Cognizant Donates Tablets and Laptops Worth 74 Lakhs to Government Schools in West Bengal

Partners with CBM India Trust to bridge the digital divide and aid learningfor underserved students

Cognizant has donated 500 tablets and eight internet-enabled laptops to four government schools in Kolkata at a function held at Garden Reach Institute for the Rehabilitation & Research (GRIRR), in the presence of Shri. Firhad Hakim, Mayor, Kolkata, Cabinet Minister of Transport and Housing, Government of West Bengal. The distribution drive in Kolkata is part of Cognizant's nationwide '**Digital Schools'** initiative being implemented in partnership with non-profit organizations.






The initiative in West Bengal will benefit 500 students of classes 9 and 10 and several teachers across government schools in the region. Cognizant has contributed more than INR 74 Lakhs towards these devices.

The 'Digital Schools' initiative, launched by Cognizant aims to bridge the digital divide and enable access to education for students at Government schools.

Speaking at the event, Syed Sajid, AVP - EAS and Centre Head for Kolkata, Cognizant, said, "As an organization that believes in the power of education to enable social progress and transformation, Cognizant will continue to serve the cause of digital inclusion in education. The Digital Schools initiative is our effort to ensure that rural schools in underserved communities overcome the extraordinary disruptions and digital inequalities brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic and continue imparting education. On behalf of Cognizant, I thank the state, district and local administration, as well as our implementation partner CBM India Trust for their support."

Cognizant Outreach, the company's employee-led volunteering program and CBM volunteers will conduct programs to train the students on using the devices effectively and will also support usage to ensure positive educational outcomes. Volunteers will also conduct training sessions for faculty members to empower them with digital skills and techniques to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes.

Commending Cognizant for their support, Dr. Sara Varughese, Managing Trustee, CBM India Trust, said, "Cognizant's support and partnership for the Inclusive Digital Schools Program has helped mitigate the impact of the pandemic on the education of children. The education of children, particularly those with disabilities and from poor socioeconomic backgrounds has been badly disrupted. This program will improve access to learning opportunities for children by providing basic digital infrastructure in 4 schools in Kolkata slums, and also support teachers to use this for teaching children. I thank our community partner GRIRR for their work on the ground, including e-therapy support for children with disabilities. Cognizant and CBM working together will ensure that children's education continues."

As part of the Digital Schools initiative, Cognizant plans to donate 3,730 tablets and 188 laptops with internet across nine cities in six states at a cost of INR 6.7 crore. Two non-profits - Nirmaan Organization and CBM India Trust are identified as implementation partners. The project will be executed in a phased manner by Nirmaan in Telangana, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Maharashtra and in Kolkata by CBM India Trust.

The device distribution is planned in four phases this year. In the first phase, distribution was completed in Telangana and Karnataka where 500 tablets and 40 laptops were donated in April 2021 and Phase 2 has been completed in NCR and Maharashtra with donations of 1,980 tablets and 80 laptops to underserved students in July 2021. Distribution drives in Phase 3 and Phase 4 will cover West Bengal, Telangana and Karnataka, respectively.

Other dignitaries present at the event included Binod kumar (IAS), Municipal Commissioner, Jb. Zafar Ajmal Kadwai, Deputy Commissioner, Police, Randhir Kumar IAS, State Disability commissioner, S.S. Vinayak, Assistant Commissioner, Disability, Shams Iqbal, Ward Councillor, and Nazim Khan, Founder, GRIRR.

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