**Voice of the Blind**

**Fortnight e-bulletin**

**(Collection of news and informations of and for the blind)**

Compiled, Edited and circulated by National Federation of the Blind Karnataka

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**1. Editorial**

Dear Readers,

You are welcomed at beginning of 3rd year of journey of “Voice of the Blind”

We take this opportunity of expressing our deepest gratitude to all those to contributed to the successful compilation and publication of 47 constraint issues of the e-bulletin during last two years.

As you all have been the witness of the fact that following have been the focused objectives in coverage of the content of the bulletin

a. eradication of negative attitude of the society for persons with disability and to promote their positive image as a student, worker, professional artist and a contributed member of our community.

b. Eradication, reduction or remedies in cases of various disabilities through alternative scientific innovations

c. Increasing intervention of IT and other advance techniques in order to overcome the deficiency of different disabilities in all spheres of life.

d. To direct the attention of policy makers, administrators, executive officers towards improvement, modernization and review of public policies, programs and practices, governing the rehabilitation, education and employment of persons with disability

e. Highlighting discrimination, violence, stereo types and government apathy, against persons with disability

f. Enabling our brothers and sisters with disability to access and avail all special opportunities and facilities of public and private sector at all levels for their appropriate rehabilitation and comprehensive empowerment in all spheres of life

As our readers are our real evaluators, we therefore leave on them that how they evaluate our success in achieving all afforstated goals and how many marks we are given for our performance.

With these words we at “Voice of the Blind” wish all our readers a wonderful year ahead and hope, this year will expand its horizons in area of its coverage and circulation with all its pre fixed aims and objectives

May all our readers have prosperity, peace and success in life

With best complements

Editor

**2. Appeal for contribution**

We appeal to all readers of this e-bulletin to share the relevant stories, news, events and development of and for the blind across the globe for this news bulletin so that we can report you the best on your success and development of the sector.

Dead line for coverage of the content provided by the readers for the next issue is 27th July 2017

Please send your submissions in English and e-format to above given mail id.

**3. News from far & near**

**1. Toyota launches robot that helps disabled move around the house**

Like the rest of the automotive industry, Toyota is beginning to think past the traditional automobile and focus on mobility. And with that, the company has shown off its Human Support Robot (HSR), after testing it with a U.S. war veteran in his home.

The HSR is part of a number of projects Toyota is working on to aid mobility mobility for those who have impaired functions. The at-home test, a first of its kind, was done with the help of Romulo "Romy" Carmago, who suffered injuries in Afghanistan that caused him to become paralyzed from the neck down.

The robot contains wheels and has visual sensors, along with an arm that can do tasks for those it is helping, like handling door knobs or grasping objects.

[GECKO INSPIRED ROBOT COULD SNAG SPACE JUNK](http://www.foxnews.com/science/2017/06/29/gecko-inspired-robot-could-snag-space-junk.html)

It also has the ability to make video calls and has been used in Japanese hospitals to help with the country's population.

“At Toyota, we have a commitment to enriching lives by advancing mobility for all – whether it’s around town or across your living room,” said Doug Moore, senior manager, Technology for Human Support at Toyota, in a statement obtained by technology website [The Verge](https://www.theverge.com/2017/6/30/15900634/toyota-robot-ai-paralyzed-army-veteran). “This includes developing technology solutions to assist people with limited mobility. We see our research with Romy and the HSR as a natural extension of our work as a mobility company that helps people navigate their world.”

The origins of the HSR date back a decade, when Toyota started its Robot Partner program. Since then, the company has experimented with robots in a number of different applications, including helping paralyzed people walk.

In 2015, Toyota created the Toyota Research Institute, saying it would put $1 billion into it over five years, to help advance artificial intelligence and different mobility solutions, including robots.

# 2.Vadodara NGO organises interactive session with disabled activist

# VADODARA: [Yi Vadodara](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Yi-Vadodara) recently organized an interactive session with Lalitkumar Natarajan. Lalit, who wants to conquer the highest motorable pass in the world, was in Vadodara en route his tour to [Kashmir](http://www.happytrips.com/topic/kashmir), on his retrofitted bike. During the interaction with [Yi](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Yi)members, Lalit mentioned, "Will power knows no obstacles. It is just not a quote but a reflection of myself."

Lalit is a 37-year-old member of Young Indians (Yi) from Tirrupur affected with transverse myelitis, a rare neurological condition and a passionate biker.

"For most differently abled people, their disabilities are perceived as barriers, but Lalit Natarajan stands out from the rest," said Amrita Patel, chair of Yi Vadodara.  
Lalit is a passionate biker who is now ready to break all stereotypes associated with the differently abled as he is a set to embark on a journey from Kanyakumari to [Khardung La Pass](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Khardung-La-Pass) in [Ladakh](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Ladakh) on his bike.  
He on his journey, also spreading the message of 'Horn Not Ok Please' to avoid unnecessary honking, an initiative of Young Indians

# 3. Southern Railways directed to become disabled-friendly by court

# **Chennai:**A city-based court of the state commissioner for the differently abled, has directed Southern Railways and stake-holders to hold a meeting with regard to provision of reasonable accommodation for differently-abled in trains where LHB-type SLRD coaches were not available.

# Passing interim orders, State Commissioner for the Special Court Ashish Kumar, constituted under Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, said the meeting shall be held on or before 9 July.

# The court was hearing a petition by TMN Deepak Nathan, founder-president of 'December 3rd Movement', who sought reasonable accommodation, temporarily, for differently-abled persons in trains where Linke Hofmann Busch (LHB) type second class luggage rake for disabled (SLRD) coaches are not available, especially in Pandian and Rock fort Express trains.

When the matter came up on 19 June, counsel for Southern Railways filed an affidavit stating that the Railway Board had accorded sanction for the manufacture of LHB type SLRD coaches for attachment in LHB rakes.

Production of these coaches will be taken up during 2017-18 in its units at ICF and RCF, it added.

However, petitioner's counsel told the Commissioner that the solution proposed would take a long time and hence, there was need of temporary measures for providing reasonable accommodation for differently-abled passengers in the two trains.

The petitioner also offered to give suggestions or ideas on the issue.

The Commissioner directed that a joint meeting be held on or before 9 July and a detailed action plan be submitted to the court on the provisions proposed to be made by Southern Railways, till a permanent solution of providing LHB type SLRD coaches in the two trains are provided.

The matter would be taken up again on 10 July.

# 4. Disabled man thrown out of a moving train in Chandigarh

Three men allegedly thrashed and threw out a disabled man from a moving train near Ambala in Haryana after he objected to their smoking in the coach, police said on Friday.

Upender Prasad, in his mid-40s, who is being treated at the civil hospital in Ambala, in his complaint said the three men in their early 20s assaulted him and later threw him out of the train after he asked them to stop smoking.

Station House Officer, GRP, Ambala Cantt, Raj Bachchan told The Hindu that Mr. Prasad boarded the Kerala Sampark Kranti Express on June 30 and was heading for his hometown in Faridabad when the incident took place.

“Mr. Prasad boarded the compartment for the disabled at 9.30 a.m. from Chandigarh in which three physically fit youngsters were also travelling. As the train left, the three men started smoking, to which Mr. Prasad objected. The altercation escalated and allegedly the three youth hurled abuses and thrashed him. Also, they snatched his cell phone and purse. Later, as the train slowed down ahead of the Ambala Cantt. station, Mr. Prasad was pushed out of the train by the attackers, leaving him unconscious,” said Mr. Bachchan.

CCTV footage scanned

The SHO said that after Mr. Prasad regained consciousness he sought help from people who took him to the civil hospital. “He sustained injury on the head, besides a fracture in the shoulder and leg,” said Mr. Bachchan.

CCTV footage at the Chandigarh railway station was being scrutinized.

# 5. Meet Vidhya, a visually impaired girl who topped her post graduation exam

# BENGALURU: When [visually impaired](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/visually-impaired) Vidhya Y approached the pre-university board, seeking extra time for her mathematics exam, she was asked why she hadn't chosen humanities instead. Today, she is graduating after topping her class in MSc Digital Society from the International Institute of Information Technology Bengaluru ([IIITB](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/IIITB)).

"Studying maths and science was very hard for me in school and I had to skip all the diagrams. In classes 8, 9 and 10, I had to learn by myself. During my undergraduate course in computer applications, I had a scribe for the exams for the first two terms, but I faced problems. Then I had to request them to let me take the exam on a computer by myself," said the 23-year-old.  
  
Vidhya and two others will be working towards making maths and science more accessible to the visually impaired.

"When I was a child, my dream was to become a doctor. But because of my disability I was unable to choose science in school and opted for commerce instead. Even taking maths proved to be a difficult task; when I sought extra time for the examination, PU board officials asked why I was 'giving them a headache', and that I should have just opted for humanities. I don't want anybody else to go through this. So I plan on building technology that will make learning these subjects easier for visually impaired primary school students. We will then move on to the higher classes as well," she said.

MSc Digital Society was launched in 2015. The two-year course seeks to train students with a background in any discipline to work at the intersection of IT and Social Sciences. Students will be equipped in such a way that they are able to design digital technologies for diverse social groups, and provide solutions that will address developmental challenges in health, education and governance.

269 set to graduate

Including Vidhya, 269 post-graduate students will graduate from IIITB on Sunday. It is the largest batch of IIITB till date. "This will include the first batch of the five-year integrated [MTech programme](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/MTech-programme), MSc in Digital Society and the sponsored MTech programme," said professor S Sadagopan, IIITB director

# 6. Bengaluru school uses Lego to help kids with learning disabilities

If you played with Lego bricks as a child, you’d remember the colorful plastic blocks which kept you busy for hours as you built anything from houses to helicopters. Sure, they were fun toys which helped you pass time as kids and gave your imagination a physical structure, but what other purpose could they possibly serve?

Turns out, they have the potential to do a lot more. And at Ankura Foundation, an inclusive pre-school in Bengaluru, that is just what is happening. The school also includes students with learning disabilities. Dr Shobha Shashidhara, the director of the foundation started a Lego Club about a month ago and now, along with her daughter Shruthi, helps children who have learning disability and social difficulties.

**What is Lego Therapy**

The Lego Club started on May 25 in collaboration with Toylet, a toy company. The Club currently has six children with learning disabilities between the ages of 5 and 7.

The Club employs Lego therapy, and also claims to be the first in Karnataka to have done so for children with learning disabilities. It was a Canadian neuropsychologist, Dr Daniel B LeGoff, who first [discovered](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/schools/the-rise-of-lego-clubs-how-toys-are-helping-children-struggling-with-social-interaction-to-build-10279678.html) the therapeutic effect of Lego bricks for children who fell under the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in 1999.

The success of the method has led to Lego groups coming up to help ASD children in various parts of the world.

Dr Shobha says that Lego therapy works because it takes the adult out of the equation and allows for the child to take the initiative and break out of his/her shell. “Many other methods to make children comfortable with social interactions rely too much on the teacher’s intervention and instruction. With Lego, the process happens naturally,” she says.

Initially, the child is assessed and based on that is given individual therapy if needed. Once the child is comfortable enough, he/she is allowed to work in a team.

**Put in groups of three, one child takes the role of the ‘engineer’, or one that decides the instruction, another becomes the ‘builder’, the one who assembles the Lego structure together and the third one is the ‘supplier’, or the one who finds the right pieces to use.**

“Such a roleplay automatically means that they have to interact with one another. So instead of us making them speak to other children, the interaction becomes organic, making it easier for the children to work together,” Dr Shobha says.

Shruthi, who holds a degree in psychology, tells TNM that there is more at work here that making children comfortable with social interactions. “There are five aspects that Lego therapy helps in: physical and motor development, cognitive development, speech and communication, socialization, emotional development and creativity and imagination,” she says.

And while adults stay out of the group dynamics for the most part, they do need to intervene at times when emotions run high and there are disagreements. But this becomes a part of children's emotional development as well as socialisation, say Dr Shobha and Shruthi.

**Shruthi adds that they also use Lego to teach about space, colour, pattern, mathematics and the like. “For instance, we can teach them numbers by counting the bricks, sequences by asking them to place the right numbered brick between those labelled ‘5’ and ‘7’, special concepts like placing a brick behind, below or on top of another…” Shruthi explains.**

However, it will take time to see more definitive results in terms of social skills and learning, Dr Shobha adds.

**Not just for kids**

It’s not just children who can use Lego to enhance or improve their skills. Turns out, Lego can help solve some serious corporate problems too. Rajan Narayanan, who works with Dr Shobha and Shruthi at Ankura Foundation, is also a certified serious Lego play instructor. Rajan, who was certified in 2008, holds Lego serious play sessions for corporates in Bengaluru from time to time to help with strategy and problem solving.

**“The problem we often run into as adults, is that while growing up, we’ve forgotten to play,” Rajan observes. He explains that Lego serious play works in three ways – by increasing the commitment of the team, by improving their confidence and by providing insights into the problem, even if it doesn’t conclude in a solution.**

Taking the example of the situation where a company’s sales are down, Rajan explains what happens. “First we’ll ask each team member to build a Lego model of themselves as a person. If you ask them to describe themselves verbally, they’d probably not say over 2 lines. But this helps them really articulate better – the story becomes more engaging,” he says.

Then, the participants are asked to build a Lego model of why they think the sales are low. After this, they would be asked to build a region-wise model of what the problem is, followed by a model of how they can help solve the problem. “This way, the entire team participates, uses metaphors to explain their ideas and negotiate with others about what they say,” Rajan says.

The major component of Lego application in problem solving or strategizing is storytelling, Rajan says. “It also helps that you’re thinking and expressing through your fingers. This improves motor skills, especially in children,” he adds.

# 7. American teen creates tech to help blind communicate with household appliances

# Teen creates device to help blind people communicate with appliances

A 14-year-old Louisville resident has created a device that allows people with visual impairments to get audio feedback from their washers and dryers.

Jack DuPlessis, who will attend duPont Manual High School in the fall, developed the Talking Laundry module at First Build, the GE Appliances subsidiary and innovation hub, where his father, Sam DuPlessis, works as design leader.

The technology can help people with visual impairments remain independent and can compensate for visual deficiencies of America’s aging population.

The gadget’s origins date back to a competition at FirstBuild, in which a community member introduced a stove for the visually impaired, which featured grooves to allow for the proper placement of pots and pans, and audio warnings about hot surfaces.

The elder DuPlessis said that he learned that modern appliances often are not very user-friendly for people with visual impairments. For example, modern appliances often have round knobs that can be turned 360 degrees, but which lack a home position. That means people who have trouble seeing cannot figure out in which position the knob is.

DuPlessis talked about the challenge with Jack, an avid programmer, who had taught himself some computer programming languages.

ack wrote software — about 1,000 lines of JavaScript code — that uses a GEA appliance’s service diagnostics board to provide feedback about the knob’s position. The board typically is used by service technicians to figure out why a machine is malfunctioning.

FirstBuild sought feedback about the device’s effectiveness from students at the Kentucky School for the Blind, who encouraged Jack to improve the functionality, for example, by having the device announce, on command, how much time remains on a washing or drying cycle.

“They helped find bugs,” Jack said. “It was very helpful.”

The device, about the size of a portable hard drive, needs a power connection and plugs into the back of GEA’s recent laundry appliances. Jack recently stood in front of a washer and dryer, turning their knobs, which prompted a synthesized voice from the module to announce “spin level high,” “whites” or “starting whites with an estimated 69 minutes left.”

Larry Skutchan, director of technology product research at the American Printing House for the Blind, said many modern appliances are so user-unfriendly for blind people that they’re essentially useless.

Skutchan said that the knob on his previous washer and dryer had no home position, which meant he relied on other family members to return the knob to the proper position once they were done with the appliances — but that didn’t always happen.

And that’s a huge problem because it increases blind people’s level of dependence on others.

“Being independent is really important for people,” Skutchan said.

He praised Jack for his ingenuity and for solving a problem that can help lots of people.

The National Federation of the Blind estimates that about 7.5 million non-institutionalized people in the U.S. between ages 16 and 75 had a visual disability in 2014. That includes about 145,000 in Kentucky.

FirstBuild leaders also hope the Talking Laundry module boosts sales for GE Appliances. In at least one case, it already has.

“I got these two now,” Skutchan said, pointing to the GEA appliances at FirstBuild that were connected to the Talking Laundry Device.

A close-up of the Talking Laundry module. Magnets hold the device in place. | Courtesy of FirstBuild

For laundry duties, he said the appliances and Jack’s device have made a world of difference.

“You can do it just like a sighted person,” he said.

Jack said that getting that kind of feedback is “a pretty exciting feeling.”

“You don’t get to do that every day,” the teen said.

“You should be proud of yourself, Jack,” Skutchan told him.

The elder DuPlessis said that the module also can be helpful for people whose vision deteriorates with age or those who have their washer and dryer in low-light environments.

Jack said his interest in coding began in fourth grade when he learned about the educational computer programming language Scratch. He enjoyed the lesson so much that he began dabbling in other computer languages.

Even now, on summer break, he spends many days at First Build, working on improving his Talking Laundry device — though most days he does sleep in and joins his father at the site after lunch.

First Build Director Larry Portaro said the Talking Laundry project exemplified the kind of work for which the innovation hub was created: People with a passion for an idea come in and use First Build’s collaborative approach and available expertise to create an inexpensive solution to an appliance-related challenge.

The modules can be ordered online for $99. They’ll be made to order at First Build, so delivery takes about five weeks.

While people who contribute to projects at First Build generally receive some financial compensation if their product goes into mass production, it’s unclear whether Jack’s work on the talking laundry gadget will boost his allowance, which he usually augments by mowing lawns.

“We haven’t figured that out yet,” his father said with a chuckle.

Jack does not seem too concerned, though, as he already is mulling his next projects. He wants to develop a better charger for his phone, and a computer case with better sound dampening.

He also has designed Pac-Man-like games and a JavaScript-based game that allows you to check your typing speed and accuracy.

**8. Odisha government to launch universal eye care program**

Bhubaneswar, Jul 2 (PTI) Odisha Chief Minister [Naveen Patnaik](http://indiatoday.intoday.in/people/naveen-patnaik/17976.html) today said that the state government was developing a universal eye care programme to reduce the number of curable blind persons.

"The state is now in the process of developing a universal eye care programme to minimise the number of treatable and curable blind persons in Odisha by setting up necessary institutional mechanisms," Patnaik said at a cornea collection awareness programme.

He said that required mechanisms would be put in place for screening and providing free treatment to all persons with treatable and curable causes of blindness along with rehabilitative services for the blind.

"I would emphasise use of technology under the programme to register all individuals with eye problems through an eye health web portal so that they can be issued eye health cards for further follow up action," Patnaik said.

The chief minister expressed happiness over collection of more than 5000 corneas through eye donations by Drushti Daan, a body that organised the cornea collection awareness programme.

He also appreciated the service of Drushti Daan in eye donation movement for 15 years.

# 9. Sight-based starting system helps deaf swimmers

A new start system has been developed at the Singapore University of Technology and Design to help deaf athletes get off their starting blocks.

The system is called SwimSight, and it uses two colours - orange and green - to alert deaf swimmers to race starts and is compatible with professional timing devices.

The SwimSight device is placed at the side of each starting block and its position can be adjusted by the athlete to his or her preference. This is unlike earlier designs, which were fixed.

It sends out an orange light, which then turns to green at the start of the race. The idea for such a device came about when the president of the Singapore Deaf Association came to the institute and asked for a device that would enable deaf swimmers to start without any problems.

The device that has been designed is user-friendly for the swimmers. SwimSight has been used in many events and has been praised by deaf and non-deaf swimmers

# 10. Andhra Pradesh NGO employs disabled to make eco-friendly bags

# VISAKHAPATNAM: The demand for paper and cloth bags as an alternative to polythene has gone up in the city, thus creating employment opportunities for women from the disadvantaged sections of the society making these eco-friendly bags. With International [Plastic Bag Free](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Plastic-Bag-Free) Day falling on Monday, NGOs hope to spread awareness among the Vizagites to encourage them to use paper and cloth bags.

# Satya, founder of [Sampoorna](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Sampoorna), an [NGO](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/NGO) which employs 20 handicapped women to make eco-friendly bags, said, "A group of handicapped women from the nearby villages work in our unit making paper and cloth bags. Depending on the size, the cloth bags are priced from Rs 10 to Rs 100 per bag and paper bags are priced from Rs 4 to Rs 40." Satya says her products are finding more takers in the city now. "For instance, the manager of the food outlet Subway in Siripuram buys these bags for her customers as the outlet no more uses plastic bags." Each day about 100 paper bags and 50 cloth bags are made at Sampoorna now. This is in contrast to the situation two years back when they made 60 paper bags and 20 cloth bags.

Apart from taking care of our daily expenses, we could also save some money to send back home," says Y Mani, a physically handicapped woman. These women earn anywhere between Rs 100 and Rs 200 per day based on the number of bags they make. Ratna Latha, founder of [Green Face Environmental Society](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Green-Face-Environmental-Society), an environmental NGO said she has requested the authorities of the Rythu bazaars in the city to take steps to curb the use of polythene bags.

"Through our student chapter we are going to create awareness among the customers on Monday at the Rythu Bazaar in MVP Colony to make them replace plastic bags with cloth or jute bags. We are also trying to procure cloth bags at affordable prices for the flower vendors in the market."

In observance of International Plastic Bag Free Day, Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board and [India Youth for Society](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/India-Youth-for-Society) is organising a painting competition with the theme Refuse, Reuse, Reduce, Recycle and Repurpose.

A group of handicapped women from the nearby villages work in our unit making paper and cloth bags. Depending on the size, the cloth bags are priced from Rs 10 to Rs 100 per bag and paper bags are priced from Rs 4 to Rs 40

**11. Study circle for free coaching to physically-disabled**

As part of its efforts to banish all ills that can impede the State’s transition to a knowledge hub, the government has introduced a series of educational schemes for not just the backward communities but also, in a first of its kind, for students who come from economically backward families regardless of the community they belong to.

To provide a ladder to the physically-disabled students to scale great heights in life, the government proposes to start a Study Circle to train them for competitive exams and civil services.

“We proposed to start AP Study Circle for the Differently-Abled in Vijayawada this month. The location is not finalised yet,” said Deputy Director of the Department of Differently-Abled and Welfare of Senior Citizens Kumar Raja.

According to the 2011 census, there are around 11 lakh-odd physically-disabled people in the 13 districts and a large number of them stand to benefit by the move.

Many physically challenged persons languish in abject poverty without proper food, clothing and shelter. Taking their ordeal into account, two new homes for the blind and destitute have been started in Anantapur and Kakinada. This is in addition to setting up a junior college for visually impaired in Visakhapatnam, a school for differently-abled at Hindupur and a home for orthopaedically disabled persons sanctioned in Guntur district.

“The idea is to help them educate themselves, enhance their skills, find suitable jobs and lead a life of dignity,” said Mr. Kumar Raja.

Existing schemes:

Disabled people receive pension contributed by the State and the Central governments under schemes such as the Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme; visually impaired persons are entitled to free bus travel in the city and suburban areas with escorts.

A grant of ₹1 lakh is given if a non-disabled person marries a physically challenged person. Educational scholarships are given to all categories of physically-disabled candidates.

# 12.Technology helps blind man see his unborn child

WILLIAMSON CO. -- A southern Illinois tech expert has developed a way to turn an ultrasound image into a life-like sculpture using a 3D printer.

His company, Image to Life, has partnered with Heartland Women's Healthcare to bring this latest advancement to parents.

Ryan and Cassandra Carter got a surprise when they showed up for their routine ultrasound.

They got a sculpture of their unborn child.

Usually during visits, Cassandra waits to see an image of their baby girl while Ryan listens for a heartbeat, because he can't see.

"Usually, I'm in here and the pictures are up on the screen and it doesn't do me any good," said Ryan.

At a very young age Ryan struggled with his eyesight.

"Before I was five, I had 13 eye operations. After that I was left with vision for a little bit, enough to get through school, and at about 20, I had another injury occur," he said.

Image to Life technical creator Chris Frost used a 3D Printer to create a sculpture of what his baby looks like.

"He was able to experience something that he had never been able to experience before. His wife comes in here several times for visits and he stands in the ultrasound room and has no idea what she's looking at," said Frost.

Frost says the entire process takes about 14 to 18 hours from start to finish.

"The model that I presented today took six hours and 39 minutes, actually from the time I press start on the printer to complete," said Frost.

Frost says he also spends time adding details and painting the sculpture to make sure parents can see the tiny features like the lips and nose.

Ryan says being able to hear the heartbeat has always been the the power of the visits for him, and now being able to "feel" his unborn child leaves him almost speechless.

Frost says Image to Life sells the sculptures to parents.

You can learn more by contacting Heartland Women's Healthcare.

## 13.14,500 special children to get supportive aids

## Those diagnosed with autism to be treated at six centres

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is planning to complete the distribution of supportive aids to 14,500 differently-abled schoolchildren in the district by August.

A.K. Abdul Hakkeem, district programme officer, SSA, said here on Sunday that hearing-impaired and visually-impaired children were given special attention this time. “They were broadly categorised into four groups – fully deaf and partially blind; partially deaf and fully blind; fully blind; and fully deaf,” he added.

Some of their problems could be cured through corrective surgeries. “As many as 7,500 students will be distributed spectacles. Those having hearing problems will be subjected to audiogram tests and will be given hearing aids,” Mr. Hakkeem said.

Those diagnosed with autism will be treated at the six autism centres in the district. Students who are suffering from cerebral palsy will be given special chairs. Another area of concern, Mr. Hakkeem said, was community mobilisation. Awareness campaigns have been planned for parents of such children. “The parents of normal children should be made aware that differently-abled kids too are part of society. They need empathy, not sympathy,” he said. Success stories and orientation programmes will be held to stress the point that they too have their rights.

Mr. Hakkeem pointed out that normally the identification and distribution of supportive aids used to get delayed because of various reasons. “This year, we started the survey to identify special children soon after the academic year began. Our resource persons identified 14,500 differently-abled school-going children between Class 1 and Class 8,” he said. “Medical camps to diagnose their problems are on now in association with the Health Department, Government Medical College, Kozhikode, and the Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences. We hope to wind it up by July 10,” he added.

## 14. Agarbattis light up the lives of visually impaired

Nagpur: Sonali Nandkumar, 38, who is partially blind, lost some courage when less marks in banking exams meant she would not get a job there. "They told me that exams would be re-conducted once the new government takes over, but I failed to clear those too," says the BA graduate.

However, like the silver lining to dark clouds, Nandkumar found employment last month at NGO Atmadeepam Society's new Agarbatti Project. Nandkumar had never seen an agarbatti machine before and was unsure whether she would be able to do it. But after training for a month, she now boasts of making 7-8kg [agarbattis](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/agarbattis) a day, between 9am to 5pm.  
"Till now, my parents have cared for me. But with the money I earn, I want to care for them. It makes me happy that I too have got something to do. I am not a lesser being than anyone," she says.

Priyankar Purankar, 21, who recently finished her graduation, is also partially blind. "The situation at home is not so good," she says, adding, "I'm from Chandrapur, but I live here with my brother. Paying the rent is a concern for us." After learning to make agarbattis, Purankar's agility now helps her make 10kg a day. The monthly wages she receives are enough to pay the rent, and also allow her to apply for a master's degree.  
Her roommate Amrapali Somule, 23, who recently shifted from Chandrapur after graduation, also decided to make the most of the opportunity. "My parents are happy and encouraging me," she says.

Over 40 people will benefit from the initiative helmed by Atmadeepam's founder Jidnyasa Chawaldhal. Each individual will be paid Rs15 per kilogram of agarbattis produced by them. The project was inaugurated on Sunday at the project's premises on Salve Road, Mohan Nagar.  
Some 20 machines have been donated by District Disability Rehabilitation Centre, while another 20 have been given by Persistent Foundation. The opportunity to work will be open to all visually impaired persons above 18 years of age who wish to earn money.

Two partially blind persons will also supervise the making of agarbattis and be responsible for making the mixture to be coated over the agarbatti sticks. All the required raw materials will be given by Cycle brand agarbattis, and the produced agarbattis will be perfumed and later marketed by the same company.

"There is a similar project in Gadchiroli for sighted people. I was in talks with them about how this project could be implemented here for the blind. When Avinash Shinde, president of Integrated Group, came forward to donate the space in his building, I decided to launch the project," says Chawaldhal.

She adds, "Not all visually impaired individuals can be absorbed in government jobs, especially the fully-blind and uneducated persons. This project is for them to earn a living. It is pretty easy once a person is trained."

## 15.Violence against Women and Girls with Physical Disabilities in India

The Center for Women’s Development Studies (CWDS), New Delhi is engaging in an action research project titled ‘Violence against Women and Girls with Physical Disabilities in India: Understanding the Issues and Promoting Legal Empowerment’. Professor Renu Addlakha is the project director of this  
two year research-cum-advocacy project being funded by the South Asia Women’s Fund (SAWF). The project has a two-fold agenda:

a. To conduct empirical research on the topic of violence against women and girls with physical disabilities (including sensory disabilities) in India.  
This work would enter the public domain in the form of presentations at seminars, conferences and publications.

b. To develop a legal literacy training manual for empowerment of girls and women with physical disabilities (including sensory disabilities). This manual would be distributed among NGOs, schools, colleges, corporate and other organisations and institutions engaging with disability issues in different domains of public life in India.

As a first step into this work, we are conducting a needs assessment survey with critical stakeholders in the disability sector to get an idea of their opinion on prevalence and importance of the issue and the need for a legal advocacy tool to empower a vulnerable group of the population to access justice.

**16. Circular for appointing special educators**

Mandatory for CBSE schools to appoint educators for students with disabilities

Asia-Pacific Jun 28, 2017

MUMBAI: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has made it mandatory for all its affiliated schools to appoint a special educator to promote inclusive education. A recent CBSE circular states that while the rule has been in place since 2015, the board had found that schools were not following it.

“It has been observed that many schools affiliated with CBSE are not adhering to the provision concerning appointment of special educators. In this connection, your attention is invited to affiliation bylaws which provide to promote inclusion of students with disabilities in the normal school as per provisions of the Persons with Disabilities Act 1995 and in conformity with National Policy of Education,” said the circular that has been put up on the board’s website.

The board has asked the school management and heads to strictly follow the provision. It has also told the school managing committee to strictly comply with the rule.

However, some schools in the city said they were already in tie-ups with special educators. “We have a tie-up with an organization and special educators visit our school every 15 days. In addition to this, there are cousellors who are available on school premises all the time,” said Kalpana Dwivedi, principal, St Joseph High School, Panvel.

However, some other schools refer cases to experts instead. “We had a special educator on our board but haven’t found a replacement after she left. It is sometimes difficult to find a special educator. We have counsellors at school who refer the cases to expert if there is a need,” said the principal of a CBSE school.

Recently, even ICSE schools were asked to take steps for inclusive education. The schools have been asked to detect specific learning disabilities in children at the early stage, preferably, when they are in the primary school or after they complete the age of nine years. The council has also laid down infrastructure requirements, which includes resource persons such as special educators.

**17. Buying vehicles is now confusing for PWDs**

HYDERABAD: For a person with disability, buying a new car under the GST regime can be confusing. Small cars under GST have been taxed at 28 per cent, however vehicles for those with disability has been rated to be 18 per cent under GST.

The rates released by the GST council in June taxed vehicles bought by PWDs at 18 per cent. To avail this 10 per cent tax deduction, those with physical disability will ideally have to submit a disability certificate along with other documentation at the time of buying the vehicle so that manufacturer modifies the vehicle.

However, no car manufacturers in India, at present, modify vehicles for PWDs. This leaves them with no other option but to rely on car mechanics who often do not have a Regional Transport Authority (RTA) licence. “Under such circumstances, those with a disability will have to buy their vehicle at 28 per cent tax and will be unable to avail the 10 per cent exemption,” said M Pavan Kumar, Chief Executive Officer, Swadhikaar Centre for Disabilities Information. “We will issue a clarification from time to time on matters related to tax classification,” said V Anil Kumar, commercial tax commissioner.

For PWDs, assistive devices under GST will be taxed at 5 to 18 per cent. “This will make these items expensive for the disabled. A vast majority of those disabled in Telangana are from the low income groups and usually need financial assistance to access such devices,” said Pavan.

# 18. Smartphone app to help color blind students conduct lab experiments

Kolkata, July 3 (IANS) Indian scientists have developed a smartphone app that helps colour blind and visually impaired students detect colour changes in a routine lab experiment, thereby ensuring their active participation and independence.

The app, Titration ColorCam, is a step forward in the ongoing effort to develop assisstive mobile technology to aid blind students in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), said Subhajit Bandyopadhyay and Balraj B. Rathod of the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) Kolkata.

It provides a multi-sensory perception of colour change observed in a titration experiment, where a solution of known concentration is used to determine the concentration of an unknown solution.

The design and development of the app were primarily focused on the problems faced by colour-blind students in chemistry labs, Bandyopadhyay, of IISER-Kolkata’s Department of Chemical Sciences, told IANS.

“By following the application tutorial and laboratory training for handling the apparatus, a colour-blind student can perform the experiment independently and with ease,” he said.

It can be freely downloaded from the Google Play Store on Android devices with platform version 2.2 and up.

The application uses the camera function of a smartphone to capture and quantify the information involved in a colour change during the titration experiment.

The app records and digitises the colour information, and on the desired colour change responds with beep sounds and vibration pulses, which are generated by the smartphone.

The work has been documented in a technology report of the Journal of Chemical Education in June.

For students who have low vision this can also be useful.

“For blind students, mostly for operational and safety reasons, assistance from sighted peers is required for the set-up. However, once it is done they can sense the end-point of the experiment with the app and can participate actively in the laboratory setting, which is otherwise not possible,” he said.

Often these students either choose to stay out of the chemistry laboratory by themselves, or face difficulties in actively participating in the laboratory activities, thereby relying on passive approaches of learning chemistry, the researchers said in the study.

The app could make the experiment more engaging even for normal vision students.

For optimum working of the application, the laboratory room space should have ambient white lighting. In a naturally lit lab, the apparatus should be placed near a window, said Bandyopadhyay.

# 19. Open school student 'denied' admission at South Mumbai college

MUMBAI: A student who cleared her Class XII from the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) was reportedly denied admission at [KC College](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/KC-College), Churchgate, allegedly because she has completed her [studies from an open board](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/studies-from-an-open-board). After scoring 81.2%, the student, who suffers from learning disability, made it to the third merit list in the arts' stream. The third list was put up at city colleges on Saturday. The girl and her parents have now approached an NGO with a complaint seeking their intervention.

Priya Deshpande from Child reach India said the student was denied admission as she completed her Class XII from open schooling institute. "I will visit the college on Tuesday to see on what grounds she was denied admission," she said. Deshpande said the student has all documents.

In-charge principal of the college, Hemlata Bagla, said that students who have appeared for the board exam privately or are from open schools are not given preference across city colleges. "We do consider such cases, but I am not aware of this case. Many a times, students fill their forms incorrectly or leave out vital information. Their documents are not in place. I will have to find out what the reason is for denying admission," said Bagla.  
Though there is no written rule on whether open school students should be given differential treatment, registrar of Mumbai University M A Khan said that all students from 'regular' boards should be considered for admissions on merit alone. "Our university provides continuous education and therefore preference is given to students from regular boards. Students coming from NIOS, however, can be treated on case-to-case basis and the college should have a valid reason for denying admission," said Khan.

# 20. Lack of government support stumps disabled cricketer

CHARMINAR: A disabled wheelchair-bound cricketer in need of financial help is crying for the government's attention. However, till now his efforts have been futile.

Mohammed Farooq [Ahmed](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Ahmed), 37, who has been making rounds of the CM's camp office and sports department, seeking their help, has bagged many gold, silver and bronze medals for the country and state.

"I have two daughters and a son to take care of. My family is insisting that I leave sports, as most of my earnings are spent on tours. As a result, I have incurred a debt of nearly Rs 4 lakh. To clear the debt and look after my family, I have decided to drive an auto," said the wheelchair-bound player.

Ahmed was afflicted by polio when he was five years old. But the passion of achieving something away from his mundane existence gave him a chance to prove his worth by participating in wheelchair tournaments at the national and [international](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/international) levels.

"I have been to Malaysia and Nepal to participate in tournaments where I had to bear my own expenses. I bagged many medals, but I have fallen on bad times and need the state's support," he told TOI.  
"To get some respite from my financial crisis, I tried to meet Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao several times. But I was not allowed to let him know about my problems," Ahmed said. Now, he drives an auto to eke out a living. Being a gold medalist, he hopes to get a government job. Unfortunately, so far he has got nothing

# 21. White cane gets a high tech update

MIT researchers give the white cane used by the visually impaired a high-tech update

The iconic white cane has helped provide empowerment and mobility for generations of visually impaired people and has now received a high-tech update courtesy of researchers at MIT.

While the cane continues to serve as a primary tool for the vision impaired, part of the reason for working to upgrade the cane, according to MIT, is because it has its limitations. For example, the cane sometimes comes in contact with other people, and it can’t identify more specific types of objects, such as different kinds of furniture. Moreover, the cane can’t determine whether or not a chair is occupied.

[**HOLY BRAILLE: SCIENTISTS DEVELOPING KINDLE-STYLE TABLET FOR THE BLIND**](http://www.foxnews.com/tech/2016/01/13/holy-braille-scientists-developing-kindle-style-tablet-for-blind.html)

To tackle the problem, researchers at MIT’s Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory (CSAIL) created a 21st-century system that relies on both the old school cane and high-tech systems. Opera legend Andrea Bocelli's foundation provided initial funding, and the technology uses a 3-D camera, a belt with separately controllable vibrational motors, and an electronically reconfigurable Braille interface.

The apparatus itself requires several steps to be worn and used properly. For starters, the user wears the 3-D camera in a pouch around their neck and a processing unit running the team’s proprietary algorithms. The system also contains a sensor belt, with five vibrating motors evenly spaced around its forward half, and a reconfigurable Braille interface, worn at the user’s side, according to MIT.

In an email, Professor Daniela Rus, director of MIT CSAIL, told Fox News that the technology's primary goal is to get users from Point A to Point B. “The question we pose is, what if these systems could also help them experience the world around them? And this is where computers and sensors can augment the feedback obtained from a white cane,” she wrote.

[**TINY, LENS-FREE CAMERA COULD HIDE IN CLOTHES, GLASSES**](http://www.foxnews.com/tech/2017/06/29/tiny-lens-free-camera-could-hide-in-clothes-glasses.html)

One crucial component is an algorithm that identifies surfaces and their orientations using data from the 3D camera. The algorithm groups pixels containing associated location data into clusters of three. Each cluster then determines a plane. If the orientations of the planes defined by five nearby clusters are within 10 degrees of each other, the system concludes that it has found a surface.

However, the system doesn’t need to determine the extent of the surface or what type of object it might be; it instead registers an obstacle, and the motor begins to buzz if the wearer gets too close to it, according to MIT.

Although users of the system found it to be intuitive and appeared to be more empowered, the researchers insist that this upgrade is not intended to oust the white cane.

## 22. Visually-impaired student tops IIIT-B

At the 17th convocation of the International Institute of Information Technology-Bangalore (IIIT-B) held on Sunday, 269 candidates were part of the graduating batch.

Vidhya Y., a visually-challenged student, was the topper of her batch in Masters of Science in the Digital Society. She bagged a 3.82 out of 4 CGPA. She has done her internship with Microsoft Research and now wants to work on designing technologies that are of relevance to persons with disability. She is extremely keen on working with visually-impaired children who are not able to take up Mathematics and Science in school.

**23.New Act roots for inclusive edu for disabled kids**

Panaji: The new central Rights for Persons with Disabilities Act 2016, yet to be brought into force in the state, has reinforced the importance of inclusive education for children with disabilities.  
  
The act calls for all educational institutions funded or recognised by the government to provide inclusive education by admitting children with disabilities without discrimination and permitting them equal access to education, opportunities for sports and other recreation facilities.  
  
Schools must also make their campuses and buildings accessible and provide transportation facilities with an attendant to children with disabilities.

One of the demands that emerged during the seminar attended by educationists from across the country was to bring education for children with disabilities under the ministry of education instead of the ministry of social justice and empowerment.

"The education of persons with disabilities should come under the human resource development ministry. All educational institutions including vocational training institutions fall within the purview of the HRD ministry. Why should the education of children with disabilities be left out? Education is for all," said Satish Kapoor, founder of Delhi-based organization Brotherhood that advocates for inclusive education.

In special schools, educators are not trained BeD teachers and find it difficult to teach math and English to children with disabilities. "Aids, appliances and rehabilitations services can continue to be with the social justice and empowerment ministry but the education of a child should come under the HRD ministry. Every child has a right to learn. I don't know why the ministry for social justice and empowerment has set up a separate department for the empowerment of persons with disabilities. The discrimination starts here," he said.

Inclusive education is necessary so that typical children and those with disabilities grow together and interact with each other. This helps in the overall development of both and sets a basis for their integration into society later in life.

# 24. Ministry of defense will not challenge disability pension for soldiers

CHANDIGARH: In a significant move, the [ministry of defense](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Ministry-of-Defence) (MoD) has decided not to challenge court orders asking the defence forces to give disability pension to its soldiers. The move will affect thousands of soldiers who have suffered disability during military service or died because of a disability while in service.

MoD has told defence services headquarters to grant 'absolute sanction' for disability pension in cases of personnel have been granted relief of disability pension by courts and tribunals.  
  
Despite a settled legal position and directions by the SC, HCs and various benches of the Armed Forces Tribunal, authorities often denied soldiers disability pension on grounds that were seen as 'hyper-technical' or hairsplitting. The benefits were denied declaring disabilities as "neither attributable to, nor aggravated by military service" (popularly known as NANA cases).  
  
Legal experts say that in many cases defence authorities would appeal against a lower court's order in the Supreme Court for what were small increases in the pension.  
TOI has reported several such cases where disabled soldiers or their family members were deprived of the pension. In one case, a widow from Himachal Pradesh whose husband was posted on guard duty at the Indo-China border, died while relieving himself was denied the disability pension.

MoD's June 29 letter has now asked military authorities to grant disability pension as per law laid down by the Supreme Court. In 2013, the Supreme Court in the Dharamvir Singh versus Union of India case had held that for acceptance of a disease as attributable to military service, conditions are to be satisfied that the disease has been arisen during the military service and caused by the conditions of employment in military service.

The MoD letter, however, has not issued directions to withdraw pending appeals. It has asked the authorities to issue 'absolute sanctions' after dismissal of pending appeals.  
Increasing litigation against disabled soldiers and other personnel had led to the constitution of a committee of experts by then defence minister [Manohar Parrikar](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Manohar-Parrikar). It comprised former Adjutant General Lt Gen Mukesh Sabharwal, former Military Secretary Lt Gen Richard Khare, Punjab and Haryana high court lawyer, [Maj Navdeep Singh](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Maj-Navdeep-Singh), former head of the army's legal branch, [Maj Gen T Parshad](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Maj-Gen-T-Parshad)and Kargil disabled veteran Maj D P Singh.  
The committee had come down heavily on the ministry and defence services stating that most appeals emanated of an 'ego-fuelled' approach, rather than accepting the law laid down by Supreme Court and other courts. The panel had asked MoD to withdraw all pending appeals since the law was well settled and also to concede pending cases of disability pension on a case to case basis.  
[Major Navdeep Singh](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Major-Navdeep-Singh) said while the move will end a dark chapter of mindless appeals, MoD should show magnanimity and withdraw all appeals against disabled soldiers.

**25. Disability rights groups demand total rollback of GST on aids for disabled**

The controversy over taxable items for the specially-abled refuses to die down. Not convinced by the clarification of the Union Government, persons with special abilities are demanding a complete rollback and have launched a social media campaign.

The government today clarified that most items will be taxable under 5 percent attempting to end confusion about the 5-18 GST bracket sine July 1.

India Today spoke to people with varied special abilities, seeking their views on the clarification. Though many are relieved of the chaos that emerged after implementation of the GST bill, they unanimously want a complete rollback.

**'IMMENSE HARDSHIP'**

Suvarna Raj, a para-athelete of international fame laments the tax on wheelchairs and says that it portrays the insensitivity of the government.

"There is no tax on cultural items like sindoor and Kohl but on equipment of significance. As an athlete, I already face immense hardship ahead of events and now this tax levied on items has come as a disappointment. It should have been kept affordable."

Supporting her views are teachers at the Samarthanam Trust for the Disabled, located in South Delhi.

Meenakshi suffers from visual impairment herself but guides many young blind children, who are from a less affluent background.

"Some of these girls wait years to buy the sensor-alert stick and most depend on donations. Taxing them means many will stay devoid of possible support, in a society that already discriminates against such children. Some of my students were forced to study with newspapers as makeshift scripts because their families could not afford appropriate Braille material."

**POLITICAL STORM**

Rahul Gandhi on Monday raked up a storm on social media by attacking the GST on disability aids.

He said the Congress Party demands a full rollback of what he called a  "disability tax"

The Finance Ministry maintains that assistive products will attract concessional five percent GST rate. This includes Braille writing equipment, optical sensors, geometrical aids, orthopedic appliances, talking books and artificial electronic implants (cochlear).

However, the special car that emerged as a boon for persons with hampered mobility, continues to fall under the tax rate of 18 percent.

Sources say many of these items utilise raw material (treated at manufacturing) are taxable and thereby five percent on the final product is an expected implementation, adding that zero tax is not a possible rethink.

The government has, meanwhile, decided to organise sessions for traders and consumers in coming week to clear further doubts.

**'WHERE IS THE UNITED POLITICAL WILL?'**

Javed Abidi, convenor of Disability Rights Group says, "There was heavy tax charged on such equipment decades ago and we led a successful campaign that concluded to its removal. Since the past one decade, such goods were exempt of any tax. The issue has come into limelight since Congress Vice President Rahul Gandhi spoke up but why are other leaders not reacting too? Where is the collective united political will? This is not about cities but about people in interior villages where people cannot afford basic price and even an additional Rs 200 tax is impossible."

# 26. Aadhaar Reunites Differently Abled Boy With Family After Two Years

# **Patna**: Two years ago, Narendra, a differently abled boy, went missing in Madhya Pradesh's Indore and somehow landed in Bengaluru. Narendra didn't remember his name and was re-christened Monu at an orphanage home in the city.  Narendra's father left no stone unturned to find his son, filed a complaint, but to no avail. Recently, the orphanage home where Narendra was living decided to get all its members Aadhaar cards. However, when Narendra's fingers were being scanned, the machine refused to accept his fingerprints and retina scan.

# The server of the Aadhaar card registration authority showed that Narendra's fingerprints and retina scan were already on record and revealed that he was from Indore. The orphanage home swung into action and contacted the Indore administration to reunite Narendra and his family.  Indore district administration will arrange tickets for the family, and an officer is also expected to visit Bengaluru, along with Narendra's father in the days to come.

# 27. Delhi University offers short term courses for the disabled

New Delhi: The Equal Opportunity Cell (EOC) of Delhi University runs three short-term certificate courses for the differently abled, which are primarily open to Delhi University students. Those from the marginalised sections are also given fee waivers.

These courses, offered at the Faculty of Arts, having a duration of 3-6 months.

“Being blind cannot stop me from achieving what I want,” said 24-year-old Moqbul, who is a final-year postgraduate student at Ramjas College. He was also a student of Sign Language Interpretation, and Information and Computer Technology at EOC.

This year, DU has received over 1,700 applications for merit-based undergraduate programmes from students who have either physical, intellectual or behavioral disabilities. Some of these applicants also have disabilities caused by chronic conditions. As per the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act - 2016, which came into force on April 19, 2017, the university will be providing 5% reservations in admissions and 4% reservation in employment for persons with disabilities.

EOC strives to make the academic years of these students hassle-free by empowering them and filling the gaps that school education sometimes creates.

“EOC has played a major role in assisting the students with disabilities with admission-related counseling and filling up of scholarships forms, making Delhi University highly inclusive of the differently abled students and teachers. Not only the DU, but other universities too must take such initiatives to provide infrastructural facilities, enable technologies and create a conducive environment for the differently abled students and teachers,” said Shakti Aggarwal, professor at Law Faculty, who claimed that as a visually impaired student, he had availed support by the EOC during his student days at DU, albeit they did not offer the courses back then.

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The cell currently provides short-term courses in Sign Language Interpretation, Communicative English and Information and Computer Technology, with a duration of 3-6 months, offered at DU-NTPC Centre at the Faculty of Arts. Forms for these courses are available online and can also be filled offline at the EOC.

“We are not treated as students with special needs. Rather, we are made independent. Sometimes I forget that I am blind because I can handle everything just like any other person,” says Vijay Tiwari, a 24-year-old student who has filled his MA Political Science form.

“People’s approach towards persons with disabilities has also changed manifold over the years,” added Tiwari, who is taking Information and Computer Technology classes from EOC.

Anil Aneja, officer on special duty at EOC, recognises strict legislative policies, accessible support technology and skills development as crucial in uplifting the differently abled to the mainstream.

The university started providing smartphones and smart canes to visually impaired students through the government of India’s Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/Fitting of Aids/Appliances (ADIP) scheme. Advance book-reading technologies have been installed to help the visually impaired students. Most students with disabilities were provided laptops, ‘plextalk’ recorders to tape the lectures, which could then be converted to PDF format to provide visually impaired students with Braille copy of the notes.

# 28. Vodafone India launches facial mouse app for the disabled

Vodafone India has introduced an app dubbed ‘Eva Facial Mouse. App users will be able to control their smartphone with their face movements. The app was developed by Vodafone Spain Foundation for helping disabled people. This app is available in India on Vodafone’s social app hub.

The Eva Facial Mouse free and open source application is designed to enable access to functions of a mobile device by means of tracking the user face captured through the frontal camera. Based on the movement of the face, the app allows the user to control a pointer on the screen, which provides direct access to most elements of the user interface.

# The app mainly targets people with amputations, cerebral palsy, spinal cord injury, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) or other disabilities.

# 29. Central Railways to start SMS helpline for disabled passengers

# The Central Railway plans to start a new helpline system to redress the grievances of the handicapped passengers and cancer patients. Following complaints from handicapped passengers that they were not getting adequate help when they called the helpline number 9004411111, the CR is all set to implement a new system where passengers just need to send an SMS on this number, which will then be forwarded to the concerned department. “The SMS-based helpline will be set up in a couple of days, and be ready for implementation,” said Divisional Railway Manager of CR, Mumbai Division, Ravinder Goyal. Asked about the difference between the existing helpline and the proposed helpline, the officer said, “Sometimes, it is not possible to make a call. In such a case, when we get a message (on the helpline) it will be transferred to the concerned department for as immediate a response as possible,” added another officer. Earlier this year, hearing a PIL about this, the Bombay High Court had directed the Railways to provide facilities to disabled passengers travelling in local trains, including CCTV cameras inside reserved compartments, special seating arrangements for the disabled on platforms and a helpline facility. The court had also directed that the helpline be activated so that passengers can immediately WhatsApp or SMS about unauthorized commuters in the handicapped compartments and that the police should take appropriate and immediate action.

**30. UNICEF India guidebook on making schools accessible for disabled**

UNICEF India has developed a guidebook: **“**[**Making Schools Accessible to Children with Disabilities**](http://unicef.in/Uploads/Publications/Resources/pub_doc119.pdf)**”** with the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, and Samarthyam, a Disabled Persons Organization (DPO), as part of the Prime Minister’s Accessible India Campaign.

Inclusive education is critical to promote the participation and learning for children with disabilities in India. The guidebook details the physical/infrastructural barriers children with disabilities may face in schools and provides practical solutions for making the physical environment of a school safe and accessible for children with disabilities.

A checklist is included that which can be used as a tool to assess the accessibility of schools and to identify areas need improvement.

Clear standards and specifications are provided, with photos and illustrations, which can be used with civil works personnel, towards making necessary changes or during construction.

# 31. Teenager creates app to help blind identify objects with phones

A 17-year-old boy from Markham, Ont., has created an app to help people with visual impairments identify objects and texts with their phones.

The free app, called iDentifi, uses artificial intelligence and your phone's camera to tell the user what's in the photos they take. It's based on several existing technologies — such as Stanford University's ImageNet database of 300 million images and CloudSight API's image recognition capabilities — and combines them into one app.

For creator and recent high school grad Anmol Tukrel, the inspiration for the project stems from his time volunteering in India to help those who are visually impaired.

"Throughout my childhood, I volunteered at an eye institute with my family back in India," Tukrel told CBC Radio's Metro Morning. "It provides free treatment."

Afterwards, he interned at an ad agency that uses artificial intelligence, and the confluence of experiences led to him creating and working "probably hundreds" of hours on the app in the evenings and on the weekends during high school.

"I've always been interested in technology and artificial intelligence fascinated me," he said.  "I wanted to try a project on my own."

## 'People say they find it really useful'

According to Tukrel, the app boasts around 15,000 users in 96 countries, and has analyzed about 200,000 objects. It can read and translate texts in 27 languages, and can even recognize and differentiate between different brands — say, Coke and Pepsi.

So far, iDentifi has been received positively by users and netted Tukrel a slew of awards, such as the 2017 Weston Youth Innovation Award presented by the Ontario Science Centre last week — his app will be on display at the centre late this summer.

"People say they find it really useful; [it] gives them more independence doing day-to-day things," Tukrel said.

## Balancing project with school work

Still, Tukrel aims to improve identify by adding more features and refining the user experience, such as using different colors and increasing contrast in the app's interface so people with low vision can use it better. He also wants to partner and collaborate with organizations like the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, doctors and even Apple's Siri app.

"I spoke to people actually visually impaired and asked them what they wanted," he said, noting he plans to incorporate some of their suggestions during the summer.

But, as always, he'll have to balance his project with school work.

"I begin university in September," said Tukrel, who will be attending Stanford to study computer science with a focus on artificial intelligence.

"I'm probably going to keep it as it is and work on it on the side."

## 32. Lifestyle App for Disabled Launching on 8th July

India is home to over 100 million persons with disabilities as well as 100 million elderly people. Despite of knowing these facts and figures, there’s little that’s being done to cater to the special needs of these sections of the population. Moreover, in this digital age, multiple applications and information portals help us plan seamless experiences when it comes to travelling and exploring, adding to our social life. However, what about the social life of persons with disabilities and the elderly?  
It is close to negligible – firstly, a disabled-friendly infrastructure is yet to dawn upon the Indian subcontinent and secondly, there is lack of information dissemination about the already accessible places.

BillionAbles has taken up this initiative to bring these people on the forefront and attempts to create an inclusive society. We are an organization which is involved in making the life of persons with disabilities more comfortable and convenient by providing information about disabled friendly places and services pan India.  
It’s an attempt at leveling the playing field so that this long-ignored segment can go out and have fun, just like the majority of the population.

To ensure a fulfilling social life for disabled community, we are delighted to announce the launch of Billionables app which is India’s first Access Guide for persons with special needs, on 8th July 2017.

We invite you to spread the message among your network by pledging a post/tweet by supporting our Thunderclap campaign here

# 33. SC seeks list of 'defaulting banks' on fund for disabled

NEW DELHI: More than 13 years ago, the SC created a trust for welfare of disabled people and directed scheduled banks and financial institutions to deposit the excess interest they had collected from more than five crore borrowers since 1991 into it.  
  
The amount so far deposited with the trust is Rs 174 crore. There are over 100 million disabled persons in India. Petitioner [Ravi Shankar Bhushan](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Ravi-Shankar-Bhushan), through senior advocate Colin Gonsalves, alleged that many banks had not paid the amount directed by the court and that the trust, headed by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), had not taken any step to use the money for welfare measures under the Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995.

A bench of Chief Justice [J S Khehar](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/J-S-Khehar) and Justice D Y Chandrachud took exception to non-compliance of the SC's direction and told RBI's counsel, senior advocate[Jaideep Gupta](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Jaideep-Gupta), "File an affidavit in this court on behalf of the [Reserve Bank of India](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Reserve-Bank-Of-India), indicating details of deposits made by various banks, in continuation of the judgment passed by this court on April 16, 2004. Also indicate the details of defaulting banks and the extent of default. Needful be done within one week."

On February 21, 2014, the SC had said, "We are of the opinion that it is for the RBI and the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) to make earnest efforts to recover the excess amount of interest from the respective banks, on which they got effective control.  
"We notice from the letter of the RBI dated February 6, 2014 that 46 commercial banks have deposited an aggregate amount of Rs 154.26 crore towards excess interest charged to borrowers and 39 commercial banks have deposited a total of Rs 19.5 crore (Rs 50 lakh each) as additional amount. Efforts should be made by RBI and SIDBI to recover the rest of the amounts and pass on the same to the trust fund."  
Gonsalves raised another important issue. He said the fund was not being managed by the trust for the purpose for which it was set up 13 years ago. He requested the court to give the amount to [National Legal Services Authority](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/National-Legal-Services-Authority) (NALSA), with a clear direction to utilise it for welfare of disabled litigants.

# 34. Train door shut, disabled misses M.Phil test at DU

NEW DELHI: Perhaps it was the cussedness of the passengers on the [train](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/train) he was to have travelled on or of the officials at Delhi University, but [Vaibhav Shukla](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Vaibhav-Shukla) has been left without hope of enrolling himself for the MPhil course this year. The visually impaired Shukla could not sit for the entrance exam on Wednesday after he missed his train at Unnao when the people in the coach reserved for people with disabilities did not open the door for him. Then, having missed the exam, [DU](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/DU) officials told him there was nothing they could do to help him.

Sharing his experience on Thursday after finally reaching the capital, Shukla told TOI that he had opted to travel by the [Gorakhdham Express](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Gorakhdham-Express) and had accordingly reached Unnao station around 2.15am on Wednesday. The 100% visually impaired youth said, "When the train arrived, we went to the coach reserved for the disabled. It was the one next to the engine. We found the doors locked. My brother and the driver tried to open it."  
The trio even asked the people inside the compartment to open the door. "They looked out from the windows, but no one came forward to help us and the door remained closed," said the disappointed youth. "It was raining and the stoppage was only for two minutes. We could not make it to the second coach for the disabled at the other end of the train."

Shukla realised he could not just climb in since the other coaches were very crowded and he could not have managed his way past them. The train left him on the platform, despairing about how he could get to Delhi in time for the entrance test.

Once in Delhi, Shukla told the Delhi University authorities about his plight. "But the DU officials said that they could not do anything now." A depressed Shukla questioned the logic of placing the two coaches for the disabled at the extreme ends of the train. And ruing his missed opportunity, the aspirant said, "There should have been a guard to open the compartment doors at stations."

# 35. Health services told to recruit disabled candidate

Panaji: The commission for persons with disabilities has directed the directorate of health services (DHS) to give an appointment letter immediately and with retrospective effect to a candidate with loco-motor disability who applied for the post of an attendant in 2015.  
  
The commission has also directed that T Gaude, who applied in the reserved category, be absorbed in the general category until they create a supernumerary post for him.  
  
The DHS received NOCs from the personnel department to fill up two posts reserved for the hearing impaired, one post for visually-impaired and one in the loco-motor disability category, but advertised double the number of vacancies in each of these reserved categories in 2015.

The minutes of the district selection committee meeting held late 2015 and early 2016 for selection of candidates recommended Gaude's selection under the reserved category for loco-motor disability. An offer of temporary appointment and an offer of appointment in September 2016 were also sent to him with a request to complete the medical examination and other formalities to join the post.  
Despite numerous visits to the DHS, he wasn't given forms for medical examination and police verification like the others who received offer of appointment letters along with him.  
The order passed by the state commissioner for persons with disabilities Anuradha Joshi states that the directorate of health services added salt to injury when it cancelled/withdrew his offer of appointment without citing any reason for such an act. The commission directed DHS to give Gaude an appointment letter immediately with retrospective effect, bringing him at par with the other three people who were given offers of appointments followed by appointment orders, and absorb him in the general category until it creates a supernumerary post.

DHS has sought an additional 30 days' time to implement the order and has moved the proposal to seek permission for his appointment, citing a ban on recruitment.

# 36. Disability organisation slams 'Blind' for casting Alec Baldwin

The Ruder man Family Foundation, a leading disability rights group, has criticized new film 'Blind', starring[Alec Baldwin](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Alec-Baldwin)in the role of a novelist who loses his sight in a car crash.

The private philanthropic group, known for advocating the casting of disabled actors, has slammed the film's makers for choosing an able-bodied actor as the blind lead. "Alec Baldwin in 'Blind' is just the latest example of treating disability as a costume," Jay[Ruderman](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Ruderman), the foundation's president, said in a statement.

**37. Delhi High Court asks government about facilities for disabled on trains**

Lack of facilities for differently abled persons in the Indian Railways today prompted the Delhi High Court to ask the Centre about the measures in place.

The high court said there were "special needs of every nature of disability which the railways has to take into consideration".

A bench of Acting Chief Justice Gita Mittal and Justice C Hari Shankar on its own initiated a PIL on the issue after coming across a report that the door of a special compartment for disabled was shut and such a youth missed his MPhil test at the Delhi University.

Terming the report as an eye opener, the bench remarked that even the Delhi University (DU) did not pay attention to the ordeal of the student Vaibhav Shukla, telling him that they cannot help him.

As per the news report, the student had attempted to board the Gorakhdham Express operated by the North-Eastern Railway at the Unnao railway station in Uttar Pradesh on July 5 to appear in the entrance exam for the MPhil course for the current year conducted by the DU.

When he tried to board the coach reserved for disabled persons which was next to the engine, the persons who were occupying the compartment refused to open the door which remained closed, it said.

The other coach reserved for the disabled was placed at the other end of the train and Shukla could not reach it, the bench noted in its order.

"This newspaper report highlights the difficulties which are being faced by the disabled persons in accessing even the coaches which are designated to be used by them.

"It also manifests that the railway authorities are not only not posting any personnel in the coaches earmarked for the disabled to ensure their rights and to assist them to board the train, but are also permitting able persons to occupy these reserved coaches which prevents them from being utilised for the benefit of the special persons for whom they are intended," it said.

The bench said that the placement of the coaches for the disabled itself does not appear to be fair.

"Indian passenger trains have several bogies and sometimes the first and the last coaches are way beyond the length of the small platforms.

"The height of the coach from the ground by itself at such end-points would be such that it would be daunting even for any person to board it. The inaccessibility of the railways as a mode of transport for the disabled would thus be unimaginable," the high court noted.

It said the railways have not addressed the special needs of persons with disabilities.

"It could have been a physically handicapped person in a wheelchair or one who is bed-ridden who was attempting to board. It does not appear as if railway coaches have accesses which would enable wheelchair or a person in a stretcher to access into and passage through the coach," the court said.

While asking the authorities to file a disability-wise status report within ten days, the high court said even the structure of the coaches are such that there is no room for manoeuvring a wheelchair/stretcher within the coach and consequently a person who is bed-ridden would never be able to even enter the first berth in the coach.

"We are also not aware of any specially designated areas for waiting for the disabled or any special manpower assigned for such purpose. Perhaps, if the above aspects had been noted, Vaibhav Shukla would have been able to reach Delhi to participate in the examination," it said.

It said that the peculiar facts and circumstances, the matter deserves the attention of the Delhi University as well.

The bench sought to know from the varsity by July 11 whether they can conduct an examination for Shukla to enable him to secure admission if he qualified for the course and the session for which he had applied.

It also sought to know from the Railways ministry and the North-Eastern Railways, why there should not be a facility enabling railway officials, including the driver and the guard of the train, to open and have access to a railway compartment from outside the coach.

"This would be essential in case any tragedy had befell the occupants of a railway coach and there were no person in the position of assisting opening of the coach from inside the train," the court said.

It also suggested that the act of the persons occupying a disabled carriage may be even a penal offence.

"We need to be informed about this aspect on the next date of hearing, July 24," the bench added.

It also wished examine the aspect of compensation for the boy who has undergone so much trauma for the callous disregard of his rights.

The bench asked the authorities to inform it about the action they have taken against the persons who were occupying the coach for the disabled in the Gorakhdham Express in the early hours of July 5, 2017.

# 38. Disabled man to get much awaited job

# Panaji: The commission for persons with disabilities has directed the directorate of health services (DHS) to give an appointment letter immediately and with retrospective effect to a candidate with loco-motor disability who applied for the post of an attendant in 2015. The commission has also directed that T Gaude, who applied in the reserved category, be absorbed in the general category until they create a supernumerary post for him. The DHS received NOCs from the personnel department to fill up two posts reserved for the hearing impaired, one post for visually-impaired and one in the loco-motor disability category, but advertised double the number of vacancies in each of these reserved categories in 2015.

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# DHS has sought an additional 30 days' time to implement the order and has moved the proposal to seek permission for his appointment, citing a ban on recruitment.

**39. European union implements Marrakesh Treaty**

It is reported that European union has today voted to implement the Marrakesh Treaty.

Details here <https://blogs.ifla.org/lpa/2017/07/06/the-european-union-votes-on-the-implementation-of-the-marrakesh-treaty/>

# 40. Some apps for the disabled to carry out daily activities

To say that life is difficult for differently abled people is to make an understatement. Social stigma is one of the major problems they face even in this age of technological advancement. The disparaging treatment of the society sometimes makes it difficult for them to perform their day-to-day activities. Thankfully, technology has come to their rescue, helping them break these social barriers.

Several start-ups in India are now working on technology to assist them in carrying out complex, but routine tasks.

Let’s take a look at four apps that are making the lives of differently abled easy:

**Avaz App**

Avaz, a full-featured AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) app, has been developed for children who communicate non-verbally or have difficulty speaking.

The app has been designed to help therapists and educators bring out the maximum potential in a child. Developed by Chennai-based**Invention Labs**, Avaz is also useful for children with Down Syndrome, Angelman’s Syndrome, Aspergers, Apraxia and other non-verbal conditions. The app has a set vocabulary with pictures (**Symbolstix**) and voice recordings (**Ivona**) to help a child create messages through touch. One can also customize the vocabulary for a particular child, taking pictures and recording voices through the app.

**Eye-D App**

Eye-D App helps visually impaired become aware of their locations and environment. Armed with the app, a visually challenged individual can navigate and explore his/her places of interest, evaluate the surrounding with his/her smartphone camera and read the printed text.

The app has four features: **Where Am I**, **Around Me**, **See Object** and **Read Text** to make visually impaired truly independent in all aspects. Founded by Bengaluru-based techie **Gaurav Mittal** along with three others Shaswat Jena, Vaibhav Asthana and Rimi Thapa, the app is paired with **Eye-D** keypad to get things started.

**Item Seeker**

The **item seeker** app, developed by **Sightica Solutions,** is the first of its kind reminder and alert app meant for elderly people with vision impairments, especially for those suffering from Alzheimers and Dementia.

The app was conceptualized after several years of research and close association with the visually impaired community. It allows users to locate a missing item or an object, which needs to be tagged using a ‘sticker’. The Bluetooth sensors on the tags alert the Item Seeker when an object goes missing. The app helps the user locate missing objects and also act as a reminder of activities that he/she needs to do at a specific time, like taking medicines.

Sightica Solutions is a social enterprise, finding solutions for problems solely faced by the visually challenged and elderly.

**‘Let Me Hear Again’**

People with hearing disability face communication problems and most of them express themselves through sign languages. ‘Let Me Hear Again’ App assists them. It is actually a virtual ear assisting people with hearing dysfunctions. The app in phone ‘hears’ the conversation and transcribes it on the phone screen, so that one can read what was said.

Founded by **Dr. Sharon Basil**, the app has received the prestigious App Inventor — App of the Month award from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in the US.

**41. Lower berth in 3AC coach to be reserved for differently-abled**

The railway move comes close on the heels of an incident in which a wheelchair-bound athlete faced difficulty in securing a lower berth. Alloted an upper berth, Subarna Raj, the medal winning para-athlete, could not get a lower berth in the Nagpur-Nizamuddin Garib Rath express and had to sleep on the floor of the train.

Now, differently-abled passengers will not face any problem in getting a lower berth in Third AC coaches as the Indian Railways has fixed quota for ‘Divyangs’ in 3AC of mail and express trains to make the journey hassle-free. Currently, there is a provision for lower berth quota in sleeper class only.

A lower berth in 3AC coach will be reserved for ‘Divyangs’ in trains and the necessary software is being readied for this, said a senior Railway Ministry official.

The railway move comes close on the heels of an incident in which a wheelchair-bound athlete faced difficulty in securing a lower berth. Alloted an upper berth, Subarna Raj, the medal winning para-athlete, could not get a lower berth in the Nagpur-Nizamuddin Garib Rath express and had to sleep on the floor of the train.

Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu had ordered an inquiry into the incident and instructed corrective measures so that this does not happen again. The 3AC quota facility for ‘Divyangs’ will be announced by railways this week.

In order to facilitate smooth entry into platforms, all stations are being made accessible for differently-abled passengers. While waiting halls have Divyang-friendly toilets, many coaches have signage system in braille for visually-challenged passengers.

# 42. Sign could soon become South Africa's official language

“The voice of the deaf has eventually been heard‚” said Shamila Surjoo‚ director of the KZN Blind and Deaf Society‚ as news broke that “sign” could soon become South Africa’s 12th official language.

On Tuesday‚ the Constitutional Review Committee recommended to parliament that South African Sign Language (SASL) be given official recognition. The committee‚ responding to a recommendation submitted by Deaf South Africa‚ declared that the move was “long overdue”.

The committee stated: “Deaf SA requested a review of sections 6 (1) and 6 (5) (a) [of the constitution] to include South African Sign Language (SASL) as an official language. Deaf SA was of the opinion that‚ while SASL is well recognised in the constitution and given a special status‚ it was not sufficient to enable deaf people to enjoy all constitutional rights.”

As its formal recommendation‚ the committee said: “The National Assembly and the National Council of Province should facilitate an amendment of the constitution to include SASL as one of South Africa’s official languages.”

Surjoo said: “All the lobbying and awareness has eventually paid off.”

She said the deaf community had been campaigning for the recognition of SASL for several years.

“Way back in 2009‚ Kyle Springate‚ then a matriculant at Westville Boys High‚ wanted SA Sign Language to be recognised as one of his matric subjects. This led to subsequent court action to advocate for recognition.”

The KZN Blind and Deaf Society launched The Talk Sign Campaign in 2014. In a 2015 petition‚ Bruno Druchen‚ national director of Deaf SA‚ said that deaf people had no access to their rights unless SASL became available as a means of access to communication‚ information and other forms of human experience. He said at the time that the Bill of Rights had no significant value to the deaf community in the absence of SASL.

“Deaf people’s rights are built on SASL‚ but this only language of deaf people is not recognised as an official language.”

Recognising SASL as a language will have a significant impact on society‚ added Surjoo.

“It will encourage the hearing community to learn SASL to communicate with the deaf and hard of hearing. This breaks down the communication barrier that exists. The recognition of sign language will impact positively in service delivery as it is envisaged that more focus will be given at state and other sectors for sign language training and will also mean focus on teaching SASL at school level.”

There are currently an estimated 600 000 hearing-impaired people in South Africa.

Olympic swimmer Terence Parkin said deaf people are often marginalised due to lack of access to information.

Parkin‚ who is deaf‚ said: “With SASL becoming official‚ it is finally being seen as an important language for South Africans. Deaf people can now take their rightful place in society.”

President of the KZN Blind and Deaf Society‚ Justice Zak Yacoob‚ emphasised that it was a human right of every person who is deaf to be able to communicate.

Surjoo said she was confident that parliament would make the necessary change to the constitution. “Our sign language is uniquely South African and I am confident that the National Assembly will recognise the deaf community.”

# 43. Deaf Tripura boy's paintings win top awards

Pankaj Roy, 14, dances to music he cannot hear. And he lets his paintings speak what he cannot express in words.

His dancing is yet to progress beyond the Tripura contest circuit, but his painting has earned him the top prize in a nationwide contest conducted by the Indian Council for Child Welfare in 2014.

He is scheduled to receive the award – along with winners of the next two years – in New Delhi in November.

When the council broke the news a few days ago, Pankaj’s parents realised their hearing and speech-impaired son was really special.

“Doctors advised us to go for cochlear implant in Chennai when we discovered his disability when he was three. But we couldn’t afford it. We though his future was doomed, but he has proved us wrong,” said his mother Purnima Roy, wiping away tears of joy.

The mother recalled Pankaj picked up a pencil at the age of six to reproduce from a calendar the picture of a farmer ploughing his field. Unknown to them, the boy also became familiar with English alphabets from signboards and nameplates.

It was then that the Roys based in Bishalgarh, about 18 km from state capital Agartala, decided to admit their differently-abled son in a school for the speech and hearing impaired. Pankaj’s mother later shifted to Agartala for his special classes.

Besides painting, Pankaj was found to be a quick learner – from academics to sports such as cricket, table tennis and badminton. He also took part in badminton at a national sports event for the deaf.

“Painting is his medium of expression. One can have a glimpse of Tripura’s culture through his paintings,” Purnima said.

Pankaj’s teacher Joy Bhattacharya, a lecturer in the Government College of Arts and Crafts, waxed eloquent on his student. “He is highly creative and has the ability to implement ideas. His dedication has earned him a scholarship from the Centre for Cultural Resources and Training under the central ministry of culture,” he said.

Pankaj is scheduled to take part in a national-level painting competition in Odisha this month.

The boy’s talent took him to Rashtrapati Bhavan via a trip organised by the Assam Rifles in 2015. President Pranab Mukherjee accepted one of his paintings.

“Pankaj is multi-talented, and it is unbelievable how he has picked up dancing to beats he cannot hear. He is a born genius,” Siddhartha Shankar Deb, a college teacher, said.

The boy’s father, Manoj Roy teaches mathematics at a girls’ higher secondary school. His elder brother Aguntuk works in Goa while younger brother Mainak is in class 9

# 44. BillionAbles app for the disabled will launch in July

BillionAbles has announced the launch of a new app called BillionAbles, aimed at finding accessible places across India for people with disabilities. The app will be for available for [Android](http://indianexpress.com/about/android/) users on Play Store from 3 PM on July 8. BillionAbles is a social startup founded by Sameer Garg, who suffered disability thanks to spinal injury about two decades ago. According to BillionAbles, the app will serve as “India’s first Access Guide for persons with special needs.” Company’s website (www.billionables.com) lists more than a 1,000 disabled friendly places across India with over 150 verified listings from Delhi-NCR, Goa and Rajasthan.

“It is a crowd sourced app which lists accessible venues and services under categories such as Accessible Restaurants & Hotels, Accessible Shops & Malls, Accessible Entertainment Joints, Wellness, Disability Events, Public transport, Accessible tours, Accessible cabs, Accessible Washrooms, Disabled Parking spaces, etc,” explained BillionAbles in a press statement.

BillionAbles app offers filter-based searches as well. People can look for places based on accessibility of ramps, lifts, elevators, step free access, braille and signage, sign language availability, gluten free food, eating aids, assistance available, large print, and more. The results are displayed as a list as well as in Map View.

Other features of BillionAbles app include the ability to increase or decrease the font size of text, change app’s contrast colour, text-to-speech, and speech-to-text options. BillionAbles app comes with in-app navigation and quick calling features as well. Users can rate the app after using it, via rating/review feature. The app gives out reward points to users add listings and submit reviews. These points can be redeem at selected accessible merchant outlets.

“The government has already launched Accessible India campaign which is directed towards making Government buildings accessible. We are working on making private sector accessible which will complement governement mission as well as boost the economy by increasing earning opportunities for users as well as merchants,” the statement added

# 45. Kapil Sharma to donate 100 cycles to help the blind

Kapil Sharma not only urges people to help those in need, but also leads by example. Touched by the work done by Mumbai-based NGO, Gyanam Ganga — that uses cycling as a medium to create awareness about visual impairment — he is donating 100 cycles to them. Kapil will announce this in the presence of members of the NGO, in an upcoming episode of his TV show, The Kapil Sharma Show.

This isn’t the first time that viewers will get to see his humanitarian side. Earlier this year, when visually-impaired cricketers attended his show, the actor-host was inspired by their resilience, and pledged to donate his eyes.

Asked about his latest initiative, Kapil says, “It’s a small gesture for the people from Gyanam Ganga who are putting efforts day in and out to achieve their goal. It was wonderful having them on our show. I’m always up for supporting causes that help fellow human beings.”

The foundation is known to have covered 1,700 km, crossing six states and helping 7,000 people of 34 villages within seven days. Each cycle has two riders: a volunteer and a visually-impaired person.

Convenor Rajesh Shukla is touched by Kapil’s gesture. “We feel grateful that the team invited us and acknowledged our efforts,” he says.

**46. Google Maps lets users add wheelchair accessibility details**

Back in December, Google [finally added accessibility details](https://techcrunch.com/2016/12/16/google-maps-now-notes-if-a-location-is-wheelchair-accessible/) to Maps. It was a long-awaited addition, but an extremely welcome one for the more than three million people in the U.S. who require wheelchair accessibility. As we noted at the time, however, the available information still left a lot to be desired. Maps has currently collected accessibility data for almost seven million places, but even with databases like [Wheelmap](https://wheelmap.org/map" \t "_blank), there were still some pretty big gaps across the country.

This week, Google’s looking to speed up the process a bit by [crowd sourcing the data set](https://www.blog.google/products/maps/building-map-everyone/). Now Android users can open Google Maps and enter that information for a location themselves. The relevant information is located under the “Accessibility” tab in “Your Contributions.” From there, users can add information about whether a spot has a wheelchair-accessible entrance, elevator, restroom and more.

Once added, that information will be available through Google Maps and search on mobile and the desktop in the Accessibility section of a location’s description. That information is viewable on all platforms, though Google apparently doesn’t have a timeline for when desktop and iOS users will be able to contribute to the growing database.

As we noted in our earlier post, the information continues to be extremely important for people who rely on wheelchairs to get around. Despite the fact that the Americans with Disabilities Act requires access for new buildings, those constructed before 1993 aren’t required to adhere to the same standards, meaning access can often be a bit of a crap shoot for older locations — a fact that those of us who don’t have the same sort of accessibility issues can too often take for granted.

# 47. Colour blind students can now study medicine

Students who are colour blind should be allowed to study medicine, concluded a committee of medical experts, two years after two students barred from taking admission in medicine on account of colour blindness approached the [Supreme Court](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Supreme-Court). Even internationally, students with abnormal colour vision are not barred from studying medicine.  
  
The two students had cleared the medical entrance examination in 2015 but they were not allowed to take admission in Tripura medical college. The Tripura high court had turned down their plea, after which they approached the Supreme Court in September 2015.  
  
The advocate appearing for the Medical Council of India (MCI), the apex regulatory body for medical education, stated that the council had recommended in 2004 that people with such handicap would not be able to perform their duty as doctor and hence barred them from studying medicine.

However, the new committee constituted on the direction of the Supreme Court, which included two ophthalmologists, a geneticist, a psychiatrist and a physiologist, came to the conclusion that the present restriction was not justifiable and pointed out that even Japan one of the few nations that barred such students had lifted the bar over a decade back. The committee also pointed out that this issue would not have arisen if the detailed report of a much bigger committee of the MCI on visual deficiency, which was submitted over three years back, had been discussed and its recommendations implemented. That committee had clearly stated that colour visual deficiency should not be a bar to study medicine.

Dr [Samiran Nundy](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Samiran-Nundy), eminent gastrointestinal surgeon who established the first gastrointestinal surgery department in the country in the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) pointed out that he himself is partially colour blind.

"If the MCI does not allow colour blind students to become doctors it will lose a number of individuals who would have contributed to healthcare in this country. After I was found to be partially colour blind, I have trained in and taught medicine and surgery in Cambridge, London and [Harvard](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Harvard-University) and returned to AIIMS in 1975. I have performed more than 25,000 operations, taught and trained hundreds of doctors, published 13 books, 230 research papers and edited four journals. I am grateful for having had this opportunity which I hope will not be denied to others," said Dr Nundy. About 70% of all the liver transplants in India are being done by surgeons, who were trained by Dr Nundy.

With the new report of this expert committee, it is expected that the question on students with colour blindness being eligible to study medicine will be laid to rest once and for all by the apex court which will be hearing the case on July 11.

# 48. Disabled boy denied Aadhar card, struggles for pension

Akhilesh Bhuiyan (17) may have fallen into the newly named and more dignified category — Divyang — but the system in place has stripped him out of the benefits meant for the likes of him.

Fault of the destitute of Nimia Tand village of Aru panchayat falling under sleepy Hunterganj block in Chatra district is just that the hi-tech gadgets pressed into service by the Unique Identity Authority of India (UIDAI) are unable to read biometric data of Akhilesh due his acute disability.

The family belonging to the poorest in the scheduled caste category, Bhuiyan, is surviving on about 10 kattha of land that produced only when the rain God wants. Akhilesh’s father Balesar Bhuiyan is to venture out in search of daily works to meet the two ends.

“In this situation disability pension to his son who barely crawls was precious for them. But since the pension scheme has been linked to Aadhaar numbers Akhilesh Bhuiyan’s name has been removed from the list of beneficiaries. For over a year from now his disability pension is being discontinued,” said Rana Yogendra Pratap Singh, Panchayat Sevak of Aru.

It is not that the desperate family did not try to get Akhilesh register with UIDAI.

“Every time we go to the Aadhaar enrolment center the operator says that my son’s finger prints cannot be scanned by the machines. Akhilesh is unable to move his hands, legs or any other organ of his body. Bahut kosish kiye lekin uska Aadhaar nahi bana (We tried our best but his Aadhar could not be made),” decries father Balesar.

Another attempt by local representatives and the Panchayat Sevak failed recently when the family tendered applications starting from the BDO to the DC.

“We have not left any effort from our side. But all of them are saying that as per the new guidelines anyone not having Aadhaar number could not be given pension of any kind. What can the poor Dalit family do when the biometrics of the boy is not being scanned? What is the fault theirs into all this,” asks former Mukhia Umesh Chandra Pandey putting the very purpose behind linking disability pension to Aadhaar with no scope to consider special cases like this.

When contacted district administration was unsure about what to do in this issue.  “The matter has come to my knowledge as the family had approached my office with application. We are looking into it and have asked the Hunterganj BDO to verify the case. If there is any provision for such cases under the existing law and UIDAI system we would ensure this can help the Divyang boy,” Chatra DC Sandeep Singh said.

The assurance remain, ordeal of Akhilesh Bhuiyan is likely to continue playing a handicap in living his life in a dignified way with self-respect.

“He is handicapped by birth and we fear he would not remain alive for long either. What pains more that he is being pushed further into poverty due to no fault his,” adds Umesh Chandra Pandey.

# 49. Delhi University to stop using the term 'deaf & dumb'

Delhi University (DU) is on its way to permit the use of 'hearing and speech impaired' instead of 'deaf and dumb' from the upcoming academic session.

The academic council's recommendation to the executive council will be implemented from the upcoming session. The guideline will be followed by DU's Faculty of Music and Fine Arts.

Department officials have termed the move a change in nomenclature aimed to remove the stigma associated with the term 'deaf and dumb'.

"It is a nomenclature given by DU as a central guideline for every department and has to be followed. Previously the university had adopted the use of 'visually impaired' as a replacement for the term 'blind'," said Anupam Mahajan, professor, Faculty of Music and Fine Arts.

This is now being adopted for students who are deaf, but want to study music, added Mahajan.

These students are allowed admission to the Faculty of Arts, introducing the transition. The professor also pointed out how such moves are aimed at upgrading of syllabus with the passage of time.

"Vocabulary in use needs to be updated with the latest adjectives. In a similar way, advancing to 'hearing and speech impaired' from 'deaf and dumb' is also advancing in vocabulary," Mahajan said.

The move also has social connotation to it, explained Uma Garg, professor at the faculty. "Education in our universities are connected to society. Such moves ought to help introducing changes in the society's way of looking at things," she said.

Adding that the move will entail a positive impact, she said, "Changes in an educational institute are always meant for betterment. These developments need to accommodate in the curriculum for students."

# 50. How to protect your eyes from infection in the monsoons

While enjoying the rainy season, don’t forget to take care of your eyes as the climate also encourages infective microorganisms to thrive. Avoid infections like conjunctivitis, sties, dry eyes and corneal ulcers by using clean towels and more, say experts.

Uma Singh, Medical Consultant at Ozone Group, Gowri Kulkarni, Head of Medical Operations, DocsApp and Shailja Mittal, Creative Head at Zapyle, have listed ways to avoid eye problems:

\* Most eye diseases are transmitted by hand-to-eye contact. Therefore, wash your hands before touching your eyes in order to reduce or prevent infection.

\* Avoid rubbing your eyes as that only increases the chances of spreading the infection. Instead, use disposable tissues to wipe off the overflowing discharge or tears.

\* Avoid getting wet in the rain. Always wear adequately protective rain gear.

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\* Be careful of dirty water, muck and dampness during the monsoon season.

\* Do not use contact lenses if you have eye-irritation, red eye or any form of abnormal discharge.

\* Be careful about using expired make-up around your eyes, and if using contact lenses, make sure you never share your solution or container with someone else.

\* Don’t share personal products with others. Items like handkerchiefs, sunglasses and contact lenses should not be shared with others because they can carry highly contagious infections.

## 51. ACCESSIBILITY ACCORDING TO ACTUAL PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

If you have a disability, what’s the hardest thing about browsing the web?” The answers to Safia Abdalla’s tweet are truly eye-opening and shows us what web accessibility should really be about.

In this article I’ll summarize and group the main topics that people bring up in the thread.

But do click on the tweet and read through all the answers. It’s an awesome read for anyone interested in making the web a better place for all. And, in my opinion, a far better place to learn about accessibility than reading any checklist or standard.

## LACK OF CAPTIONS

Videos without captions (subtitles) was by far the obstacle that most people commented on. Here is what a few had to say:  
Non-existing captions is something that can completely exclude users who are deaf or hard of hearing. But it affects many others as well. Anyone on the bus who forgot their headphones. Or some autistic users:

Many are hoping that automatic captioning solves this problem. But alas, not yet!

And the auto-captioning feature sadly isn’t available for most languages. So it’s still up to the video creators to caption.

## MOTION, ANIMATIONS AND CLUTTERED PAGES

Motion and animation can be annoying to anyone, but is extra frustrating to many users with cognitive impairments:

Do your users a favor by not distracting them with autoplaying videos, advertisements or image carousels.

## WALL OF TEXT

Many replies, especially from people with dyslexia or cognitive impairments, were about large chunks of text.

**52. Over 260 police, govt officials found in disabled coach this year**

MUMBAI: Two-hundred-and-sixty-three policemen and government [officials](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/officials) from various departments travelled illegally in [railway](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/railway) compartments meant for [handicapped](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/handicapped) and cancer patients in the last six months.  
  
Divisional security commissioner, railway, Sachin Bhalode recently wrote to the [police](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/police) commissioner and the [Government](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Government) Railway police (GRP) seeking take stern action against these policemen. Sources said that Bhalode sent around 40 letters to various government departments with a list of names of 263 officials, mostly from the city police and the GRP, who used the reserved coaches.  
  
"We have been carrying out special drives and have caught several government officials for travelling in these coaches and we keep sending notices to departments concerned to take suitable action," Bhalode said. "We have taken departmental action against those whose names have been sent to us. We will take stern action against if they do it a second time."

Activist Sameer Zaveri said Nitin Gaikwad, a handicapped person, had filed complaints as well as a writ petition in the high court.

In 2013, Gaikwad was beaten by a police officer after he asked the officer why he had entered the reserved compartment.

Gaikwad had filed a petition before the Commissioner for Persons With Disability, which ordered the installation of CCTVs besides the posting of special officers and holding of awareness campaigns to check illegal entry in these compartments.

"However, this order was never complied with and hence I filed a writ petition in the high court. In January, the high court directed the home department and the DGP to initiate disciplinary action against policemen booked for travelling in compartments reserved for the [disabled](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/disabled) and cancer patients in Mumbai's suburban trains," advocate Jaideep Tanna, who represents Gaikwad, said. He said the authorities failed to initiate any action.

# 53. Blind alligator gives vision impaired kids a class lesson

Houston, TX — Children living with vision impairment have lots of obstacles to overcome, and their school days are spent dealing with different methods of learning designed to make their education as successful as possible. Technology play a big role, of course, but what about Halo the blind alligator?

Children attending summer camp at The Lighthouse of Houston — a non-profit focused on serving the needs of the visually impaired — got an up-close view of the little gator this weekend, and learned about his species and themselves.

"The children at the summer camp were so excited to meet, touch the alligators and to learn about alligators," Christy Kroboth, known as "Gator Girl," told the Houston Chronicle. "Teaching kids with vision difficulties is a lot harder then teaching your average person because you have to be very descriptive and have to try to paint the picture of the alligator into their minds."

"All the kids loved Halo simply because she is like them and has vision problems herself," she added.

Kroboth is a member of Houston's Gator Squad, which captures nuisance alligators and releases them in the wild. It also educates the public about the often misunderstood animals. Kroboth takes Halo to events and organizations in the Houston area as a way of introducing people to the reptiles, which are abundant in the area.

**54. High Court: Keep MBBS seat vacant for girl with upper limb disability**

CHENNAI: Entertaining a plea from a girl who suffered 55% upper limb disability in an electrical mishap, the Madras high court has asked authorities to keep one [MBBS seat](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/MBBS-seat)vacant for her. If, in the end, she wins the case, she could be admitted.

Justice K Ravichandrabaabu, granting the interim relief to A Mathumitha of [Dharmapuri district](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Dharmapuri-district), posted the case to July 25 for further hearing. The selection committee handling MBBS/BDS admissions and the directorate of medical education should file their counter-affidavits by then.

Mathumitha, 18, who suffered the disability in 2010, wrote [NEET examination](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/NEET-examination) this year and qualified. When she submitted her application under physically handicapped (PH) category on July 7, she was informed that people with upper limb disability were ineligible as per clauses (1)(k), VIII (40)(iii)(a) and (e) which summarily excluded such candidates.

Assailing these provisions, Mathumitha said non-clinical [medical experts](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/medical-experts) will handle research and development and laboratory-oriented jobs with the designations of doctors. She said candidates with upper limb disabilities did not deserve any blanket denial of admission and added non-clinical courses like microbiology, pathology, pharmacology and community medicines could be handled by them.

**55. Indian para-athlete reduced to begging in Berlin before tournament**

Few things in the world of sports can be as bad as when an international athlete fails to get due recognition for their contributions to the country. Swimmer Kanchanmala Pande was recently made to bear the brunt of the bureaucratic inefficiency that plague sports federations in India. The Nagpur-based para-swimmer is completely sightless and competes in the S11 category. Just before flying out to complete in the Para-Swimming Championships in Berlin, Pande’s participation in the tournament was left in doubt after alleged mistakes by the Paralympics Committee of India (PCI).

The tournament in Berlin was scheduled to take place between July 3-9. For her and five other para-swimmers from the country, this time proved to be quite a nightmare as the government sanctioned money for their tour failed to reach them on time. To counter this, Kanchanmala is reported to have borrowed the money from complete strangers in Berlin.

“This is a government sponsored event and, as such, it is the responsibility of the authorities to see that things go smoothly, Vinod Deshmukh, Kanchanmala’s husband said in an exclusive conversation with Sports Possible. “The money to sponsor the participants of this tournament had been transferred by SAI into an account set up by PCI. When we tried accessing the money, we were informed the account was blocked,” he added.

A loan of 5 lakhs needed to be taken out by Kanchan and her family just so she could participate in the tournament. Furthermore, a medal in this tournament would mean a direct qualification into the World Championships, a fact which further accentuated the importance of Kanchanmala’s participation in it.

“The problem with the money was not the only place the PCI made a mistake,” Deshmukh continued. “Kanchan always competes in the 100m Backstroke event. On the day of her event, we found out that her name had been registered for the 50m event instead. Why is the PCI so inefficient?” Deshmukh questions.

If this was not enough, the athletes were asked to arrange for their own visas prior to the tournament which ended up costing nearly Rs 15,000. Additionally, the registration fees for the Kanchanmala’s event was also not paid. A sum of 90 euros needed to be arranged for immediately just so that she could participate in the event she wanted to.

“This kind of gross negligence affects the athlete’s concentration,” Deshmukh observed. “Kanchan was on the verge of a huge loss. We even asked for the money to be reimbursed afterwards but the PCI could offer us no assurance of that.”

Talking about these allegations, the PCI chief Gurcharan Singh has gone on record to maintain that the money, in fact, had not been sanctioned by the Sports Authority of India. Going against the athlete’s narrative, he also added that the swimmers would definitely be refunded their money.

“I am here in London for the World Athletics Championship and we are also facing a problem of shortage of money. SAI sanctioned just 40,000 pounds (Rs 33.16 lakh) while the organisers are asking for 80,000 pounds (Rs 66.32 lakh). We will hold meetings with SAI officials to discuss this matter. So, a fix to all this will be done once the London meet is over. I assure you, the swimmers will be given back their money. As for the coach problem, I am not aware of it. As soon as I get back to India, we will talk to the swimmers and will carry out an inquiry if needed,” Singh was quoted as saying by India Today.

When this news broke out, top Indian athletes like Abhinav Bindra have expressed anger at this kind of treatment towards Para-athletes.

For para-athletes who have already had to defy the odds several times in life, such experiences definitely leave a bad taste in the mouth. Kanchanmala’s story, however, has a relatively happy ending. Even after her repeated ordeals, she was able to achieve her dream of securing a berth at the World Championships.

# 56. Pune-based smart wheelchair maker raises funding

Pune-based smart wheelchair maker Arcatron Mobility Pvt. Ltd has raised an undisclosed amount in funding from Indian Angel Network (IAN).

The funding was led by Sudhir Mehta, Harish Mehta and Ketan Dalal, IAN said in a statement.

Arcatron will use the funds for launching Frido, its portable wheelchair that can be folded into a suitcase. Besides, the firm will use the funds to set up online and offline sales channels across major cities in India.

Frido is a multipurpose wheelchair that can be used as a travel companion. It has a stainless steel body, armrests, height adjustable footrests and big wheels, according to the firm’s website.

“Arcatron is doing a tremendous job in simplifying and improving lives of elderly and locomotor-impaired individuals, enabling them to lead active lifestyles,” said IAN’s Sudhir Mehta who was the lead investor in the latest funding round.

In March last year, [Mehta invested an undisclosed amount](http://techcircle.vccircle.com/2016/03/04/exclusive-smart-wheelchair-startup-arcatron-mobility-gets-seed-funding/) in a seed funding round in Arcatron, along with angel investor Anoop Hingorani.

Subsequently, in May last year, Arcatron raised another $100,000 (around Rs 64.5 lakh) from Mehta and Vaibhav Kulkarni, CEO of Pune-based e-prescription startup Anandakanda.

Founded in June 2015 by NIT Calicut alumni Laxmikant Banjarey, Kunal Kamble, Ganesh Sonawane and Dewaj Baruah, Arcatron designs and develops mobility products for assisted living for the elderly and those who cannot walk. The firm has already rolled out two wheelchairs—Arcatron SAS100 and Arcatron SSS100.

“We are also working on developing products like Frido Lite, which has the potential to replace most wheelchairs used by elderly individuals, tourism companies and hospitals. Currently, no product allows people with limited mobility to safely access bathrooms at their homes and on the go—Frido will help solve this problem,” said Ganesh Sonawane, CEO of Arcatron Mobility.

The company has also entered into a manufacturing partnership with Mehta-owned Pinnacle Industries, which is into commercial vehicles and interiors. According to Sonawane, the partnership allows Arcatron to stay asset light and focus on R&D, marketing and sales.

According to Arcatron, the global bathroom-assist devices market is worth $4 billion (Rs 25, 814 crore) while the Indian market is worth Rs 440 crore ($68 million). However, currently the space is dominated by Chinese products.

In an interaction with VCCircle last year, Sonawane said India has the second-largest population of elderly citizens at 110 million. This number is expected to reach 158.7 million by 2025 and surpass the population of children below 14 years by 2050.

# 57. Microsoft's new Artificial intelligence app for the blind available on iPhone

Microsoft released [a new artificial intelligence app for iPhone](https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/seeing-ai-talking-camera-for-the-blind/id999062298) this morning that can read text from signs and documents aloud, describe people and their emotions, identify currency values, and narrate the activity taking place in front of the user, among other futuristic features.

The app, called Seeing AI, is designed for the visually impaired but also serves as a showcase for Microsoft’s artificial intelligence capabilities. The initial release on iPhone continues Microsoft’s approach, under CEO Satya Nadella, of working with a variety of platforms beyond its own Windows operating system.

# The news was part of an event this morning in London where the company [made a series of AI announcements](https://news.microsoft.com/en-gb/2017/07/12/microsoft-reinforces-ai-vision-at-london-event/#sm.0000y8sy4w1hudd6xr922w6wu2uzn), including a new AI “research and incubation hub” inside Microsoft Research, a new “Ethical Design Guide for AI” and [an initiative called AI for Earth](https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/aiforearth) to encourage the use of artificial intelligence for environmental solutions.

Microsoft is competing against a variety of tech companies seeking to make a mark in artificial intelligence, including Amazon, Google, Facebook, Sales force and others. The company last year formed [a new 5,000-person engineering and research team](https://www.geekwire.com/2016/internal-email-microsoft-forms-new-5000-person-ai-division-top-exec-qi-lu-leaving-bike-injury/), called the Microsoft AI and Research Group, led by veteran technology exec Harry Shum, to further its AI initiatives.

**Update:** The currency recognition feature is listed as “coming in future.” We’ve asked Microsoft for more information on the timing.

## 58. This Delhi-based group of visually impaired students performing acrobatic yoga are an inspiration

It’s an age-old saying that when you don’t have one of your senses, the others are exponentially heightened. One such example of this adage would be the amazing kids from Delhi-based Yoga Artist Group — a group of visually impaired students who perform acrobatic yoga under the training of Hemant Sharma, a social activist and a yoga teacher.

When Sharma started teaching the children four years ago, he was expecting them to take time learning the postures. He was in for a surprise, however. “The concentration levels in these students are higher than regular students, who naturally tend to be distracted by so many other things. So, they learned the postures faster than I thought they would,” says Sharma.

His approach towards teaching the students was never apprehensive. “If people with no disability could learn, then these students could as well,” he was convinced. This inspiring set of children has won many accolades over the years. From the first National Disability Excellence Award and securing the first position in MTNL’s Perfect Health Mela, they went on to win the overall championship trophy in the first Yoga Champ Scavenge, among many others.

Although the students learnt faster than he thought, they faced certain difficulties in the initial days of training, owing to their impairment. “The students learnt by feeling my yoga posture with their hands and then subsequently replicating the posture,” Sharma said. The students have learnt these postures so well that they do not have to do that anymore, and only need verbal instructions now. Most importantly, the training has made the students independent of a walking stick.

“They move around confidently now, just like we do,” Sharma said. The students have also participated in the Doordarshan show — Meri Awaz Suno.

Sharma, who is a yoga teacher in SD Public School in Pitam Pura, Delhi, has been teaching the students with the help of an NGO called Akhil Bhartiya Netrahin Sangh in Raghubir Nagar. He has also started to teach acrobatic yoga to mentally challenged children.

The students continue to prove that no disability is a barrier big enough to stop them from chasing their dreams.

**59. Disabled artists in Kerala inspire with their talent & determination**

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Painting of a masked man pointing fingers confronts you when you visit Saphalyam Shopping complex at Palayam. Ninsy Mariam Mondly, a differently-abled young artist, wanted to confront the self-obsessed world ever eager to accuse others. The drawing extols us to discover the empathy in us. It is part of the items kept for exhibition and sales by differently-abled persons associated with Pallium India, a charitable trust based in West Fort.

Ninsy became wheelchair-bound after a fall paralysed her from chest down. But it has not paralysed her spirit and the desire to be independent. She started drawing because she wanted to show her sister that she too can draw. From simple drawings of pets, she has moved to abstract style. The masked man is the first one in that category. The artist is pursuing her bachelor's in Psychology and has been associating with Pallium since last year.

“I am interested in knowing about human beings, their body and mind. I will be pursuing MA Psychology,” said Ninsy.

The neglect, which Ninsy expresses through her painting, is a phenomenon that has been experienced by other differently-abled artists at the exhibition. Aji Kumar, a resident of Kattakada, is reluctant to seek help from others when he visits the town.

“I ride a tricycle. When I seek help, people either ignore it or make nasty comments. It is a painful experience,” said Aji. He faced similar experience while visiting government offices. “I once had to hire head load workers to carry me down from an autorickshaw while visiting a government hospital. Even the pension for the disabled is not given on time,” he said. But this has not dampened his resolve to go on with his life after a near-fatal accident.

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Aji makes a living by making handicrafts from recycled materials and working as a cobbler. He along with his wife Remya makes umbrellas, cloth bags, chappals, soaps and cleaning lotions. The couple received an order from a US based NRI for 50 umbrellas, through Pallium India. During festivals, he rides his tricycle to the venue and sells balloons and decorative material.

Jyoti Kumar, Preedha Jalaja, Manoj Kumar are among the other differently-abled members who pursue their life to the fullest despite the setbacks. The items they have made including cloth bags, pickle, soap, paintings, fancy jewellery are up for sales till Sunday. Pallium India has trained 40 people in various crafts.

# 60. Disabled youth in Meghalaya to get training in making shoes

Differently-abled and unemployed youth in Meghalaya, will be designing shoes for people with orthopaedic problems.The shoe-making unit, set up by the Roilang Livelihood Academy of Bethany Society, was inaugurated here yesterday by deputy consul-general of the German consulate, Calcutta, Jrgen Thomas Schrod.The unit has been set up with support from CBM (formerly Christoffel-Blindenmission) India and funding from the German consulate. The consulate had provided a grant of Rs 2.7 lakh to purchase machines required for the unit.

The unit will cater to manufacturing shoes for people, who require specially-designed footwear because of various orthopedic problems, Bethany Society Director, Carmo Noronha said.Moreover, it will also manufacture normal shoes and other leather products."We want to develop the employability of youths, including the differently-abled. It will start imparting training from tomorrow to four differently-abled persons in making special footwear, including leprosy sandals and orthopaedic shoes," Mr Noronha said..The Society had sent an employee, Eldalyne Kharsati, to the Vietnamese Training Centre for Orthopaedic Technologists of the University of Labour and Social Affairs in Hanoi to undergo a 18-month course in shoemaking.

Ms Kharsati said the price of orthopaedic shoes will be expensive considering the time involved in making these specially-designed footwear. The starting price for the shoes will be around Rs 2,000, she said.

"We have a small-scale programme, which supports small communities wherever we can in terms of improving their lives. That is what we have done here, thanks to CBM and the Bethany Society. It is not big money but it help," Mr Schrod said.

According to the 2011 census, Meghalaya has 44,317 people with disabilities, of whom 6,980 people are visually impaired and 12,353 suffer from hearing impairment. There are also 3,576 people afflicted with multiple disabilities and 5,312 from movement-related disabilities. UNI RRK RN 1214

# 61. Eye Makeup Causing Vision Problems In Young Women

Meibomian gland dysfunction -- also known as dry eye syndrome -- is on the rise among women due to excess make-up of the eyes. Though not taken seriously, the condition leads to blepharitis, extreme blurred vision, said doctors.  
  
Latest medical cases revealed that though MGD until now was seen due to ageing, now the trend has changed and it is occurring among young women as well.

"The changing trend of make-ups causing MGD is dangerous. Eyeliner and other make-up usually clog the meibomian glands leading to formation of painless lumps in the eyelids hence obstructing the vision," said Mahipal Sachdev, Director, Centre for Sight, a chain of eye centres in North India.  
  
Elaborating on the condition, Sachadev, who often sees young women with MGD says that the meibomian produce oils that prevent the tears from evaporating quickly. Whenever the glands do not function properly, the blockage in the gland restricts it from producing oil.   
  
"The oil may sometimes thicken leading to cause benign lumps in the eyelids known as chalazion. MGD is the most known and leading cause of dry eye syndrome, blepharitis and in extreme cases loss of vision," said Sachdev.  
  
Medical Sciences says that there are around 40 such glands that produce oil that flows out of the eyes as tears to keep the eyes moistened. Thickening of this oil restricts its flow causing accumulation and blockage, forming a lump in the eyelid. A blocked oil gland causes this condition of red swollen eyelids.  
  
"Around 40 per cent of the women with high usage of eye make-up products tend to get affected with oil gland blockages. Parabens and yellow wax used in mascara and eyeliners to stiffen them to make it waterproof are the same chemicals that also clog the oil glands leading to MGD, chalazion, dry eye syndrome and blepharitis," Parul Sony, senior consultant and director of Gurgram's Complete Eye Care.  
  
Stating that anti-ageing eye creams contain retinoids that has also been linked to thickening and degeneration, Sony said that such make-ups kill the blood cells in the meibomian gland ducts.  
  
A study by Canada's University of Waterloo said people who apply eyeliner on the inner eyelid run the risk of contaminating the eye and causing vision trouble.

## 62. Professor shows the vision to make way for job to the hearing impaired

COIMBATORE: Even as the State government has ordered a vigilance probe on the recent recruitment done by the Bharathiar  University, a visually challenged Assistant Professor at the Social Work department of the University, resigned saying it should have been reserved for a hearing impaired. He added he did not want to continue in a post that belongs to someone else.

P Ven­­ka­t­e­s­an, who was appointed in November 2016, has sent copy of his re­signation letter to the HoD FX Lo­­­v­e­l­ina Little Flower, as per the university rules. The varsity is yet to accept his resig­na­tion.

“He had not reported for work for the past two days,” said Vice-Cha­n­c­e­llor A Ga­­­n­a­pathy.  “He has sent copy of his re­­s­i­g­nation to the HoD.  I’m yet to receive it.”

“We wanted to give the post to a visually challenged person, so that he can work for that section of society,” the VC said justifying his appointment.

Association of University Teachers former general secretary C Pichandy said it is unfortunate. “Even in the Teachers Recruitment Board hiring, these posts are reserved specific­a­lly for visual, hearing or orthopedically impaired.”

## 63. GOVT TO REGULATE FUNCTIONING OF OPTICAL SHOPS

With optical shops mushrooming at every nook and corner of the country, the Government has, for the first time, moved in to regulate their functioning to ensure a standard of "sanitation, hygiene and professional practice".

The Union Health Ministry has set up a panel to deliberate issues like whether the optical stores have the requisite qualification to provide ophthalmology services or for that matter, whether computerised eye tests at most of the optical shops can be relied upon. Presently, these shops are guided by the State Commercial Establishments Act with no check on the quality or standard of the human resources running them.

 "We are talking to all the stakeholders in the industry including associations concerned from eye care industry besides optometrists and ophthalmologists and opticians  from government and private sector to deliberate the issue and recommend provisions for regulation of the optical stores," said Dr Atul Kumar, Chief and Professor of Ophthalmology at Dr RP Centre, AIIMS. Delhi.

In India, usually, the eye care sector is represented by ophthalmologists, optometrists and opticians, the last two operating at the optical stores.

While Ophthalmologists are in the hospital setups and can practice medicine, perform surgery, diagnose and treat eye diseases, and prescribe glasses or contacts, it is Optometrists who play an important role in optical stores: they are not medical doctors, but are primary healthcare practitioners of the eye and vision system who can successfully manage the leading cause of vision impairment (i.e. refractive error). They can also help alleviate the burden of other causes of blindness through diagnosis, referral and co-management.Optician is a technician who has special training in designing and fitting eyeglasses and contacts. He/she does not test or examine patients themselves, but use the prescriptions written by optometrists or ophthalmologists.

The need for regulation has been increasingly felt as a large number of optical stores are springing up in cities as well as in villages. Since they are catering to the health needs related with sensitive organs like eyes, we want to ensure that those providing services particularly optometrists maintain certain standards particularly in villages where eye care awareness is very poor, Dr Kumar said.

More so since optometrists need to play a larger role in detection, management and prevention of diabetes which if untreated leads to retinopathy and ultimately blindness. In the absence of adequate regulations, quacks have also entered into the business, giving wrong prescriptions and fleecing the customers.

The misuse or incorrect eyeglasses or lenses can lead to a number of health concerns if not corrected in time.  Dr Kumar said that the panel will also look into the eye care glasses and lenses' price issues as many times it has been found that the optical shop owners are charging at their whims and fancies. This needs to be regulated to protect the patients from being fleeced.

Though overall increase in population and increasing awareness among people about eye care is primarily responsible for the rampant growth of the optical shops, nevertheless, there are insufficient numbers of optometrists to meet the need."Seventy five-per cent of the blind people in the country are curable but there is acute shortage of optometrists as there are not sufficient schools. To become an Optometrist, one should finish XII class studies with a major in Science subjects and then pursue graduation in Optometry from any of the recognized educational institutions

'Needless to say, a lot of shops are not having qualified optometrists. However, the Government should ensure sufficient schools, upgrade their skills before taking any knee-jerk action," cautioned Mahipal Sachdev, Director, Centre for Sight, a chain of eye centres in North India.

**64. Auto driver doubles up as good Samaritan for accident victims, disabled**

BHUBANESWAR: Prabhat Pradhan believes in bucking trends. Where most people hesitate to offer a lift to the poor or the differently abled, the 42-year-old autorickshaw driver makes sure he gives them a ride. Not only that, he does it for free.  
  
For those who cannot afford to use public transport, Prabhat is a messiah. He has offered free rides to more than 7,000 people over the last 20 years. His mantra is simple and written on the rear of his auto: "Work is god. Physically handicapped, elderly persons and accident victims can avail free transport in my vehicle".  
  
Prabhat, a resident of the Niali area of Cuttack district, comes to Bhubaneswar every morning for work. And every day, he takes out some time to reach out to those in need. "Every day, I ferry at least two to four needy passengers for free. But I do not give free service to all. Driving this auto is my only source of income. Since Bhubaneswar is close to my house, I come here daily for work," says the father of two, adding that he earned around Rs 500 daily.  
  
When asked about when or why he started giving free rides to those in need, Prabhat's memory takes him back 20 years and he speaks of an accident he witnessed in 1997.

"I was returning home at night when I saw a man pleading for help after he met with an accident near Rasulgarh. A crowd had gathered around him but nobody came forward to help him. I was in a rush and could not help the person either. Later, I heard he had died," Prabhat says.

"That incident left a deep mark on me and it made me think. I do not mind wasting fuel for the cause. At times, I get financial support from some generous people in our locality," he adds.

Asked if his family objected to him going out of his way to help others, and sacrificing a part of his income to do so, Prabhat explains he had never let his philanthropy affect the welfare of his children Satyaranjan and Ayush Ranjan, who study in Class IX and Class III, respectively. He was echoed by his wife Sasmita, who added, "I have never objected to him wasting fuel to transport passengers for free. We believe God will bless us."  
Residents of Niali speak highly of Prabhat, whose acts of charity have made him something of a celebrity in the neighbourhood. "We are proud of him. It is unusual to find people like him these days. He has never turned down requests of people in a crisis," said [Pabitra Sahoo](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Pabitra-Sahoo), a neighbour.

# 65. Now, a survey to reach out to persons with disabilities

Panaji: The state commissioner for disabilities, together with the directorate of panchayats, has begun undertaking a survey to bridge the gap between persons with disabilities in the state and those who have disability certificates.

"According to the 2011 census, there are 33,012 persons with disabilities in the state, but only around 18,000 have disability certificates," said state commissioner for disabilities Anuradha Joshi, adding that it is important to update figures and reach out to more people.  
The directorate of panchayats has been providing the necessary support to get the survey done through block level officers and panchayat members. "Once we have the right base data to work with, planning and implementation of government policies and schemes for persons with disabilities will become easier. It will also help in correcting budget allocation," Joshi said.  
Taluka-wise meetings organised by the commission's office, together with Saksham, and NGO working with the visually-impaired, will begin this month to create awareness about the importance of the survey. Each panch member will have to fill up simple forms with details like name of the person, address, aadhar card number, whether they have a disability certificate or not, type of disability, and contact number.

This data, once collated, will present a clearer picture of the number of persons with disabilities in Goa and will prove useful with the recent Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.

**4. Announcement**

**1. N.S. HEMA Memorial Award for Outstanding NGO in Disability Sector in Karnataka**

**Applications are invited for N.S. Hema memorial Award 2017**

This award is instituted by the Association of People with Disability (APD) in memory of its founder N.S Hema, who established the organization in 1959.

**About APD and its founder Hema**: Annually, APD works with 20,000 People with Disabilities (PwD) across 8 districts of Karnataka and is a Resource Support Organization to many NGOs.  It also facilitated setting up the Disability Network Alliance, a platform for about 100 NGOs.

N.S.Hema was severely afflicted with polio at a very young age. It was her dream and life’s mission to ensure quality in the lives of persons with disability and promote inclusion in society. Hema’s vision, mission and commitment led to the growth of APD as a renowned NGO for Early Intervention, Rehabilitation, Education and Livelihoods for People with Disabilities.

She lived her dream and passed away on 8th April 2016.

**Why the Award?** Good work and recognition must go hand in hand.

The Governing Board of APD has instituted the ‘N.S Hema Memorial Award’ to recognize and promote people and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) working in the disability sector. This sector is considered a low dividend and low priority by many. APD believes that their own work has transformed the lives of people, community and the society as a whole.  This Award is to recognize outstanding work of Karnataka based NGOs.

**About the Award**: The **“N.S. Hema Award for Outstanding NGO in Disability sector in Karnataka”** will be an annual feature, to be held on the Founder’s Day,  4th October, being Hema’s birthday.  The Award **will go** **to one NGO which is doing excellent work in the field of disability in Karnataka for the last 3 years** **and will consist of  RS.1,00,000/- and citation.**The awardee will be chosen by a panel of competent Jurors consisting of people from the Disability and Development sector. **The Award will be given away on 4th October, 2017.**This will be a great opportunity and honour for NGOs working in the field of Disability, in Karnataka.

**Eligibility Criteria:**

**1.**       Completion of minimum of 3 years as of 1 April, 2017. and Registered as a **not for profit organization,**only as Society/Trust/Company.

**2**         **Compliance to Statutory requirement as a NGO**

3.       Working in the disability (as defined by RPD Act, 2016 )sector for 3 years in Karnataka

**Award’s Criteria:**Spread and Depth:  Example Geographically, types and severity of disability that the organization is dealing with, different types of programs and the projects that the organization is managing, its longevity, and the reach in terms of numbers of beneficiaries.

1.       Potential  - Relevance of the work done  in terms of need of the sector and capacity to deliver

2.       Resilience and Sustainability

3.       Innovation

4.       Credibility of the Organization

**Why you should participate:**

         Recognition (Cash price, citation or certificate, trophy)

         Opportunity to interact / interface with eminent experts during selection process

         Mentoring and advice from Disability NGO Alliance

         Publicity and media attention during the felicitation function

We hope that this Award will encourage you to showcase your work and draw inspiration from one another. We look forward to your application for the Award in the prescribed Application Form. **The last day for Application is 30 July, 2017**. Contact at [**nshemaaward@apd-india.org**](mailto:nshemaaward@apd-india.org)**or**  Mr. Daniel E James for obtaining application form and other details by Phone No. 080-25489594/080-25470390

**2. Computer Training for visually impaired at Kakinad Andrapradesh**

Computer Training For Visually Impaired. Duration: 6 Months

The duration of the course is 6months. The first 6 months  will be focused on basic computers with English communication, mobility, employability and personality development.

Course Details:

Timings    : 9:30 AM  – 5:00 PM, Monday – Saturday

Start Date : August Second Week , 2017

Premise    : Rcg training center, Kakkanad

Course Fee : No Course Fee

Eligibility:

•  Any visually impaired person with graduation or equivalent diploma.

PUC/+2 pass candidates may be considered on an exception basis.

•  Age should not be more than 35 years

•  Who want to use computer skills for their education/ employment

•  Visually Impaired persons who can dedicate their full time for the entire course duration. Register for the training on or 15th August 2017. Registered candidates should come down to Info park, Kakkanad on or before 15th August 2017. It help the organizers to assist you with the hostel/PG accommodation. contact Number:

RCG: 0484-4035537,0484-2415080 Mobile :8593838396 Anju Narayanan, Chief Trainer: 9526629949

**3. National Institute for Vision of Bodies (n.i.v.h) T.C.A.B**

 Computer and Assistive Technology training course at T.C.A.B National Institute for Visually Handicapped Dehradun)

6 Month Course

Course related topics

1 Basic Computer

2 Assistive Technology

3 Hardwares Networking and Internet

4 braille

Hostel Facility Food Facility: All these facilities and training courses are free.

After completion of the course, the certificate issued by n.i.v.h and will be applicable by the terms and conditions under the Laptop distribution process plan.

300 rupees per month in the form of pocket money. Only 10 students or girls from the entire India will be selected by interview. For application

1 photo

 2 Aadhar card

3 12th Certificate. Marksheets and c.m.o certificates will be valid from 40% to 100% and all documents are mandatory.

Take your documents as soon as possible, n.i.v.h t.c.a.b. 116 Rajpur road reached Dehradun in Uttarakhand. Contact 9997440219/8923332987

**4. Awake Vishwa Foundation opens admission for free hostel for the academic year 2017 for visually impaired boys students**

Awake Vishwa Foundation a nonprofit organization striving to empower differently abled opens admission for free hostel for the academic year 2017 for visually challenged boy students with free hostel and food, computers with wify, scribe facility, in house tuitions, text book recordings, scholarship for college admissions, music classes aspirants are requested to contact 9620369680 since there are limited seats it will be first come first serve, V.N. Gurudas Founder president.

**5. Information**

# 1. Helpline of Central Railway for passengers with disability

# helpline No.- 9004411111

**2. UNICEF India guidebook on making schools accessible for disabled**

UNICEF India has developed a guidebook: “[Making Schools Accessible to Children with Disabilities](http://unicef.in/Uploads/Publications/Resources/pub_doc119.pdf)” with the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, and Samarthyam, a Disabled Persons Organization (DPO), as part of the Prime Minister’s Accessible India Campaign.

This guide is available at : [www.unicef.in](http://www.unicef.in)

# 3. Annamalai University offering PG diploma in multiple disabilities

CHENNAI: With more schools promoting inclusive classrooms, there is an increasing demand for trained special educators. So [V-Excel Educational Trust](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/V-Excel-Educational-Trust) has tied up with [Annamalai University](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Annamalai-University) to offer distance education programmes in multiple disabilities and vocational training.  
  
"We are offering a PG diploma in multiple disabilities as well as diploma in vocational training and diploma in inclusive education," said Abhinaya Krishnan, who works at V-Excel.  
  
Anybody with a graduate degree is eligible to apply for the PG diploma programme while candidates who have passed Class XII can apply for the other diploma programmes. Applicants have to pay a fee of Rs 26,000 for the PG programme and Rs 19,000 for the other programmes.

"We are offering these programme for the first time as there is a demand for trained special educators as more schools are getting more inclusive," says Abhinaya.  
Contact classes are held every Saturday from 9.30am to 4.30pm at [R A Puram](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/R-A-Puram) in Chennai. "Regular tests, assignments and on-the-job training are part of the programme," says Abhinaya.  
"The duration of each course is one academic year, and the final exams are held in December and May each year. Candidates can take the exams in either month, depending on when they finish the course."  
For more details, contact V-Excel at 10/23, Thiruvengadam Street, R A Puram. Ph: 24956373, 24620243, 9884330821.

**4. Availability of 10th std Braille text books of Karnataka state syllabus at Mitrajyothi charitable Trust Bangalore**

Bangalore based Pioneering institution Mitrajyothi charitable Trust makes available the following Braille text books of 10th std of Karnataka state syllabus.

For obtaining the books and more details Mitrajyothi can be contacted at ph.-080-22587623/25, email [adminioffice@mitrajyothi.org](mailto:adminioffice@mitrajyothi.org)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sl. No. | Std. | Book | Braille books | Total pages (Braille) | price |
| 1 | 10 | kannada -1 | 2 parts | 308 | 200.00 |
| 2 | 10 | English -2 | 2 parts | 332 | 250.00 |
| 3 | 10 | Social Science | 4 parts | 604 | 400.00 |
| 4 | 10 | Phy.Edu. | 2 parts | 248 | 200.00 |
| 5 | 10 | Economics | 2 parts | 292 | 250.00 |
| 6 | 10 | Political Science | 2 parts | 220 | 200.00 |
| 7 | 10 | Sociology | 1 part | 144 | 150.00 |
| 8 | 9 | Kannada-1 | 2 parts | 280 | 200.00 |

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**6. Employment**

**1.**  **Recruitment for Pondicherry University**

Job title: Assistant professor post

Total post: 72

Reservation for Blind and Low vision – 04

Last date for apply – 28.7.2017

For more details please visit: [www.pondiuni.edu.in](http://www.pondiuni.edu.in)

**2. Recruitment for office of the District Judge, Nayagarh**

Job title: Stenographer , Jr.Clerk, Jr. Typist

Total post: 23

Reservation for PWD including Blind and Low vision – As per government Rules

Last date for apply – 10.8.2017

For more details please visit: [www.nayagarh.nic.in](http://www.nayagarh.nic.in)

**3** **. Recruitment for Jharkhand Staff Selection Commission**

Job title: Revenue Employee assistant

Total post: 557

Reservation for Blind and Low vision – 7

Last date for apply – 26.7.2017

For more details please visit: [www.jssc.in](http://www.jssc.in)

**4. Recruitment for Uttarpradesh higher Education Service**

Job title: Principal posts

Total post: 284

Reservation for PWD including Blind and Low vision – As per government Rules

Last date for apply – 31.7.2017

For more details please visit: [www.uphesconline.in](http://www.uphesconline.in)

**5. Recruitment for ODISHA Public Service Commission**

Job title: Graduate Teachers post

Total post: 230

Reservation for Blind and Low vision – 2

Last date for apply – 21.8.2017

For more details please visit: [www.opsc.gov.in](http://www.opsc.gov.in)

**6. Recruitment for West Bengal Health**

Job title: Staff Nurse

Total post: 6562

Reservation for PWD including Blind and Low vision – 372

Last date for apply – 31.7.2017

For more details please visit: [www.wbhrb.in](http://www.wbhrb.in)

**7. Recruitment for CG By Alan Chattisgarh**

Job title: Horticulture extension officer

Total post: 348

Reservation for Low vision – 7

Last date for apply – 24.7.2017

For more details please visit: [www.cgvyapam.choice.gov.in](http://www.cgvyapam.choice.gov.in)

**8. Recruitment for District Court**

Job title: Stenographer

Total post: 8

Reservation for Low vision – 1

Last date for apply – 31.7.2017

For more details please visit: [www.ecourts.gov.in](http://www.ecourts.gov.in)

**9. Recruitment for office of the resident Commissioner Manipur**

Job title: LDC, MTS

Total post: 33

Reservation for PWD including Blind and Low vision – As per government rules

Last date for apply – 29.7.2017

For more details please visit: [www.manipur.gov.in](http://www.manipur.gov.in)

**10. Recruitment for Odisha Postal Circle**

Job title: MTS

Total post: 144

Reservation for PWD including Blind and Low vision – As per government rules

Last date for apply – 22.7.2017

For more details please visit: [www.odisha.postalcareers.in](http://www.odisha.postalcareers.in)

**11. Recruitment for Telangana State Public Commission**

Job title: Associate & Assistant professor

Total post: 19

Reservation for PWD including Blind and Low vision – 1

Last date for apply – 31.8.2017

For more details please visit: [www.tspsc.gov.in](http://www.tspsc.gov.in)

**12. Recruitment for IBPS**

Job title: Online examination for probationary officer post

Total post: 3247

Reservation for Blind and Low vision – 38

Last date for apply – 28.8.2017

For more details please visit: [www.ibps.in](http://www.ibps.in)

**13. Recruitment for Nuapada District Judge Office**

Job title: Jr. Clerk, Typist, Stenographer

Total post: 13

Reservation for PWD including Blind and Low vision – As per government rules

Last date for apply – 21.7.2017

For more details please visit: [www.courts.gov.in](http://www.courts.gov.in)

14**. Recruitment for Parliament of India**

Job title: Jr. Clerk post

Total post: 31

Reservation for Low vision – 1

Last date for apply – 9.8.2017

For more details please visit: [www.loksabha.nic.in](http://www.loksabha.nic.in)

**15. Recruitment for Indian Space Research Organisation for its various states**

Job title: Assistant post

Total post: 272

Reservation for Blind and Low vision – 8

Last date for apply – 31.7.2017

For more details please visit: [www.isro.gov.in](http://www.isro.gov.in)

**16. Recruitment for Delhi subordinate Service Selection Board**

Job title: Teaching & Non teaching post

Total post: 4494

Reservation for PWD including Blind and Low vision

Last date for apply – 27.8.2017

For more details please visit: [www.dads.delhigovt.nic.in](http://www.dads.delhigovt.nic.in)

**17. Recruitment for THDC Uttarkhand**

Job title: Trade apprentice in various trade

Reservation for PWD including Blind and Low vision – As per government rules

Last date for apply – 31.7.2017

For more details please visit: [www.they.co.in](http://www.they.co.in)