

Biometric attendance for kids at UP govt school

Principal Kapil Kumar hopes one day children will attend school with tablets and not bags

Yashveer Singh

Etayla Mafi (Sambhal): Mohammed Nazeem proudly shows off his badge. "I got it for 100% attendance. I come to school every day," beams this third grader. There's an air of curiosity as young students in khaki uniform mill around us. Coming to school is not a task, and studying here is not a burden. With state-of-the-art facilities, one can easily believe this to be a highly-funded private school.

We The Voice

But it is not. Welcome to Prathamik Vidhyalaya – the government-funded primary school – in Etayla Mafi village of Sambhal district, Uttar Pradesh. The principal invested his own award money to bring about this change, where he hopes that one day, tablets will replace books.

State of govt-funded schools

Unhygienic conditions and lack of facilities plague government-aided schools across the country. Low quality of infrastructure as well as inadequate educational standards characterise them. But one man is this tiny village school is challenging this dismal notion by sheer personal endeavour: Prathamik Vidhyalaya's principal Kapil Kumar has invested more than Rs 9 lakhs from his own pocket to upgrade the infrastructure.

According to data by Ministry of Human Resource Development in its 2011-12 report, dropout rate at the primary level has decreased from 64.9 in 1960-61 to 22.3 in 2011-12. Apart from government initiatives, individual efforts are also bringing in changes in primary education sector.

One man's dreams changing lives

Resembling a resort, the primary school of Etayla Mafi Village boasts of computer education, CCTV cameras, modern toilets, biometric attendance – it has all



With improvement in infrastructure, the enrollment and attendance in school has also increased — ANKIT KUMAR SINGH/WION

the facilities which a private school possess, and more.

When Kumar was appointed as a teacher here in 2010, the school land was occupied by the local villagers. Then the enrollment stood at 37. It rose to 60 in March 2013, when he was appointed teacher in-charge of the school. New innovative plans like 'Student of the week, Student of the month' were started, which not only increased enrollment to more than 300 but also ensured attendance.

"I invested this money out of personal initiative. I have always wanted to work for improving primary education and change common man's perspective of it," says Kumar.

Sharing his dream, Kumar adds, "I want kids to come with tablets instead of bags and they should love studying as much as they love playing."

(Have a story to tell? Write to us at wethevoice@zeemedia.esselgroup.com)

REPORT CARD

During the period 1950-51 and 2011-12
The number of Primary Schools increased by **3.4 times**
Upper Primary Schools increased by **34.9 times**

Number of Schools in the year 2011-12

Primary Schools
7,63,370

Upper Primary Schools
4,74,294

Secondary Schools
1,28,321

Senior Secondary Schools
85,389

Total
14,55,836

SOURCE: HRD MINISTRY REPORT-2011-12