

PRESS RELEASE

Shiv Nadar Foundation takes free world-class school to Central U.P. ▪ Second VidyaGyan School to open in Sitapur, near Lucknow

November 18, New Delhi, India: Shiv Nadar Foundation takes its unique VidyaGyan School for rural toppers to Sitapur, Uttar Pradesh (U.P.) with its foundation stone laying ceremony today.

VidyaGyan, Sitapur, second of the planned three schools, will take high quality school education to rural toppers from Central U.P. completely free, including to some backward districts of what is India's largest and most populous state. The Sitapur School is the second step to doing this on a scale large enough to have tangible impact across all 71 districts of the state and transform the lives of 1000 meritorious students by early 2011. Construction is soon to begin and VidyaGyan, Sitapur is anticipated to be open in time for the academic year 2011-12.

Shiv Nadar, Chairman, Shiv Nadar Foundation and Founder, HCL said on the occasion, "We started VidyaGyan because we know there are many bright rural kids who do not reach their true potential simply because of no access to quality education. I am a product of education and know that it can empower these children to overcome their circumstances like nothing else can. I'm very proud that this social experiment is already showing results in Bulandshahr - you can see it in the students' eyes and the way they have matured academically, emotionally and physically. We are very happy to bring the school to Sitapur".

The vision of the VidyaGyan schools is to build future leaders from rural India by providing high quality school education as a tool to bridge the rural-urban divide. In partnership with the Government of U.P., VidyaGyan aims to select, induct and transform meritorious rural children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, providing them free, world class education. The initiative enables them to transcend the disadvantages they face and compete with their urban counterparts. VidyaGyan also provides them the finest mentoring and nurturance to give them the opportunity to become tomorrow's world leaders. The Foundation hopes that this will raise many more aspirations and contribute to leveling the urban-rural divide and inspire many others to undertake more such initiatives.

The Shiv Nadar Foundation had inaugurated the first VidyaGyan School in August 2009, in Bulandshahr, U.P. which is already touching the lives of 200 7th graders and 400 6th graders. The VidyaGyan schools will run from the 6th to the 12th grade, scaled up each year. Three boarding schools geographically situated to cover all 71 districts of U.P. with a capacity of 1400 students each, at full strength will nurture 4200 responsible citizen leaders.

The Shiv Nadar Foundation

The Shiv Nadar Foundation (www.ShivNadarFoundation.org) has been established by Shiv Nadar, Founder, HCL - a \$5.5 billion leading global technology and IT enterprise, which employs over 77,000 employees across 29 countries. The 34 year old enterprise, founded in 1976, is one of India's original IT garage start-ups and offers diverse business aligned technology solutions spanning the entire hardware and software spectrum, to a focused range of industry verticals. The Foundation is committed to the creation of a more equitable, meritocracy based society by empowering individuals to bridge the socio-economic divide. To that purpose the Foundation is focused on the rather underdeveloped disciplinary areas in India related to **philanthropic transformational education, creativity and art**. So far, the Foundation has set up the **SSN Institutions** (www.SSN.edu.in) in 1996, comprising the SSN College of Engineering (already an India top 10 private engineering college), the SSN School of Management and Computer Applications and the SSN School of Advanced Software Engineering, in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. Building on the experience from successfully running the SSN Institutions, the Shiv Nadar Foundation now proposes to set up the **Shiv Nadar University** in a 286-acre campus adjacent to Delhi. The vision is to create a centre of excellence in education at par with premier education institutions worldwide. The institution will take up education at the under-graduate and post-graduate levels, and will also have a strong focus on high quality, result oriented research. The land for the institution has been acquired and plans are underway.

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