

eBay Provides Light to 15,000 Children

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SAN JOSE, Calif. — Though the economic downturn has resulted in scaled-down holiday celebrations at various corporations in Silicon Valley, with many cancelling the keenly-awaited lavish holiday parties and cutting down on gift distribution, in keeping with the holiday spirit, while some have held small-scale celebrations in the form of free lunches, others like eBay have gone a step further.

Going by the trend of celebrations, India and things Indian seem to have made inroads into the main holiday celebrations in this culturally diverse valley.



From small-scale celebrations featuring Indian gastronomic delights and decorations at one of Credit Card giant Visa's buildings to mark the holiday festivities, to a gift of 15,000 'Mighty Lights' to children in India by auction giant eBay, the varied initiatives reflect a two-fold trend of corporate warming up to the ethnic pride of its employees, and Indian employees in turn wanting to give back to their motherland.

emissions.

The Mighty Light is a solar-powered LED light that is eco-friendly, robust and built specifically for rugged conditions. It can withstand falls on hard surfaces and water or dust without being damaged. The Mighty Light produces ~500 lumens of clean white light versus ~10 lumens of light from a kerosene lamp. Other benefits of the solar light extend to health and the environment with no harmful carbon

The focus of this project is to give children in rural India and Africa a chance to study.

Mighty Light is the first product of Cosmos Ignite Innovations based in New Delhi, India, the U.S. and the UK with design and assembly facilities in Gurgaon, India. It is a venture in social entrepreneurship between a team of young entrepreneurs from India and Stanford University with the vision of empowering lives through innovative products, beginning with the mission to helping the removal of darkness from homes without light.

The idea of the gift by the auction giant was initiated by Anna Sidana, director of financial products at PayPal and a member of the eBay Green Team. Sidana founded the nonprofit One Million Lights after a visit to a school in rural Rajasthan that her father had started 45 years ago with a mere five children.

Today, the school provides education through high school and is recognized as a school of excellence in many subjects. In 2003, she visited the school in Vijaynagar and decided to do something for the children of the school.

Sidana partnered with Cosmos Ignite Innovations to distribute Mighty Light to the needy children, having realized that light is one of the basic needs and how the lack of this fundamental facility keeps people away from basic opportunities.

In August this year she distributed the first batch of 250 solar lights to the children of the school in Rajasthan and set herself a goal of distributing one million lights.

"Some of the places we are trying to reach can only be accessed via trains or even camel and on foot. As these lights are distributed to various parts of the world, you will be able to track the impact of these lights from our site <http://www.onemillionlights.org>," said Sidana, who is partnering with CARE in India for the distribution and is in talks with AIF for collaboration. "You can also read stories of families and children, review postcards from them and watch videos and photos albums, showing the impact of these lights on their lives."

"In many parts of the world, safe, adequate light at home is a luxury few people can afford," said John Donahoe, president of eBay Inc., according to a BusinessWire report. "Once we learned of Anna's mission, we immediately knew we wanted to help. eBay empowers entrepreneurs, and Anna is a social entrepreneur who has identified a simple solution to a complex problem."