

400 girls get a pass to a brighter future

GIFT VOUCHERS NGO gives underprivileged kids money to study in pvt schools

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NEW DELHI: Clutching her School Voucher Certificate, seven-year-old Taiyeba Rahman, a resident of Chauhar Bangar, east Delhi, was all smiles on Wednesday. She did not understand what the certificate meant, but sensing her father Atiq Rahman's happiness, she knew it was something great.

"My father has told me I will go to a big school with swings now," said Taiyeba.

Taiyeba is one of the 400 recipients of the NGO, Center for Civil Society's School Voucher for Girls Programme (SVGP) in seven colonies of North Delhi, comprising of Welcome Colony, Chauhar Bangar, Zaffrabad, New Usmanpur, Maujpur, Janta Colony and Babarpur.

Under this initiative, families of 400 female students studying in 2nd grade in MCD schools will receive a School Voucher Certificate worth Rs 4,000 per annum for four years, which they can use to admit their wards to one of the 40 empanelled private schools located in north-east Delhi schools working with CCS.

The voucher would also cover the school fees, cost of books and uniforms.

"It is no secret that MCD schools impart low-quality education," said Baladevan Rangaraju, programme director.

"We want to start a campaign in which students be given a voucher by the government that can be given to whichever school—government or private a student wants to go to," said Rangaraju.

"So, to showcase that a student of a government school who is shifted to a private school achieves higher academic standards, we started the pilot project, SVGP."



■ Sanaa, 7, with mother Rukhsana Hussain & brother Mukhtar. Sanaa is one of 400 girls whom a Delhi-based NGO has chosen to gift a voucher of Rs 4,000. JASJEET PLANA / HT PHOTOS

I have four young children, out of which two, Sanaa and Soni (8) go to school. The others are still young. I have got a voucher for Sanaa.

I would also like my 18 year-old son, Mukhtar to have a chance to study. He could not go to school, as he was earning us a living.

RUKHSANA HUSSAIN,
Sanaa's mother

ect, SVGP."

The 40 private schools for which these students have been given a voucher have agreed to admit the MCD students on compassionate grounds, though they also benefit.

"Under such a tie-up, we are also assured the yearly tuition on time," said Dinesh Jain, principal of Alka Public School.

To start with, the programme

has selected mostly female students of Muslim or socially disadvantaged backgrounds.

"We chose the groups that have the lowest school enrollment," said Rangaraju.

"Moreover, all children we chose were students in the second grade of MCD schools because we wanted to make sure those who benefited could not afford private schools."



■ Taniya (7) with her mother Saira Bano.

I am happy that Taniya will learn English. This will greatly increase her future prospects

SAIRA BANO
Taniya's mother



■ Shaima (8) with mother Farida Khatun

I feel if my child goes to a private school, they will get a better education

FAREEDA KHATUN
Shaima's mother



■ Shabnam (9) with mother Bilkish, a maid, who has 8 kids under 13

The rest have to stay home, as I cannot support their education along with my unemployed husband's alcohol. But I am happy Shabnam's education is now fully paid for.

BILKISH, Shabnam's mother, who can't afford to send all her kids to school