

## Delhi's slumkids to get Australian degrees

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DELHI'S SLUM children will now be able to study in Australia under an exchange programme between the University of Melbourne and voluntary organisation, Asha, officials said on Tuesday.

"This is going to be the first-of-its-kind model as we focus on urban poor, mainly slum children, to give them access to higher education from a foreign country," said Asha founder Kiran Martin.

A new India-Australia partnership to support the needs of Delhi's urban poor will operate in three areas — research, education and community engagement.

"This is going to be a unique programme in terms of catering to the needs of the urban poor, who can't even afford the basic education. We also aim at finding solutions to the needs of urban poor as we begin inter-



FILEPHOTO/AP

An exchange programme between the University of Melbourne and voluntary organisation Asha will allow Delhi's slum kids to study in Australia

acting with the students," said Amitabh Mattoo, director of the University of Melbourne's Australia India Institute.

The collaborative programme will fund 40 projects during 2011 across areas such as resource and environment, contemporary India, regional relationships, health, education, economics and business.

"A memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the Australia India Institute, University of Melbourne and Asha community health and development society has also been signed," added Martin.

The programme was launched by human resource development minister Kapil Sibal in the Capital on Wednesday.