

# THE NCBM OUTREACH



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# **VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT OF NCBM**

To ensure blind people will receive appropriate training and enjoy quality services regardless of where they live in the country.

## **EDITORIAL BOARD**

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Moses Choo Siew Cheong

Wong Kwee Heong

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# **THE 2014 BUDGET – PROVISIONS FOR THE POOR AND THE DISABLED**

*By Ooi Hock Tiam*

The 2014 Budget was tabled in Parliament by the Finance Minister on October 25, 2013. In the Budget, Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, outlined certain measures to help the poor and the disabled. Here are some of the measures that were touched on in the budget presentation:

## ***1. Business Loans***

1.1 An allocation of RM50 million has been set aside in order to provide business loans with 4% annual interest for young graduates. Although the disabled were not mentioned, I believe the disabled should also be able to avail themselves of this loan.

1.2 An allocation of RM100 million with 4% annual interest has also been made for petty traders to start small businesses in the night market. The maximum loan that can be obtained is RM30,000. I believe that the disabled should also be entitled to this loan so that they could open up their small business enterprises such as opening a small massage centre.

## ***2. Education***

2.1 All school students will continue to receive RM100 next year.

2.2 RM250 book vouchers for college and university students will be continued next year.

## ***3. Housing***

Twenty thousand units of low-cost houses will be built under the Perumahan Rakyat Satu Malaysia Programme (PARISMA). The Government will subsidise RM15,000 to RM20,000 for each house. The good news is that the disabled will be entitled to a 20% discount when purchasing such a low-cost house.

#### **4. Welfare**

- 4.1 The Government has allocated RM2.2 billion for the Welfare Department. For the past three years, the allocation for the Welfare Department was only RM1.2 billion. Thus, the 2014 allocation has been increased by RM1 billion. This should certainly be good news for the disabled. However, no further details were available at the time of writing.
- 4.2 The food allowance for children staying in welfare kindergartens has been increased from RM50 to RM100 and the food allowance for senior citizens in Government old folks' homes has been increased from RM1.50 to RM3 per day. While it is good that the increases have been made but they are still barely enough even for a single meal.
- 4.3 The Government has specifically announced an allocation of RM41 million for the disabled. However, clarification is needed as to whether this is part of the Welfare allocation or a separate allocation set aside by the Government.

#### **5. Bantuan Rakyat Satu Malaysia (BRIM)**

- 5.1 RM300 will be given to all citizens above the age of 21 with a monthly income below RM2,000.
- 5.2 RM650 will be given to households with a monthly income below RM3,000.
- 5.3 RM450 will be given to households with a monthly income between RM3,000 to RM4,000.

#### **6. Civil Servants**

- 6.1 Pensioners will receive RM250.
- 6.2 All civil servants will be given a half month's bonus in January 2014.

The minuses are as follows:

### ***1. Petrol***

The price of petrol has gone up by 20 sen per litre, making the actual price as RM2.10 per litre. This, in fact, took effect from September 1, 2013.

### ***2. Sugar***

The price of sugar per kilogramme has gone up to RM2.85. This means that sugar has actually gone up by 35 Sen per kilo.

Obviously, these two price increases will bring about the increase in prices for all other products and services. Ultimately, therefore, all the goodies to be given out will come to nought. The disabled will be likely to lose more if the disability allowance of RM300 per month given out by the Welfare Department is not raised.

### ***3. Goods and Sales Tax***

From April 1, 2015, the Goods and Sales Tax will be imposed at the rate of 6%. In other words, a tax of 6% will be levied at every level of sale until the product reaches the consumer. The implication is that there could be a double or triple 6% tax increase for any product or service.

Well, the General Election is over. So there is nothing that the Government needs to worry about for at least the next five years.

We can only hope for the best!

# **AJONG SIDIM – FROM KAMPONG BOY TO SUCCESSFUL LAW CAREER**

*By Godfrey Ooi Goat See*

In the year 1956, Ajong Sidim was born in a Longhouse in Kampong Danu, Kuching in Sarawak. He was brought up by his mother who was a farmer; she grew paddy, fruits, rubber and various other crops. He had a sister but he never knew her because she left with their father when both their parents separated from one another.

In 1965 Ajong entered Primary School in Kapit. He was a pioneer student as it was in this school where the first Integrated Programme for the Blind in Sarawak was started. Ajong was already nine years old when he went to school and he would be fifteen when he was ready to go to form one. At the time, there was the stipulation which barred overaged children (fifteen years old and above) from continuing to secondary education.

Fortunately, the school principal was very understanding and he proposed that Ajong together with two other blind students skip standard three and go straight into standard four. However, he wanted the blind students to make their own decision and posed the question, “Are you sure you can cope?”

He told them that they had nothing to lose should they fail but, if they passed, then they had the choice of going to secondary school. And so the three decided to skip standard three. Ajong passed the standard six examination while the other two students failed and dropped out.

With sponsorship from the Rotary Club of Sibu, Ajong was sent to Penang in 1970 where he stayed at St. Nicholas Home for the Blind and studied at the Integrated Programme in St. Xavier’s Institution. Here he made many new friends among the blind and sighted students and the five years were a very good preparation for his future life in Kuala Lumpur.

In 1974 he returned to Sarawak where he taught at the Methodist Primary School for one year in 1975. Then, in 1976, he was admitted to the Gurney Training Centre in Kuala Lumpur where he took up the Stenography course.

On completing his training, he was in time to join the Government civil service because of the “Isi Penuh” policy being implemented at the time. He worked as telephonist at the GCA Board of Civil Aviation. However, two other female telephone operators were already employed there so that he had hardly anything to do and he felt very bored. He asked if there was any other work that he could do and the Board agreed to interview him for the post of stenographer. He could then be assigned to work with the consultant who was English. Nothing happened, however, and so exactly after one month in the job, he took the bold decision to quit without pay.

In those years, many of the blind were involved in door to door sales (or what they named as “Hello Encik”). For several years, Ajong joined the ranks of the blind in selling tidbits from door to door in order to earn his living. It was hard work carrying the heavy load of peanuts and other dried stuff, walking in the hot sun or heavy rain, climbing up and down the staircases of flats, persuading people to buy, and nearly getting bitten by dogs.

Meanwhile, he made applications to the private corporations which paid off in the end because he landed himself as telephone operator with Sime Darby in January 1980 with a salary of RM270. In 1982, he spent the evenings pursuing the one-year course in Marketing from Stamford College and he did well in the examination.

He wanted to continue with the Marketing Degree Course but there was the condition that he had to be holding an executive position in Marketing. He approached the Management but they put him to the test by making him prepare a business report. Ajong accomplished the task but the Management kept mum. Instead, they decided to raise his salary by RM120. To shut him up, they gave him another increment of RM17. Ajong was greatly disappointed that the Management had so little confidence in the ability of a blind person.

So Ajong decided to get involved with the National Union of Commercial Workers (NUCW). He became one of the leaders and helped to set up a committee. Together they negotiated salary raises and benefits for the non-bargainable staff. Suddenly, everybody was coming to see Ajong for advice.



This made Ajong realise that he should be pursuing a course in law and legal matters. Thus, he applied to the University of London to enroll as an adult student for the correspondence course. However, he was required to write an essay of about 300 words and he passed the test. He was further required to go through the A-level education programme and sit for the examination which he also passed. Then he was allowed to enrol for the intermediate course in law which took him two years to complete. Finally, he was accepted for the proper degree course which took him another four years to complete.

He obtained the results with flying colours and once more approached the Management. Fortunately, the Director of Human Resources at the time was Dato' Othman, a very forward-looking guy. He asked Ajong where he wanted to work and Ajong said that, if possible, he would like to be placed in the Legal Department.

Thus, Ajong was appointed as Legal Advisor in the year 2000. The exact name of his post is In-House Legal Service Executive. On his retirement in 2010, the Management decided to extend his service on contract, thus testifying to the fact that the Management has gained much confidence in the abilities and capabilities of Ajong.

Ajong got married on May 13 1986 and he has three children.

# THE NCBM EMPLOYMENT SMALL-SCALE RESEARCH GRANT

1. The NCBM Employment Small-Scale Research Grant is being made available by the National Council for the Blind, Malaysia (NCBM) in order to provide funding for research on issues related to employment and on support services for the retention and sustainability of blind persons in employment.

2. The purpose is to produce documented evidence on the employment and employability of the blind and to identify the factors that are obstructing the progress of the blind in obtaining employment. Detailed and pragmatic proposals can then be drawn up to improve employment opportunities for the blind. The ultimate goal is the generating of new ideas for policy formulation and service delivery to be promoted by NCBM.

3. Eligibility for the Research Grant is open to organisations serving the blind in the country, academic institutions and to blind and sighted researchers in Malaysia.

4. Applications for the Research Grant shall not exceed RM2,500 (two thousand five hundred Ringgit) and they should be addressed electronically to the Executive Director of NCBM at email [ncftb@po.jaring.my](mailto:ncftb@po.jaring.my), and giving the following information:

4.1 Full name of applicant (as in the Identity Card), I.C. number, address, mobile phone number and email contact.

4.2 Name of institution/organisation attached to or graduated from.

4.3 Objective of the research project.

4.4 Time-frame for starting and completing of the project.

4.5 The amount of grant applied for.

4.6 Five other useful information to support the application.

5. Approval of the applications shall be at the discretion of the Chairman of the NCBM Committee on Employment and Economic Empowerment whose decision, made in consultation with the committee members, is final.

6. The successful applicants are required to do the following:

6.1 Acknowledge receipt of the grant money, present a financial statement at the end of the project, and return to NCBM any money spent not in accordance with the stated purpose.

6.2 The research project shall be completed within one year. A progress report is to be submitted to NCBM at the mid-point of the project and the full report on its completion. 50% of the money will be released on receipt of the progress report and the remainder on receipt of the full report.

6.3 Present the findings in person when requested by NCBM.

7. NCBM reserves the right to publish or use the research report in any manner, in part or in whole, for advancing the objectives of the organisation.

8. NCBM, as the grant provider, shall not be held responsible for any liability (accident, offence or violation of laws) that might occur during the course of the project.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **1. Research Grant for Blindness Prevention and Employment for the Blind**

Application can be made for a research grant ranging from RM3,000 to RM5,000 to carry out research in the fields of blindness prevention and employment for the blind. An allocation of RM10,000 has been made available under the NCBM Committee on Employment and Empowerment. Those interested should contact the NCBM Secretariat at 22724959.

### **2. NCBM Job Pioneering Scheme**

The NCBM Job Pioneering Scheme was launched at the NCBM Brain-Storming Workshop on Job Placement and Support Services which was held from November 28-29, 2012. Under this Scheme, NCBM will partner with prospective employers in providing employment opportunities for the blind. The blind person will work for a period of three to six months and will be paid a monthly allowance of RM1,2000 by NCBM. At the end of the period, it is hoped that the employer will have been convinced of the blind person's capabilities and give him permanent employment.

Blind persons wishing to take advantage of this programme can request for the application form from NCBM. Please contact the Secretariat at 22724959.

## **SUPPORT OUR CAUSE**

The National Council for the Blind, Malaysia (NCBM) provides a vital link between the organisations serving the blind in this country by acting as the national coordinating body. Through NCBM, the organisations for and of the blind have a channel to discuss and formulate national policies and plans and to pioneer new programmes for the benefit of the blind.

Your financial support will, therefore, go a long way in helping to bring about new developments and progress for the blind. All contributions are deeply appreciated.

Donations should be made in the name of :

### **NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE BLIND, MALAYSIA**

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94-B Jalan Tun Sambanthan, Brickfields

50470 Kuala Lumpur

Tel: 03-2272 4959

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## **SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT**

Readers are reminded that their contribution of articles, suggestions and jokes are most welcome for inclusion in “The NCBM Outreach”. However, please note that it would be very helpful to the Editor if such contributions could be submitted either on diskette or on single-sided Braille pages to facilitate editing.

Also please note that if the article is accompanied by at least two relevant photographs and if they are accepted for publication, you will be paid an additional RM25.00 fee.

You should include your address, telephone number and bank account number so that the money can be sent to you easily.

For details of payment, please see the last page.

# **POSTBAG**

## **LETTER FROM WONG KOW**

*By Wong Yoon Loong*

Dear Editor,

Less Hassle, More Care and Better Training Facilities

I read with great concern the article entitled “Lee Ah Chan – The Life of a Blind Masseur” published in “The NCBM Outreach” of January – March 2012. According to the article, Lee Ah Chan had spent a good number of years helping his mother to rear pigs after he had become blind. When he went to the Social Welfare Department in Penang to apply for admission to the Gurney Training Centre in Kuala Lumpur, he had to wait for a long period. Year after year, the Welfare Officer would tell Lee Ah Chan that there was no vacancy available.

Only when he, at long last, gained admission to St. Nicholas Home for the Blind in Penang did he manage to get help from another blind person, Jonathan Mok, to telephone the principal of the GTC, Mr. Khoo. He was informed that in actual fact the Welfare Officer had not sent the application form at all.

As I search through my memory, I have discovered that this is not an isolated case. Over the past 30 or 40 years, I have come into contact with many trainees from the GTC in the 1960’s and 1970’s and they have told me the same story – they had to wait for years before gaining admission. In fact, I went through the same experience myself.

Blind applicants often had to travel long distances from their homes in remote villages and kampongs to the state capital to submit their applications. Very often the applicants could not locate the Welfare Officer in charge and had to make a second or even third trip just to hand in the application letter together with the relevant documents. After much hassle would come the long and agonising period of waiting aimlessly. And more often than not, the Welfare Officer would behave in a high and mighty manner when dealing with the blind applicants.

In 1963, after seeking medical treatment for several years without success, I had decided to accept my fate as a blind person. I was at a complete loss and faced much hardship as I did not have the slightest knowledge about education and training for the blind.

I came to the turning point in my life when I met a Roman Catholic priest, Father Chin, who told me how the blind were able to manage their lives after some training. As he advised, I went to the Bukit Mertajam Welfare Department to submit my application. Only after visiting the B.M. Welfare Office several times did I finally receive an acknowledgement letter from the Penang State Welfare Office nearly one year later about my initial application. I had to wait another nine months before gaining admission to the GTC.

As I compare my “luck” with some other trainees in the 1960’s and 1970’s, my case could have been considered to be as fast. This was probably because I took my own initiative in visiting the Welfare Office many times and persisting in gaining an answer to my enquiries.

In recent years after the 1990’s and in the new millennium, there have been many new Government initiatives and programmes to help the disabled. Even the Malaysian Association for the Blind has come up with the new MAB complex and new premises for vocational training and has recruited additional manpower and provided more amenities for the blind. In this connection, I hope that all parties will be more readily and efficiently able to deal with the problems and challenges facing the blind.

I believe that with less hassle, more care and with better training facilities, the waiting time for admission to the GTC can be drastically reduced. I earnestly hope that this matter can be rectified so that the blind will not have to waste many frustrating years just waiting for training in order to lead a productive life and contribute to the social and economic development of the country.

Yours sincerely,  
Wong Kow.

# **NEWS FROM THE MALAYSIAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND**

## **Football – Valuable Exposure in Bangkok**

The Malaysian squad to Bangkok had ten players, a coach, a goal guide and a team manager. Indeed, the National Blind Football team stood tall despite strong opposition!

Eight totally blind players and two sighted goal-keepers, representing the Malaysian Blind Sports Association (MBSA), had the opportunity to pit their skills against international opposition in an International Five-a-side Football Tournament for the Blind in Bangkok from August 18-23, 2013. The football teams were from Thailand, Hong Kong, India, Russia, Iran, Vietnam and Malaysia.

The Malaysians beat Vietnam 1 – 0 and held Russia to a 0 – 0 draw. Unfortunately, they were denied a place in the finals by the eventual champions, Iran, who beat the Malaysians 2 – 0. Iran gained the title by beating the Russians 4 – 0.

“This is the third International Tournament in which a team from Malaysia has competed,” said MBSA President, (Dr) S. Radha Krishnan, who is also the Chairman of the IBSA Asian Region. “The first major tournament in which Malaysia participated was in 2009. At the Third IBSA Asian Championship in Tokyo, Malaysia finished fifth.”

MBSA is in need of a designated artificial turf so that training for proper development can be conducted for the blind. MBSA secured sponsorships in 2012 for the construction of the much needed site perimeter kick-boards, which is a mandatory technical requirement for blind football worldwide.

The trip to Bangkok was funded by MBSA with the International Health Care Company of Colombia Asia coming on board as the official sponsors. The low-cost carrier, Air Asia, absorbed the travelling costs.



“The Malaysians are talented but we don’t have the required training facilities,” (Dr) Radha said. “So we plead for sponsors to come forward and reach out towards blind football.”

(Dr.) S. Radha Krishnan Elected as Chairman of Asia Blind Sports

Malaysia is proud of (Dr) S. Radha Krishnan who has been elected as the Chairman of the International Blind Sports Federation (BSA Asia continent) for the third term from 2013 to 2016. The election of office-bearers was held during the IBSA General Assembly in Copenhagen, Denmark from August 29 to September 1, 2013.

The Asian Continental Meeting and Election was held on August 30, 2013 and (dr) Radha received five votes out of seven, thereby becoming the Chairman for the third term. The countries who attended the Meeting were China, India, Japan, Philippines, Korea, Thailand and Malaysia.

(Dr) Radha’s main objective and projection for Asia is as follows:

1. To encourage many Asian countries to become members of IBSA.
2. To sign the MOU with the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) in order to develop the Five-a-side Football (known as Futsal) for the blind in Asia.
3. To sign the MOU with the Tun Hussein Onn National Eye Hospital (THONEH) on the formation of the Vision Classification Training Centre.
4. To encourage the IBSA Asia members to organise various championships on a rotation basis.
5. To organise technical and coaching courses for various sports in Asia.

# **MY EXPERIENCE AS AN ELECTION OBSERVER FOR GE13**

*by Loh Kong Ken*

Ten months after I had appeared at the public hearing of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Electoral Reform (which was Friday, November 11, 2011), I received a call from Bathmaavathy, Secretary of the Malaysian Confederation of the Disabled (MCD) inviting me to attend a workshop on Election Monitoring conducted by MAFREL (Malaysians for Free Elections). The Workshop would be on Wednesday, September 26, 2012 at the Spastic Centre in Petaling Jaya. MCD was the organiser and host of the project known as the ASEAN General Elections Network for Disabled Access project (AGENDA).

On Saturday, January 5, 2013, I attended the second workshop conducted by two personnel from AGENDA specially flown in from Indonesia. Both of them described their experiences as Election Observers for AGENDA in Indonesia and Philippines. We then went through a set of questionnaires which they had used on the election day in order to gauge the extent of accessibility for the disabled.

I was again called to attend the third session conducted by MAFREL and AGENDA on Sunday, February 17, 2013. The purpose of this session was to draw up a set of questionnaires to be used on the election day in Malaysia. Unfortunately, I was unable to be present as I had been informed only two days before the session would take place and I had gone back to my hometown for the Chinese New Year celebrations.

In early March 2013, the Election Commission (EC) announced that five Non-Governmental Organisations would be given observer status to monitor the 13th General Election. They included one organisation each from Sabah and Sarawak and three from Peninsular Malaysia, namely the Malaysian Youth Clubs (MYC), the Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs (IDEA) and the Malaysian Confederation of the Disabled (MCD).

MCD was allowed to monitor two constituencies, namely the Petaling Jaya Utara Constituency and the Lembah Pantai Constituency with a maximum of ten observers. MCD nominated seven persons from among the physically disabled, two from the visually impaired category and one from the learning disabled category. Unfortunately, when the date for the General Election was announced by the EC, one of the observers from the physically disabled category had to drop out as he had prior commitments in Europe.

Thus, I was asked to recruit an additional observer from among the blind in order to meet the allocated quota. Moreover, I had to look for an assistant to help us during the election day. Eventually, I managed to recruit Ajong Sidim to be the second blind observer with his daughter, Olivia Ajong, and my daughter, Joanne Loh Mei En, as our assistants.

On Saturday, March 16, 2013, the EC held a gathering of all the observers from Peninsular Malaysia (totalling nearly 2,000 persons) at the Shah Alam Convention Centre (SACC). At the briefing, we were told that we would start our monitoring duty on the day of the dissolution of Parliament by the Agong and it would end one month after election day.

All observers had to be neutral, i.e. we could only observe what was going on and we were not allowed to take any actions. Our report to the EC had to be factual and based on what we witnessed ourselves. No hear-say information would be permitted in the report.

We were required to submit an interim report to the EC through our organisation and the final report thirty days after election day. The observers were each given a name tag and two GE13 Observer t-shirts. The name tag authorised the bearer to move about freely within the chosen constituency except inside the polling booth. In our case, both Ajong and I chose to be located at the Lembah Pantai Constituency.

As MCD did not have any experience in election monitoring while its supposed partner, MAFREL, had been denied observer status, MCD immediately contacted IDEA to allow the ten observers from MCD to join its training programme. The training session was held on Saturday, March 30, 2013 at the Residents Hotel in Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi.

One of the speakers was En. Harizal. He was actively involved in election monitoring work on the international level. He cautioned the would-be Observers to be tactful and wise in tackling matters brought to them by the complainants.

He then brought up two real situations which he had encountered and he asked what we would do if we came across such similar situations. In the first example, he was monitoring the General Election in Indonesia when a supporter from one political party complained that supporters from the opposing party were going round threatening the villagers not to vote for his party. Obviously, this was wrong – but what should an observer do? Do you act on the information received or keep quiet about it?

En. Harizal said he took the following action – he went to see the candidate of the opposing party and advised him to stop his supporters from threatening the villagers. Apparently, the candidate received the advice good-naturedly; next day, however, En. Harizal was informed that the supporter from party xxx had been found murdered.

In the second incident, en. Harizal was carrying out monitoring work in Taiwan. One night while returning to his hotel after a political rally, he saw people everywhere. Suddenly, he heard gun-shots and people were running helter-skelter to safety. As he looked around, he saw that the President, Chen Swee Bian, was lying on the road beside his car.

What should you as an observer do? Do you stay around and help or do you run away from the scene? As for En. Harizal, he decided to run away. On the following day, he saw his photo on the front page of all the newspapers, which showed that he was running away from the shooting scene.

En. Harizal summed up by saying that whatever actions the observers decided to take, there was no right or wrong about the actions taken. He also predicted that there would be a drastic rise in political violence from both sides during GE13.

In fact, En. Harizal's prediction did come true – for instance, a campaign worker for PKR's candidate in the Tapah Parliamentary Constituency was found murdered during the campaigning period.

On Saturday, April 20, 2013, the observers under MCD met up once again in order to fine-tune and finalise the questionnaire.

On Election Day, May 5, 2013, I went out early with my wife, Kam Lin, and my daughter, Joanne Loh, to cast our votes. On the way, we picked up Dorothy Wong and drove to SMK Pandan Mewah to help her cast her vote before going to our polling centre to vote.

Unfortunately, upon reaching the school, Joanne noticed that there was a long queue inside the school compound. So I advised her to go to Sekolah Agama Pandan Indah instead so that we could cast our votes first. However, the scenario was the same – there was also a big crowd at our polling centre.

As I had to be at the SMK La Salle Brickfields as early as possible in order to carry out my responsibility as Election Observer, I decided to use my credentials as Election Observer to walk straight to the front so that Joanne and I could cast our votes.

While I was waiting in front of the queue, I heard some youngsters talking among themselves. They warned each other to be careful and watch our movements because we could be spies for the EC and the Government. Another youngster commented that we did not look like spies and, in fact, it looked like we were on the Pakatan Rakyat side. I could not help but smile to myself at the comment.

After voting, we drove back to SMK Pandan Mewah to help Dorothy with her vote. However, the crowd was even bigger then – the queue stretched far outside the school. So I told Joanne to use her status again as Observer to help Dorothy. After assisting Dorothy, we drove back to our house to park the car and then took a cab to Brickfields. By the time we reached SMK La Salle, it was already 10.30 a.m.

At this polling centre, the police and the election officers were very helpful. The crowd there was small and the voters came in a trickle of ones and twos to vote. Thus, we did not face any obstacles at all in interviewing the disabled voters. Although there were drains around the Centre, there were ramps and wheelchairs were made available to those who needed them. By

the time we left for lunch at 1 p.m., we had managed to interview at least 13 disabled voters – one hearing impaired person, two learning disabled persons and ten physically disabled persons.

After lunch at Little India in Brickfields, we took a cab to SMK Seri Pantai in Bangsar. As we approached, I sensed a carnival atmosphere in the air. The youngsters were singing outside the polling centre and they cheered as we stepped out of the cab. Immediately, they surrounded us and reported that they had caught two foreigners trying to cast their votes.

Unfortunately, when we wanted to go inside the polling centre, the police stopped us from doing so on the grounds that we were not voters. Even after we showed them our letter of authorisation from the EC, they refused to let us in. They insisted that we had to wait for the EC Personnel to bring us in.

After waiting for fifteen minutes, no EC Officer turned up. So I reasoned with the police officer that as Observers, we were allowed to enter the polling centre except the polling booth. He then took my authorisation letter again and consulted with the Ketua Tempat Mengundi (KTM). Only then did he permit us to enter the polling centre.

While we were there, we witnessed some blatant abuse of power by a Tan Sri. Before arriving to vote, he had sent seven of his bodyguards with his wheelchair in order to prepare for his arrival. Five minutes before he arrived, the walkie-talkie announced his imminent arrival and asked for preparations to be made to receive him.

When the Tan Sri arrived, his car was permitted to enter the centre without hindrance. In actual fact, no vehicles were allowed to enter other than those with the EC sticker. Nevertheless, the Tan Sri was whisked to the polling booth to cast his vote. Within ten minutes, he was done and was on his way home. As for the other voters, they had to wait for between 30 to 45 minutes before they could vote.

By the time the polling centre closed at 5 p.m., we discovered that at least thirty-three disabled persons had come to vote – they included ten blind persons, three learning disabled persons and twenty physically disabled persons.

At 7 p.m., we were picked up by Olivia for dinner at AM Corp Mall after which we submitted our report to MCD. By the time we arrived home, it was around 10 p.m.

In conclusion, I must say that MCD has done a great job in getting permission from the EC for disabled persons to observe the GE13. Even though both Ajong and I had managed to observe only four polling centres, we found that there were disabled voters in each of the centres that we had observed. This was despite the fact that more often than not, the polling centres were not equipped or accessible to cater for the needs of the Disabled.

I understand that for GE14, MCD intends to go nationwide and it plans to get more disabled persons involved in the monitoring work. I support MCD and will definitely volunteer myself again to be an Observer. I would like to appeal to the blind, especially the readers of “The NCBM Outreach” to seriously consider volunteering yourselves.

# VISIT TO THE THAILAND ASSOCIATION OF THE BLIND

*By Ahmad Shamsuri bin Muhamad*

The Thailand Association of the Blind (TAB) holds their national convention annually so that the blind from all walks of life can discuss issues affecting them. For the first time this year in April 2013, the convention included the First ASEAN Community Blind Forum to provide the opportunity for the blind in the ASEAN region to share ideas and experiences concerning the preparedness of the blind as the region moves towards the formation of the ASEAN economic community in 2015. The ASEAN countries were invited to send two delegates each to the Forum. The two delegates from Malaysia nominated by NCBM were En. Mohd. Mustaza bin Mohd. Zin and En. Ahmad Shamsuri bin Muhamad.

The 16th TAB National Convention was held from April 20-24, 2013 at the Grand Hua Hin Plaza Hotel in the Prachuap Chiri Chan Province of Thailand. At the official ceremony, TAB presented US\$45,000 to NV Access Ltd. in support of efforts in the development of Non-Visual Desktop Access (NVDA) screen-reader software. The money was derived from the collection which TAB made during the World Blind Union Assembly in November 2012.

In the keynote speech, the main theme was the importance of the Thailand Rehabilitation Act 1993 and the PWD's Empowerment Act 2007. As indicated in the speech, Thailand places emphasis primarily on promoting the rights of the disabled through legislation.

At the exhibition, products for sale included adaptive equipment and handicrafts. A very interesting product was the Voice Eye from Korea. Another interesting feature was the Thailand Blind People's Cooperative.

This was also a good opportunity for networking with professionals from among the various academic groups of blind persons. One of them was a representative from the Thailand Blind Muslims' Association. Matters touched on included research on blindness issues, cooperation in research,



and collaboration with the Thailand Blind Muslims' Association and the Blind Youths' Assembly Programme.

The TAB Night on the Beach was a joyous occasion for socialising and merry-making. It was a great opportunity for us to witness the many talents of the blind of Thailand.

Indeed the 16th TAB National Convention had been successful in providing the platform for the leaders of the blind in Thailand to deal with the challenges facing the blind in the country. It was an excellent opportunity for exposure, bringing forth new ideas and identifying weaknesses in the system.

### ***The First ASEAN Community Blind Forum (ACBF)***

This was held from April 23-24, 2013 and was sponsored by TAB. All the ASEAN countries except Myanmar were in attendance. The Forum was chaired by Senator Monthien Bhuntan, who was the past President of TAB.

At the Forum, each country was required to elaborate on the situation of the Blind there. Issues raised included Access, Education and Employment and especially the implementation of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in their respective countries.

We drew attention to the fact that Malaysia was making efforts to protect the Rights of the Disabled and to provide welfare assistance to the Disabled. While Malaysia was still lagging behind in legislative matters, it was making significant progress in terms of Education for the Disabled.

Generally, the ACBF Forum had been a successful platform for the representatives from organisations serving the blind to discuss, exchange ideas and network with one another. This gave rise to the formation of Google groups which could hold their own discussions from time to time during the meeting.

Indeed, the Forum had enlightened us on the importance of the UN CRPD, the situation of the blind in the countries of ASEAN, and the need for international cooperation.

## **Visit to the TAB Headquarters**

The visit took place on April 25, 2013 on our own initiative in order to learn more about TAB. Senator Monthien accompanied us throughout the visit and we learned that TAB was actually celebrating its 46th anniversary. We were greatly impressed with the progress that had been made by TAB as follows:

### **1. Organisational Structure**

TAB has developed from an association to become the Union of the Blind in Thailand. Originally, all members could attend the Annual General Meeting of TAB. Since 1998, however, only representatives from the branches, special interest groups and certain entities in TAB could attend the AGM.

### **2. TAB President's Duration of Service**

The TAB Constitution allows a person to hold the presidency for a maximum period of two terms. Each term is a period of four years and the AGM to elect the new committee must be held before the WBU Assembly, thereby enabling the new President to represent the Organisation at WBU and WBUAP during his term of office.

### **3. TAB Advisory Board**

The past presidents of TAB will be members of the Advisory Board to TAB for life, thereby enabling them to continue making their contributions to TAB and ensuring there is continuity in the policies and programmes of TAB.

#### **4. Thailand Blind People's Cooperative**

TAB provides the opportunity for the blind to be involved in business by buying shares in the cooperative. Various items, including assistive equipment for the blind, are sold in the cooperative and some of the goods are made in Thailand.

#### **5. International Relations Coordinator**

TAB has an officer to conduct international relations between TAB and organisations serving the blind all over the world. Through the coordinator, TAB is made known on the international level. In this way, TAB has successfully organised the WBU and ICEVI assemblies in 2012.

#### **6. The Thai Language Screen-Reader Project**

With government grants, TAB has successfully coordinated efforts to develop and produce Thai language screen-readers. They include the NVDA and JAWS screen-readers.

#### **7. Other initiatives include**

- (a) DAISY talking-book by telephone;
- (b) Support service for university students;
- (c) Support for special interest groups;
- (d) Department of Research and Development for the Blind;
- (e) Majority of staff employed by TAB are blind;
- (f) Excellent hospitality treatment for visitors (as in our case).

## **Non-Visual Desktop Access (NVDA) Workshop**

The NVDA Workshop was carried out on April 25, 2013 at the City Park Hotel in Bangkok, Thailand. The purpose of the Workshop was to provide exposure to participants concerning the NVDA screen-reader which is available free of charge. The Workshop was conducted by Michael Current, a member of the NVDA Board of Directors. There were representatives from the government departments, private sector and blind Persons.

Besides listening to the explanation concerning the NVDA, participants had the opportunity to dialogue with the speaker. At the Workshop, TAB restated their commitment to support NVDA for the benefit of the blind.

## **Recommendations for Malaysia**

### **1. Limit Representation to the AGM for Organisations Which Have Branches**

This will facilitate a smoothly run meeting, ensure that definite objectives are achieved and save expenditure.

### **2. Fix the Maximum Terms of Office for the Highest Elected Office-bearer in the Organisation**

This will provide the opportunity for more Blind people, especially the youth, to serve the Organisation and prevent monopoly by one group. This will also help to bring new ideas to the fore for the benefit of the Blind in Malaysia.

### **3. Appoint Past Presidents as Members of the Advisory Board to the Organisation**

This will enable the past presidents to continue contributing to the organisation, to guide the newly elected committee, help to ensure continuity of policies and programmes, and to act as mediators in settling disputes.

#### **4. Establish a Blind Persons' Cooperative**

This should benefit the Blind not only economically but also enable them to obtain goods at lower prices.

#### **5. Establish Programmes to Create Awareness Among the Blind and the General Public Concerning the Rights of the Disabled**

Such advocacy programmes are very important in educating the blind and the community at large concerning the rights of the disabled. Existing programmes should be evaluated to gauge their effectiveness.

#### **6. Prepare the Blind for Involvement on the International Level:**

This is to ensure that blind individuals as well as the leadership in organisations serving the blind have comprehensive knowledge in the Blindness Field for effective participation on the international level.

#### **7. Give more attention to Research and Development that will benefit the Blind in Malaysia:**

Research units should be established so that organisations serving the blind can conduct their own research activities. They should also collaborate with government agencies and educational institutions in conducting research that will be of benefit to the blind.

#### **8. Provide Capital in Support of Efforts to Produce Quality Products**

This will encourage the private sector to commit more resources in developing screen-reader software for the blind and in making the web accessible to the blind free of charge.

## Appreciation

We wish to record our sincere appreciation and thanks to the Thailand Association of the Blind for having invited us to take part in their programme. We are truly thankful for their kind hospitality and for having entertained us so well.

We would also like to express our heartfelt thanks to NCBM and SBM for having given us the opportunity to represent Malaysia at the TAB Convention and Forum and for having confidence in us to bring back the knowledge and experience that will be of benefit to the blind in Malaysia. We are most grateful for the financial sponsorship which has made the visit possible. It was a really rich and worthwhile experience and we are ready to share what we have learnt with our friends in Malaysia.

## **TECHNOLOGY UPDATE: BRAILLE DISPLAYS – THE PERFECT SOLUTION**

*By Moses Choo Siew Cheong,  
Executive Director,  
National Council for the Blind, Malaysia*

Although refreshable Braille displays have been around for many years, they have been way above the affordability of most Malaysians. In fact, I only had the opportunity to lay my hands on one after I had join the service of NCBM some years ago.

While many of us have got used to the idea of using the voice to access a computer or a mobile phone, I believe that Braille will allow us to perform our tasks with greater accuracy. However, I guess one would have to think very carefully before seriously considering to invest a huge sum of money on a Refreshable Braille Display. The good news is that Refreshable Braille Displays have come down in price with improved models and better portability.

Nevertheless, this means that there should be a lesser number of Braille cells; and yet they range from a minimum of 12 to a maximum of 84 cells – the more cells, the more expensive will be the Braille display. If you pay

more, you will have more functions on the unit. However, would you want to be carrying around an 84-cell Braille display which is more than two feet long?

Before deciding to buy one, you would want to consider the different features available, including the different connections and the wired or bluetooth (wireless) facilities. Some Braille displays have Braille input keys so that it can double up as a Braille input device. Some of the newer devices will provide you with a simple note-taking function or even a simple calculator.

For those of you who are not familiar with such equipment, let me try to give you a brief explanation of a Braille display. A refreshable Braille display is a piece of hardware that provides Braille output through your computer. All such displays have 8-dot refreshable Braille cells, i.e. the cells can be changed or refreshed according to the part of the screen that has the computer's attention. These refreshable Braille cells are the costly part of the machinery. The more cells you have, the more expensive the display will be.

Most of the displays that are being sold typically show one line of Braille at a time. Most of the line that has the computer's focus is displayed. For instance, if you are in a word processing document, the display will show the line of text at the insertion point. If you are in a dialogue-box, the display will show you information about the active control and perhaps some of the surrounding controls, depending on the screen-reader settings. You move the Focus to the next line or dialogue-box control by pressing keyboard commands or buttons on the Braille display.

Each Braille cell is capable of showing up to 8 dots. For English Braille, dots 1 to 6 are used to display traditional Braille, which can be uncontracted or contracted. Dots 7 and 8, the bottom two dots of each cell, are used by the screen-reader to show the cursor position, capitalisation, highlighting and other attributes, depending on the screen-reader settings. Some European languages use dots 7 and 8 as part of their standard Braille symbols.

The screen-reader drives the Braille display, i.e. it sends information to the Braille display. To reduce the need to move your hands back and forth from

the display to the keyboard, the Braille display has buttons that allow many tasks to be performed with your hands on the display. For instance, most displays have a button that performs the same function as the tab key on the keyboard.

One of the most useful features of the Braille display is the row of cursor routing buttons. These buttons are located above the line of refreshable Braille cells. Pressing one of these buttons will “route” or move the cursor to the cell below the cursor routing button that you pressed.

Cursor routing buttons can be used to simulate mouse clicks. With the touch of a button, you can click on links, mark checkboxes, or choose menu items. If you are filling out a form, you can put the cursor right where you need it before you type in the information. You can edit a misspelled word by routing the cursor directly to the incorrect character rather than using keyboard navigation to move to the misspelled word. Cursor routing buttons are especially useful on the internet where you can activate links or fill out forms without the guesswork that may be involved in navigating a website from the keyboard.

If you need to do a lot of editing work, then your Braille display should be equipped with router keys. The Braille Pen is a good example of a Braille display that uses router keys.

Status cells are a feature being provided by some displays. Depending on the display model and screen-reader that you are using, three, four or five of the Refreshable Braille cells will display information about which cursor is active. In many cases, the status cells can be placed where you want them to be on the display or they can be turned off altogether. (Note that not all screen-readers support status cells.)

Here are some situations in which Braille displays can be very useful:

1. A deaf-blind computer user with good Braille skills will find it to be a very helpful tool.
2. Blind employees in call centres or other customer service settings



have traditionally been listening to computer speech in one ear and the caller's voice in the other, which can be quite distracting. With the Braille display running, the computer speakers can be turned off and the output be obtained in Braille, thereby leaving both ears free to attend to the caller.

3. Blind persons involved in Braille transcription or publication works will find the Braille display to be of great help.
4. Work can be carried out more quickly and efficiently on the website by using the cursor routing buttons and other navigational features on the Braille display.

Before a blind person can make up his mind to go for a Braille display, there is nothing like being able to use one and trying it out for himself first. Therefore, I would like to take this opportunity to appeal to the organisations serving the blind to make demo units available so that the Blind will be able to confirm the viability of a Braille display.

There are at least ten models of the Braille display available on the market. However, let me present you with two of the models, the most expensive and the cheapest model, for your reference.

### ***The Braille Edge 40***

This is the most powerful and versatile Braille display available, with the features of a basic note-taker.

There are two four-way navigational keys and eight function keys (Escape, Tab, Control, Alt, Shift, Insert, Windows and Applications). It is thus able to combine the convenience of entering text in Braille with the intuitive functionality of a PC keyboard. In fact, it offers the convenience and flexibility of multiple languages, including English, Spanish, French, German and Italian.

Connect Braille Edge 40 to a computer or PDA via Bluetooth and you can

stay connected throughout the day without the need for charging. For even longer run time, connect via USB and enjoy all the great features of Braille Edge 40 while simultaneously charging the unit.

You can read and save your data on the SD card. You can use up to 32 GB SDHC cards with Braille Edge 40, enough to carry thousands of books and documents with you for reading on the go.

It is compatible with JAWS, Window Eyes, SuperNova, NVDA, VoiceOver, Mobile Speak and Talks.

Its size is 310 by 101.5 by 22.5 mm.

### ***The BraillePen 12 and BraillePen 12 Touch***

It has twelve Braille cells, twelve Braille ActiveTouch cursor routers and the clipboard (quick notes).

Its dimensions are 151 by 96 by 21 mm. (or 5.9 by 3.8 by 0.85 inches).

It weighs 260 Grams (or 9.2 Ounces).

Power supply – internal rechargeable battery.

Battery life – 12 hours working, standby several weeks, charge cycle of three hours.

Battery overcharge protection.

(For assistance in purchasing or investing in such equipment, please contact Moses Choo at NCBM)

## **A POINT TO PONDER: YOU CAN BE A HAPPY PERSON AT ALL TIMES**

*By Wong Kow*

It was a Saturday morning when I together with my friends, Liong Teck Yau and Sek Yee Seong, decided that we would cool ourselves with an overnight stay in the Genting Highlands. So we called a taxi from Kuala Lumpur. When the taxi arrived, we got in and I began to address the driver with a cheerful “Good morning!”” I wanted to create a happy and enjoyable atmosphere for everybody. However, the driver did not respond and Liong thought that perhaps I had spoken too softly. I was sitting in the back seat.

And so Liong, with his clear and pleasant voice, politely greeted the driver again, “good morning! It’s so nice of you to drive us up to Genting for a holiday!”

“Ah – what good morning? What’s so good about ...?” The driver answered in a rude and impatient tone.

Thus, realising that the driver must have got up from the wrong side of the bed that morning, we decided to keep silent as far as possible. About 30 minutes into the journey, there were the usual traffic jams, police road blocks and street repairs along the way which made the driving very slow and less comfortable. This seemed to make the driver angry at almost everything on earth. He started uttering ill-chosen words to criticise the Government, the traffic police, the Public Works Department and even at other road-users.

Thus, the usual one and a half hour journey seemed to be very long that morning. I thanked God and heave a sigh of relief when we finally reached our destination and we had to alight from the taxi. As we paid the driver the taxi fare, he blurted out, “Passengers come here to enjoy themselves and I have to drive them up like a bull!”

Fortunately, the three of us had fairly good EQ and we were able to keep our cool. Thus, despite the rather unpleasant journey up, we could enjoy the

fresh air and beautiful scenery. The room was comfortable and we enjoyed the warm fellowship with lots of singing, jokes and sharing of our dreams and future plans.

A few weeks later, another friend of ours from Hong Kong, Yu Chee Eng, paid a visit to Kuala Lumpur. As we had not met him for a long time, we decided to bring him to Genting Highlands to spend a night there so that we could update each other and share or exchange stories.

We went up by taxi again. Upon boarding the car this time, we could hear some nice music from within. The driver greeted us with a cheerful “Good morning!” Followed by a kind reminder for us to put on our seat-belts and be seated comfortably for the journey up.

The driver’s courtesy and caring attitude immediately livened up the whole atmosphere. We exchanged conversation on a great variety of interesting topics and joyfully sang some songs together.

Again there were the usual traffic jams, police road blocks and street repairs which slowed down the traffic. However, instead of complaining and blaming the authorities or others, the driver did just the opposite. For example, he expressed appreciation for the traffic lights which he said facilitated the movement of traffic in different directions. He said that the road blocks were to help the traffic police stop irresponsible drivers and curb illegal activities in order to safeguard the well-being of the general public.

His words impressed me most when, as we moved along the stretches of roads where repairs were being carried out and the taxi was moving at an agonisingly slow pace, he commented, “This will be another modern highway which will be safer and more comfortable for everyone in a few months’ time!”

Indeed, the stories that I have related are true. From the day of our birth, even from the time of conception in our mothers’ wombs, we have started embarking on a journey which will end only on the day when we leave this world. In truth, there is no exception for anybody. And yet, why is somebody always happy while somebody else is always unhappy?

Let us have a closer look at the two taxi drivers. The first driver is unhappy because he never makes himself happy. He mistakenly felt that everybody and everything is always going against him or his wishes.

The second driver, on the other hand, has a happy and positive attitude towards life. He feels that everything is in his favour and everybody is making a positive contribution in society. Thus, not only is he himself cheerful but he also creates a happy atmosphere for the people around him.

Truly, with a happy and positive attitude in mind, every move that you make in life will also go towards happiness.

## **STRATEGIES TOWARDS A HAPPY WORKFORCE PART 1**

*By Tan Sri Datuk Ahmad Ayub,  
Chairman of BAPEMA Corporation,  
At The Conference Of Engineering Organisations,  
Organised By ITM,  
Institute Of Engineers, Malaysia (IEM)  
And the Ministry of Human Resources*

### **Strategies Towards A Happy Workforce – The Japanese Model**

A Japanese company is committed to lifetime employment and will go to great lengths to build loyalty among its employees by ensuring fair and humane treatment. It is known that people who are committed to long-term relationships with one another will have a strong commitment in behaving responsibly and equitably towards one another.

This holistic concern can be illustrated thus – when training of new recruits ends, it will culminate in a big ceremony to which parents of the trainees will be invited to attend.

The President would welcome the new members, challenging them to live up to the expectations of their trainers and leaders. He would also speak to the parents and accept from them the challenge to provide their children not only with honest work but also the obligation to see to their complete physical, intellectual and moral development.

Then a representative of the parents takes the podium and thanks the company for providing the opportunity to their offspring and reaffirming the responsibility of the trainees to be loyal to their new family as they are to their blood family. Finally, a representative of the trainees would rise up to speak, thanking both parents and the company for their support and pledging to work hard to meet their expectations.

In his book on Management Style, Akio Morita, the founder and chairman of Sony, says:

“The emphasis on people must be genuine and sometimes very bold and daring, and it can be quite risky. But in the long run – no matter how good or successful you are or how clever or crafty, your business and its future are in the hands of the people you hire. To put it a bit more dramatically, the fate of your business is actually in the hands of the youngest recruits.

“A company will get nowhere if all of the thinking is left to Management. Everybody in the company must contribute; For the lower-level employees, their contribution must be more than just manual labour. We insist that all our employees contribute their minds.

“Management officers, knowing that the company’s ordinary business is being done by energetic and enthusiastic younger employees, can devote their time and effort to planning the future of the company. With this in mind, it is unwise and unnecessary to define individual responsibilities too clearly, because everyone is taught to act like a family member ready to do what is necessary. If something goes wrong, it is considered bad taste for management to inquire who made the mistake. The important thing is not to pin the blame for a mistake on somebody, but rather to find out what caused the mistake. If a person who makes a mistake is branded and kicked off the seniority promotion escalator, he could lose his motivation for the rest of his business life and the company would be deprived of whatever good things he may have to offer later. If, on the other hand, the causes of the mistake are clarified and made public, the person who made the mistake will not forget it and others will not make the same mistake.”

Thus, when an important decision needs to be made in a Japanese organisation, everyone who would feel the impact is involved in making the decision. For example, in deciding where to put a new plant, whether to change a product process, or some other major event, often 60 to 80 people will be directly involved in making the decision.

A team of three will be assigned the duty of talking to all the 60 or 80 people; each time a significant modification arises, all the people involved will be consulted. The team will repeat this process until a true consensus has been achieved.

Making a decision this way takes a very long time, but once a decision is reached, everyone affected by it will be likely to support it. The actual content of the decision may be superseded since the five or six competing alternatives may be equally good or bad. Ultimately, what is important is not the decision itself but rather how committed and informed people are.

The “best” decision can be bungled or the “work” decision could work just as fine!

(to be continued)

## **WE ARE MAD, ARE YOU?**

A Columbian high school student once wrote:

The paradox of our time in history is that we have  
taller buildings but shorter tempers;  
wider freeways but narrower viewpoints;  
more expenditure but enjoy it less;  
bigger houses and smaller families;  
more conveniences but less time;  
more degrees but less sense;  
more knowledge but less judgment;  
more experts but less solutions;  
more medicine but less wellness;  
multiplied our possessions but not our values;  
too much talk, love too seldom, and hate too often;  
learned how to make a living but not a life;  
added years to life, not life to years;  
been all the way to the Moon and back but have trouble crossing the street  
to meet the new neighbour;  
conquered outer space, but not inner space;  
cleaned up the air but polluted the soul;  
split the atom, but not our prejudice;  
higher incomes, but lower morals;  
become long on quantity but short on quality;  
steep profits, and shallow relationships;  
more leisure but less fun;



more kinds of food but less nutrition;  
fancier houses, but broken homes;  
it is a time when there is much in the show window and nothing in the stock  
room;  
these are the times of world peace but domestic warfare;  
these are the days of two incomes but more divorce;  
these are the times of tall men but short character;  
if you're here this evening, then I guess you're "mad" – Making a Difference!  
thank you.

(signed)

Michael Gomez

Organising Chairman.

(Taken from the Magazine Entitled (Anugerah Ibu Kiwanis 2010))

**PRINCIPAL OFFICE-BEARERS AND COUNCIL  
MEMBERS OF NCBM  
FOR 2012 - 2014**

Mdm Jasmine Khoo Khin Sheen,  
President, NCBM

Rev. Rt. Andrew Phang See Yin,  
Vice-President, NCBM - St. Nicholas' Home

Mr. Wong On Fook,  
Hon. Secretary, NCBM - Sabah Society for the Blind

Mr. (James) Lau Kung Wuong,  
Hon. Treasurer, NCBM - Sarawak Society for the Blind

Dato' Ganesan Supayah  
Malaysian Association for the Blind

Mr. George Heng Kiah Choong  
Malaysian Association for the Blind

Mdm. Rosalind Chew  
Sabah Society for the Blind

Mr. William G. Brohier  
St. Nicholas' Home

Dato' Dr Hsiung Kwo Yeun  
Sarawak Society for the Blind

En. Mohd Mustaza Mohamad Zin  
Society of the Blind in Malaysia

Mr. Loh Kong Ken  
Society of the Blind in Malaysia

## **CHAIRPERSONS OF COMMITTEES OF NCBM FOR 2012 - 2014**

Committee on Education (COE) -  
Dr. Kway Eng Hock

Committee on Employment and Economic Empowerment (CEEE) -  
Dr Wong Huey Siew

Committee on Wellness and Prevention of Blindness (CWPB) -  
Dr Choong Yean Yaw

## **AUDITOR 2012 - 2014**

Inpana & Associates,  
Kuala Lumpur

## **REPRESENTATIVES OF NCBM TO OTHER ORGANISATIONS, 2012 - 2014**

Malaysian Council for Rehabilitation  
(MCR) -

Mr Moses Choo Siew Cheong

National Council of Welfare and Social Development Malaysia  
(NCWSDM)

Mr Loh Kong Ken

World Blind Union/ World Blind Union Asia Pacific -  
(WBU/WBUAP)

Dato' Hsiung Kwo Yeun and Mr Ivan Ho Tuck Choy

## **EARN SOME EXTRA CASH**

Readers are invited to write for our publication, “THE NCBM OUTREACH”. For articles published, payments are as follows:-

1. Original articles on the achievements of blind people or of an inspirational nature (about 500 words) - RM75.00
2. Articles containing ideas and suggestions for the improvement of NCBM or its member-organisations (about 500 words) - RM75.00
3. Articles on funny or unusual experiences (250 - 500 words) - RM35.00 - RM75.00
4. Interesting articles taken from magazines or documents of limited circulation - RM10.00.

(Note: Articles submitted by officials of NCBM or its member-organisations will not qualify for payment unless these submissions have nothing to do with their daily office duties.)