

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Gyan Kiran, a 'ray' of hope

Initiated in February 2012, Gyan Kiran today is giving a new meaning to the lives of several underprivileged. By imparting education and vocational training, this NGO is assisting many to become self-reliant.

VOLUNTARILY rendering her services in UK for five years, Kalyani Saxena never had an idea that she would be serving the economically weaker section of the society in Ghaziabad one day. "When I came here I saw several little kids wandering on streets, wasting their time. Most of the women were not self-dependent and were falling prey to the everyday exploitation. I decided to do something for their betterment," said Kalyani Saxena, founder, Gyan Kiran.

Soon, Kalyani constituted a team of amateur social workers and went to Makanpur village. Initially, due to space constraints, the NGO operated from the tree in the village. Herein, some children were provided basic education and women were given vocational training. "It was a challenge for us to convince the families in this slum cluster to be a part of our literacy and self-reliant programme. However, sooner several kids and ladies started joining us. Some came after personal counselling. At present, we have 35 kids who are getting education from our NGO," added Kalyani.

Slowly and gradually, things started falling in place and now, the meal is also arranged from a nearby house as mid-day meal. Thus, the children get home cooked proper food. The women here were recently provided with sewing machine for self-employment. "The women are taught to make jute bags and paper envelopes as a part of their vocational training. These are then distributed free of cost to various shopkeepers and vendors in the city to



save earth. We are also talking to several industrialists and factory owners in the city for providing jobs to these women once they complete their training," revealed Kalyani.

Within the duration of 10 months, Gyan Kiran has started making small but effective impacts. The children, who initially could not even speak counting till 20 and about *K, kha, Ga* are now learning to make two to three alphabet words and have become proficient in addition and subtraction sums. "A 10-year-old girl Mohini used to take care of her one-year-old sister as her mother went out for her job. She was ruining her entire childhood in nurturing the little girl. We asked her mother to send her to our school but the mother said that it wasn't possible as somebody needs to look after the young girl at home. We finally asked that girl to bring her sister along and make her sleep on the cot kept nearby. This way, she was able to take care of her sister and get the valuable education. She is one of the brilliant students, we have been teaching," said Kalyani.



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