



Ramakrishna Mission, Batticaloa

*All power is within you. You can do anything and everything
- Swami Vivekananda*

INCLUSIVE RESOURCE AND TRAINING CENTRE

B R A I L L E

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, BATTICALOA

A Short Report of Its Facilities, Projects and Requirements

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Inspiration

Inspired by Swami Vivekananda's message to serve the poor and needy and bring out the infinite possibilities hidden in them, Ramakrishna Mission, Batticaloa, embarked on an initiative to provide special education to children with special abilities.

The initiative involves providing resource and training facilities for children with special abilities. As part of this initiative, the Mission inaugurated an Inclusive Resource and Training Centre for visually challenged persons (IRTC). On 6 March 2023, Swami Satyeshananda (Assistant General Secretary, Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math), in the presence of Swamis Aksharatmananda (Head of Ramakrishna Mission in Sri Lanka), Nilamadhavananda (General Manager, Ramakrishna Mission, Batticaloa), and Surarchitananda (Assistant General Manager, Ramakrishna Mission, Batticaloa), devotees, friends and well-wishers, inaugurated this training facility. The facility aims to provide world-class training and resources for visually challenged persons. Sri Shankar Subbhiah, consultant for assistive and accessibility technologies, provided ample support for setting up this facility and its projects.



(Inauguration Ceremony)

Srimat Swami Gautamanandaji's Visit to IRTC

On 19 May 2023, Srimat Swami Gautamanandaji Maharaj, Vice President of Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission and Adhyaksha of Ramakrishna Math, Chennai, visited inspected the facilities of IRTC.



Computer Education and Training Facility for Visually Challenged Persons

Computer education for visually challenged persons requires special trainers. These trainers learn specific tools, shortcuts and software necessary to deal with this challenge. On request from IRTC, Batticaloa, Karna Vidya Foundation, Chennai, trained four trainers (Ms. Kemayamini Yoganathan, Mrs. Pranavan Priya, Ms. Sivarajah Sivanitha and Mr. Ganadshathan Sathananthamoorthy) in Computer and MS Office Operations from 6 April 2023 to 8 June 2023.



(Trainees at our facility)

Special Education in Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda Research Educational and Research Institute, India (RKMVERI)

Trainers for visually challenged persons need special education. RKMVERI, Coimbatore Campus, provides degree programs in special education. We have enrolled Mr. Suventhiraraja Sanseelan and Mr. Nanthakumar Sasikumar in Bachelor of Science in Physical Education, Health Education and Sports (B.Sc. PHS). This three-year degree program includes adapted sports for visual impairment, assistive technology in adapted sports and other value added courses. Also, we have enrolled Mr. Ganadshathan Sathananthamoorthy in FDMSE for a six-month training program in visual impairment.



(Mr. Ganadshathan Sathananthamoorthy, our resource person, training visually challenged persons in FDMSE, Coimbatore)

Braille Publication Unit

This is an upcoming project and requires financial support.

Our centre plans to set up a braille publication unit that provides world-class resources to visually challenged persons. The publication unit needs the following equipment:

a) Braille Embosser:

This embosser supports braille printing. It is essential for printing braille books, booklets, calendars, documents and others.

Cost of Everest-D V5 Braille Embosser: USD 4395/-

b) Brailon Duplicator:

The brailon duplicator creates braille and tactile graphics. The tactile graphics are essential teaching aids for visually challenged persons.

Cost of EZ-Form Brailor Duplicator: USD 3900/-

c) Braille Typewriter:

It is a manual braille typewriter. It is used to create short documents, forms, invitations and others.

Cost of a braille typewriter: INR 45,000/-

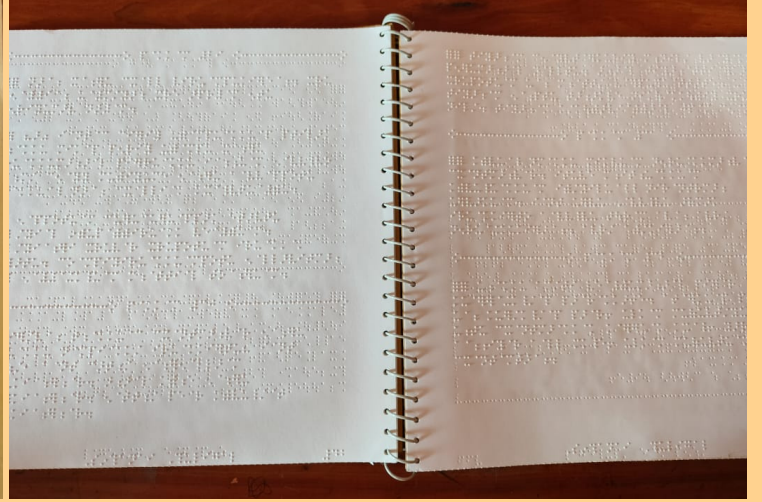
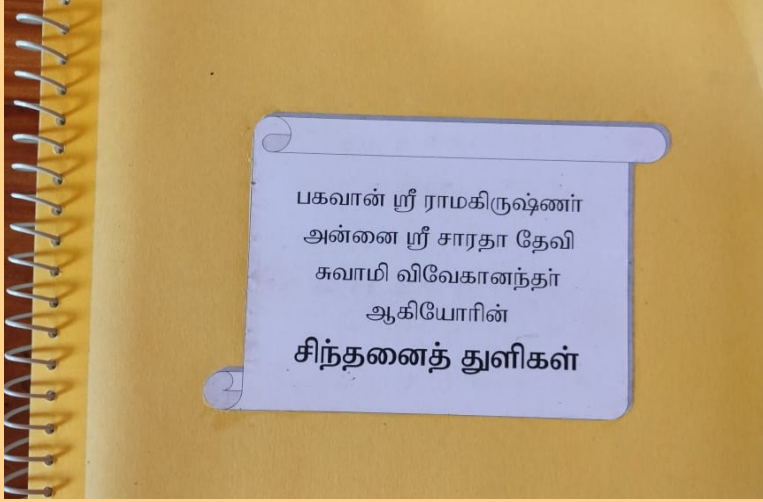
d) Papers:

Special braille papers and brailon papers.



Braille Library

This is an upcoming project. The library will be a repository of braille books that will serve visually challenged persons. The repository will include books in spiritual, fiction, non-fiction, general and other categories.

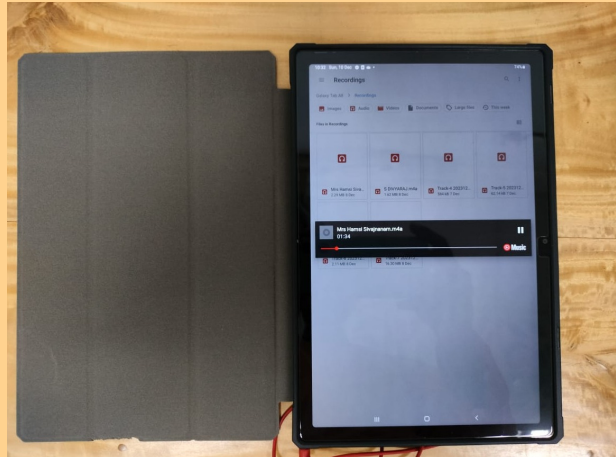


Conversion of School Textbooks into Audiobooks

This is an upcoming project. Audiobooks are an essential component of special education. The visually challenged students enrolled in schools need school textbooks, past papers and other content in audiobooks. As TTS (Text-To-Speech) is inadequate to read tables, data, equations and complex variables in school textbooks, audiobooks become essential. We have begun this conversion project for all grades. We are in the process of hiring and testing professional readers for this work.

Estimated cost for an audiobook: LKR 15,000/-

Estimated cost for 100 audiobooks: LKR 15 Lakhs/-



Universal Braille Kit for Visually Challenged Persons

Our centre plans to procure universal braille kits. The kit contains tools to learn languages, mathematics, numbers, writing tools, and a white cane. The kit is deemed essential for visually challenged children.

Estimated cost of a kit: INR 2500/-

Estimated cost of 50 kits: INR: INR 1,25,000/-



Braille Readers and Other Devices

Braille readers are devices for reading braille texts. The functionality is similar to that of a Kindle device. Other devices include mobility-related aids and low-vision lenses and devices. The centre, at present, needs a few braille readers for training programs. The estimated cost of the device is around USD 500.



Staff

We have hired two employees to manage IRTC and its activities. They function under the guidance of the General Manager and Assistant General Manager of Ramakrishna Mission, Batticaloa.

1. Mr. Yogadas, B.A., (Special) Translation, Jaffna University, Trainer
2. Mr. Sathananthamoorthy Ganadshathan, Trainer

Mr. Yogadas is a visually challenged person with special abilities.

Salary for two employees per month: LKR 60,000/-

Salary for two employees per year: LKR 7,20,000/-



(Mr. Sathananthamoorthy
Ganadshathan)



(Mr. Yogadas)

Other Projects

- Apart from the above, IRTC has plans to provide psychological counselling sessions and holding competitions for visually challenged students.
- Innovation in education for visually challenged persons.
- Special language training facility and others.
- Job-oriented training for visually challenged persons.

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