

**BLIND PERSONS' ASSOCIATION,
MUMBAI**

**(Registered under the Societies Registration Act XXI of
1860, (No. 1581 of 1947-48), Bombay Public Trust Act, 1950 (No. F-
114(B), & Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010
(No. 083780467)**

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

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2019-20

**BlindPersons' Association, (B P A) Mumbai is a voluntary
charitable organization working since October 1947 for the
betterment of blind individuals residing in Mumbai and its suburbs,
and surrounding districts including Thane, Palghar and Raigad,
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 2019-20.**

MEMBERSHIP

**The present strength of membership is 1094, including 9 new
members admitted during the year.**

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

**During the year, the Executive Council met 5 times, including a
Special Executive Council meeting and the Working Committee
met 4 times. We are happy to note that the committee members
had active participation in the meetings .They have given their
valuable suggestions and efficiently undertook the tasks assigned
to them.**

ANNUAL GENERAL BODY MEETING

**The 72nd Annual General Body Meeting of the Association was
convened on Saturday, 28th September 2019, at Kedarnath
English High School, Nehru Nagar, Kurla (East), which was
attended by 64 members. In that meeting other business important
amendment to the rules and regulation of the association were
carried out. These will alter the working of the association in the
near future.**

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, cultural programmes like Reshimbandh (which is specially meant for visually impaired youth), Hawkers' Day, Foundation Day, Annual picnic, Women's Day etc.

Details of these are as under:

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE:

BPA has a Medical Assistance Scheme under which an amount of Rs. 62,770/- was disbursed during the year to 30 beneficiaries. It covers the expenses incurred on clinical tests, treatment of ailments, purchase of medicines, surgery etc. The Association decides the quantum of assistance based on the production of appropriate medical documents. Considering the rising cost, the Association has set up a Medical Corpus Fund during the Financial year 2010-11 and as on 31st March 2020, it stands at Rs. 10,82,064/- which includes the donations of Rs. 45,000/- received during the year 2019-20. We aim to raise this as much as possible and the interest accrued on the same is utilized for the purpose of providing medical assistance to the needy blind people. We are extremely happy to announce that donors and well-wishers, sighted as well as blind are responding generously to our appeals and we would urge more and more people to come forward and donate for this purpose.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME

BPA has two schemes to promote education amongst Sighted Children of Blind parents

- Free distribution of school materials for Pre primary & 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.
- This year, the free distribution of educational materials to the sighted children of visually impaired parents was held on Saturday 15th June, 2019, at the B P A office, Cottongreen. The educational materials such as School bags, Lunch Box, Water Bottle, Note Books, pencils, erasers, scale, sharpeners etc. were distributed free of cost. Mr Y D Zope, Vice President, Mr Ketan

Kothari, Hon. General Secretary, MrPurshottam Patel, Mr Ramesh Thakkr and Mr Nilesh Kulkarni members of the Executive Council were present on this occasion and distributed the kits to the students at their hands.

During this year 75 sighted children of 62 blind parents benefitted out of this project to the tune of Rs. 29,947/-.

The Note Books were sponsored by Mr Hitesh Mehta of H M Classes who has been sponsoring the same for the past 12 years through the kind courtesy MrPurshottam Patel. The Lunch Boxes and Compass boxes were donated by Mrs&MrBhaskarSalian through the kind courtesy of MrsSavitaZende. Through her efforts we have also received cash donations from Ms Pradnya Jayaprakash Bhogle, MsRatna Chowdhury, MsKiran Mahesh Rajpal and Mr Prasad Todankar. Water Bottles, scales, pencils etc. worth Rs 2,000/- were donated by Mr C A Patu, our Ex-Vice President.

The Association kept on record its sincere thanks to all the donors for their valuable assistance and appreciated the efforts of Mr Purshottam Patel and Mrs Savita Zende for procuring the donations for the Association..

Distribution of Scholarships:

The Association distributed scholarships to the sighted students of blind parents on Saturday, 16th November 2019, at our Office premises. Mrs .Anubha Dixit, President, Mr Y D Zope, Vice President, Mr Ketan Kothari, Hon. General Secretary, Mr Purshottam Patel and Mr Nilesh Kulkarni, Members of the Executive Council were present on the occasion and distributed the cheques at their hands. During the year 115 students of 83 parents were awarded scholarships to the tune of Rs.70,000/-.

Similarly the scholarships to the college going blind students were distributed at our office premises on Saturday, 18th January 2020. Mr Hiranman Shinde, Mr Mansing B Chavan, Mrs Archana Shinde and Mr Nilesh Kulkarni, members of Executive Council, were present on this occasion and distributed the cheques to the students at their hands. During the year 29 girls and 44 boys were awarded scholarships to the tune of Rs. 85,100/-. We have also forwarded the names of these 73 students to another Charitable Trust viz. Samarthanam for scholarships.

Thus under the educational programme, during the year the Association spent a total amount of Rs.1,85,047/-. The entire educational expenses were met from the munificent donation received from BNP Paribas, under their CSR Scheme.

BPA-BPCL SCHOLARSHIP

During the academic year 2019-20, we referred 19 sighted school and college going wards of blind parents, to Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd., for scholarships. Due to some technical reasons at their end, the scholarship amount was not distributed till the end of March 2020. We were informed that the BPCL would disburse the amount in due course. The Association kept on record its sincere thanks to BPCL for their consistent support to our cause.

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 22,234/- was disbursed to 10 clients during the year.

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. During the year an amount of Rs.5,000/- was provided to a blind person whose house had completely collapsed due to heavy rain and wind.

HELP THE AGED SCHEME

Under this scheme we give Rs. 500/- per month per person, to financially poor blind persons who have reached the age of 60 or older to meet part of their expenses for medicines, grocery, toiletries, clothes etc. This aid is provided at their doorsteps, which builds up good rapport with them. During the year, 17 males and 15 females were assisted to the tune of Rs.1,88,500/-.

EQUIPMENT BANK

For last several years BPA has been running Equipment Bank for the blind. This is a unique 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 the materials worth Rs. 28,602/- were supplied to 113 poor and needy blind persons.

BPA THACKERSEY FUND FOR THE REHABILITATION & EMPOWERMENT OF BLIND WOMEN

BPA has established this benevolent fund for rehabilitation of blind women with kind courtesy of Thackersey Charitable Trust. During the year 2019-20, 32 blind women were assisted in their hour of need under our various schemes to the tune of Rs 1,23,940/-

HAWKERS' DAY:

The Hawkers' Day was celebrated on Saturday, 11th May 2019, at Kedarnath English High School, Nehru Nagar, Kurla (East), Mumbai, from 2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m. Lion Mr Deepk Rohra, the Trustee of Kedarnath School was the Chief Guest. Total 120 people participated in the function. The function was inaugurated by Mrs Anubha Dixit, President. Thereafter Mr Ketan Kothari, Hon. General Secretary, briefed about our various activities and services for the overall empowerment of visually impaired people, staying in Greater Mumbai and its adjoining districts namely Thane, Raigad and Palghar. Mr Kothari informed that a number of blind people in Mumbai are earning their livelihood by selling small items such as towels, cutleries, toys etc. in Local Trains and on platforms or nearby Railway Stations etc. Now the rules have become more stringent and the hawking in Trains, Railway Platforms etc. are completely prohibited. Even though we have written to the Hon. Minister of Railways, their reply was not positive. However, every year we celebrate Hawkers' Day where the blind hawkers would get an opportunity to get-together and exhibit their hidden talents in cultural activities on an open platform. A number of persons actively participated in various programmes. On this occasion we also felicitate four selected visually impaired hawkers with mementoes. This year Ms Kalpana Dolas, Ms Savita Gole, Mr Manoj Palekar and Mr Baban Shinde were felicitated with mementoes at the hands of the Chief Guest. Mr Jayant Pawar a visually challenged person played harmonium very well, and Mr Yusuf Babul Shaikh sang various songs to entertain the people. The programme concluded with National Anthem at 4.00 p.m.

The Association kept on record its sincere thanks to Mr Deepak Alhat, for supplying 100 packets of delicious snacks as donation

in kind through the kind courtesy of Mrs Archana Shinde and to Mr Nitesh Shah for giving common gifts through the kind courtesy of Mr Y D Zope. The Association also kept on record its sincere thanks for the cash donations from Radhe Radhe and Mr Amar Sunkersett through the kind courtesy of Mr C A Patu and Mr. Purshottam Patel.

RESHIMBANDH PROGRAMME:

This year the sixth "Reshimbandh" Programme was conducted on Saturday, 17th August, 2019, at "Municipal School, Near " S" Bridge, Byculla, Mumbai, from 2.00 p.m. onwards. The main object of the programme is to give a chance to the visually impaired youth to exhibit their talents in various cultural programmes on the stage. The programme started by lighting the lamp jointly by Mrs Anubha Dixit, President, Ms Sai Tambe and Ms. Meghna Erande of Storytel. The function was attended by around 100 people.

Ms Sai Tambe, of Storytel explained various advantages of Mobile App "Storytel" for the use of visually impaired people.. She said that at present more than one lakh recorded books are available on this App in English as well as in various other Indian languages. Ms Meghna Erande presented a programme with voice modulation. They charge a nominal amount of Rs. 299/- as subscription charges per month. However they offered that the first one month can be given free of charge on trial basis. Thereafter those who want to continue has to pay the subscription charges. Afterwards she requested the audience to raise questions if they had any. The audience raised some doubts and she cleared everything. The people were delighted about the App and quite a few of them gave their names for the same.

Thereafter a "Kawaly" competition was arranged for the youth. Total ten teams have participated in the competition. Mr Mayur Sukale and Mr Ravindra Jadhav, two well known musicians were the judges. The First prize of Rs. 5,000/-, second prize of Rs. 4,000/-, and third prize of Rs. 3,000/- were won by the teams of Ms Archana Gosavi, Mr Pradip Singh and Ms Kasim Baig respectively. The consolation prize of Rs. 2,000/- was won by Ms Nausina and team. The prizes were distributed at the hands of the Judges.

The vote of thanks was proposed by Ms Ananta Bhoje. The programme concluded with the National anthem at around 8.00 p.m.

The participants were provided snacks sponsored by Mr Radhe Radhe of M/s Basant Agro Tech India Ltd. The Association kept on record its sincere thanks to Shri Hiralal Maganlal Doshi Charitable Trust, Storytel, Life

Insurance Corporation of India Ltd. MrRadheRadhe and Prof. N Ramakrishnan, for their generous donations for the programme.

4) PERFUMERY TRAINING PROGRAMME:

B P A in association with C P L Aromas conducted an interview along with olfactory test for 29 visually challenged candidates, on Monday, 16th September 2019 at our office. Out of the 29 candidates, 12 persons were selected for their training programme. This was the fifth batch selected for training. On successful completion of the training programme, the candidates would be provided placements in different companies.

5) FREE DISTRIBUTION OF FOLDING CANES AND WEIGHING SCALES:

The Lions Club of Chembur and our Association had jointly organized a programme of free distribution of folding canes and weighing scales to poor and needy visually impaired people at our Office on Friday, 4th October, 2019, during the occasion of "Lions Service Week". The Programme was organized through the kind courtesy of our Ex-Vice President, Mr C A Patu. The President and some of the Office Bearers of Lions Club of Chembur, MrKetan Kothari, Hon. General Secretary and MrPatu were present on the occasion. The Lions Club of Chembur donated 100 numbers of Folding Canes and 10 numbers of Weighing scales for distribution amongst the blind people. At this function, eight numbers of folding canes and three numbers of weighing scales were distributed free of cost amongst the blind people who were present on this occasion, at the hands of the office bearers of Lions Club. The Association kept on record its gratitude to the Lions Club of Chembur and appreciated the efforts of MrPatu.

6) Foundation Day and PadmashreeDrRajendra T Vyas Memorial Award Presentation Ceremony

The 72nd Foundation Day and PadmashreeDrRajendra T Vyas Memorial Award Presentation ceremony was held on Saturday, 9th November 2019, at "M N B Industrial Home for the Blind, Jogeshwari (West) Mumbai" from 4.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m. Total 100 persons had participated in the function. The programme started with lighting the lamp at the hands of our President, MrsAnubha Dixit and the Chief Guest MrsVaishaliBabu, Senior Vice President, BNP Paribas Security Services India, together with MrKetan Kothari, Hon. General Secretary, MrHarshadJadhav, Joint Secretary and Mr Ashok Kamble, Hon. Treasurer. MrHarshadJadhav introduced the Chief Guest to the audience and

explained her various achievements in her career especially in the field of C S R activities.

Thereafter Mrs Dixit welcomed the audience for the function. . Mr Ketan Kothari, explained various activities and services of our Association for overall empowerment of visually impaired people, staying in Mumbai city and its suburbs, including adjoining districts viz. Thane, Palghar and Raigad for the past seventy two years. He said that majority of our beneficiaries are belonging to economically weaker section of the blind community and our aim is to make them self sufficient and lead a dignified life in the society. He also mentioned that we have a Medical Corpus Fund for the benefit of the financially poor blind people and their families. The Fund today stands at Rs. 10 lakhs plus, out of which lions share had been contributed by the blind people themselves from their limited income.

Mr Bihari N Shah, former President of our Association, paid tribute to Dr Vyas and shared his contribution in the field of empowerment of blind people. He informed that Dr Rajendra T Vyas was one of the founder members of the Association, in 1947. He continued to hold various positions of the Association till the year 1993, and thereafter he was the President Emeritus of the Association till the end of his life in the year 2010. Dr Vyas lived for 80 years out of which he dedicated about 63 years for working in the field of blind welfare activities. He was instrumental for a number of blind welfare activities not only with this Association but also with the National Association for the Blind, India, (NAB, India) which was established during the year 1952, around 5 years after the establishment of this Association. While working for NAB, India, he got an offer from an N G O based in U K known as the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind (presently known as "Sight Savers") where he was working as Asia Director. Though he was working with other Association, he continued to serve NAB, India, in his voluntary capacity. Through his initiative the NAB, India, had started the Talking Book Library, Braille Press, Training Centres for the blind and many more activities. He was always willing to mingle with the people from grass root level and help them to find out solutions for their problems. His name will always be written in golden letters in the field of blind welfare activities. Taking into consideration of his remarkable contributions for the blind, the Blind Persons' Association, Mumbai has instituted an award in his memory to be given every year to one of the blind persons who has excelled in his/her abilities or services. This year the award was conferred on Mr Sagar Hiraji Patil, a totally blind person who is a Post Graduate in Marathi Literature and thereafter he himself set up a company in the area of electronics and solar energy. Probably he is the first blind person in India, who acquired four patents in the area of electronics. In

recognition of his outstanding achievement as an entrepreneur and innovator , a citation and Cash Award were presented to him at the hands of the Chief Guest, Mrs Vaishali Babu.

On this occasion we felicitated Mr ArvindNere, a visually challenged person, for his selfless and dedicated services in the field of blind welfare activities. Mrs Santa Narsian, former Hon. General Secretary and President of B P A, introduced Mr Nere to the audience in glowing terms. Mr Nere was felicitated at the hands of the Chief Guest with a letter of appreciation and a memento.

While addressing the audience, Mrs VaishaliBabu, said that she was very much impressed about our activities and services. She also appreciated the abilities and achievements of Mr SagarPatil in the field of electronics and solar energy in spite of his visual impairment.

Thereafter Mr Mohammed Raza, Member of Executive Council proposed the vote of thanks to the Chief Guest and all other participants for sparing their valuable time and making the programme a grand success.

After the award presentation function, a musical programme was performed by Mr Rajat Vijay Mishra and Team. The Programme was very much entertaining. The audience were delighted by hearing their songs. It was a memorable evening for the audience. The Association kept on record its sincere gratitude to the entire team for accepting our request and entertaining the audience, free of cost.

The programme concluded at 7.00 p.m. followed by National Anthem. All the participants were served with tea and delicious snacks.

ANNUAL PICNIC:

During the year on Sunday, 22nd December 2019, the Association had arranged a picnic mainly for the hawkers and their family members to a Farm House owned by Naik Foundation, at Safale. Total more than 100 people had participated in this picnic. The Association had arranged transportation from Safale Station to the picnic spot and back. The breakfast, lunch, evening tea etc. were arranged by the Naik Foundation, free of cost. The hawkers and their family members were not charged any amount for this picnic. Unfortunately on this occasion, one of our participants viz. MrMadhukarKokate, had slipped off and fell down to the river

nearby the picnic spot. He was immediately taken out and rushed to the nearby Medical centre for preliminary treatment and subsequently taken to Shatabdi Hospital at Kandivali for further check up and observation.

WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATIONS:

Due to Covid 19 Pandemic and Lockdown, this programme was not conducted.

OUR SINCERE THANKS

We are highly grateful to our Donors, Charitable Trusts and Well Wishers for their generous donations without which it would have been impossible for us to support our beneficiaries. During the year a total amount of Rs. 7,97,422/- was received by way of General as well as Earmarked Donations for our various activities and projects from various individuals as well as well-wishers and donors.

We specially thank Mr Sandeep R Patil, of Sandeep Patil & Associates, Chartered Accountant, for auditing our Accounts for the year 2019-20.

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.



(Mrs) ANUBHA DIXIT
(PRESIDENT)



KETAN KOTHARI
(HON. GEN. SECRETARY)