

Printed from

**THE TIMES OF INDIA**

# Science of giving: Girl, 13, brings labs to poor kids

TNN | Dec 4, 2015, 10.03 AM IST



**HELPING HAND:** Nikhiya Shamsher at a lab in Parikrma Foundation

**B**engaluru: Mukunda S, a 17-year-old I PU student, had to travel long distances to perform lab experiments in other colleges. Tanzia J, 16, had to make do with watching science videos on YouTube as she couldn't afford a school with a hi-tech laboratory. Not anymore, thanks to a young philanthropist. All of 13, Nikhiya Shamsher has come to the rescue of hundreds of underprivileged kids like Mukunda and Tanzia, who have no access to well-equipped labs. Under her Yearn to Learn initiative, the class 8 student of Greenwood High School has been raising funds to set up science laboratories in institutions.

She has racked up Rs 2.8 lakh, which has been used to construct physics, chemistry and biology labs in Parikrma Foundation, which provides free education to 1,700 students from four orphanages and neighbouring slums. This isn't the first time that Nikhiya has been part of a welfare cause. "Under my first project, Books, Bags and Blessings, we supplied books bags, lunch boxes, pencil boxes, water bottles and uniforms to schools. The popularity and success of the initiative boosted my confidence and fuelled the idea of setting up labs for the needy. My friends and I managed to collect Rs 2.8 lakh from organizations and individuals," she said.

Due to lack of facilities PU students from Parikrma Foundation were forced to go to other colleges to conduct experiments one day before their practical exams. "The long commute took a toll on them, affecting their next day's performance. Now that they have labs in their own campus, they can carry out experiments at any time," added the teenager. Nikhiya plans to build eight more labs in two schools -Divine Mercy in Kannur village and and Sukrupa in RT Nagar -that educate destitute children from 18

quarries and slums in the neighbourhood.

"We are falling short of Rs 1.25 lakh. That's why we have started a crowd-funding campaign on [Ketto](#). People can contribute as much money as they want; December 13 is the last day," she said.