



Education Secretary, TM Vijay Bhaskar, Minister for Primary and Secondary Education, Basavaraj Horatti, Chairperson, Akshara Foundation, Rohini Nilekani and State Project Director, Atheeq at awards ceremony of The Karnataka Learning Partnership in Bangalore on Thursday. KPN

# Akshara's Karnataka Learning Partnership a runaway success

## 95 per cent hit on improving reading skills

BY BANGALORE BIAS CORRESPONDENT

**T**HE Karnataka Learning Partnership, a public-private initiative by Akshara foundation and the Education Department, Government of Karnataka and the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, on Thursday presented the findings of its reading programme conducted across 1309 government primary schools in Bangalore.

The initiative, aimed at improving learning outcomes among primary school children in Karnataka, completed its first phase, implementing a citywide reading programme.

The Karnataka Learning Partnership team assessed a total number of 1,76,235

accelerated reading programme during the first trimester of the academic year. In all 4,355 teachers were trained to conduct this programme, during a special one-and-a-half hour session, conducted for 45 working days. After 45 story cards and nearly three months, the Karnataka Learning Partnership has seen some significant achievements.

Across Bangalore Urban District, 64 percent children who were classified as 'non-readers' in the assessment have become 'readers.'

Over 95 percent of children showed movement up the five-point reading scale. Only two per cent of the children remained at 'zero' level. After three months of the programme, 45,000 children have learnt

the credit for the success of this programme goes to Akshara Foundation

The Minister also appealed to the private sector to join hands with the government in social initiatives.

"Everything cannot be done by government alone. Public-private partnership is the way to go. We should have helping hands from outside the government. Like Infosys, if other firms whose turnovers are in crores, also make some effort to encourage educational programmes, it is possible to improve the education in the state which is lagging behind other states, as most of the children lack basic reading and writing skills."

According to Government statistics, the education department

continue to put in more effort in improvising their teaching skills in such programmes.

"The government considers this a successful programme as children have benefited immensely. Teachers and educators have been enthused about this mission while parents are excited to see their children read better," said TM Vijay Bhaskar, Education Secretary, Government of Karnataka.

"This has now given us the confidence to take this initiative beyond Bangalore to all parts of the state. It is heartening that civil society players like Akshara Foundation have put in so much energy into this initiative. We look forward to more programmes under the Karnataka Learning

primary schools in Bangalore was developed using geographical information system (GIS), which provided complete information in both text and visual form. A special website <http://karnatakalearningpartnership.org> has been created to track the programme real time and provide up to date information on the programme to all the stakeholders.

"We all know that reading is a primary skill without which even mathematics cannot be understood in our education system," said Rohini Nilekani, chairperson, Akshara Foundation.

"The results are there for all to see. Everyone who participated in this exercise feels a sense of great satisfaction at the huge effort

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