

'If you have health, you can have it all'

Philanthropist Ritu Prakash Chhabria talks about the importance of sound health, as central focus to better conditions around us



Ritu Prakash Chhabria with beneficiaries of her organisation's works

Ahmedabad Mirror Bureau
feedback@ahmedabadmirror.com

Posts @ahmedabadmirror

There's nothing more important than health, if one considers the numerous areas that need help and work around us, to ensure growth and success. That is, in a nutshell, the idea and belief of Ritu Prakash Chhabria of The Mukul Madhav Foundation.

Involved in projects that help in sustenance and community building, sanitation, bringing in water pipelines, dignified jobs, vocational training, skill development, she is in Ahmedabad for meetings that help further these causes. From healthcare to education, what is her primary focus and key to balanced growth, both individually and for the nation as a whole? "Healthcare more than anything because if you have health, you can do anything. In 1998 we began with the thought process that we will help babies – neo natal care – because when you have their good health, everything grows positively. So, we're working to make everything healthier at grassroot level and are doing many programs at primary health centres as well as rural hospitals which if we strengthen at state and central level, we will be able to not just save but better many lives," says Ritu Prakash Chhabria, who runs Mukul Madhav Vidyalaya in Ratnagiri, Maharashtra. The school, her key project, is not only spread across 11 acres, it also focuses on offering children education with learning that supplements livelihood.

From healthcare initiatives like thalassemia support to cerebral palsy interventions and diabetes assistance to surgeries, the aim is to reach smaller places and tribal belts where things don't reach easily.

Through education promotion, children benefit from sponsorships as well as basic education initiatives. "We don't focus on one particular community or section, we work with passion and follow no rules or regulations on whom we can reach out to



At a tree plantation programme



Dedicating a project to public

help – from women farmers to widows, babies to expecting mothers. We are focusing on old age homes as well as on hospices. So, on the one hand, while we offer support through education initiatives, we also ensure essential infrastructure – RO systems, water coolers, sanitation facilities, etc.

As daughter of industrialist Gopichand Hinduja and wife of Prakash Chhabria of Finolex

Industries, was philanthropy a natural course of life? "When I touched my first decade, I was doing something like collecting my birthday money and giving it away to a blind school. Philanthropy is

in our DNA, from both sides of the family, and that has made a big difference. Once CSR came in, I became an implementing partner for our own company," says Chhabria.

In Gujarat alone, from around one lakh individuals, which included 28,000 families, 650 plus surgeries were performed. "The last 10 years I have been interested largely in talking and understanding from local NGOs. I take time out to meet people and there's a lot of learning behind it," she sums up.

“ We don't focus on one particular community or section, we work with passion and follow no rules or regulations on whom we can reach out to help

–Ritu Prakash Chhabria

