

PREFACE

Today, people from Bihar are the backbone of Indian administrative machinery. They have been doing exceptionally well in the corporate world as well as in different areas of scientific research, medical and engineering. Credit goes to those selfless souls who truly cared about serving the society and worked tirelessly to upgrade the lives of people around them.

Towards the end of the 20th century, certain people took it upon themselves to prepare the future generations of Bihar to meet the challenges of globalisation as well as to make the most of the opportunities it was supposed to bring to the country.

There was a new awakening. Bihar witnessed yet another phase of reform – introduction of English medium schools imparting modern education. Everyone who decided to make a contribution did it for self satisfaction... no matter whether they belonged to a princely state... or came from a family that has been producing top professionals for generations.

As we are approaching the end of the first quarter of the 21st century, we decided to look for those unsung heroes and document their efforts for posterity. We travelled the length-and-breadth of Bihar and came across several individuals who braved the challenges and continued the mission. We zeroed in on indigenously developed CBSE-affiliated schools and selected one top institution from each district.

This book, "Educational Alchemists: Transforming Bihar's Districts," celebrates the legacy of twenty visionary educators who transformed socio-economic conditions in their neighbourhood through quality education.

As you flip through pages of the book, you will come across stories of several real life heroes including someone who was a UGC scholar with a PhD degree at an early age of 23 but decided to forego a lucrative career in research and academics to serve the society. The book also traces the cases of top corporate professionals who quit their jobs to give positive direction to hundreds of youth in small towns. While certain edupreneurs came forward and established quality schools offering modern education, several educationists also resigned from top institutions in big cities and returned home to serve children in their neighbourhood.

We present this book to you with great expectations that it will help shine a light on such a dynamic region of India, demonstrating that the challenges and opportunities confronting Bihar are unique and worthy of discussion by academics, businesses and governments.

—IMRAN MOJIB

FOREWORD

**“Education is not merely the imparting of knowledge;
it is the key to unlocking the vast potential within every individual!”**



Ashit Kukian
CEO, Radio City

As we delve into the pages of 'Educational Alchemists Transforming Bihar's Districts,' we embark on a journey through the educational landscape of Bihar, a state committed to the transformative power of learning.

Over the past decade, Bihar has witnessed a remarkable shift in its approach to education. The rise of private schools has played a pivotal role in shaping the educational narrative, offering not just classrooms but vibrant spaces where young minds can thrive and evolve. In this Coffee Table Book, we celebrate these institutions that have become beacons of quality education, providing a platform for holistic development.

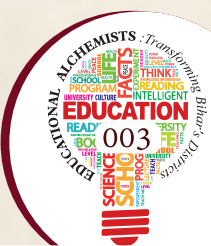
Each school featured in these pages represents more than just an institution; it symbolises a commitment to nurturing young talents, fostering a globally-inclusive community, and providing endless extracurricular opportunities for character development. These educational alchemists are moulding the future of Bihar, one student at a time.

However, we must acknowledge the challenges that persist. Disparities in infrastructure, varying student-teacher ratios, and the quest for quality education create concerns for parents seeking the best for their children. This book serves not only as a tribute to the achievements of these schools but also as a guide for parents navigating the important decision of choosing the right educational path for their wards.

Our Radio City team has embarked on an initiative to showcase a visual and editorial journey through the rich history and legacy of these schools. This book is our effort to honour and showcase the dedication and passion of educators who play a pivotal role in shaping the future of Bihar.

May this compilation serve as a source of inspiration and information, igniting conversations that transcend words. Let us collectively strive towards a future where every child in Bihar has access to quality education, unlocking their limitless potential.

— **Ashit Kukian**
CEO, Radio City





I wanted the parents to know about the future, at least the market demand in the next few years. Parents must realise what will be the scenario when their children will come out of the school, so that they work on their children's education.

– Ranjeet Kumar

LAURELS

- 2016** : Students won accolades at the 18th Junior State Fencing Championship.
- 2022** : National School Award 2022 for Educational Excellence.
- 2022** : Icons of Asia's Edupreneur Director of the Year Award to Ranjeet Kumar.
- 2023** : International School Award 2023 for School with Most Qualifying Faculty to Executive Director of the school Ranjeet Kumar.
- 2023** : Govt of India's Department of Science & Technology presented Inspire Award to Grade 8th student Kriti Kumari for her science project.
- 2024** : Rajesh Kumar, Ankit Kumar and Adarsh Pankaj won Bronze Medal while representing Bihar in Under-14 National Fencing Championship organised by the School Games Federation of India (SGFI).
- 2024** : Ex-student Shivam Kumar won Bronze Medal in Under-19 National Fencing Championship.

get much attention as Dr S P Singh was busy establishing and managing a homeopathic medical college in Motihari. The school's growth started in 2003 when Dr S P Singh's elder son Prakash Arun took charge of the school, which was running up to primary level till then. He upgraded it to middle school. Soon it was raised to secondary and senior secondary level. The school was affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), New Delhi, up to Class 10 in 2012. The affiliation was

further extended up to Class 12 in 2014. The school suffered an immense setback when Prakash Arun passed away suddenly.

To save the legacy, school chairman Dr S P Singh asked his son-in-law Ranjeet Kumar to take charge of the institution. An alumnus of the Indian Institute of Management Calcutta (IIMC), Kumar was working as Asst. Vice-President at American Express, the multinational financial services corporation.

For him it was an opportunity and challenge, both. It offered him an opportunity to give back to the society in terms of guiding the future generations to scale greater heights in academic life and professional career, a cause he was passionate about. However, it was a challenge to put his vision into practice due to the socio-economic conditions in Motihari.

Making sudden changes was not possible. He set a timeline to put the school in the forefront by 2025. The pandemic caused by Covid-19 came as a boon. Several teaching and non-teaching staff as well as students left the school during the pandemic that helped him make a fresh start to turn it into a modern institution.

Holistic Development

Ranjeet Kumar said that education does not mean good results in board exams only. A school is the place for holistic development of students. To achieve it, he wanted to make grassroots change. For this, he needed support from parents as well. But he realised that there was a communication gap between parents and the school. He spent some time understanding the parents' inclination and what was being offered by the school. Later, he also realised that there was a gap between the parents' awareness and the global trend.

Dr S P Singh





Talking about the future of school education and how Arya Vidyapith is taking care of futuristic education now to have employable youth of the future in 5-10 years, Kumar said that he has introduced Robotics, Artificial Intelligence and foreign language Japanese.

“I was wondering why no school in Bihar was teaching AI, despite the fact that the CBSE had introduced it in 2018-19. So I introduced it from the session 2023-24. I wanted to introduce it much earlier, but it was a challenge to find a good teacher for AI. I introduced it with a gut feeling that when you make a good start, good people join you.”

He pointed out that getting a good teacher for AI was not the only challenge. He paid equal attention while selecting teachers for other subjects as well. Today about 90 per cent of the teachers are from other states. The school has six engineers who are teaching Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, Robotics and AI.

“Parents were surprised when we introduced AI. They didn't appreciate it, because they were not aware of it. But I continued my efforts and after AI, I also introduced Robotics, Entrepreneurship and Japanese language.”

Arya Vidyapith is perhaps the only school in Bihar to have Japanese as the third language in class 6-8. Usually French and German are taught in metro cities.

“Japanese or any other foreign language can't be the primary skill, it will be only a secondary skill, a supportive skill.”

Ranjeet Kumar himself teaches Japanese. “I have studied Japanese and have spent a few years in Japan. I have introduced it because I know the importance of Japanese giving a boost to professional careers. But educational material is not easily available. I have written to The Japan Foundation – an arm of Japan Govt Culture Promotion and they have agreed to send some educational films for now.”

Another unique aspect of the school is teaching Entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship classes are also conducted by Ranjeet Kumar.

This extraordinary step has made a significant impact on the students. Learning a new subject from someone who was highly successful in his professional career has given a major boost to the children's confidence. They are encouraged to experiment, follow a new path and achieve greater heights in their professional life.

Ranjeet Kumar's efforts have made an impact. “Recently, when a media team visited our school, one of the girl students replied that she doesn't want to do a regular job. She is planning to have her own startup and work on metaverse. Her dream is to launch her own metaverse wedding platform and make youngsters attend the wedding ceremony of their parents, which is possible through metaverse,” said Kumar.

Personalised Counseling

Ranjeet Kumar also offers career counseling to students of Class 8 onwards. He also uses this opportunity to identify the intelligence of individual students and provides them personalised counseling.

There is a brilliant girl student who wanted to pursue a career in Chartered Accountancy. She is the daughter of a rickshaw-puller and spending on her higher education is virtually impossible.

"I called her parents and advised them to let her pursue her dreams. She wanted to pursue a career in Chartered Accountancy. But I advised her to look for a degree from IIM. Prepare for the five year Integrated Programme in Management (IPM) offered by various IIMs. Agreed, it is not easy to meet the IIM's fee structure, but there are banks ready to give education loans if anyone cracks for the admission in IIMs. Hope she will have a fulfilling career," he added.

Focus on Sports

I have been focussing on sports because I believe that sports make you mentally fit more than physically fit. That is very important. It helps you overcome failure in life. Several researches have shown that losing games is important for children because it teaches them to show empathy and cope with the experience of losing. Sports help them learn that losing and winning is a part of the game. It eventually prepares them for bigger challenges in life.

In recent times, suicide rate in students has increased substantially. A major reason is that they are cut off from sports and worldly life in their efforts to crack entrance tests to various top institutions. They were habitual of winning in the school where they had to compete with a limited number of students. When they step out of the school and face stiff challenges from hundreds of thousands of students from across India they fail to overcome it.

"For girls, especially adolescent girls, khokho is a wonderful game. I started it at school and later

popularised it outside as well. Recently our school's boys team won the district level championship, and the girls team stood second. Fencing is another game our students are doing very well. Recently a boy and a girl participated in a national level championship and won a gold medal."

Experiential Learning

Site-seeing and excursions are other important extracurricular activities conducted by the school. But these excursions are not just picnic trips for the students. These trips form a part of experiential learning. Before conducting a site visit, a teacher visits the site and looks for various aspects of learning. During visits they are told to take notes, during the returning journey the teacher conducts a quiz. It is fun learning.

"We are going from rote learning to experiential learning. Field trips are an important source to achieve it," said Ranjeet Kumar.

Parents do not know that every child is gifted and every child has eight multiple intelligences, out of which one is up with two supportive intelligences. Good teachers know that and they keep looking for the strong side of every student.

"Our students have been selected to participate in the Sand Rover competition organised by Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur for students wherever Robotics is being taught. We are the only ones from Bihar. Whether the students win a prize or not, their participation in such a big competition itself is an achievement."

"Now, I can say that we can compete with any school in academics and personality development," he concluded.



**and
the journey
continues ...**



