

IIM Topper Takes To Green Cart

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B-SCHOOL

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Kaushalendra, a topper from IIM- Ahmedabad sells green vegetables in a door-to-door vegetable marketing initiative in Patna on Wednesday. (PTI)

He is perhaps the smartest vegetable seller around with his IIM degree. Kaushilendra, the 2007 batch topper of the IIM, Ahmedabad, became a vegetable vendor "to earn money and ensure quality prices to farmers and quality product to citizens"; His light pushcart is made of fibre, can carry 200kg and keeps vegetables fresh for six days, for it is ice cool. It has computerised weighing machine that "guarantees a proper calculation." Even the customers are impressed. "Computerwaala taraaju dandi nahin mar sakta (A computerised machine is not exposed to manipulation)," a woman told this reporter. Encouraged by the initial response, Kaushilendra is now the owner of 50 such carts that are selling vegetables in "right measurement and right rate"; "I plan to buy more (carts) to spread the business. This is just the beginning. My venture will spread in the entire country in the years to follow," Kaushilendra said with enthusiasm so infectious that one would want to believe him. His fascination with the vegetable trade is understandable. Born to modest vegetable farmers' family in central Bihar's Ahmad Nagar village (Nalanda), Kaushilendra received his education in a rural government school while assisting his family in farming. Nalanda, incidentally, is known as the "vegetable bowl" of Bihar. "Though a bright student, Kaushilendra loves working in the field," says father Narendra Prasad. He moved to Navodaya Vidyalaya in Nawada to complete his high school. Then, he cleared CAT to enter IIM, Ahmedabad, after passing intermediate from Patna Science College. "I am and have been fascinated with farming since my childhood," the IIM topper said, adding: "I have planned to develop a Bihar brand of vegetable and popularise it in the country. Bihar has a potential to feed the nation," he said "The B-school product has challenged billionaire Reliance Fresh venture though small means and innovative mind. He can emerge as a vegetable tycoon in future," remarked Ajay Kumar, an economist and CEO of a private portal, bihartimes.com. Kaushilendra's effort is similar to the one of the fibre rickshaw that was developed by another B-school graduate, Irfan, from Begusarai of Bihar. Like Irfan's Samman Foundation, he, too, has floated Kaushalaya Foundation. "A number of farmers from Nalanda have approached me to buy their products as they found our foundation's rates reasonable. I am getting more than enough supply. But we will be in a position to buy in bulk only after our business grows." Initially, the family was perplexed by their boy's decision. "Now I am receiving all the support from them, my customers and the state." Courtesy: The Telegraph