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Ph. No. 011- 41644471  
balaknamaeditor@gmail.com

# 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.**

## DREAM COME TRUE- STREET AND WORKING CHILDREN WILL GO TO SCHOOL

### No Identity proof- No admission

Mostly, our reporters tell us about the problems street and children are facing due to no address proof. As they don't have proper identity card, they have to face difficulties in day-today life, forget about the professional one, like not getting admission in the school, not having an identity, etc. The reason for not having an identity proof is that they have to travel with their family from one place to another in search of different kind of work. With such problems, when they collect courage to get admission in the school, the school administration doesn't allow them. Telling about the pain and trials their parents do, the children said, “Even after all this, when our parents go for issuing an identity card, they tell us that as we don't have any proper address we can't get our Aadhar card issued. This is one of the big reasons why our dream of going to school never comes true. Even after trying hard, our parents can't get our admissions done in the school.”

### Speedy vehicles- Afraid children

According to the information we got, there are many slums situated on the side of ring road due to which families living there are always afraid of getting injured by the speedy vehicles. On the other hand, there are school going children who have to cross this ring road daily. Most of the children are afraid of going to the school. Our reporters interacted with these children, they got to know that due to this fear, not only the children don't want to go to school but parents are also afraid of sending their children. During the interaction, the parents said, “Our children doing child laboring on the tea stalls and dhabas for earning some money is far better than sending our children to school for study by facing such difficulties and danger.”

Talkative Reporters Raju, Shubham, Suraj, Rustam and reporters Shambhu, Deepak, Jyoti and Poonam

**We are pleased to bring this edition of Balaknama in your hands with all new hopes and news. In this edition, you will get to know about ways and tricks, the street and working children found to face the difficult situations and compulsions. The way they survive and are living a new life and their first step was towards the temple of education- School. While reading the news and stories, you will surely understand the pain and happiness the children were feeling.**



Expressing their fear, they further added, “There are many people in our country who don't follow the traffic rules while driving and also drive at very high speed. If something wrong happens or their vehicles just go out of control, it will not cost them much, but our children have to pay for it, at times have to sacrifice their lives too. It's not just our dreamy fear. We have seen many accidents before too and that's the only reason why we and our children are afraid of going to the school.”

### Family Problems

During a visit, our reporters got to know that the families living at the roadside and door houses forces their children for begging. They don't want to see their children stepping towards education. When our reporters interacted with the innocent and young children,

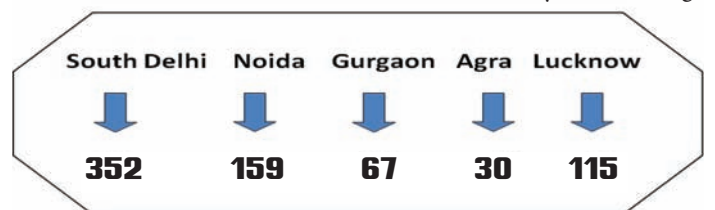
they said, “We don't like to beg. We want to study but we can't do anything for it. If we don't go for begging and request for studying, our parents will torture us. Due to their fear, we will never ever get a chance to study and follow our dreams rather we have to beg in front of others.”

### Caste system and discrimination

At present, there are many issues going on the topic of caste system and social discrimination. People who belong to the Banjara caste can't get their children educated. There only work is to beg and raise their children. Due to their traveling habits they don't stay at a single place and that's why they don't have any proper identity and people ignore them for this reason. This is one of the biggest reasons, why they don't have any identity card

and children belonging to them don't get admission in schools.

### Representing the figures in front of you



Not having an identity card, unable to go to school, family



problems, caste discriminations and many other problems. in order to get rid of these problems, around 723 street and working children from the places like, South Delhi, Agra, Lucknow, Noida and Gurgaon, got admission in government school. At present, they all are very happy with their lives and are regularly going to school.

### Experiences of the school going street and working children

10 years old Manav, who lives in Badshahpur, Gurgaon. There is not even single news about his father. His mother used to work in bungalows and they survive on the income of his mother only. Manav used to play in the parks near the slum areas of Gurgaon. He even used to do the rag picking work. Even the neighbors of his house are tired of him. But, at present, nobody sees him wandering and doing naughty things in the slum as now he is busy in going to school and his studies. Manav says, “I love going to the school. in fact, books are now my best friends.”

12 years old Sooraj, who lives in Badshahpur, Gurgaon with his family. He belongs

to a very poor family. Past few years, his father's leg got cut in an accident and due to which he don't do any work. His mother started working as a house helper for their survival and he used to look after his father. He had lost all his will and courage and never thought of going to the school. After coming in our contact, he started going to school and even help his parents in households too.

*continued on pg. 2*

# PARENTS SACRIFICING WOMB TO DEAL TO POVERTY

Talkative reporter Bhalu and reporter Shamhu, South Delhi

In past, we were scared of hearing stories of female feticides but the today's 21st century's news are scarier and heart breaking. We are talking about the news we recently got to know about. The street and working people are not rich and are so unprivileged that they hardly get to earn for their survival. They don't have any way of proper earning. In such situations, they are not even able to fulfill the needs of their family members. Under compulsions, they have found a new way, but a wrong one, for their survival. According to the information we got, there are 2 pregnant women, who live in doss house and slum



areas, have recently scarified their child who has not yet born. They have sold their womb, the unborn child. They have done this for money, so that they can have a better life and can get rid of the domestic

responsibilities. Telling about the slum woman, one of the slum people said, "Recently, a woman gave birth to twins. She had already sold her unborn child, in the womb. When the twins born, the

owner to whom she sold her womb took both the children with him. When stopped, he said that he did not said that he want single child rather he said that whoever, girl or boy, is in the womb will be his after birth. The saddest thing is that the woman, who kept the babies in her womb for 9 months, did not even got to see the faces of her babies." Telling about the doss house woman, he further added, "As soon as she gave birth to the baby, a man came to take him and gave 1 lakh rupees to the woman. Somehow, the police came to that place and took the man with them and took strict actions against him. When asked, he said that the woman has already sold her womb, before the birth of

the baby, to him. Telling him about the laws, the policemen told him that it is a crime and strict actions can be taken against him for this crime. The man then gave greed to the policemen for some money and took the infant child with him." After listening to him, the only thing which comes in our mind is, "Why? Why the parents are are sacrificing their womb? How can they sell their unborn child, their womb?" The only answer is, "Poverty." These people will only stop doing this when they will get some proper work and a safe place to live at. A place where they can start their family, and can fulfill the needs of the members. For this, you have to come forward to help them.

## CUSTOMS, TRADITION AND CASTE SYSTEMS- TILL WHEN DO WE HAVE TO FIGHT AGAINST THEM?

Reporter Deepak, West Delhi

Caste system is the old custom which our ancestors used to believe in and is continued in today's world too. There is one more old custom and tradition, other than caste system, that is fixing the marriages of 14 to 15 years old boys and girls and asking for dowry from the girl's family.

One of such news came to us. When our reporter went to investigate and visit both the family members, the only thing which was told by the families was, "It is our old tradition. Our ancestors made this rule and custom. We are just following the tradition and we don't want to change it." Do you really think that it's worth? There are many daughters who are not loved by their parents just because of these customs and

traditions. There are many daughters who have been killed and thrown out of the house or married at the very young age because of this dowry customs.

Not only this, these old customs and traditions are the only reason, why parents discriminate between their son and daughters. In the today's world too, there are many families who celebrates the birth of a boy with lot of joy and happiness whereas if the girl is born, nobody gets a single smile on their face. There house environment changes to something like a funeral place. Forgetting everything, if girl's family successfully collects the amount of dowry for her marriage with lot of pain and hard work and the boy does not likes the girls then even after marriage, she can't live peacefully and happily. She

has to face many problems in her daily life.

There is one more custom which came in our reporter's knowledge. The girls, whose marriage is fixed at the very young age, can't even look at another boy or man whereas the boys can do whatever they want with whichever girl they wish for.

They are free to talk to anyone, any girl. If the girl is seen or caught while talking or looking at any other boy, the boy with whom her marriage was fixed, deny marrying her and don't even give back the amount of dowry which was given by the girl's family. That's why each and every girl wants freedom from these old customs and traditions, especially from the child marriage custom, which is not a marriage for girls but a cage with Hitlers, killing all their dreams and wishes.



## WHY ARE WE TREATED LIKE THIS?

Reporter Jyoti, South Delhi

In order to get to eat, people are wandering here and there for work so that they can earn something for their survival but even after wandering here and there and changing places, they have to starve and sleep with empty stomachs. Something like his can be seen and matched

with the lives of unprivileged people living under the bridges. Many families leave their homes, and hometowns in search of work and money but sadly even after leaving their homes and coming to a new place, they have to starve and sleep at footpaths and live in slum areas. This poverty makes them do different works like rag picking, begging, and at times stealing too. Buying a house at a safe place and living happily is their dream which can never come true. Facing such problems, some children living under the bridge said, "We live in a handmade house (jhuggi), made by our parents, under the bridge. As you can see in the image that we sleep under the bridge only. At night, when we are sleeping, there are some boys who drink beer and stand on the bridge only. They fill the empty beer bottles with toilet and throw it on us. At times, we do get injuries. When we told them to stop doing this, they undress their private part and starts peeing on us. Seeing this, we, girls feel very bad and sad." Asking for some kindness and humanity, girls further added, "Why are we treated like this? We just want to live safely and happily. We request an appeal all of them to stop doing such things so that we can also live peacefully."

## DREAM COME TRUE- STREET AND WORKING CHILDREN WILL GO TO SCHOOL

from page 1

13 years old, Raju, talking about his compulsions and past experiences, said, "I used to work at the tea stall and would never thought of going to the school. While seeing other children going to the school, I also used to wish of going. At present, my dream has come true and mother is very happy for me." Expressing her happiness, his mother said, "I am very happy that not only my child, but each and every children of our slum is going to school and stepping towards to better future through the medium of education."

10 years old Naem, telling about himself said, "I live in Noida. My mother expired during my past. At that time, my father used to force me



for doing rag picking work. Due to which my dream of studying was spoiled. But, at present, with the help of Balaknama's reporters I got admission in 2nd class and now I regularly go to school. I am so happy and proud that I get rid of child laboring."

11 years old Preeti living in

Sarfabad, Noida, said, "My parents are busy with their own work due to which I have to look after my house and do household work and my whole day used to get wasted in this only. This is the reason why I was not able to go to the school but due to the help of Balaknama's reporters, I got admission in a government school and now I also go to school like other children."

12 years old Shahrugh, living with his family in a slum in Noida. Explaining his past, he says, "I used to work at a tea stall and have to work for the whole day due to which I never got time for my studies but at present I have get rid of my work and have taken admission in 5th class and go to school regularly."

11 years old Hina, living

in Sarai kale khan with her family. For the survival of her family, she used o work in bungalows. Not only this, she also cooks food for transgender people and work as a house-helper too. She helps her mother too in doing her own house hold works. She also dreams of going to school and studying but due to such busy schedule, it was not possible for her to go to school. She had so much courage and love for studies that under these situations she somehow used to manage to go to centers for studying. Hina completed the open basic education course and got the certificate for the admission in the 5th class. Her dream has now come true. She took admission in a government school.



## STREET GIRLS BATHING ON STREETS, PASSERBY MAKING COMMENTS

Reporter Jyoti, West Delhi

We have got to know that there are many street and working girls that are facing now problems and living a difficult life. These girls live under the bridge, near the parks, in Tent. When these girls, get out of their Tent for some work, the auto drivers look at them with obscenity and talk filthy about them, by hearing their words, girls feel disgusting and sad about their life. Telling about a recent incident, a 16 years old girl said, "One day, when I was taking bath, there was an auto driver who started touching his private part while looking at me. When I looked at him, he showed me some money and blinked his eye for calling me and sitting in the auto with him. When I told about this incident to my parents, they went with me to him and asked what's wrong with him. He just started lying in front my parents that he was not doing anything like this, in fact he was not even looking at me." After reading and knowing about this incident, do you now think that our country is really independent? The day, when the street and working children will start living a peaceful and independent life, on that day our country will get freedom, that will be the day on which we can really say that yes, our country is independent.

## GIRLS BEING SCOLDED FOR TALKING TO BOYS

Reporter Poonam, Agra

In the today's world, a girl's life is the toughest journey you can ever face. She is always seen with filthy eyes. She can't fulfill all her dreams and have to live a restricted and life. This news belongs to a 14 years old girl from Agra. Telling about the day-to-day problems, the girl said, "In our society, boys and girls are discriminated at each and every point of our lives. If we girls are going to school and any boy, on the way, come forward to talk to us for whatever reason, the society will say that we, girls are shameless that we are talking to a boy. We are also human. We also feel bad about it. It is our humble request that please don't look at us with hatred and doubtful eyes. If a boy is talking to us that don't mean that we have any kind of relationship with him." Another 15 years old girl, telling about a recent incident happened with her, said, "Few days back, when I was coming back from my school I saw a boy who came from another village and was going to some other place. As he was new in our area, I helped him out and started telling him the route for his place. Somehow, my uncle saw both of us and went to my home. He told my parents that I was wandering out with a boy. When I reached to my



home, my mother asked me that with whom I was roaming today. I was shocked to hear this question as I was in the school for the whole day. As soon as I started talking, my father came out with a stick in his hand and started beating me. I was unaware and was just thinking that for what I am getting these beatings. When my mother came to save me, my father told her that I don't go to school rather I just roam with boys. Listening to him, I got very upset and went to room and started crying. I was crying for the fact that when I don't roam with boys then how can my father think so? I just helped that boy so that he can

reach his place easily." Raising some genuine questions, she further said "I believe that my parents are not the only one who thinks like this. There are many other people who look at girls with doubtful eyes and hatred. We girls want to know that why do you people behave so rudely with us? Don't we girls have the right to talk to others? This is not necessary that if a girl and a boy are talking to each other, they are in some kind of relation. They both can be siblings too. We girls are requesting you to please stop looking at us with doubtful eyes and give us a chance to do something in our life."

## DON'T WE DESERVE TO LIVE SAFELY?



Talkative reporter Aanchal and reporter Sangeeta, Lucknow

According to recent information, we got to know that there were many families living in a basti in Lucknow, were easily able to survive by doing some works like selling vegetables, breaking bricks, etc. But at present, not even a single person is happy and safe in this basti as the area has been destroyed by the government workers. One of our reporters visited the area and tried to know more about this incident

in details. He got to know that the people were living near the railway tracks which were the government's ground and were unsafe too. They were given a notice regarding leaving this place as soon as possible and were warned for destroying their handmade homes. When the reporter asked the slum people that why not they took it seriously, they replied, "We were not at all sure that this time something will happen. We have received many such notices before also but nothing happened." Not

taking a government notice seriously, resulted in such a bad way. A sudden investigation was done by the government members and jhuggis were started destroying. Not only the families, but the pet animals such as goats, dogs etc were also caught badly in this move. Sharing her feelings, a 13 years old girl said, "At present, we don't have any place to live at. All our groceries and household material is buried under the debris. We don't have anything to eat." requesting for some help and kindness, children living in the slum and basti area said, "Don't we deserve to live safely? Don't we have the right to live in our homes? Why does government do such things with us only? Wherever we start living and settle our homes, the government sends its notice regarding destroying our homes and leaving the area. It is our request to the government that please doesn't do this with us. We also want to live safely and happily. Please allow us to live with respect and love, like others. We also want to request to the government that please provide a facility of safe place for us where we can live peacefully and respectfully."

## AT AGE OF 10, THEY WORK LIKE MOTHER'S



Talkative reporter Muskan and reporter Shambhu, Noida

There are many children of 10 to 12 years, who are living in slum and are facing difficulties in their day-to-day livelihood. Let us know about them in details. We got to know that there is a slum in which parents used to go out of their home for working and earning for their survival. Young children of 10 to 12 years of age, used to stay at home and look after their siblings whereas young innocent girls have to do all the households. They are the only homemakers of their family. The sad thing is that the soft and small hands of children, who should be indulged in studying, are doing the households and are seen washing cloths and utensils. During the visit, one our Balaknama reporters got to know that these young girls are indulged in the households only, for the whole day. They

have to work like cooking food and taking care of their siblings. The reporter was shocked to see that how can a girl cook food in such a young age. Reporter then interacted with these girls. Telling about their problems and experience they said, "In the starting, it was very difficult for us to cook food as for lighting hearth we need to use plastics. While burning plastics, we used to burn ourselves too. But at present, we can easily cook food." Requesting and appealing for some kindness, they further said, "We are not satisfied with our work and livelihood. When our siblings cry, it is very difficult for us to handle them. That's why we appeal and request you to come forward for us and do something for our family so that one of our parents can stay at home with us and can look after the siblings. Then, we can also go to school and can have a better future."

# MARSHY AREA-EVIL EYES, WHERE TO DEFECATE?

Reporter Poonam, Agra

This news belongs to a basti in Agra whose name has been kept secret. Children and their parents living in this slum used to go to shrubs area for defecating as there is no facility of toilets in this area. The scary thing is that where the people go for defecating, there is a swamp in that area and pet animals like cows, dogs, goats and drunk people usually fall in it. Due to which children are really afraid of going in this



area. Expressing their fear, children said, "Whenever we go there, we feel like we will

also fall in the swamp. Due to this reason, parents allow our sibling and other young age

children to defecate behind the basti area." On interacting with some girls, they said,

"There are some drunken men who play gambling near the swamp due to which it is very difficult for us to go for defecating during the day time. In order to get rid of this awkwardness, we go for defecating in the darkness of mid-night. That time we can be saved from the evil eyes but are at a high risk of falling into the sedge." Asking for some help and safety, slum people said, "We request you to do something for us, for our safety so that we can also live safely."



## THUNDERSTORM PUSHED STREET CHILDREN INTO FURTHER HARDSHIP

Talkative reporter Pinki and reporter Shambhu, Noida

As we all know about the recent thunderstorm occurred in Noida and Delhi which have destroyed the life of many slum people. Sharing their experiences, children living in the slum area said, "The night on which the thunderstorm strikes our area was very frightening for us. Our tarpaulins were caught in the storm and we had no place to hide ourselves. Our homes were destroyed. Our parents were afraid for us. They were hiding us from the storm. That's they were telling us and gave the order of holding the pillars." The reporter then interacted with some more children. Other children said, "That night was one of the scariest one ever. The thunderstorm destroyed our homes and due to which our parents were unable to go to work on the very next day. They were busy in fixing the homes. Not only this, our grocery and eatables were also caught in the thunderstorm and our cloths flew away with the stormy winds." Telling her feelings and requesting for some help, a 14 years old girl

said, "We, street and working children, have to suffer from such problems on a regular basis. This is our request from all of you to help us for providing a secure and safe place where we children can also live like you, safely and happily."

Reporter Shambhu, Gurgaon

Innocent children and women are not respected in our society, why? We are not the ones who are asking this question from you. This is the question raised by the females (girls and women) living in the slum areas and footpaths. The only thing they want to know is why they have to live such a painful and difficult life? Let us know about these girls and women I details so that we can get to know why are they raising these questions. Our reporter visited one of the slum areas where he got to know about some problems, females are facing. The reporter got to know that there is not even a single bathroom in the whole

## RAGPICKER CHILDREN, BLAMED AS THIEVES

Reporter Shambhu, Gurgaon

This news belongs to a basti in Gurgaon, whose name has been kept secret. We recently got to know that larceny happens there on a regular basis. There is a huge reason behind the larceny. Let us know about it in details. As per the information, there are families from Bengal and Bihar living in this slum. There are many homes made up of tarpaulins. The families living there work really hard for their survival. But at present they are being troubled and bothered by the thieves. They hardly get to earn some amount for their survival and the thieves are stealing it too from them. Due to this, the rag picking children are very upset. According to the slum people, these are the rag pickers who are stealing the money from the houses but



when we interacted with the children they said that they are innocent and have not done anything wrong. According to some, thieves are the drunker who wander near the slum area in night.

According to the families, there are almost 8 to 9 houses which are being targeted by the thieves in a month.

Children suffering from this, asking for some help said, "Though we are rag pickers but we have not stolen anything. It is our request to all of you that please don't look at us with suspicious eyes. We have not done any crime. We also deserve the same respect and love, the other people gets."

## GIRLS BATHING IN OPEN, BOYS MAKING VIDEOS

Reporter Shambhu, Gurgaon



slum where girls and women can take bath. There is a water tank, under which females have to take

bath in the open areas only. Due to this, girls and women have to face more problems like when they take bath,

there are some evil men and boys who have made holes in their house's wall to see the girls and women while bathing. Not only this, they even make videos of them. Due to their fear, girls can't even bath properly. When these girls go out for doing some work, there are some men and boys who taunt them and talk filthy about them due to which girls are afraid of stepping out of their homes. Facing such problems and requesting for some help from the government, the girls said, "This is our request to the government that please do something for us. Please provide the facility of toilets and bathrooms in our slum areas so that we can get rid of at least one problem."

# CHILDREN SHOWING WAYS TO PARENTS

**Talkative reporter Rohit and reporter Shambhu, Noida**

Telling about the situation children have to face when left alone at home when parents go for work, street and working children performed a street show to make their parents understand the feelings and emotions they feel. Let us first introduce you to themselves and their past. These street and working children belongs to Bengal and Kolkata.

During past, they did not have any work to do and no way of earning due to which they were not able to survive



properly. In order to get rid of this problem, they decided to move to another place so they came to Noida with their

families. Even after coming to Noida, they wandered here and there but were unable to find some kind of work for themselves.

As they were not able to live properly, the males of the families decided to allow their wives to work in bungalows so that they can get some help. As per the decisions, the women of these families also started to and it resulted in a better way. The families, now, are able to earn enough money for their survival. Though it helped the parents but children had to face a drawback that is they have to face difficulties when

parents are not at home. As the parents started going out for work, children were alone and started wandering here and there. If any unknown person gives some something, they just agree for doing anything the person wants. The children showed this to their parents through the medium of street show, to make them understand what they are facing in their parent's absence. By this street show, street and working children tried to make their parents understand that they also need to look after their children and have to think about them too.

## NO PLACE TO PLAY, HOW TO ENJOY CHILDHOOD?

**Talkative reporter Navaab, and reporter Shambhu, Noida**

This news is about a basti in Noida. There are almost 800 to 900 slums in this basti. Children living here don't have any playground to play as people living in the slums uses these grounds to throw their wastes. Also there is a dirty sewage near their slum but children can't play there as the sewage is too deep and a very bad, foul smell comes from it. If ball or something else, while playing, is thrown in to it, it will be very difficult for people to take it out from it. Everyone knows, children can't live without playing. So they decided to play in a park which is on a distance



of 2 kilometer away from their slum. While going there, they changed their minds. What was the reason they changed their minds, that too for playing? Let us tell you the whole story. In order to reach the park, they had to cross the ring road, which they can't cross, as there are

some people in Noida who ride their vehicles at a very high speed and cross the signals on the red light too. These young children wake up every day with a hope of playing in the park but when they go, due to heavy traffic or fast vehicles, they had to come back to their



homes. Telling about the situations, children said, "It was not the same, before. We do have a park in our slum where we used to play as much as we wanted. But there were some people who did not like it when we play. According to them, we just shout for the whole day and

that's why they hate when we play. That's why they brought the pipeline of dirty sewage in the ground and asked others to throw the residues and wastes in the ground only. At present, our playing ground is full of dirty sewage water and waste material." Raising questions they further added, "We want to know that what the problem they have is? Why do these people are doing abduction of our right to play? We children request the government to remove the waste from our playing ground so that we can get back what we had to leave. Also the dirty drain, whose pipeline comes in the ground, should be stopped so that our ground should be cleaned."

## STREET CHILDREN DEMAND BAN ON SUBSTANCE

**Reporter Shambhu, Gurgaon**

Balaknama's reporters organized a support group meeting with the children of a slum, whose name has been kept secret, of Gurugram. During the meeting, we got to know that all the children of this slum are indulged in

the dark world of intoxicant's supply. People from Kolkata and Bengal are living here. They are living here for their survival. There are some evil people in the slum, who used to stay before the other families came here, are using Kolkata's and Bengal's young innocent children for their

work and pushing them in the dark world of intoxicants. They greed them for some money and tell them to supply intoxicants like- charas, ganja, etc.. Reporter was shocked to know about this. He then asked the children, "Why did he choose you, children to do this work?" The children

replied, "He chooses us so that no one like policemen or other people can doubt on us. We feel very afraid while doing this work. We are so afraid that we can't even tell about it to our parents. We are afraid because the evil men have told us that if anybody gets to know about this work,



## PARENTS FORCING CHILDREN TO BEG

**Talkative reporter Sameer and reporter Shambhu, South Delhi**

According to the information collected and given by our talkative reporters, we got to know that the parents torture the children in the families, living under the bridge and the door house. Let us tell you about it in details. One of our talkative reporters noticed that parents beat their children and torture them for begging. If the children deny begging, parents abuse and beat them and force them for begging.

Even our talkative reporters



were also shocked and afraid after listening to their stories.

Children sharing their problems, said, "During

past, when we used to go for begging, we usually get to earn some money but from the day the society is being awaked, nobody gives us money instead they offer us some food to eat.

Our parents don't like this. They force us to beg and ask for money only, not for eatables. Our parents force us to request to the people for giving money but when we do so, nobody gives us a single penny. We need money for our survival so that we can use it by the way we and our parents want to, but society doesn't understand this thing."

he will torture us, beat us and will not give the money we are getting at present to eat food." Reporter then asked, "How much do you get to earn for this work?"

A 15 years old child replied, "We get to earn according to the packets. If we sell 12 packets, we will get 100 rupees to earn." Telling more about the person, children said, "Those who force us to do this work, when come to our slum are, see our mothers and sister with obscenity, which we don't like and feel ashamed of. We children want that some action should be taken against them as soon as possible, so that we can get out of this dark world and can live our life in a better way."

# RAG COLLECTED IS STOLEN BY OLDER PEERS-WHO CAN HELP?

Talkative reporter Hina and reporter Shambhu, South Delhi

Children living at railway stations were so afraid that they were not able to share their stories and thought with anybody. They were depressed due to the beating by the policemen and scolding of society's people. Somehow, they met one of our Balaknama's reporters and shared all of their problems deeply which they have been facing. Sharing their stories, a 15 years old child said, "We ran away from our homes as we were tortured by our family members. We were so depressed and irritated by our family that we children decided to



sacrifice our lives and chose the tough life of railway stations. We chose this thinking that we will get rid of some problems. But even after coming here, we are not able to live peacefully." Telling about recent problems, they further added, "At present, there are some adult boys who are creating problems for us. After working for whole day, we collect garbage and keep it on a place from where we take it another place. When we children are not near to our garbage collection, these boys come and take our garbage. We feel very sad about it as at the end of the day, we are the ones who did not get anything. At times, we even have to starve and wander here and there in search of food.



## STINKING SCHOOL, HOW TO STUDY?

Talkative reporter Priyanka and reporter Poonam, Agra

Firstly, we are very sorry as the name of place about which we are talking in this news is kept secret. There is an old government school in this slum and all children used to go to the school for studying. But, at present, children are not ready to go to the school as the school is surrounded by too many slums. The people of the slum used to throw their house wastes near the school area due to which the foul smell and infectious environment is increasing near the school day-by-day. When talked to the people who are indulged in this work, telling about the truth they said, "We don't have any other option. ADA workers don't come in our area to collect the garbage that's why, unwontedly, we have to throw the garbage and waste materials near the school area only." As the garbage is increasing and getting more infectious, the foul smell also increases. Even the classrooms are also in its reach. The children are not able to bear this foul smell and hence are forced to leave the school. There are many children who are falling ill due to this. In order to get rid of this problem, the principal of the school took initiative and sent a letter to the ADA office but they have not yet received any notice or letter

regarding their query and request. At present, there is not even a single who is interested in going to school; in fact some have already left the school. Due to this entire scenario, the parents living in this slum are much tensed about their children's future and requests, "Please help us. Somebody please take a step and help us to get rid of this problem."

## WORKING DAY AND NIGHT FOR SURVIVAL-NO TIME TO STUDY

Talkative reporter Priyanka and reporter Poonam, Agra

During a visit in Agra, our reporters got to know that there are some children who work really hard, day and night, for their family's survival but still are not getting rid of problems. Let us tell you more about them in details. When our reporters interacted with them, telling about themselves, the children said, "We used to sell different types of things like wiper, glasses and hunter, etc. We used to go in a group as wherever we go for selling our items, we have to face many difficulties which we can't handle individually. But even after facing so many problems, we are unable to sell our items." Telling about the current situation, a 13 years old girl said, "Before we used to live happily but now we are living a tough life. We are so busy in selling items that we don't have time to do other things. We usually leave our homes around 8 am in the morning and go back to home around 8 pm or



9 pm. During these 12-1 hours we are unaware of anything happening at our homes. Our parents also go out for work. Our siblings are the ones who don't go out for work but they never stay at home and are busy in playing and the thieves take advantage of this situation. If we keep anything at our homes, the thieves steal it." Another 15 years old boy, Gautam said, "My family is very poor. My parents hardly get to earn for our survival. Even after

working hard, they are not able to fulfill all our needs. Seeing everything, I decided to work and help my parents. I started working with other children but still my family is not able to live peacefully. We are still facing poverty." Requesting for a better life, the children said, "We request you to give our parents such a work by which, at least, they can fulfill our basic needs. We children also want to study and live a better and respectful life like others."

## ROWDY RATS MAKING LIFE HELL

Talkative reporter Gaurav, and reporter Shambhu, Noida

There are more than 1500 basti and slums near Amrapali, Noida. The families living in these areas are very poor and economically weak. They work really hard and then somehow able to buy grocery for their survival. At present, they are facing a problem of rats. There is a jungle near there slum and rats are getting more in number. Rat enters their houses and eats the groceries they collect for themselves. They contaminate the entire food items. Telling about the situation, the parents said, "When we go out for work, we close the door and the rats take advantage of the darkness and contaminate our food items. As our floor



is of soil, rats make burrows in our houses. Due to this we are always afraid as the snails and other animal also lives in the jungle with the rats. That's why, as soon as we get to know about the burrows, we just close the burrow."

Sharing more about the daily issues, a 12 years old boy said, "Our parents cook and keep the food in the houses but when we come, it was already contaminated by the rats. As we don't have any other option, we have to eat

the infectious food only." Another 13 years old girl said, "At night, when we are sleeping, the rat moves on our body and bites us too. Not only this, but the rat's torture have created many difficulties and problems for each and every children of this slum." One more thing came in our knowledge that is children collect money by working really hard and buy new clothes from that money. They keep it in their houses for safety but on the very next morning they can see the holes and cuts in their new clothes too, made by the rats. The parents even tried to trap the rats and throw them out of the slum but that also did not work. Even after throwing the rats out of the slum, they again enter the slum and create problems for the slum people.

# TRUTH BEHIND STREET CHILDREN USING FAKE NAMES

Reporter Shambhu, South Delhi

Our reporters done a visit in some areas to find out the reason behind street and children lying about their names. Let us tell you about it in details. Why do these children tell fake name. First of all let us tell you that our reporters did survey in many areas of Gurgaon and Delhi where street and children lives. On asking the reason, the child said, "We tell fake names so that we don't have to face any problems later. We live near the bus stand and railway station areas and also work here. If somebody gets to know our real names, it may result in a bad manner for us." Children living at the railways station said, "We live on the railway stations and there are many other children and people who live there with us and are indulged in gambling



and thievery. If we will tell them our real names then they will steal and will put all the blames on us by taking our names." Sharing more, a 15 years old child said, "There are many children who run away from their homes due to bad environment and come at railway stations. If anyhow

they get to know our real names then there are chances that they will take us back and will torture us again. That's why we children keep our real names as a secret." Children further said that they only tell their real names to the ones who are trustworthy. They do so for a safe life.

# CAN PARENTS BE THIS SELFISH?

Reporter Jyoti, South Delhi

There are many parents in our society who don't work but force and torture their children for begging. As soon as our reporter got to know about this, he immediately went to meet them. On interaction, the children said, "Our parents don't work. They only live at home. Our fathers are indulged in gambling. They just need food for 3 times, money for gambling and alcohol to drink daily. If they don't get these things, they start fighting." Sharing her friend's story, a 13 year old girl said, "One of my friend's father asked for money for gambling from her mother but she did not had money so she was unable to give. Her father started beating her mother badly

and even ran towards my friend to beat her too but luckily we ran away from the house. This is not a one day story. We have to face this problems daily." Children undergoing this situation said, "In order to get rid of such problems we children have to beg. People don't give us money; they think that we are doing this with our will. No, we also want to study but we can't do anything. When we tell about it to our parents, they also don't understand and torture us for begging."



# CONSISTENT MIGRATION AFFECTING SCHOOLING OF CHILDREN

Reporter Shambhu, Gurgaon

The reporter organized a support group meeting in which many children participated with all of their will. In this meeting, the children discussed their problems in details. This news belongs to a slum in Gurgaon. Children here are not ready to go to school. The reason they gave for not going is that they don't have any proper place for living. Sharing their problems, children said,



"Even after this problem, our parents get us admitted in schools but due to changing of places we can't continue our studies. As we don't go to school daily, our teachers get angry on us." Telling about a recent incident, slum children said, "Recently, one of our friend came from his village to the basti and when he joined back his schooling, the teacher got angry on him and said that if he don't have a proper place of living so how can he study properly." When he shared this

with his parents, they also felt bad for him and were unable to do anything. The parents also understand that teacher is right. But what can they do? If they don't go to places for work then how will they manage to survive? Teacher's rude behavior is affecting children as they are afraid of their teachers. Children wish to have a proper place of living so that they could also manage to go to school like other children and can have a better future by studying.

# THIS TAILOR IS ABUSING US-CAN SOMEONE SAVE?

Reporter Shambhu, Noida

There is a tailor in Badshahpur, Gurgaon, in a slum. He used to look at slum children with hatred. Some of our talkative reporters told us that the tailor even abuses the children. Children living in the slum said, "We even went to him to ask what is wrong with him but then also he started abusing us and got angry. We are very afraid of him. We even told our Teacher, who is a social helper and comes for educating us, but still we are not getting rid of this problem. Our teacher interacted with the tailor and told him not to abuse us. The tailor is so bad that he started abusing our teacher too but then also he tried to request him not to behave like this with us. The tailor did not listen anything and started threatening our



teacher. He said, "Don't teach me anything. Just pack your bags and leave this area as soon as you can else I will bet you a lot." Telling more about the tailor, children living in the slum said, "Mostly, he abuses the rag pickers. This is our humble request to all of you and the policemen to take some strict actions against this tailor so that we can get rid of

him. Then only we will again go to school as due to his fear, there are many children who are not even going to school. We have tried our best to make him understand and talk to him but we can't see any changes in his rude behavior. We want that the readers should help us after reading this story so that we can also live happily and can continue our studies."



# STREET CHILDREN FALL INTO GAMBLING-EFFECTING FUTURE

Talkative reporter Jahangir and reporter Shambhu, Noida

During a visit in Noida, Delhi and Gurgaon, our reporter got to know that there are almost 450 children who are indulged in gambling. Then he decided to meet these children and ask, "From where have you learnt this at

such a young age?" Telling about the reason, a 12 years old boy replied, "Our nearby environment is not good. People around us usually play gambling. Seeing them, we children also indulged in it." Children from Gurgaon are more in number. Children even bunk their school for

*continued on pg. 8*

## AMAN SAVES PEERS FROM RAUCOUS RICKSHAW

Reporter Jyoti, West Delhi

This news belongs to an 11 years old boy, Aman who lives in a slum of West Delhi. Sadly, being after so young he has to work on a tea stall for his family's survival. He is always ready to help street and working children. At present, he is one of the Balaknama's talkative reporters. As he know very well about the street life, he look after the street and working children and help them in order to get rid of their problems.

Telling about a recent incident he said, "Few days back when I was going back to my home, I saw two children crying and talking to each other while crossing the ring road. There was a drunken rickshaw driver whose rickshaw was not in his control and was moving here and there. The children were unaware of the rickshaw. I jumped off in front of the rickshaw in order to save them. Somehow, I managed to save them but unexpectedly, hurt myself. The people on the road

ran towards me and blessed me for my braveness. They even took me to the hospital and paid for my band-aid and medicines. At present, I am totally fine and in a healthy condition." He further added, "I want to know that why did people drink while driving. Don't they understand that it is not only unsafe for others but may lead to severe injuries and even death for themselves too." We hope that after reading this story, people will stop drink and drive and will be more alert while driving.

## STREET CHILDREN FALL INTO GAMBLING-EFFECTING FUTURE

from page 7

gambling. Parents of these children are busy with their work and that's why are not able to look after them properly. Telling about the craze and addiction, a 13 years old girl said, "Children are so into gambling that they even take wrong steps for it. They sell their households and plays gambling with the money they get. Children who work as rag pickers don't give the money to their parents and use it in gambling." Telling more, a 14 years old child said, "These children learned gambling from their surroundings. If they will live in such a bad environment, they will learn wrong things only."

## Amit wish to Go to School

Talkative reporter Amit and reporter Aanchal, Lucknow

Let us tell you about Amit. Amit is an 11 years old, young boy. He looks after all his family members. During a visit in Lucknow, one of our balaknama's reporters met Amit. He interacted with him and took more information about his family. After interaction, we got to know that there is no elder person in Amit's family and he is the only one who is holding all the responsibilities of his family. There are 5 members in his family- his parents, who are so old that they can't work, and his two siblings, who hardly manages to go to the school. During past, Amit was also used to go to the school but due to poor economic conditions, he has to leave his school. At present, he used to sell vegetables. Sharing his feelings, he said, "Whenever I saw a student, my heart also wishes for going to school. I still find myself lucky as my siblings are going to school. My wish is to go to school, like my brother and sister. This dream will only some true if you people help me. Your one small step can take me to the bright path of education. I hope that after reading my story, at least one person will come forward to help me."

## STREET GIRL HAS HOLE IN HER HEART-NEEDS ATTENTION

Talkative reporter Hina and reporter Shambhu, South Delhi

This news belongs to an 11 years old girl, Umra who lives in a dock house in Sarai Kale Khan. There are 6 members in her family, her mother, father, 3 sisters and a brother. Her youngest sibling has hole in her heart by birth only. Telling about her sad story, she said, "My youngest sister is of 6 years and has a hole in heart. As my family is economically very poor, my parents are unable to get her proper medications. We hardly manage for our survival. There are no elder siblings in my family. My parents are the only ones who have to work and earn for our family. They hardly get to earn for



our survival. Even after so problems, we managed to get medications for my sister but still she is unwell. That's why we are afraid of leaving her alone. At times, she gets

attacks and we have to rush to the hospital. My parents beg to other people for loan. After so much things and medications, my sister is recovering. She has also lost her will power." Telling about her sister and her feelings, she further added, "There are times when my sister says, 'Just leave me alone now. Leave me and let me die. I can't see my parents like this, anymore.'" Asking for help for their daughter's life, Umra's parents said, "It is our humble request to each and every person who is reading this news that please come forward to help our daughter. We don't want to lose her. Please help us so that our daughter can get rid of this problem and live a happy life ahead."

# BALANAMA AND BADHTE KADAM IN HEADLINES

We are sharing some photos related to these moments with you.



New journalists of Balaknama are happy after training



Talkative reporters share their experience with Denmark Media.



Kids are learning the music.



Talkative reporter trying write the news.



Awareness in the street children about district court proceeding

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.