

Empowering Rural Children With Computer Literacy



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Correspondent (Delhi) The World Computer Literacy Day is being celebrated since 2001. It was announced by NIIT, a leading computer education institute on its 20th anniversary to encourage the development of technological skills, particularly among children and women.

Cosmo Foundation, a CSR wing of Cosmo Films Ltd. has been running Computer Literacy Program since its inception from the year 2008, with a similar motto to create employment opportunities for rural children. The Computer Literacy Program is the one of the flagship programs under the umbrella of Cosmo Foundation, where basic computer operation and exposure to digital technology is imparted to rural children and youth. Cosmo Foundation regularly organizes and celebrates this day with government schools around Karjan block, Vadodara district in Gujarat. The program also has its footprints in Gangapur block of Aurangabad district in Maharashtra. In the last 10 years, the organization has touched lives of 26,000 students across 83 villages.

This time on World Literacy Day, Cosmo Foundation organized competitions on designing posters, digital art, sessions on the role of computer literacy in 21st century with students, teachers and computer experts. Students from Zilla Parishad Schools from Aurangabad district were taken on a visit to P.E.S. Polytechnic and Engineering College to get orientated for higher education in computer science and computer engineering.

Cosmo Foundation has designed a curriculum on basic computer literacy, provided hardware and internet connectivity and has trained rural youth, placing them as teachers. Local government schools provide space, electricity and timings during working hours.

Cosmo Foundation is also aligned with national policies and programs such as. Digital India, Swachh Bharat and Right to Education. A context survey conducted in the Karjan area regarding access and ability of digital payments among the community showed that around 80% people were not aware of digital transactions. CF joined hands with managers of 13 banks operating in these villages and understood the problems faced by them as well as issues faced by the local people. Cosmo Foundation thus conducted series of trainings for Panchayats and Aanganwadi workers on digital transactions.

Cosmo Foundation organizes Computer Award Competition every year and awards top five performing students with laptops; in order to promote enthusiasm among students to learn computers.

Over the years, the organization has created a good program through experimental approach in the field of computer literacy. Many beneficiaries of the programme have been able to secure admissions in B.C.A. Diploma and Degree in Computer Engineering. Some of the former students have also started their own computer centers, become D.J operators, video editors, web-designers, store officers, data entry operators etc. Some of them have joined the organization itself as computer teachers. Our journey goes on with a dream to make every rural child a digitally literate citizen.