

**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, RustomAplaiwalla Complex 124/127,Cotton Depot,
Near Reay Road Rly. Station (East),MUMBAI-400 033

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2023-2024

Blind Persons' Association, (B P A) Mumbai is a voluntary charitable organization working since October 1947 for the betterment of blind individuals residing in Mumbai, 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 2023-2024.

MEMBERSHIP

With inclusion of 4 new members and sad demise of 6 members the present strength of membership is 1073.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

During the year, the Executive Council met 4 times, and the Working Committee met 5 times.

ACTIVITIES

This year also was full of activities and projects. BPA has many programs and schemes like Scholarship and Educational Assistance, Help the Ageded, Medical Assistance, Need Based Financial Assistance, House Repair, sale of Aids and Appliances at subsidized cost, Counseling Services, etc. It also organizes functions , cultural programs 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. 98,500/-/- (Ninety eight Thousand five Hundred Only)was disbursed during the year Total 45 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 2024, it stands at Rs. 12,97,069/-which includes the donations of Rs. 1,00,000/- received during the year 2023-2024. 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 Preprimary & 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

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, house collapse, sudden death of earning member of the family etc. Total assistance of Rs 20,600/-was disbursed to 10 clients during the year.

HOUSE REPAIR

BPA extends a helping hand to the needy blind persons residing in hutment 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.2000/-was disbursed to 1 clients.

HELP THE AGED SCHEME

Under this scheme we give Rs. 500/- per month per person, to financially poor blind individual who have reached the age of 60 or above 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, 38 clients were assisted to the tune of Rs. 2, 28, 000/-

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, Writing Slates, Signature Guides, Weighing Scales, braille playing cards etc. are made available at highly subsidized cost to needy clients. During the year the materials worth Rs. 21,800/were supplied to 94 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 2023-24, 21 blind women were assisted in their hour of need under our various schemes to the tune of Rs. 46,600/-.

Hawker's Day Program For The Blind.

On the occasion of AMRUT MOHASTAV of Blind Persons Association (Aandha Jan Mandal Mumbai) had organized Hawker's Day for the blind on Saturday the 20th May 2023 from 4.00 pm to 8.00pm at Rusi Mehta Hall, Bane Compound, Mumbai Central Railway Station(W) , Mumbai 400034.

Around 100 persons participated in this program. The cultural program was organized in the beginning where in some of the hawkers them self-had actively participated.

Mrs. Padma Kharat, Mrs. Suman Singh, Mr. Anil Mhaske and Mr. Hareshwar Mhatre were felicitated by sarvshree Arun Dudhwadkar local former Municipal corporater of municipal corporation of greater mumbai and comedian poet Mahesh Dubye for their outstanding achievements. 4 silver coins were also given to them by BPA to encourage them in their future life and towels were distributed as common gift as kind courtesy of Mr. Nitesh Shah.

Finally, Shree Mahesh Dubey a comedian poet presented one hour program for the entertainment of hawkers and other dignitaries who were present on this occasion.

School kit Distribution for the children of blind parents.

On 9th July 2023 school bags containing raincoat and other education material were distributed to 50 children of 45 Blind Parents in the presence of office bearers and E. C members along with representatives of the Rotary club of Mumbai Powai who sponsored this project.

Distribution of plastic sheets (Tadpatri) for rain affected blind families

As there was heavy rainfall in month of July in Mumbai and nearby districts which caused heavy damage of houses of poor blind families residing in chawls in the vicinity of Vangani railway station of central railway. BPA had distributed water proof plastic sheets(Tadpatri) to cover the roof top of 18 blind families as token of help, as it was an urgent need on 26th July 2023 the said material was handed over in presence of few office bearers and staff at Reay Road office.

The cost of this project was Rs: 25,000/- including transport charges which was generously sponsored by Shri. Shridhar Vaishaampan former executive of TCS .

RESHIMBANDH PROGRAMME:

On 26th August 2023, Reshimbandh program of Blind Persons' Association, Mumbai was celebrated with great enthusiasm. The program was organized at Terna Dental college auditorium, Nerul. The schedule of the program was as follows in the first session, Shri. Rajdeep Kadam entertained the audience by making different kinds of sounds and Dr. Kishore Gawande entertained the audience by singing in his own voice. The audience thoroughly enjoyed it. Music competition of monsoon song was organized in the evening session in which 19 singers participated. Three prizes and two consolation prizes were given away in the competition.

There were two judges for this competition Mr. M Shrinivasan and Mr. Bipin Vartak. Ex-Mayor of Navi Mumbai and Former member of parliament (M. P.), Dr. Sanjeev Naik ji was present to grace the event as chief guest in the beginning. He gave valuable guidance to the audience and also donated Rs: 25,000/- from Ganesh Naik Foundation. Executive member of our organization Mr. Patu was instrumental in getting snacks and Terna Dental college auditorium free of cost by kind courtesy of Mr. Radhe Radhe and MLA Rana Jagitsingh Patil respectively. Executive member Shri. Ashok Jangam was also instrumental in arranging evening snacks. Free samples of some of the beauty products were also distributed by Dr. Morphin company through Hyphenc advertising agency. The specialty was braille labels work printed on boxes.

Self-Employment Project

The Lions club of Malad Borivali extended financial support to 18 visually impaired persons amounting to around Rs 1,50,000/- referred by BPA to promote self-employment venture. Many of them are engaged in acupressure and massage therapy. Such V. I. person were provided with ultrasound and vibrator machine. Some of them are selling cutlery items at public places they were given away daily use articles to earn livelihood. Under the project "UDAAN " they will be assisting many more visually impaired person in future to lead a dignified life.

Scholarship Distribution for the children of blind parents

Phadke Ganpati Temple Trust gave Rs: 1,100/- each to 21 children of blind parents. The students and teacher of Rania Nursery school raised Rs: 21,760/- and Rotary club of Powai Mumbai provide cheque of Rs: 1,100/- each to 55 students. All together this year we have offered educational assistance to 86 students.

Apart from with reference of Dr. Kamlini Pathak, Shri. Harish Iyer from SUGOM Trust sponsored Rs: 1,00,000/- for the scholarship of 50 College going blind students of Rs: 2,000/- each. The amount was directly credited in the account of Blind students. To promote higher education amongst the visually impaired girls Shri. Tulsiani gave away Rs: 1500/- additionally to 23 college going blind girls. This function was arranged in our office on the occasion of our foundation day that is 19th October 2023. (Total amount of college 1,34,500/- Total amount of parents is 104,500/- grand total 2,39,000/-)

The cheque distribution function for the children of blind parents was organized on 11th November 2023 for which Shri. Dilip Talreja and Mrs. Sudha Ajit were present

on behalf of Rotary club of Powai Mumbai. Shri Radhe Radhe also graced the occasion along his wife & served the snacks to all the beneficiaries who were present on this occasion.

MOU with St. George Hospital for dental treatment :

Considering the rising cost in Dental treatment and the difficulties faced by blind patients to approach the hospital Memorandum of Understanding was sign between BPA and St. George hospital regarding Dental scheme for the blind on 19th October 2023 to commemorate our foundation day. A special function was organized at St. George hospital at 11.00am in which the doctors and students of dental college along with office bearers , committee members of BPA were present.

77th Foundation Day of Blind Persons Association.

77th foundation day of Blind Persons Association (BPA) Mumbai was organized on Sunday the 22nd October 2023 from 2.00 pm to 7.00 pm at Govind Dalvi Sabhagruha, A. B. Goregavkar English school, near Jain Temple, above Bank of Maharashtra, Goregao west Mumbai. This program was inaugurated by the chief guest former vice chancellor Dr.Mughda Karnik of Mumbai university and Ms.Jahnavi Killekar TV serial artist, Dr.Kamalini Pathak president of Rotary club of Powai and Shri. Amit Agarwal president Lions club of Malad Borivali were present for this function as guest of honour.

Shri. Sagar Bodke (visually impaired) was conferred Dr. Rajendra T. Vyas memorial award 2023 at the auspicious hands of chief guest for his outstanding achievements in the field of sports, athletics, tandem cycling , mountaineering etc.

Shri.Prathmesh Bendre had recited his own gazal and shero shayri from 3.00 pm to 4.00pm whereas Shrimati. Dipali Kelkar a news reader of Mumbai Durdarshan had performed Marathi standing comedy, HasyaSanjivani program from 5.00 pm onwards.

Around 200 persons had participated in this program. The program was a grand success . This program was jointly sponsored by Lions club Malad-Borivali, Shri. Gopal Shetty member of parliament Borivali Mumbai, Shri. Nitin Narkar social worker from employee of B.E.S.T. undertaking and Avarya flavours of India sweets.

One day rapid Chess Tournament for the Blind 2023.

organized by Blind Persons Association Mumbai, with lower Parel,Mitra Mandal & sponsored by Space Modular on Sunday the 31st December 2023 from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm at Aasra Nivara building Mandapam, Sitaram Jadhav Marg, Lower Parel West, Mumbai 400013. This tournament was inaugurated by office bearers/committee members of BPA & office bearers of Lower Parel Mitra Mandal at 9.30 am.

Around 50 leading blind chess players from various districts of state of Maharashtra had participated in this tournament.

Colorful prize distribution ceremony was held at 4.30 pm in the presence of dignitaries & guest. Cash prizes of worth Rs. 20,000/- were given away to the winners of the chess tournament. This event was a grand success. Shree Nitin Narkar local social worker & employee of BEST Undertaking had coordinated this marvelous tournament successfully including sponsorship of Rs. 50,000/-

Annual Picnic :

The annual one day picnic of BPA was organized on 24th February 2024 at Rajhans resort and water park , Navapur, (Motha Mahal Pada), Virar west. Around 75 persons including blind men & women, children, volunteers had participated in this picnic. Participants enjoyed various exciting slides, swimming, wave pool, rain dance with D. J etc.

Their management had provided beautiful resort at reasonable cost along with two time tea, snacks and delicious lunch. They have also arrange pickup and drop facility. This picnic was grand success.

International Women's Day Program

We have organized International women's day for blind women on Saturday the 9th March 2024 from 9.00 am to 6.00 pm at Central Railway Kalyan Bhavan Hall, Matunga (W), Mumbai.

This program was inaugurated by Head of Education Department Mumbai Grahak Panchyat Mrs. Mangala Gadgil and her colleagues by lighting the lamp .

Around 110 women participated in this program. Prizes were given away by Chief Guest renowned author Mrs. Swati Londhe & Mr. P L Tulsiyani for different games and Lucky draw to the winners.

In the first session various skits were perform for consumer awareness by the team of Mumbai Grahak panchayat. Which followed by question answer session .

To involve participation from all women various fun games were conducted which were well appreciated. The participants enjoyed sumptuous lunch. Mrs. Arti Muneshwar performed Mono acting by depicting historical figure of Aandi bai Peshve.

In the final function Dr. Savitri Gupta was felicitated for her outstanding achievements.

On this occasion Solicitor Kanchan Pamnani ,P L Tulsiyani & Manish Rupnani administrator of Suman Ramesh Tusiyani Tust were present as guest of honour. Specially this program was successfully organized by lady committee members and office bearers including President Mona Tailor, Executive council committee members Mrs. Sarla Padhi, Ms. Ananta Bhoje, Ms. Vanita Hariya, Ms. Ketki Shah and Ms. Sunita Nigam. Complementary Gifts were given by Mr. P L Tulsiyani and Champaben Respectively.

Tulsiani Trust gave a donation of Rs.2100/- to the blind women who attended the International Women's Day event.

Women volunteers of Service Civil International Maharashtra group offered their services.

Report of Ayushman Bharat Card Camp

The Central Government has launched a medical scheme name Ayushman Bharat, by which citizens having yellow and saffron ration card are entitled for free medical treatment up to Five Lakhs at designated hospitals. Provide benefit to visually impaired persons BPA Mumbai had organized a camp for Ayushman Bharat card on Saturday the 16th March 2024 at BPA office. The said camp was conducted in collaboration with Samata Foundation. 60 persons registered them self for the camp out of which 43 turned up. Two staff members of Smamta Foundation extended support to the beneficiaries and promptly handed over laminated cards.

Some beneficiaries were also given E- Sharam card. Samata Foundation assured us to conduct such camps in future also.

On this occasion BPA office bearers and committee members were present.

Advocacy :

The All India Confederation of the blind had donated Rs: 1,80,000/- for the salary of an advocacy officer for a period of 1 year. Shri. Mangesh Gaykar was appointed as advocacy officer from 16th October 2023 on contract bases . Under the advocacy initiatives several issues faced by the blind were taken up successfully. Some of them were as follows.

- 1) Access audit of central railway station .
- 2) Webinar on various scheme of both central and state government for the benefit of V. I. person.
- 3) Offering technical assistance to use smart phones.
- 4) Taking up cases of those who had denied banking services .
- 5) Liaisoning with Divyang Kalyan Vibhag for various issues and difficulties of blind students.
- 6) A petition with Chief commissioner for persons with disabilities regarding discrimination in getting railway concession for low vision persons.

The list is illustrative and not exhaustive. We have rejuvenated our counselling service which we offer to the newly blind persons . There are many more issues which BPA will take up to reduce the hardship of the blind.

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. This year we received Rs. 10,75,784/- (Ten Lakh Seventy five thousand seven hundred eighty four only) by way of donations from our donors by way of General as well as earmarked Donations for our various activities and projects.

Our special thanks to Shree Babulnath Mandir trust, N. Ramakrishnan , Shridhar Vaishampayan , All India Confederation of the blind, Shri. Hiralal Magnalal Doshi Trust, Space Moulders, Infinity Construction, Siddhi Trading, Mahendra Galani, Hassanand Bodaram Chawla Charitable trust, Max Joseph Fernandes, Saroj P Shah, Vaidheeswaran Iyer, Seth Pestonji F Davar Charitable trust, Mangala Prabhu, Lions club of Malad- Borivali, Rotary club of Powai Mumbai, Sugom charitable trust etc.

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.

We hope the next year would be a better year for all of us.



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(HON. GEN. SECRETARY)