

# No empty tummies, only hungry minds

## Trust Provides Mid-Day Meals In Govt, Aided Schools

Yamini Nair | TNN

**W**hen businessman Mohsin Shariff decided to take forward charity work initiated by his grandfather, he had in mind the importance of eradicating hunger to reduce the number of school dropouts.

Mohsin Shariff Educational and Charitable Trust (MSECT) thus began in 2002



with the objective to provide mid-day meals to students in government schools. "Our aim is to serve mid-day meals to 2 lakh children who are

studying in government and aided schools from Classes 1 to 10, irrespective of caste, creed, language and religion. At present, MSECT is feeding around 50,000 kids every day in 182 Kannada, Urdu, Tamil, Telugu and English schools," says Shariff, chairman of the trust.

With aid from state and central governments, MSECT has been able to cater to more children. "We serve food on all working days. A variety is on offer like bisi bele bhath, chitranna, anna sambar, etc," says Jamal Mohammed, PRO of the trust.

For Shariff, work starts at 4am every day at the kitchen in K R Puram. More than 100 staff work there. Modern equipment are used to ensure hygiene. By 9.30am, the food is sent to schools.

"Mohsin Shariff Trust provides a variety of food, which has prompted more children



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**VARIETY OF FOOD HAS IMPROVED ATTENDANCE IN THE SCHOOL**

to join our school. The kids are happy too," says M Muni-venkatappa, headmaster of Government Kannada Primary School, Garudacharpalya. "It has considerably reduced dropout rate," he adds.

MSECT also initiated a programme to provide packaged drinking water to school-children in August 2010. "We have a water-purification plant in Bannerghatta. At present, we supply water to 50,000 children. We have plans to extend the benefit to more," says Jamal.

MSECT extends its helping hand to other sections of society as well. It serves special meals to prisoners on certain occasions and organizes rehabilitation programmes for those released from prison. "We also offer scholarships to students who excel in studies. We provide blankets and warm clothes to senior citizens during winter," says

Shariff. "The immense satisfaction you get from such an initiative keeps me going. Expenses are met from the profit of my business as well as donations from volunteers. I spend from my own pocket to serve meals to 10,000 children every day in D J Halli slum area," he adds.

"Due to the mid-day meals, attendance has improved in our school. Children are keen on attending classes regularly," says Mohammed Iqbal Hussain, secretary, Modern Kannada and English School, D J Halli.

MSECT also plans to extend medical facilities to poor children by providing them with hepatitis-B vaccine free of cost. "A memorandum has been submitted to the Union health ministry on this. Plans are afoot to extend mid-day meal facilities to Devanahalli and Doddaballapur as well," Shariff says.