

The Times Of India, Bangalore
Date: September 10, 2007

Empower kids to become world leaders: Tharoor

Former UN undersecretary-general Shashi Tharoor on Sunday outlined the need to go beyond literacy to empower even disadvantaged children to become tomorrow's global leaders. Speaking after interacting with children at Parikrma Humanity Foundation, he said: "Reading and writing is a must for every child. But that is not enough today. The world we live in has shrunk and our opportunities are linked to what happens in other countries, half a world away."

Further, Tharoor said India's own success in the information age requires Indians who can take advantage of globalisation. "There is little doubt that all our children must have the ability to hold their own. We have shown that Indians can be world class leaders. There is no reason why even the poorest Indian child of today cannot become a world leader of tomorrow," the noted writer stated.

During his one-hour interaction with children, Tharoor observed that the first building-block is literacy and then comes education.

"Every child I met today has dreams. Not educating our children is like tying our hands to the back and remaining silent," he added.

Parikrma has initiated a study conducted by The Nielsen Co. and supported by ANZ Operations and Technology Pvt Ltd.

Research focused on the Parikrma model in comparison to the existing systems at government and private English medium schools. "Where the Parikrma children really score is in their self-confidence and much wider world view. We are looking at what education has to deliver rather than improving delivery of irrelevant education," said Shukla Bose, founder CEO of Parikrma Humanity Foundation.

The foundation educates 850 children from 26 slums and four orphanages in and around Bangalore.