



E-BUZZ ON “ACCESS TO INDEPENDENCE”

Information around the world for persons with vision loss

November 2017 (18th edition)

Greetings from the 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 accessibility, from education to leisure and recreation, from advocacy to public initiatives from the world around us.

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

- **IITs to increase quota for persons with disabilities**

The Indian Institute of Technology will admit more students with disabilities to their BTech courses from next year. The tech schools

have decided to increase their disability sub-quota from 3 percent to 5 percent as mandated for all educational institutions by the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016. This means that each of the caste quotas – Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, other backward classes and general category will include a 5 percent disability sub-quota.

Source: <https://www.telegraphindia.com/india/iit-disability-quota-up-181764>

- **Big Bazaar tested accessible shopping for persons with disabilities**

In a major move, Big Bazaar made shopping a smooth, fun and joyful experience for the persons with disabilities in 105 stores across 17 cities in India from 29th to 31st October. Over three days, persons with speech, hearing and vision disabilities were invited to experience the new features that promised a superior customer experience. Some of the features that were planned are quite innovative and exciting. For one, all Big Bazaar stores were available on Google Maps and this was of great help to persons with vision loss. There were shopping assistants at every store to help persons with disabilities in finding products, choosing clothes, moving around the store and billing. The shopping assistants had been trained on how to communicate with persons with disabilities and had a basic understanding about how to deal with a person's disability.

Source: <https://newzhook.com/story/14291>

- **Mobile court for persons with disabilities**

The Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) along with the Goa State Commissioner for PWDs will organize a day-long mobile court at Margao on 23rd November, 2017. So far, more than 30 mobile courts have been held by the CCPD for persons with disabilities in 18 states. In the mobile court, problems such as disability certificates, free education in appropriate environment to children up to the age of 18, reservation in admission to educational institutions, reservation in employment, rights and facilities under the Persons with Disabilities Act and any type of discrimination against persons with disabilities will be heard and orders will be passed immediately.

Source: <https://newzhook.com/story/14498>

- **New app to help persons with vision loss navigate their homes and other public spaces**

Three South African men, Siegfried Jegels, Richard Newman and Brandon Van Der Ventel have developed a mobile app called ProxiSee with an aim to help persons with vision loss to independently navigate their homes and other public spaces using beacon technology. “It helps people who are blind and have low vision navigate independently indoors by means of audible signals and gesture controls. The app pushes the information using the Bluetooth signal,” the developers of ProxiSee explain.

Source: <http://www.capetalk.co.za/articles/276119/trio-develops-app-to-help-visually-impaired-navigate-spaces-buildings>

- **Concert in the dark... the first of its kind in India!**

The Banglorians had a time of their life on 5th November, 2017 when they experienced music with intensity in a dark environment. The concert was held in a pitch dark atmosphere where the audience were assisted by persons with vision loss to move around in the concert hall. This concept is similar to that of 'Dialogue in the dark' where diners dine in the darkness and are assisted by guides with vision loss to move around in the exhibition. This was first of its kind in India and was well received by the audience.

Source: <http://www.thehindu.com/entertainment/music/gig-guide-two-swiss-artistes-present-a-concert-in-the-dark/article19967907.ece>

- **International conference on inclusive education**

The Centre for Disability Studies and Action, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai and Brotherhood, Delhi in collaboration with Prof. N K Jangira are organizing a joint international conference on inclusive education from 22nd to 24th January, 2018 at Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. Implementation of inclusive education would require a number of changes in present day teaching practices, curriculum content, infrastructure, technological aids, evaluation procedures and available resources at the school level. Keeping this in mind, this conference focuses on the importance, challenges and measures to implement inclusive education in different countries.

Source: <https://www.tiss.edu/view/5/mumbai-campus/school-of-social-work/international-conference-on-inclusive-education/>

- **Campaign for making Indian currency accessible**

A campaign has been started on the social media to make the Indian currency accessible as persons with vision loss are not able to differentiate between various note values. It has been found that they are facing a daily challenge while using Rs 500 note and Rs 20 note. Please check the following link to support the campaign.

<https://newzhook.com/story/13738>

- **Microsoft launches video which showcases assistive technology for persons with vision loss**

As part of the company's commitment to inclusive learning, Microsoft has recently launched a video that focuses on technology for persons with vision loss. The video shows students from the adaptive technology for rehabilitation, integration and empowerment of persons with vision loss and shows how learners with vision loss can gain important computer-science skills that will help increase their employment opportunities. Accessibility and assistive technology tools were used in order for the students to use basic office-productivity tools and even computer programming and coding. In addition, the video shows how trainers with vision loss teach other students. This shows how fundamental concepts can be better explained in the context of the students' special-learning needs and how assistive technology can truly transform a classroom to be 100 percent inclusive.

Source: <https://carroll.org/2017/10/microsoft-launches-video-for-the-blind/>

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

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