



EK KADAM AUR

QUARTERLY REPORT

January - March 2026



Ek Kadam Aur Team advocating for the education of children with blindness at the Tata Mumbai Marathon



QUARTERLY REPORT

JANUARY - MARCH 2026

Table of Contents

Introduction	01
President's Message	02
Highlights of the Quarter	04
Tata Marathon in Mumbai	05
India Giving Day Music Concert	06
Arunodaya (Sunrise) for Children with Blindness	07
High School Leadership Program (HSLP)	26
Nurturing Young Leadership Leadership Program (NYLP)	29

Introduction

About Ek Kadam Aur

Ek Kadam Aur is a nonprofit organization registered in India (80G, FCRA) and the US (501c3) that works towards delivering quality education to underprivileged children in India and Nepal. We work at the crucial juncture where blindness, poverty, and lack of accessibility converge.

Vision

The Ek Kadam Aur Foundation's vision is to create a world where every child has the right to quality education, access to skill enhancement, and healthcare.

Mission

Our mission is to help underprivileged children improve their lives through education, technology, and healthcare initiatives.

Our Values



Growth



Respect



Inclusion



Teamwork

Our Programs

Arunodaya (Sunrise) for Blind Program:

A Program through which the Foundation identifies visually impaired children aged 5 to 17 years from remote regions of India to provide personalized one-on-one training from mentors and special educators to prepare them for regular mainstream schools.

High School Leadership Program:

An initiative of the Foundation that offers training in essential 21st-century skills such as communication and leadership. Students in this program have the opportunity to participate in an entrepreneurship boot camp and the I-Search (research-based) program.

Active Learning Program:

It fosters student engagement by transitioning from teacher-centered to student-centered learning, promoting the development of 21st Century Skills. Regular workshops and training programs on Active Learning are conducted for teachers and students in partner schools.

Nurturing Young Leadership:

We strongly believe in nurturing young leaders to public service. To facilitate this, we host several student interns from New York University, Harvard University, Columbia University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) from the US each year. While we engage them in social impact opportunities, we also gain from their insights and perspectives, especially from an academic lens.

President's Message

To our friends and partners,

We began 2026 with a distinct sense of gravity. Having just crossed the ten-year mark for Ek Kadam Aur, this quarter wasn't about resting on our laurels; it was about honoring our history by accelerating our future. We entered January with a clear mandate: to prove that education for children with blindness can be personalized, tech-enabled, and, above all, a source of radical independence.



Dr. Satish Tripathi
Founder/President

This quarter, our enrollment grew from **835 to 1106** students across our Arunodaya Home-Based and Special School models. While a **32.5%** increase is statistically significant, the true metric of our success is the **271** new faces behind those numbers. These are children who, just months ago, were on the periphery of the educational system. Today, whether they are receiving one-on-one instruction in a remote village or learning within a structured classroom, they are no longer just "accessing" education, they are owning it.

Our progress this quarter was marked by a deepening of impact and visibility, reflected in several defining milestones. In January, 26 of our students navigated the energy of the **Tata Marathon in Mumbai**, a powerful act of public advocacy that dismantled long-standing stereotypes about the capabilities of children with visual impairment.

This spirit of independence resonated globally during our **India Giving Day** benefit concert in Maryland, where over 600 supporters gathered to reinforce the diaspora's role as the bedrock of our work across India and Nepal. Central to this momentum is our move beyond traditional support toward "accessibility-enabled independence," where smartphones, AI-enabled tools, and screen readers are becoming the standard tools for our students to exercise modern leadership.

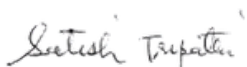
This quarter, our High School Leadership Program has seen meaningful advancement with 25 intensive webinars led by our dedicated volunteers, focusing on the critical thinking skills necessary for the modern world. In tandem, our interns from Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Brown University were engaged in a set of high-impact projects that strengthen Arunodaya's long-term sustainability.

Our interns provided foundational support in our journey to build a scalable, centralized data management system, strengthening and professionalizing Arunodaya's infrastructure. This work will help ensure that as we continue to grow, our impact remains both measurable and sustainable. In parallel, we hosted a New York University Capstone team for a field visit to Maharashtra. By engaging directly with our community-based systems, these students gained the firsthand insight needed to provide strategic recommendations at the end of their tenure to sharpen our programs and strengthen our scalability vision.

The mission for the rest of 2026 is clear: transition from demonstrating what is possible to embedding it. We are working to ensure that digital accessibility isn't a "special feature" of education, but an integral standard.

I am profoundly grateful to our Board, volunteers, supporters, and colleagues. Your commitment does more than sustain an organization, it dismantles the barriers of a legacy system that has sidelined children with blindness for too long. We aren't just filling gaps; we are architecting a future where every child has the agency to lead. When the right tools meet untapped potential, these children don't just succeed, they transform the world around them."

With gratitude and determination,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Suresh Tripathi". The signature is written in black ink on a white rectangular background.

Highlights of the Quarter

Promoting Inclusion through the Tata Marathon

The participation of 26 students in the Tata Marathon in Mumbai emerged as a key highlight of the quarter, providing a powerful platform to promote inclusion and raise awareness about the education of children with blindness. The event enabled students to confidently engage in a large public setting, while reinforcing messages of equal opportunity, teamwork, and independence.

Strengthening Global Support through India Giving Day

The India Giving Day benefit concert held in Maryland, USA, brought together over 600 community members, strengthening global support for inclusive education initiatives. The event highlighted the impact of the Arunodaya program and reflected growing engagement from the Indian diaspora, contributing to increased awareness and support for children with blindness.

Expanding Digital Access and Student Empowerment

The quarter saw significant progress in enhancing digital inclusion through the provision of smartphones, education kits, and structured digital literacy training across states. Students demonstrated increased independence by using assistive technology for learning and examinations, while achievements across academic, cultural, and sports platforms reflected growing confidence and holistic development.

Promoting Inclusion through the Tata Marathon



On 18 January 2026, 26 students from Arunodaya participated in the Tata Marathon in Mumbai, Maharashtra, demonstrating enthusiasm, confidence, and determination. The event provided a valuable opportunity for students to engage in a large-scale public platform while also spreading awareness about the importance of educating children with blindness. The presence of Usha Tiwari, Board Member, and Dr. Satish Tripathi, Founder and President of Ek Kadam Aur, further reinforced the significance of the initiative and the organisation's commitment to inclusion.

The students were supported by dedicated volunteers who guided and motivated them throughout the marathon, ensuring a safe and encouraging environment. A team of educators, including Suraj Kumar, Ravi, Jyotsna Dere, Suvarna Kadam, Yogesh Jadhav, and Yashoda, were also present to oversee coordination, safety, and student engagement.



The marathon promoted physical fitness, teamwork, and social interaction, while helping students build confidence in navigating public spaces. It also served as a platform to highlight the need for inclusive education and equal opportunities. The experience left a positive impact, encouraging students to participate more actively in similar events while reinforcing awareness and inclusion.

India Giving Day Concert – Maryland, USA

As part of India Giving Day, a benefit concert was organized at Seneca Valley High School Auditorium in Maryland, USA, bringing together over 600 members of the community. The event served as an engaging platform to strengthen support for the education of children with blindness in India.

The concert featured performances by Surdhanuk Desi Bollywood and the DMV Desi Band, creating a vibrant atmosphere that combined music, culture, and community participation.

During the event, Dr. Satish Tripathi, Founder and President of Ek Kadam Aur, spoke about the impact of the Arunodaya program in enabling access to education and digital skills for children with blindness. Mr. Nawal Todi, one of our valued supporters, also shared his experience from a recent visit to India, where he witnessed Arunodaya children confidently using digital tools to enhance their learning and independence.



Dr. Deepthi Telikicherla, Director of Research and Global Strategy, and Sharon Jose, Head of Global Communications, from Ek Kadam Aur were also present at the event.

The event reflected strong community engagement and support from the Indian diaspora across Washington DC, Maryland, and Virginia, contributing to increased awareness and resources for the program.

Arunodaya (Sunrise) for Children with Blindness Program



Arunodaya Impact

Children Impact



1106

Children trained in
mobility & daily living
skills



489

Receiving digital
literacy training



807

Children enrolled in
schools



271

Enrollments this
Quarter

Ecosystem Strengthening



85 Mentors & Educators



50+ Teachers Trained



700+ Peers Sensitized

Family Engagement



1000+

Parents Counseled



75 Districts



629 Villages



Updates from Uttar Pradesh

During the first quarter of 2026, Arunodaya in Uttar Pradesh continued to strengthen its focus on digital inclusion, skill development, and community engagement for children with blindness. The quarter reflected a combination of structured interventions, student achievements, and community-based events that collectively contributed to improved learning outcomes and confidence among students.

Provision of Smartphones to Support Digital Inclusion: In January, smartphones were provided to children at Primary School Pratham in Fatehabad, Agra Dehat, benefiting nine children from the Bah and Fatehabad blocks. A total of 11 smartphones were made available as part of this initiative to bridge the digital divide and enhance access to educational resources, assistive technologies, and communication tools. Special educators offered hands-on guidance to ensure effective usage of the devices for learning and daily interaction. The initiative led to visible enthusiasm among students and contributed to increased confidence and independent engagement with their education.



Mobile phones provided to enhance access to digital education

Participation in All-India Competitions: Students from Uttar Pradesh represented the program at the All-India Competitions organised by the National Federation for the Blind in Delhi. They participated in multiple categories, including Braille reading and writing, English typing, and debate, demonstrating both preparedness and skill. Ojas Yadav secured second prize in the Braille Reading Competition, while Nandini Raikwar received a consolation prize. Their performance at a national platform reflected the impact of consistent training and the growing confidence of students.



Students participating and receiving prizes at All-India competitions

Graduation Day Celebration: Graduation Day celebration was organised at Panchayat Bhawan in Akbarpur, Mathura, bringing together students, parents, educators, and community representatives. The event was attended by **Mr. Abhimanyu Seth**, Block-level Administrative Officer, Chamuha Block, who encouraged parents to actively support and prioritise their children's education. Ten students from Batch 3 successfully completed Phase 2 of the program and were awarded graduation certificates, marking an important milestone in their educational journey.

The event also included the provision of smartphones and keyboards to students from Phase 1, ensuring continued support for their digital learning. Cultural performances by students added to the significance of the occasion, reflecting their growing confidence and active participation, while also encouraging stronger parental involvement.



Students with graduation certificates alongside the EKA team and officials

International Women’s Day Participation: In March, students participated in an International Women’s Day event held at Birbal Singh Memorial School in Auraiya, organised by SAKSHAM. The event was attended by **Mr. Kuldeep Sachan, District Coordinator (Samagra Shiksha)**, along with other dignitaries, highlighting strong institutional engagement in promoting inclusive education. The platform provided an opportunity for students to demonstrate their digital competencies and highlight the importance of technology in enabling independence. Students showcased their typing skills and demonstrated the use of accessibility applications such as Seeing AI, which drew appreciation from the audience and guests present. Their participation and recognition at the event reflected the growing confidence of students and reinforced the role of digital literacy in empowerment and inclusion.



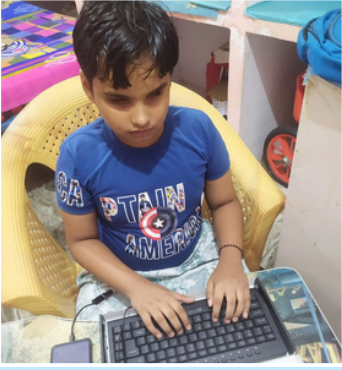
Students demonstrating typing skills and use of accessibility applications

Inter-State Typing Competition: Ek Kadam Aur conducted an inter-state typing competition from 2nd to 10th January 2026 provided students with an opportunity to showcase their digital proficiency in a competitive environment. Participants from Uttar Pradesh performed strongly, with Shivaarchan Dubey emerging as a winner in the junior category and Nandini Raikwar securing recognition in the senior category. Their achievements highlighted the program’s focus on building essential digital and academic skills.



Students awarded certificates for the Inter-State Typing Competition

Impact Stories



Ojas Yadav – Turning Adversity into Achievement

Ojas Yadav, a 13-year-old child with blindness from Etawah, Uttar Pradesh, is currently studying in Class 9 at Composite Vidyalaya Kandhni. As the only child with blindness in his school, Ojas’s educational journey has been marked by both challenge and resilience.

A turning point in Ojas’s journey came with his enrolment in Arunodaya. While he had earlier relied primarily on Braille, the program introduced him to assistive digital tools that transformed the way he learned and engaged with the world. After successfully completing Phase 2, Ojas is now proficient in using a smartphone for learning, regularly accessing information and staying updated on current affairs. With consistent mentoring, he has also developed strong typing skills in both English and Hindi, further enhancing his academic independence.

Ojas’s progress is reflected in his growing achievements beyond the classroom. He participated in national-level platforms, including a typing competition organised by SAKSHAM in Delhi and the World Braille Day celebration hosted by the National Federation for the Blind. His dedication and skill earned him the second prize in the Braille Reading Competition, marking a significant milestone in his journey.

Today, Ojas stands as a confident and disciplined learner, recognised for his determination and clarity of purpose. He aspires to become an IAS officer and contribute meaningfully to society. His journey reflects the transformative impact of the right support, demonstrating how access to inclusive education and technology can empower children with blindness to overcome barriers and achieve their full potential.

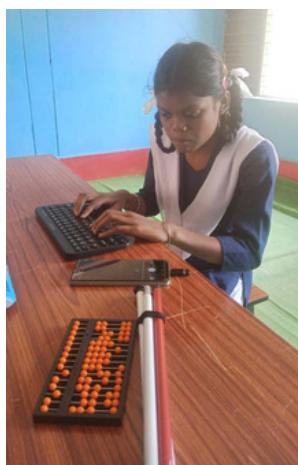




Updates from Chhattisgarh

During the first quarter of 2026, Arunodaya in Chhattisgarh focused strongly on expanding digital access, strengthening community engagement, and improving learning outcomes for children with blindness. The quarter reflects a strategic combination of grassroots mobilisation, institutional collaboration, and targeted digital interventions, particularly in remote and underserved regions.

Enabling Digital Examination Access for Students: A significant milestone was achieved in March when two children with blindness from Dhamtari district were supported to appear for their Class 9 examinations using digital tools. With appropriate guidance and arrangements, both students transitioned from traditional writing methods to keyboard-based input. They completed their examinations independently using digital platforms, marking a major step toward accessibility and inclusion. This achievement strengthened their confidence and demonstrated the effectiveness of digital interventions in enabling academic independence.



Students taking exams through digital tools

Community Engagement through Chher-Chhera Festival: The Chhattisgarh team leveraged the traditional Chher-Chhera festival to mobilise community support for the program. Rooted in the spirit of sharing the collective responsibility, the initiative encouraged local communities to contribute food grains, which were subsequently converted into financial resources to support the educational needs of children enrolled in the program. This approach not only generated local resources but also strengthened community ownership and participation, reinforcing the program's presence at the grassroots level.



Food grains collected from the community during Chher-Chhera Festival

Provision of Learning Devices and Education Kits: In January, literacy kits were provided to children with blindness in Korba to strengthen both digital and academic access. The support included smartphones as well as essential learning materials, enabling students to continue their education with improved access to resources and tools.

The initiative was attended by **Mr. Kunal Dudawat, Administrative Head of the District**, whose presence reinforced institutional support for inclusive education and encouraged continued community engagement. The provision of these resources not only supported immediate learning needs but also enabled students to build long-term independence through access to digital tools and structured educational materials.



Administrative Head of the District with students and EKA team

Smartphone Training Across Districts: A series of smartphone training sessions were conducted across multiple districts, including Janjgir, Korba, Narayanpur, Dhamtari, and Kondagaon, reaching children in both accessible and remote regions. These trainings focused on building foundational digital skills such as smartphone navigation, use of accessibility features, and accessing educational applications. In January, sessions in Janjgir and Korba provided hands-on exposure to smartphone usage, ensuring that children could effectively use digital tools for learning and communication.

In February, similar trainings were extended to Narayanpur, as well as Dhamtari and Kondagaon, highlighting the program's commitment to reaching underserved communities. Despite contextual challenges, these sessions were successfully implemented, enabling children to develop confidence, independence, and practical digital skills essential for their education.



Glimpses from smartphone training sessions

Midline Assessment for Special School Model: A midline assessment for the Special School Model was conducted at National Association for the Blind, Raipur in March to evaluate student progress and the effectiveness of ongoing interventions. The assessment provided valuable insights into learning outcomes, skill development, and areas requiring additional support. These findings will inform future program strategies, enabling more targeted and impactful interventions.

Impact Stories



Devdas – From Dependence to Digital Independence

Devdas, a Class 9 child with blindness from Bastar, Chhattisgarh, faced significant challenges in reading and writing, which led to a loss of confidence and increasing withdrawal from learning. His family remained concerned about his future and his ability to become independent.

After joining Arunodaya, Devdas began his learning journey through digital tools, using a smartphone and keyboard with consistent support from educators. From being unable to read or write independently, he gradually developed strong digital literacy skills. Today, he uses accessibility features like TalkBack to read and write, accesses textbooks through reading applications, and navigates educational content on his own.

Today, Devdas is a confident learner, actively engaging with his studies and moving toward greater independence.



Updates from West Bengal

During the first quarter of 2026, Arunodaya in West Bengal focused on expanding outreach, strengthening institutional partnerships, and enhancing both academic and holistic development for children with blindness. The quarter reflects sustained field engagement, capacity building, and initiatives that supported inclusion across education, sports, and community platforms.

Field Outreach, Enrolment, and School Transitions: Extensive field visits were conducted across districts including Bankura, Purulia, Purba Bardhaman, Bardhaman, and Canning, with a focus on monitoring student progress and strengthening grassroots coordination. These visits were carried out alongside **Mr. Naval Todi, one of our key supporters**, whose engagement contributed to strengthening outreach and community connect. The visits enabled closer interaction with children and their families, ensuring timely support and structured follow-up.

Outreach efforts also led to the identification and enrolment of new children into the program, while continued engagement in regions such as South 24 Parganas and Uluberia supported children transitioning into formal education. Hospital visits remained an important pathway for early identification and linking families to intervention services.



Mr. Naval Todi, Dr. Satish Tripathi, and EKA team during student home visits

Training and Capacity Building – Special School Model: The West Bengal team participated in a Special School Model training led by Ankita Sehdev, Senior Manager of Inclusion Education at Ek Kadam Aur, aimed at strengthening inclusive education practices. The training provided practical insights into classroom strategies, assistive learning techniques, and structured intervention approaches.

Sports Inclusion Initiative – Cricket Kit Support: In March, a collaboration with the Cricket Association of Bengal for Blind enabled the provision of cricket kits to students at Manbhum Drishti Pratibandi Sikshayatan in Purulia. This initiative created opportunities for children with blindness to participate in team-based sports, promoting coordination, confidence, and social inclusion.

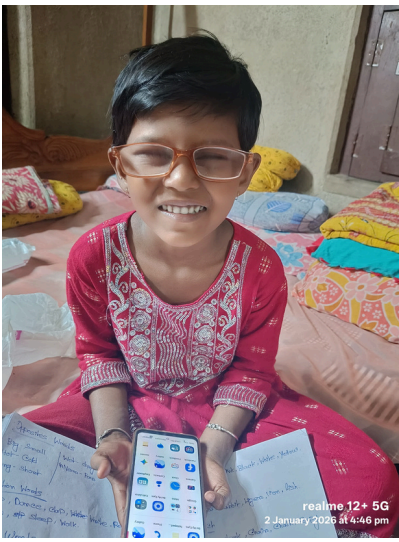
Building on this engagement, the association extended its commitment to support additional partner schools under the Special School Model, including Nabadwip Acharya Prafulla Chandra Blind School, Sri Aurobindo Institute for the Sightless in Siuri, and Sri Sri Ramakrishna Satyananda Dristideep Sikshaniketan in Rampurhat. This expansion will enable more children to access sports opportunities, supporting holistic development beyond academics.



Students with cricket kits promoting sports inclusion

Student Progress and Digital Skill Demonstrations: Digital skill demonstration sessions were organized to showcase student progress, where children confidently presented their abilities in using technology and assistive tools. These sessions reflected improvements in both skill development and self-confidence. The activities concluded with a recognition ceremony acknowledging students' efforts and achievements, while regular monitoring visits throughout the month ensured continued personalised support.

Program Strengthening through Internship Initiative: To enhance academic support and follow-up engagement, an internship initiative was introduced with the selection of 11 interns from various districts of West Bengal. The interns will support both online and offline learning sessions, ensuring continuity in education and additional mentorship for students. This initiative is expected to strengthen learning outcomes and contribute to building a supportive ecosystem around the program.



Glimpses from digital skills demonstration sessions

Impact Stories



Astami and Pratima – Redefining Possibility

In Saloni village of Bankura, Astami and Pratima, two sisters with blindness from a low-income family, faced significant barriers to education. With their father having blindness and their mother having partial vision, the family lacked access to guidance and learning opportunities, leaving the sisters confined at home.

Their journey began to change after joining Arunodaya, where they received structured digital learning support, assistive tools, and consistent mentorship. Gradually, they built confidence and began engaging with education in new ways, overcoming hesitation and social barriers.

Today, both sisters attend an inclusive school alongside sighted peers. They use smartphones to read textbooks, complete assignments, and participate actively in class. Their growing independence is visible in their daily lives, as they confidently navigate their surroundings and engage more actively with their community.

For their parents, this change has brought a renewed sense of hope and pride, as they witness their daughters move toward a more independent and secure future. Their journey reflects not just personal progress, but a transformation that has restored confidence and dignity within the entire family.



Updates from Rajasthan

During the first quarter of 2026, Arunodaya in Rajasthan focused on strengthening digital skills, promoting inclusion through public platforms, and building confidence among children with blindness. The quarter reflects a balance of skill-based initiatives and opportunities for students to engage in wider community and state-level platforms.

Participation and Recognition in Inter-State Typing Competition: Students from Rajasthan participated in the inter-state typing competition organised by Ek Kadam Aur from 2nd to 10th January 2026, providing a platform to demonstrate their typing proficiency, speed, and accuracy. Three students from the senior category, Faisal Khan, Himanshu, and Golu Yogi, emerged as state-level winners, reflecting their consistent practice and growing digital competence. Their performance highlights the program's emphasis on building essential digital skills that support both academic progress and independence.

Participation in Republic Day Celebrations: Students actively participated in Republic Day celebrations across their respective schools, engaging in cultural performances, speeches, and school activities. Their involvement was recognised by school authorities, with several students receiving appreciation for their participation.

These celebrations provided an inclusive platform for students to express themselves, build confidence in public settings, and strengthen their sense of belonging within the school community.



Students celebrating Republic Day

Participation in Jaipur Purple Fest: In February, students participated in the Jaipur Purple Fest, a state-level platform focused on inclusion, accessibility, and the achievements of persons with disabilities. During the event, students demonstrated their digital literacy skills, showcasing how they use smartphones and assistive tools for learning, communication, and daily activities.

Their presentations were appreciated by government officials, stakeholders, and visitors, who recognised the students' growing independence and confidence. The experience provided valuable exposure and enabled students to represent their journeys on a larger platform while reinforcing the importance of inclusive and technology-driven interventions.

Impact Stories



Varsha – Reclaiming Independence and Confidence

Varsha, a child with blindness from Bharatpur, Rajasthan, once depended entirely on her family for even the most basic daily activities. This constant reliance affected her confidence and limited her ability to engage with the world around her.

After joining Arunodaya, Varsha began a gradual yet powerful journey toward independence. With consistent guidance and structured support, she started building essential life skills and learning to manage her daily routine on her own.

A key shift came with her introduction to digital tools. Through smartphone-based learning and accessibility features, Varsha is now learning to navigate her surroundings, access information, and engage more confidently with her environment.

Today, Varsha is no longer defined by dependence. She approaches life with confidence, takes ownership of her daily activities, and continues to move toward a more independent future. Her journey reflects how the right support can restore dignity, build confidence, and open new possibilities for children with blindness. For her family, this transformation has brought a renewed sense of pride and hope. Varsha now serves as an inspiration to others in her community, showing what is possible with the right opportunities and support.



Updates from Maharashtra

During the first quarter of 2026, Arunodaya in Maharashtra focused on strengthening student confidence, recognising achievements across academics, sports, and cultural platforms, and celebrating key milestones in students' learning journeys. The quarter reflects strong student participation and performance across diverse areas, highlighting holistic development.

Student Achievements and Recognition Across Platforms: Students from Maharashtra demonstrated remarkable achievements across academic, cultural, and sports platforms during the quarter. Participation in speech competitions, national-level events, and cultural programs provided opportunities for students to showcase their confidence and skills.

Arjun secured first prize in a speech competition held on Republic Day, while Ashwini Lokhande achieved second prize during Shivaji Maharaj Jayanti. Sanvi Pawar also secured first prize in a speech competition on the same occasion, reflecting strong communication skills among students.

At the national level, Vedika Hagwane secured first prize in the typing competition organised on the foundation's Foundation Day, while Prapti Pisal achieved third prize. These accomplishments highlight the growing digital proficiency of students. In addition, Aditi Shinde completed her unit examination through typing, demonstrating the effective use of digital tools in academic settings.

Students including Bhagyashri Kate, Sanjit Salve, Gauri Argade, and Sachin Shinde participated in speech presentations during the Blind Welfare Educational Weekly, reflecting confidence and active engagement. On the occasion of Louis Braille Day, students participated in awareness and educational activities, strengthening their connection with the learning community.

Beyond academics, students also excelled in co-curricular areas. Srinivas Parihar delivered a tabla performance on Ram Navami, showcasing his musical talent, while Krushna Pawar secured first prize in a state-level bench press competition, highlighting achievement in sports.



Krushna Pawar and Arjun with their awards and prizes

Graduation Day Celebrations – Satara and Ahilya Nagar: Graduation Day ceremonies were organised to mark the completion of one year in the program for students across Maharashtra. The first event was held on 8th February in Satara, with participation from 27 students representing various talukas. A second ceremony was conducted on 19th February in Ahilya Nagar, where 12 students participated.

During these events, students shared their experiences, delivered speeches, and expressed gratitude toward their teachers and the program. Educators encouraged students to continue their learning journey, while parents shared their appreciation and support. The ceremonies served as an important milestone, celebrating student progress and reinforcing motivation for future growth.



Graduation certificates presented to students



Updates from Andhra Pradesh

During the first quarter of 2026, Arunodaya in Andhra Pradesh focused on promoting inclusion through community engagement and strengthening digital skills among children with blindness. The quarter reflects active participation in national initiatives and meaningful celebrations that fostered confidence, interaction, and a sense of belonging among students.

Participation and Recognition in Inter-State Typing Competition: Students from Andhra Pradesh participated in the inter-state typing competition conducted from 2nd to 10th January 2026, providing a platform to demonstrate their typing skills and digital proficiency. Three students from the junior category, Kusuma Devi, T. Mohan Sai Ganesh, and Sai Lokesh, secured recognition at the state level. Their achievement reflects consistent practice and highlights the program's focus on building essential digital skills for academic growth and independence.

Republic Day and Foundation Day Celebration: Republic Day and Foundation Day were celebrated at Louis Braille School, Amalapuram, in Konaseema district, bringing together students in an inclusive and engaging environment. A total of 65 students participated, including students from the school and children from the program, creating a space for interaction and shared learning.

The programme began with flag hoisting by Ex-Military Commander Mr. Gangadhar, setting a tone of patriotism and unity. Students actively participated throughout the event, with one student leading the Preamble pledge and another presenting a patriotic song that was appreciated by all present. The celebration encouraged interaction, confidence, and inclusion, reflecting the program's commitment to creating supportive and participatory learning spaces.



Glimpses from Republic Day and Foundation Day celebrations

Impact Stories



A Father's Pride, A Child's Progress

T. Mohan Sai Ganesh, a child with blindness from Chaagallu in West Godavari district, comes from a humble family where his father works as a lorry driver, often travelling long distances to support the household.

During one such journey to Madhya Pradesh, his father had an opportunity to interact with the team from Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), which supports Mohan Sai Ganesh's education through its CSR initiatives implemented in partnership with Arunodaya. He shared how the program has helped his child gain confidence, develop digital skills, and engage more actively in learning.

The interaction left a strong impression on the team, who recognised the impact being created at the ground level. As a gesture of encouragement, they extended festive wishes to the family and provided a festival kit.

This moment reflects how the program, with the support of Indian Oil Corporation Limited, is not only strengthening the education of children with blindness but also bringing hope and confidence to their families.



G. Joseph – Building Confidence and Belonging

G. Joseph, a child with blindness, completed Phase 2 of the program in March, marking an important milestone in his learning journey. Over this period, he demonstrated notable progress in both academic engagement and overall development.

Joseph has now adapted well to the school environment and attends regularly with enthusiasm. He has developed a strong interest in learning and actively participates in classroom activities, showing increased confidence in interacting with teachers and classmates.

A significant change has been seen in his social development. Joseph has begun building friendships and engages comfortably with his peers, reflecting a growing sense of belonging and self-confidence.



Updates from Telangana

During the first quarter of 2026, Arunodaya in Telangana focused on strengthening community engagement and improving access to education for children with blindness. The efforts centered on outreach, awareness, and building stronger connections with families to support sustained learning.

Community Engagement and Awareness Program: A community support program in Tandur engaged students and underprivileged families while promoting awareness on education and government welfare schemes. The Administrative Head of the District attended and appreciated the initiative, encouraging stronger community participation.

Interactions with families focused on improving attendance and understanding challenges, while volunteers helped identify needs and extend support. The program contributed to increased awareness and improved engagement with education among children and their families.

Impact Stories



M. Nithya Sri – A Mother’s Hope Turning into Confidence

M. Nithya Sri, a child with blindness from Annaram, Vikarabad, joined the program in October with fear and hesitation toward learning. Her mother was concerned about her future and independence.

With consistent support from educators, Nithya Sri gradually began learning sensory activities, orientation and mobility, daily living skills, and basic digital literacy. Over time, her confidence grew, and she developed a willingness to learn.

A key milestone in her journey has been learning to use a smartphone independently using TalkBack and a keyboard. Today, she shows increased confidence and independence, bringing a strong sense of hope and pride to her family.

High School Leadership Program

During the first quarter of 2026, the High School Leadership Program continued to engage students through structured webinars, leadership sessions, and interactive learning experiences. A total of 25 webinars were conducted with the support of 13 mentors, reaching students across India and Nepal.

The program impacted students from Lamdon Model Senior Secondary School, Ramakrishna Mission High School (Visakhapatnam and Sitanagaram), and N.K. Singh Memorial English Preparatory School in Kathmandu, collectively engaging over 200 students.

Foundation Day Celebration – 10 Years of Impact: The Foundation Day celebration marked ten years of impact in education and youth leadership, bringing together students, mentors, and educators on a shared platform.

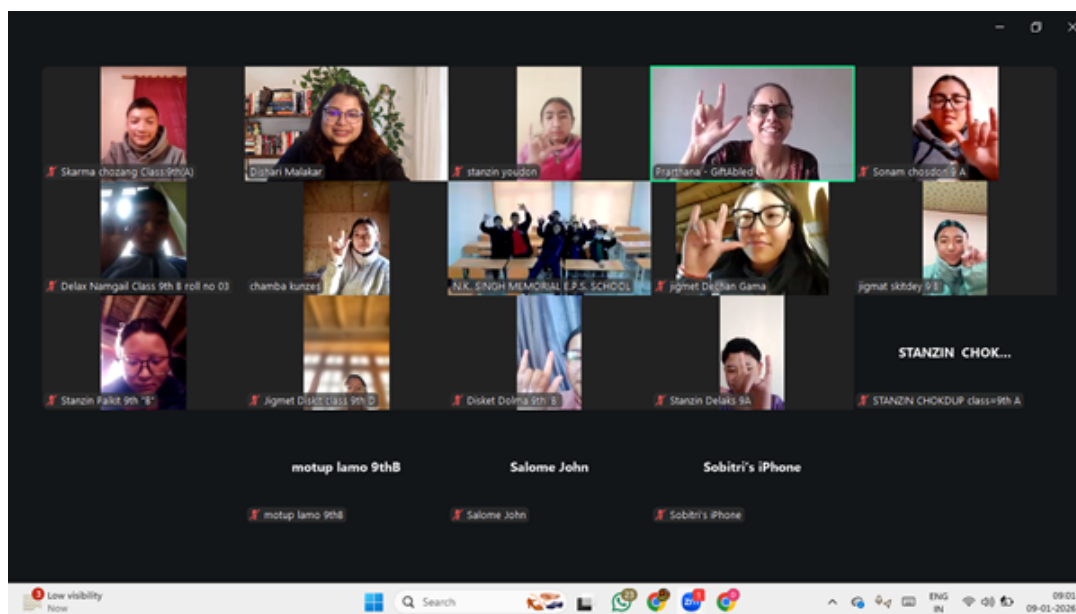
The programme included a virtual flag hoisting ceremony, followed by student-led cultural performances, speeches, and creative showcases reflecting confidence and leadership. Student achievements were recognised through competitions in typing, essay writing, and painting.

A dedicated youth segment provided space for students to share their perspectives, reinforcing the program's focus on student voice and leadership development. The event concluded with reflections and acknowledgements, highlighting collective efforts and continued commitment toward nurturing young leaders.



Inclusive Leadership and Awareness Session: A session on inclusive leadership introduced students to the importance of diversity, accessibility, and equitable participation. Through interactive discussions and practical demonstrations, including basic sign language, students explored ways to build more inclusive environments.

The session encouraged students to reflect on empathy, representation, and their role as emerging leaders. It strengthened awareness and equipped students with practical perspectives on creating inclusive communities.

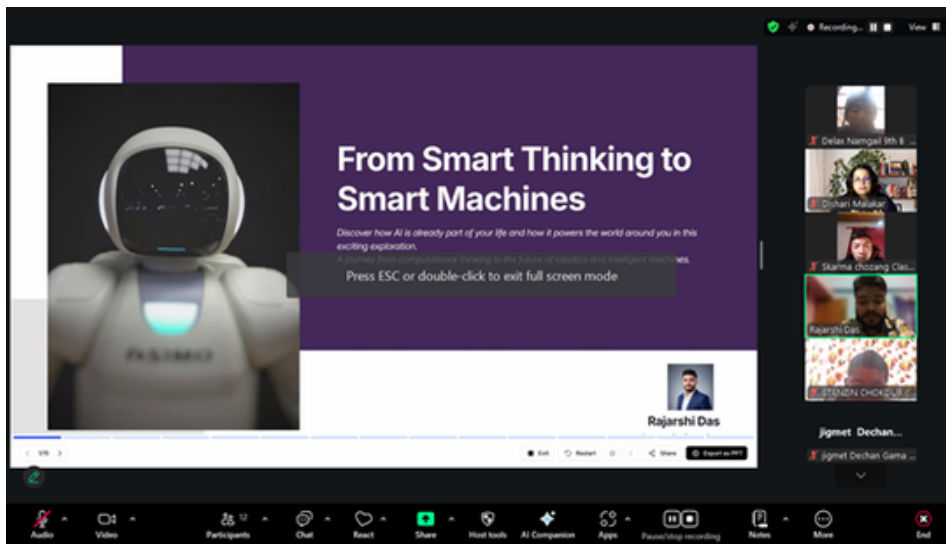


Adolescence and Well-being Awareness Session: A session focused on understanding adolescence provided students with a safe and open space to learn about physical, emotional, and psychological changes. The discussion addressed common misconceptions and encouraged open dialogue around topics often considered sensitive.

Students engaged actively and gained awareness on health, hygiene, and self-care, enabling them to approach this stage of life with greater confidence and understanding.

STEM Learning and Real-World Applications: STEM-focused sessions introduced students to key concepts such as laws of motion, chemistry in daily life, circular economy, and emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and robotics. The sessions connected theoretical knowledge with real-world applications, helping students understand the relevance of science in everyday life.

These sessions encouraged curiosity, critical thinking, and problem-solving, while also inspiring students to explore future opportunities in science and technology.



Voices of Impact



My experience with Ek Kadam Aur Foundation over the past year has been truly meaningful. Beyond academics, I gained valuable life skills that helped me become more independent and confident.

Being part of the program gave me opportunities to collaborate, take initiative, and strengthen my communication and leadership skills. The mentors created a supportive environment that made learning comfortable and engaging.

The program also helped me broaden my perspective and better understand the world beyond my immediate surroundings.

- Pranisha Nyaupane (Girl School-Vice Captain)

N.K. Singh Memorial English Preparatory Secondary School, Kathmandu, Nepal

I would like to thank Ek Kadam Aur Foundation for providing me with this meaningful opportunity. The sessions, including personal development activities, and I-Search, were both engaging and valuable for my growth.

Through these experiences, I developed important life skills that supported my overall development. More than just sessions, they became memorable learning experiences that contributed to my confidence and outlook toward the future.

- Bishesh Baidya

N.K. Singh Memorial English Preparatory Secondary School, Kathmandu, Nepal



Nurturing Young Leadership Leadership Program

From 13 to 16 January 2026, students from New York University (NYU) visited Maharashtra as part of the Nurturing Young Leadership Program to gain firsthand exposure to inclusive education practices and community-based support systems. The visiting students included Sydney Bertinetti, Tara Moslehi, and Vicky Zhang. Yi-Ting (Tiffany) Lan was also part of the group but was unable to travel. The visit was facilitated by the program team and provided a platform for meaningful exchange between visiting students and program beneficiaries.

School and Community Immersion

During the visit, the New York University students engaged closely with children enrolled in Arunodaya program across multiple locations. They observed classroom sessions across subjects such as Mathematics, English, Marathi, Computer, Sports, and Music, gaining insights into inclusive teaching practices and student participation. Interactions with teachers and school leadership provided a deeper understanding of strategies used to support diverse learning needs.

The students also visited the homes of children, engaging with families and community members to understand the broader support systems that contribute to each child's development. These interactions highlighted the role of family involvement and community engagement in sustaining educational progress.



NYU students visiting homes of children in the Arunodaya program

Student Interaction and Skill Assessment

Through direct engagement with students, the group explored individual learning journeys, aspirations, and progress. They facilitated practical activities, including tasks related to smartphone usage, enabling them to assess digital skills such as typing, use of accessibility features, and navigation of applications.



NYU team in interaction with Arunodaya students

Group Engagement and Experiential Learning

The visit concluded with a joint session in Satara, where the students participated in group discussions and interactive activities alongside program students. These included sensory orientation exercises, orientation and mobility activities, and team-based games, fostering mutual learning and collaboration.



The visit provided valuable insights into inclusive education in practice and highlighted the impact of structured support systems across school, home, and community environments. It also created a space for cross-cultural learning, reinforcing the importance of empathy, inclusion, and shared learning experiences.

In this quarter, the Foundation also welcomed a diverse cohort of interns from the United States and India. These undergraduate and graduate students gained hands-on experience in global development while providing vital support for EKA's core initiatives. The program continues to be a cornerstone for cross-cultural collaboration and leadership growth.



Aditi Dey, Brown University

Aditi Dey played a critical role in strengthening the Arunodaya Program's monitoring and evaluation architecture by developing standardized Phase 1 and Phase 2 assessment tools, a structured impact framework, and a survey administration protocol. Her work established clear outcome indicators and measurement systems, significantly enhancing the Foundation's ability to generate credible, data-driven insights and deliver robust impact reporting to CSR partners and institutional stakeholders.



Kanna Pichappan, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Kanna Pichappan led the development of a scalable, centralized data management system for Arunodaya using Airtable, enabling end-to-end tracking of student progress across program phases. The platform integrates demographic, assessment, and program data into a unified dashboard, supporting real-time monitoring, analytics, and reporting. This contribution lays the groundwork for a single source of truth for program data, significantly strengthening operational efficiency, transparency, and decision-making capacity.



Eva Bennet, Northeastern University

Eva Bennet contributed to advancing the Foundation's research and thought leadership agenda by developing a comprehensive, publication-ready manuscript on inclusive education for children with blindness, anchored in the Arunodaya Program model. Her work synthesizes evidence, articulates systemic gaps, and positions the program within national and global discourse, strengthening the Foundation's ability to engage with academic, policy, and international stakeholders.



EK KADAM AUR

A Step Forward Towards Inclusive Education

For Online Donations



Ek Kadam Aur, USA

1781 Reserve Court

Highland Park, Illinois 60035, USA

+1-646-732-2090 | E-mail: admin@ekkadamaur.org

**Ek Kadam Aur Foundation For
Education and Health, India**

Flat 17C, Tower D, Viceroy Park Thakur Village, Kandivali
East, Mumbai 400101, India

Follow us on

