

## OCTOBER 2023: VIDYA GYAN (in the U.S. and INDIA) ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND PROGRESS

### Vidya Gyan Initiative

Vidya Gyan Initiative	Impact in District Saharanpur's Rural Government Schools
❖ Pencil to Power -----	~58,000 Notebooks distributed to ~18,500 children since 2016
❖ Nirmal Neer Mission -----	3,000 water bottles to students in primary grades in 2022
❖ Savings to Secure (Sukanya Accounts) ----	Over 1000 girls' accounts opened with Vidya Gyan support
❖ Adopt a Girl Child -----	20 girls adopted since 2021
❖ Super 20 (for Learning and Leadership)----	~250 students in 15 "Super 20s" in 12 schools in 2023
❖ Classroom furniture -----	21 schools affecting over 2000 students since 2018
❖ Library for Learning -----	Children books to ~20 schools
❖ Technology tools -----	15 schools received LED(smart) TV and a printer
❖ Computer Labs -----	2 rural schools furnished for basic computer instructions
❖ Competitive activities -----	Over 160 schools in 2022 & about 20 schools in previous years
❖ About Covid -----	14 Oxygen Concentrators and 10,000 face masks

The world has slowly but steadily emerged from the Covid and so did Vidya Gyan. Our activities are returning to full swing, but life is never without challenges, opportunities, and external factors beyond one's control. The challenges make us humble to experience life and do things differently, and seek ways to turn challenges into opportunities. We are faced with an external challenge of undue delay in the approval of FCRA which is limiting Vidya Gyan (USA) ability to transfer funds to Vidya Gyan India. Our leadership is steadfastly engaged in getting the FCRA process completed expeditiously.

This newsletter is a summary of our accomplishments which would not have been possible without Vidya Gyan's trusted friends, donors, and volunteers. This year, your generosity reached 3,700 students in the form of notebooks under our Pencil to Power initiative. Vidya Gyan is always in need of sponsors/donors for various projects aimed at improving the teaching and learning of students in rural government schools. For example, we are approached with the very unique idea of giving a Hindi-English dictionary to children in middle school for increased English vocabulary. Classroom furniture is always in demand and "smart" classrooms with access to technology are gaining momentum.

No amount for sourcing and leaving a legacy for improved learning is too small. Your donations may be monthly, yearly or a lump sum. Every penny counts and so does every donor in our quest of improved learning because Every Child Matters. Please use the DONATE button below because you as our friends have shown trust in us. We are equally and sincerely thankful to our teacher collaborators, parents, and school administration for the opportunities to Vidya Gyan. A highlight of this year was the rural students watching live telecast of Chandrayan landing on the moon using the smart TV in a school (photo shown below) with donors' support. Thank you donors; you are making a difference.

click here  [Donate/Contribute to Vidya Gyan](https://www.vidya-gyan.org/)



**e-WinS:** A walk by **Empowered Women in Saree (e-WinS)** was organized by Vidya Gyan in the India Fest Parade at the Minnesota State Capitol Grounds in St Paul, Minnesota on August 12. It was to raise awareness and make a pledge to narrow the significant gaps in girls' education in rural India. The empowered girls (future mothers) through education will empower their families. Women dressed in sarees supported Vidya Gyan in this effort along with their family members in Indian attire. Vidya Gyan's booth highlighted the iconic Sarees and the volunteers taught how to wrap/wear a Saree. We believe that the e-WinS was one of many ways to represent India's regional diversity and the grace of empowered women in Minnesota. Together, Vidya Gyan's friends and families celebrated Bharat's Independence Day in a unique style and propagated a message of empowering girls in rural schools.



**विद्या ज्ञान इंडिया**  
VIDYA GYAN

<http://vidya-gyan.org/>

**"VIDYA GYAN INDIA" HOME**

PS. Firozabad

U.P.S. Jainpur

U.P.S. Doobhar Kishanpur

U.P.S. Jhadwan

U.P.S. Sadholi Hariya

PS. Mahtauli

U.P.S. Kutubpur Labdaula

PS. Umahi

PS. Saidpura

PS. Balakhedi

U.P.S. Lakhnaur

U.P.S. Sabdaijpur

PS. = Primary School

U.P.S. = Upper Primary School

**EVERY CHILD MATTERS**

**"Vidya Gyan Super 20" in Rural Government Schools in District Saharanpur, U.P.**

**OUR SCHOOL OUR PRIDE**

Teacher's Commitment and Collaboration for 'Student Centered' Learning and Holistic Development.

'Youth in U.S.A.' Celebrates 'Youth in India'

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Encourage Education • Cultivate Knowledge • Enable Development

**The Super 20 (S20):** While Vidya Gyan is committed to Every Child Matters, S20 was initiated to identify about 20 bright students in grade 3 for learning and leadership development and monitor it for 3 years (grades 3, 4, and 5). Likewise, during this school year, we added four S20s in grade 6 to be monitored for 3 years. Vidya Gyan hopes that S20 students will continue to excel in their learning and become the leaders in various school related and/or community activities.

We are pleased with an increase from five S20s in 5 schools in 3 Development Blocks to fifteen S20s in 12 schools across 7 Blocks. The students in S20s are instructed by one or more school teachers for about an hour every day during school hours or after school. They are coached and mentored on a slightly higher learning platform with a focus on leadership development.

All of the necessary stationery (notebooks, pencils/pens, drawing materials, etc., and some special books) for S20s are provided by Vidya Gyan.

Each school has been given an LED (smart) TV to connect the classroom to the world using teachers' mobile phones. It was very gratifying that S20 schools were able to show the Chandrayaan-3 landing live which was a proud moment for all. Vidya Gyan also gave a printer for duplication and printing of tests and homework materials. The LED and printer are accessible to the entire school. For example, the classroom with LEDs can be used for other students when the S20 class is not in session.

While Vidya Gyan operates with complete trust in and full cooperation of teachers, we hold monthly Zoom meetings to further build the team spirit and strengthen partnership. This allows Vidya Gyan to assess progress, address issues, if any, plan the next steps, and discuss teachers' ideas. Additionally, a common test, prepared by teachers, is given to all S20 students for an ongoing assessment of their academic performance. We have asked teachers to start assessing students' leadership based on communication skills and abilities, attendance, classroom participation, etc.

Our future goal includes an expansion of S20 in other schools. We have been approached by several schools which will be visited during the next India trip in January 2024 for further analysis.

**VIDYA GYAN's HOPE: Together we can Educate, Empower, and Enable every child to go farther, and Lift their Lives through Learning.**



**Pencil to Power:** All students in S20 schools and many other schools are given notebooks and pencils to emphasize writing under this initiative.

This year, we distributed about 8,000 notebooks to about 3,700 students in 27 schools. This initiative has been in place for nearly 6 years and successful in improved learning through writing.

It is well established that taking notes in the classroom improves learning and makes handwriting better. We are pleased to note that a small gesture like giving “notebooks” is making a big impact on learning. Vidya Gyan is very proud of this initiative making a difference. The photo on the right shows Vidya Gyan India Trust members with school staff and students in one of the schools.



**The Science Initiative:** Vidya Gyan’s network of S20 schools includes 4 junior high schools. Each of these schools is given two science kits to accelerate science learning. This step should enable teachers to demonstrate science experiments and let the students touch, feel, and/or observe scientific phenomena. Participation by each student is not possible for safety reasons or because of limited equipment or supplies. Shall we say, something is better than nothing for right now?

At our request, Saharanpur’s BSA offered the courtesy of handing the science kits to schools on Vidya Gyan’s behalf. These four schools have also instituted three different competitive activities and recognize the top three winners with a memento on behalf of Vidya Gyan.

**Computer Labs:** Vidya Gyan is pleased with two functional computer labs providing instructions on the basics of computer education. One of these is at P.S. Biharigadh (grades 1-5) in Block Muzaffarabad (shown on the right) and another is at U.P.S. Sadholi Hariya (grades 1-8) in Block Rampur. Getting these labs operational post-Covid was a heroic effort but the good news is that the students are now engaged in computer literacy.

Vidya Gyan friends/supporters of these labs must take pride that they are making a difference in the technology learning of children in the rural schools. They are learning the basics of word processing and making drawings on the computer.

Vidya Gyan would do a serious assessment and explore if a similar effort is worth replicating elsewhere. The challenges include a solid commitment by the school teacher and committed space for a computer lab.



***With your generosity, we can educate, shape a better future, and enable every child's exit from the shackles of poverty and ignorance.***





VIDYA GYAN

Encourage Education • Cultivate Knowledge • Enable Development.

## CELEBRATING OUR VALUED PEOPLE & CHILDREN IN 2022 AND ACKNOWLEDGING OUR DONORS, VOLUNTEERS, AND FRIENDS WHO KEEP VIDYA GYAN DYNAMIC AND LET US DREAM WITH SCHOOLS

Celebrating Partnerships with Schools, Communities, and Teachers for Children's Learning  
Sincere Gratitude to Our Valued Donors, Volunteers, and Friends Globally  
They Enable Vidya Gyan's Dynamism and Dreams— Every Child Matters



Distribution of LEDs, Printers, Books, and Stationery



Super 20 at P.S. Ballakhedi



Super 20 at U.P.S. Sadholi Haryana



Super 20 at P.S. Mahtauli



Recognition of Top 'ICT' and 'Super 20' Teachers



Teachers in 2023 Vidya Gyan Super 20s



Selection of Books by Teachers for Super 20



Vidya Gyan Board Members in U.S.A.

Our School : Our Pride

SCHOOLS ARE WELCOME TO JOIN SUPER 20  
PLEASE SEND WHATAPP MESSAGE AT +17012001960

## Photos are always worth a thousand words:

The notebook's front and back covers are Vidya Gyan's way of highlighting some of its accomplishments during the first half of the year. Accordingly, the front cover above shows the map of Saharanpur (U.P.) with the geographical location of schools hosting one or more Super 20 classes. Vidya Gyan has a vision to expand in other locations.

The back cover (on the left) shows photos and media reports about other activities. For example, the teachers are being recognized as Super 20 changemakers and schools receiving an LED TV and a printer. In another frame, the top ten teachers (identified by the district administration) are being recognized by Vidya Gyan for their pioneering use of Instructional and Communication Technologies (ICT).

Additionally, students in three different Super 20s are shown on the cover. Vidya Gyan believes that not enough is done to recognize the "doer" teachers.



Students participating in various activities in different rural government schools in Vidya Gyan network