Corona Pandemic Onslaught

The year 2020 has been annus horribilis for the world. Educational institutions, vocational training centers, industries, services and business faced the grinding halt. The activity of rendering computer skills to disable youths of AT&T Technology Park of the PNR Society, Bhavnagar(PNRs) also suffered a halt for a while.

Blessing in Disguise

There was apprehension of danger of keeping such a noble activity of empowering disable youths for a long time. Appreciating this fact the USA based Shri Prafulbhai Shah, one of the founders of AT&T Technology Park and well-wishers of the PNRS suggested 'Online Training' during the misfortune. The suggestion was precious and worth-implementing but it was not very easy.

Online Computer Training

Transforming Calamity into Opportunity by A.T. & T. Technology Park Institute

SPECIAL ISSUE ON A.T. & T. Technology Park

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Suggestion – Blessing in Disguise

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Beginning of Pilot Project

At the end of in-depth deliberations on how to start pilot project, selection of area and its beneficiaries, how much expenses and how much success could be achieved, etc, in the Board of Trustees the project began its journey with the valued cooperation of USA-based donors and Bhavnagar-based donors. The trainees were provided laptop, dongle for internet, scanner, mouse, CDs and books after purchasing them for use at home to till completion of the training.

Solution of problems

Trainees at large were less educated, weak in English and being mostly based in rural area had hardly knowledge of computer. Thus to impart them computer training online was a difficult task. So for these trainees a one-day **offline training** was organised. In this training they were explained how to connect internet, how to join with faculty and how to communicate besides English words used for computer operation.

The First Beneficiaries of Online Training

Eight trainees were selected at the start of **Online Training**. In this batch the first trainee has been **Makwana Mamta Dipakbhai** who is physically handicapped and mother of two. The economic condition was poor. She stays in Vidyanagar area of Bhavnagar. When she knew that she would be given free computer training while staying at her rented home and would be given Laptop and other gadgets, her pleasure knew no bounds. Thus she could see a ray of hope for a job. Mamta completed the training successfully.

Expansion of Online Education

The functioning of pilot project attracted other disable youths to gain **Online Training** in computer. The number of beneficiaries thus increased, Again with the help of Shri Prafulbhai Shah and the USA based donors and local donors the additional requirement of gadgets like laptop, dongle, etc. were purchased in September 2020. These were distributed among new trainees at the hands of donors and Trustees.

Beneficiaries of Online Training

The disabled has to face difficulties in the daily life. For schooling the problem of to and fro for physically handicapped, for the deaf in communication and for partially blind for movement from one place to other. If family condition is poor, they face problem for study, vocational training and for starting a business without any guidance let alone to get a job. This results in losing self confidence. It is at this time they got an opportunity for taking free online computer training in AT&T Technology Park. After success of pilot project there are 130 enrollments. Thus this project has proved blessing to them specially in critical time of Corona Pandemic.
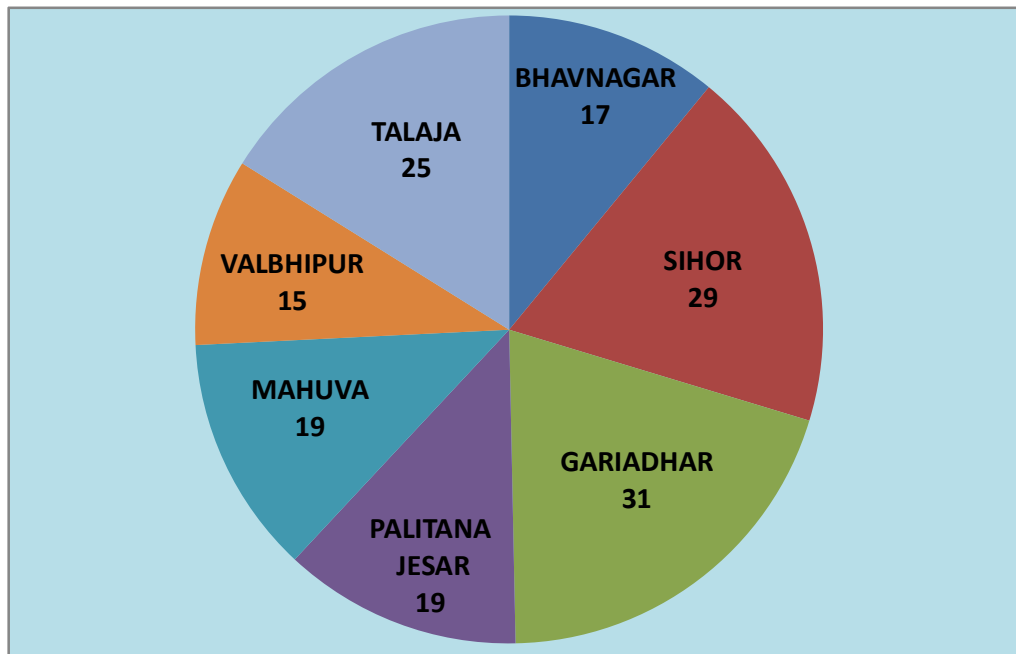
Awareness Camps
The following awareness camps were organised to alert disable youths for free opportunity

Sr. No.	Date	Taluka	No. of Beneficiary	No. of Beneficiary Selected for Training
1	03/07/2020	Sihor	150	45
2	31/01/2021	Gariyadhar	180	90
3	10/04/2021	Palitana – Jesar	200	67
4	10/07/2021	Mahuva	225	82
5	11/09/2021	Vallbhipur	135	58
6	27/11/2021	Talaja	250	20

Online Computer Training

Month	Taluka	Trainees	Male Youth	Female Youth
July – 2020	Bhavnagar	08	05	03
September – 2020	Bhavnagar	09	05	04
December - 2020	Sihor	20	04	16
February – 2021	Gariyadhar	20	13	07
May – 2021	Palitana – Jesar	19	16	03
July – 2021	Sihor	09	05	04
July – 2021	Mahuva	19	09	10
August – 2021	Gariyadhar	11	09	02
September – 2021	Vallbhipur	15	08	07
December - 2021	Talaja	25	17	08
Total		**155**	**91**	**64**

How seemingly impossible project of rendering computer training to the disable youths became possible and started?

With an aim of empowering disable youths AT&T Technology Park has been functional under the aegis of the PNRS. Its establishment in 2001 was with the financial support of **AT&T** Company of USA and USA based Shri Jayantbhai Shroff of **Share & Care Foundation**. It is a brainchild of Shri Prafulbhai Shah of Bhavnagar now in USA. When Prafulbhai Shah suggested for the first time, it seemed impossible. At that time even for normal people it was difficult to learn computer skills. But Shri Prafulbhai remained firm. With the technical guidance of Shri Jayantbhai Rajyaguru the project was commissioned.

Many Challenges were faced

As soon as the AT&T Technology Park started free computer training for the disable youths in the campus of K.L. Institute for the Deaf the disabled youths of all hues dashed to the Park and expressed desire to join, In fact, disabled of rural areas were more. Their free lodging and boarding facility was made in the campus of the K.K. School & Home for the Blind and they were provided tricycles, wooden stands, caliper to facilitate their to and fro to Park and elsewhere. To provide two meals to each was initially a challenge but the generous citizens of Bhavnagar city agreed to provide Tiffins against our appeal.

Basic to High-Level Computer Courses

Three computer labs were raised in this Park. They were equipped with 15 computers, scanner, photocopying machine, lamination machine and free Wi-Fi facility. Initially primary courses like computer fundamentals and data-entry like courses were started. As the disabled got completely aware about computer working they were imparted DTP, Photoshop, Hardware Networking, Accounting, AutoCAD, Mobile repairing courses.

Encouragement with Computer Training

Those who joined Computer Training in the Park if they were pursuing study, they were given scholarship and those have completed the courses were provided guidance for seeking job as also starting their own business besides helping them to operate new gadgets in the digital world. This is not all. Even the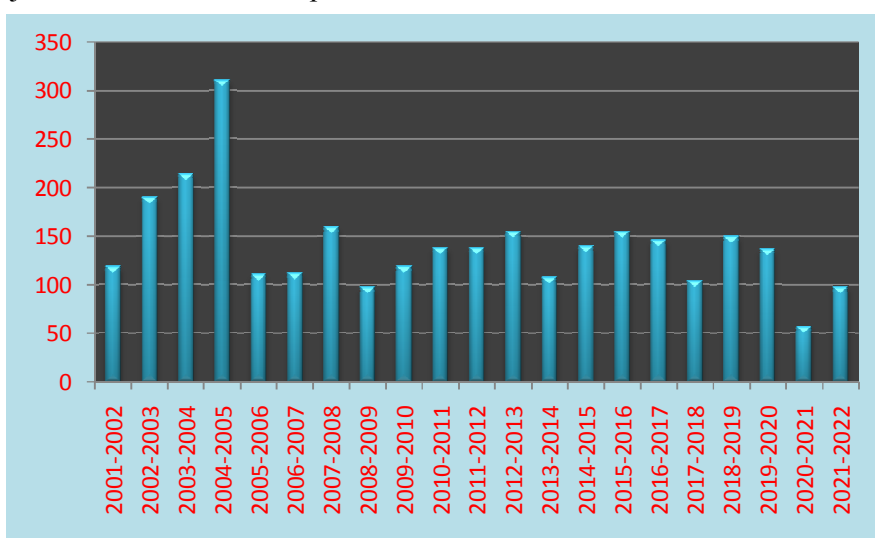y are assisted in taking tests of government openings and how to face interviews. Based on the prospect of business intended by the trainee the Park administration renders them financial assistance. On completion of training awards and cash prizes are also given to the trainees.

A Thought of 21 Years back Made History!

Soft corner- inspired feelings for the cause of disable the USA-based Prafulbhai Shah made seemingly impossible mission of imparting computer skills to the disable youths a reality and history was made. A total number enrollment of disable youths in the AT&T Technology Park of PNRS has been 2862 from 2001 to 2020-21. During 2021-22 alone the enrollment has been 98 for different courses making total 2960. At present many of them are self-reliant and joined mainstream as respectable individuals.
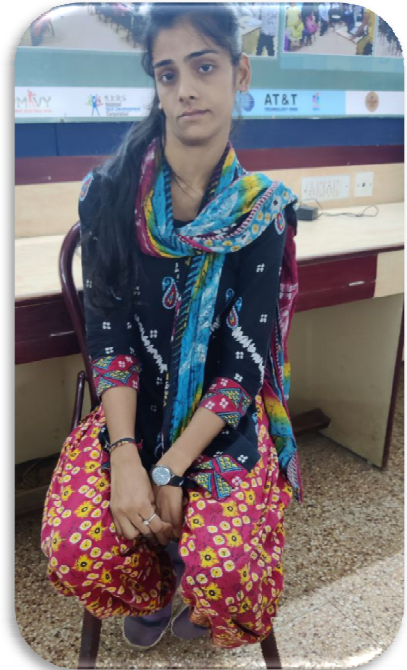

Year	Enrollment
2001-2002	119
2002-2003	190
2003-2004	214
2004-2005	311
2005-2006	111
2006-2007	112
2007-2008	160
2008-2009	98
2009-2010	119
2010-2011	138
2011-2012	138
2012-2013	155
2013-2014	108
2014-2015	140
2015-2016	155
2016-2017	146
2017-2018	104
2018-2019	150
2019-2020	137
2020-2021	57
2021-2022 upto Dec 2021	98
Total	**2960**

Year	Enrollment	
	Offline	**Online**
Upto 31st March 2020	2805	0
Enrollment in 2020 – 21	0	57
Enrollment in 2021 – 22	0	98
Total Enrollment	2805	155
Present Strength	**2960**	

Case Study

Vadher Priyanka Shaileshbhai: Native of Shihor near Bhavnagar. Priyanka is multiple disabled. She has difficulty in movement and speech. She studied in spite of poor condition of the family and got B.A. degree and now pursuing M.A. Aged 22, Priyanka's determination is unique. She felt that only degrees won't get her a job and computer skills were necessary. How can a family finding problems in normal livelihood afford computer training fees! She went to AT&T Technology Park center of Shihor and joined free computer class. Her confidence got boosted. Because of her multiple disability no one was ready to give her a job. After Basic Course completion she enrolled for DTP Course. She wants to help her family becoming self-reliant.

Dabhi Hiral Maganbhai: She hails from Sanosara village of Bhavnagar district. She became victim of disability in both legs at very young age. For pursuing study upto Std.XII her father used to take her to the school to and fro. She became B.A. as external student. She wanted to be a teacher and make her presence in the mainstream society. She initially applied her hands to activity like sewing and knitting. To get good income from such a trade in her village was difficult. For good job she has to move to cities. But in absence of proper guidance she was helpless. Aged 24 Hiral having got the information on free computer learning at AT&T Technology Park of PNRS of Bhavnagar she didn't waste any time and got the admission. The institute gave her laptop and dongle with full recharge. She took training online. She expressed her sincere thanks. She feels that this training will get her a job soon.

Milestone of Evaluation & Success

There are many examples of getting jobs after receiving computer training in the Park. Handicapped at both legs Alpesh Sutaria is working in Head Post Office of Bhavnagar, Vishal Parmar in Bhavnagar Jilla Panchayat,, Chhaganbhai Khodifad in Indian Railways and Ganava Rakesh in Sidhhi Cement, Adajan(Kutch)

Certain disable youths after computer training are running their own business. Faga Unadbhai and the deaf Bhal Hitesh after acquiring computer skills in this Park are running studio for marriage album and video editing business. Dayaben Chauhan is in RTO compound running a shop where she prepares applications and taking out prints of documents with the help of her own photocopying machine.

Those who got the success in life after receiving computer training have been described in booklet entitled **' Safaltani Chavi '** published by the AT&T Park of PNRS. This book has encouraged others to get computer training.

The ceaseless work of the team of the AT&T Park have brought in best results. Those who were trained in computer skills are no more liability to their family. Instead they joined as the earning members governing respectable position in the society. They are now part and parcel of making the healthy society.

Administration

In administration and running the Park Shri Suketubhai Shah (Project Coordinator), Shri Kaushikbhai Parmar (Administrator), Shri Mehulbhai Budheliya(Counselor) are making great efforts. As faculties Shri Bhavikaben Rajai, Bhaveshbhai Rathod, Sagarbhai Budhhadev Jignaben Dave, Taralaben Boricha are very active.

This is not all.USA based Shri Jayantbhai Rajyaguru through frequent video conferences continues to guide in implementation of this unique and noble project.

Financial Assistance

List of Generous Donors to the AT&T Technology Park

2019

Sr.No.	Donor's Name	Amount
1	Gunvantrai I. Shah	$5,000.00
2	Paresha Prakash Shah	$725.00
3	Uday Kapadia	$365.00
4	Subhash Vora	$1,600.00
5	Jayant & Yogini Shroff	$5,000.00
6	Batuk Modi	$101.00
7	Praful Shah (Fidelity)	$3,500.00
8	Onally Chinwala	$3,000.00
9	Ashwin Shah	$500.00
10	The Dalal Family Foundation, Inc.	$7,000.00

2020

Sr.No.	Donor's Name	Amount
1	Dinesh Gandhi	$1,000.00
2	Shah Living Trust	$100.00
3	Arvind/Smita Shah	$200.00
4	Pravin & Arti Shah	$1,500.00
5	Robert & Irene Henrick	$1,000.00
6	Gunvantrai I. Shah	$5,000.00
7	Praful Shah	$1,300.00
8	Network for Food	$240.00

2021

Sr.No.	Donor's Name	Amount
1	Shri Radhakrishna Kasat-NJ	$150.00
2	M/s GM Services LLC-Emmett McNulty-MA	$500.00
3	Shri Pronoy Chatterjee-NJ	$100.00
4	Shri Robert & Irene Henrick-MD	$500.00
5	Shri Rashmi Satyadeo-NJ	$251
6	Shri Manhar Soni-IL	$5,000.00
7	Shri Gunvantrai I. Shah-KS	$5,000.00
8	Shri Praful Shah (Fidelity) -NJ	$7,500.00
9	Shri Batuk Modi-OH	$1,000.00
10	Shri Amrendra & Hilla Singh-NJ	$500.00
11	Shri Puthucode Rajamani-NJ	$200.00