

He Adopts Govt Schools to Ensure Poor Pupils Get Better Deal

Good Samaritan

Your Monday Morning
Mood Enhancer



Ajit Isaac

Charity begins at home, they say. And Ajit Isaac, CEO and MD of Qess Corp, a Bengaluru-headquartered business services group, is doing exactly that. Earlier, his acts of philanthropy at a personal level were impulsive and unstructured. But he realised that he needs to sharpen his focus after he closely looked at the living condition of the 25,000-odd people who formed his company's facilities management team — the cleaning staff, in other words.

"Until a year ago, I would help people if approached. But I realised that a structured setup in place would help me achieve greater mass, make a difference to more people and even involve the government in my efforts," says the 48-year-old business leader, who is part of Canadian billionaire Prem Watsa's Fairfax group.

With a corpus from personal contribution, the British Council Chevening scholar and management studies graduate from Leeds University, UK, started the Care Works Foundation last year and decided to invest time and energy in improving education and healthcare facilities for low-income families.

Helping his employees battle alcoholism, solve their sanitation and education problems (he provides scholarships to over 200 kids), Isaac has also adopted four government schools across the city, including the ones in Iblur and HSR Layout. "My target is to be able to reach 10 schools," he said.

Isaac's intention is to provide a 360-degree holistic solution to issues faced by every school, for which he studies shortcomings and requirements in each one of them.



Ajit Isaac (fourth from right) with the children of a govt school

All schools are provided with basic infrastructure like toilets, seating areas, cupboards for books, utensils for midday meals, comput-

er labs, libraries and teachers, wherever required. "We also network with other institutions and encourage them to use their re-

A LONG LIST ADDRESSED
Isaac provides toilets, seating areas, cupboards for books, utensils for midday meals, computer labs, libraries and teachers to schools

sources to help these schools improve quality of education."

Isaac personally supervises the extent of work done in these schools and the impact created. "I visit the schools, spend time with the teachers and children to understand their issues and see if we have managed to make a difference. We measure impact based on three things — at-

tendance, academic performance and teaching quality." Funds are gathered by way of donation or government grants.

M Muniyandy, the Block Education Officer in South 3 zone under whose jurisdiction the Iblur Government Primary School falls, says Isaac and his team have turned the school around. "They provided basic facilities and an English teacher, which has benefited the students a lot. There has also been an increase in the number of admissions."

According to Isaac, the number of students in the school has gone up from 230 to 300.

Isaac's next step is to provide impoverished farmers with education, healthcare and housing facilities.

Divya.Shekhar@timesgroup.com