

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.



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 and vision-impaired.

It cost The National Council for the Blind, Malaysia RM 30,000.00 a year to produce both print and Braille.

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 :

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** NCBM has not appointed any agent to collect cash on our behalf.*



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SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

1. Articles, suggestions and Jokes for the Magazine:

Readers are reminded that their contribution of articles, suggestions and jokes are most welcome for inclusion in the NCBM Outreach

Please note that it would be helpful to the editor if such contributions could be submitted on a thumb drive or similar mode, or in Braille. If the article is in Braille, it should be on single-sided pages in order to facilitate editing.

You should include your full name (as in the identity card) with your address, telephone number and bank account number so that the money can be bank into your account.

For details concerning payments, please see the last page.

Thank you for your assistance and support.



EDITORIAL BOARD

Moses Choo Siew Cheong

Wong Kwee Heong

Inungkiran Mongijal

Chin Yew Cheng



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The SBM Abilympic Competition 2017

By Dr. Wong Huey Siew, Chairman of the Human Capital Development Committee, Society of the Blind in Malaysia (SBM)

Date of Competition : 09 December (Sat) & 10 December (Sun) 2017

Venue

This will be decided later.

Introduction

In view of IT being an important factor in determining the quality of life and well-being of disabled persons in general and the blind in particular in our country, greater effort needs to be made in promoting the abilities and skills of the visually impaired through IT education and training. Hence, it is proposed to implement a programme that can help to highlight the abilities and skills of the blind in IT.

Proposed Programme

This is the SBM Abilympic Trophy (Information Technology chapter). This programme is based on the International Abilympic Model and the objective is to bring about public awareness concerning the abilities of the blind in IT. Thus, the Human Capital Development Committee (Jawatankuasa Pembangunan Modal Insan - JPMI) would like to initiate this idea in the blind community of Malaysia.

Furthermore, the current Abilympic model does not cater for the needs of the blind. Hence, there is the need for such a programme in order to fill this gap.

Aims

1. To create public awareness concerning the abilities of the blind in IT.
2. To bring to the fore the abilities of the blind in IT.
3. To promote the abilities of the blind to the public, especially among the employers.

Slogan

"We Too Are IT Literate".

This slogan has been chosen in view of the fact that many people in society still do not know or understand that the blind can make use of IT. They are still holding on to the concept and belief that the blind are also feeble and deaf.

Rules of Participation

1. The competition is open to all visually impaired persons who have IT skills.
2. The competition will only be run on the National level.
3. The final competition will be broadcast by the main and social media.
4. Each contestant must have their own computer.
5. A fee of RM10 is charged for each event.
6. Every contestant can take part in more than one event.
7. The closing date will be extended till October 15, 2017.

Those interested should register with **Puan Norfadilah bt. Abdullah**,
Tel. 03-2274 6162 during office hours.

Events for Participation

1. Using MS-Word to type and produce a document.
2. Composing and making a Powerpoint presentation.
3. Surfing the internet for materials.

Competition Categories

1. Category B1 (three (3) events as mentioned).
2. Category B2 (three (3) events as mentioned).
3. Category B1 versus the sighted (MS-Word and internet surfing).
4. Category B2 versus the sighted (MS-Word and Powerpoint)

This means that there are ten (10) events to be carried out.

Prizes

1. First prize for every category – RM350
2. Second prize for each category – RM200
3. Third prize for each category – RM120

NCBM'S SUPPORT SCHEMES FOR THE BLIND



1. NCBM's Job Pioneering Scheme:

This scheme was launched in 2012 whereby NCBM collaborates with prospective employers in providing employment opportunities for the blind. The blind person will work for a period of **three to six months** and be paid a monthly allowance of **RM1,200 by NCBM**. At the end of the period, it is hoped that the employer will be convinced of the blind person's capabilities and give him permanent employment.

Please contact the NCBM secretariat for the application form.

Tel. 03-22762973.

2. Equipment Loan Fund for the Blind:

NCBM would like to see significant improvement in job opportunities for the blind in Malaysia. Therefore, blind persons in employment who face the difficulty in obtaining adaptive equipment to help them in their work can get in touch with NCBM for such assistance.

For more details, please call the NCBM secretariat at 03-22762973.

3. Research Grant:

Anybody, blind or sighted, interested in carrying out research on employment for the blind or on blindness prevention can make application to NCBM for a research grant. The amount to be provided can range from RM3,000 to RM5,000.

Please contact NCBM at 03-22762973.



MESSAGE FROM NCBM APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF DISABLED PERSONS

We would like to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt thanks and deep appreciation to the Government, in particular, the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, for the appointment of ten (10) Disabled Representatives on the National Council of Disabled Persons for the 2016-2018 session.

We would also like to extend hearty congratulations to those disabled persons who have been appointed to the Council.

Indeed, it should be borne in mind that the appointment of disabled persons to the National Council of Disabled Persons is an important item in the Development Agenda which has been enshrined in the Disabled Persons Act 2008. In so doing, this has legitimised and given recognition to the rights of the disabled to benefit from development in Malaysia through the process of legislation.

With the new session having taken place, we have great hopes that each and every one of the appointed members will take whatever action possible in championing for the needs of the disabled in this country.

Truly, the current situation and the issues facing the disabled grows ever more challenging and increasingly complex. The focused concentration of effort and thought at Council level is significant in bringing about meaningful solutions for the disabled. In view of this, it is hoped that various categories and different groups of disabled persons will be able to unite so that we can speak out with one voice and take united action in support of the National Council of Disabled Persons.

In fact, it is most heartening to know that Kelantan is leading the way with the formation of the Majlis Persefahaman Pertubuhan OKU Kelantan (MPPOK). Let us keep up the good spirits by following in their footsteps.

Remember that "There is nothing about us without us". So let us go forward together in order to achieve and make a success of the next stage of our struggle.

In closing, we would like to mention the names of the new members of the National Council of Disabled Persons as follows:

1. Dr. Azian Sofia bt Amin (OKU Fizikal), Pensyarah UKM
2. Mohd. Yazid bin Bain (OKU Pendengaran dan Pertuturan)
3. V. Murugeswaran Veerasamy (OKU Fizikal)
4. Choo Siew Cheong (OKU Penglihatan)
5. Fariz Hj. Abdul Rani (OKU Fizikal) Wakil Sabah.
6. Dr Sulaiman Abdul Mutalib
7. Dr Ruziah bt. Ghazali
8. Dr Ong Puay Hoon
9. Ras Adiba bt. Mohd Radzi
10. Jatan Anak Kidu



LOOKING BACK ON 2016

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

On January 4, 2016, NCBM officially operated from our new office located at unit 13-8 of Menara Sentral Vista. While many organisations are preparing themselves to face the next tough years ahead, NCBM's moving into the new office is actually our way of tightening our budget in order to face the coming uncertainties. Indeed, we have moved from the luxury of occupying about 5,000 square feet to only about 2,800 square feet.

Nevertheless, our supporters and friends are still most welcome to pay us a visit whenever possible. We will ensure that we are still effective despite being confined to a smaller space.

2016, as in previous years, has been a busy and challenging year for NCBM. Much effort has been put in by NCBM to carry out its existing programmes as well as to initiate new services and programmes either on its own or in collaboration with other organisations, Government agencies and even the private sector.

The main programmes and services carried out in 2016 are as follows:

1. Services for the Deafblind:

While services for the deafblind had been introduced in the early 1960's with St. Nicholas' Home sending staff to Helen Keller International in the USA for training as instructors, the deafblind programmes in Malaysia until today have remained as rather rudimentary and they are merely aimed at assisting the deafblind to manage their daily living skills. To enable the deafblind to become useful citizens in the country, there is the need to beef up our services so that those suffering from deafblindness can be trained to be employable and productive.

For a start, NCBM has thus taken the move to convince the leaders of other NGOs and Government agencies that measures need to be taken to address the situation.

NCBM, therefore, led the way by organising two (2) Workshops, the first workshop from January 29-31 in Penang and the second one from October 10-11 in Kuala Lumpur.

We were very honoured to have Ms. Akiko Fukuda and Mr. Atsushi Mori to speak at the Penang workshop and Ms. Katsura Fukuda as the speaker at the Kuala Lumpur workshop. We were able to bring in the speakers at low cost and we are most grateful to the following organisations for their support - Malaysian Confederation of the Disabled (MCD), Malaysian Federation of the Deaf (MFD) and the Penang Association of the Deaf.

A set of recommendations were formulated as follows:

- i. To urge the Government to recognise deafblind persons under a new category rather than grouping them under the Multiple Disabilities category and that this be spelt out in the Malaysians with Disabilities Act 2008.
- ii. To encourage the Government to provide assistance to persons with disabilities in accordance with the severity of disabilities rather than providing the same quantum to everyone who qualifies.
- iii. To adopt one form of tactile sign language in Malaysia and to provide training in this sign language.
- iv. To provide training for interpreter-guides similar to the model in Japan, provide support to the deafblind in carrying out their daily activities, and to create awareness concerning their needs.
- v. To set up support groups for the deafblind comprising parents, deafblind persons and officials of NCBM and MFD with the ultimate aim of forming the Malaysian Deafblind Association.
- vi. To work with the Ministry of Education in training teachers for the deafblind and creating a special curriculum for deafblind children.
- vii. To cooperate with the Japan Deafblind Association in initiating programmes for the deafblind in Malaysia.

2. Education:

2.1 Private Education Institutions

In supporting education for the blind, NCBM has begun involvement with private education institutions. In this connection, NCBM worked with the Methodist College Kuala Lumpur (MCKL) in providing support for a blind student, Celine Lean Yew Lin, at the college. We are very happy to note that she has done very well for the first year.

2.2 *The Unified English Braille Code*

While both the English and American Braille have been widely used around the world, Malaysia started using British Braille way back in the 1950's. Then with the introduction of computers for Braille production in the 1990's, many had defaulted to the use of American Braille as it had been preset with the installation of the Duxbury Braille Translation software. Consequently, the use of the two Braille codes have got rather mixed up; therefore, the introduction of the Unified English Braille code (UEB) could not have come at a better time.

On the initiative of NCBM, the Braille Council of Malaysia was formed in 2014 in order to deal with all matters pertaining to Braille. The adoption of UEB and discussions on formatting the Malay Braille Code to comply with UEB has been its main focus.

Thus, with NCBM as the main driver of UEB in collaboration with the Department of Special Education (in the Ministry of Education), NCBM helped in facilitating a UEB workshop specially organised for Braille book producers who were enlisted under the Bahagian Buku Teks of the Education Ministry.

At the technical advisory meeting of the Department on Special Education held on June 29, the Committee accepted the proposal for the implementation of UEB to commence in January 2018. It is envisaged that by the end of 2022, all books and examinations will have adopted the UEB system.

2.3 NonVisual Desktop Access (NVDA)

Although the introduction of speech-aided computers had taken place since the 1990's, helping the blind to obtain affordable screen readers had been our biggest challenge. In 2006, however, two young gentlemen, Michael Curran and James Teh (in Australia) got together and created a screen reader which can be downloaded from the website at no cost, which is

<http://www.nvaccess.org/download/>

NCBM has since then been encouraging the blindness community to make use of such free technology for the improvement of the lives of the blind.

In moving to promote the use of NVDA, the CARE Unit of NCBM together with the staff of our Braille Unit has been organising training sessions in cooperation with the South-East Asian Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEOSen). While NCBM provided the trainers, SEAMEOSen assisted in the logistics arrangements and in communicating with the teachers of the Ministry of Education. In total, NCBM has provided training to more than 120 persons (including teachers of the blind, Braille personnel of member-organisations, and some of the undergraduates of Universiti Malaya.

2.4 Promoting the Use of Braille

In a contingent effort to promote Braille reading among the blind, NCBM organised a Braille Reading Competition (in English and Bahasa Melayu) on December 2, 2016. The response was excellent as we had a total of 60 participants. Once again, the Reading Competition was broadcast to interested listeners on Amboi FM, an internet broadcast run by the blind.

In preparing for the competition, the staff of our Braille Unit were sent to the different locations to make recordings. Unlike the previous year when recordings were made at five (5) locations, our staff made recordings at seven (7) locations in 2016 which included Kota Kinabalu, Kuching, Melaka, Kuala Lumpur, Prai, Penang and Kuala Terengganu.

The winners were as follows -

Malay Junior Category (under 25 years):

- i. Nur Syuhada bt. Alias
- ii. Kelvin Makupi
- iii. Kemilah bt. Haramai.

Malay Senior Category (25 years and above):

- i. Alia Nur Aini bt. Erman Efendi
- ii. Siti Nurjannah bt. Zamzuri
- iii. Fadzlin Hiezrie bin Abdul Rahman

English Junior Category (under 25 years):

- i. Teo Zhan Feng
- ii. Ang Lit Xuan
- iii. Kenzon Yeoh

English Senior Category (25 years and above):

- i. Chok Siew Lee
- ii. Wong Swee Foon
- iii. Laxme Preyalatha.

2.5 Career Camp 2016 for Form Five and Form Six Students

The Annual Career Camp was held at the Selesa Home Resort in Pahang from December 5-8. There was a total of 29 participants who came from eight schools in different parts of the country.

3. Employment

In 2015 NCBM was part of a special initiative to create a better insurance experience coverage for the disabled. In the process, not only did the Allianz Group open up their insurance policies to the disabled but they also accepted four blind persons for employment at their call centre.

In trying to promote employment opportunities for the blind, NCBM did videotape recordings of exemplary models of the blind in employment. Two of the blind persons featured were Lee Sheng Chow, a successful entrepreneur and Dr. Wong Huey Siew, a successful educator.

3.1 Seminar on the Promotion of Employment for Persons with Disabilities

The Seminar was organised by the JPOKU from March 15-18, 2016. The concept of job modification, reasonable accommodation and supported services were recommended to the Public Services Commission for their consideration of PWD's for employment in the public sector.

3.2 Job Placement

Through its Centre for Advocacy, Research & Empowerment (CARE) Department, NCBM worked with Malaysian Association for the Blind (MAB) Job Placement Section in placing blind individuals as Customer Service Representatives with Allianz Malaysia . In April 2016, a total of 6 persons were taken in.

Meanwhile, NCBM followed up by providing training to these new employed individuals, thereby familiarising them with the use of NVDA along with the system of Allianz Malaysia.

3.3 Advocacy Work

NCBM together with the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) organised the ICT Day Programme on March 22. The objective was to encourage the use of ICT among the blind and to explore the possibility of gaining support from the Government.

3.4 Better Banking Services

Through discussions with NCBM, Bank Negara Malaysia decided to produce the new version of the cash-test card which can measure both Ringgit notes and coins. NCBM then produced the Malay and English instructions in Braille.

The cash-test cards were distributed to the blind through NCBM and its member-organisations as well as the Special Education Division and Jabatan Pembangunan OKU.

3.5 Regional Action Plan

Through our CARE Department, NCBM organised a consultation on the Regional Action Plan to Mainstream Persons with Disabilities in ASEAN with the leaders of Disabled People's Organisations affiliated to the Malaysian Confederation of the Disabled (MCD) on April 2, 2016. The input will be used for consideration in the formulation of a regional plan of Action for persons with disabilities.

3.6 Seminar on Understanding of Advocacy Documents

At the Seminar, the participants gained an understanding of the UNCRPD, the Malaysian Disability Act and other related Acts on April 18. Organisations for and of the disabled took part.

3.7 Moving forward

NCBM took part in a discussion to draft a proposal requesting exemption from GST for the disabled. The working paper was submitted to JPOKU.

On November 28, we were happy to learn that the Minister of Women, Family and Community Development made the announcement that with effect from January 2017, OKU individuals can get the assistance of the OKU Department to obtain exemption from GST.

NCBM is very grateful to YB Dato' Sri Rohani Abdul Karim, Minister of Women, Family and Community Development, for having taken up our suggestions.

3.8 Public Awareness

In order to gain support and understanding from the general public, NCBM embarked on a project to provide real life experience to members of the general public. This comes in the form of the simulation spectacles whereby anyone wearing them will be able to experience the different types of eye diseases.

In conclusion, on behalf of the Council, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our supporters for having provided us the funds, resources, time and moral support, thereby enabling NCBM to fulfill its commitments to improve the lives of the blind and visually impaired in Malaysia.

With all your support, NCBM is now able to take another big step into the 31st year of its existence. May NCBM continue to serve the blind for many more years.



REVAMPING OF THE BLINDNESS PREVENTION COMMITTEE

by Datuk Rosalind Chew

Editor's note: At a council meeting held towards the end of 2016, NCBM decided to expand the focus of the Committee on Prevention of Blindness and to call it the Committee on Public Awareness of BVI's. Datuk Rosalind Chew was appointed as the first Chairman of the Committee.

She reports as follows:

While Malaysia has celebrated its 59th year of independence, public opinion concerning the rights of the disabled has barely begun to take shape. As a matter of fact, even though the blind, amongst all the disabled categories, have apparently received the most attention from the public when it comes to fund-raising, yet they still face very negative responses when it comes to employment and acceptance as fellow productive citizens of the country. In view of this, I made the proposal to NCBM for the setting up of a Committee that would look into the matter of promoting Public Awareness on the Blind and Vision-impaired (BVI's). Consequently, it was decided to revamp the Committee on Prevention of Blindness and to call it the Committee on Public Awareness of the BVI's.

The first and most important function of this new committee would be to look into the matter of access for the blind as a precondition that would enable them to exercise their rights and realise their potential in an inclusive society. Access to the physical environment, public transportation, with information and communication services based on the universal design will certainly bring about much greater improvement with regards to safety, clarity and ease of use for everyone, including the blind, in society.

An important aspect of access, of course, is being able to gain access to information concerning the relevant services of Government agencies and

private corporations. In this regard, it is of utmost importance for NCBM and its member-organisations to begin taking positive actions. An important step in this direction is for the organisations to identify suitably qualified persons as representatives to look into the needs of the blind on the local councils and Government agencies both at the state and federal levels.

Although NCBM (through CARE) has been working with the Society of the Blind in Malaysia (SBM) in promoting knowledge on accessibility, I have no doubt that it is still of vital importance for all the member-organisations to ensure that their staff as well as the blind that they serve are equipped with such information. By having a greater number of persons equipped with such knowledge, we will be better able to support the Government and the private sector in achieving the goal of providing accessibility in a shorter period of time.

In spite of prior importance being placed on accessibility, nonetheless, the work on blindness prevention will not be neglected. Indeed, the Government and many of the eye clinics have been very supportive of the work on blindness prevention and this new committee will continue upholding the good relations that has been fostered with both the public and private sectors.

In this connection, therefore, it is very important now for us to recruit more hospitals to be contributors rather than beneficiaries of the money being collected, thereby initiating the move to make such preventive operations cheaper.

Another important objective of blindness prevention is to help those who have been affected and they are not curable. Hence, this calls for the setting up of an outreach programme to formulate contingency plans to help these people and to form the vital link between all its member-organisations. A mechanism must be created so that there is a cross-reference between all the five member-organisations.

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Besides looking at how the blind are being viewed by the general public, there is the need to ensure that the blind are ready and able to take on the challenges that come with the recognition as being rightful citizens of the country. Hence, this calls for the promotion of equal rights through Disability Equality Training (DET) as well as Disability Inclusive Training (DIT). In carrying out this task, the Committee will have to work with the five member-organisations in looking at the sort of approaches that can be taken to prepare the blind through DET and DIT.

Finally, there is the need to monitor the Government's commitment in implementing the plan of action of 2016 to 2022. While the Jabatan OKU has come up with such a plan of action, it is imperative for us to have the opportunities to keep track of its implementation.

Composition of the Committee on Public Awareness of BVI's

Thus, as for all the committees formed by NCBM, this Committee will comprise the following:

1. A Chairman (preferably someone from the Council)
2. One representative each from the member-organisations (preferably someone who is active on the management of the member-organisation. It is also preferred that this representative has a mechanism to report back to the management of member-organisations and to take the opinion of member-organisations back to NCBM. In the past, sending staff or persons without recourse to the respective management has resulted in poor communication between the member-organisations and NCBM).
3. Others (including those who are blind) who may be in an influential position and who can work with NCBM.

Objectives of the Committee on Public Awareness of BVI's

The objectives of the new committee are outlined as follows:

1. To promote an accessible and barrier-free environment for the blind.
2. To promote equal rights for the blind through Disability Training (DET) and Disability Inclusive Training (DIT).
3. To continue working with the Government and the private sector on blindness prevention.
4. To implement an outreach programme that will help those with incurable blindness.
5. To monitor the Government's commitment in implementing the plan of action for 2016 to 2022.

NEWS FROM THE ORGANISATIONS SERVING THE BLIND

Celebrating the Contributions and Achievements of William G. Brohier in the Work for the Blind



An appreciation dinner was held for Mr. W. G. Brohier at the Eastern & Oriental (E&O) hotel in Penang on March 31, 2017. Coincidentally, Mr Brohier's birthday falls on April 8 (which was not too far away) and everyone took the opportunity to convey heart-warming greetings and best wishes for his eighty-fourth birthday.

NCBM Executive Director, Mr. Moses Choo, said, "Bill Brohier's legacy stretches almost sixty years and no form of appreciation can adequately express the gratitude of the blindness community. We all know, however, that behind every successful man, there is a hardworking woman quietly working in the background. In this case, it is none other than Mrs Margaret Brohier. And so while we are gathered here tonight, let us join together in thanking Mr. and Mrs. Brohier for all their efforts in bringing success to the blind and to the blindness organisations, especially NCBM and St. Nicholas' Home."



In recognition of his services to the country, Mr. Brohier was awarded the Pingat Jasa Kebaktian (PJK) in 1973 and the Darjah Johan Negeri (DJN) in 1992 by the Government.

For all his important contributions in the upliftment of the blind, particularly in Malaysia, NCBM presented him with the 1998 NCBM Tun Hussein Onn Award for distinguished Services to Visually Impaired Persons.

The citation for William Godwin Brohier was presented by Bishop Charles Samuel, representing the Council of NCBM, as follows:

"William G. Brohier first appeared on the blindness scene in 1960 when he joined St. Nicholas' Home as its principal designate. After successfully completing a certificate course in the teaching of blind children at the University of Birmingham in 1971, he returned to Penang to take up the position of Principal.

In 1972 he again went to the United Kingdom for a Diploma course in Education and Management at the Sheffield Polytechnic. This led to his promotion as the Executive Director of St. Nicholas', a position which he held until March 1979 when he went international.

"Some of the memorable achievements of those nineteen years include the following:

- Securing St. Nicholas' Home the status of a Special Primary School from the Ministry of Education, thereby ensuring a definite grant for teachers and students at the school;
- Furthering and pioneering education for the blind by initiating efforts to establish programmes in teacher training for the blind and to promote the integration of the blind in mainstream schools;
- Developing important support services for the blind in need of rehabilitation, After Care, Jobs and Library Services with the establishment of the Occupation Centre for Blind Women, the After Care and Job Placement Service, the Talking Book Library, the Low Vision Unit, a Science Classroom, and a swimming pool at St. Nicholas';
- Strengthening the position of St. Nicholas' through fund-raising activities, particularly the endowment fund of a few million Ringgit and gaining international recognition for St. Nicholas' as one of the leading schools for the blind in the far east.

On the international scene, Mr. Brohier also achieved much as an avid advocate of better quality services for the blind through various positions which he held. He was the regional representative of the Royal Commonwealth

Society for the Blind (which later became known as Sightsavers International) from March 1979 to 1991. He was also the regional representative of the Christoffel-Blindenmission (CBM) until his retirement in 1992. In August 1987 he became the first Asian to be elected President of the International Council for the Education of the Visually Impaired (ICEVI) in its 40-year history and was re-elected for a second five-year term in 1992.

Through these influential positions, Mr. Brohier was active in promoting the interests of the blind in many countries. In Malaysia he supported the efforts of the Malaysian Association for the Blind (MAB) in the establishment of the Mobile Eye Clinic, Job Placement Unit and the Community-based Rehabilitation (CBR) service.

He helped to strengthen the blind movement in Malaysia by staunchly supporting the initiatives of the Society of the Blind in Malaysia (SBM) to develop pilot agricultural projects for the blind in Pahang and to employ a full-time Executive Secretary to administer the services and programmes of the Society.

He also worked closely with the Sabah Society for the Blind and the Sarawak Society for the Blind in the development of various services for the blind in those states.



Most significantly, he had worked tirelessly to help ensure that the National Council for the Blind, Malaysia (NCBM) became a reality. Because of his persuasive skills in negotiation, many came to be convinced of the need of such an organisation in which organisations serving the blind could collaborate as equal partners to bring about a better quality of life for the blind in Malaysia. Thus, international organisations like Sightsavers and CBM were willing to extend financial assistance to NCBM even beyond the usual three-year period.

The NCBM programmes which he supported included a Perkins Braille Repair Course for instructors, a Job Placement Seminar and an Eye Care Seminar.

In recognition of his services to the country, Mr. Brohier was awarded the Pingat Jasa Kebaktian (PJK) in 1973 and the Darjah Johan Negeri (DJN) in 1992 by the Governor of Penang.

For all his important contributions in the upliftment of the blind particularly in Malaysia, the NCBM presented him with the 1998 NCBM Tun Hussein Onn Award for Distinguished Services to Visually Impaired Persons.

Bill Brohier continued to represent NCBM on the Council of NCBM and during 2013 and 2014, he was actually wearing 2 hats. One on behalf of CBM and the other was of course St. Nicholas' Home.

On the records of NCBM, Bill Brohier only relinquished all responsibilities on April 20, 2014. Even then, he continued to correspond with the officers of NCBM".



Disability Equality Training

The Disability Equality Training workshop was organised by NCBM at the Sentral Sea View Hotel, Penang on March 31, 2017 (Friday). The facilitators were Mr. Wong Yoon Loong, Encik Muhammad Nadir A. Nasir, and Mdm. Christina Anne Lau.

What is Disability Equality Training (or DET)?

DET is a facilitated participation learning programme specifically designed to expose the participants to the understanding of disability concepts and to encourage pro-active actions amongst its participants. This training is organised mainly for sighted leaders and staff from the organisations serving the blind in Malaysia.

What are the benefits of DET? It helps to equip the participants with the inclusion and empowerment tools, provides them with the space for idea development, and enables them to take advantage of collaboration opportunities.

The DET workshop is, therefore, organised in order to do the following:

1. Nurture participants' understanding on disability issues through the equality and human rights paradigm;
2. Show the participants how to take pro-active action in order to bring about the inclusion of the disabled;
3. Help the participants to develop the necessary skills for disability related services.

Who should join the Disability Equality Training Workshop? The programme is aimed mainly at the sighted leaders and sighted staff in the organisations serving the blind.

Aspects touched on in the workshop include the following:

Understanding the social model of disability;

Thinking about capability and independent living;

The difference between empowerment and enablement;

Inclusion solution exercises;

Bridging the gap with tips on how to interact with the blind and vision-impaired.

According to DET, the definition of "Disability" is as follows - **"Disability" results from the interaction between persons with impairment and the attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.**

In other words, a person is not disabled because of their handicap but it is rather because of the result emanating from the interaction between the disabled person and those barriers.

Joyful Choir of the Blind

The Joyful Choir of the Blind (JCB) performed at the Music Graduating Ceremony of Lim Tou Qing at SEGi College Subang Jaya on April 18, 2017 (Tuesday).

Lim Tou Qing, the graduating student, played nine sonatas, the first of which was the Sonata for Keyboard K233 to K234 in E-minor.

Lim started his first piano lesson at age sixteen. In 2012 he obtained his Piano Grade Eight Trinity Certificate. In 2013 he decided to pursue his Diploma in Music at SEGi College with minoring in composition.

Lim obtained the ALCM London College of Music in Pianoforte in 2016. He is currently preparing for the LLCM at the end of this year.

In view of this, Lim was invited by Dr. Liu Ban Hong, trainer of JCB, to be the accompanist for the Joyful Choir of the Blind during their practices from 2014 to 2015. Lim very kindly did so as a generous service to the blind community.

In appreciation of the kind services that had been rendered by Lim, the JCB performed at Lim's graduating ceremony and they had the honour of being accompanied by Lim himself on the piano. The JCB sang "The Blue Danube" as the first of three items performed at the ceremony.

JCB is one of the interest groups of the Elderly Blind Club under the Malaysian Association for the Blind (MAB). The Choir was formed in January 2008 with more than twenty members and it has been under the guidance of Dr. Liu Ban Hong from the start. The purpose of the Choir is to provide the opportunity for the blind to cultivate and develop their talent and passion for the art of choir singing. The members of the choir come together to hone their teamwork skills as well as foster friendship. They have their weekly practices every Tuesday evening from 8 pm to 10 p.m. at the Elderly Blind Centre in Kompleks MAB, Brickfields, Kuala Lumpur.

At the beginning, most of the members faced many problems as they could not read the scores like normal sighted people. In spite of this, they managed to overcome this obstacle through patience and proper teaching. To date, they have learnt about ninety songs in Mandarin and other Chinese dialects as well as in English and even other languages such as Malay and Italian.

In 2012 JCB had their own CD album entitled "Songs of Hope". Their hard work and perseverance have demonstrated that losing one's sight need not be a major problem and that through diligent practice, blind people can still achieve many great things.

In the same year, they took part in a charity concert during which they performed with some American and Filipino musicians. In the following year, they participated in many choir exchange events. JCB has subsequently organised two concerts with success and they have travelled to various parts of the country. Wherever they went, they have been well received by many small groups of music lovers.

In 2016 they performed before a group of Australian visitors at the KL Hilton Hotel.

Launching the MAB Shoppe

The newly renovated MAB Shoppe was launched by the Malaysian Association for the Blind on March 11, 2017 in Mid Valley Mall. While the premises have been given a new face lift, the name, MAB Shoppe, has been retained in order to maintain its identity. Services provided by the shop include reflexology and therapeutic massage.

Officiating at the launching ceremony of the MAB Shoppe located at the NP2-K1 Mid Valley Megamall was the MAB President, YM Tan Sri Dato' Seri Tengku Azlan ibni Almarhum Sultan Abu Bakar. He said that the new premises for the MAB Shoppe will help to improve the business opportunities for the blind masseurs.

Mr Charles Chew, a member of the MAB Council, said that although the masseurs are blind, the more important factor to be considered is the satisfaction that can be gained by the customer, depending on their physical condition and health.

For further information, you can call Tel. 03-2284 6050.

The Shell Malaysia Treasure Hunt

The purpose of the Treasure Hunt was to provide the opportunity for the personnel of Shell Malaysia to interact with the blind, thereby raising public awareness on work and the blind. Thus, in order to bring about the opportunity for cooperative effort, the Treasure hunt was organised on March 28, 2017. 12 blind persons and 25 personnel from Shell Malaysia participated in the event.

The assignments included looking up five checkpoints, i.e. Kompleks MAB, Imbi, Bukit Bintang, NU Sentral and KL Sentral. Each of the groups had to use public transport to get to the checkpoints within three hours.

The event was concluded with a luncheon and the presentation of a donation from Shell Malaysia amounting to RM 3,500 to MAB.

Access Audit of the MRT Central Station

One of the Strategic Thrust 1 Objectives in the OKU Plan of Action 2016-2022 is to raise the level of accessibility of public amenities and the usability of public transport for disabled persons. The Plan of Action was launched by YB Dato' Sri Rohani Abdul Karim, Minister of Women, Family and Community Development, on August 9, 2017. This provided a great boost in focusing attention on matters of accessibility for the disabled.

In keeping with the Plan, the Accessibility and Advocacy Unit of MAB had thus been invited by the Ministry of Transport to work with their representatives from Prasarana and MRT in carrying out an access audit of their facilities and services at the MRT Central Station as well as on the MRT trains and the feeder buses.

The Access Audit on January 12, 2017 was carried out smoothly and the team was able to give comments and suggestions based on the Malaysian Standard MS11/84: 2014 for the consideration of the relevant authorities.

65th Anniversary Celebrations of MAB

The Malaysian Association for the Blind (MAB) celebrated 65 years of serving the blind on Saturday, May 6, 2017. MAB commemorated the event with the launching of the MAB website sponsored by the world-famous Microsoft Corporation.

The visitors and guests also witnessed the relaunching of the MAB Newsletter which will be in four issues per year and will feature the programmes and services of MAB for the benefit of the blind.

As mentioned in the newsletter, MAB was founded in 1951 by a blind man, Major D.R. Bridges and it started from very humble beginnings to become a nationally and internationally recognised organisation serving the blind in Malaysia. For many years, in fact, MAB had to be housed in very humble quarters, even in a cowshed at one stage.

A very wide range of services have been developed or initiated over the sixty-five year period of MAB's existence. They include Educational, Rehabilitation and Training Programmes, Job Placement Services, Welfare Services, Skills Training Programmes, Blindness Prevention, and so much more.

The celebrations were officiated by Dato' S. Kulasegaran, Deputy President of MAB. He took the opportunity to appreciate the OCBC Bank Malaysia Bhd., Mydin Mohamed Holdings Bhd., Dining in the Dark (Kuala Lumpur) and Tun Hussein Onn National Eye Hospital (THONEH) with the most Supportive Employer's Award.

Certificates and souvenirs were given to a number of donors which included Sime Darby Foundation, the UEM Group Bhd., Khazanah Nasional Bhd., L'occitane Malaysia Sdn Bhd., and Standard Chartered Bank Malaysia Bhd.

Indeed, there is much for rejoicing and celebration with MAB in the 65th Anniversary of its existence. As MAB prepares for further exciting developments and more great challenges ahead, there is no doubt that MAB is getting stronger at sixty-five.

New Designations and Portfolios for the KL/Selangor Branch of the Society of the Blind in Malaysia (SBM):

At the Biennial General Meeting of SBM's KL/Selangor Branch on May 7, 2017 (Sunday), the biennial elections were held. Members elected to the new committee and designations given to them were as follows:

Pn. Rosnah Haji Ahmad - Chairman of the KL/Selangor Branch;

Mr. Godfrey Ooi Goat See - Deputy Chairman; also responsible for Assets Management of the KL/Selangor Branch;

Anna Loo Soon Nyong - Secretary and Chairman of the Human Capital Development Committee;

Eee Jia Jiann - Treasurer and Chairman of the Finance and Welfare Committee;

Amar Low Kek Kong Abdullah - Chairman of the Communications, Advocacy and Human Rights Development Committee;

Jebry bin Demei - Chairman of the Culture, Arts and Social Development Committee;

Qairy Azry bin Zahrin - Chairman of the Youth and Sports Development Committee;

Muhamad Nadhir bin Abdul Nasir - Chairman of the Economic Development Committee;

Lele Suyarni bt. Omar - Chairman of the Women and Community Development Committee.

EXPERIENCING THE WORLD OF THE BLIND

*by Lee Sheng Chow
as told by Godfrey Ooi*

Editor's note: Lee Sheng Chow is truly an exemplary model of the blind in employment. For his contributions in the work for the blind, Lee has been given recognition as follows - in 2007 he received the Honorary Doctorate Degree from Help University and is, in fact, the first blind person in Malaysia to have been given this degree. In 2008 he received the Ahli Mangku Negara (AMN) from the Yang di-Pertuan Agong in recognition of all his achievements.



Here is Lee Sheng Chow to tell us of his experiences in the world of the blind:

At age 19, I was an ambitious young man looking forward to a bright and promising future. I was undergoing training as an Electrical Technician in Malayan Breweries. However, they spotted my potential and offered me a scholarship to study Electrical Engineering at the Industrial Training Institute in Kuala Lumpur.

In 1976, during my second year at the Institute, all my hopes suddenly came crashing down when I was struck by a disease known as Behcet Syndrome. The disease caused internal bleeding in my eyes and eventually led to my blindness.

Everyone in my family panicked. Even I myself could not accept the fact that I was going blind. Thus began my frantic search for a cure. First I was admitted to the University Hospital in K.L. but I failed to find a cure. So I went to the bomoh in the kampong, the Sinseh in the Chinese Temple, and the Swami in the Hindu Temple at Batu Caves in search of a cure. I was trying to seek help from the god of any religion in the country.

In 1977 I flew to England where I spent a whole year undergoing medical treatment, but no cure was in sight. So I returned to Malaysia and got myself readmitted to University Hospital but my eye condition only worsened.

I knew that there was another eye patient in the hospital but I was so moody that I did not want to have anything to do with him. Then I became aware that he, Peter Ow, was being visited by a number of blind visitors in the evenings. They seemed to be so happy that it got me wondering that they must have something that I don't have.

Well, after leaving the hospital, Peter Ow invited me to his rented room in Brickfields. There I met Chow Hock Seng, the blind massage Instructor at the Gurney Training Centre, which was the Vocational Training Centre for the blind in K.L. I was really amazed at how the blind could walk so independently. I also met Mooi Hong, a young blind woman, who later became my wife.

One day I decided that I had to walk to the bus stop by myself in order to prove that I could make it on my own in life. Nevertheless, I was filled with great fear that sighted people would see me with a white cane. I had to take two buses - first to Kota Raya and then to Salak South.

In Kota Raya I found the bridge. However, I tapped loudly with my cane to attract attention for assistance to the next bus. I told the driver to inform me when I arrived at my destination.

As I got down, panic seized me and I broke down in tears. How could I let sighted people see me using a cane? Then, as I was still some distance from my home, the inconceivable happened - I heard a familiar voice calling out to me, "Eh, how Ah Chow?" What I feared most had come to pass!

Nevertheless, I replied nervously, "I'm okay!" Then I immediately crashed into a stationary bicycle.

In 1979 I was admitted to the Gurney Training Centre (GTC) where I took up the Telephony Course and I learned how to weave baskets. I also had the opportunity to learn how to swim at the Special Teachers' Training Institute (STTI) in Cheras, K.L. In fact, I went on a head-on scramble to do anything and everything that I could.

In the evenings I would spend my time learning from a blind friend, Gopal, how to massage. During the weekends, I would follow other blind friends to sell tidbits from door to door, which they said was "going for Hello Encik". I felt a little depressed, however, as I felt that I was like a beggar. When I was caught by the Principal, Mr. Khoo, and he asked me why I was doing this, I replied that I was gaining practice in walking which helped me to grow in confidence and to be brave and courageous.

When I left the GTC in 1980, I had sleepless nights and no employment. One day the Job Placement Officer at the Malaysian Association for the Blind (MAB) asked if I would like to join Gopal working as a masseur at the Massage Centre in Bukit Bintang and I accepted without hesitation.

I was given a place to stay but I kept my clothes in a bag. I was paid on commission basis and for the first few days I had no customers at all because the men only came for the massage girls. And so I had to spend the afternoons "going for Hello Encik".

One day I discovered that another blind masseur, Chee Ming, was working in a salon. Then the idea struck me that I could open my own salon. I consulted Chow Hock Seng and he told me that when he was training in Taiwan, he used to see the blind masseurs there doing house calls.

I started looking around in Brickfields for some space and I found an empty lot for a rental of RM800, which was too expensive at the time. Then I came across another empty lot at no. 4A Jalan Thambapillai, Brickfields which was going for RM80,000 in 1983. I bought up the place with a loan from Hong Kong Bank and it became known as the Professional Blind Massage Centre.

Initially, my application for a licence was rejected by the DBKL officer. He explained that massage was a control business and was only allowed to operate in a five-star hotel. However, I persisted and with the help of the MAB Job Placement Officer, DBKL finally granted permission and I had Chow Hock Seng as the first masseur in my Centre.

I was taking a very big risk at the time as the general public had never experienced being massaged by blind masseurs. Moreover, the men preferred being entertained by the bar-girls in the Rose Bar just opposite my Massage Centre. And, of course, nobody wanted to go for my male masseurs.

And so I came up with the idea of "Men for Men" and "Women for Women". This demonstrated an understanding that I had of the Islamic culture and I was able to target the Muslim men. I started in August 1983 and DBKL, being finally convinced, approved my licence in 1984.

For the first month I had only four customers and for the next six months I had less than twenty customers. I could not make enough money even to pay for the utilities. So I printed cards and sent them to the hotels with flyers. I personally went to the hotel car parks where I clipped the flyers on to the screen wipers on the front windows of the vehicles there. Fortunately the guards were very sympathetic and turned a blind eye. The business began to pick up gradually; it doubled up in the second year and, in the third year, we were making money.

In 1985 my masseurs complained that I was paying them too low and that I did not provide for their Employees' Provident Fund (or EPF). In fact, I was paying them on a 60-40 percent basis but they wanted to take the matter to court.

I sought the advice of Peter Ranapan, an industrial court arbitrator. He advised that as it was a profit-sharing business, the EPF did not apply.

In 1986 I got a sponsorship from Dr. Paul Chan (who was then Associate Professor at Universiti Malaya) to take up a course at Help College. I also gained some knowledge about the stock market from Dr. Paul Chan. Thus, I bought up many of the rotten shares and I was very lucky to benefit from the super bull-run during which my shares went up to ten times their value. And so I was able to plough in the share profits into my massage business and to have it expanded.

In 1990 I went to China and I discovered how little I knew about massage. I found a sponsor for the Society of the Blind in Malaysia (SBM) to bring in a lecturer from China to help upgrade the Massage Training Programme in Malaysia. We signed a contract with the Federation of the Disabled of Guangdong, China.

I experienced the second trauma of my life at the birth of my daughter. Initially, what great joy we felt when we learned that my wife was pregnant. However, when we were at the Tawakal Hospital for delivery of the baby, the doctor did not turn up. We noticed that the baby's heart had stopped once and then twice before the doctor came too late. The baby was being strangled by the umbilical cord so that the lack of oxygen resulted in brain damage.

Then in 2004, as I was in search of solace and comfort, I attended a spiritual healing session at a church. I remember one of my blind friends, Dr Tan Tok Shiong, bearing testimony and it brought tears to my eyes. I just cannot explain it but I felt a sudden surge of inspiration as I experienced being touched by the Holy Spirit.

Two things stood out clearly in my mind - we cannot understand nor can we describe who or what is God but we can feel His presence. I began to accept the fact that I was childless by providence, but so be it. God will show me the way.

I found time to be involved in sports and I excelled. I took part in the ASEAN Paralympics seven times and in the Asian Games eight times from 1986 to 2010. Four times I got fourth placing in the Paralympics and I felt greatly disappointed but I did not give up. Then I was able to beat China three times as the best discus thrower. In 1988 I set the World Record at 12.68 metres.

In order to help the blind and other disabled persons have the opportunity to participate in sports activities, I set up the Disabled Athletics Association in 1999.

It is my hope that the massage profession will remain relevant to the blind for a long time to come. I am, therefore, willing to pass on my knowledge and expertise to another organisation. Thus, in 2003 I helped in establishing the Massage Association of the Blind. I am also working with Help University in establishing the Massage Programme as a course of study for students at the University.

Truly, I must say that blindness can be very disabling and it can really kill one's morale. However, if one has the spirit of survival, we can learn to stand on one's own feet and carry on living with hope and dignity. Indeed, I am most grateful for the chance that has been given to me by society to make my way in life and be successful in spite of my blindness. Indeed, I shall never forget that it is with the Grace of God that I have been able to overcome all my tribulations and to come out triumphant. Thank you all, and thank God, for all blessings and mercies that I have received.

Here is a parting thought from Gandhi:

"We cannot divide the waves in the sea. All are part of the sea."



THE TANDEM TREASURE HUNT

by Kuek Chu Lan

The Tandem Cycling Treasure Hunt or the Vision Weekend 2016 was organised by the Penang White Cane Club July 23-24, 2016 (Saturday and Sunday). I was among the twelve blind participants sent by MAB from Kuala Lumpur while four other blind persons from Penang joined with their volunteers. We were divided into two groups and my group was led by a volunteer, Mr. John Cooke from Michigan, U.S.A.

We all gathered at the Pedal Cafe near Bandar Baru Air Putih in Balik Pulau, Penang. I was paired off with John Cooke, Oi Yong with Joyce Wong, Siti Huraizah with Koh Hang Yew, Nursyahida with Billy Teoh, Norzamzuria with Yap Eng Lim, Grace Lim Siew Chong with Elaine Wong, Tong Teong Kuan with Chris Chin, and Sudiarto with Mohd. Daud.

The launching ceremony was officiated by YB Dato' Seri Dr. Hilmi bin Haji Yahaya, Deputy Minister of Health. Distinguished guests present were Mr. Suaran Singh (blind), President of the Penang White Cane Club and Dato' Mah Hassan bin Omar (blind), President of Braille Resources K.L.

We were flagged off at 10 a.m. from Pedal Cafe, which was the host venue for the Vision Weekend event. Mr. John Cheong, the owner of Pedal Cafe, was among the officials and guests to see us off.

Armed with the Tandem Treasure Hunt Score Card and with all the participants being blindfolded, we had to go from station to station to hunt and identify the treasures with the help of our remaining senses of Touch, Hearing, Taste and Smell. At Station 1, we had to identify three popular local games (within thirty seconds) from among a number of items placed in a box, which included a marble, a takraw ball, an elastic catapult, an abacus, a flute, etc. If we had all the correct items, this would mean a score for the team.

Then, in order to get to station 2, we had to ride through an orchard farm and along a riverbank. Besides the fruit trees, there were also many old trees (more than 100 years old) with water lilies growing on the surface of the water. It was like going back to the peace and joy of Kampong life. You just felt like singing a song as the beautiful breeze kissed our cheeks.

At Station 2, which was the balls and basket station at the Audi Dream Farm, we had to use our sense of hearing in aiming to throw as many balls as possible into a basket. The basket would be held by a volunteer and, following the sound made by someone, we had to aim the ball into the basket. A point would be scored for every successful ball thrown.

While waiting for our turn, however, we had the opportunity to enjoy a cup of fresh Durian Coffee. It was really genuine 'Ang Hare' (or Red Prawn) Durian Coffee!

At Station 3, our sense of hearing was once again required in following five tunes played twice by the Hunt Master on overturned containers. The containers included a Milo tin, an aluminium plate, a plastic bottle and a glass bottle. The containers were plastered with paper tape for different tonal effects. After the Hunt Master had beaten out each tune twice with a stick, our ability to reproduce the tune accurately would score a point for the team.

Then, at Station 4, we had to identify ten pre-recorded animal sounds. After hearing each sound twice, we had to write down on paper the sound that had been identified. The sounds included a tiger roar, a wolf howl, a cow mooing, a dog barking, a chicken clucking, a turkey gobling, a goat bleating, and an elephant trumpeting. A point would be scored for each sound correctly identified. Here mostly everyone got the correct answers.

At Station 5, we had to use our sense of taste to identify five kinds of fruit juice - guava, lemon, jackfruit or nangk, apple and orange. Each participant was given a small cup of juice to taste and score a point for the team.

Finally, at Station 6, we had to use our sense of smell to identify and match three kinds of herbs from among a variety used in popular local dishes. The herbs included bunga kantan (torch ginger), kunyit (turmeric), lengkuas (blue ginger), daun kesum (Vietnamese mint), Serai (lemon grass), Ginger, Jintan, and Kayu Manis (cinnamon). Three local dishes given were Nasi Lemak, Penang Laksa and Satay. One point would be scored for each correctly identified smell.

With the competition over, we all headed back to Pedal Cafe. The captain was not confident that we could ride up the hill but the blind stokers (or riders) insisted that they could. Then when we came to a small steep slope, the captain told us to get down and push the tandems. However, the blind stokers again said that they could ride and we succeeded. The captains were very happy with their blind stokers and their praises made us glow with happiness and we felt proud of our achievements.

Then came lunchtime 1 p.m. at Pedal Cafe with Nasi Beriani and Chicken Curry and some varieties of coffee - Brazillian, Paraguayan and Vietnamese coffee. This was soon followed by the closing ceremony at 2 p.m. when the participants were given a souvenir - it was a small rattan basket made by the blind. We waited with baited breath as they announced the winners of the competition - the winners were Tong Eng Guan from Kuala Lumpur and Lee Soo Sien from Sungai Patani. The prize was a book of coupons to the value of RM20 which could be used to buy items from the booths around the Pedal Cafe.

On the way back to the hotel, we stopped by at Balik Pulau for durian and rambutan. It was real genuine local durian at RM10 only per kilo or you could get the 'Ang Hare' durian for RM25 per kilo.

According to feedback received, the Tandem Treasure Hunt was a great event and the blind should have more opportunities to go through this kind of experience. However, some of the comments would deserve some attention when organising such an event in the future.

For example, it was noted that the Penang tandems were of mini-size and they had no gears. But there was a basket in front and a good cushion seat with back to lean on. In fact, it was a bike that was good for a lazy ride but not for sport. As for the K.L. tandem bicycles, they were equipped with gears and broader handle-bars. They were, in fact, mountain bikes which were much more powerful than the Penang tandems. However, the seats were quite narrow and not very comfortable on the backside.

Disappointment was also expressed that no prize was awarded for team effort. There was only a prize for the overall winner from each team.

On a more cheerful note, the blind participants were very happy with the volunteers who were very hospitable and there was good interaction among the blind and the volunteers.

The police too were very good, the traffic police always helped in stopping or controlling the traffic, thereby clearing the way for the tandem-riders. It was felt that such police assistance should also be obtained when organising tandem riding events in K.L.

On the whole, the Tandem Treasure Hunt was a great event and we would like to extend our very grateful thanks and appreciation to the Penang White Cane Club for having organised the event successfully. In spite of some weaknesses, it was a great programme and there was a lot that we could learn from the experience.

Our very special thanks to Mr. Suaran Singh, President of the Penang White Cane Club, for having made the event possible!

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS OF MR. JOHN WONG AND MDM. PHILOMENA YU

by Ivan Ho Tuck Choy

Editor's note: Ivan Ho gave his address on the occasion of Mr. John Wong's 90th and Mdm. Philomena Yu's 88th birthday celebrations on December 17, 2016. Here is what he said:

Good afternoon Mr. and Mrs. John Wong and Family Members, Rev. Father, Dato'-Dato', Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I feel great to be in Sibu once more, and to know that the generosity of the community here towards the work for the blind is still very strong. In fact, the generosity has grown stronger as was manifested at the 44th Open House cum Food and Fun Fair of the Sibu Centre for the Blind of the Sarawak Society for the Blind (SKSB).

Congratulations to Mr. Clarence Ting and his team of dedicated volunteers for having raised over RM171,000, the highest target ever achieved in the history of this annual event initiated by Mr. John Wong back in 1972 and which he faithfully took charge of as its Organising Secretary for nearly 40 years.

My wife, Jill, and I would like to thank the five children of Mr. and Mrs. John Wong for extending to us the invitation to attend this happy and memorable occasion of their parents' birthday celebrations with a combined age of 178 years. We are most fortunate and delighted to be able to accept the invitation, and to have the personal opportunity of wishing Mr. and Mrs. John Wong continued happiness and God's blessings on their journey through life.

Indeed, it is an accepted fact of life that more years are being added to our age with every passing year. However, in Mr. and Mrs. John Wong's case, I can confidently say that growing old is but a perception in our minds. An old song by Nat King Cole comes to mind which applies appropriately to this loving couple although I have slightly changed the words:

"You will never grow old while there's love in your heart. Time may have silvered your coal-black hair while you sit in your comfortable chair".

What do I mean by this? Because they have love for each other, love for their five caring and successful children and the growing number of grandchildren, love for the community (particularly for the blind among whom they have worked), and love for their religious faith.

I first met Mr. John Wong in 1983 when we were planning for the formation of the National Council for the Blind, Malaysia (NCBM). At that time, Mr. John Wong and Mr. Ying Ten Ping were the representatives of Sarawak Society for the Blind (SKSB) to the negotiation team. However, after one year of tough negotiations, the Malaysian Association for the Blind (MAB) decided to withdraw from the plan.

I recall most vividly that fateful meeting which took place at the KTS office in mid-1984 hosted by the Sibu Branch. Mr. John Wong saw to it that everything would run smoothly and he hosted a sumptuous dinner at Elizabeth Ong's restaurant.

At that meeting, the momentous decision was taken to invite Tun Hussein Onn, then President of MAB, to be the Pro-Tem Chairman, thereby hopefully preventing MAB from withdrawing. After the dinner, we got together and drafted that crucial letter on SKSB's letterhead to be brought back to KL the next day. The plan worked! Tun Hussein Onn inaugurated NCBM in October that year and he was elected Chairman and subsequently as the first President of NCBM upon receiving its registration.

Mr. John Wong was elected as the Hon. Secretary of NCBM around 1990, and he served in that capacity until 2010, without ever missing a meeting. Indeed, it was not easy in those days to travel between Sibu and Semenanjung Malaysia, especially when the meetings were held in Penang or Terengganu. On those occasions, Mr. John Wong had to be away from home for almost four days. Mrs. John Wong was very supportive of his work although she was left alone during those occasions for several years. However, realising how lonely it was for her, Mr. John Wong later took her along on those trips at their own expense.

NCBM, as most people are aware, is an umbrella organisation of five organisations working collectively for the advancement of the blind. NCBM brings together leaders in the work for the blind to discuss issues and common concerns affecting the blindness field, to explore and develop new programmes and services, and to find solutions to problems. Mr. John Wong was involved in all these important discussions which resulted in the setting up of employment services, upgrading of massage training courses, running school support programmes, promoting Braille literacy and Braille production, organising fact-finding trips to local and overseas institutions, providing sponsorships and research grants, interacting and collaborating with Government bodies on policy formulation and legislation related to disability and blindness prevention work, and so on. Some of the member-organisations have taken advantage of these opportunities in order to benefit the blind that they serve.

Indeed, I have very fond memories of Mr. John Wong, having worked with him for over 25 years. Although not a person of many words, Mr. John Wong has been truly a man of action as evident in his holding of the responsible position of organising secretary for many projects where success depended upon good planning and efficient execution.

He would staunchly support a proposal if it is explained clearly. I found this to be especially so when I was the Executive Director of NCBM. For example, I proposed to take a loan of RM800,000 from a bank in 1996 to purchase a building for NCBM. It was a great risk that I was taking and I harboured much anxiety and fear that the plan might fall through. Fortunately, Mr. John Wong as well as Datuk Dr. Tan Yaw Kwang, then President of NCBM, were in the forefront with others to give strong support for my action which was ultimately carried out with success.

Mr. John Wong is truly a sincere friend of the blind as can be seen by the many activities and projects that he had initiated and organised in Sibu - building of the Sibu Centre for the Blind, running the Cane Handicraft-making Workshop, initiating the Massage Training Unit, and introducing the Monthly Food Parcel Distribution Programme for families of the blind living in the surrounding areas.

On the state level, he had organised many Blindness Prevention and Cataract Campaigns. On the national level, working through NCBM, he had been a staunch and active partner.

In recognition of his many contributions in Sarawak, to the country and to the community, Mr. John Wong was bestowed the Pingat Pangkuan Negara (PPN) by the King and the Ahli Bintang Kenyalang (ABK) by the Government of Sarawak.

In the year 2000, in recognition of his long and outstanding services, his many contributions to the progress of NCBM, and as one of the Founders of the National body, Mr. John Wong was presented with the NCBM Tun Hussein Onn Award for Distinguished Services to the Visually Impaired.

Yes, Mr. and Mrs. John Wong had fought the good fight in life by serving the community. They have completed the race set before them and they never shirked their responsibilities. They had faithfully kept the faith, believing that everything is possible!

Happy birthday! May God continue to give you strength and courage in facing all discomforts and hardships.

Thank you.



TECHNOLOGY UPDATE: HELPING THE BLIND TO COPE WITH TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

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

Indeed, in today's fast-changing world of technology, the blind in Malaysia are facing a very real and great challenge. The problems are being compounded by the fact that they are unique to each blind individual.

The main objective, therefore, that I have in mind is to find a solution to these I.T. related problems. For example, newly blinded persons should be able to learn how to repair, to configure and to set up PC's so that they would continue to be useful tools for them in this world of technology, thereby enabling them to overcome their helpless situation in spite of their blindness.

In light of this, I feel that a very important step that can be taken is to bring together blind persons who are themselves experts in the use of technology and ICT. The idea is for them to look at the uses of different software and to find solutions to problems concerning hardware and software that are specifically related to blindness. Perhaps one way of doing this is to have a Call Centre to which appropriately trained blind persons could be sent in order to handle all these difficulties and challenges.

I understand, of course, that financing the cost would certainly pose another great challenge. Therefore, while blind people should be encouraged to take up the challenge in running this Centre, those blind individuals who require the support should also be encouraged to pay for the services rendered. Thus, I would suggest that these blind individuals be made to pay an hourly charge, let us say perhaps RM20 per hour spent.

Undoubtedly, however, the RM20 charge will not be sufficient payment for the blind technologist. Therefore, the organisation responsible could also consider providing the transport fees or even topping up another RM10 towards the payment of these instructors.

Truly, I am in favour of those blind persons who have acquired the knowledge and skills in the use of technology for the blind. This is because they are the ones who have spent a considerable amount of money on buying such equipment and gadgets and they have certainly invested so much of their time in overcoming the technological challenges and difficulties facing the blind.

Paying them and thereby allowing them to earn an income would be a great boost in helping the blind of this country. At the same time, it would enable these experts to further develop their knowledge and skills, thereby enabling them to carve an even brighter future for the blind in Malaysia.

Finally, I come to the question as to who or which organisation should take on the task of establishing the Call Centre and bringing about the pool of blind experts in technology and ICT? Well, as we are talking about blind people helping other blind people, I, therefore, feel that the Society of the Blind in Malaysia (SBM) would be in the best position to take on this great challenge.

I can cite at least three reasons to show why SBM should take on the proposed project. Firstly, SBM has established branches throughout the country, i.e. at least one branch in each of the states of Malaysia. This means that with the establishment of such Call Centres in each of the branches, SBM will be able to reach out to the blind all over the country.

Secondly, many of the blind in Malaysia are already members of SBM. Therefore, SBM should have little difficulty in recruiting clients for the Centres.

Thirdly, through the Call Centres, many more of the blind will get to know SBM and its work as a self-help organisation of the blind. Therefore, this will be a great potential opportunity for SBM to recruit new members throughout the country.

Thus, in view of the advantages to be gained, would SBM be prepared to take on the proposed project? I hope you will give very serious consideration to the matter.

THE ORBIT READER 20

by Moses Choo Siew Cheong

Executive Director,

National Council for the Blind, Malaysia

After the announcement and feedback during the March 2016 CSUN Conference regarding the release of the Orbit Reader 20™, which is a new refreshable Braille Display with an SD Card slot and stand-alone functionality, it is clear that the device warrants some additional description.

MODEL : ORBIT READER 20



In brief, the Orbit Reader 20 combines simplicity, functionality and connectivity in a unique and low-priced package, thereby making the reading of Braille more practical in many situations. In fact, the Orbit Reader 20 will be manufactured by Orbit Research and it will be sold by the American Printing House for the Blind.

Current State of Refreshable Braille Technology

Users who are blind do enjoy increasingly better and less expensive speech output accessibility in mobile devices. For Braille, however, access is nearly always achieved by employing an additional external device. The device works much like a Bluetooth keyboard, except in this case, the peripheral is a refreshable Braille Display that sometimes includes a Braille keyboard. While this scenario works, few can argue that one single unit that includes the Braille components would be a far superior setup. Here the unfortunate truth of manufacturing products for a low incidence population arises currently, no large for print manufacturer can justify the low return on investment for refreshable Braille Technology.

However, with the recognition of the importance of Braille literacy, the need for specialisation, and the advancement of electronics technology have been the motivating factors behind the production of electronic Braille Displays for several companies in the blindness business. Over the years, these electronic Braille products have evolved into three categories:

1. Braille terminals - a refreshable Braille device that connects to a host, with no additional functionality. It usually includes a Bluetooth interface and it sometimes features a Braille keyboard. The user reads the Braille from an app running on a phone, tablet or computer, which controls the host and/or types with the keyboard using the Braille terminal.

2. Note takers - they work like a Braille terminal but they include additional functionality such as the editing feature or a calendar that is used without connecting to a host. These devices always include a Braille keyboard.

3. PDA's - a note taker that uses a mobile operating system to provide all the services of a smartphone or tablet. Modern PDA's include Android and Windows applications. These devices could even be called Braille Tablets. In fact, this is the next best solution for the user desiring the ultimate experience of a single integrated unit.

Nevertheless, one of the disadvantages of Braille PDA's is the cost. While the user can obtain a well equipped iPhone® for about US\$800, or even use an Amazon Fire® tablet for US\$50, the cost of Braille PDA's is in the thousands. Thus, while it is almost painless to spend a few hundred dollars every two or three years to upgrade to the latest device, spending thousands to keep up with Braille technology hurts a lot more and it is out of range for many users.

These disproportionate prices should not reflect badly on the manufacturers - it is indeed expensive to design specialty hardware and the traditional Braille cells used to date are very expensive. Moreover, relatively low quantities for manufacturing also contributes to the problem.

No doubt, there is a market for premium Braille PDA's. For most users, the note taker does offer a middle-ground approach. It provides minimal but essential functionality in stand-alone operation and it lets the user connect to a host device for more demanding tasks such as web browsing or for streaming movies. The disadvantage, of course, is the inconvenience of having two separate devices to contend with. However, this aspect becomes an advantage when it is time to upgrade to the next generation of phones or tablets.

Advantages of the Upcoming Orbit Reader 20

Actually, the Orbit Reader 20 was designed as a Braille reading device and it falls into the note taker category. Its stand-alone capabilities include reading, writing and file management. For anything else, the user can connect to a host device that provides those services. In this usage model, the Orbit Reader 20 becomes a terminal that displays the Braille for the App running on the phone, tablet or PC. It works via Bluetooth with iOS and Android devices as well as through USB or Bluetooth for Windows, Mac and any other operating system that includes a screen reader with Braille support.

In the USB configuration, Orbit Reader 20 supports both serial and human interface device (HID) protocols. This means that if the screen reader supports it, then no driver installation is required.

When using it as a stand-alone device, Orbit Reader 20 starts as a reader displaying the content of files stored on the SD card. The interface is simple as it focuses on allowing the reader to scroll the text and select other titles. The youngest readers find it easy to get to the next line of Braille by pressing the panning button. For more advanced users, Orbit Reader 20 provides searching, bookmark and note taking capabilities.

In addition, Orbit Reader 20 also lets the user create and edit text. Indeed, the editor is simple and it works with about 15 pages at a time. If more complex formatting or the spell-check is needed, the user can utilise a Word Processing Programme such as Microsoft Word on the PC with Orbit Reader 20 serving as the Braille terminal.

Finally, Orbit Reader includes File Management capabilities as part of its stand-alone functionality. The user can rename, relate, copy and create files and folders as needed.

Revolutionary Refreshable Braille Display

Along with the simple software features, Orbit Reader 20 also boasts of some noteworthy hardware. The most distinctive feature is the Braille technology. Some compare it to the Braille used on signage. The dots do not fade when the user presses them. Once the dot is raised, it stays raised no matter how hard the user examines it. This unique factor could have positive implications for beginning Braille readers and for those who suffer from some degree of neuropathy.

Development of the Orbit Reader 20

The Orbit Reader was made possible by the Transforming Braille Group, LLC. Their goals for this device included increasing literacy and reducing the cost of refreshable Braille technology.

In 2011 Kevin Carey, the Chairman of the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) announced that RNIB will find a technology that can disrupt the Braille Display market by radically reducing the cost of refreshable Braille. He convinced ten (10) World Wide Blindness Organisations to form the Transforming Braille Group (TBG).

After a thorough examination of over 60 possible projects, TBG agreed to fund Orbit Research with US\$1.25 million to develop the reader for about US\$300 each, with the commitment of 50,000 units over a five-year period. In March 2016, TBG and Orbit Research announced the successful completion of the project and revealed the prototypes at the CSUN Conference.

While no organisation has yet published an end user price for the Orbit Reader 20, it is fair to expect a price of around US\$500 for North America. TBG members can get the device for US\$320.

Another factor that could affect the end-user price is The use of a software utility that allows an organisation to translate the user interface into any language, thereby allowing the delivery of a product directly to the customers.

While the device is engineered for varying climates, eventually the battery, for example, will need replacement. Therefore, some organisations may wish to consider providing such services such as battery sales and installation.

Some of the most important considerations for successful integration of such a breakthrough technology are marketing, support and education. The TBG members must be responsible for providing information to the consumers, educational institutions and Government entities about the cost and literacy advantages. They must also build customer support channels as well as create and distribute tutorials, localised versions of the user interface and documentation.

The Orbit Reader uses common off-the-shelf parts and most of these parts are used in millions of other consumer devices. Therefore, the individual prices are expected to continue falling.

The end result of a low cost refreshable Braille display is not magic. The TBG members made a commitment not only to identify and finance the new Braille technology but they also committed themselves to quantities. Thus, they had to accept compromises to achieve this remarkable cost breakthrough.

Some Compromises made:

1. Elimination of routing buttons

The first difference from full-featured devices is the lack of cursor routing buttons. These buttons, which are associated with individual cells, make the interface easier for modern operating systems. The cursor routing buttons were eliminated due to limited usefulness when used as a reader and in order to save on cost.

2. Slower Refresh Rate

The unit refreshes differently from previously existing technology. The refresh rate is slower and the user can just hear the slight tap as each pin rises from left to right. However, it happens quickly, usually in about half a second for the whole line and the left side is ready almost immediately. The refresh rate could be faster with additional cost, but initial indications show that many users are satisfied with the alternative technique.

3. Size and Appearance

It is not the smallest or sleekest refreshable Braille device available. It is approximately 6 inches (width), 4 inches(depth), and just over 1 inch (height) In fact, it appears more utilitarian than elegant.

Regardless, it looks good, it is built ruggedly, and it functions well.

It does not come with a carrying case but it does contain rings where a strap may be attached. However, Orbit Research will offer a case for purchase.

The Purpose of Orbit Reader 20

The device is not intended to compete with high end PDA's. Its purpose is to get Braille into the hands of more users. Hence, parents can now afford a Braille reader to accompany the family tablet, libraries can reduce costs for those users that desire electronic distribution, and Governments can provide inexpensive and easy to maintain devices on which to read.

For teachers of the blind and visually impaired (BVI's), it means that the schools can provide a Braille display for every student that requires one. It can also be made available to the student for home use during the evenings and weekends.

At school, students can use it to read textbooks, write homework assignments, take notes and interact with the school computer. At home, they can read books and magazines, carry out homework assignments, interact with the iPad, and connect it to the home computer.

In short, the Orbit Reader 20 provides a simple, well-built and inexpensive method to offer the prospect of literacy to more people who are blind and visually impaired by dramatically reducing the cost of refreshable Braille technology.

It is not the sleekest, smallest, most elegant or most feature laden device available. It is, nonetheless, an incredible value for simple value for simple and reliable electronic Braille tasks.

The Transforming Braille Group is optimistic that this combination will ease the literacy crisis among blind citizens the world over.



A POINT TO PONDER: MY DAUGHTER'S DREAM

by Wong Kow

Because of their career and responsibilities, my two sons have to travel abroad frequently. Consequently, my wife too often has to stay in Taiwan in order to take care of our very young grandchildren there.

Whenever my daughter, Constance, and I are left alone at home in Malaysia, she would be reminded again and again to take good care of me. My wife is especially worried about me, which may be out of her genuine nature of love and care or perhaps she may not be feeling too comfortable with the thought of leaving me alone at home while she goes abroad. Usually, my wife will list down the items from A to Z for the attention of Constance to be in charge of my safety, security and activities.

However, as my daughter, Constance, has a rather busy work schedule in the office, she often has to come home late. At times she has to continue working after dinner until midnight in order to meet deadlines. I can sense the stress that she is undergoing from the pressure of lots of worries for me and the heavy workload in the office. She is concerned about me not being safe alone at home, not being able to prepare my own meals, falling down the stairs while climbing up, and so on.

One day, Constance told me that she had a dream in which she brought me to the office and left me sitting in a corner, thereby placing me within her supervision while she carried on with her work. I could truly sympathise with her as she described the happenings in her dream so vividly and with such clarity. It sounded as if the situation would really occur in the future. In appreciation of her loving care and concern, I sought to reassure her and all my loved ones that I was aware of my own safety and that I was capable of managing my own life while they were away.

The story that I have just related brings me down memory lane to the time when I was taking care of my children about 25 years ago. In fact, I had brought my daughter to my office when she was still in primary school. It was the school year end holiday season and my wife was busy at work while

my two sons were outstation taking part in their school cadet police activities. I thought it would not be safe to leave my young daughter alone at home. Ironical, isn't it? - life seems to be moving in a circle - almost 25 years later, my daughter is unconsciously treating me in the same way as I had treated her in the past, except that for the moment it is just in a dream!

Indeed, I believe that my daughter's dream can serve as a wake-up call to me and for many others. Life in this world is a journey which we are going through. In the early years, we will travel together with our parents and perhaps with our brothers and sisters. As time goes by, however, we will have to break up and continue on our own into the long journey ahead of us. Under whatever circumstances, we are ultimately left with the responsibility of managing our own lives. The love and care of family and the concern of relatives, friends and neighbours are the extra blessings that have been bestowed upon us.

Truly, I consider myself to have been very fortunate as I have had my loved ones around me. Nevertheless, I must constantly remind myself not to take things for granted. In order not to become a burden to family members, I must take good care of myself. Moreover, love and care should be mutual and I must, therefore, always be generous in reciprocating my love and care for others whenever possible.

I am deeply touched by my daughter's dream in which she would take the trouble so far as to bring me to her office in order to take care of me. Nonetheless, I am praying hard that there could be a better alternative so that life would be easier for both of us.

Phew! Everybody seems to be moving too fast nowadays! Life is becoming way complicated in our modern society. We are challenged by our relations with one another and with our human surroundings, we have to deal with the pressures of life and work, and we have to cope with whatever problems and hardships that may be thrown up by mother nature.

Finally, if you are in pursuit of those dreams which can lead to the attainment of happiness, a positive outlook and a fulfilling life, I take this opportunity to wish you all the best in having your dreams realised.

SOME QUOTATIONS



Tunku Abdul Rahman, First Prime Minister of Malaysia:

If you think you are rich, there are many who are richer than you. If you think you are clever, there are many more people cleverer than you. But if you think you are honest, then you are among the few; and in this instance, it is best to be among the few.

Datuk Seri Wong Chun Wai on Moderation:

In the Star Newspaper, Datuk Seri Wong Chun Wai explained:

"Moderation is to see with clarity, to hear with an open mind, and to speak with kind words".

Dalai Lama:

When you talk, you are only repeating what you already know. But if you listen, you may learn something new.

B.B. King:

The beautiful thing about learning is nobody can take it away from you.

George Washington Carver, Renowned African American Agricultural Scientist, Educator and Inventor:

Education is the key to unlocking the golden door of freedom.

Unknown:

A strong person is not the one who doesn't cry. A strong person is the one who is quiet and sheds tears for a moment, and then picks up the sword and fights again.

Unknown Author:

If you want to touch the past, touch a rock. If you want to touch the present, touch a flower. If you want to touch the future, touch a life.

Principal Office-Bearers and Council Members of NCBM for 2017-2018

Mdm Jasmine Khoo, President, NCBM

Dato' Dr. Hsiung Kwo Yeun, Vice-President, NCBM/President, Sarawak Society for the Blind

Mr. Ng Kich Sheng@Jimmy, Secretary, NCBM/Secretary, Sabah Society for the Blind

Dato' S. Kulasegaran A/L Sabaratnam, Treasurer, NCBM/Council Member of Malaysian Association for the Blind

Datuk Rosalind Chew Bee Koh, President, Sabah Society for the Blind

Bishop Charles Samuel, Chairman, St. Nicholas' Home, Penang

Dato' Dr. Sharom Ahmat, St. Nicholas' Home, Penang

Dr. Ahmad Shamsuri bin Muhamad, Society of the Blind in Malaysia

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

Ms Annie Soon Nyin Yin, Sarawak Society for the Blind



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President, NCBM

Dato' Dr Hsiung Kwo Yeun,
Vice-President, NCBM / President, Sarawak Society for the Blind

Mr Ng Kich Sheng @ Jimmy
Secretary, NCBM / Secretary, Sabah Society for the Blind

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

Dato' S. Kulasegaran
Deputy President, Malaysian Association for the Blind

Datuk Rosalind Chew Bee Koh
President, Sabah Society for the Blind

Bishop Charles Samuel
Chairman, St. Nicholas' Home, Penang

Dato' Dr Sharom Ahmat
St. Nicholas' Home, Penang

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

Mr Ahmad Shamsuri Bin Muhamad
Society of the Blind in Malaysia



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

Committee on Public Awareness (CPA)
Datuk Rosalind Chew Bee Koh



AUDITOR 2016- 2018

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REPRESENTATIVES OF NCBM TO OTHER ORGANISATIONS, 2016- 2018

World Blind Union/ World Blind Union Asia Pacific -
(WBU/WBUAP)
Dato' Dr. Hsiung Kwo Yeun and Mr Moses Choo Siew Cheong



EARN SOME EXTRA CASH

Readers are invited to write for our publication, NCBM Outreach. For articles published, Payment are as follows:

1. Original articles on the achievements of blind people or of an inspirational nature (about 500 words) - RM80
2. Articles containing ideas and suggestions for the improvement of NCBM or its Member-Organisations (about 500 words) - RM80
3. Articles on funny or unusual experiences (250/500 words) - RM40/RM80
4. Poems which are personal compositions depicting experiences of a blind person (about 50/100 words) - RM40/RM80
5. Articles of an informative nature written in your own words (about 500 words) - RM80.

Note: Articles submitted by officials of NCBM or its Member-Organisations will not qualify for payment unless the submissions have nothing to do with their daily office duties.

Also, full payment will be made if the article requires little or no editing.



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