

# Chalta-phirta mobile school bus to start from January 25

Moushumi Das Gupta  
New Delhi, January 8

THE NEW Year has brought in some good news for children from disadvantaged groups who cannot attend schools because of financial or other hardships.

The "chalta-phirta" mobile school bus service will start in the Capital from January 25 and it will take education to the doorstep of such children who either can't go to school or have dropped out because of various reasons.

The project will be implemented by the education department and will be the city's first mobile school bus service. Initially two buses will be pressed into service. The yellow buses will be fitted with a television screen and equipped with computers, multimedia facilities, a book library, blackboard and toys. Each bus will also have two teachers specially trained to educate children through books, computers, exhibits, films, workshops, etc.

"The buses will go to red light areas, construction sites and slum clusters where children do not have access to education. The buses will go to three-four such points in different parts of the city everyday, park there for two hours and provide education to the children inside the bus," said Rina Ray, Delhi education secretary.

Initially, the project will be implemented on a pilot basis. The project is part of the Centre's Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme



ILLUSTRATION: DURGA

aimed at providing elementary education to all children up to 14 years.

The education department is in the process of finalizing city based NGOs for running the buses. "The NGOs will be given a three-year contract to run the buses. We will reimburse the expenses incurred by them. They will be given Rs 3,000 per child per annum," said an education department official.

To ensure that the buses are going to the specified locations everyday, the education department will monitor its movement through a GIS system installed in the buses. Delhi State Industrial Development Corporation (DSIDC) has donated two buses for the programme. Even the UNICEF is supporting the government in this project.

moushumi.gupta@hindustantimes.com