Mr Anand Mahindra launches coffee table book - ‘May a Million Buds Bloom’

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- ***The book on Project Nanhi Kali captures the impact made by one of India’s largest CSR programmes focussed on girls’ education.***
- ***Founded by Mr Anand Mahindra, Project Nanhi Kali is jointly managed by K.C. Mahindra Education Trust and Naandi Foundation***
- ***The project aims to reach 1 million girls by end of FY 2026***

Mumbai, August 26, 2025: Mr Anand Mahindra unveiled a coffee table book, ‘May A Million Buds Bloom’, a picture book that documents the transformative impact of Project Nanhi Kali.

Established in 1996 by Mr Anand Mahindra, with a vision to empower young girls with holistic education and help them break the shackles of patriarchy, Project Nanhi Kali has touched the lives of close to nine lakh underprivileged girls across India. From tiny hamlets in rural Maharashtra to tribal settlements perched on the Araku hills of Andhra Pradesh; from far-flung

border districts of Darjeeling and Shravasti to the congested by lanes of Varanasi, the project has created robust ecosystems in underserved communities through regular engagements with the girls, their parents and community stakeholders.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr Anand Mahindra, Chairman, Mahindra Group, said*: "Our endeavour to empower underprivileged girls through academic support, sports, technology and now skill training is a testament of how Project Nanhi Kali has evolved with changing times. The book 'May A Million Buds Bloom', through a combination of storytelling and visual art, offers readers a thought provoking and soul stirring glimpse into what change looks like beyond mere numbers."*

Societal transformation and creating gender-neutral attitudes need long-term commitment, which is where Nanhi Kali's long-term engagement with young girls, their families and communities have helped reshape the ecosystem. Beyond the numbers, this book captures these markers – leisure as a 'social right' for the girl child; agency to move, to dream, to aspire. Community Associates have worked as influencers, changing the opinion leaders within the ecosystem sarpanches (village heads), fathers, and grandmothers and greater exposure to the world. Interspersed with anecdotes and bytes from Nanhi Kalis themselves, the book is a collage of imagery – some visual, some oral – all showcasing the lasting impact of the programme.

The book is authored by Nitya Manoj Kumar, a student and passionate photographer. Over three summers, Nitya travelled to and with Nanhi Kalis all over the country, joined them in their classrooms, on the playground, at their homes, at the village square, on public transport, striving to capture the true impact of Project Nanhi Kali on these girls. Nitya started her work on this book with the conviction that the true impact of Project Nanhi Kali lies in these intangible seeds of transformation – which cannot be counted, touched or measured, but only felt, and experienced.

Well into its third decade, Project Nanhi Kali has evolved from providing after school academic support through personalised adaptive learning platforms to 21st century skills training. The project boasts of an all women army of Skills Associates who serve as role models and are mentors to the girls.

In recent years, a professionally designed sports curriculum was integrated giving the girls an opportunity to participate in fitness activities and team sports leading to the annual athletics and football tournament Toofaan Games & Toofaan Cup respectively. With over 150,000 girls participating in the Toofaan Games athletics events, and 1000 football teams on the ground, Project Nanhi Kali is easily the largest active girls' club in India today.

Starting academic year 2024-25, the project embarked on a new journey – Nanhi Kali 3.0, in line with National Education Policy 2020. This empowers girls from lower income strata studying in secondary government schools

with 21 st century skills such as financial, digital literacy and life skills, making the transition from school to the workplace seamless.

***Rohini Mukherjee, Chief of Global Partnerships of Naandi Foundation, said**, "For nearly three decades, Project Nanhi Kali has been committed to breaking down the barriers that prevent girls from accessing their right to education, their right to choose and contribute to the India growth story, and we are already seeing a difference."*

***Sheetal Mehta, Executive Director at Project Nanhi Kali and Senior Vice President, CSR, Mahindra Group**, said, "This coffee table book beautifully captures something we have always known – that the true impact of our work is not just in the number of girls enrolled, but in the confidence in their eyes, the pride in their achievements, and the dreams they now dare to dream. These portraits are a celebration of resilience, and a powerful affirmation of why we do what we do."*

***Nitya Manoj Kumar** said, "This book focusses on the lived experiences of the girls whose lives have been touched by Nanhi Kali. The stories captured here speak of confidence, hope and transformation. These are changes that cannot always be measured but are deeply felt."*

Key Highlights of Project Nanhi Kali since inception:

- Impacted around 9 lakh girls across 15 states.

- 7600+ government schools.
- 18,000+ women tutors from the local community.
- 1000+ Nanhi Kali football teams formed.
- 70% rural, 22% urban and 8% tribal reach.

Learn more about Project Nanhi Kali on www.nanhikali.org X: @NanhiKali/ and Facebook: @ProjectNanhiKali

About Mahindra

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