

Small kids come with big ideas for Happy India

- IndiaFirst Life Insurance's Happy India campaign successful
- Top 25 teams from Pan India present their ideas at National Conclave

MUMBAI, February 8, 2015: They want to ensure education for child labourers who are not fortunate enough to go to schools. They want to build toilet blocks for girls and boys in schools and they are keen to promote cleanliness in slums and eco friendly shopping bags at malls and local markets. And, they have a lesson or two for civic bodies to build pothole-free roads and introduce sensor-based dustbins. They are school children from across the country, who want to make the nation a Happy India. They are the future change makers and they want to be the change that they want to see!

Over 15,000 young students in the age groups of 11 years to 16 years from across 304 schools from across the country enthusiastically sent in their ideas for the IndiaFirst's Happy India. A jury has selected 25 final ideas to be executed by as many teams. IndiaFirst Life Insurance is helping execute these projects over a period of 40 days with a grant of Rs 50,000 each and with some industry stalwarts mentoring them.

While working with their ideas, some student groups have already launched their pilots. For instance, a Vijayawada school team called Happy India raised some noise about the lack of education and even access to an island village Pamula Lanka that gets surrounded with water during the monsoon and thus gets cut off. The Happy India team inspired the Zilla Parishad chairperson to start work on a bridge to the island and move the AP Government for additional funds to complete the work. This will enable the villagers commute across to the mainland apart from facilitating the young Happy India team to go there and run classes for children there.

A team from Bhopal came up with a novel idea to implement Swatch Bharat drive organizing *Bal Panchayats* in eight schools to mobilize students to maintain cleanliness in the toilets and wash basins.

A Jaipur school team has shown keenness to incentivize people to shift habits and use shopping bags made with used clothes. The students plan to sell the bags at shopping malls and give them parking coupons. As a pre-cursor, they spread awareness about the hazards of using plastic bags through various skits and road shows and have already inspired over 400 families to follow their example.

A Nashik school has shown interest in checking female feticide and run self-defense classes for girls. Focusing on an energy saving drive, a team from Hyderabad has suggested promotion of use of solar appliances.

Many teams demonstrated their concern for street children and child laborers who toil for meager wages when they should be playing or going to schools. The school going children presented ideas to promote literacy among the less fortunate ones and even organize for teaching skill sets so that they can better their lives.

Two teams from Vijayawada came up with the idea of planting and maintaining trees and staging street plays and skits to spread awareness about green environment.

A team from Vizag evinced interest in 'each-one-teach-one concept to spread literacy - first by making elders realize the importance of educating their children and then conducting classes for the young ones.

A Mumbai school conceived a project to build a Swast Bharat (Healthy India) by ensuring everyone has the right to basic vegetables at a price they can afford by with a cross-subsidization model where the middle income as well as the low income populace gets the cost benefit of getting vegetables directly from the wholesalers.

Pot holes are a major nuisance in Mumbai and many other cities in India where motorists keep protesting to the municipal corporations over the awful state of the roads. Here, a team from the Island City decided to take things in their hands, use waste plastic and construct a road that is not only solid and durable but also less expensive than the conventional material.

Reckless garbage disposal and overflowing bins cause a major nuisance in many cities. To tackle this, a Mumbai school has come with the idea of awards for maintaining cleanliness in the streets by encouraging proper methods of using garbage bins. Moving ahead on the same idea, a Vijayawada team did a pilot project with sensor-based garbage bins. The bins send out light signals once the garbage gets converted into organic manure which the village folk can use in their farms or kitchen gardens.

Contaminated water is the cause of many diseases in the country and keeping this in mind, two different teams from Vijayawada suggested medical camps and supply of pure drinking water to keep people healthy. Another team from the Andhra city is keen to promote education based on Shantiniketakan model with emphasis on practical learning and giving back to the society rather than mere theoretical studies.

Commenting on the success of Happy India, **Mr. Mohit Rochlani, Chief Marketing Officer IndiaFirst Life Insurance** said: “Through Happy India, our endeavor is to involve the future generation in the nation building activity. We hope this small step from IndiaFirst will lead to a big leap forward for the next generation.”

“We are overwhelmed by the response from school students across the country. The enthusiasm and talent that was witnessed was truly inspiring to us elders. Seeing these students actually implement their ideas is a great experience,” Mr Rochlani said.

Mr. R S Setia, Director and CEO, IndiaFirst Life Insurance and Chief General Manager, Bank of Baroda, said, “It feels great to see children with such beautiful dreams which can be realized with a little effort and bring about change in our country. These are the children who are future of our nation and we are proud to give a platform like Happy India for children.”

In all, Happy India received 1,042 ideas from students between 11 to 16 years old with focus on key areas such as Education, Health, Energy Conservation, Security, Environment Protection and Financial Inclusion. The initiative is being supported by Bank of Baroda and Andhra Bank, while the validation and process authentication is being overlooked by KPMG in India – Process Evaluators, the Knowledge Partners.

The Happy India national conclave from IndiaFirst Life Insurance was held today in Mumbai, which showcased ideas from the top 25 teams and its impact to the audience of corporate honchos and key public figures.

The efforts of these students will be published in the ‘Young Change Makers’ compendium, jointly created by IndiaFirst and Shristhi Publishers. The compendium will also feature the Mentors’ perspective on building a Happy India.

About IndiaFirst Life Insurance

Headquartered in Mumbai, IndiaFirst, with a paid-up share capital of INR 475 crore, is one of the country's youngest life insurance companies. It is promoted by two of India's largest public sector banks - Bank of Baroda and Andhra Bank along with UK's leading risk, wealth and investment company Legal & General. Bank of Baroda holds a 44 percent stake in IndiaFirst, while Andhra Bank and Legal & General hold a 30 percent and 26 percent respectively.

IndiaFirst believes it can differentiate itself through simple, easy to understand products that are fairly priced and efficiently serviced.

Today IndiaFirst Life is present in over 1000 cities and towns across the country through 6000 partner bank branches. The company has covered over 2.7 million lives and have over INR 7.500 crore of AUM as on September 30, 2014.

As per IDRA web site, IndiaFirst is ranked 8th among private life insurers for new business premium.

The Journey, So Far:

- One of the fastest growing life insurance company in the country. Moved from 23rd position to 8th position amongst private life insurers.
- Defied industry trend – grew by 28% in terms of new business premium at the end of FY 2013-14
- Over Rs.7,500 crore of AUM – ensuring superior risk adjusted returns. Have consistently outperformed our benchmark indices
- Over 2.7 million lives covered
- Wide network with 6,000 touch points across 1,000 cities and towns
- Over 31 awards won in a span of 5 years including three consecutive Celent Asia Awards
- Ranked amongst the Top 100 Great Places to Work

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