

# Footpath Shaala vows to educate every kid



Smruti Biswas, a homemaker and a volunteer of Upay, teaching underprivileged kids near University Library Square on Friday.

(Pic By Satish Raut)

■ By Kaushik Bhattacharya

TO OVERCOME disparities in education, every child should get an opportunity to learn, grow and succeed. With this vision Upay, a Nagpur based NGO is running 'Footpath Shalla' in five different cities of the country.

Spreading education in Nagpur, Pune, Mumbai, Gurgaon and Delhi, the NGO is primarily focusing on providing free education to needy children. They also conduct recreational activities aimed at broadening the skill set of such children.

Upay, founded by Varun Shrivastava, an IIT Kharagpur student with the help of three other, socially motivated engineers in 2010. Currently, it has 25 centres including, 8 centres in Nagpur zone, 8 in Mouda, 1 each in Mumbai, Gurgaon, Delhi and Pune respectively.

"We have started this initiative in Nagpur with only 15 children and today our 200 volunteers are teaching more than 1400 kids in all five cities," told Vinay Choudhary, Director (Operations), Upay informed 'The Hitavada'.

'Footpath Shala' project is run on city footpaths. Similarly, they are also contributing for slum and remote

village children who are either school dropouts or underprivileged with the project 'Reach and Teach'.

Choudhary said, "In our Mission 2020, we are planning to reach 3000 under privileged children through 'Reach & Teach' initiative and to enrol 500 street children into school through *Footpath Shala* initiative."

Social welfare, opportunity to all, literacy enhancement, under privileged advancement, teach and reach India, inspiring youths, orientation for moral and social values and nurturing the rural talent are the core values we are working on, explained Choudhary.

The NGO provide Stationery to all kids who are getting education under the banner of Upay. They have produced 70 graduates till date under 'Reach & Teach' initiative. This year the organisation admitted 26 dropout students in Zilla Parishad schools in Nagpur. With many other success stories the organisation is focusing on their Mission 2020.

The NGO is also running a campaign named 'Street to School' in which they require helping hands to sponsor the education of an underprivileged kid.