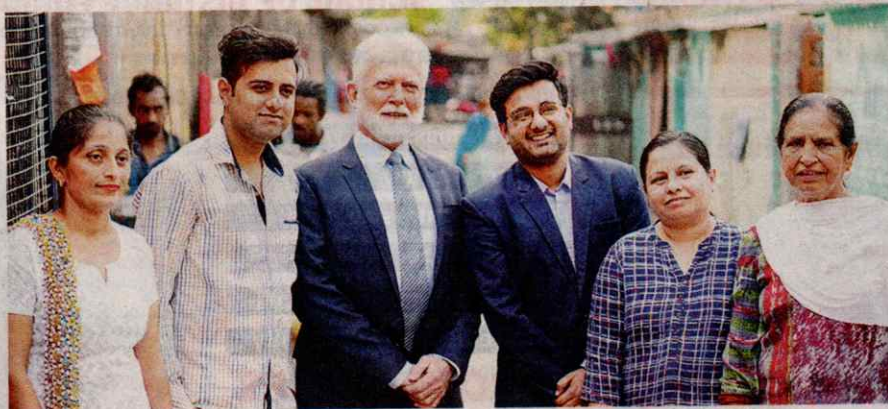


Delhi slum boy is now headed to Sydney on a scholarship

Abhishek has been awarded the Sydney Scholars India Equity Scholarship worth Rs 2,930,000 by the University of Sydney to pursue management

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Having spent his teenage years in the slums of Peera Garhi in Delhi, Abhishek expected his life to follow the familiar path of other boys in the neighbourhood — a path with limited opportunities and bleak future. Concentrating on his studies was difficult as there were always distractions in the form of noise from the neighbourhood, loud music, and everyday quarrels. Today, he is headed to the University of Sydney, Australia, to pursue a Master of Management (CEMS) on a fully-funded scholarship. As part of the master's programme, Abhishek will spend two semesters at the University of Sydney and one semester at a partner European university. "Growing up in the slum, never in my wildest dream could I imagine that I will ever get to pursue my education overseas. I will be the first student from the slums of Delhi to go to the University of Sydney," says the 22-year old. He was brought up in a 60 sqft room in the slum by a single mother, who left her



Abhishek (fourth from left) with his family, officials from University of Sydney and NGO Asha

abusive husband for a better life for her children.

Abhishek is headed to Australia after being awarded the Sydney Scholars India Equity Scholarship worth AU\$60,000 (Rs 2,930,000) a year. The scholarship has been launched this year in collaboration with the Asha Society and is available only to current residents of slum communities in Delhi, India, where Asha Society works.

Abhishek, who was born in Srinagar, was 14 when his family migrated to Peera Garhi. Coming in touch with the Asha team was the turning

Good grades in school and college, and active participation in extra-curricular activities helped Abhishek secure the scholarship

point in his life. "In 2015, when I was in class XII, Asha team leader met me and asked me to come to the centre. This was the game changing moment of my life. They helped me with various supplementary books and question

papers to help me prepare for my board exams. I ended up scoring 89% and later got admitted to the BCom programme at Delhi University, which paved my way for a better future," he says.

"Good grades throughout school and college and active participation in extra-curricular activities helped me secure the scholarship," says Abhishek, adding that having internship experience at firms such as Macquarie Investment Bank and International Monetary Fund during college helped him strengthen his candidature.