

Digital library for visually impaired launched

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Here is a reason to cheer for the visually challenged students as a new initiative to ensure an equitable digital space to upgrade their technical skills and advanced learning though has been announced in the capital.

"Your Voice, Their World" - a project to create India's largest accessible digital library for the visually impaired, launched today, is a collaborative effort of Omron Group in India, part of Omron Japan, a company with a global presence in automation technology and the National Association for the Blind (NAB), Delhi.

The project aspires to extend support to strengthen "accessible content",

infrastructure and tailor-made technology in an attempt to empower such students by enabling them to fulfil their dreams of basic and advanced education.

It would cater to nearly 2,000 members of NAB Delhi library and around 10,000 through institutional members all over India (school and college students, job seekers, employed), apart from 250 students of NAB.

According to the architects of the programme, this would bridge the digital divide by encouraging visually impaired to pursue science and math education and professional courses that otherwise are not that preferred due to lack of accessibility.

The project in line with the regular curriculum

(encompassing CBSE, ICSE and other state boards of education) will take up special initiatives to create books on science subjects and competitive exams - one more step towards opening new avenues for visually impaired.

Joint secretary of NAB Prashant Ranjan Verma said: "NAB is the first organisation to start production of Digital Talking Books in India and South Asia in 2003. We have been making few DAISY books with our limited infrastructure. Now, with support from Omron, we shall be able to take this pioneering initiative to the next level by producing more books and to fulfil education needs of a large number of visually impaired students."