One India One People Sadanand A. Shetty, who was a successful industrialist. There are many inspiring stories of people who are products of night schools but sadly these schools have been victims of government apathy. These institutes need more support in terms of infrastructure and finance for their survival. If these institutes are forced to close down due to lack of funds, it would spell darkness for the young migrant population who learn while they earn.

Initiatives of Masoom
As a result of the findings of a research fellowship on the problems of night school students, in 2008, this writer set up MASOOM – a non-profit organisation with a vision ‘Every Child’s Right To Learn Right’. In order to overcome these issues Masoom has created a pool of resources that can help sustain and improve the quality of night school education. Masoom is a unique organisation in the sense that its team members are former students of night schools and thus know the system well. It is the first and till date, the only organisation in Maharashtra, running a comprehensive intervention programme for night schools. The intervention programme currently runs two night schools, namely, Maratha Mandir Night School, Worli and Milind Night School, Parel on a pilot basis. It is implementing the pilot programmes with the financial support of EdelGive Foundation – a subsidiary of Edelweiss Company. Masoom’s founder is a level 2 investor with Unltd India - an organisation that supports social entrepreneurs. Masoom has also got international funds from Global Fund For Children for its night school programme.

If this gives any indication of how strong is the need of night schools for the society and their contribution in nation building, besides an active government support in terms of sound policies and financial grants, they certainly need the generosity of philanthropists.

Those interested in supporting the cause of night schools can contact Masoom at nikita.masoomforu.org and nikitaketkar@gmail.com

The writer is ex Assistant Director-Personnel Department of DRDO (Defence Research Development Organisation) and founder of Masoom.

Vocational skills in demand

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Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed herein are solely those of the author and in no way reflect the views of the organisation.

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