

of Little Steps School spread awareness about cleanliness and greenery among residents of capital

# Kids turn crusaders for cleaner city

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Bhubaneswar, Jan. 23: The tiny tots of a pre-school in Patia launched a cleanliness drive today by removing garbage from residential areas near the school.

In a bid to sensitise people about the need to keep their surroundings clean and green, the students of Little Steps School, Nandan Vihar, began the 'Go green campaign' by cleaning the Phase-V of Basundhara Enclave in Nandan Vihar, Jagannath Vihar, Jagannath Complex, Omm and Subhadra Apartment complexes along the Airport-Nandanikanan Road.

A teacher of the lower kindergarten (LKG) of the school, said: "The civic authorities have the responsibility of keeping our surroundings clean but as responsible citizens we also have the duty to put the waste in the dustbins and ensure that the roads are not dirty. But since a large number of people do not care about these things we thought that a campaign would awaken them. We have also put up placards asking people to use of dustbins."

Another teacher of the school felt that apart from the civic issues, the city also needs more green cover, as it would help bring down the temperature during the summer. "Our campaign also focuses on plantation to make the earth greener, saving water and protecting nature," she added.

Principal of the school, Sudha Manjari Mishra, said: "The campaign just began today. From tomorrow till January 30, the kids will cover more

areas such as Bansal Vihar, Nandanikanan and Infocity where the campuses of Infosys, Tata Consultancy Service and Wipro are located. Other areas — Mansion Green and Orissa Sponge Colony; Star City and Baishnavi Palace up to Big Bazar Square in Patia — would also be covered. During the campaign students would also distribute leaflets to create awareness among the people about the environment. They will also administer a pledge to the residents of these areas in this regard."

On Thursday, the students will plant 100 saplings at Infocity and on the last day of the campaign they will dress up like animals and birds to spread the message of animal welfare near the Patia mall. "Parents and other volunteers are also helping children in the campaign to spread the message," she added.

Local councillor of Ward No. 2, Sanjay Kumar Sethi, who looks after Patia and Damana villages, Kanan Vihar and Shree Vihar, said: "The campaign by the little ones is an inspiration for all the elders. For long we have been trying to make people aware on such issues without much success. The children have now taken up that responsibility."

The campaign was supported by Centre for Environment and Development, Thiruvananthapuram and city-based Kalinga Development Foundation besides the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC).

"We did not want to burn the wastes and create more pollution, so we took the help of BMC to transport the garbage instead," said the school principal.



Primary school in Patia participate in the weeklong green campaign'. Picture by Ashwinee Pati