NATIONAL ABILYMPIC ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

NAAI

BEYOND SKILL

BEYOND LIMITS

22 JOURNEYS OF TALENT, EXPERTISE AND POSSIBILITY



Celebrating skill.

Recognising excellence.

Opening pathways.

Content credits: Nistha Tripathi



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Preface

The true measure of talent is the quality of work a person can achieve when skill is recognised and opportunity is accessible.

The Abilympics bring this idea to life. Across painting, design, traditional crafts, hospitality, technology and professional services, they offer persons with disabilities a platform to demonstrate expertise, learn from peers and have their work recognised at regional, national and international levels.

This book brings together 22 journeys shaped by different interests, professions and ambitions. Some participants have built careers over many years; others are developing new skills and exploring opportunities through training and competition. Their stories are individual, but each speaks to the value of practice, learning and recognition.

Behind many achievements are people and institutions who make progress possible: families who encourage, trainers who refine technique, employers who recognise capability, and organisations that create access to learning and competition. The Abilympics connect these contributions through a shared focus on excellence in skill.

The pages that follow celebrate medals and milestones, but also professional independence, creative expression, cultural knowledge, confidence and the willingness to take on a new challenge. These are meaningful achievements in themselves.

As India prepares for the International Abilympics in Helsinki in 2027, the stories also point towards the work ahead: identifying talent across communities, strengthening training, removing barriers and creating pathways for people to contribute and excel.

May these journeys invite readers to recognise ability in its many forms and help build a world in which skill—not assumption—shapes opportunity.

Foreword

Every life has a story — a unique rhythm of dreams, challenges, and triumphs. Among these, some shine brighter because they illuminate the strength of the human spirit. Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) embody such brilliance — individuals who choose courage over comfort, perseverance over pity, and hope over hesitation.

At Sarthak Educational Trust, our journey began with a simple belief — disability does not define destiny. Over the years, this belief has turned into a movement of empowerment through health, education, skilling, and employment. We have seen thousands of individuals break barriers, rewrite their narratives, and step into their potential with confidence and dignity.

This Coffee Table Book brings to you twenty inspiring stories from our Skill Development Program — stories that mirror not just personal achievement, but also the collective effort of families, trainers, and inclusive employers who stood as pillars of support. Each page celebrates a victory — some big, some small, but each deeply meaningful.



Dr. Jitender Aggarwal
Founder & CEO, Sarthak Educational Trust

As you turn these pages, I invite you to see beyond challenges — to witness determination, resilience, and possibility in action. Let these stories remind us that inclusion is not charity — it is humanity in its truest form.

CHETAN CHANDRAKANT PASHILKAR

01 | PAINTING WITH PURPOSE





For Chetan Chandrakant Pashilkar of Pune, painting became both a language of expression and the foundation of a profession. Living with a hearing impairment, he found that art offered a way to communicate thoughts and emotions beyond everyday conversation.

After his father's death, financial pressures made education and employment difficult for the family. Chetan nevertheless completed a Bachelor of Arts degree and continued to develop his artistic abilities. He now works as a painting teacher in Pune, introducing children to creative practice and helping them build their own skills.

The Abilympics marked a significant step in his career. With guidance from coaches and mentors associated with the National Abilympic Association of India (NAAI), he refined his technique and gained confidence as a competitor. He secured first place at both the State and National Abilympics, earning the opportunity to represent India at the International Abilympics, where he won a Gold Medal.

Chetan continues to paint and teach, and hopes to encourage young artists, particularly persons with disabilities, to pursue creative careers. He also advocates accessible workplaces, equal employment opportunities and stronger skill-development programmes.

NEHAL TIWARI

02 | STONE BY STONE, A WORLD OF COLOUR





Mumbai-based Nehal Tiwari brings together a career in technology and a distinctive practice in stone painting. An Information Technology graduate of St. Xavier's College, Nehal works as a consultant at Ernst & Young. Diagnosed as being on the autism spectrum at two and a half, Nehal has pursued education, employment and art with the support of a close-knit family.

School brought challenges in language-intensive subjects and in making friends. Nehal completed Class 10 under the ICSE board and Classes 11 and 12 in the CBSE Maths–Science stream before finding a strong fit in Information Technology. Conventional recruitment interviews initially made employment difficult, as they did not always accommodate Nehal's communication needs. The Neurodiverse Centre of Excellence at Ernst & Young offered a different pathway; after five rounds of recruitment, Nehal secured a position.

Alongside work, Nehal has developed a body of stone paintings exhibited in India and abroad, including at the Nehru Centre in London, in Dubai, at IIT

Hyderabad, IIT Bombay and India Habitat Centre in New Delhi. The work has also received appreciation from organisations including Bank of America and Tata Power.

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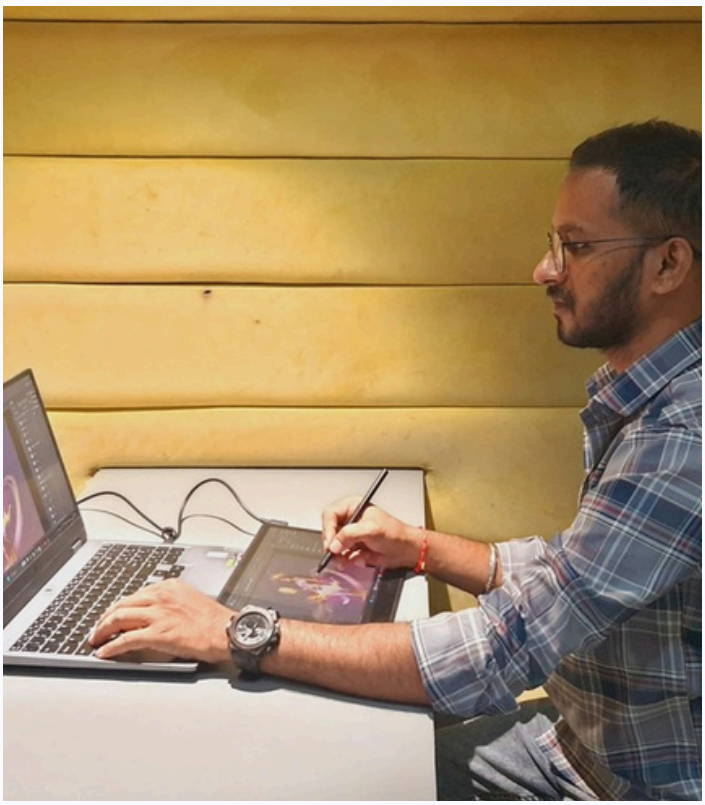
AVINASH AVHAD

03 | BUILDING WORLDS THROUGH CHARACTER DESIGN

Avinash Avhad from Pune works as a 2D Concept Artist at Rocksalt Interactive Games. Deaf since birth, he has built a career in drawing and visual storytelling through sustained practice and a commitment to learning.



He studied at Vikas Vidyalaya, run by Janakibai Educational Institute, from kindergarten through Grade 10. His interest in drawing emerged during these years, and he won several art competitions. After completing Class 12 in Commerce at Ruparel College, he appeared for the entrance examination to Sir J. J. School of Art. When he did not secure admission, he continued developing his skills through a one-year Diploma Foundation course at L. S. Raheja School of Art, where he earned further recognition.



His interest in creating characters and imaginative worlds gradually developed into a professional specialisation. In 2025, his friend Chetan Pashilkar introduced him to NAAI. Avinash entered the Character Design category to test his abilities, learn new techniques and connect with fellow participants.



Regular training helped him refine his work. He won Silver in Character Design at the Regional Abilympics in Mumbai in 2025, followed by Gold at the National Abilympics in New Delhi that year. He credits the experience with strengthening his confidence, independence and professional skills, and hopes to represent India at the international level.

OMKAR VIJAYKUMAR DEORUKHKAR

04 | DESIGNING ON HIS OWN TERMS

Omkar Vijaykumar Deorukhkar, from Pune, has pursued formal training in art and design while navigating communication barriers associated with his hearing impairment.

Identified with hearing impairment at around four to five years of age, Omkar was unable to secure admission to a regular school and completed his schooling at an institution for students with hearing impairment. As many teachers did not know sign language, he developed lip-reading and speaking skills to communicate. He later completed a commercial course, a diploma and a degree in Fine Arts.

Despite these qualifications, suitable employment proved difficult to find. Some employers offered lower salaries because he could not communicate over telephone calls. Omkar responded by continuing to build his creative and technical abilities.

He learned about NAAI through Bal Kalyan Sanstha, Pune, and entered Poster Design. The competitions exposed him to advanced computer skills and design tools. NAAI and





Sarthak along with Bal Kalyan Sanstha supported his participation and guided him through the process.

Omkar won Gold at the state level and Silver nationally. At the international level, he placed seventh among 14 participants. He now aims to build his career, provide a better life for his family and win Gold for India at the International Abilympics.

T. HARISHANTHAN

05 | BEHIND THE CAMERA, BEYOND THE FRAME



T. Harishanthan of Chennai turned an interest in photography and videography into a professional career, even after financial difficulties forced him to discontinue his Film Technology studies. He continued learning through practical assignments and opportunities to work behind the camera.

He began with Crutch NGO as a photographer and videographer, producing documentaries about the lives of persons with disabilities. Work with a local monthly magazine gave him further professional experience. He later fulfilled his ambition of working as an Assistant Cameraman on a Tamil film and established his own photography studio, offering event photography, videography and related services.



Harishanthan learned about NAAI through Crutch NGO in 2007. At the National Abilympics in Delhi, he won Gold in Photography and qualified to represent India at the International Abilympics in Japan, where he earned a Bronze Medal. Training and mentorship from NAAI and Sarthak Educational Trust, particularly from mentor Vijay Jodha supported his continued development.

For Harishanthan, photography combines technical knowledge with creativity, patience and attention to detail. He is now preparing for the International Abilympics in Finland in 2027, with the aim of winning Gold for India.

KARAN TANNA

06 | DESIGNING FOR ACCESS



Karan Tanna, originally from Ahmedabad and now based in Mumbai, works as a Senior Designer at LTM. His work connects creativity and technology with a larger purpose: making products, services and spaces more accessible to persons with disabilities.

A stroke at the age of five resulted in a locomotor disability affecting his right hand and legs, along with a partial speech disability. Surgeries and years of rehabilitation shaped his understanding of accessibility. During education and employment, he also encountered inaccessible infrastructure, social exclusion and assumptions about his professional capabilities.



Karan studied Architecture at CEPT University, completed a Master's in Design at IIT Bombay and earned a diploma in rapid prototyping from Fab Academy in the United States. Fellowships took him to Israel, while design experiences in Spain and Italy broadened his perspective. His work includes a Top 10 project mention at Laval Virtual for accessible virtual-reality interactions and the Best Thesis Award at IIT Bombay for a physiotherapy device designed for children with cerebral palsy. He was also a founding member of IIT Bombay's PwD Cell.

In 2025, Karan entered Desktop Publishing at the Abilympics, using the competition to test his skills under time constraints. He is preparing for Helsinki 2027, where he hopes to represent India in Publishing. His long-term ambition is to create inclusive digital products, services and spaces, and to encourage young persons with disabilities to explore design, architecture and technology.

PRIYANKA DEEPAK DABADE

07 | EMBROIDERY AS ART, AND A SKILL TO SHARE

Born in Sangli district and now based in Pune, Priyanka Deepak Dabade has built her work around embroidery, fashion design and teaching. She has a hearing and speech impairment, and credits her mother and family with encouraging her ambitions.



Priyanka completed her SSC at a special school in Pune. An early interest in drawing and painting grew into a passion for fashion and embroidery. She completed a Diploma in Fashion Designing with a specialisation in embroidery. After facing difficulty finding suitable employment, she focused on developing her craft. Today, she exhibits her work and trains deaf students at a special school, helping them acquire a skill with livelihood potential.



Introduced to NAAI through Bal Kalyan Sanstha, Pune, Priyanka went on to win Gold at the West Zone Regional and National Abilympics. At the International Abilympics 2023 in Metz, France, she earned a Silver Medal and a Medal of Excellence in Embroidery.

In 2024, she received the National Award – Sarvshreshth Divyangjan (Best Disabled Person) from the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, presented by the President of India. Priyanka is now preparing for the 2027 International Abilympics under the guidance of Dr. Simmi Bhagat of Lady Irwin College, New Delhi. She hopes to represent India again while continuing to train deaf students.

SONALI SHINDE

08 | EVERY LOOP, A NEW POSSIBILITY

For Sonali Shinde of Pune, crocheting is both a creative pursuit and a skill she hopes to develop into a livelihood. A person with hearing impairment, she completed a Bachelor of Arts degree despite communication barriers and discrimination during her education. Family members and supportive teachers helped her stay focused.



Keen to improve her crochet techniques and explore career opportunities, Sonali learned about NAAI through a friend in Mumbai and entered the Regional Abilympics. The competition introduced her to new methods and gave her the chance to learn from experienced mentors and other participants.

With regular practice and NAAI training, she improved her speed, precision and confidence. She won Gold in Crocheting at the Regional Abilympics and went on to secure first place at the National Abilympics.



Sonali now hopes to represent India at the International Abilympics and win Gold. She also wants to teach crocheting to children, passing on the knowledge and enjoyment she has found in the craft.

BHAGYASHRI MANOHAR NADIMETALA

09 | CREATING HER OWN DESIGN LANGUAGE

Bhagyashri Manohar Nadimetala from Maharashtra has developed a strong interest in dress making and artistic design. A head injury following a fall at the age of two resulted in partial hearing loss. Although treatment could not fully restore her hearing, her family's continued encouragement helped her pursue her interests.



Communication challenges affected her education, but Bhagyashri completed Class 10 and continued studying art. She has spent four years at an art college and has also developed computer skills to broaden her career options. Dress making and artistic design allow her to combine creativity with precision.

She learned about NAAI through a deaf community group and an NGO in Mumbai. With encouragement from the NGO, family and mentor, she registered for the Abilympics and prepared through consistent practice. After initially placing third in a competition, she won Gold at both the Regional and National Abilympics in Dress Making.



Bhagyashri hopes to represent India at the International Abilympics and bring home a Gold Medal. She also wants young people with disabilities to see creative skills as a field in which they can pursue their ambitions.

TANUJA RAMESH MORE

10 | FROM HAND KNITTING TO WORKPLACE INCLUSION

Tanuja Ramesh More, from Malegaon, Maharashtra, is a postgraduate, law graduate and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Consultant. She lives with a 79 per cent locomotor disability affecting both legs and uses calipers and crutches for mobility.

Accessibility barriers marked her school years; the absence of a ground-floor classroom made regular attendance difficult. During this period, she began learning knitting and later taught the skill to others. She went on to complete an MA and LL.B., despite discouragement from people who questioned whether she could study law or build a professional career.

After qualifying in law, Tanuja worked as a social worker and later moved into Human Resources. Her job search involved repeated rejection after employers learned about her disability. In one role, her productivity was initially questioned; she demonstrated her capabilities within a month and earned a permanent position. She now works as a DEI Consultant, bringing professional experience to workplace inclusion.





Tanuja joined NAAI through a group for persons with disabilities and entered Hand Knitting. With guidance from her coach, Daljit, she continues to refine her technique. Her recognitions include the Recognition Award in 2019 for her work as a lawyer with a disability, the Mahila Ratna Award in 2020, an Outstanding Woman Honoured Award in 2021, and the Rex Karmaveer Global Fellowship and Karmaveer Chakra recognitions for 2025–26, including a Silver Medal in 2026.

She hopes to represent India internationally and continue advocating workplaces that assess people on their abilities.

GHULAM MOHD MAGRAY

11 | A KASHMIRI CRAFT, CARRIED FORWARD





Ghulam Mohd Magray, from Kachan in Jammu and Kashmir's Ganderbal district, learned willow wicker basket making by watching his father at work. A person with a locomotor disability, he has turned this childhood learning into a profession and a way of sustaining a traditional craft.

Through observation and practice, Ghulam mastered the process of weaving willow into baskets. Mobility-related challenges and limited employment opportunities in his region made earning a livelihood difficult, but his practical expertise helped him establish basket making as his occupation.

Ms. Rashmi Dhariwal of SETU Organization, Jaipur, brought his work to wider attention and encouraged him to enter competitions organised by NAAI. With guidance from his trainer and the NAAI team, he participated in the North Regional Abilympics, gaining an opportunity to travel beyond Jammu and Kashmir and present his craftsmanship.

He won Gold at the North Regional Abilympics in Lucknow in 2025 and another Gold in Basket Making at the National Abilympics that year. In 2024, he had also received First Prize at the Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory Level Award for Willow Wicker (Kani Work).

Ghulam now looks towards the International Abilympics in Finland in 2027. Alongside his ambition to win Gold for India, he hopes to preserve the willow wicker tradition and pass the craft on to future generations.

MOHAMMAD SHAMIM ALAM

12 | A TAILOR'S CRAFT ON THE INTERNATIONAL STAGE

Mohammad Shamim Alam, from Gaya district in Bihar, grew up in a family of tailors. Affected by polio at the age of two, he lives with a locomotor disability. Watching his father work sparked an early interest in garment making, and family encouragement helped him develop the skill.



Although Shamim became a capable tailor, stable employment remained difficult to find. Dr. Shivaji Kumar, Commissioner of the Bihar State Disability Commission, encouraged him to participate in the Regional Abilympics in Kolkata in 2024, introducing him to NAAI.



The competition gave him a platform to demonstrate his abilities and learn from experienced mentors. After the regional event, he received advanced training. Regular practice helped strengthen his technical skills and prepare him for national and international competition.

Shamim won Gold at the National Abilympics and went on to represent India at the International Abilympics in France, where he earned Bronze in Tailoring. The recognition brought greater visibility to his work and opened employment opportunities, including a position at a garment showroom.

He hopes to compete again at the International Abilympics in Finland and win Gold for India.

MD. KASHIF KHAN

13 | PRECISION AND IMAGINATION IN PATISSERIE

Mumbai-based Md. Kashif Khan has developed a career in Patisserie and Confectionery through professional training and disciplined practice. Living with complete hearing and speech impairment, he credits his mother's constant encouragement as an important source of support.



Academically bright, Kashif scored 86% in school in Mangaon, Maharashtra. He became interested in baking through the design, colours and precision involved in creating cakes and pastries. To turn this interest into a profession, he completed a one-year formal course in cooking and practical training at a luxury hotel in Mumbai.



Selected as a wildcard entrant through a national assessment process, Kashif represented India at the International Abilympics 2023 in Metz, France, and won Silver in Patisserie and Confectionery. On returning, he was promoted at The St. Regis Hotel, Mumbai, where he had worked in the bakery department for four years.

He continued his competitive success in 2025, winning Gold at both the Regional and National Abilympics. He is now preparing for Helsinki 2027, aiming to win Gold for India. His professional progress reflects the value of recognising expertise in demanding culinary environments.



SATHISH

14 | TWO DECADES OF CAKE CRAFT

Sathish, from Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, has worked in baking and cake decoration for more than 20 years. Deaf since birth, he developed his craft through professional training, sustained practice and an interest in creating distinctive baked products.



After completing Class 12, Sathish undertook nearly four years of professional training in baking and cake decoration. He went on to establish himself as a baker and cake decoration artist, and also works as a tutor, sharing his knowledge with others. His spouse and child remain important sources of support.

A friend introduced him to NAAI and encouraged him to enter the Cake Decoration category. Sathish saw the competition as an opportunity to demonstrate his abilities and learn from fellow participants. He earned a Silver Medal at the Regional Abilympics, an experience that strengthened his confidence and encouraged him to refine his techniques.



He now hopes to represent India at the International Abilympics and win Gold. He also plans to establish his own baking and cake decoration business, with the possibility of creating employment for others.

ADIL SAIKH

15 | A CHEF'S CRAFT, A RESTAURANT DREAM

Adil Saikh of Pune has built a career as a professional chef through workplace learning, practice and a strong interest in cooking. Born with a hearing impairment, he comes from a Deaf family; his parents, wife and son are also hearing impaired. Their encouragement has supported his ambitions in the hospitality industry.



Adil began learning the fundamentals of cooking in a hotel, developing his techniques through observation and hands-on experience. Communication could sometimes be challenging, but he remained focused on gaining professional experience and eventually secured a position as a chef.

The hotel's Human Resources team encouraged him to participate in the National Abilympics. He entered the Cooking category and received professional training and mentorship through NAAI. Adil secured a wildcard entry to the National Abilympics and finished in second place, earning the opportunity to represent India at the International Abilympics.



He hopes to perform to the best of his abilities internationally and win a medal for India. Beyond competition, he has a clear ambition: to open his own restaurant and bring his culinary experience and commitment to quality to a wider audience.

SUMAN RAWAT

16 | BUILDING A BUSINESS, CREATING A PATH FOR OTHERS





Suman Rawat moved from Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh, to Delhi, where she established her own beauty parlour. A professional beautician and entrepreneur, she lives with a locomotor disability affecting her right leg due to polio contracted at eleven months of age.

After completing Class 12, Suman began working at a beauty salon. Following her marriage, she encountered expectations that she should stop working because of her disability. With encouragement from her parents and husband, she continued her career while managing household responsibilities. Nearly five years of learning and experience at the salon prepared her to set up her own parlour.

Suman learned about NAAI through an online orientation and entered Hair Dressing. Training and mentorship helped her strengthen her professional techniques. She won Bronze at the Regional Abilympics, followed by Gold at the National Abilympics.

Her next ambition is to represent India internationally. She also hopes to establish a Beauty Academy where young people, particularly persons with disabilities, can receive professional training. She would like to offer free training to those who cannot afford it, extending the opportunities that helped shape her own career.

SUKHMANI

17 | TURNING EXPERIENCE INTO A WELLNESS PRACTICE



Sukhmani, from Ludhiana, Punjab, is a professional massage therapist. An accident after she completed her Master's examination resulted in bifemoral fractures; she continues to live with permanent titanium plates in both thighs.

The accident changed her circumstances, but she continued to pursue professional goals. Sukhmani encourages people to stay connected, make use of online platforms and remain open to learning and new experiences.

She discovered the National Abilympics online and saw an opportunity to demonstrate her massage therapy skills. Joining through a wildcard entry, she is preparing for her first competition. Training has introduced her to new techniques and helped strengthen her professional abilities.

Before the accident, she was crowned Ms. Fresher at two colleges. Later, the Pyaras India Charity Foundation honoured her on stage for her speech, an experience that renewed her confidence.

Sukhmani hopes to win Gold at the Abilympics and eventually establish her own massage therapy centre. She also wants employers and society to recognise people for their skills and work, rather than make assumptions about what disability means they can achieve.

SHEETAL LEMBHE

18 | FROM HOTEL HOUSEKEEPING TO THE NATIONAL PODIUM

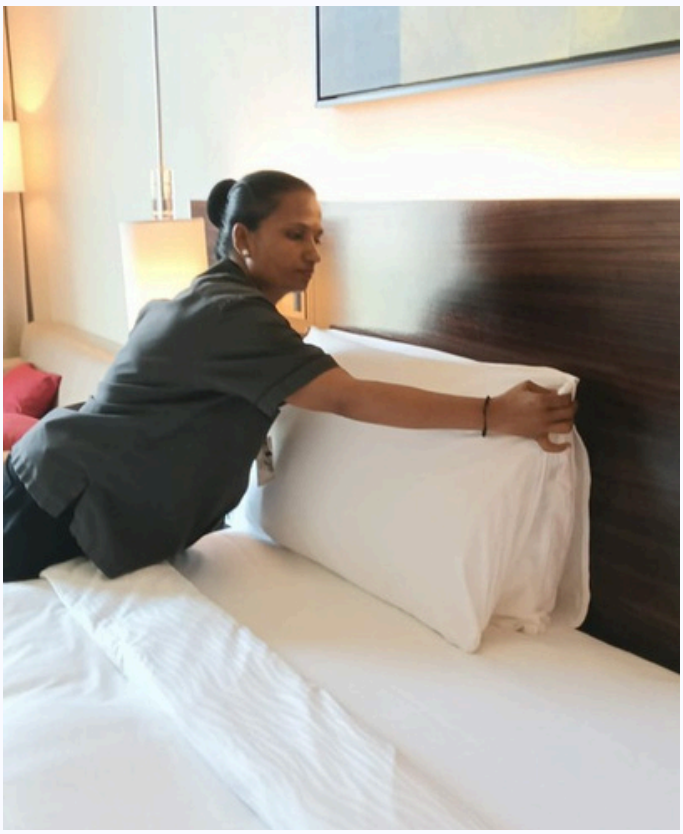
Sheetal Lembhe of Pune works as a Housekeeping Associate in a hotel while continuing her education. A person with hearing impairment, she is focused on professional growth and building an independent life.

Communication barriers have sometimes made education and everyday interactions difficult. After completing Class 12, Sheetal continued her studies alongside work. Following her divorce, she made a conscious decision to focus on her career and strengthen her independence.

Her workplace manager introduced her to NAAI and encouraged her to enter the Cleaning Service category. With support from experienced mentors, NAAI and her workplace, she prepared through regular practice and improved her skills and performance.

Sheetal placed second at the Regional Abilympics and went on to win first place at the National Abilympics in Delhi. She now hopes to represent India at the International Abilympics. The national achievement has given her recognition and a renewed sense of direction as she continues to build her career.





RUPA BHANUSHALI

19 | ENGINEERING EXPERTISE, INDEPENDENTLY FORGED

Rupa Bhanushali was born in Ashapar, a small village in Kutch, Gujarat, and grew up in a farming family. Although her parents had limited formal education, they consistently encouraged her to study. A severe illness during infancy permanently affected one of her legs, but she continued to pursue her ambitions.



After the family moved to Valsad, Rupa completed a Diploma in Mechanical Engineering and entered a field not commonly chosen by women with disabilities. She now works as a Project Manager at Ambition Marine, contributing to shipbuilding design and mechanical drawings.

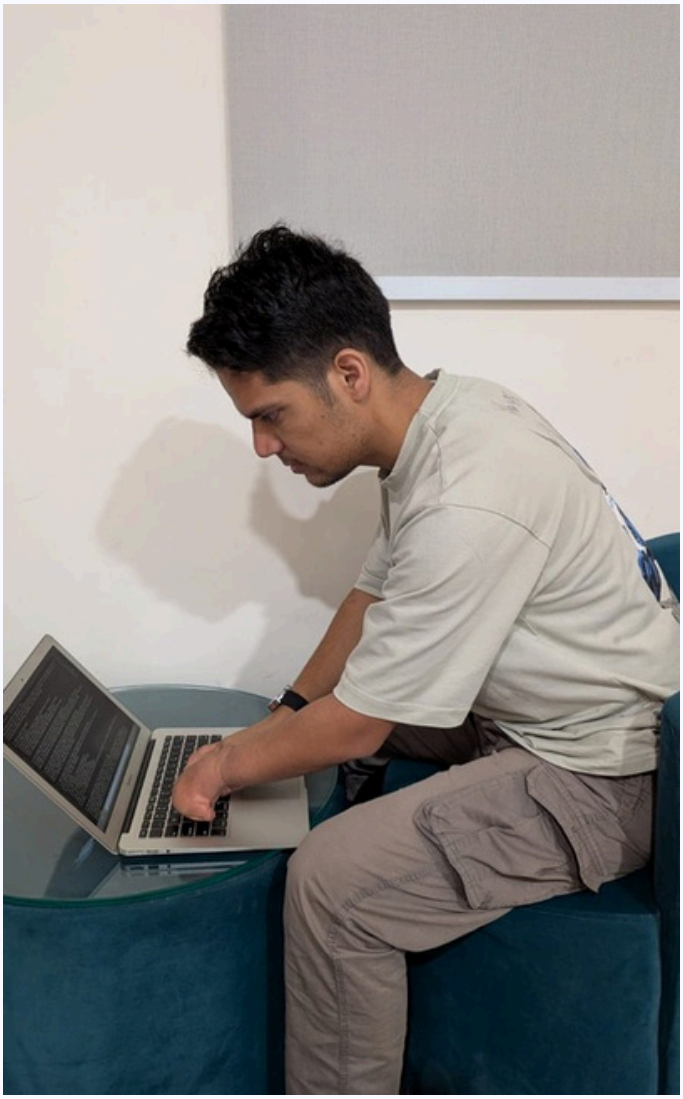
Rupa is also raising her son independently following the end of her marriage, balancing professional responsibilities with family commitments. A friend introduced her to the Abilympics organised by NAAI and Sarthak Educational Trust. Participating for the first time in 2025, she chose Engineering CAD. The software was new to her, so she arranged coaching and practised late into the night alongside work and family responsibilities.



Her efforts earned Gold in Engineering CAD at both the Regional and National Abilympics 2025. Rupa hopes to win Gold for India internationally and encourage more women with disabilities to pursue technical and professional careers.

PANKAJ SAINI

20 | COMPUTING AT THE FRONTIERS OF RESEARCH



Pankaj Saini's career in scientific research grew from a strong commitment to education. A scientist at CSIR–National Institute of Data Science and AI (CSIR-NIDSA), Bengaluru, he works in High-Performance Computing, Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning and scientific research.

Born with a locomotor disability, Pankaj has no fingers on his left hand and three underdeveloped fingers on his right. He grew up in a joint family with limited financial resources and saw education as central to building his future. Despite practical challenges and limited facilities during his schooling in Jaipur, he remained focused and cleared the Joint Entrance Examination, securing admission to IIT Delhi. He completed both B.Tech. and M.Tech. degrees in Computer Science.

After beginning his career in the IT industry, Pankaj joined CSIR and developed expertise in advanced computing and research. His recognitions include the Dhirubhai Foundation Award, the Rajasthan Laptop Award for being among the top one per cent of students, second position in the TISS Social Venture Challenge and TechTop NIC Tamil Nadu, and selection among the Top 15 at APU NSEIC. He also cleared UGC-NET/JRF on his first attempt and has presented research at international conferences.

Introduced to NAAI by a friend, Pankaj entered Computer Programming and won Gold at both the Regional and National Abilympics. He hopes to continue contributing to research and technological innovation, while encouraging young persons with disabilities—particularly those from economically weaker backgrounds—to pursue education and meaningful careers.

MUKESH KUMAR

21 | FROM PARA SPORT TO PUBLIC SERVICE



Mukesh Kumar from Patna, Bihar, has pursued opportunities across education, sport, technology and public service. Living with polio and using a wheelchair, he faced accessibility barriers during childhood. Difficulties with commuting and inaccessible school infrastructure affected regular attendance, so he completed much of his education through distance learning.

With family support, Mukesh completed a Bachelor's degree and a Master of Computer Applications. His mother, who encouraged his education, passed away during the COVID-19 pandemic; her support remains an important source of inspiration.

After college, he explored competitive sport and won silver and bronze medals in Para Dragon Boat Racing at the IDBF International World Championship in Thailand. In 2021, he joined Sarthak Educational Trust and became associated with competitions organised by NAAI.

Competing in Data Processing, Mukesh won Silver at the Regional Abilympics and Gold at the National Abilympics 2024. He is undergoing advanced online training through Sarthak and NAAI for the International Abilympics 2027 in Finland.

He has also achieved a long-held ambition by securing an appointment as a government teacher in Bihar. Alongside teaching, he is preparing for the civil services and hopes to support students through education.

MOHAN EKAMBARAM

22 | COMPUTER SKILLS, SELF-EMPLOYMENT AND INDEPENDENCE

Mohan Ekambaram, from Sholinghur near Chennai, Tamil Nadu, has built a livelihood through computer skills and self-employment. A first-generation graduate with a congenital leg impairment, he grew up in a weaver's family and lost his father at a very young age.

His mother worked as a weaver to support his education despite severe financial hardship. With her encouragement, Mohan completed his studies and became a graduate. Today, he is the sole breadwinner for his family and is motivated by the desire to provide his children with a good education.

Finding suitable employment was difficult, and available opportunities offered limited pay. Mohan taught himself computer skills and established a self-employment venture, creating a livelihood through his own abilities.

He became associated with NAAI in 2007. Training, guidance and competition helped him develop his Word Processing skills and gain recognition at national and international levels. He won Gold at the National Abilympics in New Delhi and has earned several medals through national competitions. His record also notes that he participated as a seventh international participant.



For Mohan, the Abilympics have supported professional development and financial independence. He remains grateful for the training and mentorship and hopes to represent India in future international competitions.