

**FOR A CAUSE** | Squadron Leader P.K. Khullar

# Man on a medical mission

Pawan Pandita

ONE NAME was missing from the news reports of two Pakistani children operated upon in the Capital recently - that of Squadron Leader (Retd) P.K. Khullar. The 69-year-old retired IAF officer paid Rs 1 lakh for the surgeries.

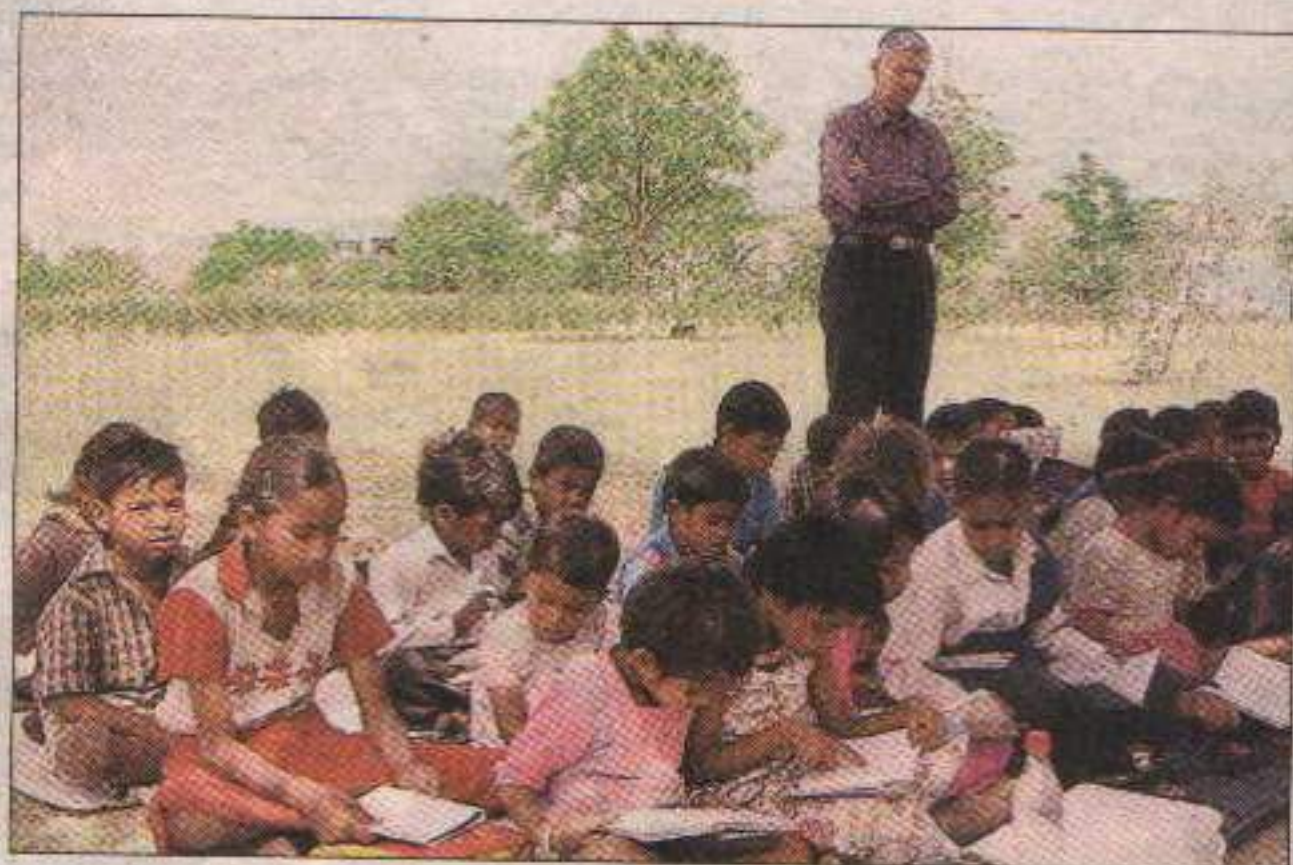
"A paediatric cardiac surgeon from the Max Hospital who knew that I have been funding such cases contacted me," says Khullar.

Such acts of philanthropy are not new for Khullar, who runs the Able Hospital at Behrola, Palwal, and two educational centres for children of migrant labourers and slum dwellers. He also pays for the education of nine children who have lost their father. Eight poor children have undergone cardiac surgery with his assistance.

He has been doing all this for the last seven years now. Khullar spends 14 to 16 hours a day meeting people, commuting between Delhi, Faridabad and Palwal fighting red tapism, typing letters and surfing the Net.

It was during his posting with the IAF at Bidar, Karnataka, that he decided to help women in distress. To realise his missionary zeal, he took premature retirement from the IAF and bought 40 acres in Bamnikhera. "While turning the barren land into an orchard, I realised how miserable the poor women working on my farm were," says Khullar.

"They were at the mercy of quacks and midwives. I decided to provide them



**SELFLESS:** Sq. Ldr. Khullar wants all the destitutes in the district to have a medical insurance. SUBHASH SHARMA

with better healthcare and that is how the Able Hospital started," says Khullar. It is a multi-speciality hospital with departments of medicine, general surgery, gynaecology, cardiology, orthopaedics, radiology, ophthalmology, dermatology, dental care and physiotherapy.

He also started bearing the expenses of nine children of widows in Behrola, Mitraul-Aurangabad and Atohan. Now Khullar is providing medical care to 25 such children and eight women. Donations from overseas relations and friends help in the running of his mission.

"Recently I have entered into an agreement with the Max Hospital, Saket, to fund a paediatric cardiac sur-

gery for Rs 50,000. I am getting requests from Pakistan and Bangladesh as well," says Khullar.

Khullar has also been funding the books and stationery for 126 children of slum dwellers in Sector 10 and 21A. "About 60 children from the Sector 10 jhuggi cluster come to us," says Khullar.

But lack of volunteers, besides bureaucratic hurdles, is an impediment in making his effort successful. "I

even got pamphlets distributed in schools so that students could come forward to volunteer, but there was no response," he rues.

A post-graduate in Economics from Hoshiarpur, this student of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has even written a book titled *Deprivation of Rural India*.

"My dream is to get all widows and their families in the district covered under medical insurance," says Khullar.

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