

Havells India Ltd: QRG foundation on the cross road

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If your mind can conceive it and your heart can believe it, I am sure you can achieve it. (Shri Qimat Rai Gupta, Founder- Havells India Limited)

It was 2 a.m. and Colonel Ramavatar Nirban was already on a round supervising and studying the delivery log chart, to ensure that freshly cooked food was delivered in all listed schools before the lunch hour. There were a lot of activities happening in the state-of-the-art kitchen built under “Mid-Day meal programme” of Havells located at Alwar in Rajasthan. By 6 a.m., the kitchen was filled with an aroma of freshly cooked Indian recipes. The team of people transferred the hot cooked food into sterilised containers. Delivery vans waited outside the kitchen lawn, ready to load the proper quantities of food for their daily routes to be delivered to the different government schools adopted under the scheme of “mid-day meal-food” for every kid.

Assuring that everything was going according to plan and satisfied with the speed and coordination of his team, Colonel Ramavatar came back to his cabin, relaxed and started mulling on the agenda of the upcoming meeting with the board of governors that was scheduled next week, i.e. June 15, 2016. The board had proposed an expansion of the MDM programme in other states where they have plants. While he was still mulling, his thoughts were interrupted with the entrance of Sardar Singh, project supervisor, who informed him about the sudden announcement of the local holiday in schools due to an untimely demise of the regional political leader. This was a challenging situation as food was already prepared and loaded for delivery. The issue was to think quickly on what to do with the perishable food loaded on vans. Colonel pondered over the current scenario. He realised that this was not the only issue, rather the programme was facing many other challenges, which definitely needed to be addressed. He questioned himself “Would it wise to expand this programme in other state/s before addressing the day-to-day challenges in the current project?”

Background

India had by far the largest population of illiterate adults at 287 million, amounting to 37 per cent of the global total, the report published by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation said[1]. Its literacy rate increased six times since the end of the British rule – from 12 to 74 per cent in 2011; yet, India had the world’s largest population of illiterates, and it was ranked 123rd out of 135 countries in female literacy rate (Oxfam India)[2]. Many efforts such as National literacy mission and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan were made by the government of India to improve literacy rate.

To enhance enrolment, retention, attendance and simultaneously improving nutritional levels among children, the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (NP-NSPE) was launched as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme on August 15, 1995 initially in

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