



## **E-BUZZ**

**MAY 2017 (12<sup>th</sup> Edition)**

Greetings from Institute for Vision Rehabilitation!

It's our pleasure to bring forth yet another edition of E-Buzz to you!

This edition brings you updates and happenings ranging from Assistive technology to sports, from education to employment avenues, from the world around us.

Hope you find this useful. Please do share it with your contacts who you think would benefit from it.

- **Discover accessible bank machines through Talking ATM India**

You can now locate a nearby Talking ATM just by entering a PIN or an area name through the Talking ATM India website. Just at the click of a button, the ATMs close to you will be displayed in a tabular form.

You can also learn how to use a Talking ATM through an easy step by step process. To know more, visit,

<https://talkingatmindia.org/>

- **Beno Zephine, the only person with vision loss ever to be recruited to the Indian Foreign Services impresses diplomats in Paris, France**

Chennai-born, Zephine, who joined the IFS in 2014, has been posted at the Indian Embassy in Paris for 7 months. This is her first overseas posting. She is taking lessons in French language from a teacher with vision loss who can write French in Braille. The French government is amazed that India has taken the challenging and unconventional step of recruiting a girl with vision loss as a diplomat and posting her abroad. Her seniors at the Indian Embassy have sent her to 8 diplomatic conferences to represent the Embassy on her own. She has been a hit at each of these.

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QDmxHZzywKk>

- **Microsoft's Office Lens app.... A scanner in your pockets!**

Microsoft's Office Lens turns your Android, iPhone or Windows phone into a pocket scanner. The handy scanner app recognizes the corners of a document, whiteboard, electronic screen or any rectangular media and automatically crops, straightens, enhances and cleans up the image, then enables saving to OneNote or OneDrive for easy retrieval from any device. It converts images of paper documents, electronic screens and whiteboard notes into word

documents, PowerPoint presentation and searchable PDF files for easy storage, editing and reformatting and identifying printed text with Optical Character Recognition (OCR) so that you can search by keyword for the image in OneNote or OneDrive.

Source: <https://blogs.office.com/2015/05/27/office-lens-android-now-available-at-google-play-store/>

- **Project Checkmate... a special initiative for India's young chess 'Grandmasters' with vision loss**

Devanshi Rathi, a 16-year old Arena International Master, who won bronze in the Commonwealth under-18 tournament in Sri Lanka, is on a quest to unearth chess Grandmasters by teaching children with vision loss through her unique initiative called Project Checkmate. She started playing the game at eight and liked it so much that she started her chess company at 12. With this entrepreneurship, she decided to combine her love for chess with social service and thus initiated Project Checkmate in April last year. This is her way of giving back to the game she loves.

Source: <http://www.hindustantimes.com/other-sports/project-checkmate-a-special-initiative-for-india-s-young-chess-grandmasters/story-Sd6OD1p2lh4IDdgsWDjLBN.html>

- **Vodafone Egypt launches new app for users with vision loss**

In an attempt to make its products and services inclusive to all its users, Vodafone Egypt has launched a new mobile application called "E3rafli" for customers with vision loss. The new application can

recognize colors, identify the value of Vodafone cards and charge it. It can also enable its users to determine the denomination of the Egyptian currency and count it on the go. “E3raflī” allows its users to read the taxi metre once users finish their trips. They will only have to direct their cell phones towards the selected items and digital solution will assist with the rest.

Source: <https://egyptianstreets.com/2017/04/16/vodafone-egypt-launches-new-app-for-visually-impaired-users/>

- **Training in occupational touch therapy for persons with vision loss**

The first batch of students with vision loss who have been trained under occupational touch therapy and sensory integration course are now ready to work as touch therapists. “We have introduced an occupational training course for persons with vision loss which would allow them learn touch therapy and help them earn their livelihood. A group of ten students have finished the course and now they can earn Rs 10,000 as touch therapists,” said Indore District Collector P. Narahari, while addressing a press conference.

Source: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/indore/visually-impaired-become-touch-therapists/articleshow/57902458.cms>

- **Aipoly Vision now available for Android**

Aipoly Vision is an object and color recognizer that helps persons with vision loss understand their surroundings. Simply point your phone at the object of interest and press any of the recognition buttons on the

screen to turn on artificial intelligence. Aipoly Vision will keep running and recognizing objects until you switch to a different mode, or toggle the recognition button. It can recognize a wide variety of objects at a rate of 3 times a second by identifying what it sees through the camera. Besides this, it can read text in multiple languages, can recognize colors and more. All recognition modes with the exception of text and packaged products work without an internet connection so that they can be used in any situation and in complete privacy. Earlier this year at Consumer Electronics Show (CES) 2017, Aipoly Vision won the best of innovation award for Aipoly Vision 2.0. They also announced that Aipoly Vision for Android would be available in April this year. It's compatible with Android 5.1 (lollipop) and above.

Source: <https://coolblindtech.com/aipoly-for-android-is-now-available/>

- **Indian runner Sagar Baheti with vision loss completes historic Boston Marathon!**

In a watershed moment for Indian sport, as well as a triumph in overcoming the odds, Bangalore-based Sagar Baheti has become the first runner with vision loss to complete the historic Boston Marathon, the world's oldest, most competitive and the hardest marathon to qualify for. With assistance from an old college friend, Boston-based Devika Narain Aerts, Baheti finished the 121<sup>st</sup> Boston Marathon as one of 30,000 runners on a blisteringly hot day. The 2017 Boston Marathon has been recorded as the 2<sup>nd</sup> hottest in a decade. Baheti completed the 42.16 km distance in just over four hours. Diagnosed with Stargardt's disease, a type of macular degeneration that eventually leads to legal blindness, in 2013, Baheti a businessman by

profession did not let it deter him. A sports enthusiast from a young age, he used his disability to raise awareness on visual impairment in India which led him to Boston to participate in this year's annual run. With his participation, Baheti hopes to raise \$10,000 for MAVBI, an organization that builds advanced low-vision devices to make daily travelling easier for persons with vision loss.

Source: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/sports/more-sports/athletics/visually-impaired-indian-runner-sagar-baheti-completes-historic-boston-marathon/articleshow/58237686.cms>

- **The IIMs have made sure to support students with disabilities get good jobs with good salaries this year**

Companies are increasingly appointing persons with disabilities (PWDs), not just to meet their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) obligations but also to tap a loyal talent pool, sources said. These firms are encouraged by the government's inclusive initiatives such as the Accessible India campaign. "Across IIMs, courtesy initiatives such as Accessible India, there's been a new high in terms of candidates with disabilities being recruited," said Prakash Singh, placements chairperson at IIM Lucknow. Campus insiders said just five IIMs (Bangalore, Indore, Kolkata, Lucknow, Tiruchirappalli) this season placed more than fifty candidates with disabilities ranging from visual and hearing to locomotive. They were offered salaries up to Rs. 20 lakhs.

Source: <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/company/corporate-trends/india-inc-opens-doors-wide-for-differently-abled-iim-graduates/articleshow/58037371.cms>

- **A new initiative towards inclusive university education for persons with disabilities**

In keeping with Ability Foundation's goals towards a rights based and inclusive society for persons with disabilities and Sathyabama University's mission towards serving society at large, ten seats are now being offered to deserving students with disabilities for undergraduate courses in Engineering, Commerce, Visual Communication and B.Ed. Besides admissions, this also comes with complete scholarship throughout the study period and in a totally accessible and inclusive environment that is conducive to the disability.

Source: <http://www.abilityfoundation.org/poster.html>

Disclaimer: The information shared in this newsletter is a collection of updates and happenings from various sources.

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