

THE DECCAN HERALD, BANGALORE, 29 NOV 2002

Setting an example

Kishanrao Kulkarni

IT comes as no surprise when students shift from schools in villages to those in towns and cities that offer better facilities. But what is surprising is the movement of students from schools in towns to a small school in a village. The Government High School in the Hireharahalli village of Yelburga taluk in Koppal district has been witnessing this reverse phenomenon. The school stands tall conveying a message to all those parents who pay a hefty sum as donation to get their children admitted in private schools that it is not inferior to any private school in the town.

Many students from neighbouring villages and towns have not been sparing efforts to gain admission into this school. There is so much demand these days that students are selected only after being screened through a written test and an interview.

"Though the school is situated in a village, it is no less than any school in the town," says Mr Satyanarayana Angadi. "We used to go to schools in the town to get admission for our children. But people from those towns now come to our village to get their children enrolled here. It is definitely a matter of pride for us," adds Mr Prabhuraja of the Hireharahalli village.

An excellent faculty, the importance attached to co-curricular activities and dissemination of technical knowledge, a beautiful campus, and more importantly the dedication of the teachers are some of the factors that have been responsible for the popularity of the school. "I got my son enrolled in this school last year. His performance has improved so much during this one year," says Mr Devappa from Kushtagi, who is a bank employee.

The pillar of strength here is the teaching faculty of the school. They have always worked hard to give their best to the school. They take special classes on Sundays for students who are weak in academics. They also organise programmes for the benefit of students during the vacation. A 'Save environment' campaign that was undertaken last year during summer vacation gained recognition throughout the state. The 'Pustaka Bikshe' programme initiated by them was also an instant hit. The books that were catching dust in the shelves were finally of some help to those who actually needed them. The students were extremely happy to have access



Students from neighbouring towns and villages are rushing to the Government High School in Hireharahalli because of its unique teaching programme.

KISHANRAO KULKARNI finds out

to these books. The 'Kaun Banega Padaka Pati' scheme was another initiative by them to encourage students to perform well in their exams.

The students are also involved in many co-curricular activities after the school hours. They are required to collect data about various species of flora and fauna that are on the verge of extinction, unique seedlings, storage of rain water and the existing forms of folk art in their village. The information thus recorded was not just for their use, but for creating awareness among villagers. After learning about this experiment, the Indian Institute of Science sent a team headed by Dr Madhav Gadgil to record the data because it was found to be helpful for research purposes. The Institute has also sanctioned a Taluk Centre for Science at the village.

The students are also trained in farming. Experts in this field are invited to deliver lectures and conduct seminars for the same. The students are in turn required to share this knowledge

with local farmers.

"As long as the teachers are dedicated to their profession and are willing to work hard, there is nothing that can stop us from moving ahead," says Headmaster Ramesh Gowda Patel with immense confidence. He also acknowledges the contribution of the former

Headmaster H Pratappa Somashekar Gowda in the development of the school.

The Department of Education has recognised the contribution of the school and declared the Centre for Science in the village as a model institution. They have also felicitated three teachers from the school for their services.



Top: Students of the Government High School at Hireharahalli in a discussion

Above: A laboratory run by the students at the school