

Learning to teach...



Teach India campaign has generated ripples among those who want to do something for society...
avers Prathamesh Jadhav

“I learned Pythagoras theorem all over again. Wow! I am retrieving some of the basic mathematics from the hard disk of my memory. And guess what? I am revisiting some mathematical lanes I had left behind many years ago,” says Anandi Joshi, 34, a housewife who is totally engrossed in teaching some underprivileged kids in Andheri.. Anandi, a mathematics graduate is one of the many people who are part of the Teach India campaign, an initiative taken by The Times of India. A move, many people consider as the best thing to have happened to our society, where thousands are willing to lend their service of teaching to underprivileged children without charging a single penny.

“Vidyadhanam sarvadhanam pradhanam [knowledge is the most valuable asset] a line painted on one of the classroom walls grabs your attention, where Megha 14, a garland maker comes every weekend to get mathematics lesson from Anandi. Dressed in green salwaar kameez and a small jute bag slung around her shoulder Megha lost her father when she was all four, her mother raised Megha by serving as a domestic help in the neighborhoods. Megha had to enter into garland making to support her mother in raising two more brothers. Megha had to skip school. But when she heard about Teach India campaign from one of the customer, she immediately rolled in her name for the same. “I had to leave my school when I was in fourth, but today I feel so happy to come here, where I get to learn mathematics, English, Marathi, Hindi, history and science every weekend,” says Megha, with an unparalleled elation on her face, which is hard to go unnoticed. “My mother cannot afford to educate me, because I need to be home to make garlands and gajra but my mother is also happy about the fact that I am getting the lesson for which I have to come only three days a week on those days my brothers look after the job,” Megha shares her dilemma. In asking whether she would also rope in her brothers in to get some schooling lesson? “When I go home I share what I have learnt with them one of my brothers is planning to join with me,” says Megha as she gets busy getting her home work checked.

In our country where millions of kids can't afford even primary schooling. Let alone higher studies. Though government is making every possible attempt like Sarv Shiksha Abhiyaan

and free education for girls, even primary education is available at a nominal cost, many don't go to school. Many poor kids would rather work to survive rather than going to school. Instinct of survival prevails over the instinct to aspire. To add to this there is a large number of students who have to quit schooling in order to sustain their livings and to support their families. In this scenario a single thought like Teach India campaign when materializes can create wonder. Today many housewives, college goers, working professionals can select a venue as per their choice, conveniently located nearby their house or near their workplace, can select convenient timings on particular days of the week to teach the subject of their choice to some unfortunate kids. It's also easy on kids as they can get their lessons from young, dynamic students who they can relate to easily. Many poor kids working in hotels or some small scale industry to fill their bellies, would not reveal their identity with a constant fear that they would be framed under anti-child labor act say it's because of Teach India Campaign they can learn today and can aspire to become big. It's a platform that should have come long back. Nevertheless! Better late than never!

“I feel more responsible as part of society. Because today I can contribute and give little I can offer to these kids it's kind of my small return to society which gave me so much,” says Hrishita Das, final year advertising student, who joined Teach India campaign and today happy volunteering for it. “I was so impressed and inspired with the response this campaign saw, that I enrolled my mother and my friends and we all enjoy our share of social responsibility, it's quite an experience.” There are thousands of college students who have taken keen interest in Teaching India and it's great to see that people of every age from different walks of life giving the best they can. Knowledge! “But there is one concern which can not be overlooked,” says Hrishita “people especially youngster should continue to serve to this noble cause. This spirit and enthusiasm must sustain throughout. This campaign should not be seen as a passing fad.”

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