

गॉन
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PRESENTS

Teacher CONNECTION

CELEBRATING TEACHERS EVERY DAY



STRIKING THE RIGHT NOTE

Teachers bring music front and centre into their classrooms

SLOW

MUSIC



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GAON CONNECTION

**FOUNDED IN 2012 TO STRENGTHEN
THE VOICE OF RURAL INDIA**

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FROM THE MANAGING EDITOR

MUSIC IS INTEGRAL to us. Our weddings are incomplete without it and there are songs to accompany almost each and every ceremony that goes on for days together.

Celebration of motherhood (*godh bhara*, the modern day baby shower) has its own songs accompanied by dance. There are lullabies and it isn't uncommon to have a to-be-mother humming to her unborn baby. Or, a *rudaali* (professional mourner) mourning the dead through song.

Kirtans in Gurudwaras immediately envelop you in peace. Just as qawwals singing at the shrine of Sufi saints transport you to the 'other world'.

Music binds us. It offers solace. The early 1990s saw discussions on the Mozart effect theory, which claimed babies serenaded with the music of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart would grow up to be smarter.

A number of other scientific studies have confirmed that listening to music does lead to a certain cognitive spike. Music activates the areas of the brain which are concerned with spatial reasoning — the ability to visualise and manipulate two and three dimensional objects in mind.

No wonder then that music is turning into a powerful tool to impart education — be it teaching mathematics tables to primary school kids, or the periodic table to middle school students. Music is now an essential part of curriculum at government schools including the ones in rural India.

Music teachers are hitting the right notes as they brighten the lives of children in their classrooms. As part of Gaon Connection's long term project Teacher Connection, we have been documenting how music and music teachers are making learning a joyful experience.

For instance, 62-year-old Kamini Mishra is a music teacher in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. She earned her Masters in music when she was 53, and is today a sought after music teacher who trains women and children to sing.

Ramlal Jingar is a visually challenged teacher at an all girls' school in Padru village in Barmer district, Rajasthan. His physical handicap does not come in the way of him teaching music and musical instruments to his students.

This issue of the *Teacher Connection* magazine celebrates these noteworthy teachers.

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Harmonising Young Minds

Instead of its 'extra-curricular' status, teachers have brought music to the front and centre in classrooms as it carries with it enormous power to transform the learning environment

GAON CONNECTION

HAVE YOU ever wondered at the number of songs you remember? These may be from the 50s, 60s and 70s, or even earlier, yet we can sing along as they play on our music systems.

Not just film songs. There are family favourites of folk songs, songs we sing and dance to during festivals, plaintive numbers in weddings guaranteed to make us misty eyed, and of course, who can forget their lustily-sung school songs.

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(Top) Kamini Mishra enrolled herself in a music school, earned a music degree at the age of 53, and then began to teach children and women in her neighborhood; (below) for Ramlal Jingar, music brought light into his life ever since he lost sight in both his eyes when he was only five years old.



Music has the ability like none other to free us from 'narrow domestic walls' Tagore spoke about in his poem, *Where the Mind is Without Fear*, dissolve hatred and transport us from everyday trials and tribulations, even if just temporarily.

And, that is exactly why we should be so grateful to the music teachers at schools who for those 40 minutes or so of the music period made us forget terrifying chemical equations, report cards and class tests.

In 2007, Kamini Mishra, originally from Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, rekindled

JINGAR TAUGHT HIMSELF TO PLAY THE DHOLAK AND THE HARMONIUM, AND NOW, WHETHER IT'S THE MORNING PRAYERS AT SCHOOL OR CELEBRATING INDEPENDENCE DAY AND REPUBLIC DAY, JINGAR LEADS THE WAY.

her love for music after her husband's passing. Returning to her parents' home allowed her to reconcile with her grief and loss, reigniting her passion for music, which she had set aside when she got married.

"I met Guru Ma (Saroj Pandey), who said I sang well. She also told me no one forgot how to sing and I should take it up again," 62-year-old Kamini told *Gaon Connection*. She enrolled herself into a music school, earned a music degree at an age of 53 years and then began to teach children and women in her neighbourhood. She teaches other women whose children are grown up and they have more time for themselves now. She also teaches children who have an affinity for music.

It healed her, the music teacher said. "But for music I would have been nothing but a broken soul."

For Ramlal Jingar, music brought light into his life ever since he lost sight in both his eyes when he was only five years old. He is 35 years old and is a teacher at the Balika Rajkiya Prathamik Vidyalaya in Padru gram panchayat in Barmer district, Rajasthan.

►► CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



Meenakshi Goswami has immersed 850 students in her school in the rich tapestry of their state's music, dance, cuisine, and culture. In 2022, she received the prestigious National Awards to Teachers from President Droupadi Murmu.

Jingar taught himself to play the dholak and the harmonium, and he sings and teaches music along with other subjects to his students. Despite a life filled with challenges and hurdles, Jingar said music kept him going. Nothing brings him happiness like music does. Now, be it the morning prayers at school or celebrating Independence Day and Republic Day, Jingar leads the way.

Music has a way of keeping cultures and indigenous traditions alive like no manual or hefty books can. It also promotes harmony and goodwill, believes Nanak Chand, a government school teacher from Bharatpur in Rajasthan. He is a poet and musician and he composes verses and songs in the Mewati language.

Nanak Chand, along with his students, has brought about awareness about government schemes and initiatives through his Mewati songs. Whether it was to raise awareness about COVID-19 or assist the government in its SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participa-

MUSIC HAS A WAY OF KEEPING CULTURES AND INDIGENOUS TRADITIONS ALIVE LIKE NO MANUAL OR HEFTY BOOKS CAN. IT ALSO PROMOTES HARMONY AND GOODWILL, BELIEVES NANAK CHAND, A GOVERNMENT SCHOOL TEACHER FROM BHARATPUR IN RAJASTHAN.

ipation) programme, Nanak Chand composed songs and made the campaigns successful.

Sometimes music can also win accolades for schools. Like it did for Chandranath Sarma Higher Secondary School, a rural government school in Pithakhowa village in Assam. At the behest of their principal Meenakshi Goswami, seven of the

school students took part in a Guinness World Records event in Guwahati where 11,000 dancers and drummers gathered to do the Bihu dance.

Goswami has ensured that the 850 students of her school are soaked in the state's music, dance, cuisine and culture.

"I have always maintained that while children are updating themselves and keeping up with the modern changes, they should not forget their own roots," said Goswami. She believes that cultural activities such as music and dance are not just for entertainment, but they also influence moral values amongst the younger generation.

The music classes are the oasis in the dreary desert of class tests, revisions and home assignments. One does not need scientific proof that music is therapeutic or that music brings joy. Ask anyone over sixty years of age about their school songs and watch the smiles spread and the songs come traipsing out of them. ■

A RURAL SCHOOL TEACHER HAS DONATED BLOOD 88 TIMES

DARSHAN SHARMA

NUAPADA, ODISHA

WHEN KISHORE Parida was just 18 years old and impressionable, he donated blood for the first time in his life. His actions perhaps saved the life of a pregnant woman. That was in 1993, and ever since the school teacher has donated blood 88 times.

Parida is a teacher at the Government Upper Primary School in Kuliabandha village in Nuapada district, in Odisha. And, he has made it a point to spread awareness on the importance of donating blood.

The 48-year-old Parida teaches Odia, history and geography to the students of classes six, seven, and eight. But his strongest message is around blood donation and saving lives.

"I tell my students about blood donation and explain what it is all about, and how their action can save precious lives," he said.

He spreads awareness about blood donation through youth organisations, women's organisations,



Kishore Parida teaches Odia, history, and geography to students in grades six to eight, emphasizing the importance of blood donation and saving lives.

social institutions and of course schools and colleges.

His hard work is paying off. "I have been teaching for so many years now and many of my students who are adults now donate blood regularly. My colleagues at school, both teaching and non-teaching staff, donate blood," said Parida.

The school teacher has participated in more than 400 blood donation camps. Parida is often invited to speak to people to assure them how safe blood donation is. "It is important to lead by example. Only if I walk the talk will people believe me," he said.

A school teacher directs short movies; his students act in them

VIRENDRA SINGH

SITAPUR, UTTAR PRADESH

WHEN THE blackboard and chalk were not enough to keep children interested, teachers of a rural school decided to innovate and try something else to get them back into the classroom.

The teachers of the primary school in Mangal Purva village in Sitapur district, Uttar Pradesh, began to make short movies with their students and their guardians acting in them. This sparked off a transformation like never before and now children and their parents from villages far and wide are clamouring to get



The first movie they made was called **Parakh** and it had students and their parents acting in it. VIRENDRA SINGH

admission in this school. Admissions have gone up and the attendance that was a dismal 50 per cent has climbed to 90 per cent.

"When I joined this school in 2018, I realised how poor admissions and the attendance was. Despite the best efforts of our teachers, children would not come regularly to school," Vivek Kumar, the headmaster of the school, told Gaon Connection.

It was then that the teachers of the school hit upon the idea of making short films based on the more inspiring stories in the textbooks of the children.

Their first film 'Parakh' featured students and parents as actors and was shared on YouTube. "Acting, role-playing, and getting into the skins of the characters they played was a big hit. So far, we have made two films, the second one being 'I Am Azad,' which is based on the life of freedom fighter Chandrasekhar Azad," the headmaster said.

Growing Their Own Food At School In Nagaland

SAYANTANI DEB

IN MARCH 2010, when Mimi Yhoshii took charge as the head teacher of Government Middle School Officers Hill district, Kohima in Nagaland, she wanted every student under her care to have a holistic education. Most of the children who came to school were from families that were unable to provide them with adequate nutrition required for a healthy life. So, she started a kitchen garden in the school premises.

For the past four years, the students have been growing and eating seasonal vegetables as part of their mid-day meals. They grow cabbage, pumpkin, squash, chillies, bottle gourd, tomato, beans, maize and sev-



The gardening project in Government Middle School has created strong bonds between the teachers and students. SAYANTANI DEB

eral other vegetables.

"A child needs healthy and nutritious food in order to grow up healthy," the 51-year-old Yhoshii told *Gaon Connection*. She believes in learning by doing and that was the idea behind having the kitchen garden at school.

"Agriculture is the backbone of India's economy, every child should understand the importance of farmers and farming. I am trying to instil in them the ability to grow food so that they can earn their living from a young

age instead of waiting around for government jobs," said the head teacher.

The gardening project has forged deep connections between teachers and students. This innovative kitchen garden initiative unites them, with each teacher having specific responsibilities and collaborating closely with students to oversee the garden, as highlighted by Imtirenla Jamir, a senior school teacher.

A Sanskrit Teacher In Jodhpur Helps Children From Sindh Feel At Home

LARAIB FATIMA WARSI

ASHA BAI regularly writes short skits for her students. It is a task to which she pays a lot of attention as the skit is performed by children who have migrated from Sindh in Pakistan, and are now students of the Senior Secondary School Madhya Poorv, in Gangana village in Luni block, Jodhpur district.

Though the 43-year-old teaches Sanskrit to students of classes 6-12, she does a lot more for her students. There are approximately 1,500 students in the school, many of whom are children of migrants from Sanghar in Sindh Province in Pakistan.

The migrant children knew little when they first joined the school. They only spoke Sindhi, Asha Bai said. "They did not even know things our nursery children would know. I decided to make them comfortable first in



There are approximately 1,500 students in the school, many of whom are children of migrants from Sanghar in Sindh Province in Pakistan. ASHA BAI

the language before getting down to teaching them other things," she said.

The transition from Sindh to Jodh-

pur was a difficult one for most of the children. "The children were bullied as they came from Pakistan. Local students would make fun of them and their accents and often tell them to go back from where they came," the teacher said.

So she began to write short skits in simple Hindi that the children could manage. "This would help them learn the language and bring them out of their shells, I thought," she said.

She set about creating mixed study groups, organising competitions and putting up plays where the children all participated together and got to know one another gradually.

"Asha Ma'am conducted extra classes for us after school so that we could start communicating better. She made sure we learnt at our own pace and learnt Hindi through the skits and conversations," said Manji Bheel, a 17 years old boy. He migrated from Sindh to Barmer in Rajasthan in December 2013, and now lives in Gangana village, and is a student of class 10.

Use Of Bluetooth And Puppets Makes Learning Fun In A Govt School

LARAIB FATIMA WARSI

ASSISTANT TEACHER Priti Srivastava has a dream and a mission. It is to ensure every child in Dakkhinpatti Ranno village in Jaunpur district, Uttar Pradesh, attends school.

The 43-year-old teacher of the government Composite School in Ranno uses puppets and bluetooth to generate interest of rural children in school and education. She has kept up with the times and uses technology to make her classes more interactive and attractive to her students.

"I embed a bluetooth speaker into a puppet and my students love it when the puppets speak. I dress the puppet in uniform, so that it encourages the students to be particular about coming to school in uniform too. And, I make sure I change the puppet's costume depending on the subject I am teaching that day," she told *Gaon Connection*.

Srivastava teaches Hindi, English,



Priti Srivastava has a dream to ensure every single child in the village Ranno attends school.

Sanskrit and Home Science to students of classes six, seven and eight. She uses her laptop, the projector and the internet a lot to keep her students engaged.

For example, on the days the children have Home Science, and Srivas-

tava plans to teach them about cooking, the bluetooth-embedded puppet comes to class wearing an apron and chef's hat. Her students eagerly wait for the puppet to visit their classroom.

Saturday Specials At A Rural School

PRATYAKSH SRIVASTAVA
GORAKHPUR, UTTAR PRADESH

NIDHI CHATURVEDI has realised it is important to first get her shy students comfortable enough to talk amongst themselves and to her, before she can make any headway in her lessons.

"Children often just nod their heads when I ask them if they have understood something I taught," said Chaturvedi, an assistant teacher at the Primary School in Ramughat, Gorakhpur. "A student, Prateek Sahani, was very shy. He would always nod his head if I asked him if he understood something. But, soon I real-



Chaturvedi decided she would have warm up exercises in class that would loosen the tongues of her tongue-tied students. PRATYAKSH SRIVASTAVA

ised he really had not understood it," she told *Gaon Connection*.

Chaturvedi realised that there were many children like Prateek, who would rather remain silent than

speak out if they could not grasp a lesson. She decided she would have warm up exercises in class that would loosen the tongues of her tongue-tied students.

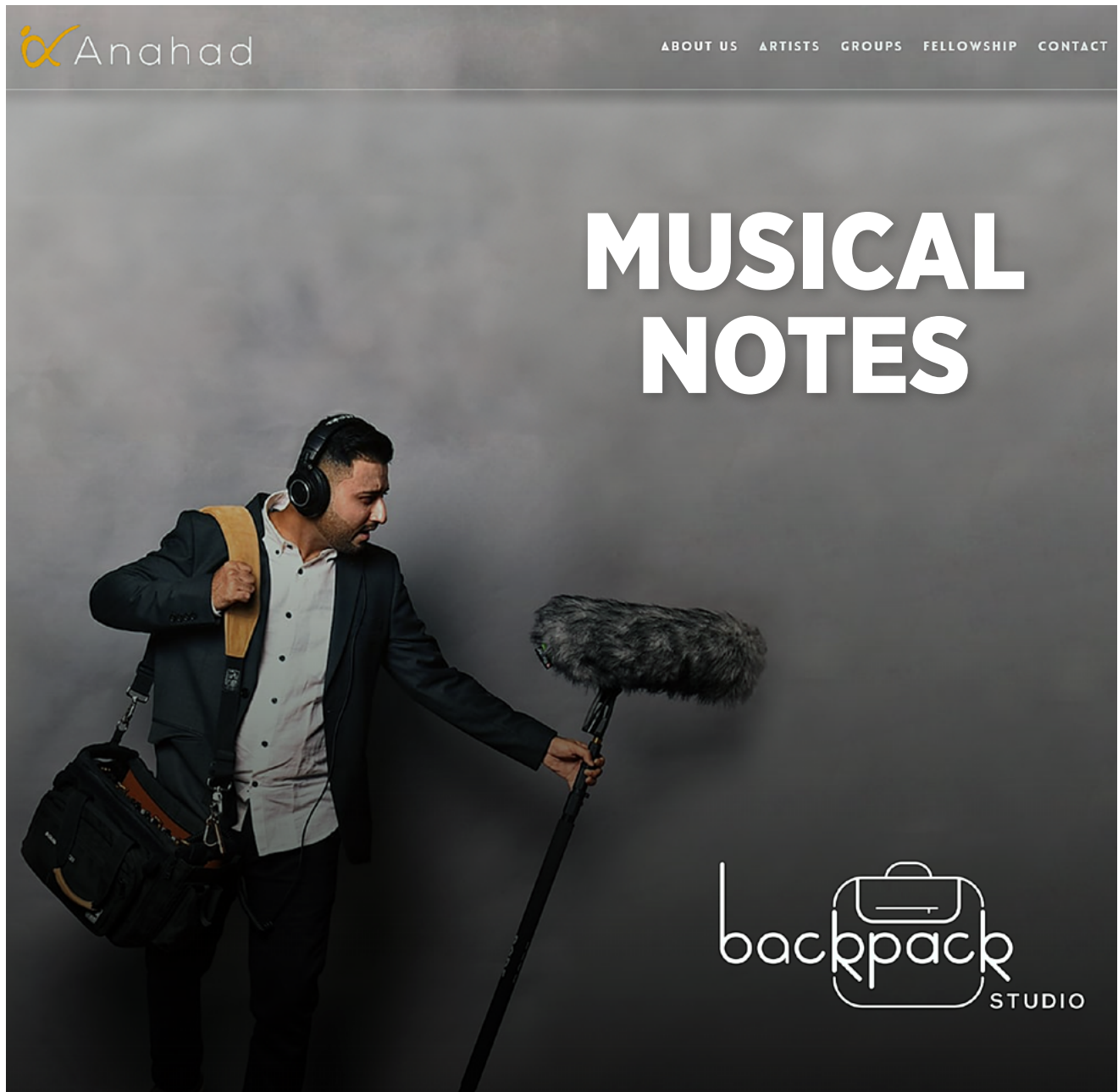
So she began by asking them about their trip to the market, to their grandmothers', the temple... what they did there, what they ate there and her play worked! Children were happy to recount their experiences.

These warm up exercises are also recommended under NIPUN (National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy), which was launched in 2021 by the Union Ministry of Education. The programme focuses on consolidating and strengthening the literacy and numeracy skills of students in classes one, two and three.

Chaturvedi has ensured that Saturdays are conversation days and her students are loving it.

RESOURCE ROOM

HERE ARE SOME ONLINE RESOURCES AND WEBSITES THAT CAN ADD MUSICAL FUN TO THE CLASSROOM.



BACKPACK STUDIO

'BACKPACK STUDIO' by Anahad Foundation is an initiative to uplift and bring back under-privileged tribal folk musical communities of India into mainstream by providing them access to production technologies at their doorsteps. Using a portable battery operated setup, music videos and webpages are created to provide an online presence for artists.

Its website has 6000+ folk artists and 1000+ folk groups across five states of India. Introduce your students to the rich heritage of folk music and folk artists of the country.

#CANDOMUSIC

#CANDOMUSIC IS a campaign that aims to ensure all children and young people can access musical learning in school. Its mission is to celebrate and unlock the innovation of music teachers and senior leaders, to share practical ideas and resources to deliver music in engaging and inspiring new ways, and to support schools in ensuring that music plays a central role in rebuilding their school communities.

It has a website which shares inspiring stories from classroom teachers, school leaders and other music educators and signposts to existing practical resources that teachers might use to ensure music is part of the solution in every school.



EDUCATION THROUGH MUSIC

A STUDENT-CENTRIC focus on music education is at the heart of what makes Education Through Music's model unique. It takes a comprehensive approach to deliver music education at under-resourced elementary, middle, and high schools, ensuring sustainability and long-term success

by providing comprehensive and sequential music education as a core subject for every student.

Education Through Music has activities that can be done in almost any home and only require a few everyday household items, two hands for clapping, and a big smile.



BECAUSE
EVERY CHILD IS
NOTEWORTHY...

CHILD'S PLAY India Foundation is a registered music education trust that seeks to instil positive values and provide social empowerment to India's disadvantaged children through the teaching of classical music to the highest possible standard. It was founded by Dr. Luis Dias, a physician and musician, in 2009.

The Foundation currently teaches violin, viola, cello, transverse flute and piano and choir to children across two locations in Goa.

MUSIC BASTI

MUSIC BASTI has worked with hundreds of children through community music projects with an aim to create learning and exposure opportunities.

Faith Gonsalves, who believes in the use of music and arts learning as subjects and as pedagogical tools, founded Music Basti in 2008, a music education programme for children from marginalised communities.

Music Basti has been teaching a mixture of musical training, song-writing, and performing to the under-privileged and young kids. The team believes that children from lower socio-economic groups are extremely disadvantaged in their access to quality learning and opportunities in and out of school, to learn, be encouraged, and excel. The only thing separating them from their more affluent peers is opportunity.



Bringing the girls back to school

MANOJ CHOUDHARY
DHOLPUR, RAJASTHAN

MANY GIRLS dropped out of school and stayed home after they passed class 8 as Bijauli village did not have a high school. Parents of young teenage daughters were not ready to send their girls far away to pursue education. But nine years back, in 2014, when the Rajkiya Uchcha Madhyamik Vidyalaya (RUMV) located in Dholpur district of Rajasthan, was upgraded to senior secondary level, the transformation in Bijauli village was dramatic.

"Now 55 per cent of the students in the school are girls, and many of them are going on to pursue higher studies in colleges," Renu Gurjar, the history teacher at Rajkiya Uchcha Madhyamik Vidyalaya, told *Gaon Connection*. "In 2011, only 14.2 per cent females in Bijauli, out of a population of 2,526, were literate," she added. But things are changing now.

Ever since the school was upgraded, it has been winning accolades and more and more girls are enrolling in the school. Last year, the school team won the first prize in two categories in a science model making



Now 55 per cent of the students in the school are girls, and many of them are going on to pursue higher studies in colleges. MANOJ CHOUDHARY

competition organised by the Rajasthan School Shiksha Parishad.

According to the principal, Rajendra Kumar Sharma, the school was established in 1964 as a primary school. Until 2008, the classes from one to eight were held in eight rooms. When it was upgraded in 2014 the school grew and now has 24 classrooms. "There are 619 students enrolled at school and more than half of them are girls. We have 22 teachers,"

said Bharat Bhushan Bhardwaj, the social science teacher.

Rajkiya Uchcha Madhyamik Vidyalaya is now the pride of the village community. "Our village has 409 households and most of us are daily wage labourers and farmers. The school has been the best thing that has happened to our children," said Pinky Devi, a resident of Bijauli.



The teacher believes that the performance tracker helps pinpoint problem areas such as absenteeism, more accurately. PRATYAKSH SRIVASTAVA

All Present and Accounted for

PRATYAKSH SRIVASTAVA
GORAKHPUR, UP

WHEN SHE joined school in class one, Soni Nishad, was often to be found with her nose pressed to the window of her classroom looking in from outside. If the teacher spotted her, she would flee to the bathroom and hide there. There was something that prevented her from entering the classroom and sitting with her classmates. She would miss classes every other day.

"When I inspected the performance tracker, I realised that she was struggling in almost every subject," Manorama Rai, an assistant teacher at the Primary School, Bhatahat in Gorakhpur, told *Gaon Connection*.

The performance tracker is a big register where the teacher makes

regular entries. The register has a column-wise distribution of lessons against the names of the students. The tracker clearly establishes what each student's struggle is. This forces the teacher to think of ways to help tackle the problem areas.

Rai, who has 21 students in her class, has been teaching at the school since 2014. She said the performance tracker provided to her as part of the 'teacher guides' under the NIPUN programme helped her quantify the progress made by her students.

"As I review the tracker, I see that some students require a different approach. For instance, teaching addition and subtraction on the blackboard is less effective than using real-life examples for the same mathematical concepts," the teacher explained.



For 'Rastar Master', where there's a wall, there's a way

AISHWARYA TRIPATHI

DEEP NARAYAN Nayak has become a household name in some of the most marginalised villages in the five districts of West Bengal. He has brought classroom teaching out into the streets and is called 'Rastar Master' or the master of the streets.

The 36-year-old teacher has painted the walls of the villages black and turned them into blackboards. This

has made education accessible to the women who may be reluctant to come to a regular school to learn.

The 'blackboard-on-the-wall' project that began as an experiment in 2014, is presently being run in 50 such open air sites with the street classes being organised in five districts of West Bengal — Paschim Bardhaman, Purulia, Birbhum, Bankura and Hooghly. When Nayak's street classes gained fame on social media, teach-

The Rastar Master has managed to balance his unique project along with his regular government job.

ers posted at remote villages facing similar education-related challenges picked up on the strategy.

"They reached out to me to understand how to adopt this in their villages. After all, it takes counselling of the communities and special teachers' training to replicate this," Nayak said. The teacher travelled across the villages in the five districts to help the fellow teachers with the initial set up. Presently, the project is extending education to almost 10,000 children belonging to Munda, Santhal and Oraon tribes, Scheduled Castes and Muslim communities, who in turn pass on what they learn to their mothers.

Nayak has been a teacher since 2010 and is presently teaching at the state government's Tilka Majhi Adibasi Free Primary School in Jamuria area of Paschim Bardhaman district. While his project began as a one man show, there are 300 volunteers who are working with him today.

Teachers at this govt school survey villages to enrol out-of-school children

MANISH DUBEY
KANPUR DEHAT, UP

THE LIEUTENANT COLONEL Shivnath Singh Inter College sits right on the border of Ranjeetpur and Bhaupur in Kanpur Dehat, Uttar Pradesh. Spread over nine acres, the campus has several species of trees that makes the environment cool and green.

Bordering the green are classrooms with clean and bright white-washed walls. The government school has about 1,000 students and 30 teachers who learn and teach in its 24 classrooms, five laboratories and two staff rooms.



The school has had an active National Cadet Corps (NCC) wing since 2016. The NCC is the youth wing of the Indian Armed Forces with its headquarters in New Delhi.

What sets this school apart is the fact that its teachers go way beyond what is expected of them. "Before the new academic year begins, our teachers conduct a survey in the nearby villages. They spread awareness about the importance of school and motivate parents and children towards education," said the acting principal Shashi Prakash.

In the course of their village visits,

the teachers find families where a child is not in school because he or she cannot afford the fees. Those children are identified, their parents counselled and the children are enrolled in the Lieutenant Colonel Shivnath Singh Inter College. Teachers also take care of the needs of students coming from economically weaker sections.

A cool school in the Thar desert provides free education to girls

KULDEEP CHHANGANI

JAISALMER, RAJASTHAN

AN OVAL-SHAPED building in the Thar desert, in a village called Kanoi, 37 kilometres away from Jaisalmer city in Rajasthan, is garnering a lot of attention from tourists. Because it is where 140 girls from the neighbouring villages with low literacy are provided education.

But that is not the only thing special about Rajkumari Ratnavati Girls High School. The school building is designed in such a way that it is said to withstand temperatures up to 50 degrees Celsius. It has been built using locally available building materials by involving the local masons and carpenters.

Despite the hot weather of the desert, the school interiors remain cool and girls can be seen singing, dancing and running around the 'green' school premises. They come from families where their parents are farmers, camel herders, goat herders and casual labourers.

The Rajkumari Ratnavati Girls



The school building is designed in such a way that it is said to withstand temperatures up to 50 degrees Celsius. KULDEEP CHHANGANI

High School was conceptualised by Michael Daube, founder of an American non-profit CITTA, that provides women and girls from marginalised communities education and means of economic independence. The school was designed by American architect, Diana Kellog, and began functioning in July 2021.

CITTA also funds the running of the school which is absolutely free for the students who are also given

free books, uniform and transport, besides food. The architects of the school have taken special care to ensure the school building is built with sandstone that is locally available.

Solar panels generate the required power supply and an efficient rainwater harvesting system has been put in place that collects runoff from the roof and leads it into a tank through pipes.

The writing is on the wall

PRATYAKSH SRIVASTAVA

GORAKHPUR, UP

FOR VIJAY KUMAR Chaudhary, teaching students in the primary school of Manikapar, Gorakhpur, is not merely an occupation but a calling. He lives in a room inside the school premises and likes nothing better than painting educational graffiti on the walls of the classrooms.

"The kids really like it. The graffiti adds colour to the classrooms but also acts as a teaching aid to the teachers who teach in it," he told *Gaon Connection*. "Although I have a house in the city, I prefer to live here and spend time interacting with the villagers and beautifying the school," Chaudhary said.



Storytelling using posters is one of the favourite activities of the students in the classroom. PRATYAKSH SRIVASTAVA

The 44-year-old teacher was posted as an assistant teacher at the school in 2010 and is now its headmaster. He presently teaches classes one and five.

Anshika, one of his students, perks up as he asks her to tell the story of an injured dog that a little girl takes home and looks after. There is a poster on the wall on which is a pictorial depiction of the dog and the little girl, and Anshika looks at it and confidently narrates the story to her classmates.

Chaudhary is big on pictorial presentations. He uses posters, and the graffiti of the wall and firmly believes the children benefit from this. As part of the NIPUN programme launched by the Union Ministry of Education, in July 2021, teachers are encouraged to use visual aid in teaching students in class one.

The teachers use the graffiti clad walls as teaching aids. They ask their students questions about what is painted on the walls.



Mamta Singh

I TEACH at Upper Primary School, Narayanpur in Amethi district of Uttar Pradesh. Recently, on Teacher's Day, on September 5, when I arrived at the school at seven in the morning for the extra class, I was pleasantly surprised. The class-

room was decorated and there was food and drinks kept at a corner. I realised my students, who are in class 6, had woken up at five in the morning and come to school to decorate the classroom to welcome me on Teacher's Day. They had taken special permission from their parents to arrive early to school that day. I was a bit upset when I saw they had worked so hard to decorate the classroom and asked them why they did so. "Ma'am, you do so much for us, so we decided to do something for you without compromising on our studies," is what they told me. I can never forget that day in my life.



Lucky Singh

AS SOON as the bell of my school, Composite School in Balrampur district, Uttar Pradesh, rings, my class begins whether I am there or not. And the class always runs smoothly. The biggest reason for this is a student in my

class named Niranjana. As soon as he realises it is class time and I am not there, he takes charge of the class along with the other children. Together the kids pay close attention to what I had taught and what needed to be covered next. They also revise their lessons in case I get late due to some unavoidable reasons. Other teachers often tell me, "Whether you are in class or not, the class always functions." I have also formed a group called the "Children's Brigade." If a child doesn't come to school, the Children's Brigade goes to bring the child to school.

Babita Yadav

I BELIEVE that just as it is important for children to receive a good education, it is equally important to pay attention to their passion, which can help bring out their talents. If a child is not doing well in academics, it doesn't necessarily mean they lack talent. What they need is guidance in the right direction. I have always



been a science student, but my passion has always been singing. In my school Composite School Dankaur in Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh, there is a child named Lokesh who used to struggle with academics, but by observing his interests and behaviour, I understood that he had the potential to do something different.

When Lokesh entered my class in the 6th grade, I started teaching him theatre. Lokesh has been doing exceptionally well, and it was very gratifying to see him perform so brilliantly at school. He played the role of Sudama and also gave his friend the opportunity to play the role of Krishna in the play. He handled all aspects of the play, from arranging costumes for all the children to directing the performance.



Anuradha Bhardwaj

WHEN I was in Hathras at Kathara Jahangirpur Primary School, there was a boy named Rajendra who was very good at studies and was my student too. He was counted among the good students in the school. After leaving school, he got admission to Navodaya, and after some time, I received a sweet box from a boy who came to me. He told me that Rajendra had cleared the NEET exam and got admission to MBBS in Chennai. I felt very happy to hear this. At present, I am the principal of Mahua Kheda Primary School in Aligarh. Another teacher in my school, Kavita Yadav, and I, together with our own money, have installed a 32-inch TV in the school. The children study through the TV.

**NOTE: IF YOU HAVE AN INTERESTING STORY/ INCIDENT TO SHARE,
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TUM KAHO
CHAAND
CHOUKOR
KAR DEN

NEELESH MISRA
SINGER-SONGWRITER

PHIR
MILENGE

SLOW
MUSIC

CO-COMPOSER:
ANUJ BHATT



