



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



Dr Harendra Singh

Central Public School, Chapra

Transforming Lives through Quality Education



Right education can lift people from poverty, improve their health issues, financial crisis, ultimately it can change their lives.

Established with this noble thought, the Central Public School, Chapra, has become an institute of eminence

In the words of the late President of India Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, "Almost half of the population of the world lives in rural regions and mostly in a state of poverty. Such inequalities in human development have been one of the primary reasons for unrest and in some parts of the world, even violence."

Dr Harendra Singh, a Chapra-based educationist and an ardent admirer of Dr Kalam, agreed with his observation in letter and spirit. He says that a close look at the scenario in Bihar will reflect that almost 80% of the poor live in rural areas. Thus, significant efforts must be made for revival and progress of the rural area.

"Transformational change in rural areas is only possible by linking education to such areas. In a world based on science and technology, it is education that determines the level of prosperity, welfare and security of the people," he said.

It was the same ethos that guided him to make a humble beginning by establishing the Central Public School in Chapra in 1994. In the three decades since inception, it has become an institute of eminence in the district.

Today, the school has multi-storey buildings with over 100 classrooms all equipped with modern facilities. The school has state-of-the-art smart



classrooms for students, laboratories for science subjects, dedicated laboratory for Artificial Intelligence (AI), Robotics and 3D Printing, besides a rich library. All these facilities cater to a whopping number of over 2,500 students of Nursery to Grade 12.

“I had realised very early in my life that the upliftment of socio-economic status and development of rural areas is possible only through education. Thus, as soon as I completed my higher education, I returned home and established this school,” he said.

Born and brought up in a remote village of Bihar, Dr Harendra Singh went to Raniganj in West Bengal for school education. After passing matriculation in 1982, he came to Patna for higher studies. He earned a graduation degree, followed by completing Post Graduation and MBA in 1988.

This opened the doors to unlimited opportunities. Soon, he got a prestigious job. But he failed to focus on it and realised that his expertise needed to nurture the next generation in his hometown.

Challenges Ahead

However, it was not an easy task. When he shared his wish with parents and the well-wishers, there was a big no from everyone. However, his father was a bit sympathetic. He discussed this with his senior colleagues and asked them to convince the young man to continue with the job which could help him move up the financial and social ladder.

But, those efforts remained futile. On the contrary, Harendra Singh convinced them with his vision and mission.

But, much bigger challenges were waiting for him as he had to start the project from the scratch without any political or financial backing.

Recalling the initial days, he said, “There were very few people who had confidence in my abilities. My friend Murari Singh, who is currently serving the school as its Principal, was one of them. When I asked him to help me in my endeavour, he joined me whole-heartedly. Among others who supported us in this journey without any selfish motives were the school's first principal Meena Singh who oversaw the academic activities and PC Sharma, who set up the base for co-curricular activities in the school.”

“Together we prepared the foundation of an institution that will continue to serve the upcoming generations,” he expressed confidence.

LAURELS

- 2005:** The school's 18 students received President Award by President of India Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam at Bharat Scouts and Guides National Jamboori, Haridwar.
- 2008:** Rashtriya Shiksha Ratan Award to chairman Dr Harendra Singh by Ex Election Commissioner of India GVG Krishnamurthy and Governor of Assam Bhishm Narayan Singh for Individual Contribution for Economic and Social Development at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi.
- 2013:** School Skilling Award at Global Conference Skilling Award by CBSE, New Delhi.
- 2015:** Physics Olympiad Award by National Physics Olympiad at Dr. Homi Jahangir Bhabha Institute, Mumbai.
- 2015:** Om Parvat Award by IG of Sashastra Seema Bal to Dr Harendra Singh.
- 2015:** Best School Award .
- 2017:** Best Teacher Award by Private School & Children Welfare Association, Awarded By Dr. Ashok Chaudhari, Education Minister of Bihar.
- 2017:** Best School in Bihar For Quality Education, Awarded By Dr. Ashok Chaudhari, Education Minister of Bihar
- 2017:** Pride of India Award by Global Achievers Foundation
Award presented by Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand K. Dabbaransi, Princess I. La orgue from France & Ambassador of India Dr. V.B. Soni.
- 2018:** Best School in Bihar 2017 at the International Excellence Award presented by film actress Shilpa Shetti.
- 2018:** Dr. Harendra Singh received the Honorary Doctorate in the Field of Education by Balls Bridge University of Iran, presented by Ambassador of Iran to India Gallamansh Ansari.

Fruits of Success

The humble beginning made with a firm determination started showing results very soon. The school made a steady success. It inspired the founders to acquire a plot of land for the school on the outskirts of Chapra and construct its own building. The school shifted to its own campus in 2003.

“Twenty years ago, this area was not so populated. It used to get completely cut off during monsoon. We had to build a makeshift bridge to connect the school to the city,” Murari Singh, principal, said.

The inaugural function was attended by minister Udit Rai, seasoned politician Prabhunath Singh and District Magistrate Baidyanath Mishra. Impressed by our vision and mission, Prabhunath Singh strongly supported us in the early days. He also helped in development of this area. This encouraged others in the city and neighbourhood to come forward and extend a helping hand for the sake of their future generations.

Today, people get fascinated by the school's multistory building with over 100 classrooms, all equipped with modern facilities, a rich library, science laboratories as well as the AI, Robotics and 3D Lab.

“Constructing a huge building was never the mission, building the next generation of leaders was and remain our sole aim. We continue to do that. Construction of the classrooms and equip it with all modern facilities are necessities to obtain the kind of results we always long for,” he said.

While the management was aware of the importance of lab, library and classrooms, they never ignored the human resources. Harendra Singh said that teaching and learning was never limited to classrooms built of brick-and-mortar, but human resource was always needed.

Thus the management paid special attention to the manpower. Teachers are encouraged to experiment, evolve, and implement newer and better teaching practices, hence making them more responsible and better involved. Further, they undergo different kinds of training conducted by veterans of education sector that nurtures them further.

“We maintain the best policy to retain our teaching and non-teaching staff. The average retention rate is 15 years,” he added.

It was impact of their continued efforts that the school started getting outstanding results in Grade 10 and Grade 12 examinations conducted by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), New Delhi. Most of the students score 90 per cent and above marks in both the examinations, most of the times its students bring laurels to their alma mater by clinching the top ranks in the district every year.

It was result of this phenomenal way of teaching and training that its students felt free to carve a niche for themselves in whatever field they chose to venture into.

Today, there are hundreds of qualified doctors, engineers, banking professionals and administrative officers, while thousands of them chose other fields to make a career including music and acting.

Among the notable alumni were two exceptional students Vikas Kumar Singh and Shweta Singh, son and daughter of the founder chairman. While his son





cracked CAT and studied MBA at a prestigious institute, his daughter has become a doctor. Whereas Ashwini Parmar, son of current principal Murari Singh, has also completed his management education from a prestigious college and serving the school as HR head.

“I wanted to set a precedent. I wanted people to believe in my mission that I will give education to their children as good as I wish for my son and daughter,” he said.

Distinguishing Factors

What made the school outstanding were not just the curricular activities.

“Since we believe in holistic development of every child, co-curricular activities are given equal importance. But above all, it is our training to maintain ethics and values as well as our endeavor to instill love for the motherland and mother nature,” he added.

Today, socio-cultural events in town remain incomplete without participation of its students.

The school has an excellent band of Bharat Scouts and Guides. The school band got an invitation to perform at the Bharat Scouts and Guides National Jamboori in Haridwar. President of India Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam was scheduled to attend the event.

“It was a great occasion. A band of 18 students participated in the event. All 18 students were honoured by the President of India Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, one of whom was my son Vikas Singh, who is now managing the school,” recalled Dr Harendra Singh.

Similarly, the students got another honour when a team of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) came to Chapra as part of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and the school's students joined them. The officers were so impressed that they mentioned it to the higher officials.

“Consequently, they invited us to attend the 52nd Establishment Day of SSB at Ranikhet, Almora, Uttarakhand. But another surprise was waiting. They honoured me as Chief Guest. The IG of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) Shyam Singh Shekhawat also decorated me with the Om Parvat Award,” he reminisced.

Students from the school have been regularly participating in the National Children Science Congress also. Several of them have also won Gold Medal for their projects. In 2022, the team went to Hyderabad and brought Gold Medal. Similarly, the student went to Khelo India and won gold medal in Kabaddi there as well.

Dr Vikas Kumar Singh, the school Manager and Admin Head, said that it is a matter of great pride

**and
the journey
continues ...**

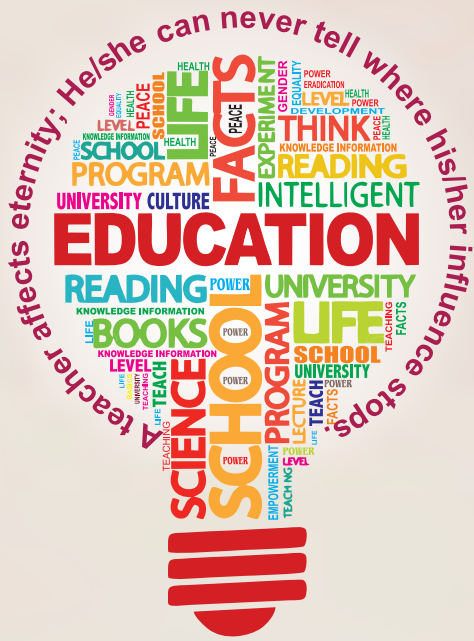




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