

Torchbearers of future?

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Hoping to get an insight into the lives of the kids at UPAY's (Under Privileged Advancement by Youth) foot-pathshala near Maharajbag, Lokmat Times visited the place on the eve of Children's Day and discovered a new acuity in these kids.

Even these families living on the streets in literal sense have not been spared from the wrath of the development works going on in the city. Because of the development works, the families had to move and this made it all the more difficult for the students to visit the UPAY centre.

The students have to cross the street through heavy traffic in order to get education at UPAY centre, run under street lights.

The number of students have gone down. When we asked the reason for that, the parents of the kids answered, "We live off the streets and the kids too study on the streets. However, this road has heavy traffic and we cannot put the lives of our kids to risk for education. Even if the centre is across the road, we have to pick and drop them, but since they are very young, they have to be kept under watch, but we cannot keep an eye on them from across the street."

The parents (the vendors selling soft toys on the street) have cleaned a spot just beneath the street light so that their kids can

study there.

When Lokmat Times went to have a chat with the kids, the children studied in the dark, mostly completing their home work for the day. Kishan, a student of kindergarten, when asked what he aims to become, without a hesitation said that he wants to become a soldier and guard the borders of the nation. He even asked his mother to buy a uniform for him as a Diwali gift and eventually his mother Santosh, got one for him.

Prem, a fifth standard student immediately responded that since, he is looking after all the development work in the city, wants to become an Engineer, because the teacher at a school informed that it was the work of Engineers and they are the ones behind providing all the amenities to the people of the city.

Sanju, another bright student at the centre of fifth standard is not just good in studies with his sharp con-



The bright students of UPAY centre near Maharajbag study under street-light and prepare for their home work as schools are set to reopen soon.

centration but also has a knack for dance. He said he wants to become a Doctor when he grows up and is ready to take all the pains for the same.

Jitesh a fourth standard student, who was busy getting his home-work checked from the UPAY volunteer said he will join the police force as he is very impressed with their work catching the thieves and stopping all the wrong in the society.

These four along with some 4 year-old kids who were busy in learning while playing made sure they made the most of the sunlight that remained and completed their home work in the street light. All these kids are students of Madan-gopal Agrawal High School in Sitabuldi.

Certain bright students who

■ Fondly recalling the first prime minister of independent India, better known as Chacha Nehru (Uncle Nehru) or Chachaji (Uncle), Children's Day is celebrated in India on his birthday, that is November 14,

■ He emphasised the importance of giving love and affection to children. After the death of Jawaharlal Nehru in 27 May 1964, it was unanimously decided to celebrate his birthday as Bal Diwas or Children's Day in India. And since then, teachers organise various events in schools across India on Children's Day.

are good scorers in the examination at the school, also one Sheetal, who will appear for her tenth standard board examinations and Rohit who loves to study, were seen making chandeliers and helping their parents in the business. No one indeed can stop them from chasing their dreams yet they are far away from the basic amenities and these kids are making their ends meet to reach to the top.

