

World-class education in government school



An innovative educational development project initiated by Pradeepkumar, MLA, aimed at raising government schools to world standards began unfolding at Government Vocational Higher Secondary School here on Wednesday with the inauguration of its first phase.

Named Promoting Regional Schools to International Standards through Multiple Interventions (Prism), the Rs.-14crore project, besides establishing top class infrastructure facilities in schools, also focusses on increasing quality of education and enhancement of teaching and leadership skills with inputs from Indian Institute of Management, Kozhikode (IIM-K).

While the lion's share of the funds for the development initiative had been provided by Faizal and Shabana Foundation headed by NRI tycoon Faizal Kottikollon and wife Shabana Faizal of KEF Holdings, the input for academic development came from IIM-K Professor Saji Gopinath.

Under the first phase, eight new classrooms, four well-equipped science labs, staff rooms and dedicated conference rooms have come up at the school.

The Faizal and Shabana Foundation, which has spent over Rs.60 crore on philanthropic programmes in India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), has taken upon itself the onus for the complete refurbishment and upgradation of the -120year-old girls government school at Nadakkavu.

New classrooms, a well-stocked library, state-of-the-art kitchen, canteen, an astro-turf stadium (the first in any school in the State), toilets, multi-purpose hall, and interactive science centre have come up at the schools. The construction activities which started in February were completed at a brisk pace using sophisticated technology.

Mr. Pradeep Kumar, in his inaugural speech, hoped the Prism project, by upgrading facilities at the school to world standards, would attract more students to government schools where student strength had been generally declining because parents prefer to send their wards to private schools where facilities and comforts are much more.

The MLA had submitted the proposal for Prism project and got it approved during the tenure of the LDF government.

“As a former president of the SFI, who had organised and spearheaded many students’ strikes that had paralysed functioning of schools in the past, I am asked what would be the use of having world class facilities in schools if studies are disrupted by students’ strike? My answer is: students’ strikes that I organised were for facilities of the kind that are now being established under the Prism project. The transformation of government schools that Prism would bring about is the revolution student leaders like me had dreamed about and for which strikes were organizes,” he said.