

Beyond the Classroom: Buddhabhushan's Beacon of Change



Launched in 2022 and 2023, the Vidyankur Project aimed to transform the educational experience for underprivileged children in Zilla Parishad schools in Kolhapur. The project's mission was clear: to make learning both exciting and meaningful, bringing renewed energy and purpose to students who often faced significant challenges.

In 2023, a dedicated fellow was assigned to Kumar and Kanya Vidya Mandir in Shiradwad as part of the Vidyankur Project. On her first day at Kumar school, she encountered the lively and curious students of Vidyankur's class. While she was familiar with the teachers, the children were new to her.

Meeting Buddhabhushan Khadsole

Among the students, one child stood out to the fellow: Buddhabhushan Khadsole. A tall, calm, and understanding boy in Class V, Buddhabhushan immediately captured her attention with his gentle demeanour. When asked, "What is your name, boy?" Buddhabhushan replied with hesitance. Despite the fellow's unfamiliarity with his speech patterns, Buddhabhushan's repeated introduction, coupled with the laughter of his classmates, showcased his witty and endearing nature. His unconscious smile as he responded left a lasting impression.


Overcoming Challenges

Through various activities designed to get to know the children better, the fellow learned about Buddhabhushan's challenging family situation. Living with five parents and three siblings, the family dynamics were far from ideal. His father bore much of the responsibility alone, while his mother worked at other homes and cared for the children. As the eldest, Buddhabhushan took on significant responsibilities, showing deep care for his younger brothers despite the hardships.

A Moment of Selflessness

During a classmate's birthday celebration, chocolates were distributed to the students. While most children eagerly ate their chocolates, Buddhabhushan saved his, tucking it away in his pocket. When asked why he hadn't eaten it, Buddhabhushan explained, "I'm going to take it home for my little brother. He's still in Kindergarten, and he loves chocolate so much." The fellow was deeply moved by this gesture of selflessness. The genuine affection and concern in Buddhabhushan's eyes highlighted the profound impact of the Vidyankur Project, revealing how a supportive environment could nurture both academic and personal growth.

Recognizing Progress As time went on, Buddhabhushan's academic progress became increasingly apparent. His curiosity, demonstrated by frequent questions like, "Tai, how do we do this? Can we do this?" and his enthusiastic participation were clear indicators of his engagement. His willingness to help others and his consistent smile reflected the meaningful impact of the Vidyankur Project's approach.



Eventually, Buddhabhushan's Ma'am informed the fellow that his progress had been so remarkable that he would advance to study with the other children in the same class. Although the Vidyankur Project typically focused on a separate set of students to improve their grasping capacity, this move was a significant achievement for Buddhabhushan.

Upon learning that he would be leaving the class, Buddhabhushan expressed his reluctance, saying, "Ma'am, I don't want to leave this class." The fellow observed his innocent and earnest expression, recognizing the bittersweet nature of his advancement. While it was a sign of his growth and the project's success, it also highlighted the strong attachment Buddhabhushan had developed to the class and its supportive environment.

A Lasting Impact

The Vidyankur Project's approach to education not only enhanced academic performance but also made learning a source of joy and inspiration for the children. By addressing their unique needs and celebrating their individual progress, the project fostered an environment where learning was both exciting and meaningful. The journey of Buddhabhushan Khadsole stands as a testament to the transformative power of the Vidyankur Project. Through its dedicated efforts, the project successfully brought about a profound change in the educational experience of underprivileged children in Kolhapur, making a lasting impact on their lives and futures.

