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# BALAKNAMA

UNIQUE NEWSPAPER FOR AND BY STREET CONNECTED 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.

## SLEEPING ON THE STREETS, SCARY WINTER NIGHT FOR STREET CHILDREN

Balaknama Bureau

Winters have made it really difficult for people to survive. Pollution in Delhi has made it unhealthy to breath and winters are making it difficult to survive. These days' villagers, street and working children and homeless children surviving at railway stations, bus stands and footpaths have to suffer a lot. To know more about them, our Balaknama members decided to interact with them and talk about their conditions, for this, our Balaknama members visited South and West Delhi, Noida, Agra, Lucknow and Gurugram. Telling about themselves, a 15 years old girl, Shalu (changed name) said, “We children live under the bridges. We are not allowed to live in door houses as they are only for homeless families.” Other children informed that they use tarpaulin sheets and jute sacks. Telling more, Shalu further added, “We don't even

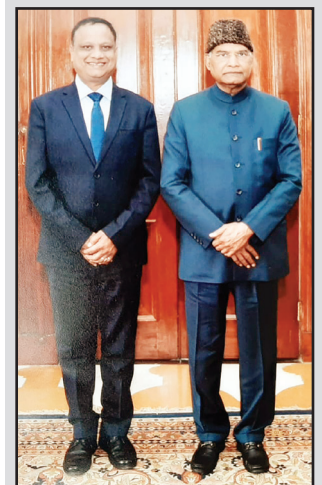


have wood for bonfire. We need to buy wooden blocks but as they are very costly, we can't afford it.” Some other children said, “As we don't have many blankets, 6-7 young children have to sleep in one blanket only.” Other than this, a shocking thing came into our knowledge which is few young children of 7 to 8 years of age slide into the blankets muffled by elder ones in order to feel warm but shockingly they are being harassed. Even after being harassed, they stay there as they don't have any other option to survive these freezing

nights. Some children stand for their safety and slide under the trucks and sleep there as the warmth of the engine provides them some warmth. Other than these things, children wander whole day in order to collect woods and burn them in the night and stay near to it only. Some children drink alcohol in huge amount so that they lost their senses and don't feel cold. Few children sleep with the stray dogs to feel warm. Some other children came forward and informed that they burn their own clothes during the night time to feel cosy and

some sleep under the cars as the engine provide them some warmth. Some children sleep on the tarpaulin sheets and this is how street and working children are surviving these freezing nights. Another 16 years old girl said, “We don't have any warm clothes and that's why we take intoxicant to feel comfortable.” When our reporters interacted with the children living on railway station of Agra, they got to know that they intake mentos medicines, opiates and intoxicant injections in order to fight these winters.

### CHETNANGO MEETS WITH HON'ABLE PRESIDENT OF INDIA



At the beginning of the year 2020 some good news for children living in difficult situations in India. CHETNA NGO director Sanjay Gupta was invited at the President House to meet Hon'able President Shri Ram Nath Kovind. Mr. Gupta apprised the president about CHETNA's work, especially about how the NGO is empowering children in street situations through education. Mr. Gupta apprised the President in full length and talked about the situation of street-connected children especially absence on the census, difficult situations, and difficulty faced at the school level. Mr. Gupta also requested the President to adopt UN General Comment on Street Children. President took note of it and appreciated the work of CHETNA NGO and the newspaper Balaknama run by street children. Mr. Gupta handed over a copy of Balaknama Newspaper and a handmade card on behalf of children to the President. CHETNA was among the other 60 social organizations across India who were invited today for the appreciation of its commendable work. Many thanks for all your support.



Reporters of Balaknama presented copies of Balaknama to Justice Dalveer Bhandari of the International Court of Justice. Along with the Director of CHETNA, Mr. Sanjay Gupta.

### 6-YEAR-OLD EARNING FOR FAMILY



Reporter Aanchal

This news belongs to a 6 years old young boy, Kishan living on the Madiyan contact point with his family. He regularly *cont. on pg. 7*

## CHILDREN TAKING BATH IN POLLUTED RIVER, HEALTH GETTING AFFECTED



Reporter Aanchal

There are so many families living on the banks of the river Gomti. Children of these families usually go near the river while playing outside. At times, children go there for taking bath. Sadly, there is lot of garbage dumped on the banks of the river also there are few drunk men who always roam there and throw garbage there only.

Due to this the banks and the water is very polluted and is directly affecting the health of the children of the families living there and using its water for their basic needs. In order to know more, our reporter interacted

with the children living there. Children said, “Eventually after, the river get polluted, most of the children started falling ill. The river is not getting polluted due to few drunken men but whenever the visitors come here, they bring their food and water bottles and throw the unwanted materials and left over on the banks only not in the dustbin. This is one of the major reasons of falling ill. Other than this, one 16 years old girl, Payal (changed name) said, “No government worker or van come here to clean the banks or river due to which we are suffering.”

## EDITORIAL



Happy Christmas! Good Bye 2019! We are blessed to say that soon we will enter in the new year of 2020. We are obliged to provide you this 83rd edition of Balaknama. We are proud of the editorial team, Balaknama reporter and talkative reporters who are still working for this newsletter even after having so much of fewer facilities. Almost in each and every state and city, street and working children are surviving under severe conditions. They are selling water sachets, toys, balloons etc., at railway stations, bus stands, red lights and wander here and there for collecting garbage. Their parents are also working hard for earning so that they can fulfill their basic needs. Deprived of studies and their rights, these children work day and night just to survive. They are getting deprived of studies due to the harassment they face on the way to school, workplaces and drug traders and drunken men. School is the temple of education. Children learn good things there. But seeing all these things we can say that these innocent young souls are not safe even in the school and nearby campus. Balaknama team is responsible for standing and looking after such children. We want to raise their voices so that government should listen to them. We know that you must be thinking so many things and you must be having too many questions after reading all these stories and news. So please share your thoughts and questions with us through letters and e-mails. We hope that you will support us like this in the future too. We are very sure that our team will work with more courage and motivation in the upcoming year of 2020.

Thank you,  
Balaknama Team

## INNOCENT KIDS FORCED INTO DRUG PEDDLING

Reporter Sangeeta

Our Balaknama reporter visited few slums where she found that drugs are being served there in a huge amount. When people don't have any work to do they do the business of drugs. Not only they trade them but they intake the drugs too. As we all know what children see is what they learn hence children living there are also learning to trade and intake drugs. There are almost 6 children of 8 to 9 years of age who are involved in this business. According to these children, sellers are forcing them for drug trading. They give them drugs in small sachets and children sell them to the elder male and females. From these elder ones, few people themselves come to the children in order to buy drugs. This is how children's future is being moving towards



criminal activities. The main thing to think about is that how these evil souls are using young innocent children for their erroneous business? Children are being moving towards the wrong direction and are getting deprived of studies. If it did not stop soon, children will be totally ruined.

## MEN AND DOGS CREATING MENACE FOR CHILDREN ON STREET

Reporter Sangeeta

With the help of our reporters we got to know that the street and working children living near the Charbagh railway station (Lucknow) don't have any shelter and bed to have a comfortable night, still they are living happily with their friends and family. When our reporter met these children, she found that these kids were unhappy. When she asked the reason they replied, "At present, there are lots of mouse, rats and stray dogs which bother us during the night time. At times, they bite us too. Not only the animals, but the humans too are



troubling us now-a-days. There are drug traders who have started to come into our area." Our reporter herself saw many wounds on the body. Children are being eaten regularly by dogs and wild rats. Telling more, children added, "Due to cod, we are senseless during the night time due to which we are not able to know that rats are biting us. When we wake up in the morning, we see the wounds on the body given by the wild rats. We children really want to get rid of these rats, stray dogs and drug traders. We already struggle for proper sleeps; we don't any new trouble in our life."

## CHILDREN FACING PROBLEM ON WAY TO SCHOOL

Talkative reporter Kajal and reporter Shambhu

During the visit of our reporters, they heard that the school going children are facing trouble in their day-to-day lives. Parents who are working from childhood are forcing their children for the same. They want them to leave their school and work. Though with the help of social workers, their parents were convinced for sending them to school, in fact children

were working hard for getting educated. Shocking when our reporter met them recently, she got to know a serious problem. Telling about themselves, a 12 years old girl, Monica (changed name) said, "With the help of social workers we got admission in government schools and were able to achieve education. Luckily, we have passed class 5th recently and entered in the class 6th. But sadly, we were studying in a primary school. For continuing our education,



we are being sent to the senior school in Chhalera village

which is far away from our slum. Due to this reason, many children are not able to continue their studies as to reach the village, we have to use public transport and need money for daily fare. First thing is the distance and the second is the money due to which parents are not allowing us to continue our studies. We need Rs 50 on daily basis for going to school and coming back to home for which our parents not ready." Telling more, they further

added, "The Municipality bus do come in the nearby area but the driver does not stop it for us. Instead they speed up the bus. We can't afford to go by walking as it consumes time. Not only this, but there are chances of getting into an accident also we get late for school. That's why we children want you people to read this news and come forward to help us. Please help us so that we don't get deprived of studies and can go to school again."

## STARVED CHILDREN EATING FROM GARBAGE

Talkative reporter Gauri and reporter Kishan, Noida

Do you people even know how street and working children survive? Why do they eat food from the garbage? To know the answers of these questions, our reporter interacted with few streets and working children. During the interaction, the children said, "The number of children eating food from the dustbins is large in Delhi. There are lots of dustbins on the road and people

usually dump their leftover food items, chappatis, biscuits, chocolates and other eatables in the dustbins, which children usually collect and eat. When we don't find anything in the dustbin, we beg to fulfill our stomach. At times, we don't get anything only abuse and rude behavior of the society is what comes in our bag." Their parents also don't think about them and don't look after them properly as they themselves are always drunk. People walking on the streets and roads don't treat them



properly. They are being hated by the society for no reason. Due to all these reasons, children get deprived of the studies and move towards the dark world of intoxication. There are many children who are already involved in alcohol and criminal activities and no one is there to tell them the difference between right or wrong. Not only they are using money for wrong things but have started pick-pocketing in the greed of money. Their future is getting ruined day-by-day.

# CHILDREN STILL DEFECATING IN OPEN



Talkative reporter Anjali and reporter Shambhu

During the visit, our reporter got to know that there is a slum in Noida where people are living from past 5 years. They belong to Bengal and work as rag pickers for their survival. There they did not have any way of earning and that's why they

came here in search of some work and money. At present, they work hard for whole day and sleep comfortably during the night time. Sadly, they are being facing a problem in the slum that is because there is no facility of the toilet in the slum. People have to defecate in open areas. Mostly, girls were being troubled. In

order for their safety, slum people decide to make a shed from tarpaulin sheet near the drainage in the slum for girls and females. Sadly, the sheds are being broken by the government workers and the slum people have being told that soon new proper toilets will be built there. Though it is great news for them but till date there is no further process or information regarding this topic. Children are angry with the workers, they said, "They should not have broken the sheds made by clothes and tarpaulin. First they should build the proper toilets and then they could have broken the sheds. At present, we again have to wander for defecating. We are facing those problems again. We want that we should get rid of this problem soon else we will be forced to make those sheds again."

# CHILDREN SUFFERING IN THE ABSENCE OF TOILET

Reporter Sangeeta

This news belongs to a slum of Luv-kush Nagar in Lucknow. When our reporter Sangeeta interacted with the children of this slum, they told her that they are facing severe problems as they don't have any public toilet in their nearby areas. They have to go far away from the sum in order to use public toilet. Children have to cross roads to reach the public toilets due to which many children are meeting with accidents in their regular lives. Vehicles pass by the roads in speed and do not slow down when children are crossing the roads. Telling more, a 12 years old girl, Juhi (changed name) said, "If we try to defecate in open areas, there are few men who look at us with obscenity. We are forced to defecate in open areas as



there is no facility of toilets near our slum due to this we have to face lots of problems in our regular lives. That's why we children request government to provide the facility of toilets in our slum areas too. We will not have to cross the roads and defecate in open areas."

# IN THE ABSENCE OF AADHAR CARD, STREET CHILDREN AREN'T ABLE TO ACCESS SERVICES



Talkative reporter Aakash and reporter Shambhu

A support group meeting was organized with the street and working children in which children participated in a huge number and shared their day-to-day problems and lifestyle. Telling about their problems, children said, "As you all know that we belong to Bengal and our parents moved in here in search of work and food. But even after coming here, we are struggling for food, shelter and work. Our parents are not getting any work as most of the people are now asking for, ID proves and we don't have any. There are few parents who have Bengal ID cards even

though they are not getting any work as the Bengali language is written on the cards." Another problem they shared is the responsibilities these shoulders have to carry in such a young age. They said, "When our parents get any work, they leave early in the morning due to which we children have to do all the household works and have look after our younger brother and sisters. We have to cook food by burning woods. While cooking food we get burn marks. After getting burn, we stop cooking but due to hunger we have to cook again under compulsion. We don't even have any food stall nearby where we can go and eat."

# CHILDHOOD TRAPPED IN CHILD LABOUR

Talkative reporter Rizwan and reporter Shambhu

During a regular visit, our reporter got to know about a slum of Noida where parents of few street children go to bungalows to work as house helpers and other parents' works as rickshaw pullers. Reporter was informed that families living here are very unhappy and unsatisfied with their lives. They are being facing harsh situations due to which young children are being affected badly. They are living at a place where they earn less and have to pay rent even for their jhuggis. Seeing their parents working hard for whole day and night, children



also started helping their parents in work. Telling about their work, 14 years old girl Kajal (changed name) said, "The boss of our parents does not even pay them on time due to which we are facing trouble in fulfilling our basic needs. in order to compensate

it, we children have taken the initiative to work and earn with our parents." Telling more, other children said, "There is a company near or slum, lots of garbage is dumped in the nearby areas of the company. We collect that garbage and clean it. After cleaning the garbage, we sell it in the market and give the money we earn to our parents. While collecting the garbage we have to climb on the garbage hills, during which we have to lots of problems. At times, we get wounds by pointed materials present inside the garbage. Even though we work and collect garbage so that we can help our parents for our survival."

# CHILDREN AND FAMILY LIVING IN GARBAGE HEAP

Talkative reporter Sonu and reporter Shambhu

During the regular visit, we got to know that people from Bengal, Noida and Bihar come to the cities like Noida and make their home on the empty grounds of Noida for their survival. Our reporter saw few male and females cleaning the jungle. There were some children playing near them, the reporter asked those kids, "Why are your parents cleaning this jungle?" The children replied, "Our parent will make jhuggis here and we will live here only with our families." The reporter the asked, "Why do you want to live here only? Why are your parents building jhuggis?" The children then replied, "Our parents don't



have enough money for paying the rent or buying home. Our parents have moved here from the village with our whole families in search of work and money. In the village it was not possible to survive as there is no work and money." During the interaction, reporter saw that parents were digging the ground for taking the mud to

build their jhuggis. After few days, when he again went to that place, he found that the same whole which they were digging now used as a dustbin for dumping the leftover and other garbage by the slum people. Not only this, children use it for defecating due to which lots of flies are getting a favorable environment for infecting humans. Seeing their situations, we are very sure that the slum people going to fall ill and diseases like Malaria, Dengue, etc., will catch the soon. Children appealing for some help said, "We children requests the government to send the garbage trucks or vans in our area so that they collect the garbage on a daily basis and we children don't have to pay for it in future."

**CHILDREN'S HELP  
LINE NUMBERS**

CONTACT THESE TOLL FREE  
NUMBERS IF YOU FACE ANY  
PROBLEM.

Child line Number  
**1098**  
Police Helpline Number  
**100**

# GIRLS DROPPING SCHOOLS DUE TO HARASSMENT ON THE WAY

Talkative reporter Gomti and reporter Poonam

We got news from the city of Taj- Agra, that almost 10 girls have stopped going to school. Let us see why did it happen? When the reporter met them, they got to know that these girls belong to a very poor family. Their mothers go to bungalows as house helpers and fathers



work as labours. Their parents were not at all ready for sending their children to school especially girls. But somehow they were convinced. In order to know the reason behind their 'don't want to go behavior'; our reporter interacted with these girls. Girls said, "Recently, there are few drunken men and boys have started on the way to our school and back. They

have started abusing us and harassing us. Due to this we don't want to go to school. At times, they followed us to our home because of which we left our school." With the courage of getting educated, they took admission in private schools but due to huge amount of fees, they stopped going to school and are now indulged in the household work.

## LACK OF DRAINAGE SPREADING DISEASE



Reporter Sangeeta

One of our talkative reporters at the contact point of Puraniya, who is 10 years old girl, Saba informed us that there is no proper drainage system for flowing of dirty water in their slum. Due to this the drains are getting over flowed with dirty water. She said, "The water if filled on the streets on the slum.

Drunk men and drug traders sit in this dirty water due to which our slum is getting dirtier. Whole slum is filled with dirty and muddy water due to which we have to breathe in very stinky environment. It is not only affecting the environment but our health too. Young children are getting more affected by this as they play outside in the dirty environment.

Their immunity is also weak that's why they are falling ill regularly." Looking after there is our responsibility that's why we Balaknamareporters requests government and Municipal Corporation to pass the order to clean their slum as soon as possible so that the drainage system starts working properly and dirty water would not set into the slum. We also request you to fulfill the spots in the street so that dirty water or rain water would not set into them. These things are not only polluting the environment but the health of many children and their parents too. We did a survey of this slum in which we found that a large number of children are unhealthy in this slum at present only because of this unhealthy environment.



## ANIMALS DIED OFF TRAIN ACCIDENT, STINKING THE SLUM

Reporter Aanchal

This news is of a slum situated on the sides of Purniya Railway station. Dead bodies do not only include humans but pigs and other animals too. The problem is whenever anyone met with the accident, no one from the railway officers or Municipality comes there for survey. There is no measure till date taken for preventing these accidents. Due to this, dead bodies are being floated on the sides of the tracks and starts stinking.

Their foul smell is bothering the slum children and elders too. It is unhealthy for them to breathe in such polluted environment. Children said, "In such situation, if we try to eat something, we eventually end it by vomiting as the smell is so stinky that we cant even open our mouth." This is very unhealthy for children. Children are falling ill due to this on regular basis. Not only the pollution but the stinky smell is also the reason for unhealthy children of this slum.

## CARELESS PARENTING FORCING CHILDREN INTO CRIME

Reporter Aanchal

Our reporter visited Charbagh railway station. During which she met different groups of children and interacted with them. During which, she got to know that there are few 2 to 4 children who are involved in drugs and alcoholism. Their age is only 6 to 8 years old and they intake alcohol in a large amount. Not only this, but shockingly they harass other children of their age when drunk. Our reporter saw a 8 years old boy, Golu



(changed name). He was little bit drunk and was somewhat senseless. After interacting with him, the reporter got

to know that his mother and father don't look after him properly. Most of the parents of the slum are indulged in gambling and don't love their kids. His parents don't bother about him. Same like him, many other children shared their stories. Children said, "Our environment is filled with such gamblers and drinking people. Our parents are also involved in these things. We are learning what we are seeing. Our parents also don't bother what we are doing."

## CHILDREN WANTS TO LIVE IN HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

Reporter Aanchal

One of our reporters met with children of Luv-Kush Nagar of Lucknow. She saw that there is lots of cow dung near their slum. There was no facility of proper drainage for water. People have dumped garbage on the streets and near their homes. When she interacted with the children she got to know that there are some milk dairies in the slum and people do have cows and buffaloes as their pets in the slum area only. Telling more, they said, "People have their own stables for cattle. Their food is also provided inside the stable only. Their straw flew with the wind in the slum also there is no proper cleansing and draining of their dung. This is the reason of our dirty and stinky slum." Children's health is being affected badly due to this. Children are not getting healthy and clean environment



for living and breathing. Children appealed for cleansing of the slum. They suggested that Municipality workers should come on a regular visit in the slum and look for pollution. They also want to live in clean and healthy environment.

## CHILDREN FOLLOWING FATHER'S FOOT, DRINKING ALCOHOL

Reporter Sangeeta

This news belongs to a 10 years old girl, Mansi (changed name) who lives in Purniya. She studies with the student of a social organization. Telling about herself, she said, "My father is involved in drinking. He fights with my mother daily. One day my mother goes irritated and she went on the railway track for



suicide." She died. She has 4 siblings. One elder sister got married in front of her mother only. After the death of her

mother she started being sad and unhappy. Now she has to work for her survival. When her mother was alive, Mansi does not have to worry about money and work. At present she works on a beer shop and sells disposable glasses. She earns daily and spends it for fulfilling her stomach. If somehow she is unable to go for work, she has to starve that day.



## CRIMINALS PUSHING CHILDREN TO DRUG PEDDLING

Reporter Kishan

When our reporter visited one of the slums he got to know that the parents of the innocent children of the slum are getting trapped into the fake promises of their neighbors. They say, "Your children don't do any work. He/she just roam here and there. If you want, I will take the responsibility of their earning. Send them with me; I will give them some work. There he/she will learn some work and will earn for your family too." Listening to them, innocent or should say greedy parents send them with those people. Let us know about the type of work children are being given. On interacting with children, we got to know that these innocent kids are being involved in the dark world of trading Ganja (marijuana). Children said, "Those evil souls ask us to go to different areas and sell Ganja. Whenever police caught us, he leaves us alone and does not take stand for us and when policemen asks them about us, they simple deny that they know us and we work for them. In such situations, when our parents asks them for help they shout at them and say that they pay

us for this work. Our parents have to fight alone for us." As soon as the kids gets bail, those people again asks their parents and involves them in their trade.

## WHO WILL SAVE FROM THIS EVIL SOUL?

Reporter Poonam

Street and working children of Agra work really hard for their family's survival. Parents have to leave early for work and come late in the night. Children are home alone during the whole day. Neighbours are taking advantage of these children. Our reporter got to know that there are some boys and men who greed girls for money and asks them to enter their rooms. When the girls go inside with them, they harass and sexually assault them. Not only this, they threaten girls for not telling about



it to anybody. They threaten them by saying that if they let anybody know about it, they will beat them and they will

lie to their parents that these girls are involved in physical relationships with other boys too. Due to these things girls do not tell about it to anybody. They live in fear of getting blamed and judged by the society. When the Balaknama reporter met them, they shared their problems with her. Girls said, "We are not the only ones, there are many girls who are being harassed daily and are quite for their respect. We want that these boys and men should be given cruelest punishment so that nobody will again dare to do any such thing."

## CHILDREN BEATEN WHILE SLEEPING ON STREET

Reporter Deepak

Balaknama reporter visited South Delhi and asked street and working children about the problems they are facing in their daily lives. Telling about themselves, children said, "We live here by making small jhuggis. We survive by selling wipers, silbatta and by begging. There are other people who are living here before we started. They are troubling us now-a-days. Without any reason or fault they fight with us and beat us. If we speak in our favor, each and every one stand with them to beat us. Not even a

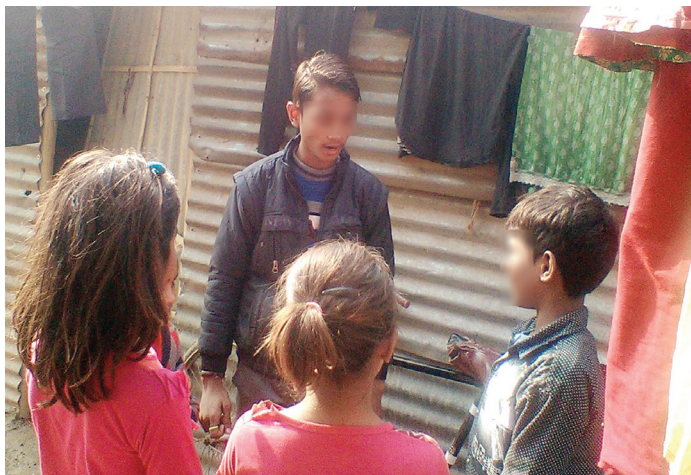


single person thinks about us. They see us with hate. They did not consider us in their society and look our girls

with obscenity. Not only this, they abuse us too. Though we

feel bad and unhappy about it but what else can we do? Where will we go? We don't have any other place to live. We have to live here only for our earning. If we started listening to them then our family's survival will not be possible. That's why we have to listen to them under compulsions. We are being forced by our situations to listen to their abuse and live in such a disrespectful society. We just fear that someday we children will become suspect of some kind of problem without any fault."

## CHILDREN SNIFFING SUBSTANCE, NEED ATTENTION



Reporter Kishan

Our reporter has brought heart-threatening news. You must have heard of solutions, gutkha, tobacco which children usually use

as intoxicants. Recently we got to know that now-a-days, in order to keep them warm, children have started taking intoxicants. Girls, who don't have any money for buying drugs or alcohol, are using

nail polishes as intoxicants. If parents see them doing this, they try to stop them but these kids run away. Not only this, there are some children who buy match sticks from the shop for Rs 1 or 2. They collect the powder of the match stick on a foil paper and are taking it as intoxicants. Due to all these things, lots of pollution and intoxicants are getting deposited in the children's body which is totally unhealthy for them. That's why we request you not to do any kind of intoxication in front of any child. If you see anybody doing so, please stop them because children learn what they see. It is our responsibility to look after young innocent kids. They are the future of our country.

## CHILDREN STRUGGLING TO SURVIVAL

Reporter Kishan

This news belongs to the children of Agra who work on the shops of clothes and groceries. Due to winters, the business is quite low at present because of which the shop owner screams at innocent children working as helpers. Sharing their experiences, children said, "As the business is low, our owner does not give us salary on time. Our family's survival is also in danger. We are not able to give money to our parents. Our parents do also not understand our problems. They think that we don't want to give them money. That's why we tried on other shops too for other work but at present, no one wants to keep us as helper and if anybody agrees to give us work then



at very low price. That's why we children request you to come forward and help us in any possible manner so that we can get rid of this problem soon and can make our parents happy.



## NO TOILETS FOR STREET CHILDREN: DEFECATING IN OPEN

Reporter Kishan

Recently we heard that most of the slums are being broken in Noida but there is one slum where people pay rent for jhuggis. Due to breaking of the jhuggis, many families have to wander for shelter. Parents have to face many problems for finding other shelter. Somehow parents were able to move from one area to another and managed to find a new shelter for their children. At present, the main issue they are facing is the toilet. There is no facility of public toilet in their nearby areas. Due to this, children started defecating in open areas. Seeing this, the facility of public toilet was provided but at a far distance. Parents do told them that children will not be able to use toilets during the night time and suggested them to build them near their slum but they did not listen to them and made it far away from them. Children are facing problem in using the toilet during the night time. They want that the toilet should be moved near their slum so that they can use it whenever needed.

## ORPHAN DUO FACING NEGLECT



Reporter Poonam

This news belongs to two children of Agra. At present, these children are living with their uncle and aunt. Telling about their sad story, they said, "Our parents died because they are not well. After our parent's death, our paternal aunt took us with her to her home. She did not take us for looking after us. Instead she took us for helping her in household work and not only this she used to force us for working in hotels for earning money. When I used to go to hotel for work, my cousin brother used to torture my younger brother who is of 5 years. Not only my cousins, but one day when I was unable to go to work due to high fever, my aunt started scolding me by saying that this was just my

drama so that I don't have to go to hotel for work. Seeing all these things, my paternal uncle and aunt took us to their home. At first they were very kind with us but sadly as the days passed by; they also started getting irritated from us. They also started treating us the same way my aunt used to treat us. Now we are not able to think where shall we go now? We brother and sister does want to spend a better life but unfortunately, we are not even getting food for a single time. That's why we are requesting you people that if you can help us in any possible manner, please come forward so that we both can have a better life ahead."

Talkative reporter Javed and reporter Poonam

There are lots of innocent children in Agra who are involved in child labor. Some make bricks and some make prosperous garlands of Peepal leaves. Children are getting indulged in this work at a very fast rate. Parents of these children said, "We go early for work and our children are left alone for whole day at home. They don't even stay at home

# CHILDREN AFFECTED DUE TO MUGGERS

Reporter Kishan

During a support group meeting child shared their problems and gave some suggestions for a better and safe environment. They said, "Mugging is getting more day by day in the capital-Delhi." In which street and working children are getting trapped without any fault. Sharing their problem, they further added, "We work in crowded areas where some pick pocketers also roams. They steal and we children are being judged for it. We are being beaten just because we are street children. They board on the buses and do pick pocketing. They steal things in the market. If anybody tries to follow them, they attack



them with blade or other pointed things. But sadly, we children are judged for these things. We are the ones who have been beaten. We want that strict actions should be

taken against such person so that they stop doing such things and harming others. Also, after that only we will be able to spend a simple and respectful life."

## CHILDREN DEMAND SAFE PLACE TO PLAY

Reporter Deepak

Balaknama reporters organized a group meeting during the visit of South Delhi. While sharing their problems, one child said, "There is a very beautiful and big park near our slum. We children regularly go there for playing. We feel very happy while going there. But this happiness is also snatched from us." telling about the reason, children said, "There are few elder men who come in the park and do unfamiliar and obscene things. Seeing them we feel ridiculous and did not want to play there near them. We don't want to go there as we don't want



to learn such things. That's why we want that one guard should be assigned for this park so that no such activities can occur again." Children are afraid that they will learn

wrong things from those men that's why they want that these men should not enter into the park so that they can learn healthy things in their childhood.

## HARD TIME FOR KIDS MAKING GARLANDS FOR SURVIVAL

rather they wander here and there and meet different types of good or bad persons. That's why we started sending them for so that they don't wander instead they will sat and learn something." Children sharing their views said, "Some parents bring Peepal leaves from the jungles whereas some of us have to go and search for it. We earn Rs 1 for making 12 garlands. That's why we children have to work hard for making so many garlands so that we earn more."



Sharing their problems, they further added, "While making the garlands, we often get hurt by the needles due to which our finer and hand aches badly. Few of us work under the contractor; he has given us the work as he doesn't have to pay us more. He pays us less and sends those garlands at a high price. We want that after so much of hard work we should get the right price for our work. Our hard work is paying off for others not for us."

## BALAKNAMA REPORTER MET STATE COMMISSION MEMBER

Reporter Aanchal

Dr. Preeti Verma met one of our Balaknama reporters, Aanchal. She was keen to know how we run our newsletter. Telling about the conditions our reporter has to face, she said, "I had to face lots of problems in my past. I was a street child who used to wander here and there. One day, I met Balaknama reporters and they helped

me in various possible manners. They helped me to move forward in my life and here I am today. Whatever I am today, it's all because of them only." Listening to her, Dr. Preeti Verma got very happy. Telling about herself, the Dr. said, "I work under the department of State Commission for Protection of Child Rights, Uttar Pradesh. I felt obliged after meeting and knowing the Balaknama reporter,

Aanchal. I wish all the children for a successful life and want to congratulate the ones who are already achieved success. I also want to thank and congratulate Aanchal and all the Balaknama members for helping these children in various possible manners. Keep working like this so that more children can come in contact with Balaknama and keep motivating more children towards studies."



## SLEEPING IN OPEN : NIGHTMARE FOR STREET CHILDREN

Reporter Jyoti

In a support group meeting organized in Lajpat Nagar, our reporters got to know that children sleep in the park after working for whole day as rag pickers. The park in which children sleep is well known by the name- Kinnar Park. Though it is a park but there are too many jhuggis inside it. The bitter truth about it is that the sexual assault of girls is being getting more and more these days. Children are being used for wrong purposes. They told about it to their parents but they ignored it. Though some parents thought about it and went to police station for complaint. In fact policemen caught these people but then also the crime rate was not

getting low as these people get bailed by corruption and again harass girls." Due to all these things, girls sleep at their workplace only or in the market where they go for work. But then also they have to listen to many things and people judge them by saying that something wrong is happened with them that's why they are not going back to their homes. Girls are disrespected. They are being judged wrong for not doing anything. Children said, "Now, how should we save ourselves? How to survive in this world where nobody wants to stand with us? Our parents also don't look after us. They are drunk and senseless. Whom should we ask for help? Police? Parents? Society?"

## PARENTS FORCING GIRLS INTO CHILD LABOR

Talkative reporter Kajal and reporter Deepak

Recently we got shocking news from West Delhi. There are many families who are forcing girls for doing work. They don't want them to do work for learning and earning rather they want them to do this so that they don't have to face any problem in their marriages. When the reporters met these girls, they said, "We belong to Gujarat and this work of ferri is very important in our society. This work is more important for girls as if any girl does not know how to roam and sell things then she has to face lots of problems in her marriage. If somehow any girl gets married and she does not this work then her husband gives her divorce." Due to all these things their parents



force them to do this work. Explaining their problems, girls said, "We don't like this tradition. We have to leave early in the morning around 8 am in the morning and then have to wander under the scorching sunshine to sell

our items. There is one more reason with it that is there are some boys who look at us with obscenity and talk filthy about us which we don't like. We want to get rid of these old traditions soon so that we can also live a normal life."

## 6-YEAR-OLD EARNING FOR FAMILY

From pg. 1 goes to the vegetable market with his mother to work and collect the vegetable which tumble outs the trucks and sell them door to door. This is how earns and give money to his mother for their survival.

When our reporter Aanchal met him, she asked, "Why don't you go to the school?" For which he replied, "I do want to study like other children but sadly my family is so poor that I have to work daily for our survival. If I

don't go out for work, we will not have food to fulfill our stomach and other basic needs. That's why I always pray for some management so that I can study in my free time and don't have to leave my work too."

## CHILDREN FEELING UNSAFE WHERE THEY WORK

Reporter Jyoti

During a support group meeting we got to know that their different types of work in which children are involved. Some work as house helpers in bungalows whereas some has to wander in streets for selling buckets and other plastic-wares instead of old clothes. Then these kids have to sell those clothes in the market. At times, they set their own

stalls in different one day markets like Tuesday market, Wednesday market or Sunday market. There they sell different clothes and materials. Mostly girls are involved in this work. Sadly, the girls who work in the market are being harassed by their co-workers and other people. While giving money to the girls, some people tries to snatch their hands and not only this, they even say filthy words to them. If any girl



stands against this then she has been abused and beaten. That's why girls are afraid of standing for themselves, they are afraid that the same people may follow them towards their home after work and may hurt them on the way. Telling about the incidents, a 15 years old girl, Suman (changed name) said, "We, girls have to go through such situations daily. We are being harassed daily without any fear. We

girls are totally unsatisfied and unhappy due to this harassment. Our parents also don't bother about us. Even after knowing everything, they ignore such things. They say that we should also ignore these things and should not say anything to anybody as we have to work there only. If we started speaking for ourselves then nobody will allow us to enter the market. Our survival will be in danger."

# ALCOHOLIC PEOPLE HINDERING THE WAY OF GETTING EDUCATION

Reporter Jyoti

During a visit in East Delhi, our reporter met few school going children. Telling about their problems, they said, "There are some drunken men who used to stand in our way to school and back to home and abuse us. They disturb us a lot. Not only this, but they force us to bring gutkha, tobacco and cigarettes for them. On denying, they beat us. When we told

about it to our parents and they come with us to see those drunken people, they run away seeing our parents. While going back to home, we just fear that if those people again caught us for complaining about them to our parents then what will do? How will we save ourselves from them then?" Due to too much fear, some children have already stopped going to school regularly so that they don't have to face these men.



# BALANAMA AND BADHTE KADAM IN HEADLINES

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



• Street and working children celebrated Christmas and congratulated each other.



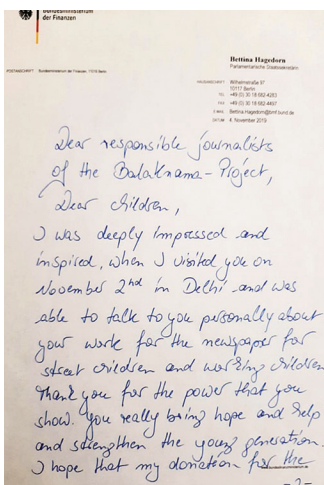
• Distribution of warm clothes by a member of the State Commission



• Children learned leadership qualities diligently in a four-day workshop in Lucknow.



• Special invitation to the Balaknama team to be part of the celebration at the German Children's Embassy, New Delhi



• Mr. Gunnar John, Minister of Finance Affairs, German Embassy, New Delhi and gave a letter of appreciation of Ms. Bettina Hagedorn for the Balaknama team.



• Gurugram police became friends with Badhte Kadam members, Gurugram police spoke directly to them

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.

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