration was a great success and everyone departed with the pleasant memories at the end of the function.

The programme received overwhelming response from the participants. We are specially thankful to Dena Bank, Canara Bank, Bank of Maharashtra, M/s Basant Agro Chem. Ltd and Mrs Surekha Kewale for making this event a grand success.

OUR SINCERE THANKS

We are highly grateful to our Donors, Charitable Trusts and Well Wishers for their generous donation without which it would have been difficult for us to support our beneficiaries. This year we received Rs.6,81,776/- from our 76 donors. We also express our sincere thanks to "Union Bank of India" for their magnificent donation for purchasing a Cupboard for the office.

We specially thank M/s.Sorab S.Engineer & Co. (Chartered Accountants) for auditing our accounts free of cost every year.

With deep gratitude, we acknowledge the services of volunteers, friends, well-wishers and staff members for their help, support and co-operation extended to us.

Sd/-
Suhas Karnik
(PRESIDENT)

Sd/-
Y.D.Zope
(HON. GEN. SECRETARY)

BPA THANKS ALL THE DONORS FOR THEIR KIND SUPPORT