

TECHIES GO TO VILLAGES



COUNTRY CLUB: Some of the volunteers of Yuva Bengaluru.

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THEY may not be NASA scientists, but their enthusiasm to better villages is no less than that of Shah Rukh Khan's character Mohan Bhargav in Swades. A group of techies from leading IT companies in the city have planned to visit rural areas in the state to better understand the problems of the villagers.

The techies, who call themselves Yuva Bengaluru, will kick off their 'A day in a village' initiative this weekend with a visit to Ramanagar,

YUVA BENGALURU

YUVA Bengaluru was founded in 2008 by eight techies who wished to empower the youth. Today, it has over 800 members. 'A day in a village' is only the first of a row of projects planned for the next one year. One of their successful initiatives is called 'run your school', started last year. In this project, they adopted and renovated a 70-year-old school,

which was the constituency of former Chief Minister H.D.Kumaraswamy.

Weekend in villages

"H.D. Kumaraswamy is our inspiration," said Kiran Gangadhar, founder, Yuva Bengaluru. "We will start our 'A day in a village' this weekend and aim to bring better tomorrows for villagers."

Over 40 techies and working professionals from various city companies, including Hewlett Packard, Dell and Honeywell, will take a break tomorrow and spend this weekend in 15 villages of the Ramanagar constituency.

They will form two groups of equal strength and work in the villages and fields. One team will make an attempt to understand the lives of farmers and the challenges they face, through interactions in places like harvest fields. The other team will visit villages and discuss topics such as education, health, women empowerment and agriculture with farmers, women and children. They will also try to find answers for the farmers' challenges.

Said Gangadhar, "We have



IN HIS STEPS: Ex-CM H D Kumaraswamy is Yuva Bengaluru's inspiration.

planned a series of events like children's evening, where children will be taught through games. We will also try to act as a bridge between them and policymakers or bureaucrats."

Hero No. 1

The inspiration for the initiative came from Kumaraswamy's 'Grama Vastavya' programme, under which H D Kumaraswamy and his officials would visit villages, stay with the locals and listen to their problems. They would then try to

address their grievances. "His stint in villages encouraged us to take up the initiative. We are looking forward to more youth joining our campaign," said volunteer Tanu Kulkarni. Yuva Bengaluru has the full-fledged support of their hero.

K Raju, MLA, Ramanagar and a close aide of Kumaraswamy said, "This is a great initiative. Kumaraswamy is guiding and helping the team, as it's a unique exercise. It's a welcome move by techies. We will soon start a pilot project in this regard."

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YOUNG AND READY TO HELP: The volunteers are all set to do their bit for rural uplift.

INSPIRED BY THE IDEAS OF A FORMER CM, A GROUP OF TECHIES IS GOING TO VILLAGES TO UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEMS THERE AND FIND SOLUTIONS

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DRIVE TO MAKE PLEDGING OF EYES A FAMILY AFFAIR

Campaign by youth group will ask those willing to donate eyes to involve their families as well

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YUVA Bengaluru, a city-based team of young working professionals championing 'a day in village' initiative, is now gearing up for a mammoth drive with the call, 'eye donation...let it be your family tradition'.

Approaching firms

This drive is set to start later this month across Bengaluru and will make working professionals of over 40 corporate companies, including IBM, Accenture, Honeywell and Globals, pledge to donate eyes along with their families.

Unlike normal eye donation camps, which restrict to individuals this will be a family pledge, say members of Yuva Bengaluru.

The drive will go on for three days from January 25 to January 27. Dr Rajkumar eye bank has joined hands with Yuva Bengaluru for this drive.

Going to colleges

Raj's sons Punith Rajkumar and Raghavendra Rajkumar will launch the drive that also covers over twenty colleges including Mount Carmel College, Vijaya College and Surana College.

"This is for the first time eye donation drive is happening on such a large scale," said Kiran Gangadhar, founder, Yuva Bengaluru. "The drive will happen across Bengaluru in over forty IT companies," added Gangadhar.

Yuva Bengalureans, a group of over 300 techies from various IT companies including Hewlett Packard, Dell and Honeywell, who are successfully carrying out initiatives like making of a model school and a day in village, will now work for blind as part of International Youth Day. They will now facilitate 'family eye pledge' drive.

"We are aiming to reach three thousand mark," said Gangadhar. "In most cases the family is not aware of the pledge taken by a donor in their family. Hence, the family pledge is effective as the whole family will be aware of the pledge they have taken."

Awareness

Yuva Bengaluru will interact and play short films for working professionals and students. The films that will be played are made to create awareness, besides helping in clearing away the taboos attached to eye donation.

"With increasing corneal problems, the demand is increasing every day, which we are not able to meet," said Veeresh MPM, manager, Dr Rajkumar eye bank.

"Yuva Bengaluru have taken up the issue on right time. We too have joined them and have agreed to interact with employees in corporate companies and distribute awareness creating CDs. With their participation, we hope to cater to demand, which is at least for 3 to 4 eyes everyday," added Veeresh.



VISION MISSION: Yuva Bengaluru volunteers (above) and a poster for the eye donation campaign. Before this, Yuva Bengaluru has worked on other campaigns such as 'A Day in a Village' that enabled young professionals to understand the problems of rural areas over weekend trips. Yuva Bengaluru is a group of over 300 techies.

