

## BLACKSMITHS IN THE DARK

**T**HEY make knives, billhooks, spades and axes. Their skill makes our lives easy because without these tools we cannot spend a single day in the city or in any village. They are blacksmiths otherwise known as Karmakars or Kamars as several of these communities live in the city. At Karwan Bazar around 250 blacksmiths work in 25 workshops. The air filled with the odour of smelting iron in manually regulated foundries, harsh sounds of the anvil on the hot iron as it flares and sparks characterises the area.

Their working environment is risky; hazardous to their health. They find difficulty in breathing because of the lack of oxygen in the air. They inhale iron dust, which, according to doctors is a cause for cardiac disorders.

