

BALAKNAMA

World's Unique Newspaper for and by Street and Working Children

“Balaknama is the newspaper presented by Street and Working children themselves to fight for their own rights and problems because they are being completely ignored.

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WHY STREET AND WORKING CHILDREN ARE NOT USING PUBLIC TOILETS?

STREET CHILDREN EXPLAINED TOILETS' ECONOMY

When Balaknama Reporters got to know about the new announcement done by Delhi Government that people can use any toilet by giving Rs.1 only, they went to speak to children living on streets to know the effect of this announcement on them.

STREET CHILDREN SHARED ISSUES AND COMPLAINTS RELATED TO TOILETS

Reporters met street and working children who do

asked them about the Delhi Government's new scheme related to toilets. 12 years old Rohit said, “We face many problems because we are 5 members in our family and my parents goes to work in others homes. They get Rs.3000 per month only because of which we cannot use toilets as we children go to toilets 3-4 times a day. Toilet boards display that Rs.2 for using the toilet for urine and Rs.5 for stool but the person who takes care of toilet takes more money from us like Rs.5 for urine and Rs.10 for stool. Thus we spend around Rs.150 alone



If I want to keep my society clean then I have to shell around Rs.100 to Rs.150 every day. Reporter met with a family who spends Rs.100 alone on using toilets. 16 years old Kamla (name changed) said, “I have 12 members in my family in which we are 8 sisters and if we want to pee also we use toilets. We have to shell Rs.5 – Rs.10 every time we use toilets. Females have to give around Rs.40 for using toilets three times a day. Boys can relieve themselves by standing anywhere but we need toilets, we cannot sit here and there”. She added, “My whole family spends Rs.150 every day for using toilets only. It is better to relieve in open than wasting so much of money. Atleast we would save our money. This is the reason children go here and there”.

in using toilets. This is the reason my family members defecate in open because if we will go to use toilets, our one day earning will go in that only”.

15 years old Karan said, “Our parents do begging and I also beg on roads. We earn Rs. 50 also with great difficulty then from where we will give Rs.10 for going to toilets. All street and working children say that Swachh Bharat Campaign is going on but we are compelled to defecate in open as we do not have enough money to spend Rs.100 – Rs.150 every day”.

13 years old Nazaran said, “Bhaiya, girls face the difficulty very much. We pay for using the toilets and still they are not clean. Everybody is ready to take money but no one is ready to clean the place. Toilets are filled with shit all the

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Savior turns Devourer

Balaknama Bureau

Reporters conducted support group meeting with Children working at stations. 15 years old boy said, "Police behave very good with us when NGO people are there



with us and the moment they go, policemen starts abusing and beating us again. We are related to every incident which happens at station. Whenever anything is stolen at station we are picked up at night while asleep, taken to police station and are beaten badly when we even did not do anything. Don't we have the right to live?" 17 years old boy said, "We stay at railway station and many a times police come and ask us to visit the police station saying that they have got clothes for us but instead they do bad things with us". Reporter asked these children, "What kind of bad things they tell you to do?" 12 years old boy said, "One day when I was picking bottles from train with my friends a policeman came and asked one of us

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WORKING WITH BURNING TANDOORS EFFECT CHILDREN'S HEALTH BADLY

Balaknama Bureau

Reporter met a child who has been working in a restaurant since childhood. He has become 15 years old now working there. Earlier he used to do dough kneading but now he does the work of putting chapattis in tandoor. Child told reporter,

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION (STREET TALK)

BE A PART OF IT



Come and listen to the Street Talk - message of Badhte Kadam- Federation of Street and Working Children and their newspaper Balaknama on 11th April, 2017 (Eve of International Street Children Day). You will hear Street Children's stories in their own words. The program will be organized in India Islamic Centre, 87-88, Lodhi Road, New Delhi – 110003 from 4:30 to 6:00pm. Send us your wishes to support us on badhtekadam1@gmail.com and tweet @balaknama1.

EDITORIAL

Dear friends,

Greetings!!

Wish you a very Happy Holi from Street and Working Children.

Friends, Like always this time also street children's newspaper Balaknama has brought many real stories in front of you with its new edition. Balaknama reporters spoke to street and working children to know their views regarding the new scheme of Delhi's Government of availing toilets in one rupee.

Balaknama Reporters got to know about the problems of children staying on stations, footpaths, slums, etc. We have come up with the real pictures depicting problems faced by children, how girls feel unsafe inside and outside of their homes. This way we have brought small, big news in front of you through our newspaper.

Hope you like this edition also. Do send us your responses on above given address.

The Editorial Board

BUY 5KG THINGS AND GET YOUR DRINKING WATER!!

Talkative Reporter Aarti,
Reporter Shambhu

15 years old girl said, "It is very difficult to stay under Okhla flyover near the railways tracks. Trains cross at very high speed resulting in accidents". 15 years old boy said, "Recently an old man met with a train accident and died. We got very scared seeing that as his body was torn in pieces and was scattered near tracks. There is a forest also nearby and such incidents keep happening". 14 years old girl said, "Most severe problem faced by children staying here under the flyover is that we do not get drinking water anywhere near so we have to go far off places to get water. There is a water tap in the premises of a temple nearby but that



has been occupied by an old lady. She earns her livelihood through running a ration shop and asks our parents to buy ration from her then only she will let them take water from the tap. Our parents are forced to buy 5kgs rice or 5kgs flour from her to fetch water from the tap and those who do not buy from her shop; she does not allow them to fetch water". One day we all

children asked her, "Why don't you give us water when our parents buy ration from you only?" She replied, "1-2kgs do not work, you have to buy 5kgs ration then only I will give you

water". "We tried explaining her that we stay inside a tarpaulin home under the flyover where there are too many rats who eat away our ration so we buy ration in less quantity from her. But she did not listen to us and ask us to buy 5kg ration only and then only she allows us to take water. We waste our money also and our ration also gets wasted due to rats", added 14 years old girl.

HOW TO TAKE CARE OF CHILDREN?

BADHTE KADAM
TAUGHT PARENTS
THROUGH STREET PLAYS

Talkative Reporter Khushi,
Reporter Shambhu

There are no whereabouts of street children living in our country. Where they go who takes them nobody has any idea and when their parents go to Police station for filing the complaint nobody listens to them. Police rather blame them only for their carelessness for not taking care of their children and ask them to go away from there. Badhte Kadam members prepared

a play on this incident and showed in every street that how children are kidnapped and how their parents can keep an eye on their children and take care of them so that they are not kidnapped. They also showed in the play that how children's parents become careless.

Badhte Kadam members did this play in every street of Sarai Kale Khan and explained the parents to take care of their children properly and not to be careless. 17 years old Khushi

said, "There are still many children in our country who get kidnapped". 14 years old Shenaz said, "We have got to know now that every 8 minute a child gets stolen and nobody gets to know where these children are taken. The sole motive of this play is to make people aware about it so that they take care of their children and not let their children play outside alone and whenever he or she goes anywhere please keep an eye on them".



STREET CHILDREN EXPLAINED TOILETS' ECONOMY

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time. When we ask the care taker he says if you have a problem clean yourself. If you want to use toilet do otherwise go from here".

There are around 1500 slums in Badarpur Border where many street and working children stay. Reporters spoke to these children also. Children said, "There is no toilet in our area and we all go to relieve ourselves in open only. Some children go to railway stations. Children get into any train which enters railway station for using its toilet and after using the toilet they get down anywhere from the



train. This is only because they have no money to use the available toilets".

Delhi Government

announced that one can use toilet in Rs.1 but in a family of 8 members, if all uses toilet 3 times a day

— Children's Suggestions —

- * There is a solution to reduce the expenses on toilets. There can be a toilet card for each child with his or her photo on it with one month's validity. Its cost can be Rs.10 to 15 which children can give.
- * Toilets to be made free for children.
- * It should be applicable that one child can use toilet in Rs.1 for whole day.
- * Toilets to be made according to the population of a particular area.
- * Children want Government should build toilets where there are no toilets and they should be cleaned.

also would cost them Rs.24 per day and Rs.720 per month. This much money a child belonging to rag picker family or beggar family cannot give so children have to sit outside in open only.

15 years old Shambhu said, "I live in Sarai Kale Khan. All members of my family go out in open to relieve themselves as we do not have a single toilet in our area".

SMALL CHILDREN MAKE PAPER ENVELOPES



Talkative Reporter Shambhu, Reporter Jyoti

During the visit reporter got to know that 7 to 11 years old small innocent children make envelopes by cutting newspapers for keeping peanuts. Reporter asked these children, "You are all so small so how are

you all able to make these envelopes?" 7 years old Pawan said, "We have been making these envelopes since our childhood. Our parents do not send us school and it is very common in our caste that the moment child grows their parents put scissors and newspapers in their hand rather than

giving him books and ask us to make envelopes at home. My mother works in other's homes and my father sell different things according to the weather like peanuts or any hot item in winters and vegetables and toys in summers. Reporter asked children, "How much hours do you make these envelopes?" 10 years old Yamini said, "We make envelopes from 8 in the morning till 9 in the night and our mother provide us with the adhesive before had only. We work the whole day without eating anything. We prepare all envelopes and then pack them too. Our parents then go to market and sell them on shops". 11 years old Rani said, "One packet contains 10 pieces and get sold at Rs20".



EARNING LIVELIHOOD BY SELLING PYJAMA THREADS

Talkative Reporter Shravan, Reporter Shambhu

Reporter spoke to the small children who earn their livelihood by selling toys and Pyjama threads in the market whole day without eating anything. 15 years old boy said, "We face many problems in selling our stuff in this market. Earlier guard used to beat us but now police have also started abusing us so we go to different markets to sell our products like Sarojini Market or when some fairs take place we go there to sell". Another boy aged

14 years old said, "We Safdarjung Airport. Our fathers and elder brothers get the products in bulk from Sadar Market. The pyjama threads we get from the market remains entangled which we solve of it. We sell these in market and whatever we earn from it is used for our house expenses. We see police beating one or the other child every day. Our parents also sell the same things at red lights. They do not come to the market because of the bad behaviour of police".

BALAKNAMA SAVED TWO CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Balaknama Bureau

Two small kids - 8 years old girl and 12 years old boy stay with their parents in West Delhi. Their parents go to work at others' homes to make their ends meet. Recently their maternal uncle came to stay with them at their home. Innocent children used to spend time with their uncle without knowing his intentions and used to sleep with him. Girl said, "My uncle sexually assaulted me when everybody used to sleep at night and I did not tell my parents out of fear that

they will beat me instead. I remained silent but one day I saw him doing same thing with my brother. I got scared seeing that and decided to disclose this incident. Next day I told about this incident to children in neighborhood and those children informed Balaknama Reporter about it". Reporter said, "First I investigated about the whole thing and then I called the Child line helpline 1098 to report the issue. Childline workers spoke to both the kids and assured their parents about the safety of children. The proceedings of the case are going on".

FEMALE FOETICIDE BY THEIR OWN MOTHERS

Balaknama Bureau

Girls' population from Dome caste of Bihar is getting reduced because girls of this caste are married at a very young age and boys' family asks for so much of dowry that girls' parents have to sell

of their property. Due to all this, four ladies did not give birth to their daughters and killed them in their womb only. Reporters spoke to all these ladies. First lady said, "I committed this sin because if I would have given birth to my daughter then she

would have also lead a life full of sadness because girls are married off early in our caste and if in case the boy meet with any mishappening or die then our girls have to lead their full life as widow. Reporters asked all ladies, "How do you get to know that you will give birth to a girl?" Ladies said, "This is not a city. In this village doctor tells you everything". Third lady said, "There are many ladies like us who takes part in female foeticide the moment they get to know that a girl is there in their womb. This is happening all because of our customs and rituals which have not changed since long".



Small child pulls boat to earn food grains

Talkative Reporter Karan, Reporter Shambhu

This news is about 12 years old Karan who stays in Jamalpur, a small village in Bihar. His father works in Kolkatta and mother is a farmer. There is a large river in Bihar where Karan does the work of pulling boat. Reporter asked Karan, "You are so small, how you manage to ply boat in such a large river?" Karan replied, "I have never gone to study and there are not even good schools in our village. So, I started doing this work and pull boat from 7 in the morning till 10 at night". Reporter asked him, "Does not your hand pain when you pull the boat loaded with so many people?" Karan replied showing his hand, "These blisters used to pain earlier but now it is ok. My chest pains when I pull boat. Earlier I used to fear that if in case I fell in the



river then how will I come up and will get drowned but now I have learnt swimming so that fear has also gone. I feel scared at night because there is no light in the village and it becomes too dark. There is risk to my life if I fell in the river at night me". Reporter asked, "Do you get some money for working day and night?" Karan said, "I do not get money but whatever grains are produced in our village in a year, villagers give 60kg of grains to my family. I get rice, wheat, pulses, corn by pulling boat that is only my earning".

CHILDREN'S HELP LINE NUMBERS

CONTACT THESE TOLL FREE NUMBERS IF YOU FACE ANY PROBLEM.

Child line Number

1098

Police Helpline Number

100

INNOCENT CHILDREN MADE TARGET

Balaknama Bureau

Children living at stations are always abused. Recently the reporter got to know that smaller kids are made to carry out criminal activities by elder children. 15 years old Girl said, "I do rag picking at station. I have seen how elders take advantage of the innocent children who come at station after running from their homes".

"A child ran from his home and came to station in

search of some food where he met a person who was

and made children to beg. He asked the child why he was crying. To which the Child replied that his parents had sent him out of home and he was crying as he was too hungry".

The girl further shared, "The person said to the child that he will have to do a work given by him to get food. The person asked him to go and pick the pocket of any



good person he sees coming towards him".

"This way these people entrap these innocent children by taking advantage of them. They apply such methods to earn money through these children. They prepare them to pick pockets. This kind of pressure is always there on small kids at every station and they even get into habit of taking drugs with these people. These way small children are being entrapped in criminal activities".

No education in village schools

Balaknama Bureau

There are 4 Government schools in Biraul, a small village in Bihar for poor children. The board displayed there says, "Poor children have to study and education needs to be spread in Bihar" but the situation there is complete opposite. The school where children should study are seen playing outside that same school and teachers are seen gossiping on their personal talks and their whereabouts.

14 years old Boy said, "I study in class 5th but till now I don't even know how to write my name. When



exams happen, teachers write the answers on blackboard of the questions asked in the exam while children copy

Everyday children come to study in school but not even study for more than one hour and during that also teachers

ask them to play outside. If any child wants to study also, teachers do not let him and make fun of him". 15 years old boy said, "This has been happening since very long. We want freedom from this issue now so that every child of Bihar becomes educated".

BIG RESPONSIBILITIES IN YOUNG AGE

Talkative Reporter Aasma, Reporter Poonam

15 years Aasma used to stay with her parents. She

father was an alcoholic who used to create mess all the time in the area outside his house after getting drunk. Neighbours were also fed up of her father. Due to this Aasma left his father and went to live with her grandmother along with her siblings. She is currently working to take care of her siblings and takes care of her grandmother too as she is too old. Aasma is taking care of her siblings alone and does the work of making undergarments at home.

Her siblings also help in her work. Aasma said, "I do this work for a company who provides me the cloth and thread at my home only. I make undergarments the whole day and get Rs.3 for 12 pieces." Reporter asked, "How do you manage your expenses in such

siblings make undergarments from 8 in the morning till 10 at night then only we are able to earn Rs.50 to 60 per day. And after this I do all my household chores and take care of my grandmother too as she is very old".

GIRLS FED UP OF THE MISBEHAVIOUR

Savior turns Devourer

Talkative Reporter Khushi, Reporter Shambhu

Raghuvir Nagar is the area where girls and old people all work. A market takes place in Raghuvir Nagar called as Sunday market or Old market. This is near Rajouri Garden road. Girls are mainly the sellers in this market and sits in the shop since 6 in the morning till 12 in the afternoon. These girls sell those clothes which they get from houses in exchange of utensils. They wash these clothes properly and then sell them in the market. Reporters met these girls and tried knowing about this trend. Girls said, "Our parents do not sit at shops and tells us to sit there". 16 years old girl said, "Our parents make us sit here at shops because boys also come to this market and buys more clothes".

17 years old girl said, "Whenever boys come to buy clothes they



indulge in obscene talks with us. They ask us the rate of clothes and our rate too. When we extend our hands to give them clothes, they hold our hands. We feel bad when our parents also say that it is ok if they say anything or touch you, atleast we are getting money. They say that if you will not sit at shops then how will clothes get sold and then everybody will have to remain hungry in the house". 15 years old girl said, "We have to give Rs.50 to the contractor also for putting up the shop. Then we have to go out also at 12 and there also these boys follow us and misbehave with us. We are scared of something bad which can happen to us but our parents are not bothered about what is happening with us. They just want money as we are the only source of money. Our expenses are met through this only".

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to come to police station to collect clothes. Listening this I went to police station with

to massage his foot which I did. I thought I will get clothes after this but it did not happen rather he started sexually abusing me and forced my hands into his private parts. I got scared and ran away from there by making an excuse. Next day he called another boy to his room and did the same thing after switching off the lights. That boy also ran away from him but he does not leave any child and entrap these children by giving them temptations and then sexually abuse them. This policeman talks to us very sweetly but in return sexually abuses us and if we do not listen to him then next day he does not allow us to pick rags on station and beat us badly".

STRICT PARENTS STOPPED GIRLS' EDUCATION

Balaknama Bureau

There is a place named Vilochpura in Agra which is inhabited by Muslims. Reporter got to know that there are around 25 girls aged between 13 to 17 years who are not allowed to go out by their parents. Parents say that girls in our families do not go out and if in case they have to then they have to go out in burqa only. 16 years old girl said, "I love going school and I want to go to school like other children. Recently some workers from an organization came to teach us but our parents put forward the demand that there would be no boys amongst us to study. Workers asked our parents, "Now nobody discriminates between girls and boys then why are you saying like this?" On this

parents angrily replied, "We do not want our girls to be spoilt like other children". Reporter

and got to know that there are around 25 such girls who always remain at home and if ever they are found talking with any boy then they are beaten very badly. 15 years old girl said, "Tradition of keeping girls in burqa is still being followed in our caste the way it was followed earlier. We are not allowed to talk to anybody that is why we are not sent to schools. We cannot go to the nearby market also. Our parents get us the things if we require something. We want to get freedom from such stressful environment. We also want equal opportunities and not want discrimination between boys and girls in our area too like it are everywhere".

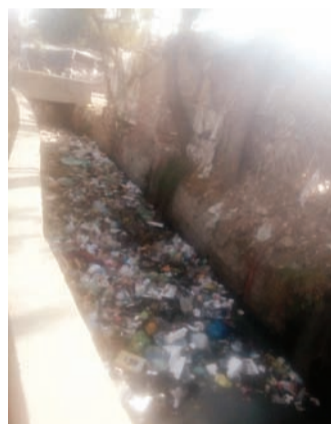
FILTHY SMELL SICKENING CHILDREN

Balaknama Bureau

There are around 150 to 200 slums in Rasalpur area of Agra. There is a long drainage which crosses through this slum area.

through this drainage which stinks a lot and children keeps playing around this drainage. Reporter got to know that children are

and dirt of this drainage but still people keep on throwing their garbage in this dirty canal. Reporter asked children, "How many children have fallen sick till now?" 15 years old boy replied, "4 to 5 children have fallen sick in last one



month as they play around it and when they sit for eating their food at home, it stinking smell reaches their home too because of which they are not able to eat their food".

15 years old girl said, "This drainage smells worst in

the morning. In evening, People collect their garbage and throw in it. Even the dead pets are thrown into

This may be the reason of children's illness". 17 years old boy said, "Swachh Bharat Campaign is running in our country so aggressively still people do not keep cleanliness nearby in their areas and throw garbage here and there. We want that canal in our area should also be cleaned and people should be made aware not to throw their garbage in it. They should cooperate with each other in keeping the surroundings clean".

GIRLS EXPRESS THEIR WORRIES: DO NOT FEEL SAFE

Talkative Reporter Lakshmi, Reporter Shambhu

Many girls stay under tin sheets near Kalkaji Temple. These girls face many problems at night. Reporters went to speak to these girls. 15 years old girl said, "We sleep in a house made of tin sheets near Kalkaji Temple. This house is such which has no walls and only has a

roof. We have put tarpaulin sheets around but that also does not help much. Anybody enters into it. We are always scared of the boys who roam around at night in inebriated state and keep stalking us. Recently, an incident happened with a girl. People gathered when the girl shouted and they took that boy to police station". 16 years old girl

said, "Do we girls have no right to life safely? We do not have any arrangement to bathe here so we have to go to Jungle to bathe. Boys keep looking at us and pass lewd comments because of which our parents get us married in younger age only so that something bad does not happen with us. And after marriage also we are tortured and ill - treated".

Mentally challenged children sexually abused

Talkative Reporter Varsha, Reporter Chetan



A very poor family stays in Kamla Nehru camp. Family has two mentally challenged children in which 13 years Mani is very weak mentally and is not able to speak properly too. He cannot even tell his name properly when you ask him. Mani does not stay at home and keeps roaming outside his home. He always stays in a nearby temple and begs when he feels hungry. When Mani's parents go out to call him he runs away from there. But Mani faces many problems in staying out of his home.

People misbehave with him when he stays out. People take advantage of his mental condition as he does not say anything to

anybody. People are aware of his condition so think that they can do any and he will not tell anybody. They call him by luring him of some money and then sexually abuse him. Mani tries to tell his pain to his parents with his hands but they are not able to understand his actions. Balaknama reporter got to know his problem from children staying nearby. Reporter also got to know that his parents go to work in other homes because of which they are not able to take care of him.

HELPLESSNESS COMPEL CHILDREN TO WORK

Balaknama Bureau

80 to 100 children of 13 years to 17 years of age group are sent to city to work from Bihar. Reporter met a child who came back to his home after working in the city. Explaining his family's condition child said, "There is no earning member in my family and my father worked in the city who died there only. I have



mother goes to work in the

for their marriage. I go to city to work so that I can marry them off in a good home because boys' families ask for dowry. They will not get married if I do not go to city to work. My paternal uncle's sons also work in other people's houses and I

also do the same work and stay with my paternal uncle there".

He added, "Small children get to work in people's home and a bit elder children get to work in city's hotels and restaurants. Small children are not kept in restaurants so they earn while working in people's homes. People keep small children at their homes easily because no one comes to check at homes and nobody questions. Children remain hidden inside the homes".

WORKING WITH BURNING TANDOORS EFFECT CHILDREN'S HEALTH BADLY

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"I belong to Bihar and have been working here since childhood. I was learning the work when I was young, now that I have learnt the work so I put chapattis in tandoor. It is easy to put chapattis in tandoor in winters but as the summers are approaching it

of tandoor results in red sores on my body which burn a lot. There is sweat all the time on my body while working on

tandoor which itches more. This work is more dangerous than other works, at times my hands get burnt by the coal inside while putting chapattis inside tandoor". Reporter asked that child, "Do you want to go to school?" He replied laughingly, "What are you talking Bhैया. My half of the life has been spent; I may live only for few years now because my blood has got burnt by working on tandoor and a kind of sensation remains in my hands all the time. I feel very weird as if this work has affected my health a lot".

POLICE FEAR STOPPED GIRLS FROM BEGGING



Talkative Reporter Aarti, Reporter Shambhu

There is a change seen in the girls of Sansi camp with the help of Police. Few months back Sansi camp girls were begging when suddenly four boys started misbehaving with them. These girls saw a Policeman passing nearby

and immediately ran to him and asked for help. That policeman beat those four boys and saved the girls. Policeman asked the girls, "Why do you beg? Why can't you do some other work?"

15 years girls replied, "It is not our choice to beg. This is a ritual in our families. All girls beg only and we

do not know any other work". Policeman asked, "Why don't you study?" 16 years old girl said, "We study through open basic education with the help of an organization but we are not able to go there regularly as we go here and there to beg". Policeman explained those girls, "If you will not study you will face such kind of problems in future as well as complete your studies with help of your organization and tell your parents also the importance of studies".

He added, "If your parents force you to beg, you tell me without any fear I will explain your parents. If they will not listen I will lock them and take action against them". Girls told this about way back home so their parents out of fear do not force them to beg. Now girls do not go to beg and do work at their home only. They study when the workers from organization come to teach them.

Children beg under pressure

Balaknama Bureau

There are around 60 children who go to different homes to beg flour and rice on 6 days in a week and beg money on Saturdays in a temple. Reporter met these children to know the reason. Children said, "It is not our wish to beg rather our parents ask us to beg. If we refuse to beg our parents do not give us anything to eat and make us sleep hungry at night. Out of this fear we children beg flour and rice for 6 days. We are pressurized to get atleast 5kg of rice and flour otherwise we are beaten badly".

They added, "We get 2kgs only in a day that too with great difficulty. Our parents do not understand this. When Saturday comes we give them money by begging. They abuse us if they do not get money and blame us that we keep playing that is why we do not get money. We always remain in fear



every day that if we will not get money we will have to remain hungry today night also. This is the reason we go to beg in busy places like temple and market on Saturdays. We even cry in front of other people but they push us away without giving us any money. Our parents do not care about us. They are not bothered about we face while we beg for money".



Pawan's Struggle

Talkative Reporter Pawan, Reporter Shambhu

12 years old Pawan stays in a tarpaulin home on Lodhi road with his family. He has started plying rickshaw after his father's death. Pawan said, "The responsibility of my family has come on my shoulders since my father died. I work because I have to take care of my mother and sister. I do any kind of work. I clean utensils in Army camp, apart from this I ply rickshaw also. And occasionally I work in marriage parties too when I get work there".

Pawan said, "Rickshaw plying is most difficult for me. It is ok to ply when I get one customer but pulling two people on rickshaw results in pain in my chest. It feels as if I will faint on the road but I try to do my

work with all courage. I work very hard so that my mother and brother sister do not have to beg. That is why I do every kind of work. There are so many children like me who has to struggle every day".

CHILDREN MADE AWARE OF CHILD RIGHTS

Talkative Reporter Yashika, Reporter Chetan

Yashika, 11 years old stays in B-3 Raghbir Nagar and she is a sincere leader at her contact point. In such a young age, she gives information regarding children to children and makes them aware about child rights. She also tells them about the childline number where they can ask for help if they face any problem or if they see any other child in problem. Recently only Yashika conducted a support group meeting which was attended by 42 Street and working children. Informing children Yashika said, "Children are being employed as labor in Raghbir Nagar and their



rights are being exploited. That is why I will tell you the way to get freed from child labor and how to get your rights. If any child is in any problem like you see any child being forcefully employed by anyone then

you can call on 1098 to help that child. If any child works in a bungalow or do labor work then also you can call on 1098. This is childline number. If you see any child in distress you can help that child".

BEGGING ON THE STREETS, CHILDREN STILL WANT TO STUDY

Talkative Reporter Arjun, Reporter Shambhu

There are some children who beg the whole day near Tuglakabad Railway Station. They are around 8 to 10 years old. These children beg out of compulsion. Their parents also do this work. Children told reporter, "People abuse us when we go to beg and they do not give us anything. After begging for whole day we earn Rs.15 to Rs.20 only but we want to study. We all want to go to school and study



like all other children but we do not have any identity proof because of which we are not able get admission

in any school. We can move ahead in life if somebody can come to our place and teach us". Reporter event

took their test to check their capability and found that they are seriously brilliant children. 10 years old Arjun said, "We do not want to do begging. We also want to study but nobody is helping us so that we can study further. People misbehave with us when we go to beg, they scold us saying that we have made this our business and we cannot do any other work. We are not able to get admission in schools also due to lack of identity proof. How do we study then?"



POLICE NEEDS TO BE FRIENDLY WITH CHILDREN STAYING AT STATION

Talkative Reporter Salman, Reporter Shambhu

Children staying at station said, "Police is harassing us from last few days. When we wash our clothes at station they start beating us saying that you are wasting stations' water which is for washing the trains but that is not true. We do not waste water and use it very judiciously. They do not say anything to other people who wash their clothes or bathe there. But the moment they see us they come running to us with their stick to beat us".

15 years old boy said, "Old police were very good but new ones hate us. Old police used to tell us to remain clean all the time and never beat us. They used to listen to our problems and always helped us. If in case we ever missed going to

our classes at our contact point, they sued to come to us and ask us if we have any problem. The new police which have come on station harass us a lot and beat us with their sticks".

SUCCESS LIES IN UNITY

Talkative Reporter Tanga, Reporter Chetan

Working children of a slum of South Delhi are not educated. This is the reason that they remain busy in their work. When morning comes, children have gunny bag on their shoulders to pick rags in place of the school bag. These children do not know anything related to education. They just remember that if they will not get rags then how they will manage their home expenses. So they pick rags, iron, plastic and bottles by roaming around at different places. Children said, "When we go to pick rags, we get divided in two groups and go to pick rags in groups. Boys go one side and girls go other side.



We children do this so that nobody is able to misbehave with any of the child". Children said, "We used to face many problems when we used to go alone to pick rags because nobody used to be left behind to take care of the collected rags. People used to take advantage of this and would steal our rags and sell them. We used to get beaten at home also for

this but now when we go in groups we are left with rags of much quantity and nobody steals our material as we work united now". They added, "We are now each other's strength. Since the time we have started working in groups, we not get full fruit of our hard work and not half. Unity has given strength and more benefits".

CHILDREN STAYING AT STATION LEARNT MEANING OF UNITY

Talkative Reporter Rohit, Reporter Shambhu

Children staying at railway stations do the work of picking rags for their survival and are involved in drugs all the time. These children did not know the meaning of Unity. They always fought amongst themselves so Balaknama Reporter conducted support group meeting with them. Reporter asked children, "What is unity for you all?" 15 years old Rohit asked, "Bhaiya what is unity?" Children did not know its meaning at all as they are always involved in their work at station. How will they know what is Unity. Children said,



"We have heard this word for the first time". Then Reporter explained all the children, "Unity means that we are together. If we face any problem, we all should face it together. That is called Unity. Now tell me what unity is". Children replied, "Now we understood what unity is like we all children do begging and at times some children do not get any money and if we have money then we can buy them food from our money so that they do not remain hungry. And together we can face those people also who beat us". Children decided that from now onwards we will help each other and will try to leave drugs.

HATS OFF TO SAPNA'S COURAGE

Talkative Reporter Sapna, Reporter Shambhu

16 years old Sapna stays with her family in a slum in Badarpur Border. Her parents work to manage their home's expenses. Sapna has two younger siblings who go to school. Sapna being eldest does not go to school and stays back to do household chores. She also goes to beg outside during festivals.

Sapna went to Kalkaji Temple on Dusshera to be part of a Navratri festival where girls are offered food where she saw a child of around 7 to 8 years old who was crying loudly calling her mother.

Sapna went there and asked the child, "Why are you crying baby?"

Child replied, "I came to temple with my mother but



now I am not able to find my mother. Then Sapna started searching for his mother at different places and other girls also started the search for the child's parents who came there with Sapna. Child's parents were found

near Lotus temple after one hour. And Sapna got to know that they were also searching for their child.

Sapna gave their child to them and said, "Auntyji, Please take care of your child as this is Dusshera time and there is so much of crowd". She came back after explaining them. This way Sapna also tries to explain the children around her area. She tells them not to get involved in gamble and rather encourage them to go to school. Sapna stays in a slum where parents go to work after leaving their children back at home and Sapna takes care of all of them very well. She also takes care of children playing around the railways tracks as many trains cross from there. She just wants freedom from begging.

MAJEEDA REACHED SHELTER HOME SAFELY

Talkative Reporter Salman, Reporter Shambhu

15 years old Majeeda ran from her home and reached Old Delhi Railway Station. When Balaknama Reporter met Majeeda, she told about her sad story. She said, "My father died two years ago after which my mother married another person. My step father used to beat us all three siblings. He even got me employed in somebody's house where I used to work for whole day. I never used to get any money as my step father used to go at my workplace and collect money before the end of month. They did not even give me money when I required rather he would ask if I did not get money from my employer. I used to feel so bad knowing that my step father already has my earned money with him and he is lying

to me".

"I used to ask my mother also for money but she also did not give me. My parents used to send my brother and sister to beg and if they did not used to get any money they were not given food to eat. They used to send them forcefully to beg and would abuse them on not going.

So I ran away from my house. I was scared when I first came to railway station. I started crying thinking where to go and then I met Salman who told me about himself", added Majeeda. Salman told Majeeda, "I also stay at railway station and I am talkative reporter of Balaknama newspaper. I help other children". Then he gave her some food and with help of other reporter he sent Majeeda to shelter home through organization's worker.



SMALLER KIDS BEING BULLIED BY ELDER ONES

Balaknama Bureau

Children who stay on railway stations do the work of picking up bottles from trains. One child told the reporter, "We face many problems when we go to pick up bottles in trains. There are two people who do not let us

pick bottles from trains and beat us badly. They have taken control of all express trains which come there and bully all people around. They do not let us pick rags from any train and by mistake also if we get in any train they beat us very badly". He further added, "Due to this we



started picking bottles from the trains running at night. But that has also become difficult for us; we are beaten at night also. Police blame us saying that we come at night to steal things of the travelling passengers. We tried explaining the police

allowed to pick bottles in the day time. There are two persons who do not let us work in trains and if we try to do, they beat us. Because of this we come at night to pick up the bottles. Still Policeman did not believe us and started beating 13 years old child badly".

BALAKNAMA SPREAD MESSAGE THROUGH PLAY

Talkative Reporter Salman, Reporter Shambhu

Children staying at railway station were taught through plays how children come to stay at railway station after running away from their homes and how they fall prey to the world of drugs. First children stay with their family but after getting frustrated from the exploitation done by their own parents or relatives, they leave their homes and come to station. That child keeps roaming here and there at railway station and nobody helps him/her so he also start doing the same things which other children do like rag



picking and stealing. And while living at stations they get into drugs also. And one day comes when they get into habit of taking drugs also. Children were made aware about the ill effects of drugs through play. Children were given the message that if a child destroys his/her life by consuming drugs and also risks his/her life if he/she consume drugs regularly for 6 months. 15 years old Salman said, "If any child comes to railway station after running from their homes then they should not get into dark horrors of drugs rather should try to go to a shelter home as soon as possible or return back to their homes".

BALAKNAMA AND BADHTE KADAM IN NEWS

WE ARE SHARING SOME PICTURES OF THESE MOMENTS WITH YOU....



Children of D.C. Vedic Inter College forming Human Chain



Balaknama's stakeholders taking balaknama

Police interact with street children to end 'cop fear'

ABHAY SINGH
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New Delhi, 20 February

"If you are in trouble, inform us, we will help you," Delhi Police has told street children. They were trying to make this most vulnerable group of homeless children understand how they work.

"It was a great thing when the police uncle told me that they are there to help us if we face some harassment," said 14-year-old Nagma, a homeless girl living in the shelter home in Sarai Kale Khan.

Talking to The Statesman, the homeless children said that they had earlier feared police as they had no knowledge about police work. They have only seen police arresting them. "Before meeting them, someone had warned me that police would arrest me if I frightened but after meeting them I know that police will arrest only bad people," said Sangeta, another homeless girl, living in the shelter. During their visit to Lalpuri Nagar police station in south-east Delhi, station house officer (SHO) Kishan Pal welcomed these children and listened to their problems.

A senior police officer told this newspaper that children had some misunderstanding about police as they have never talked to us but after meeting us they were very happy. They are a vulnerable lot and we have given them confidence that if they see anything wrong happening in the society or any one harasses them they could come to us for any help," said the officer.

The street children said that police have told them if they found anyone taking drug or beat them, they should just inform the police.

According to NGO Chetna, policeman is the first person who comes in contact with street children on behalf of state. Children often face abuse by locals. This is the right time for police and children to come together and to have a trustworthy relation.

"We approached six Delhi police stations during the police week and received overwhelming response. More than 200 children have already benefited. Children also expressed willingness to meet the police commissioner and we are in touch with his office," said Sanjay Gupta from Chetna.

Coverage of Street and Working children in Statesman Newspaper

WE TOO EXIST- Street Children Performing Qawali on Hume to loot liya milke hus...

www.youtube.com
<https://youtu.be/z40I3oJLSc> 8:04 AM



Balakanama Reporter with Actress Dia Mirza



Balaknama's coverage on NDTV news channel

Balaknama: A Turning Point In The Lives Of Children Living On The Streets - ...

everylifecounts.ndtv.com

This edition is for limited distribution. All pictures are published in this edition after children's their approval.

Balaknama is written originally in Hindi by children reporters. This is translated version of Hindi and translation assistance is taken from adults ensuring the original feel intact. Translated by Richa Somvanshi.