

Bharti Foundation to set up primary schools for underprivileged children in rural areas of West Bengal

Hon'ble Union Minister of Finance Mr. Pranab Mukherjee unveils the initiative; lays foundation stone for the Satya Bharti School in Murshidabad

- 10 Satya Bharti primary schools to be set up, which will benefit over 2100 children.
- Satya Bharti Schools will offer free quality education, including text books, uniform and mid day meals to children from the poorest community
- Innovative curriculum with focus on English language and computer based learning
- Schools will employ 60 teachers, who will be recruited from within the local communities and receive training

Kolkata, November 22, 2009: Bharti Foundation, the philanthropic arm of the Bharti group, today announced that it will set up 10 primary schools for underprivileged children in rural West Bengal under its flagship Satya Bharti School Program. The Hon'ble Union Minister of Finance, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee today unveiled the initiative and laid the foundation stone for the Satya Bharti School in Murshidabad, West Bengal. Mr. Rakesh Bharti Mittal, Vice-Chairman and Managing Director, Bharti Enterprises and Mr. Vijay Chadda, CEO, Bharti Foundation, were also present at the event.

The Satya Bharti School program aims to provide free quality education to underprivileged children in rural India. The Foundation will set up a total of 10 Satya Bharti Primary Schools in West Bengal that will reach out to over 2100 children and employ 60 teachers, recruited from the local communities, with a focus on women teachers.

On the occasion Mr. Rakesh Bharti Mittal said, *“The Satya Bharti School Program aims to address the need for quality education in rural India and help underprivileged children reach beyond their limited means to participate in the country’s growth story. We hope that our initiative in West Bengal will benefit thousands of underprivileged children and help them realize their true potential.”*

Over the next few years, Bharti Foundation plans to set up 500 Satya Bharti Primary Schools and 50 Senior Secondary Schools that will reach out to over 200,000 children at full capacity, in villages across India. Of this, 236 primary schools have already been set up in the first phase of operations, across the states of Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, with approximately 30,000 children and over 1000 teachers.

The Satya Bharti School Program aims to provide free quality education to underprivileged children in the deepest rural pockets of the country, with special focus on the girl child. Books, uniforms and mid-day meals are also provided to students free of cost. Local youth are also provided employment opportunities as teachers in these schools and Bharti makes considerable investment in their training and development.

The Satya Bharti School Program has been making considerable amount of positive impact in the communities in which it works. . Parents of students have expressed their satisfaction at the way their children are taught at the Satya Bharti Schools. They have reported that their children are making an effort to speak in English and also are familiar with Computer-aided learning as a part of their daily lessons.

About Bharti Foundation

Bharti Enterprises set up Bharti Foundation in 2000 to help underprivileged children and young people of our country realize their potential. Bharti Foundation has been creating and supporting programs that bring about sustainable improvement in the field of education - both primary and higher education. The Foundation has adopted a two-pronged strategy to make a difference in the quality of elementary education in the country through its Satya Bharti School Program. In addition to the above two flagship programs Bharti Foundation has also initiated and set up 26 Bharti Computer Centres and 104 Bharti Library and Activity Centres (BLAC) across the country and partnered with premier institutes like the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi in 2000 to set up the Bharti School of Telecommunication Technology and Management, IIT Delhi. It has also entered into a partnership with IIT, Bombay to set up the Bharti Centre for Communication, Bombay. The Bharti Scholarship and Mentorship program has also been instituted to support academically brilliant students from financially weak backgrounds.