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FORMER BANKER ON A MISSION TO TURN AROUND THE LIFE OF TRIBALS



THE OPTIMIST CITIZEN AUGUST 8, 2016 1.9K VIEWS





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Every day we witness that our lives have always been encumbered and entangled in numbers. The highest percentage in school, the figures of GDP growth rate, the fall of the stock market or the millions who died in a year. Although seemingly logical by their outlook, numbers often reduce even the most genuine human lives and emotions to just a basic fact, leaving us vulnerable to the core. Constantly enamoured by this fact, Sanjay Nagar, a former banker, quit his comfortable city life and job to pursue his hobby of wildlife photography and set up a resort in Kohka village which is

located near Pench National Park. Once there, he readily witnessed the numerous problems faced by the local tribal populations and decided to volunteer as a teacher in the local government school of Kohka.

While working with them, Sanjay decided to take things a notch further. Two years ago, he launched an NGO called Kohka Foundation to bring in more help for the tribal communities in the villages in and around the Pench National Park in Madhya Pradesh. The main focus of the organization has been to improve the educational standards among the students of these villages. In all their efforts, the foundation has been helped by Mumbai-based Light of Life Trust.

One of their flagship programme, Anando Program for Secondary Students, has been able to raise the pass out percentage of the local schools substantially. From a 38% failure rate before the program, the ratio of students failing in class 10 has fallen down to 28% due to Anando.



"The next step for us is to provide all these students with computer literacy. We realize that they need this in order to move ahead in today's times. It will help them avail more information than the school textbooks can provide. Also, the kids will have better job opportunities if they knew how to operate computers. Computer Literacy in India is less than 7%, and the condition is still worse in rural areas," said Sanjay Nagar. He aims to set up a computer laboratory with at least 15 computers in Turria Government High School which are attended by more than 400 kids from 20 nearby villages.

Work towards this end has already begun. A crowdfunding campaign is underway on Crowdera (http://crowdera.in/campaigns/computerfortribals/Sanjay-1478),a free crowdfunding platform that has two domains a global one (https://crowdera.co/) and another focused specifically on India (.http://crowdera.in/), to raise the funds necessary for the laboratory. Through offline and online donations, Nagar has already bought 10 of the 15 laptops required. More funds will be needed for buying accessories like printers and AMC device. The intention is to collect the remaining funds in the next fortnight so that the laboratory can be inaugurated on August 15.

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THE OPTIMIST CITIZEN

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