

PRESS RELEASE

**Australian High Commissioner to India Visits VidyaGyan Leadership Academy in Sitapur and Addresses the Students**

***~ Her Excellency Ms Harinder Sidhu inaugurated the 'Greenhouse Center of Learning' at the VidyaGyan Campus ~***

**Lucknow, April 20, 2017:** The Australian High Commissioner to India, Ms. Harinder Sidhu visited the Sitapur campus of VidyaGyan, a leadership academy for meritorious and economically underprivileged students from rural Uttar Pradesh, today. An initiative of the Shiv Nadar Foundation, VidyaGyan was established in 2009 to select and nurture potential high achievers from rural Uttar Pradesh and provide them a platform to excel in whatever field they chose. Currently, there are close to 1900 students studying at the two campuses of VidyaGyan, located in Bulandshahr and Sitapur.

**Her Excellency, Ms Harinder Sidhu addressed the students of VidyaGyan and also inaugurated the Greenhouse Center of Learning** at the school's Sitapur campus. The newly established "Greenhouse Center of Learning" comprises three open and glass topped class-rooms and is a reflection of VidyaGyan's continued quest to provide the best-in-class infrastructure and an inspiring, innovative and creative learning environment to its students. Located in the seven-acre Mango Orchard, this Centre will offer a physical learning space that seamlessly integrates the formal set-up of classroom training with the openness of nature."

Addressing the students, **H.E. Ms. Harinder Sidhu, Australian High Commissioner to India** said, *"VidyaGyan is an interesting and radical model as it can address the problem of inadequate leadership for every developing nation. I am delighted to be at VidyaGyan and interact with the students who are truly gifted and have the potential to change the face of this nation. The Australian High Commission and VidyaGyan have been partnering for a couple of years now and we have been supporting the VidyaGyan students towards enhancing their communication skills through our Direct Aid Program. I am happy to see the progress made by the students through our support."*

The event was attended by Ms. Roshni Nadar Malhotra, CEO, HCL Corporation and Chairperson, VidyaGyan and the entire leadership team of the Shiv Nadar Foundation.

Speaking on the occasion, **Roshni Nadar Malhotra, Chairperson, VidyaGyan** said, “*We are delighted to have H.E. Ms Harinder Sidhu, the Australian High Commissioner to India here with us to address and interact with the students. VidyaGyan is designed as a leadership academy and I strongly believe that our students will benefit from and be inspired by interacting with role models like Ms Sidhu. Innovation in education and exposure to successful leaders is always a great way to keep students engaged, motivated and curious. The students of VidyaGyan have shown excellent potential and I hope that in the near future some of our students will be able to follow in the footsteps of Ms Sidhu and represent India to the global community.*”

After the key note speech by the High Commissioner to the assembled students, faculty and other guests, Ms, Sidhu was also taken on a tour of the leadership academy and had an interactive session with the students.

#### **About VidyaGyan Leadership Academy**

Established in 2009 by the Shiv Nadar Foundation, VidyaGyan ([www.vidyaGyan.in](http://www.vidyaGyan.in)) today houses 1900 students across two campuses in UP in Bulandshahr and Sitapur. The Academy was launched to bridge the urban-rural divide by selecting, nurturing and developing future leaders from the underprivileged communities of rural Uttar Pradesh. A fully residential academy, VidyaGyan not only takes care of the education of its students but of all their needs. VidyaGyan addresses social imbalances and envisions nurturing and creating leaders who would be the inspiration and role models for their families, communities and society at large. The Foundation hopes that this will raise many more aspirations.

#### **About Shiv Nadar Foundation**

The Shiv Nadar Foundation ([www.ShivNadarFoundation.org](http://www.ShivNadarFoundation.org)) has been established by Shiv Nadar, Founder, HCL - a \$7 billion leading global conglomerate. The Foundation's mission is to contribute to the process of national development and social transformation by establishing institutions and undertaking new initiatives in the fields of education and culture. The Foundation is committed to the creation of a more equitable, merit-based society by empowering individuals to bridge the socio-economic divide through philanthropy-based transformational education.

The Shiv Nadar Foundation set up the SSN Institutions ([www.SSN.edu.in](http://www.SSN.edu.in)) in 1996, comprising the SSN College of Engineering (already a highly ranked private engineering college in India), in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. The Foundation has also set up VidyaGyan, a residential leadership academy for meritorious rural children, at Bulandshahr and Sitapur in Uttar Pradesh. In addition, the Foundation runs the Shiv Nadar University ([www.snu.edu.in](http://www.snu.edu.in)), an international multidisciplinary university with strong research orientation located in Greater Noida in India's National Capital Region and the Shiv Nadar School ([www.shivnadarschool.edu.in](http://www.shivnadarschool.edu.in)), a network of progressive urban schools across India aimed to provide children with education that creates lifelong learners. The Foundation has also set up the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art ([www.knma.in](http://www.knma.in)), India's largest private philanthropic museum in modern and contemporary art with the vision to take art to the common public.