

A road to remember

“Everyone has a story to tell, a lesson to teach, and wisdom to share. Life is a beautiful masterpiece bound together by your experiences. Open up and share your story; become an inspiration to others. You can make a difference because you matter.”

True to the Melanie Moushigian Koulouris quote above is an endeavor undertaken by Sehgal Foundation: the deputation of two buses, by Haryana Roadways, for approximately 200 girl students, teenagers from seventeen villages to their respective schools in Nagina and Pinagwan. What is commendable about this initiative is the joint action undertaken by all stakeholders involved in order to facilitate the education of girls.



Sangeeta Rani, a student of class 9, says, “Earlier I had to wait many hours for a bus. I felt I would no longer be able to continue my education post class 8; household chores would be my sole engagement; however, with this bus connection I am able to pursue my studies for as long as I wish to.” Hemlata adds, “I hail from a poor family. I cannot even afford to pay the bus fees. With this bus connection, I can think of studying further.” Geeta, described how mischievous elements en route to school had posed serious problems for her. She now feels safe using the bus.

What is heartening about this feedback is the girls’ resolve not to give up, to study, be someone, fulfil dreams, and serve as an inspiration for many others.

The GM, Haryana Roadways, Mr. N.K. Garg, cites working as a collective force as the reason this initiative has seen the light of day, "When this problem was brought to my notice, I immediately took action. Educating girls is vital. The government also supports the cause actively under the *Beti Padao, Beti Bachao* campaign. These girls can now proceed with their studies in a safe and secure environment, as commuting is no longer a challenge."

Aarif Hussain, block coordinator, Nagina, elaborates, "The issue of transport facilities for girls used to be discussed often during the *gram sabha*. After consultations and coordination, the busses were finally started. The main challenges were logistics, coordination, and follow-up; but at the end of it all, we are really proud and happy of the result."

Navneet Narwal, program leader, Governance and Policy Advocacy, Sehgal Foundation, highlights the importance of the involvement of all stakeholders involved. "Unity for a cause is very important," he says. "Without this, a cause cannot see realization. For me, this initiative was a bridge between challenges and achievements, between people from different backgrounds and between dreams and reality. I feel that the bond built is stronger than any challenge fathomable."

For further information, email:

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