

Techies help out rural children

PRAMILA KRISHNAN

DC | CHENNAI

Aug. 8: C. Kartheeban, works in an air-conditioned IT company and earns more than Rs 30, 000 a month, but he still remembers his 'open classroom' in the government school at Tiruvannamalai where he studied under trees. A group of techies like Kartheeban in the city have teamed up to inject self-confidence among the rural children by conducting competitions in village schools and spending weekends with them.

The techies have named their initiative as 'Team Everest' (TE), which has already covered 1,00,000 students in 385 schools across the state. Apart from



Members of 'Team Everest' distribute prizes to rural school children. PHOTO: DC

participating in competitions in essay-writing, drawing and elocution, the students also get to take the dais for singing, mimicry, Thirukkural recitation, and

Bharathiyar/Bharathidasan songs recitation, besides and quiz competitions.

Elaborating the TE theme, Kartheeban said, "Being a moderate student in a rural

school, I did not get any chance to participate in competitions. And so I launched Team Everest in 2006 to give these rural children what I could not get in my school days. I have roped in my colleagues who also have their roots in villages."

TE began with just four techies but now has over 250 volunteers. They contribute a portion of their salaries for the project, apart from time. "We were delighted when our competitions saw 100 per cent participation from the students of 15 schools. We are planning to adopt dilapidated schools and reconstruct them," Kartheeban added.

To become a TE volunteer, contact 9940299062.