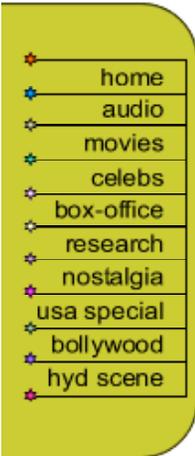




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## Poornachandra Rao, a true Friend of Orphans, about his Mission

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May 26, 2008

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Consider a talk about a voluntary organization, or a volunteer. It invariably invites criticism, disbelief and hesitation to extend a heartfelt donation. It is due to countless reasons, valid or wild. Some charitable institutes take birth just to collect funds, foreign and inland. The organizers move in Mercedes, fly in air and attend summits in Swiss. All this fuss is not our concern.

Let us talk about one person, who has greatly inspired an US-returned Telugu filmmaker to mould a character out of him. Those who watched the recent blockbuster Gamyam might find the role played by veteran actor Giribabu as just one among the passing characters in the game of entertainment. But, to quote the film's director Jagarlamudi Radhakrishna (Krissh): "I know an elderly person called Purnachandra Rao who runs a charity organization called NICE (Needy Illiterate Children Education | website: [www.nice-india.org](http://www.nice-india.org)). He earns a little salary and puts everything on charity. He has 126 children surviving on him. He is such a noble character. Giribabu's character is inspired by him."

### Who is this Purnachandra Rao?

Born into a poor family of agricultural laborers at Bollapalle village of Martur mandal of Prakasham district, P. Purnachandra Rao lost his father before he knew his senses. "My mother used to work as a coolie from dawn to dusk. She would spend a good chunk of the small amount to buy pencils, slate and books for me. She cared much to fill my stomach, starving herself with occasional meal. Her ambition was to see me educated. I finished my BA in Chirala. I reached Hyderabad in 1989, started working as a clerk. The haunting memoirs of mother's hunger and hard physical labor moved me like anything. Quitting the job, I sold our little old house at our village. With that money, purchased 3500 yards of land in Guntur district, and started a school – Needy Illiterate Children Education

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(NICE) - in 2003, with 10 children. As of now, there are 126 children, with 11 of entering the 10th standard of the CBSE pattern. I take every care for providing not only good education, but also good food, clothes and moral support to them."

NICE is one and the only school in India, training orphans for the CBSE pattern. His beard worn out, but rare spark of joy and urge to do more for orphans. His daily choir goes thus: Going about Hyderabad, and traveling long distances for collecting donations. For every donation, he issues the receipt, for availing 80 G Exemption of the Income Tax. He strictly avoids taking donations on his name. For every financial year, he publishes the balance sheet and makes the copies available to the donors. Former President APJ Abdul Kalam was among the elite personages who got thrilled at Rao's contribution for the poor and needy children. For all this, he considers the happiness of the children at his school as his remuneration. He has made it a rule in his life – not to seek the governmental support till the last breath of his life.

He decries rampant corruption at every step in government offices. "If I give bribes, I can get things done in no time. Several of my files are pending with the clerks at various levels. I know that they won't be cleared. A good number of people abroad who know about my organization are ready to extend their assistance. But, I couldn't get clearance under Foreign Contribution Regulatory Act, as I can never be shelling bribes. How can I give bribe from the donations? In which account can I show them? It is chain reaction. If I budge, I will be an utter flop as a human being."

In all humility, he recollects his association with Krishh (Director of Gamyam). "I was working with a mineral water plant. A decade ago, one rainy day, I happened to receive a guest from Secunderabad railway station. That was this Krishh. I took him on my worn-out scooter all the way to remote Madhapur (Now Hitech city) in rain. He knows about my life. I am thankful to him for recognizing my urge for the orphans."

"Now, my school shelters only boys. Orphaned girls are the worst hit in our country. At a very tender age, they are victims of worst exploitation, malnutrition, rape and murder. I look forward to start a residential school for such girl-children. I know for this, I require a lot of public support. I don't rest till I achieve this goal," Poornachandra Rao says.

Interested donors can extend their liberal contributions to Rao's mission.

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