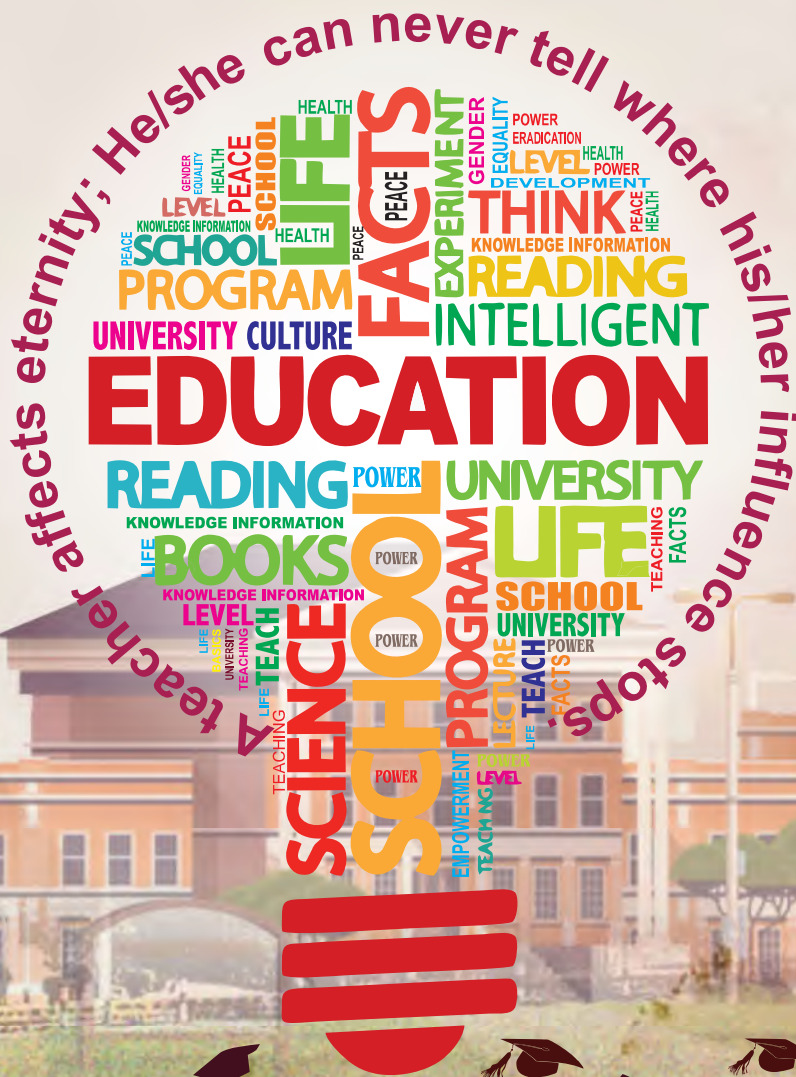




PRESENTS

EDUCATIONAL ALCHEMISTS

Transforming Bihar's Districts

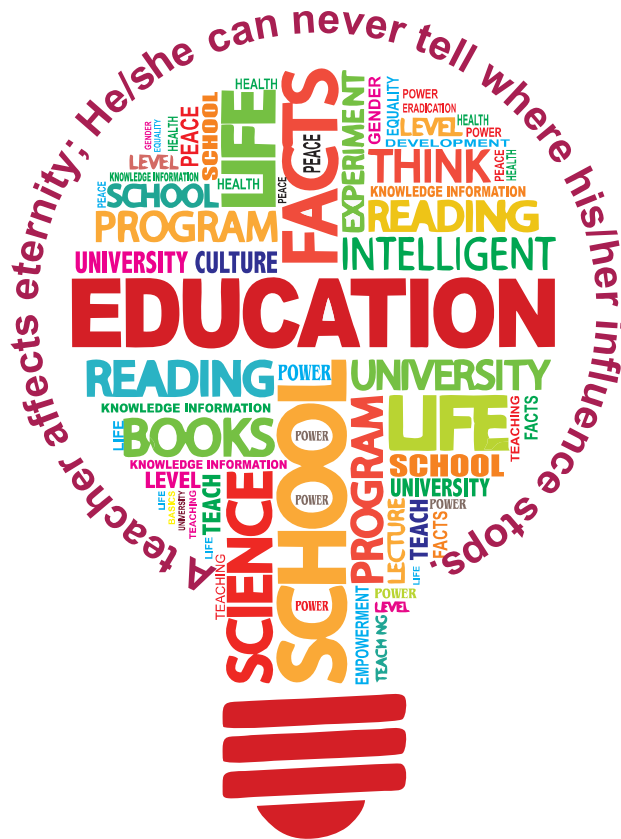




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This inspirational book is a biographical narrative that reveals the unique thought process, grand vision, untiring efforts and enthralling anecdotes of top achievers in the field of private education in Bihar.

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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



Bibhuti Bhushan Jha

Fostering Culture of Peace Through Education



Shanti Mission Academy, Saharsa, has carved a niche for itself by offering modern approaches to teaching that helps students accomplish worldly goals along with the challenges of achieving peace

The practice of learning and scholarship in Bihar got a spark when people of eminence realised the forthcoming challenges of the 21st century and that children in the state are losing fast to the world. Thus, the last decade of the 20th century saw the emergence of new English-medium schools across Bihar to prepare the next generation to regain their lost place in education.

It opened new vistas for educators. Some of them took even greater leaps as they left the classroom to become entrepreneurs and launched their own institutions for greater freedom to serve the society.

One of them was Bibhuti Bhushan Jha, founder of the Shanti Mission Academy in Saharsa, who decided to retire from teaching and build his own educational institution to have a broader impact on education as a whole. He believed in himself, trusted his gut, and never allowed anyone to tell him that he can't do something.

After spending a few years working as a high school teacher in Patna, he realised the power of education and decided to take a chance on his skills. He started the BPL Public School in Patna in 1995. Within a few short years, he turned it into a reputed institution offering modern education up to Class 12.



- 2009** : Shanti Mission Academy was established in Saharsa with academic facilities from Nursery to Class 8.
- 2010** : The CBSE New Delhi granted affiliation up to Class 10.
- 2012** : The CBSE affiliation was extended up to Class 12.
- 2012** : First batch appeared for the Class 10th examinations.
- 2014** : First batch appeared for the Class 12 examinations.

During a visit to Saharsa, his hometown, Jha realised the need of a good educational institution in his ancestral place that could continue to impact the education ecosystem in all ways.

“People in Saharsa had no idea about an English medium school's impact on children. They had no vision of what a school affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), New Delhi, could offer to its students. When I went there and discussed with people in Saharsa, they welcomed me with open arms.

Soon, he got a huge plot of land on lease to construct the school building as per the norms set by the CBSE, New Delhi. Since his school in Patna was doing well, he dedicated his energy to establish the school in

offering a quality education. People gave full co-operation.

The Mission

The school was established with the aim to help students discover life's purpose and prepare them to meet the challenges of life. To make it a lifelong mission, Jha adopted the name Shanti Mission from the weekly 'Shanti Mission Prakriya' a meditational practice that helps discover life's purpose and experience more peace in life.

Academic activities at the Shanti Mission Academy in Saharsa started in 2009. Usually, new schools start with limited academic activities serving students from Nursery to Class 5. But considering the need over there, the school admitted students from Nursery to Class 8. As the school was well-equipped, the CBSE, New Delhi, granted affiliation up to Class 10 in the year 2010. The affiliation was extended up to Class 12 in 2012. However, the first batch appeared for the Class 10th examinations conducted by the CBSE in 2012 and the first batch appeared for the Class 12 examinations in 2014.

“Since it was the first private school in Saharsa, several people discouraged me and said that it was bound to fail because parents used to send their wards to government schools as they were getting benefitted from various schemes run by the government. On the contrary, I was about to open the first private school, where parents had to pay for





their children's education. But there were several others who understood the worth of a quality school and encouraged me to go ahead," he said.

Despite being the first English medium school in Saharsa, finding good teachers was not a challenge. Bibhuti Bhushan Jha said that when he started the school in Saharsa, a Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya and a Kendriya Vidyalaya were operational in town. Both the schools are affiliated to the CBSE, New Delhi, and run by the central government for talented students predominantly from rural areas in India, targeting gifted students as well as catering to the educational needs of children of transferable employees of the Government of India.

"Most of the teachers employed at the Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya and the Kendriya Vidyalaya belonged to other states. While they were in the schools, their spouses were free. I invited them to join the Shanti Mission Academy. Existence of those two schools proved to be helpful," he added.

It is a fact that students in the rural areas perform poorly in English compared to their urban counterparts. Thus special arrangements were made to prepare them to achieve a satisfactory level as soon as possible. The school had to resort to using transcription and translation methods. But it was a lengthy process. Later, the school adopted functional grammar. It helped a lot.

"We believe that our students deserve quality education in an environment which is structured, disciplined, challenging, stimulating and caring. We provide a challenging and stimulating environment to facilitate the intellectual, creative, social, emotional and personal development of our students," said Bibhuti Bhushan Jha.

"We keep monitoring every student. Weak students are given special classes to make them equal to other students. Similarly, we also monitor bright students. We give them extra classes and prepare them to achieve success in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities as well. Those who wish to remain focused on studies and target stellar performance in exams, they are given special treatments to achieve the same."

Holistic Development

The school has taken several initiatives to ensure holistic development of the students. It implemented various proposals made by policymakers as part of the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020).

"Some of them are very promising. We have also implemented various steps suggested by the policymakers including upgradation of schools, initiative for proficiency in reading with understanding and numeracy, online education, as well as placement of digital infrastructure for

ACHIEVEMENTS

1. 100 % result in Class 10th and 12th board exams
2. Winner Veergatha 2.0 (organised by CBSE).
3. Winner Pariksha Pe Charcha 2023 (organised by CBSE).
4. Winner district level yoga participation 2023.
5. Winner district level khel pratiyogita 2023.
6. Winner under-17 kabaddi 2023 (district cup tournament)
7. Various state championship medal in sports tournament
8. Winner under-14 kabaddi 2023 (district cup tournament)
9. Various students selected for national games, national quiz, science exhibition.
10. Lotan Kumar participated in state level Kushti 2021.
11. Aman Kumar Thakur selected for School Games Federation of India National Games 2023.



knowledge sharing. New policy on weight of school bags with focus on reducing the weight of school bags has been discussed,” he said.

Besides the extraordinary academic facilities, the school won the parents' confidence with all the facilities that were needed for a balanced, all round growth of the pupil's personality and unfolding their hidden talents to the fullest capacity. The classrooms are equipped with a variety of visual and audio-visual teaching aids. The school also has well-furnished science laboratories, music and painting rooms, Art & Craft Section, Computer Lab with terminals connected to a server and a rich library that caters to the needs of students of all ages.

“Artificial Intelligence (AI) is the latest thing being introduced at school level. We are in touch with the people who not only set up the AI lab, but also provide good teachers, because just setting up the lab will not fetch good results. Hope we will get it operational by next academic year,” he added,

To ensure overall development of the students, the school also provides all sports facilities, outdoor as well as indoor including basketball, table tennis, and athletics. There are spacious play grounds for all modern sports. Swimming pool is the only thing missing that is due to lack of space.

“As students are doing well in physical education, the school is in the process of setting up a state of the art gym with all facilities,” said Jha.

Challenges

He pointed out that a major problem with the small town schools is to fulfill the basic curricular needs. The school had acquired a plot of land adjacent to the existing school campus to further extend the extracurricular facilities. But the school received a large number of new admission thus the plot of land was used to build extra classrooms to accommodate those students.

The school hosted Bal-Sansad (Child Parliament) twice, which gave students a chance to think about the future. It was loosely based on the internationally practiced format of Model United Nation (MUN) which engages hundreds of thousands of students each year, helping them to learn more about the principles of the UN and how it functions. Many of today's leaders in law, government, business and the arts – including at the UN itself – participated in Model UN as students.

Similarly the Bal Sansad (Child Parliament) was aimed at sharing first-hand knowledge to students about the Indian parliamentary system and its functions by creating accurate and authentic simulations, and encouraging the participants to take concrete action to support the goals set by the government.

Jha appreciated the initiative that recognised the value of the Indian parliament or the legislative assembly simulations and garnering support for

— We are committed to provide quality education to develop the personality of the future citizens of a dynamic and pulsating nation. We make a concrete effort towards the development of academic, sports and other activities to make each of our students a wholesome entity.

— *Bibhuti Bhushan Jha*

cooperation. He lamented that this could not be continued because it needed larger cooperation and enough free time to prepare students for the related activities. It was difficult to continue because parents and students at small town schools remain focused on curricular activities and performances in various tests.

“Not all the policies can be implemented in schools based in the small towns. The policymakers must keep in mind the limitations of school managements in rural areas as well as the mindset of guardians who remain stuck to the old system. These have to be resolved,” said Jha.

Despite these limitations, the school has been continuing to impart quality education to its students, serving the vital needs of the locality.



Stellar performance of its students in the annual examinations conducted by the CBSE, New Delhi, is a testament. Students of the Shanti Mission School, Saharsa, have been securing the top positions in the board examinations every year in the Kosi region.

“Going by our commitment to serve the region, we are now planning to establish a Nursing college in Saharsa. Establishing a medical college is planned in the next stage,” said Bibhuti Bhushan Jha.



**and
the journey
continues ...**

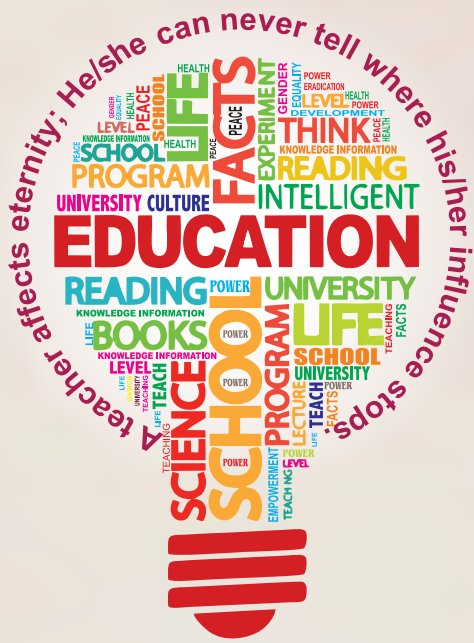




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