

Giant Leaps

Forward...

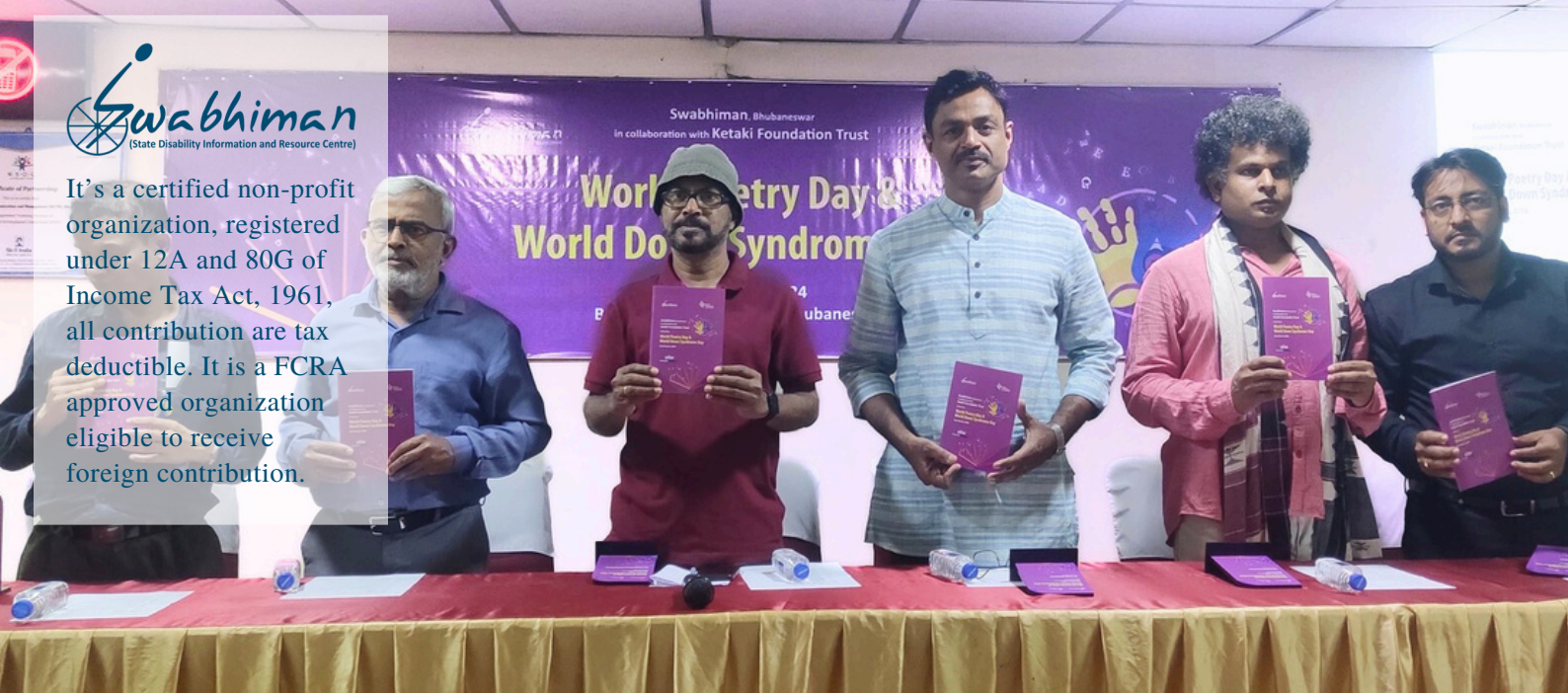
Building a world of equal opportunities

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF SWABHIMAN

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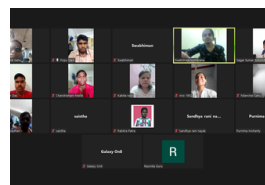
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Celebration of World Braille Day 2024

04/01/2024: Swabhiman celebrated the 215th birth anniversary of Louis Braille in collaboration with CureBay, Bhubaneswar, marking World Braille Day. The event witnessed the presence of esteemed guests including Sanyashi Behera (OAS), Deputy Secretary of SSEPD, GoO, and Shri Ashok Mohapatra, coordinator of Inclusive Education OSEPA.

Speakers highlighted the significance of promoting Braille for the education of blind students. A total of 30 students from 4 districts of Odisha were provided Braille kits, containing essential tools such as Braille slates, styluses, abacuses, mobility canes, and Braille boards. Additionally, two fact sheets developed by Swabhiman were distributed in print and Braille.



Invited guests and teacher trainees received New Year calendars, fact sheets on health disability and Braille, and printed books in Braille on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016. The event also featured a patriotic song performance by students from Bhabagrahi Model School for the Sightless and an interactive quiz competition. This program saw the total participation of 53 including 34 Students with Visual Impairment.

Participation in the Aids and Appliances Distribution Program for PwDs

20/01/2024: Our beneficiaries, specifically Youth with orthopaedic impairment, in Bhubaneswar were facilitated to actively participated in the Aids and Appliances Distribution Program for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) held in Gandamunda, Bhubaneswar, on January 20, 2024. The event, organized by the National Career Service Centre for Differently Aabled (NCSCDA) in collaboration with the Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO), aimed to provide essential aids and appliances to enhance the lives of individuals with disabilities.

Under the patronage of Bhubaneswar Member of Parliament, Smt. Aparajita Sarangi, Swabhiman



facilitated the participation of 10 beneficiaries with orthopedic impairments. These beneficiaries were primarily interested in obtaining motorized wheelchairs and modified scooters. The event saw the presence of distinguished guests, including Chief Guest Aparajita Sarangi, MP, Bindulata Baliarsingh, Sanjoy Mandal, Manager & RMC, ALIMCO, Shasanka Singh from ALIMCO, and Sonalika Suman Head of NCSCDA.

Participation in the second "Evidence for Children" Roundtable by UNICEF India

30/01/2024: Dr. Sruti Mohapatra has been invited to participate in a thematic session focusing on disability at the second "Evidence for Children" Roundtable, which was hosted by UNICEF India and convened virtually. This gathering brought together a diverse range of participants, including key experts, producers, and users in the evidence ecosystem, representing various sectors such as research institutes, policy think tanks, government bodies, donors, multi-lateral organizations, CSOs, the private sector.

The overarching theme of the roundtable was 'Equity,' with a specific aim to deepen understanding and address knowledge gaps concerning the most vulnerable children in India. Discussions delved into identifying these children, understanding their geographical locations, vulnerabilities, and exploring effective solutions and interventions to cater to their needs.



Health Assessment Program at Thee Trust

12/02/2024: Health assessment program was held in Pipli, Odisha, was organized by Swabhiman in collaboration with Thee Trust and the Children's Cross-Border Pediatric Foundation, USA. The foundation, renowned for its work in enhancing the health and well-being of children in developing nations, partners with Swabhiman and Pipili Health Care to extend medical support to children with disabilities in Odisha, India.

10 CwDs, beneficiaries of Swabhiman, were facilitated to undergo health assessments. The participants included:

1. Shriya Sahoo - MR
2. Arghyaru Das - MR
3. Aditya Sahoo - ID
4. DibyaJyoti Biswal - SI & HI
5. Shradhanjali Nayak - ID
6. Sikruti Rout - HI
7. Subham Kumar Rout - MR
8. Ritesh Bisoyi - LD
9. Shivasai Behera - SI & HI
10. Raghu Baski - SI

Each participant underwent individual assessments, and prescriptions and necessary medications were provided accordingly.

1. Sikruti Rout is scheduled for an initial MRI of the brain, after which further arrangements will be made based on the results.
2. Ritesh Bisoi will undergo B/L hip AP and power charting before subsequent decisions are made.
3. Subham Rout has been advised to schedule an appointment with a psychiatric doctor for further treatment initiation.

This report summarizes the outcomes of the health assessment program conducted on February 12, 2024, outlining the subsequent steps to be taken for the respective participants based on their assessments.



Recognizing Sign Language on Mother Language Day

21/02/2024: Swabhiman (DLU-East) collaborated with the RIE, Bhubaneswar, and the Ali Yavar Jung National Institute for Speech and Hearing Disability to celebrate IML Day at the New Auditorium, RIE Campus, Bhubaneswar. This celebration was centered around recognizing sign language as a mother language, aiming to promote inclusive education practices and preserve linguistic diversity. Aligned with the NEP-2023, the event sought to transform the landscape of education in India by nurturing inclusive environments. The collaborative effort to organize this event resonates with SDGs 4 and 17, emphasizing the importance of inclusive education and fostering global partnerships for sustainable development.

As the theme for IML Day 2024 was "Multilingual education is a pillar of intergenerational learning," the event emphasized the pivotal role of ISL in promoting inclusion and sustainable development goals. Expert presentations sensitized participants, including BEd and MEd students, RIE faculty members, Swabhiman volunteers, and special BEd students of AYJNISHD, towards disability and inclusion, inclusive education, and ISL. Sessions led by Dr. Lanu Wanboy Aimol and Smt. Biswamitra Mishra highlighted the need for standardization of ISL and its varied dimensions across India. Prof. P C Agarwal underscored the importance of inclusive education and efforts to standardize ISL for the Hard of Hearing population nationwide.

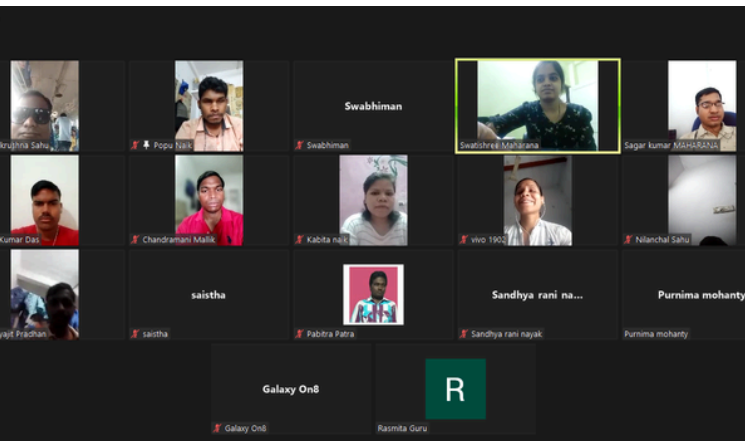
The celebration, coordinated by Professor Gowramma, commenced with lighting a lamp and welcome address by Professor Manshi Goswami of RIE. Smt. Tanmayee Sahu from Swabhiman, contextualized the significance of ISL as a mother language, emphasizing its importance in India's context. The event concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Mr. Varun of RIE, reaffirming the commitment to promoting inclusive education practices and preserving linguistic diversity.



Scholar Enrichment Classes

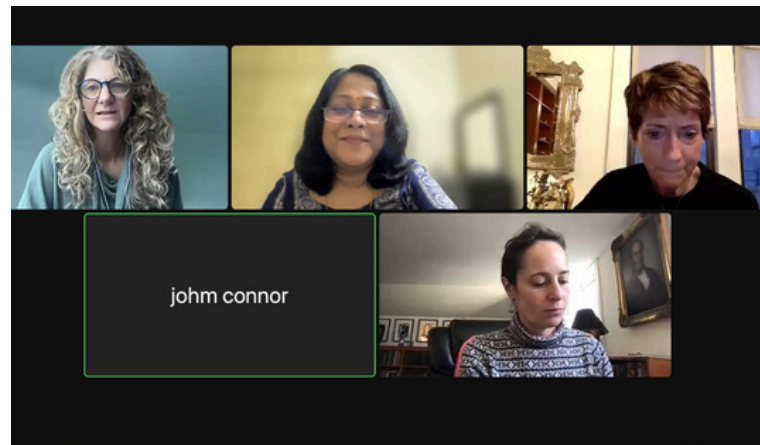
04 and 24/02/2024: Swabhiman conducted two scholar enrichment classes for the Anjali Scholars, led by Sambit Das, a banker with Visual Impairment. The first class focused on essential aspects of the Indian Polity. Topics covered included the structure of the Indian Parliament, the role and powers of the President, various types of funds used by the Union Government, and legislative processes involving bills, acts, and ordinances. The session also discussed the classification of bills and the types of majorities required in parliamentary proceedings. A total of 22 students with disabilities actively participated in discussions, seeking clarification and posing insightful questions.

The second class, which took place, continued the exploration of Indian Polity, concentrating on Part 4 of the lecture series. This session revisited the structure of the Union Government, further explored the functions of the Indian Parliament and the President, and examined the types of funds utilized. Additionally, the class delved into legislative processes concerning bills, acts, and ordinances, while revisiting the classification of bills and the nuances of different types of majorities required in parliamentary procedures. Despite a slight decrease in attendance, with 18 students participating, the level of engagement remained high, with active participation and insightful inquiries from the students.



Planning Meeting of CDPF on COSP 17

22/02/2024: Planning meeting of CDPF on COSP 17, New York and CHOGM 2024, Samoa was held virtually with an objective to advocate for the implementation of a Disability Inclusion Protocol and Strategy among member states of the Commonwealth. The CDPF made a decision on upcoming COSP 17 and CHOGM 2024. Dr. Mohapatra, Vice chair, will represent CDPF in both these events in New York and Samoa respectively.



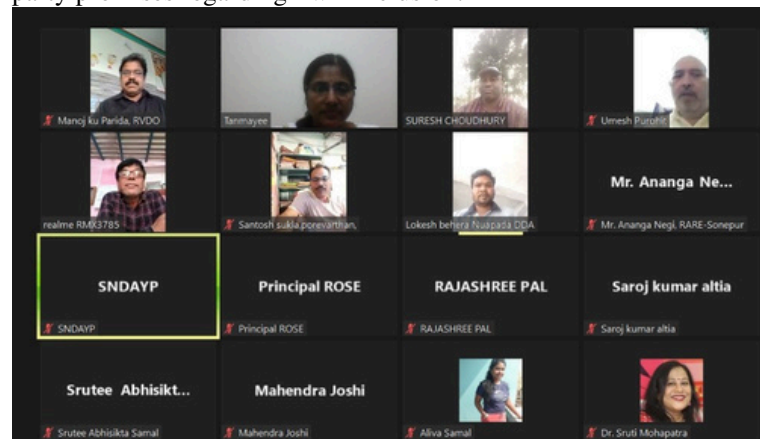
OSdN Partners Meeting for Disability Inclusion in Election Manifestos

14/03/2024: Virtual meeting of OSdN partners convened with 19 organizations and social activists from various districts of Odisha. The focal point was to strategize disability inclusion in election manifestos.

The meeting commenced with a welcome address by Umesh Purohit, followed by Dr. Sruti Mohapatra's comprehensive presentation on the Manifestos for and by Citizens with Disabilities. Dr. Mohapatra highlighted significant milestones achieved in disability inclusion from 2014 to 2016, emphasizing the exponential increase in disabled voters and their substantial impact on electoral outcomes. A draft letter advocating for a Disability Manifesto in political parties' policy agendas was also shared.

Actionable steps discussed included compiling case studies, tracking party promises, documenting voter challenges, translating the manifesto, and addressing local issues. Concerns about accessibility and advocacy extension were addressed, and partners agreed to prioritize immediate actions. Other points discussed included registration of bedridden candidates with disabilities and concerns about dilution of accessible polling.

Key decisions made include compiling case studies featuring iconic candidates with disabilities, tracking party promises regarding PwD inclusion.



Advocacy with political parties for Political Participation

21/03/2024: Team Swabhiman, represented by Tanmayee and Satyajit, conducted advocacy visits to the offices of four prominent political parties in Odisha: Biju Janata Dal, BJP, Congress, and Aam Aadmi Party, to promote the political participation of the Odisha State Disability Network (OSdN). At the BJP office, Tanmayee met with Mr. Saroj Kar, who oversees operations on behalf of party President Mr. Manmohan Samal. Despite the President's absence, Tanmayee shared the letter and manifesto with Mr. Kar, collecting contact numbers for future communication.

Meanwhile, at Congress Bhawan, Tanmayee interacted with Jitendra Biswal, President of the Disability Cell in Pradesh Congress, Odisha, and other members. Jitendra Biswal accepted the documents on behalf of the party President and relevant members.

On the other hand, Satyajit faced challenges in meeting leaders at both the BJD party office and the Aam Aadmi Party's office. All BJD members were occupied at Navin Niwas, and Aam Aadmi Party leaders were unavailable due to internal issues. Nevertheless, letters, alongside a concise Accessibility report and manifestos in both Odia and English, were dispatched via physical and email channels.

Similar letters were disseminated by all district partners of OSdN to positively influence the ongoing process.

Celebration of World Poetry with Difference

21/03/2024: Celebration for World Poetry Day with a difference was hosted at Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, in collaboration with the Ketaki Foundation Trust. The event featured poetry recitations centered around themes of inclusion, disability, diversity, and differences. The program began with a symbolic act of watering a plant to signify growth and nurturing, along with environmental respect.

Distinguished guests, including Shri Ramakanta Samantaray, Shri Sanyashi Behera, Shri Suman Dash, Dr. Sakti Mohanty, and Sri Sailen Routray, delivered speeches and shared their exquisite poetry,

enriching the event with their contributions. Shri Sanyashi Behera highlighted the significance of March 21st, linking it to the equinox and spoke about humanity's quest amidst life's challenges. He emphasized the power of poetry to evoke conscience and compassion, especially towards individuals with Down syndrome.

The second session featured poetry recitations by teachers, parents of children with disabilities, social workers, and students, showcasing diverse perspectives and experiences.

Awareness

Our efforts in the domain of awareness and sensitization have been multifaceted and far-reaching:

- **Disability Sensitization Programs:** From celebrating World Braille Day to recognizing sign language on Mother Language Day, our events have aimed at fostering awareness and inclusivity.
- **Dr. Sruti Mohapatra's participation in UNICEF India's "Evidence for Children" Roundtable** underscored the importance of data and evidence in advocating for children with disabilities.
- **World Poetry Celebration:** We celebrated World Poetry Day with a difference, featuring poetry recitations centered around inclusion, diversity, and growth, alongside renowned poets as esteemed guests and community members.

Advocacy

Our advocacy efforts have been instrumental in driving policy change and fostering inclusion:

- **Sensitization of State Level Bodies:** We engaged in advocacy with school authorities and state-level stakeholders to ensure accommodations for students with disabilities during examinations.



Photo Gallery

- **Global Advocacy:** Our participation in planning meetings for international events such as COSP 17 and CHOGM 2024 aimed at advocating for disability inclusion on a global platform.
- **Political Participation:** We advocated for the inclusion of disability-related issues in political party manifestos and facilitated partnerships to enhance the political participation of persons with disabilities in the state of Odisha.

We've provided crucial legal support to individuals with disabilities:

- **Support to Monalisa and Dilu Mohan Bhoi:** Our legal aid efforts extended support to individuals in need, ensuring access to justice and empowerment.



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