



Editor's Desk

Dear friends,

A hectic and thought provoking month with World Disability Day celebrations seeing people with disabilities rally for Reclaiming constitutional rights. The interesting discussions on various issues and amendments needed , human chain to make the point created noticeable ripples in the city of Chennai. Across the country many unique events were planned to get the focus on disability and issues around it.

"There is no greater disability in the society than the inability to see the person as more" -Robert M Hensel

Happy Reading!!

Regards,

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From The Heart

Meet an inspiring couple, Samuel Mani and Meenu Arora , who are on a mission to make people with disability become visible citizens of India. .

Yes! We Can , their dream project, leaves no stones unturned to realize this.

Tell me about yourself ,your work and your relationship

I am Samuel Mani and I am 42 years old I have been running my own computer hardware and software company for the past 20 years. After my marriage in 2010 to my lovely wife Meenu Arora, we thought of starting an NGO keeping in mind our experiences and the fact that many of our friends were still not able to come out in the society and stuck in their homes.

This was the main thought which motivated us to start our NGO-YES WE CAN. My wife Meenu is the founder and I am the promoter. We had a love marriage, so we treat ourselves more as friends than husband and wife-we help each other regardless of whose work is it.

I am a person with cerebral palsy and my wife also is a person with cerebral palsy and we both use wheel chairs. We have seen the society change a lot .From when we started our schooling nobody even recognized what is disability all about. Now it is better but still the mind set has not changed.



Over the years from our own school days to now, we have felt a need that more people with disabilities should come out in the society and be a part of it because only when you are seen only then can changes take place in the society .Our NGO has been working for the last six years ,started in end 2012 and registered in 2013.

Through my NGO we have started bringing people out of their homes who are left alone due to multiple disabilities and their parents or siblings do not find the energy and time to bring them out and enjoy the simple festivals like Holi, Diwali, Christmas etc,

We started bringing them out for enjoying the festivals. After the first year we found the need to empower them and we also felt that there are other needs which will bring a difference in their lives so started various initiatives towards independent living which is by itself a large term

We are trying to empower our members through various events and projects to enable them by giving them proper aids like motorized wheelchairs so they can become independent

we have trained the members who have been given these aids to commute independently by metro which is accessible for people with disabilities

Many of our members are using the metro and can now travel to anywhere without needing any assistance from family members which has to a large extent empowered them.

We have also tried to finding jobs which suit people with multiple disabilities whether they are living in inaccessible place or living in buildings which are more accessible

what are your action plans for the coming year

In the coming years we plan to increase more such events and more trainings for developing skills like content writing, graphic designing or even like paintings etc which are not only forms of earning money but also a form of releasing their emotions.

What is your take on inclusive education

Inclusive education has started but not gained moment as we found many schools which call themselves inclusive schools but have made section were children with disabilities are made to study

For me inclusive school should be a class with students of different abilities -children whom we call normal and other whom we call children with disabilities study together and one teacher to teach them all.

There are schools like St Mary's school, where I studied, is very inclusive and staff are well trained to accommodate the needs of children with disabilities.

Your opinion on employment opportunities

As far as Employment opportunities are concerned they are less and we are trying to innovate with employment ideas or self employment opportunities

Tech Solutions at your finger tips

Take a look at these free to download tech solutions

Text-to-Speech Reader

1.[http://www.tucows.com/preview/322007/Natural-Voice-](http://www.tucows.com/preview/322007/Natural-Voice-Text-To-Speech-Reader)

Text-To-Speech-Reader This is a text-to-speech program with Microsoft Voices. You can have your computer read any part of the news, weather forecast, charting messages and e-mails.

The application can also read Word documents, rich text files and PDF files.

The speaking speed and voice quality can be changed according to your needs. You can also save the voice as a WAV file, so that you can listen later or burn it onto a CD. You can also record your sound to compare Natural Voice and your voice. It includes Microsoft voices.

2. NVDA Installer <http://www.nvaccess.org/>

The Non-Visual Desktop Access (NVDA) is a free, open-source Windows-based screen reader designed to bring computer access to blind and visually impaired users. NVDA's built-in speech synthesizer enables users to interact with all Windows operating system components. The main applications NVDA supports include Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, Outlook Express, and Microsoft Calculator, Word, and Excel. A portable version of NVDA is also available.

3. Balabolka is a Text-To-Speech (TTS) program. All computer voices installed on your system are available to **Balabolka**. The on-screen text can be saved as a WAV, MP3, MP4, OGG or WMA file. The program can read the clipboard content, view text from documents, customize font and background colour, control reading from the system tray or by the global hotkeys.

<http://www.cross-plus-a.com/balabolka.html>

4. Natural Reader is a free text to speech tool that can be used in a couple of ways. The first option is to load documents into its library and have them read aloud from there. This is a neat way to manage multiple files, and the number of supported file types is impressive, including ebook formats.

<https://www.naturalreaders.com/>

Magnifier

1.The **Pointing Magnifier** is a mouse-activated magnifying glass that enlarges a circular area on the computer monitor. The user first moves a virtual lens with the mouse over the area they wish to enlarge. They then put the cursor within the circle and click any mouse button. Everything inside the circle is magnified; the cursor is pinned in place. Any mouse action a user then takes within the magnified circle returns the Pointing Magnifier to its original size.

<https://downloads.tomsguide.com/Pointing-Magnifier,0301-36837.html>

2.Screen Magnification Software

Use Microsoft Windows built in Magnifier to see everything on the screen magnified.

<https://support.microsoft.com/en-in/help/11542/windows-use-magnifier>

Free Download E- books

1.Google Books

<https://www.epubor.com/how-to-download-google-books-as-pdf.html>

2. Librivox

<https://librivox.org/search>

The Best Dictation Software to Help You Work Faster

1.Speechnotes.

<https://speechnotes.co/>

2 e-Speaking.

<https://e-speaking.com/>

3. Voice Dictation

<https://dictation.io/>

NUOS IS A NEW SYSTEM THAT LETS PARALYZED PEOPLE WITHOUT VOICE COMMUNICATE

Originally featured in -Access and Inclusion News -
<http://assistivetechologyblog.com/2018/11/nuos-is-a-new-system-that-lets-paralyzed-people-without-voice-communicate.html>

Sixteen years ago, Henry Evans was driving his kids to school when he suddenly fell sick – He started slurring his words and had trouble seeing. In a matter of hours, he went into a coma. When he came out of his coma, he couldn't move or speak.

Several years later, Evans is using a new system that lets him interact with his family using his brain and eye signals. Evans wears a headband that along with a sensor on the bridge of his nose, can track signals from his brain and eyes, and help him navigate and control a tablet without physically touching it or speaking to it.

Evans can use pre-written messages like “I need water” or “I’m in pain” – very similar to how other AAC apps work. However, with this system, he can also invoke “Alexa” commands as well among other things, all from one interface.

This system, called Nuos, is designed for people who are paralyzed and unable to talk. Francois Gand, CEO & co-founder of Nuro , the company that built Nuos, explains that Nuos helps people start interacting again with the world – family members, doctors, nurses, caregivers etc. What’s really interesting is that by monitoring signals from the brain and eyes, and recognizing patterns in the data, the system gives the patient the ability to control the user interface. The system also uses artificial intelligence to predict the interface a patient should use. For example, someone who just had a stroke would start with a simple interface that gradually becomes more advanced as the patient gets comfortable with the system.

Besides using pre-written messages, invoking Alexa skills and typing messages using brain and eye signals, Nuos also allows the patient to browse the internet, connect to external robots, and support many other uses. Evans considers Nuos a breakthrough especially for people who cannot move their head.

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