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## **Apeejay Surrendra Group and Volunteers of the Group gifted a special library to the children of BHUMI**

**December, 23<sup>rd</sup> 2012, Chennai:** Apeejay Surrendra Group proudly presents to the city of Chennai an 'Apeejay Anand Children's Library' an Education Support Program launched in 1992 for underprivileged children in Kolkata as part of CSR work of over 100 year old diversified industrial and services conglomerate.

The Library in Chennai is the first hard brick n mortar Community asset created by 10 Chennai based Apeejay employees volunteering their time under the Group's Individual Social Responsibility (ISR) Program. ISR was launched in Apeejay in 2007/2008 to add the force of Apeejay employees to Group's CSR work. Both ISR and CSR run parallel in Apeejay Surrendra Group's community efforts. The fact that the ISR policy has been able to create a CSR asset is what makes this Library in Chennai truly unique.

The Chennai centre opened in Nari Kuravar School, 579 (369) Anna Salai, Saidapet to provide 90 children from class 1 to 8 a fun place to read with book donations from Oxford Bookstore, Chennai.

The Library was inaugurated by 8 year Vir Vaidynathan with his grandmother. Vir is the son of Ms. Priya Paul who along with Group Chairman Mr. Karan Paul and sister Ms. Priti Paul oversees Group CSR Initiatives run through the Apeejay Trusts. Apeejay Anand Children's Library was incorporated in 1992 in Kolkata in memory of their brother Anand who died then. Ms. Priya Paul, Director of Apeejay Surrendra Group and Chairperson of the Group Company The Park Hotels or Apeejay Surrendra Park Hotels her husband Mr. Sethu Vaidynathan and Group Ethics Ombudsman Mr. Parthasarthy is also Chennai based who was also present at the occasion.

Unlike Charity Volunteering when spoken about creates a wave of inspired people who come forward and volunteer. It is because of this thought that the Library signage has been created promoting the Volunteers only. Apeejay Surrendra Group is deeply invested in promoting Volunteering in India since they adopted the ISR policy in 2007/2008. The success of ISR opens up possibilities for the employee volunteers in various other cities and reaches many children. It is with the purpose of mainstreaming it in the Indian Psyche that they created a National Award for Volunteers, Volunteering engaging NGOs and Corporates with best employee volunteering policies in 2011. The award was called Apeejay India Volunteer Awards 2011 [www.apeejayiva.com](http://www.apeejayiva.com) .

Towards this effort Apeejay flew down Bangalore based Mr. Ram Sundher National winner for the Individual Category to Chennai to hold a counseling session for the children on the

importance of education and reading books. He also encouraged the Apeejay volunteers to continue volunteering and to create community assets such as the Apeejay Anand Library in other cities. The Youth Volunteer of the Apeejay India Volunteer awards 2011, 25 year old Vaishnavi Srinivasan moderated the session attended by all the 90 children.

The books in the Library have been bought by Group's Bookstore chain, Oxford Bookstore. To increment and show long term support Apeejay has also announced a Book Bank Program at its Literary Festival in Kolkata , Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival where each guest, author, panelist has been requested of the 28 events over Jan 9-13 2013 has been asked to bring one book at least for a child of class 1 to 8. For more details please visit the site for your reference [http://www.kolkatalitfest.in/book\\_bank.htm](http://www.kolkatalitfest.in/book_bank.htm)

### **About BHUMI**

Bhumi, one of India's largest independent youth volunteer non-profit organisations, works with orphaned and underprivileged children in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra and New Delhi. They aim at providing children with quality supplementary education and enabling them to become responsible and productive citizens of the future. The efforts of its volunteer force consisting of over 800 students and young professionals under the age of 30 benefits over 7,500 children across the country. For more details, please visit [www.bhumi.org.in](http://www.bhumi.org.in)

### **About Apeejay Surrendra Group**

Established in 1910, Apeejay Surrendra Group employs over 43000 people in rapidly expanding operations in Tea, Hospitality, Shipping, Retail & Real Estate and has diversified into new business initiatives like, Marine Clusters, Logistics Knowledge Parks. 2010 was the Group's centenary year. For more Information, please visit [www.apeejaygroup.com](http://www.apeejaygroup.com).

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