

Son of soil plans two schools in Araria

JOY SENGUPTA

Amit Kumar Das, the owner of a software company Down Under, continues to give back to his state.

Originally from Bihar, Das last year brought an engineering college to his home district Araria. This year, he has planned to set up two schools in Forbesganj, Araria, around 300km east of Patna.

His aim is to ensure the children have quality education at home and don't need to leave the state in search of greener pastures like he had to many years ago.

The 32-year-old, who till 1997 he didn't know a word of English, is now the chairman

of ISOFT Software Technologies headquartered in Sydney, Australia. He has made Australia his home for the past eight years but hasn't forgotten his roots.

He invested Rs 120 crore in Bihar and set up Moti Babu Institute of Technology at Forbesganj in August 2013. The institution is named after his father. Now, he is looking at opening two state-of-the-art schools in the same town.

"The engineering college, affiliated to the Aryabhata Knowledge University, is running fine. We got our first batch of 200 and odd students from different parts of country, including Bangalore, Delhi and of course Bihar. There



Amit Kumar Das

are 35 students from Nepal too. The college has state-of-the-art facilities and we will soon start a students' exchange programme under which toppers in the different streams would be taken to Australia," Amit told **The Telegraph**.

On why he decided to start two schools, he said: "Araria has been always considered a very backward district of Bihar and it needs development. I am from a small village called Mirdaul in Araria where there is almost no infrastructure. Development can only be possible with proper education. At present, we are focused on making the Moti Babu Institute of Technology the first choice of Bihar students wishing to study engineering. We are aggressively working on branding and communications. The two schools will come up close by too. One will come up on four acres of land and would be 1km from the college. The other will be

spread across 25 acres and will have residential facilities. We will have quality teachers from different parts of the country and even guest teachers from abroad. The schools shall provide the best primary and secondary education to children in Bihar. The engineering college will soon get more faculty members and their children, too, can study at these schools."

He, however, declined to say anything about the project cost.

"As I am from Bihar, I want to do my bit for the state's development. Children living in the far-off districts of Bihar are still deprived of good education and I want that to

change. We are optimistic that construction of the schools would start by next year. The schools would be equipped with all kinds of facilities. I had struggled a lot on my path to realise my dreams. In this process, I had to leave my state. I am trying to create an atmosphere where students can get good education in the state and don't have to leave," he added.

He's not done though. In his zeal to give back to his home state, Amit also plans to invest in the healthcare sector. "I am looking at bringing a world-class healthcare facility in Bihar. But I will be in a better position to talk about the project later," he said.