

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.

STREET CHILDREN SPEAK THEIR HEART OUT DURING CHILDREN'S WEEK

"National Children's Day" till Universal Children's Day (14th-20th November) are considered as fun and festive days for children. Children of rich families go to the mall and good places to visit with their parents and friends on these days, but it is a matter of regret that children living on the street are victims of child labor and violence even on these days. Children are the future of the country, reflecting on their overall development and making some concrete effort is the important responsibility of the country. Proper development of the country is possible only by the development of children. It is the responsibility of the society and the policy maker to make children educated, curbing child labor, proper care of their nutrition and efforts for their character development. Journalists of Balaknama went to different places and wanted to know from Street and working children what these children have in their young hearts, which they want to reach people, due to which they are not free due to their involvement in work Find out. Therefore, they keep their desires in the mind.

VOICES FROM SOUTH DELHI



10-year-old Anu lives with her family at Sansi Camp. She loves to go to school but sadly she is not going to school due to poor economic condition. Anu said, "I want a person to enroll me in any school on this occasion of 'International Children's Day' so that I can make my own future."



The 15-year-old (changed name) Kajal told about her. She said, "There are a total of four members in my family. My father has died. After the death of my father, my mother's behavior has changed a lot. She keeps roaming all day long and drinks alcohol with other people, because of this we have to starve, all three of my brothers, for the whole day. I want that on this occasion of International Children's Day, we should make some arrangements for the three siblings so that we don't have to stay hungry. Will you help us?"



The 12-year-old Karan, who lives in the slums of Badarpur Border, talked about his condition. He says, "Our slum has a railway line on which the train is supposed to come at very fast speed. The train sounds too fast. Because of which we can not study in our home. There are no parks to play, so we have to play between the railway tracks only. All the time we all are afraid that there is no dangerous accident with us and other children."



10-year-old Suraj says that we do not know how many such children live on the station and on the road. They are going ahead every day in the world of intoxicants, so I am telling them on this special occasion that if someone wants to help us, then they should try to stop this addiction.



Describing the economic condition of his family, a 12-year-old boy, Mangal said, "As my slum does not have any means of water, I want that on the occasion of International Children's Day, a person should listen to our problems and help us so that we can get water and we children don't have to wander around."



The 13-year-old Rustom live in Ren Basera, Sarai Kale Khaan. His family situation is so bad that all the members of the house have to beg for help. Rustom is very much interested in dancing. He said, "I want someone to enroll me in my dance class on the occasion of this International Children's Day because I want to show my skills in front of people even while passing through this situation."



9-year-old Pooja, while describing her family status, said, "The condition of my house is so bad that my mother and my brother and sister have to beg for our survival. I want that some elder sister or brother should help us on the occasion of this International Children's Day, so that our family should not be begged. Will you help us?"



Javed, a 11 years old boy, lives with his family under the Sarai Kale Khan bridge. Describing the condition of his family, Javed said, "Children and families like us are being driven from under the bridge, there is no place for us to live and sleep. So I want to arrange a safe place for children on this occasion so that we do not have to wander around."



8-year-old Preeti, while speaking about her situation, said, "There is no system of electricity in the slum where I live, so we have problems while studying at night. Therefore, on the occasion of International Children's Day, we children want this problem should be solved as soon as possible so that we do not have to face any problem in studying."



The 13-year-old, Prahlaad, said, "As there is no toilet in our slum, so we go to the forests to defecate. Especially the girls have trouble, so we kids want to arrange the toilets in our slum, so that we do not have to go to the forest to defecate."

Talkative reporter Sangeeta, Rustom and reporter Jyoti

SOME CHILDREN FROM WEST DELHI EXPRESSED THEIR WISHES



The 14-year-old girl, Komal, said, "Due to the old customs of this world, there are many girls who are facing many problems after marriage because of dowry. I want this system to be eliminated from the root system like this dowry so that we do not have to face such difficulties."



14-year-old Rohit, while referring to his situation, said, "Even at present, our society is being discriminated between boys and girls. Even today there are many such families who are indulged in female foeticide. That's the only thing I want to stop."



13-year-old Aman talked about his future and said, "At the place where I am living, government employees break our slums without any notice. Because of this we have to change the place every time, because we do not have enough money for renting a room. That's why we have to go back to our village, due to which we can't study. That's why on the occasion of this International Children's Day, we children want that government should not take away the right to study from us in any condition."



9-year-old Amit said, "We have suffered a lot and there are many such houses here whose house is spent only by ferrying. Most of the children are also being found in the work of the ferry, due to which these innocents are deprived of education. So I want a brother to give good jobs to our parents, so that we can have good parenting and future."



12-year-old (changed name) Kajal referring to the current situation, said, "There are many people in our slum who are involved in drug trade with children so I want this drunkenness to be stopped so that more children should not get trapped in clutches"



When 10-year-old Ranjit said, "I was a working child. On this auspicious occasion of International Children's Day, I want to make a wish to the government that whenever they make some rules. They should think about us also."



9-year-old Ronit said, "We road and working children are disturbed but the police when we live under the bridges. So I want to make some arrangements for them, where we can happily live with our family."



13-year-old Nisha said, "All members of my family do the ferry of cloth to fulfill the family's needs. My wish is live with freedom and happiness."



Seeing the present situation, the 12-year-old Pooja said that in our society, road and working children are ignored, overlooked and discriminated. So I want that no road and working children should be discriminated."



11-year-old Aarti, while expressing out her thoughts, said, "Our society is still being discriminated. That's why I want that this kind of behavior should not be done with the girls. We should also give equality to the girls in the society."

Talkative reporter and reporter Deepak and Chetan

SOME CHILDREN OF NOIDA SAID THEIR WISHES

Talkative reporter Pinky, Nobieun and reporter Shambhu



Guddu, an 11-year-old boy, said, "My family is so poor. From Bihar to Noida, we came to earn money but after coming here there is no income earning even after coming here. Our parents wander from poverty to earn money, then go and earn little penny and half of the amount of money our parents earn, we have to give to slum owners. That is why I want some arrangement to be done for our families on this occasion, so that our parents do not have to pay the slum rent."



13-year-old Yashpal mentioned about himself and said, "We have no place to teach children, because our parents who work as beldaris. In this work, our parents have to change places in every two to three times. The change is not possible in our school enrollment and under the right guidance. So I want a brother to give such a task to our parents so that we can find a place for children to live and we can make good future through studies."



A 13 years old boy, Ajay, Noida, lives with his family in Sarafabad. Ajay described his slavery by saying, "Till his age, I have never went to he school and now because my admission is currently held in class 5, I have to study with small children. I want the opportunity to get enrolled in class 7th so that I can study something new and can study with the children of my age."



13 year old Pramod lives in Noida, Sector 74, Sarfabad. Pramod is mentally and physically afflicted. Pramod's mother said, "His father had died two years ago, so I married another so that I can get treatment of my child, but even after getting married, this problem was not solved. Pramod's condition is worsening every day. So I want my child to get rid of this sad slavery. I hardly get to earn some penny after working for the hole day."



14-year-old Jasim mentioned his present situation and said, "There are a lot of people who speak Hindi in the workshop where I work in. As belong to Bengal, I hardly understand Hindi. Our situation is so bad that I have to work as a clerk in builder's office. I want someone to teach me hindi without taking any fee so that I can also go out and do some other work."



11-year-old Arif, referring to his family status, said, "My family is very poor because of which my dream of studying in public school can't be fulfilled. Therefore, I want this incomplete desire to be done on the occasion of this International Children's Day."



The 10-year-old, Raju (name changed) who lives in Noida, works himself in the garage to supervise his mother. Raju, while describing the pain of his sadness, says, "Because all my colleagues and their children are not right, all the slaves and children taunt me, so I want that I can improve my mother's behavior and condition so that people should not discriminate me and should treat us with affection."



15-year-old Suhana, who lives in Noida Sector 74, referring to her current situation, said, "There are 10-12 in our house whose work is to manage or look after small children in the house because the economic condition of our home is not well. And the second thing is that we do not have all the girl's satisfaction in this work, as we want to do a tailoring course to move forward so that we can learn the skills of the hands and can have a bright future."



8-year-old Aftab, while describing his condition as a labourer, said, "My parents are very poor, so we children have to do the work of collecting garbage. We kids wants that the government should listen to the children's voices to give employment to our parents, so that we do not have to choose such future."



A 11 years old boy, Monu resides with his family in Noida Sector 49. He said, "I and my parents work as garbage collector. My parents are unable to teach me in the school. Where I live, here are many children who go to the school. I also like to go to school but due to this situation I am unable to attend school, would any of you help me in going to school?"

SOME CHILDREN EXPRESSING THEIR WISHES FROM BADSHAHPUR (GURGAON)

Talkative reporter Raju, Mampi and reporter Shambhu



8-year-old Hasan Ali, while expressing the present situation, "My parents go out to work only at eight o'clock in the morning. I keep the three young brothers and sisters in my house for the whole day. That's why I can not play outside and neither can I do studies. So I want someone to help me on this special occasion and send me a good teacher at home, so that I can study like other children."



13-year-old Raju, who lives in a slum in Badshahpur, is looking for a tea shop for his family's survival. Raju's dream is that as the way our Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi used to sell tea in the past and has become the Prime Minister, why can not I go ahead? Raju is not currently cooperating with us, so Raju wants a person to help him on this occasion of International Children's Day, so that he can be admitted to my public school, only then he will make his bright future.



The 7-year-old boy, who is very clever and promising, is well-known in the slum colony of Badshahpur. Everyone has a lot of affection for humans. People living in the slums of Badshahpur told that the boy wanders the entire day. His mother does not even care where my baby is, where did he go? That is why people want to be raised to a place where humans can make their future bright by studying.



11-year-old Mampi is sitting in a dream of becoming a doctor. Mumpy wants to become a good doctor so that she can do the right treatment for road and working children, but it is becoming very difficult for her to fulfill this dream, because the Mumpy's parents are extremely poor, because of this reason Mumpy is not able to study well.



13-year-old Jehangir belongs to the poor family. Jahangir works at the vegetable shop for his family's survival, but Jahangir dreams that he should grow up to be a police officer, but because of his forced condition, due to poverty situation, his dreams are being broken, hence Jahangir wants someone to help him to fulfill his dream on this special occasion.



10-year-old Suraj said, "On last Raksha Bandhan, my father has lost his one leg due to a railway accident so I have to take care of him. So my mother goes to work in the closet to run the house expenses. I have to look after my father. I want someone on this occasion of International Children's Day to help me in my economic situation, so that I can move forward in my life."



The 13-year-old Zaheer lives in the slums of Badshahpur and works to take garbage in order to run his house, so Zaheer has a lot of children screaming. This makes Zaheer very bad; Zaheer wants someone to help his family so that he doesn't need to get rid of garbage.



8-year-old Shivani said, "I want someone to help me on the occasion of this International Children's Day so that I can fulfill my dream of studying because girls in our caste don't go out of the house. People do not let us get away because of which girls are being deprived of studies."



The 8-year-old Dev lives with his family in a slum of Badshahpur. Due to their high number of members in the family, their parents are not able to think about the future of their children, so he wants a brother to enroll in school, so that he can make a bright future.



The 8-year-old Raju works hard with his parents to settle his family. Raju dreamed that he became an engineer, but due to poverty, this dream is not being fulfilled, if someone joins Raju's good public school on the occasion of this International Children's Day and cooperates in running the house, Raju The dream can be fulfilled.

SOME CHILDREN OF AGRA SAID THEIR WISHES



Tannu, a 12-year-old living in Azampada, told the situation of her family, said, "My family is very poor, so I have to beg, but I do not like to beg. If someone supports me in improving family status, then I can stop begging."



The 14-year-old Sarika described her sadness as saying that there are two small brothers and sisters in her house. In order to nurture them, she has to work in the cottage, because her father is engaged in the dark world of alcohol all day, so she could not study. But she wants to teach my younger sibling. If she get any support for this, her dream will be fulfilled.



14-year-old Khushi, speaking about herself, said, "I live in Laldiggi. My father works in the furniture store. The money he get from the shop, he drink alcohol by that. That's why I used to spend the whole day on the train all day by selling toys and food products. My dream is to do a course of sewing machine, but this dream is not being fulfilled due to poor family status. Will you help me?"



14-year-old Sneha is dreaming to become a teacher, but because of not having any big member of the family, Sneha herself goes to Kothi and her mother at the railway station to sell toys and other types of food. Sneha wants someone to help her in order to fulfill her dream.



Ankit, a 10 years old boy, tells the situation of his family, said, "I had a dream that I should study in a good school and make my future bright, but seeing the circumstances of the house, I sacrificed my dream and started working in marriages and parties. I still hope that if a brother cooperates with me then my dream can come true."



A 10 years old boy, Monty talked about his sadness, he said, "My mother's health is getting worse, so I have to work in a shoe factory. There is no one to run the house. Even my father is there, then he runs the rickshaw, but whosoever earns the whole day, he waste it in drinking. I have a dream since my childhood that I become an engineer by studying. It seems that this dream will be a dream."



12-year-old Aditya, referring to him, said, "My father died two years ago, since then only my family has experienced sadness only. Currently, I work in a wedding-party to run the house and my mother sells toys and gram at the railway station. My dream is that I should study in a good school. If a brother-sister can help my family to survive, then I can study."



10-year-old Vanshika said, referring to herself, "My dream was that I would become a bank manager, but due to the extreme poverty, this dream is not possible because at present my younger brother and sisters work in a jewellery shop and in fact my father does the work in a shoe factory, then also the home expenses are not fulfilled as the room in which we live is also rented. After facing so much, how can I get dream of studying?"



10-year-old Nisha explained her condition and said, "When I paste the stones on the anklets, my eyes pain. I want to leave this work and study but due to poor condition of my house I cant study."

Talkative Reporter Akash, Varsha and Reporter Poonam

WHY CHILDREN AND FAMILY BEG AT TRAFFIC SIGNALS? -INSIDE STORY

Reporter Shambhu, Jyoti, Chetan and Deepak

During a survey in West and South Delhi and in Agra, our reporters have found out the reason for from where are these children coming and why are they wandering at red lights? During the investigation, the reporter reached to a place where there are a large number of children present. On investigating, we got to know that these children came from many different places with their family like, Nepal, Aligarh, Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Gonda, etc. They all are living under the bridges in Delhi. On interacting with them, we got to know that due to poor economic conditions, their parents wander here and there in search of some work and money. They have reached here while wandering only.

A 32 years old man, Mr Arun said, "We belong to Bengal. Once due to a flood, our houses was broken because of which we don't had any proper place to live. We used to wander here and there with our children but no one came forward to help us. At that time we decided o go to Delhi. We thought that this is the only place where we can survive. But even after coming here, we did not get rid off our problems. At present, we collect garbage for our survival."

Similarly, our reporter interacted with other people also. Another 32 years old man, Mr Rajesh said, "Our children wander here and there because we don't have any place to live and survive. We work for one day and ten next 5 days we don't



Parent's viewpoint



Our Balaknama team interacted with the parents of street and working children. Parents were asked for the suggestions and ideas for removing and improving this type of child labor. A 28 years old lady, Mrs. Sheela Ji talked about her children and said, "Our children wander here and there in tensions and earn money by begging and showing games on roads. When they are begging, they get to hear filthy talks from the people passing by. Seeing the people's response we feel very bad and think that why our children are not respected?." She further added, "I want that our children should not be treated like this." Asking for some respect and help for children, she said, "I want to say that if you people see any children in need, please go and help him/her."

Another 48 years old lady, Mrs. Rani said, "Due to illiteracy of people living in Madhya Pradesh, they spend their life on a footpath in Delhi with their entire family and go to mosques and temples for begging. When they are being run away from these places they go and live at new places." Demanding for some help for their survival, she further added, "We just want that we people should also given some place or shelter to live and free education for our children so that we and our children can get a bright future and can live a reputed life in this society."

have anything to do. Due to this, our survival is not possible. That's why only we send our children to different places for

begging and collecting trash. We also send them for selling balloons and toys in the slums." Telling more, another 34 years

old lady, Mrs. Vimla Devi said, "There are many places which we and our innocent children have changed, still we don't have a proper place to live at. That's why we have decided to live under the bridge. Even after living here, our children have to face many problems which we can't even tell you. Like, at nights when our daughters are sleeping, that time the people passing by look them with filthy eyes and try to obscene with them. When we face problems at one place, we change our place that why people also call us, Ghumantu (travelers)."

Like this talking to their parents, our reporters reached to the children who were sad and were sitting at the roadside. When the reporter tried to interact with them in order to know the reason behind their sadness, they start running away from him. Seeing this, the reporter called all of them and made them understand that he works for children only. He will help him. Listening to him, a 14 years old boy, Harpaal said, "There are many people like you who came here and made fun of us. They think that wandering is our work that's why we don't share our problems with

anybody." The reporter then made them understand that they are not like all those people who made fun of them they just wanted to know the reason for their sadness. Suddenly, a 15 years old boy, Sachin said, "We are sitting here sadly because we have not got anything from the morning till now (afternoon) to eat. We all are starving. There is a mall near us. We children go outside the mall and eat the residues and the left food of the travelers. They buy and throw it and we go and pick it up to eat. We all fulfill our stomach with that food only but sad thing is that there are some guards in the mall. They run behind us to beat us. That why we children always wander here and there in search of food. At past, we even started begging also but public don't give us a single penny. Instead they ask us that don't we have any other work except begging? They even say that it's our daily work of begging. Listen to this, we children again started wandering here and there and left begging. People are not ready for giving us money, not even the food and a respected life too."

They said that we have thought that if even after wandering they are not getting food to eat then they should start pick pocketing. At present, many of them are doing pick pocketing. They said, "When we go back to our home in the evening, we have to cross a huge jungle. There are many people in this jungle who taken intoxicants. These people take all our money and in fact they even beat us. That's why we children have stopped doing pick pocketing too."

Talkative reporter Roshni and Deepak

A support group meeting was organized by our Balaknama Team in West Delhi in which many girls took part. The girls told us about their problems. They informed us that their parents have separated them in two groups. They said, "When our brothers go to school, they don't say a single word to them but when we say that we also want to go to school they tell us that there is no need of studying as one day you only have to live with your in-laws. You girls should learn domestic households which you have to do after getting married. If you girls will not able to do households after getting married then we will get to hear that you daughter does not know anything. If they get angry from you, they might beat you." The girls are now very tensed and scared after listening to all this things. They said, "Why such practice happens with us only? There are many girls in the world who are moving forward and touching the heights." Telling the reason behind such practice, an old man living in West Delhi said, "We don't send our daughters

GENDER DISCRIMINATION IS THEIR EVERYDAY LIFE

to schools because nowadays girls who are going to school are indulged in wrong things with boys and after some day they run away from the homes. We are afraid that our daughters might do something like us and that is why we don't allow them to go to school." Another 32 years old lady, Mrs. Sulekha

Devi (name changed) said, "At present, our daughter is of 10-12 years that's why we allow her go out for short durations but as soon as she will become 16-17, we will not even allow her to step out of the home." Listen to Mrs Sulekha Devi, a 11 years old girl, Anjali (name changed) said, "Yes, she is right. We girls

have to live only in the 4 walls of our homes till we don't get married." Raising questions, she further added, "We want to ask, that which type of place is it where girls are not allowed to study? Boys can roam anywhere without anybody's permission but we girls cannot even go out. Why we girls are pressurized for



such thing? We girls also want to study and fulfill our dreams like other girls. We also want to live independently. Is it like if one girl did something wrong, so we all will also do the same?"

CHILDREN FORCED TO DO TRADITIONAL WORK

Talkative reporter Aarti and Jyoti

During a visit, the reporter reached a place where small innocent kids were doing the work of making iron tools. Those children were just of 12-13 years old. The reporter was shocked to see that how did they manage to make iron tools in such young age? Regarding this, he went to talk to many people and tried to find out the compulsions and reasons which made these small children do such work. On asking different people, the reporter got to know that these children are from different places and their parents themselves send them to the Blacksmith so that they can learn the process of making iron tools and can become a Blacksmith. He also got to know that their parents think that if their child learns to make iron tools and become a Blacksmith, his/her future will be secured. This was something our reporter did not understood that how becoming a Blacksmith will make their children's future bright. On the next day, when the reporter again went to the same place he saw a mother, who came there for leaving her children so that he can also learn this. The reporter asked the mother that why she is putting her child in this trade. The mother replied, "I belong to a village where this is a rule that when a child becomes 10 years old, he has to be sent out of village in order to learn

some work. That is why I came here to leave my child so that he can also learn something." Telling the reason behind sending all the children here only, she further added, "The reason behind sending our child here is that Blacksmith does not any penny from us for teaching our children. There are many other works but for them we have to spend money. This is the only work which our children learn without spending a single penny." The reporter then talked to some children. On interaction he got to know that children face many difficulties in making iron tools. Telling about their experiences, a 12 years old boy, Sajan said, "There is an chimney to make iron tools. We children use that furnace to make iron tools. First we children light fire in the furnace with the one hand and use another hand for holding the iron. We do so in order to melt the iron. After that, we have to use tongs to bring out the iron from the furnace. After all these, we have to hammer the hot iron and design it with the machine in order to give it the shape of a tool. This is our work. The rest of the work is of our boss. But in this work only, our hands get sore and our body also gets burned after sitting in front of the furnace for the whole day. We feel dizziness but our parents ignore us even after seeing all these things. They all are so stubborn that they don't feel our pain instead they just want us to learn the process of making iron tools."

CHILDREN ARE FORCED TO SELL DRUGS UNDER BLANKET



Reporter Shambhu

Stations, bus stands, red lights, and the other crowded places are nowadays becoming a hub for taking intoxicants for street and working children. Let us know how small innocent children are being used for supplying drugs? During the visit, one of our journalists saw a child wearing a blanket and wandering. Our journalist as shocked to see him as the child covered himself by through in the hot summer. Our journalist tried to interact with him. As soon as he reached to the child, the child asked, "You want a small one or a bigger one?" Our reporter stayed quiet for some time and then replied,

"Small one". The child replied, "Rs 150 for small and Rs 300 for bigger one." When the reporter asked for small one, the child gave a small packet, which was wrapped in a paper, from is blanket. When the journalist opened that packet, he realized that it was a drug. When the journalist asked him that what is it, the child started running from him. The reporter made him feel comfort by telling him that there is no need of running away and being afraid of him. He also told him that he work for children like him. When he spent some time with the child, then child informed that they don't sell drugs by their will. They are being forced by their boss. He said, "Our boss gives

a full training for selling drugs. We are being called that we should go to the crowded places and sell your drugs to the people who are abnormal, wearing cheap and toned cloths and drug addictive. We just have to tell them and they will buy it from us." After listening to him, our journalist asked, "Don't you have any fear of policemen?" A 17 years old boy, Rajan(name changed) said, "We are not afraid of the policemen because our boss gives them weekly money. That's why only even after looking at us, policemen ignore us." Telling more about their work, he further added, "When we reach at the bus stand at 10 PM in the night, our boss asks for the money we have earned. Our owner is also a supplier and addictive of drugs and narcotics. He also tells us to take intoxicants. If we children deny, he force us to do so. In past, when we children were not indulged in taking intoxicants, our body used to stay fir but now after taking intoxicants, we feel pain in our chest and stomach on a daily basis. Sometimes, the condition is so bad that the bleeding starts from our nose. We children just want to come out of this bog and to stay safe and happy."

Is canning, right approach to ensure bright future?

Talkative Reporter Sagar and Shambhu

Balaknama's support group meeting was organized with the children living at the station. During this time, all the children participating in the meeting mentioned their problems which they are facing. A 10 years old boy, Munnana (name changed) said, "We children are unsafe at the stations because the R.P.F team has taken almost 25 children from here to the intoxicant centre." Listening to him, the journalist asked the children that why did the police do this? A 15 years old boy, Suhev(name changed) said, "The police officer raided a place in the past, which has been kept secret, because at that place a large number of people used to do wrong things by intoxicating themselves. The policemen still thinks that we will trap small children and will force them to take intoxicants. That is why they are taking us away from the stations." Expressing their feelings, a 16 years old girl, Rupam(name changed)

said, "We all are very happy that policemen have taken a step for our bright future only but the way they are using is very wrong. If they have to take children to the drug addiction center then should take them with love and affection. We are ready to go for our happiness, but they come in midnight, carry a stick and take us with



them in a car. We are not happy with this behavior. Another 17-year-old boy, Suleiman(name changed) said, "We all know that children are unsafe at the station but what can we do as children? Except the stations we don't even have any other place to live safely" he further added, "If you people want children like us to stay away from drugs then you have to first take a step against those shopkeepers who are selling drugs by hiding it in the grocery shop."



CHILDREN IN BIHAR'S PRIVATE SCHOOL ARE LIVING A FEARFUL LIFE

Talkative reporter Vikas and Deepak

When one of our journalists went for a visit in Bihar, he got to know that there is a residential private school which is famous as 'Hostel' among people living there. There are about 500 students studying in this school who used to live there only. There is no facility in this school. By looking at the school, it feels like it is a garbage house because there are a lot of rats. These rats eat the student's belongings and books too. Students said, "The place at which we sleep, rats spoil it y digging the floor. Sometimes they even bite our hands and legs. Suffering from all these problems, we went to our principal and told him our situation. Instead of helping us, he started scolding us and said that if you want to stay, stay else you can leave. When we children decide to leave the school, the principal calls our parents and tell wrong thing about us due to which we get scolding from our parents too. Another 15 years old boy, Rupesh(name changed) said, "Our parents have worked very hard for our admission in the school. They don't want us to work like them in the farms. They want our future to be bright. But looking at the school's condition, we children hardly get relax. We have sleepless nights. We children just want that someone should help us so that we can get out of this problem."

YOUNG GIRLS PICKED UP FROM STATIONS, FORCED TO SEX WORK

Balaknama Bureau

Stations are becoming worst place day by day for girls. Recently, we got to know that girls living on the stations are being harassed. It's been almost 2 weeks. Our reporter went to talk to the girls living the station. He asked them, "How did you manage to stay at the stations? Don't you have any kind of problem?" Replying, a 16 years old girl, Rani(name changed) said, "We girls are totally insecure at the stations. The problems for which we run away from our homes are nothing in front of the problems we have to face while living here." Telling more, she said, "Before here were almost 12 girls with me who used to collect the trash and give it to a lady. They used to live with the woman only. Suddenly, girls have started disappearing and we don't even know where did they go? When we went to the woman and asked about the girls, she said that their parents came and took them with themselves. We girls were shocked after hearing to the lady. We even asked her that everyone's parents came together at the same time only, how is it possible? We had many queries because one day before only we met them. They used to be very sad and depressed.



And after collecting the trash they directly used to go to their homes." In between the whole conversation, a 15 years old girl came running towards us and said something which was very shocking for us. She said, "I am coming from a Kothi." The journalist asked her that who took her there. She cried and replied, "The lady took me to the Kothi. It is a trap. When a new girl comes at the station, she took her to her home and makes her feel happy till she does not get a phone call from the broker. As soon as she get the phone call, on the same night she mix something in our drinks and food due to which we don't know anything where we are going and what we are doing. When we open our eyes, we find ourselves in a closed

room. There the owner of the Kothi tells us to do gross things to do. When we deny she ties our hand with the ropes and then make us do vulgar things." Telling more about that place, she said, "There each and every girl is being harassed at least 5 to 6 times in a day and the person who gets physical is also of very old age. When we ask them that why are they doing this with us, we are just of your daughter's age? They reply us and say that they have given money for this. During all these things, is a girl gets pregnant she has been given medicine and forced for feticide." Expressing their feelings and sadness, the girls said, "Till when we girls have to face all these things? Don't we have the right to stay happy and safe and fulfill our dreams?"

Children following parents bad habits

Talkative reporter Khushi and Deepak

As we all know that it is true, that children learn from elder people, what they do in their daily life. Children learn each and every work done by the eldest people of the family. For this they don't need any lessons. That's why only, families are called as the first school of children. This news is about one of such family where children learnt what they saw and what their father made them learn.

This news is about a slum area in Noida. There are almost 600 houses made of tarpaulin. People living there; unite at the evening for gambling after working for the whole day. They even abuse each other during gambling. Learning and seeing them, the children also have started doing the



same thing only. Some children informed, "Before, some children used to go to schools but at present, there is not even a single child who want to go to school. We children sit for gambling in the morning only. They are indulged so much in gambling that at present they have started selling their households only. Even after selling their households, they can't fulfill their needs. In order to overcome such situation, some children have started to collect trash also." Telling more about themselves, they

said that when they used to go to schools, their fathers used to sit with them at night and play gambling. When they tell their father that gambling is not good for children he used to reply that it is not true. They informed, "Our fathers use to say that we children should play gambling. Now when we have indulged in gambling, our parents have issues from us. If our parents stopped us at the right time and have not told us to do gambling, we would have not indulged in this. We children also started abusing each other like our parents." When the reporters asked their parents, they said, "We were not aware of the fact that gambling will result into such bad situation. Now we want that somehow our children should come out of this dark future of gambling so that they can make their future bright."

CHILDREN UNWILLING TO CONTINUE PATRIMONIAL JOB

Talkative reporter and Chetan

During a site visit, our Balaknama team met some families who survive by doing some small works. Some families belongs to Madhya Pradesh, are living in West Delhi, make small bamboo baskets for their survival. The reporter got the information that these people belong to the 'Banskhedi' caste. Their works are usually related to the bamboo. It is seen, that in their families, their children also involved in works like cutting the bamboo sticks and collecting small pieces of it and making small bamboo baskets. They sell one basket for Rs 30 to 40.

On seeing such skilled children, our reporter decided to interact with them. On



interaction, a 12 years old girl, Saurabhi(name changed) said, "In past, we used to live in a village in Madhya Pradesh and survive on our farming. We also used to cut bamboo sticks. Some people told our family that this work is going on at a very high rate in Delhi. And lied to us that we can earn Rs 500, only for selling 4 baskets. In greed of money, our parents come to Delhi. At present, we are facing many difficulties

because in our village we had farms of bamboo due to which bamboo was easily available to us but here bamboo is very costly. We have to walk 12 km in order to get bamboo. Seeing this I tried to convince my parents to go back to our village. But my parents are not ready to go back to the village." The reporter then asked the children, "Did you go to school for studying?" A 13 years old boy, Saurabh(name changed) replied, "Yes, e do go to school but as soon as we come back from school, our parents make us do bamboo related works due to which we children are unable to study properly. As a result, we are not able to do our homework and teachers get angry from us. Even after knowing everything, our parents are ignoring everything."

Rotten shells, gives tough time in Agra

Talkative Reporter Sanjana and Reporter Poonam

This news is about a slum in Agra, which is connected to the dirt and garbage. It is very difficult for the people to live in that slum due to stinky smells as there is garbage everywhere. They fall ill on a regular basis and most of them have a disease of vomiting due to which the mental balance of the children living there is misbalanced. In order to meet the people live there and to take a survey, Balaknama's team reached there. Due to unpleasant smell, our team also felt problems in breathing. Our team tried to find out that where did that stinky unpleasant smell coming from. Our team members surveyed the area and tried to ask people but no one informed anything because they thought that we will file a report against them in police station. After searching for almost 2 to 3 days, our team met a 32 years old lady, Mrs. Sita Devi. She was coming with her child from the hospital. Like everyone else, she was also afraid of us. One of our reporters interacted with her and comfort her by saying that she works for small children and she should afraid of her. She will not harm them.

After talking to her for long time, she said, "There are some people who clean shells. This stinky smell is of the residues and trash of that shell only." The reporter then asked, "What is the



use of it? Why such bad smell did come from the shells?" he lady replied, "There are some people who bring shells from the Yamuna River and give it to the people living here for cleaning them. After cleaning the shells, they throw the residue into a pit near the slum. The residue smells too bad after getting raw. After cleaning, these shells are sent to cities. These shells are used for worship purpose. These are very auspicious for worship."

She further added, "These people earn almost 5 to 6 thousand rupees in a month. Their children are also indulged in this work. They also face many problems while cleaning the shells." Telling more about this, a 13 years old girl, Komal(name changed) said, "In order to get rid off it, we tie up cloth on our nose but still we don't get any relaxation. We have to do this work doesn't matter what happens. If we deny doing so then our parents will scold and beat us and if we children will not help them in households then how will we survive? We have to do this work for our survival as we belong to a very poor family."

Blessing our team and having hopes, she further added, "We are very happy to see you here. Because of you only we are hoping for new life. We know that you will, anyhow, tell our situation to the government. We children also want to live at a clean place and also want to study so that we can have a bright future. We as a child want to give our parents a good life."

Children of Debris

Talkative Reporter Varsha and Chetan

There are many factories in West Delhi, where cleaning of iron is done and wooden furniture is made. There is a lime furnace place known as 'Veerana', where these factories throw their debris. At this place, debris is thrown with the help of a truck. Due to this, some parents and their children live in Veerana so that they can clean the debris. A 10 years old boy, Kanhaiya(name changed) said, "We children wait for the debris truck and as soon as the truck come, we run towards it so that we can get whatever iron comes out of the debris. At times, we children are also indulged in fights. There are about 15 to 20 children who came here for refining the debris. The truck comes only 2 to 3 times in a day. When we children did not manage to get the iron, it has a very bad drawback. Our parents beat us and did not even give us food to eat. They always abuse us. They think that we did not go for refining debris. Instead they say that we must have gone for playing with our friends."



Telling more, another 11 years old boy, Sonu(name changed) said, "When we run towards the truck for refining the debris, the truck driver scolds us. He says that we should not run behind a moving truck. But in greed of collecting more iron we start running behind and towards a moving truck only." Telling about an incident, he further added "10 months ago a boy was running behind a moving truck. As soon as the truck dumped the debris, he jumped into the debris for collecting more iron due to which debris went into his eyes nose and mouth. That child was taken to the hospital. It took 2 weeks for him to recover. Not only this, when we refine debris, a lot of dirt is present on the air and on the ground due to which we children also feel pain in our chest and nose. We children fall ill on a daily basis."

BRAVO, SAVED HER FROM FATHER'S FREIND

Balaknama Bureau

This news is of 2 friends. One was poor and the other was very rich. The one, who is rich, has a garbage shop and the other, who is poor, pulls the rickshaw. They both meet in the evening only. They take alcohol at poor one's home. Sad thing about the rich friend is that he does not have any family. He lives single only. But poor friend has a family of 6 members, 4 children and 2 parents. Recently, we go to know that rich friend's nature is not good. The poor friend has a daughter of 11 years, who used to study in 6th



class. Whenever this girl steps out of the house for going to the school, he used filthy things to her. Also he used to catch her hand when she was going or coming from school. Seeing all these things, his little girl decided to fight against him. She told everything to her parents. Instead of listening to her and helping her, her father started beating her and told her that he is his best friend; he won't do such vulgar things. And asked her that why was she blaming him? The time passed and the again met at the poor friend's home after 7 to 8 months. Rich friend made his poor friend drink too much of alcohol due to which he fainted. He took an advantage of this situation and tried to obscene the little girl of 11 years who was doing some households. Luckily, her mother came from outside. When she saw that rich friend was trying to harass her daughter, she started beating him with a stick. In the morning, when his husband woke up, she told him everything but he refused to agree the fact that his fiend would do such thing. Both the girl and her mother always stays in tension that the rich friend will do something to them. At present, when this girl goes to school, her mother also go out with her. Her mother stays always with her so that anything wrong should not happen with her.

GIRLS REFRAINING BEGGING ON TRAFFIC SIGNALS, AS THEY ARE PULLED IN CARS

Talkative reporter Madhu and Jyoti

Due to high poverty in Rajasthan, many families came to Delhi for survival. Due to the lack of employment opportunities and insufficient salary, they have to spend their lives under the bridge only. On interacting with them, the reporter got to know that in order to survive all the family members sell flowers at red lights. Girls are also indulged in this work. Parents bring roses from the market and then make cluster of flowers. Girls stay under the bridge only. As soon as the signal turns red, they start going to cars and selling their flowers. But from few days, these girls have stopped doing this work. They are not selling flowers anymore and their parents are also happy with their decision. Parents say that their daughters will not sell flowers anymore now. The reporter tried to find out the reason behind their decision but everyone was afraid to



tell it. The reporter decided to find the truth behind this. The journalist then tried to interact with the girls but the girls were also not telling him. He then told them that if they will also hide their problems from us then how will we help them out? After talking to these girls for a longer duration, it was found that these girls are being harassed by the drivers of cars passing by. These girls said, "When we girls go for selling flowers to the cars, their drivers talk to us filthy things. Telling about their experiences, a 15 years old girl, Munni (name changed) said, "When we put

forward our hands for selling flowers, these drivers catches our hands and says that they will give us more money than the cost of flowers but we have to go with him for an hour. When we told about it to our parents, they understood us. At present, we girls don't go out for selling flowers. Now this work is done by our brothers and parents only."

Asking for some respect and relaxation, she further added, "We girls want that this type of harassment should not be done with us. Our parents are also getting old day by day. We want to help them. Till when will they work for us? We girls also have full right to live with respect and independently. Through Balaknama, we request each and every people who harass girls in some way or the other that please change your way of thinking towards us so that we can also live happily like all other girls present in the society." At last they all greeted the reporter for going to them and helping them out.

EDITORIAL

Dear friends,
Greetings

The increasing number of street children in the country is still a deep concern. If it is not controlled within some time, it is going to have a huge drawback. With regards to this horror drawback, Indian National Policy have declared the children as "Highest and important assets". According to this, children should be placed on a prominent stage for human resource development so that the children can become mentally and physically strong and they can become strong and responsible. But sadly, in India there is a huge group of children who are facing many problems and circumstances and are indulged in drinking, child laboring, juvenile violence, street working, domestic violence and abuse, sexual harassment and exploitation.

With the views of helping street and working children and to implement them, we have published our 68th edition of Balaknama. We hope that the news we have collected from street children will reach to you and their problems will be eradicated as soon as possible. We want that some system should be made at the national level so that no child has to face such situations in their childhood again. We hope that these children can have a better life ahead and will make a step forward to make our country proud by getting proper education.

With hope and expectations!

The Editorial Board

Salute to the bravery of these girls

Talkative reporter Sakshi and Chetan

There are almost 12 girls, who go out for collecting trash in groups before the sunrises. All of them also go to schools. Some of the girls are of 4th, 5th, and 6th class. A 15 years old girl, Sakshi (name changed) said, "When we go for collecting trash in the morning, it's very dark outside. That's why we girls go out together in a group so that even if we face some kind of problem we can handle it by our own only." Another 16 years old girl, Seemla (name changed) said, "When we go out of our homes, we cross each and every small factory coming into our way because the workers of the factory throws the trash and residues outside the factory area only. We girls collect trash under the street lamp. Then we move towards the railway stations. There are 2 small railway stations near our homes. Trains rarely stop here. We collect cardboards and bottles from the railway track. There is a type of parcel at this railway station where trucks and trains are loaded and de-loaded. At that time, workers throw wastes and bottles on the railway track only."

Another 17 years old girl, Anju (name changed) said, "We have unity in our group. We always stay with each other, also we divide our trash and garbage equally between us and then returns to our homes so that we can survive easily. After reaching home, we get ready for school. Till then our mothers pack our lunch box. After coming from school, we hardly rest for 2 hours and then again start working for refining the collected garbage. After refining, we do our homework and then help our mother in households too."

Jyoti wish to live with father again-family discord

Talkative reporter Sunil and Chetan

This news is about a family who used to live in Gujarat, Pali. There were total 5 members in the family: grandmother, parents and 2 children. Both the parents used to be busy in their work and children used to go out with their friends for playing after coming from schools. The elder one is a boy, who is of 15 years and the younger one is a girl of 11 years. Their parents used to love them a lot. In fact, their father used to go to school with them for sending them. Grandmother used to hate both of the children. Our reporter was also unable to find out the reason behind her hate. The 11 years old girl, Jyoti said,

"In 2016, our grandmother told our father that our mother does not go for work and that is why our economic condition is not good. After listening to my grandmother, my father beaten my mother and ordered her to leave the house with both us. He even said not to come back. My mother tried to explain to my father that she does not like the work of ferry but my father was not ready to listen to her. Due to which we have to come to our maternal grandfather's place in the night only. When my mother told everything to her parents, my maternal grandfather went to our home in order to talk to our father. Instead of talking, our father got angry and pushed him out of the house. Seeing this, my mother decided

Sewer drain became the concern of children

Talkative reporter Rphit and Shambhu

The people who are being called from the villages for construction work have not given the houses to live instead they have given some area on the same land where the construction work is going on where the workers have to live by making some camps with their family. Similarly, there is news of a place near Hayat Hotel, where similar people are living. There is a road on its one side and slums on the other. There is a deep dirty drain in between the road and the slum.

In order to pass this drain, a bridge has been made over it by using the pillars of street lights. There are many small children in this area, whose parents left them with their grandparents. As the old people stays in the homes for the whole day, they usually sleep. Due to which children are becoming the suspect of this drain. A 35 years old lady,



Mrs Sabita said, "Our boss does not give us a safe place to live. When he will provide us a safe place to live, then we will also be able to do our work peacefully. Whenever we go to a new place, we have to face such dangerous conditions. What can we do? If we will deny to work then how

will our children survive." Another 38 years old lady, Mrs Menka Devi said, "Whenever it rains, the bridge becomes wet due to which we slip during rainy seasons. Not only children, but we also have a fear of getting slipped into the drain. When we shared it with our boss, he said that he can do anything regarding this. We have been told that the ones who have many problems can leave the work and the place too. That is why we have ignored this condition and are living here in fear. We always fear that our children will get into this drain."

STREET CHILDREN LOOSING HARD EARNED MONEY IN ABSENCE OF SAVING OPPORTUNITY

Talkative reporter Salmaan and reporter Shambhu

Children living at the railway stations hardly get to earn Rs 2 for their survival. These street children work for hours, collect garbage, beg, clean the stations and train coaches by broom stick after taking off their clothes, and then they hardly get to earn around 2 rupees. They survive on these 2 bucks only. Talking about themselves, these street children said, "After doing so many things and facing many problems, we hardly get to earn 2 rupees. We try to save our money. At present, someone is stealing our savings at night after we sleep. When we are in deep sleep, a big man comes and takes money from our pockets. There are many small children at the station like us. When these small children roam here and there in night, that thief takes the money from them also. Sometimes, he even threatens them to death." Finding a solution for their problem they further told us what they did to save their money, they said, "That's



why we started giving our money to another person whom we can trust, but he also dishonestly reacted with us. If we give him around 200 rupees, while taking back the amount, he says that we have given 150 rupees only. If we argue for our money then he throws our money in front of us and says that next time onwards he won't save our money and also threatens us to kill." Putting forward their views and thoughts, these street children made a simple demand to our government, they said, "We also want to save money for our future. We, children just want our government to open bank accounts for us also so that we can put whatever amount we get to earn in our accounts and later use it."

RAJU THE LONE EARNER, AT AGE 10

Talkative reporter Raju and Shamhu

Raju (name changed) is a 10 years old boy, who used to live in Samastipur with his family. Due to unemployment and their compulsions, his family moved to Sarai Kale Khan and started living there in a house on rent. For 6 months, he was living happily with his family but after 6 months, his father has to go back to the village as his grandfather met with an accident. At present, no one is there in his family to earn for their survival. He is the elder one in the children; there are 2 younger brothers and 1 younger sister in his family. Telling about his condition, Raju said, "My father used to pull rickshaw. One month ago, he went to the village as my grandfather is not well. There also our economic



condition is not good so he cannot send us the money for our survival. I saw some people making roadside shops at Barahpula and decided that I will also do the same." Raju started selling fish at Barahpula with his mother. His mother used to bring fishes from the market and she keeps it in ice for the whole day.

In the evening, Raju used to go to Barahpula for selling those fishes. Raju just started making his fish stall. One day a person, who collects weekly income, from the roadside shopkeepers, came and asked him for money. Raju explained him his condition, and said, "Today I can't give you any money as till now there is not even a single fish, which I sell." Listening to him, that person threw all of his fishes on the road and started abusing his mother. From the very next day only, he made her mother work on a Kothi and he himself go to the market for selling fishes. They hardly manage to survive. Sometimes, there is not even a single sell and then there are people who come for weekly income. In such situation there is only one question that, how will Raju manage to earn for his family's survival?



Life took a makeover

Talkative reporter Suresh and Shambhu

Due to the unemployment and government's irresponsibility, a huge part of Bengal was poor. Not only they did not have a place to live but they did even have cloths to wear and sufficient rice to eat. Not only the elders but the children too, wander in search of some work, and whatever work they find, they start doing it. At times, when the whole family does not able to find any work, they all have to spend their by starving only. It was year 2000 when parents were wandering here and there for their family's survival due to the poor economic condition of Bengal. They wandered a lot but were unable to find out any work by which they can earn for their survival. There was a man from Bengal, who used collect garbage from door to door. He used to go to his village in every 4 to 5 years. By looking at Bengal's condition, he got watery eyes. When the people told him about their condition, he immediately took all of the villagers with him and brought them to Delhi. At present, they all are living in Baroli, and working as rag pickers for their survival. At present, some boys and girls go to different houses for collecting garbage and others do the labor work. The ones, who go for

collecting trash, take a rickshaw with themselves. They collect the garbage from the houses and then throw it in the dustbin. Later, they refine it like keeping the eatables, plastics and papers at different places. After 4 to 5 days, when they collect a lot of garbage, they dump it in a truck which came from the outside.

Telling about their conditions, girls and parents said, "We people have to work hard. The garbage we get from the houses is very heavy and the polythene is very thin. Sometimes the polythene gets broken then the owner of the house makes us clean the floor. Not only this, the place at which we go for collecting garbage is almost 9 to 10 km far from our homes. From there we carry it to our homes. While bringing also we face a lot of trouble as the road is always busy. We always have a fear of meeting an accident." Another 16 years old lady, Mrs Kavita Devi said, "Though we have to face many problems but still we are living here a much better life than we used to spend in our villages. At least our children don't starve here. Also some children from our society are also going to school. Their parents have to work." Their arrangement for living is from their boss. They all say that after coming to delhi our life has took a beautiful makeover.

UJALA'S DREAM WILL EVER COME TRUE?

Talkative Reporter Ujala and Deepak

This news is of 10 years old girl, Ujala, who used to live in West Delhi with her family. Her father works in a cement factory as a loader. The salary he earn is hardly enough for her family's survival. Her mother's habit is very bad. She always sits with her friends and gossip all day. She does not care about her family. Even when Ujala's father comes from work, she does not even give him water and food. Ujala herself do each and every household work. She even cooks for herself. One day, accidentally she got burned while cooking. Even after hearing her screams, her mother did not come back to her as she was busy with her



friends in gossiping. Seeing this, her father got very angry and he beaten her mother. Still Ujala's mother did not care anything. Some children of this area go to school for studying. Seeing them, Ujala also started craving

for going to school. She told her father that she also wanted to go to school like other children. Her mother was not agreeing with her. She immediately said, "If Ujala started going to school then how will do the household? We have 2 younger children too, who will look after them?" Ujala said that, now going to school is just a dream for me. At present, Ujala look after her 2 siblings and stays busy in households only. Ujala wants to know that will these restrictions and torture she is facing at such young age of playing and studying, will ever come to an end. Taking care of such situations is also comes under the government work. Will government ever help her out? Till when she has to face all this?

Talkative Reporter Preeti and Jyoti

This sad news is about a 16 years old girl, Sunila (name changed). During past, almost 4 years ago, Sunila used to live happily with her family. Her father used to work in the city for money and her mother was a domestic helper. Her mother had tuberculosis. She died because of irresponsibility and lack of money too. When her father got to know about the death of her mother, he

immediately came back and organized her funeral.

After her mother's death, Sunila was the only one who used to live in the house. She was so young that she doesn't even know how to cook the food. Ignoring her problems, her father married to another woman. Like her father, her stepmother was also a widow. Sad thing is that, even after this Sunila's problem was not



solved. She said, "After the second marriage, my father again went to the city and left me with my stepmother. After few days, my stepmother started misbehaving with me. She already had 5 children. When my father went back to the city, she used to look after her 5 children and if I try to talk to my father regarding this, she used to threaten me. Because of this only, I started doing each

and every household. I used to live hungry and quietly. Even after all this, my stepmother wanted me to marry her brother. I denied because the one, whom I call maternal uncle, how can I marry him? After looking all this things, I got a feeling that my house is not safe for me, anymore. And decided to run away in order to save myself from the harassment. At present, I am living at the railway station and work on a Paan shop for my survival."



During the meeting of life skill aptitude, children of badte kadam expressed their problems



Children companions spreading awareness among the passing by passengers on the road, to get rid of intoxication, begging and child labor



for improving leadership, Balaknama journalist giving training in a group of children



Child companions visited Standard Chartered Bank to gather information about the working style of the workers

Balaknama thanks to the Diamond Sponsor, Sardar Nagina Singh Ji, for helping us in publishing our newsletter. You can also help us for publishing.

This newsletter is for limited delivery only. All the pictures are printed by the approval of the children.

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 Vibha Shakya.