

## SECRETARY REPORT

**April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021**

Dear Friends, for the past many years I had been consistently sharing my joy and happiness of scaling new heights and achieving social success in the path of bringing hopes and light in the life of my fellow blind brothers through social cause with your benevolent help, but this year I am upset and at immense pain because of suffering through Covid pandemic that has gripped not only our country but the whole world as such and everyone be it rich or poor, able or disable has suffered either in the form of health, wealth or peace of mind. Covid -19 is the most tumultuous, most catastrophic and the most defining epoch of our generation. I cannot think of any other disease or natural disaster that has spread in the entire world at such a speed and magnitude that the entire world was forced to stop at its' track - from the end of December 2019, when the first case was reported in China, to the middle of April 2020, when an estimated one third of the world's population is locked behind the doors. Our country and every state were under strict lockdown. Everyone suffered his/her own sorrows and endured it. Roads were deserted and all one could hear was blaring sirens of ambulance, which again filled the mind and heart with fear and anxiety. In such a situation major sufferers were poor who lived by each day's earning and physically handicap who need support at every walk of life. This filled my heart with pains. Today I might seem calm as an ocean, but deep inside me I know how disturbed I'm. On those days calls I received from my fellow brethrens were mostly for as basic need as supply of groceries and other day to day life needs. In such trying periods we as a human are expected to behave responsibly, watch for each other's back and reach out to those who need help and this is precisely what our great saints have been preaching us all along. At such times, I literally remembered the Verse written by Saint Dnyaneshwar in which he wrote that " Kavnache Maaybaap, Kavnache Gangotra, Mrugjalvant jaeel laya ....." i.e. in this selfish world all relationships are flimsy and everything is doomed to end.

As far as this year is concerned, compared to previous years, we took up less social activities, but the ones that we took up were crisis based which brought relief to the blind brothers immensely.

- 1. Distribution of groceries:** - To curb spread of Covid our country was under strict lockdown and curfew was imposed in the whole country due to which all modes of conveyance i.e. trains, buses, taxis and autos and rickshaw were stopped. This caused a direct impact on the livelihood of people who did small odd work and businesses at bus stops or ones who ply these vehicles. Their businesses came to a standstill and they faced a time of starvation. Sadly we still have a number of blinds who solely depend on seeking alms at these crowded places and they were the worst sufferers. In such situation, I am proud to mention here that our office bearers and committee directors took up to themselves and initially set an example to the society by distributing groceries to the blinds so that they do not go hungry. **Isn't it "the charity begins at Home" in true sense?**

Organization at your doorstep was our motto and with this concept in mind on 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, and 24<sup>th</sup> April 2020, 180 blind people from Nasik, Malegaon, and Ahmednagar were given enough ration to sustain for at least a month that included 10 kg of wheat, 5 kg of rice, 2 kg of sugar, tea leaves, pigeon peas, beaten rice, oil pouch, Salt bag, peanuts, lentils, red chili paper, spices, turmeric, toothpaste and vegetables. This help brought smiles to blind people's faces and they felt content. The financial cost of implementing this project was huge but this was made possible with the help of gracious donors, I'm obliged to mention the names of some of them here. It would not be an exaggeration to say that it was only with the help of Lions Club Corporation president Mr. Raju Vyas, businessman Mr. Nilesh Bora, Firodiya Group, then Municipal Corporation permanent president Mr. Ganesh Gite and some doctors. Special efforts were made were by Blind Welfare Organization president Mr. Arun Bharaskar, Honorary President Mr. Vijay Ghatge, Dr. Vishwasrao Gaikwad and Mr. Anil Jain for the success of this initiative.



2. **Covid-19 Braille Book publication Ceremony:** - Covid is a global pandemic that wracked havoc worldwide and has caused deaths in massive proportion. The world is extremely frightened of its magnitude. For a normal person it's quite easy to get updates about this disease as well as precautions to be observed to keep this disease at bay through print media such as newspaper or internet, but for the blind people it poses a great challenge. Their handicap makes them helpless as to understand what causes this disease? How to take care if one get contracted, and what precautions one should take to prevent this from happening? Well, we understand their requirement firsthand and the book was printed in Braille, which covered all their doubts and has all pertaining information. We got printed as many as 1500 copies of this book and were distributed among blinds after publication. Observing all necessary Covid precautions the book was published online by Guardian Minister of Nasik Hon. Mr. Chhaganrao Bhujbal and Rajiv Khandekar, Chief Editor of ABP Maza a popular news channel on June 30, 2020 at Bhujbal Farm House Nasik. The cost was expected to be around Rs. 1, 25,000/- (One Lakh Twenty Five Thousand Rupees) however, with the financial support of Lions Club of Ganesh Khind, Rotary Club of Nigadi Pune and Rotary Club of Bombay Queens City, it was possible to print and distribute these Braille book to the blind brothers in Maharashtra. Another feature of this book is that by providing the phone numbers of all the district hospitals in the state of Maharashtra and at least one charitable hospital number in each district and also detail information of Mahatma Phule Yojna the patients can get cheap, swift and proper treatment. Hon'ble Bhujbal sir was all praise about the book as it is very handy and covers all aspects and wished shall it be published in Hindi language it would benefit blind people across the country. Speaking on the occasion Mr. Rajiv Khandekar said, "I have seen the work of the origination closely and the president of the organization Mr. Arun Bharaskar, keeping in view the situation, carries out appropriate activities for the visually impaired." He expressed hope that the society would definitely support Mr. Bharaskar for his efforts. As the event was online a large number of well-wishers from Mumbai and Pune were present. To name a few Mr. Dwarkanath Jalan, Mr. Vijay Kalbhor, president of Rotary club of Nigadi, Mr. Girish Agrawal, president of Mumbai Green City, Mr. Kulkarni of Pooja Industries and Mr. Vijay Bhandari of Lions Club were present. For the success of this initiative, President Arun Bharaskar, Director Bhagwan Pawar and Treasurer Mrs.Vijaya Dabe took special efforts.



3. **Anniversary day celebration of the Organization:-** The organization debuted in its 14<sup>th</sup> year this year. It shall not be an exaggerating in saying that we have completed 14 years of tenacity, because looking back, the organization has always kept the graph of its work going up and you as a well-wisher of organization are witnesses to it. However, this year due to the Covid atmosphere in our state, the anniversary was celebrated in a simple way by providing groceries to the needy blind people instead of holding competitions or entertainment programs. On the occasion of this anniversary, groceries were distributed to 110 blind people in Nashik city and various areas. It can be said that this project was made possible only due to the financial support given by Supt. Engineer Hon'ble Mr. Ranjit Hande, Mr. Deepak Daryani and Dr. Waliya. Considering difficulties faced by blinds, the groceries were home delivered to them. For the success of the program Honorary President Mrs. Kalpana Pande, General Secretary Mr. Datta Patil, Treasurer Mrs. Vijaya Dabe and Director Mr. Dinesh Musale worked hard.



4. **Braille Guide Publication Ceremony:-** Examination of std. 10<sup>th</sup> is considered as a turning point in any student's life because unlike school exams, this exam is conducted by State Board, which is a cause enough to fill the students with anxiety and fear and another reason is on the basis of marks obtained in this examination students get admission to their desired branch. For a normal student to achieve better marks there are plenty of study materials available in the market, but blind students are again at loss here. Since at present only text books are available in Braille for blind students, new guides set in Marathi, Hindi, English and Sociology in Braille language was printed. This guide is available in 23 parts and is priced at Rs. 6400/- (Six thousand four hundred rupees). After the publication, 400 sets were given free of cost to all the blind schools in Maharashtra. I firmly believe that these books shall help increase the marks of the students. The publication ceremony of these guides was held on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2020 in a very simple manner at the office of the organisation in Nasik by observing all Covid precautions. Former social welfare

divisional commissioner Hon'ble Mr. Rajendra Kalal, Sales representative of Bharat Petroleum Nasik and Zonal head of Bharat Petroleum Mr. Vineet Indulkar were present online at the publication ceremony. At the time of publishing the book Mr. Kalal on behalf of Bharat Petroleum commended the company for its support to this commendable initiative and truly hoped that this guide would help increase the percentage of the students. Given the size of the guide's set, he was astonished as to how it was possible for the organization to print it in such a short time. He applauded all the staff. Mr. Vineet Indulkar, while expressing his sentiments, lamented that he could not attend this commendable event but testified that Bharat Petroleum will always cooperate if the organization carries out good initiatives for the benefit of the blind in future also. K.J. Mehta School and NAB School representatives accepted the guide set in a representative manner. Mr. Bhagwan Pawar, Mr. Mahendra More and Ms. Sapana Chandak worked hard for the success of the program.



5. **Distribution of refreshment on occasion of Diwali:-** Just like previous years, on behalf of the organization, this year also on Danotryadashi Diwali sweetmeat distribution was organized with the help of Rotary Club of Nashik Smart City on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2020 at the office of Organization. At this time 1 kg of dipawali sweatmeat was distributed to 124 blind peoples. And on the initiative of Hon'ble Mr. Arjun Mudaa, director of the organization, Raymonds pant and shirt cloth were distributed to 80 needy blind brothers and the saris were given to the women with the help of Wasan Toyota. Rotary Club President Ms. Arpana Marwar presented the book Covid -19 in Braille as a gift to raise awareness among the blinds. Diwali being an auspicious festival, melodious Mangalam song was played in the beginning. Atmosphere of joy was everywhere. Lanterns and sky lanterns and rangoli filled with rainbow colors were the main attraction of the event. Ms. Arpana Marwar President of the Rotary Club graced the event as chief guest and Mr. Tushar Chavan, who 10 years back inspired us to hold such events, were present for the occasion. Also present were former president of Lions Club of Nashik Corporate Mr. Raju Vyas and other office bearers lit the lamp. The program started with the singing of Diwali song. To make festival a more happy and sweet event, faral, sweets, along with dresses for men and saris for women and White sticks were distributed. Mrs. Marwar and Honorary president Mrs. Kalpana Pandey wished a Happy Diwali to the blind brothers. Mr. Tushar Chavhan who inspired us to hold such events and witnessed this for the past 10 years praised our growth and the sustained activities of the organization that always create consciousness in the life of the visually impaired. Rotary club and Lions Club always help us to carry out such activities. Former president of Lions Club of Nasik corporate Mr. Rajubhai Vyas promised that Lions Club shall sponsor eye donation camp organized by the Blind Welfare Organization in future and wished the blind brothers well on the occasion of Dipawali. The program was hosted by President Mr. Arun Bharaskar and the organization was introduced by General Secretary Mr. Datta Patil. Treasurer thanked the guests. Secretary Ms. Megha Pimpley, Ms. Sapana Chankdak, Mr. Dinesh Musale worked hard for the success of the program.



6. **Louis Braille Birth Anniversary celebration:** - In keeping with the previous year's tradition, January 4<sup>th</sup> was celebrated with joy as an acknowledgement and reverence to the God of blinds, Mr. Louis Braille, whose efforts and innovation helped blind people across the world to fulfill their dream of achieving academic success, prove that they are also an integral part of this world, and lead a normal life as other able people. It's his sincere effort and innovation that has helped a blind aspirant Ms. Pranjal Patil to reach to highest level and presently is appointed as District Collector. Another successful especially able person Mr. Balaji Manjule is presently serving as Disability Commissioner of the State of Maharashtra. We have always wished that apart from these few successful persons, other blind brothers also need to be provided a platform to follow their example. Various competitions were organized to promote the talents of blind people. The 112<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary was celebrated on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at Durvankur Lawns Nashik and due to Covid restrictions this year only competitions like oratory competitions and quizzes were organized. Such quiz competition and oratory competitions show participants where they lack in terms of knowledge and also boost their courage of public speaking. In this oratory competition, Mr. Krishna Najgad secured first position and Mr. Narendra Jadhav stood second. As the quiz competition was held at the college level, the first prize was accepted by Mr. Akash Chavan on behalf of KTHM Collage while the second prize went to Mr. Rahul Dhamne's group. In the same program, one-month grocery was distributed to 109 blind people. Attempts were made to provide relief to the blind people whose business had come to a standstill during the Covid period.



Dr. Rakesh Kanojia, business women Ms. Sangitha Shaha and Lions Club's Mr. Raju Vyas, Ms. Balasaheb Tidke were present on this occasion. At this time, Raju Vyas announced to give a stall to Vijay Gosavi, a blind man for business. He testified that he would provide his lawn free of cost to us whenever the organization needed it. Mr. Balasaheb Tidke, director of Durvankur Lawns also praised the initiative taken by the organization. Entrepreneur Ms. Sangita Shah also saw the work of the organization for the first time and after seeing such a good work, she announced spontaneous financial help for stall. Dr. Kanojia also highlighted the great work of Mr. Louis Braille and said that his contribution shall remain

unforgettable not only for the blinds, but also for the society as a whole. President Arun Bharaskar, Honorary President Vijay Ghadge, Director Pratibha Holkar worked hard for the success of this program.

7. **HaldiKumkum Function celebrated:-** This year also, as every year, on the occasion of Rath Saptami Haldi-kumkum program for ladies was organized on 19th February 2019 at the office of the organization. In fact, there are many platforms for sighted women to come together. Many circles in the streets or wards organize such events, but the blind element is neglected in it. So this year under the guidance of organization's well-wisher Rotarian Mrs. Asha Venugopal, 40 women were given a two kg box as a gift. In the same program, Mrs. Shaila Yelme was helped for medical treatment. Mrs. Kalpana Pandey, Honorary President of the organization Mrs. Vijaya Dabe, Treasurer and other office bearers of the Society were present on this occasion.



8. **Eye Donation Camp:-** The organization basically works for the cause of social upliftment of blinds. Eradication of blindness is also a part of it. Sadly even today there is not enough awareness about blindness in rural areas and even today there is a section of society that believes that blindness is a past-life sin or the wrath of God. In fact, vitamin A deficiency leads to blindness. Due to growing poverty in the society, lack of availability of cheap medical treatment and poor nutrition plays a major role leading to blindness in poor section of society. Therefore, for the purpose of eradicating blindness in rural areas and to bring social awareness about it, a free eye check-up camp was organized on Saturday March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at Mauje Malegaon taluka Trumbakeshwar in association with Tulsi Eye Hospital Nashik. An updated system was made available on behalf of Tulsi Eye Hospital in this eye camp. A total of 76 people underwent free eye check up while 22 individuals were given guidance on cataract surgery.

An medical examination of Mr. Ramdas Magar revealed that he needed retinal surgery, but as he was very poor, the organization provided financial assistance for the surgery. In the same program, the president of the organization Arun Bharaskar personally donated eight fans and eight tube lights to the primary school in the village. On behalf of Rotary Club of Smart City MLA Shri. Hiranman Khoskar and Mr. Sampat Sakale distributed sports materials to school. At this time, Mr. Hiranman Khoskar expressed satisfaction that even though our organization is city based, it has reached the place where the work is really needed and he expressed the view that other organizations should follow this example and work in remote areas to eradicate blindness. Treasurer Mrs. Vijaya Marathe, General Secretary Mrs. Megha Pimple, Mr. Dinesh Musle and Mr. Bhagwan Pawar worked hard for the success of the program.



9. **Scholarship Distribution Program:-** Scholarships are given every year by the organization to promote the education of needy and deserving students and the organization firmly believes that this money helps them for their education. Therefore, for the last 13 years, the organization has continued this project uninterruptedly. Scholarship cheques amounting to Rs. 1500/- each were distributed to blind students at Patrakar Bhavan Sadashiv Peth Pune on Friday March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021 this year. The event was organized in Pune on the initiative of Director Kohinoor Group Krishna kumar Goyal, President of Lions Club Churchgate Mrs. Archana Shah, and Mr. Bapsi Daruwala, President Bombay Queens Way, Lyon Ramashankar. Mr. Krishna kumar Goyal chief of Kohinoor Group, Mr. Pradip Kulkarni President of Rotary Club UpTown and Superintendent of Engineers Mr. Prashant Auti and other dignitaries were present on the occasion. Scholarship checks were handed over to each student by dignitaries. Director of Kohinoor Group Shri. KrishnakumarGoyal appreciated all the scholarship holders. He wished the students best luck for the future and assured continued support to the organization for future endeavour. President of Rotary Club UpTown Mr. Pradip Kulkarni in his monologue expressed that Rotary Club will always extend its co-operation to the organization in social cause. Superintendent of Engineers Mr. Prashant Auti also applauded the students for success and advised them not to get arrogant with success. He assured that there would be no financial constraint for them to find new educational opportunities in future also. As a representative of the society, he expressed the feeling that the society is always with the needy and budding students. On this occasion, the Lions Club handed over scholarship cheques to organization for 60 blind students. At the same event, the Rotary Club distributed the book Covid-19 in Braille script to 60 students. Mr. Arun Bharaskar, president of the Blind Organization, Mr. Datta Patil, General Secretary Mr. Dinesh Musle, Ms. Rechal Shirsath took special efforts for the success of this program.



As a General Secretary of Blind Welfare Organization, I have dedicated my life for upliftment of blinds and over the successive years my endeavour has been to set higher targets higher every coming

year. I am aware that in comparison to the previous years, this year we could organize and implement only 9 major social activities, but prevailing pandemic condition this year hampered our goal. In fact, the graph of your organization has always been rising and you all have been witness to it. One thing I have relearned this year that there are always ups and downs in life and it is important for us to face it with courage. Our journey of life becomes happier if we cross the difficult part with resolve to do better. Then only one can reach a goal he or she sets for oneself. Renowned poet Shri Sohanlal Dwivedi has rightly said for situations like this that, "One who is afraid to sail the boat in turbulent water shall never cross the river." Of course, well-wishers like you give me a helping hand and courage in difficult times, so there is no question of giving up and losing heart.

I would conclude by specially mentioning Shri Ulhas Debadwar, Shri Krishnakumar Goyal, Shri Narendra Firodia, Shri Keshav Varkhedkar, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Siyaram Group, Bharat Petroleum, Rotary Club, Lions Club and some known and unknown individuals and organizations, Nationalized Banks for their continued support through thick and thin. I would take this opportunity to express my gratitude towards them. Some of the people stood firmly for my cause and extended unquestionable support to me. I believe it's offending to express thanks to such people because in their heart they consider it to be their moral responsibility to help underprivileged and needy in the society. I sincerely hope for their continued support to our Organization in future also.

General Secretary  
Shri Dattatray Shankar Patil



(Marathi to English Translation by ... Mr. Sanjay Narayan Mankoskar, Nashik)