

Chairman's Message



Shekhar Mehta

Serving the common man

Dear Friends of Humanity,

I am happy to see the meaningful work that India Humanity Foundation is able to do in *Serving the Common Man*. Our all-encompassing efforts in literacy are transforming the lives of lakhs of people across India—whether through thousands of Vidya centres, by providing books to thousands of children under the Padho Bharat program, or by distributing shoes to 2,000 children under the Happy School program. The Annapurna program continues to grow stronger, feeding lakhs of children and communities. Our Saving Little Heart program received a boost when the Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, applauded the initiative of heart surgeries being conducted in India for children from Ethiopia. This was personally very gratifying for me, as these surgeries were the result of my commitment to the President of Ethiopia, Ms. Sahle-Work Zewde, during my visit there as the President of Rotary International. More children are now coming from Ethiopia and Ghana for their heart surgeries, and our work continues. All of this is possible thanks to the tremendous support from everyone.

We welcome our new Trustee, Shri Vivek Tankha, M.P. (Rajya Sabha), who brings rich experience - not only in public life but also as a distinguished lawyer who has done tremendous work in the service sector.

The icing on the cake was a recent visit by Rashi and me to the Vice President of India, Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar, and his gracious wife, Sudeshji. We apprised him of our literacy work, which he deeply appreciated. I pass on his good wishes to everyone involved in the program, for it is because of your dedication that we are *serving the common man*.

Regards,

Shekhar Mehta

Shekhar Mehta
Chairman
India Humanity Foundation



Lighting the Path to Literacy:

Lakhs Empowered Across India

In a resounding victory for education and empowerment, India Humanity Foundation, under its brand India Literacy Mission has made extraordinary progress in its mission *#MakingIndiaTotallyLiterate*.

Key Highlights of VIDYA (Centre Based Program)

Coal India Collaboration

- 1,253 Vidya centers across West Bengal, Jharkhand, and Odisha.
- 45,000+ learners reached.
- 26,434 completed sessions; 8,116 took exams.

CSR Partner: Balrampur Chini Mills

- Balrampur Chini: 111 centers, 4,440 learners in UP.

Partnerships with Rotary

- Rotary Calcutta Mahanagar : 170 centers, 10,280 learners.
- Rotary Club of Bombay : 38 centers, 1,601 learners (Rajasthan & Maharashtra).
- Rotary Club of Mumbai Royals : 93 centers, 3,720 learners (Rajasthan).
- Rotary Club of Pratapgarh: 40 centres, 1,600 learners.

Literacy Behind Bars – Correctional Homes

- 8 centers in West Bengal prisons, 1,495 inmates reached, 800 fully trained..

Key Highlights of DIKSHA (Each One Teach One)

- Field officers - Aman, Subhendu & Karima have visited 44 schools and enrolled 10,000 student volunteers.
- These volunteers are teaching 1 adult illiterate each.
- Currently, nearly 10,000 adults are enrolled.

Current Milestone

Over 3,00,000 adults enrolled across the country in 5,254 centres.

“Literacy is not a privilege; it is a right.”

The movement is transforming lives across coalfields, villages, cities, prisons, and schools—rewriting India's future, one word at a time.

India Humanity Foundation Leadership



Shekhar Mehta
Chairman



Kamal Sanghvi
Trustee



Vivek Tankha
Trustee



Dr. Mahesh Kotbagi
Trustee



Kishore Kumar Cherukumalli
Trustee



Sandip Agarwalla
Trustee

CEO's Message



Aparna Biyani

Transforming Lives

Dear Friends,

It gives me great joy to bring to you this issue of Humanity Times - a window into the work, people, and purpose that define the India Humanity Foundation.

This bulletin is more than just a collection of updates—it is a celebration of what we can achieve together. From lighting the spark of literacy in thousands of adults to planting hope in the Sundarbans, from feeding families to healing little hearts, every initiative you'll read about is rooted in compassion, collaboration, and the belief that service can **transform lives**.

None of this would be possible without you—our volunteers, partners, supporters, and communities. You are the heart of this mission. With your energy and dedication, we are not only reaching the unreached, but also building a stronger, kinder, empowered India.

We hope Humanity Times inspires you, informs you, and invites you to stay connected with our work. Together, let us continue to dream big, act boldly, and serve selflessly.

Warm regards,

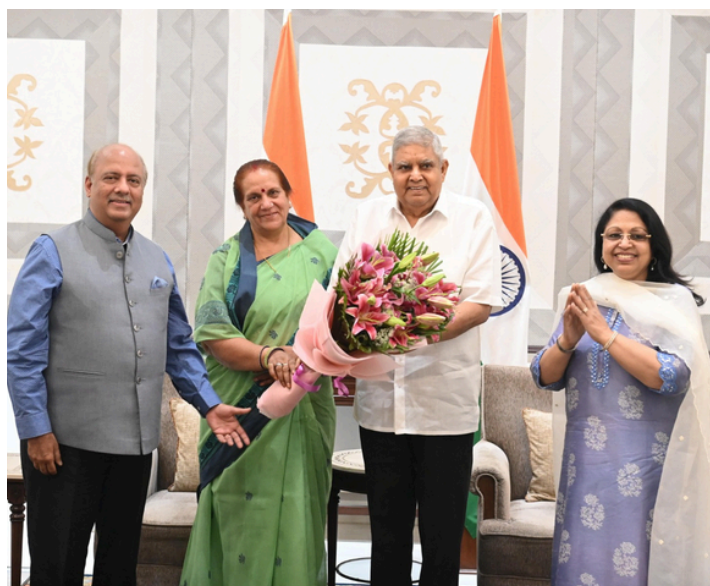
Aparna Biyani

CEO & Editor

India Humanity Foundation

Championing the cause of Literacy

Meeting with the Vice President of India to Power a National Literacy Movement



Mr. Shekhar Mehta and Mrs. Rashi Mehta met with Hon'ble Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar and Sudesh Ji to discuss transformative efforts under the India Literacy Mission.

The high-level meeting, which lasted 45 minutes, was not just symbolic—it was strategic. It served as a platform to align national vision with grassroots momentum.

Charting the Path to Literacy for All

During the conversation, Mr. Mehta highlighted the scale and spirit of the mission: to eradicate adult illiteracy and empower communities through education. The Vice President commended their dedication and expressed interest in expanding support for community-driven literacy efforts.

“Empowering India begins with educating India,” Mr. Mehta emphasized, reinforcing the urgent need for nationwide collaboration.

Partnerships for Progress

This meeting signals a significant boost in government and civic alignment for India's literacy movement. By engaging with the country's top leadership, Mr. Mehta is helping bridge the gap between grassroots action and national policy-making.

Happy Steps, Happier Children:

School Shoes Distributed to 2,000 students

In a meaningful move to support underprivileged children, the India Humanity Foundation (IHF), in collaboration with Plaeup Private Limited, donated nearly 2,000 school shoes to kids aged 4–18 across India.



From Rajasthan to Mumbai and West Bengal, this effort was made possible by dedicated Rotary Clubs and generous donors who ensured no child has to walk barefoot to school.

More than a donation drive, Happy Steps is about equity, inclusion, and empowerment—proving that change can start from the ground up, one pair at a time.

NGOs Take the Lead:

A Groundbreaking Step Towards “Making India Totally Literate”



The teachers (called “Akshar Sathis”), often drawn from the same communities they serve, are key to the model’s success. Their deep local ties ensure that the program resonates with learners and fits their lived realities.

Monitoring, Mentorship, and Milestones

NGOs are also responsible for ensuring the integrity of every step:

- Tracking session attendance and learner engagement.
- Uploading session images and verifying progress.
- Ensuring completion of all 60 sessions per learner.
- Issuing completion certificates — a symbol of achievement and dignity.

“This model is about more than just literacy. It’s about empowerment, community ownership, and dignity,” shared a program coordinator.

Literacy by the People, for the People

This decentralized, NGO-led approach exemplifies the strength of grassroots participation. It acknowledges that true transformation begins locally, and that trusted community organizations are best equipped to lead the way.

The Vidya Centre-Based Model is not just teaching adults to read—it’s helping them rewrite their futures. And the pen is now in their hands.

In an inspiring move to eliminate adult illiteracy, the India Literacy Mission has entrusted Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) across the country with a transformative responsibility: implementing the Vidya Centre-Based Model—a strategic, community-driven approach to adult education.

These NGOs are not just partners in name—they are the architects of change on the ground. From setup to certification, they are the driving force behind India’s evolving literacy landscape.



The Model: From Orientation to Transformation

Each NGO begins with an in-depth orientation to understand the mission’s framework. From there, they commit to:

- Setting up adult literacy centres
- Recruiting and training local educators (“Akshar Sathis”)
- Mobilizing non-literate adults for enrollment.

IHF IS HAPPY TO RECOGNISE THE OUTSTANDING NGO PARTNERS

Arj Foundation, Jharkhand
Mr. Jitendra Kumar Pandey

PARDA, Odisha
Mr. Rudra Pattnaik

Bagmari Mother And Child Development,
West Bengal
Mr. Samsul Alam Khan



Akshar Sathis

The Grassroots Guardians of India's Literacy Revolution



They are not in the headlines, yet their work is quietly changing lives every day. Meet the Akshar Sathis—the 5,000+ frontline educators powering the success of Vidya Centres in IHF's ambitious mission to eradicate adult illiteracy.

From conducting door-to-door outreach to uploading learner data, these community heroes are the glue holding the Literacy Mission together. And their impact is nothing short of transformational.

Their mission starts at the doorstep—literally. Through home visits, they identify non-literate adults, build trust with families, and motivate individuals to join the learning journey.

On the Frontlines of Change

Trained and guided by IHF through ILM and partnering NGOs, Akshar Sathis are equipped with essential skills in:

- Teaching and adult education
- Community mobilization
- Digital reporting and monitoring

"We don't just teach letters—we build confidence and open doors," says one Akshar Sathi from West Bengal.

From Blackboards to Dashboards

Beyond instruction, Akshar Sathis play a critical role in the program. Their tech-enabled responsibilities include:

- Uploading learner data and attendance records
- Capturing photographs of learning sessions
- Submitting 30- and 60-session progress updates
- Conducting and documenting final exams and results

This dual role—educator and administrator—ensures every learner's journey is tracked, supported, and celebrated.

Unsung but Unstoppable

While policymakers plan and NGOs strategize, it's the Akshar Sathis who translate vision into action. Their deep connection with their communities makes them uniquely positioned to drive real change at the grassroots level.

"Annapurna" Food Program:

Feeds Hope to 20,000 Lives

In a powerful demonstration of compassion and coordination, the India Humanity Foundation (IHF), in partnership with the **India Food Banking Network (IFBN)**, has brought comfort and nourishment to over **20,000 underprivileged individuals** through the **"Annapurna" Food Programme** - a humanitarian initiative aimed at eradicating hunger across eastern India.

A Mission Beyond Meals

Food packets and ration kits were distributed across Kolkata and its neighbouring districts, including: South 24 Parganas, North 24 Parganas, Birbhum, Purulia, Medinipur, Hooghly, Howrah.

But the ripple of kindness didn't stop at state lines. The Annapurna program extended its reach to remote and underserved communities in Bihar, Jharkhand, and Odisha, bringing both nutrition and dignity to households in need.



A Model of Scalable Compassion

What makes this initiative stand out is its scalability and cross-state reach—demonstrating how strategic partnerships can be leveraged for sustained, high-impact humanitarian relief. The collaboration between IHF and IFBN sets a blueprint for future food security models in India.

With 'Annapurna,' the India Humanity Foundation has distributed food products worth over 5 Cr to the needy.

Padho Bharat:

Over 1,000 Books Gifted to Ignite Young Minds

In a powerful push to fuel curiosity and learning, India Humanity Foundation (IHF) has distributed over 1,000 books during April 2025, thanks to the generous support of Orient Black Swan. The initiative, part of the Padho Bharat Library Program, continues to bridge the literacy gap by bringing high-quality reading material directly into the hands of underserved children.

A Library in Every Corner

More than just a distribution campaign, this effort is woven into IHF's ambitious goal to cultivate a national reading culture. With over 4,000 libraries already established in schools, orphanages, and NGOs across India, the Padho Bharat program is ensuring that no child is denied the magic of books.



“Each book is a doorway to imagination, knowledge, and possibility,” said a volunteer. “We are not just giving books—we are building futures.”

More Than Literacy—A Lifelong Gift

Whether it's a child in a remote village school or a young learner in a crowded city orphanage, these books carry stories, science, history, and hope. The goal is clear: to empower every child with the tools to read, dream, and rise.

We recently received a heartfelt thank you letter from Dhakuria Ram Chandra High School for our book donation. Several other schools and NGOs have also shared their appreciation. We're grateful for the positive feedback and remain committed to supporting education in every way we can.

Planting Hope: 6,000+ Nypa Palms to Shield the Sundarbans



In the heart of the fragile Sundarbans delta, a quiet revolution is taking root—over 6,000 Nypa palm saplings have been planted in the Patharpratima block, a bold stride in India Humanity Foundation's mission to restore ecological balance and climate resilience in one of the world's most vulnerable ecosystems.

With rising sea levels and cyclonic extremes threatening the Sundarbans, this project is more than a plantation drive—it's a grassroots movement to heal nature's frontline defense. The Nypa palm, with its dense root structure and high salt tolerance, is nature's answer to erosion and habitat loss.

“This is about building a green wall against climate change,” said one volunteer. **“Each sapling represents protection, possibility, and a future we refuse to give up on.”**

Powered by People, Rooted in Purpose

From local schoolchildren to seasoned environmentalists, the project saw an outpouring of community spirit. Residents joined hands with environmental groups in digging, planting, and nurturing the saplings—transforming barren tidal stretches into future strongholds of biodiversity.

Why Nypa Palms?

- Thrive in estuarine and tidal zones
- Help stabilize shorelines and prevent erosion
- Create habitats for countless species

More Than Trees—A Movement

This restoration initiative is just the beginning. Plans are already underway to expand the green cover, integrate climate education into schools, and involve more coastal communities in eco-action.

IHF's Role

India Humanity Foundation played a critical role in this initiative, offering:

- Technical support to ensure scientifically sound plantation practices
- Coordination with the government and other partners to align efforts and scale impact

In a world losing green too fast, the people of Patharpratima are planting it back—one sapling at a time.

India's Gift of Life:

'Saving Little Hearts' Initiative Applauded by PM Modi



In an inspiring endorsement of India's expanding role in global humanitarian care, Prime Minister Narendra Modi lauded the 'Saving Little Hearts' project during his recent Mann Ki Baat address. The initiative, led by India Humanity Foundation (IHF) in partnership with Rotary in India, is transforming lives by providing life-saving **Pediatric Heart Surgeries** to children from across Africa.

"Indian doctors and volunteers are not just healing hearts—they are building bridges of love that span continents," said the Prime Minister, calling the initiative a "shining example" of humanitarian commitment.

Healing Beyond Borders

Launched as a promise to heads of State of African countries by IHF Chairman and Past Rotary International President Shekhar Mehta, the project brings children from countries like Ethiopia, Uganda, Nigeria, and Ghana to top Indian hospitals - for pediatric cardiac surgeries that would otherwise be out of reach.

"A Proud Moment for India Humanity Foundation (IHF) Thank you, Prime Minister Modi Ji, for recognizing this mission of compassion and humanity. We at IHF are committed to continuing this noble journey, saving little hearts one beat at a time."

- Shekhar Mehta, Chairman, IHF

The People Powering the Mission

A committed team of leaders is ensuring every heartbeat counts:

- Mr. Rajiv Sharma was instrumental in coordinating an agreement with the Ethiopian Airlines and in organising collaboration with the Health Ministry in Ethiopia.
- Mr. Rajendra Rai led the coordination with the hospitals in getting the surgeries done and looked after the on-ground logistics from receiving the children in India to safely sending them back.
- Mr. Sandip Agarwalla, Mr. V R Muthu, and Mr. Rajiv Sharma (Bhusawal) contributed consistently to the project's success.



A Global Impact, Rooted in India

This initiative is more than a medical intervention—it's a symbol of empathy and international goodwill. The beaming smiles of children post-surgery speak louder than any statistics.

A Moment of National Pride

The 'Saving Little Hearts' project demonstrates the power of compassion, collaboration, and world-class healthcare. As India's stature rises on the global stage, it is projects like these that reflect the nation's true heart.



Promise made to the President of Ethiopia, Sahle-Work Zewde



Promise kept

Together We Will:

Uniting to Make India Totally Literate

In a powerful evening of vision and purpose, leaders in education, civil service, and social impact gathered on **8th April, 2025**, at Hotel Hindustan International (HHI), Kolkata, to commit to one bold mission: **“Making India Totally Literate.”**

Hosted by India Humanity Foundation, in collaboration with Mr. Imran Zaki, President of Faces, **“Together We Will”** the brainchild of Chairman Shekhar Mehta brought together more than **50 eminent educationists, school principals, and change-makers, including the distinguished Director General of West Bengal Police, Mr. Jagmohan.**



A Forum of Ideas and Action

Participants shared ideas, innovations, and a unified commitment to eradicate adult illiteracy across the country. From community outreach models to curriculum strategies, the room buzzed with purpose.

“We must look beyond classrooms and empower every adult with the ability to read, write, and thrive,” said one principal during the session.



Real Commitments, Real Change

In a major milestone, several attendees pledged to sponsor Vidya Centres—community-based hubs that will provide adult literacy training and resources. This marked a crucial first step in mobilizing local action toward national impact.

Collaborative Roadmaps

The evening also sparked smaller breakout sessions among school leaders and educational strategists. These one-on-one meetings laid the groundwork for:

- Collaborative teacher training programs
- Curriculum design tailored for adult learners
- Community engagement initiatives focused on inclusive education

A Movement Begins

The event concluded with a shared sense of momentum and mission. The message was clear: literacy is not just a right—it's a responsibility we all share. And the time to act is now.

With vision, collaboration, and commitment, the dream of a totally literate India is no longer a distant goal—it's a work in progress. **“Together, we will make it happen”**

**“Together We Will event is more than a moment—
it's the start of a movement.”**
- **Imran Zaki, President, FACES**

A big thank you to Mr. Imran Zaki of FACES and Mrs. Rubena Chatterjee of Sushila Birla Girls School for your contribution in making this event a great success.