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A philanthropic legacy of over half a century

Pragyesh Singh | TNN

Basabdatta Sarkar

Kolkata: In April 2014, when the government of India legally mandated corporate social responsibility and made giving to society mandatory, the Emami Group was already a veteran in the field. With a philanthropic legacy of over 50 years, the group has mastered the act of giving in fields that ranged from education and healthcare to job creation and art and culture.

Aditya Agarwal and Manish Goenka, the second-generation leaders, have been continuing with the social work that the group has become synonymous with. "We have grown up seeing our parents and every member of our family undertaking phi-



(Top) Aditya Agarwal (L) & Manish Goenka; a free medical camp held for flood-affected people in East Midnapore



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lanthropic work for the betterment of society, which has inspired us to do the same," said Aditya Agarwal, director of the group.

Another group director, Manish Goenka, added: "We undertake activities in various fields, such as our programme Padho India, our tie-up with KIIT University to provide fees and lodging for half the enrolled students (around 20,000). We also run free clinics and a 60,000 sq ft centre for art for culture."

According to Agarwal, one of the group's main ways of helping society is to provide employment and ensure that jobs are created while also giving importance to automation. The group's philanthropic work has touched lakhs of lives over five decades. Najik Hossein, a Bengali teacher

at Goja High School, said: "When our school stayed shut owing to the pandemic and teaching children was a distant dream, Emami's Digital Empowerment programme hel-

When our school stayed shut during the pandemic and teaching children was a distant dream, the group helped us organize online classes and use apps such as Google Meet

Najik Hossein | A BENEFICIARY

ped us to organize online classes and use applications such as Google Meet. The education system at our school would have collapsed without the support of the group."

Another such beneficiary is Khushi Jaiswal, who is pursuing BCom Honours. "I got

my height, weight and blood pressure checked at a free medical camp organised by the Emami Group, I am very grateful to Emami Group for this help," she said.

Not only reaching out to those in dire need, the group has the tradition of hand-holding NGOs that work for the benefit of the underprivileged. "While many NGOs already involved in philanthropic activities are doing good work, much money is wasted to collect funds for programmes, and the money collected is not passed on to those in need," said Goenka.

"NGOs willing to be in philanthropic activities should see where work needs to be done. Philanthropy can be of various kinds and done with limited resources," added Agarwal who heads the group's edible oil and bio-diesel business. He also heads the group's paperboard business — Emami Paper.