

Want to support
Balaknama?

Give news lead and send in your suggestions and contributions to the given address – 31 Basement, Gautam Nagar, New Delhi – 110049
Ph. No. 011- 41644471
balaknamaeditor@gmail.com

BALAKNAMA

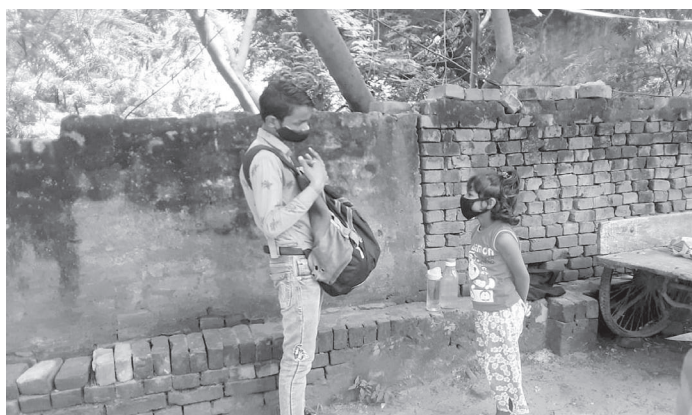
UNIQUE NEWSPAPER FOR AND BY STREET CONNECTED CHILDREN

“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.

COVID-19 VACCINATION: WHAT STREET-CONNECTED CHILDREN HAVE TO SAY

Talkative reporter Vishal, Rustum Bharti, Vishal, and reporter Kishan, Sangeeta, Aanchal, Deepak, Ravi.

As we all know, for a long time the corona pandemic has created a ruckus in our entire country. Due to the fear of this disease, the situation is that humans are running away from each other. From people losing their jobs to the loss of their family members, many families have endured severe pain. Of late, but a ray of hope has come and gradually we Indians have started winning the battle with Corona. Today the situation has improved a lot. Along with this, a very important role in winning the war against Corona has also been played by the vaccine of COVID-19. Initially, there were different rumors about the vaccine, due to which many people were hesitant to get vaccinated. But now slowly everyone is getting their vaccination done. Along with this, the government has made another announcement that now it is also manufacturing

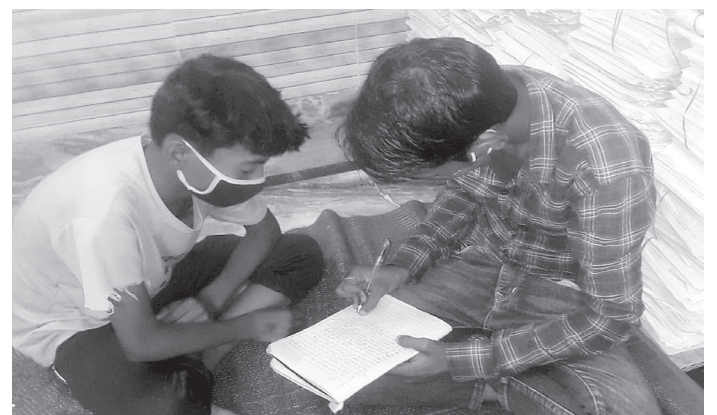


vaccines for children so that children can also be kept safe from this virus. It is possible that in the coming 1 or 2 months, children will also start getting the covid-19 vaccine. To know the opinion of the children on this subject, our talkative reporters Sultan and Rahim (names changed) tried to get the opinion from the street-connected children living in Sarai Kale Khan, Noida, Lucknow, East Delhi and they found that children have mixed opinions regarding the vaccination.

Rahul (name changed) said that "He has watched on TV that

many people have died because of the vaccine, so he will not get the vaccine." Rahmat and Hussain (name changed) said that "They have heard that after 10 years of vaccination the person will die and that is why both the brothers will also not get the vaccine." Ramu (name changed) said that by getting the vaccine "People get sick and then they die".

Along with this, some children are also told that "If they do not get the vaccine, then they will not be able to travel by rail or take advantage of other government facilities. Talking to most children, it



was found that children have negative thoughts or opinions about the vaccine and on the other hand, many children have positive thinking about the vaccine.

One of them is child Shilu (name changed), he told that "My mother is older and she has also got the vaccine and she is absolutely healthy. She had just a slight fever, apart from that she is fine now. He will also get himself vaccinated whenever the vaccine is available for the children." Balu (name changed) said that "Both his parents have got the vaccine and nothing happened

to them so he is also ready to get the vaccine." Apart from this, many more children shared a positive attitude about corona vaccination and shared that most people in the country are getting vaccinated and their own parents, grandparents, or people living in the neighborhood have got the vaccine, and nothing happened to them and they are completely healthy. In just 2 or 3 days there was a slight fever or body ache, fatigue, etc. But after that everything has become completely normal. If the children's vaccine comes, they will get it done.

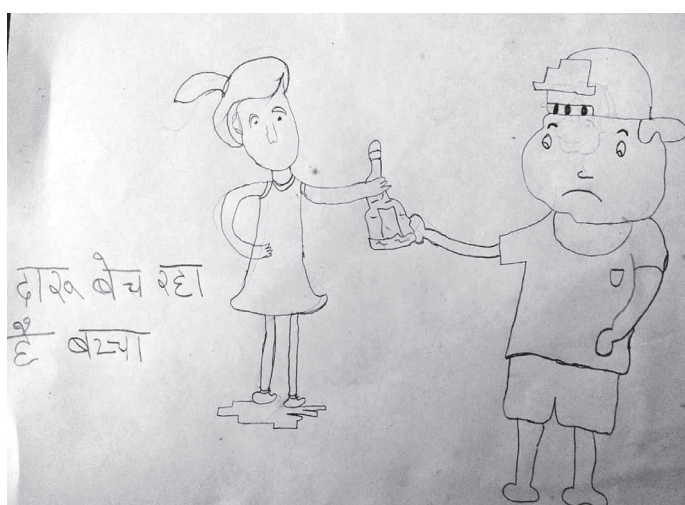
INNOCENT CHILDREN MOVING TOWARDS CRIME

Bureau report

Balaknama reporter visited a slum and during this visit, it came to know that in this slum innocent children who are 10-13 years old are involved in illegal work. When the Balaknama reporter investigated the area, it was found that recently the government has issued an order to close the private liquor shop, due to which now only government liquor shops open and these shops have a very long line. That's why most people do not like to go to the liquor store. Given this situation, some greedy people have started involving small children in supplying liquor bottles. Let's get detailed information. Some elder people buy liquor from the government liquor shop and

keep it in a safe place around their house so that no one has any doubts. 10-year-old Gopal (name changed) who is involved in this work said that "These people buy liquor from government contracts and get children to sell liquor bottles for more money than that they have bought the liquor bottle.

The children shared that "While supplying liquor, they have to face many difficulties, such as many times the policemen, seeing the children doing such work, they beat them and also take them to the police station and threaten the children to lock them in the police station. But our boss stops them from taking the children to the police station by bribing them." Children are getting away from their education and



are moving towards crime. Although the children do not get much money for doing this work, the parents of the children are also happy with this work because they are only concerned with money but the children are afraid that

their life may be ruined due to this work. About 30 children took part in the meeting and narrated their problems, they said that "There are some children here who do the work of selling drugs to run their household expenses and

some older people are helping the children to do this work. These people give 300 rupees per day to the children. The parents of the children are also aware that their children are involved in this wrong act but they do not have any problem or objection from it. Whenever the police come for patrolling, these children are caught and taken away, but the owner stops them from taking the children to the police station by bribing the police.

The owner gives ₹ 1000 every month to the police so that the police should not visit this area very frequently. Whenever there is a police visit, these people stop selling liquor at that time and when the police leave, these people start selling liquor again and their work continues like this.

RISING PRICES HAVE TAKEN A TOLL ON THE HAPPINESS OF STREET-CONNECTED CHILDREN

Talkative reporter Vishal and Rustom and reporter Ravi

The effect of rising inflation and corona has not only been on adults but its effect has also been seen on children. Today, through our talkative reporters, we have brought special news for you on this subject. Rising inflation and corona have had an impact, especially on the street and working children. To know this topic more deeply, today through this news we will meet those children who used to go to school days before the corona epidemic, but now due to the corona epidemic, they are engaged in work. 10-year-old Ashu (name changed) said, "We used to sell water

bottles in buses and outside the park earlier. Due to the covid lockdown, everyone was forced to remain imprisoned in the house for several months, but when the lockdown opened, these people come to the park for entertainment and refreshment, but in view of the rising inflation and coronavirus infection, most of the people bring food items and water bottles, etc. from their own home. Because of this, children have lost their work of selling water bottles and some food items outside the park. Then these children adopted a new way to earn money to arrange one-time food in a day - these children have started begging with any handicapped and the two of



them divide the money they get from begging.

9-year-old Sohail (name changed) said, "It is the same at stations now. People carry most of their food items and beverages with them and due to this, it has become very difficult to find employ bottles and junk even in trains. For this reason, many children

are now engaged in the work of stealing iron rods because the financial conditions are very pathetic in their families, and child labor has become a compulsion for the children. Due to the effect of inflation and lack of means of earning, it is affecting them and their families as well. Our talkative reporters also interacted with

many such children who live in their homes and study in government schools. These children told that "Now our parents also do not give money for education expenses as before or are hesitant to give money. Earlier children used to express their desire for anything related to studies, then their parents refused them once or twice but at the end they provide the study material and support to children." But now parents also lost their work or their work put on hold, the parents avoid to talk whenever their children ask for money. Seeing the pathetic condition of their home and parents, children have also stopped insisting on anything from the parents.

STREET-CONNECTED CHILDREN ARE DEVASTATED BY THE DISPLACEMENT OF THEIR SHANTIES

Reporter Vijay and talkative reporter Sumit

Ever since the government issued the notice of demolition of the famous Banjara Market in Gurugram 56, more than 1000 poor families are at risk of lack of a place to stay. Banjara Market is famous for cheap goods, here home furnishings are available at cheap and affordable prices. People told that they have no place to live now and their children used to go to study at Chetna NGO center and now do not know what will happen to the education of their children?



Kapil [name changed] told that "Now he will have to leave this place soon and he will not be able to come to study

even at the center." It directly affects the livelihood of more than 1000 poor families. The artisans working here say that

"Whenever they share their problems with the police, they do not listen to them at all and say that they are just doing their duty."

Ravena (name changed) told that "My family is living here for more than 10 years by working hard and kept about 25000 rupees items for sale, but after hearing the order of the government, there was such chaos that whatever our family save to sell the decor material, all that stuff got broken and my the family suffered a lot." Champa (name changed) cried that she was not given any notice and some

people suddenly came and have started breaking into their homes and shops overnight. If we have given notice a few days earlier, we would have saved a lot of our belongings." The demolition of homes and shops started when all of them were sleeping peacefully or were involved in their work. It is a very pathetic situation where innocent children are forced to sleep under the open sky. Parents and children say that "If there was such a thing, the government should have informed 10 days ago but nothing like this happened and where should we go now?"

STREET-CONNECTED CHILDREN ARE BEFOOLED ON THE NAME OF EDUCATION



Reporter Kishan and talkative reporter Radhika

The repeated lockdown has also become a problem during the corona pandemic for the last 2 years. The Balaknama reporter visited places around Delhi's Dilshad Garden Metro Station and discussed with the children about their problems. Describing their

problems, the children shared that "As you know how many problems we are facing due to the closure of our schools due to corona epidemic from the year 2020, schools have also been closed and children are not able to get a proper education.

It became a problem in front of the parents that where and how the children should

study. In the settlements where these children live, some people come from outside and live in rented rooms.

These people have studied till class 12th but they have an only degree but they do not have any knowledge of subjects. Some parents send their children to these people for tuition, even then the children dont get any kind of help with education. The parents of these children are illiterate, these tuition people take advantage of the poor people because the parents are unable to read what their children have studied or what they have learned by going to the tuition. Parents pay Rs 150 per month for tuition. Due to the closure of schools, it is a big problem for the children that they are unable to get a quality education.

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST DURING RAINY SEASONS

Reporter Sangeeta

You all know how much it is raining nowadays and due to excessive rain, street-connected children are facing a lot of problems. Now you must be thinking that what problems our street-connected children must have to face in this rainy season? This news is from the township of Lavkush Nagar, Lucknow. When the Balaknama reporter went to the slum to organize a support group meeting, they noticed a child who was carrying the soil on her head. Then the girl told her problem during the conversation and said that "the walls of my house are made of mud, which has broken and fallen due to excessive rain, we are carrying the soil to make the wall so that we can build that wall again. Due to the rain,



there are a lot of earthworms in our home and water gets filled inside our houses. We have a lot of problems with draining the water. Our school clothes, bags, and books, etc. get wet, even that also what we do, we have to stay in this hut."

NIGHT CURFEW: PROBLEM FOR WORKING AND STREET-CONNECTED CHILDREN

Reporter Kishan and talkative reporter Rohan

Would you like to know that due to the curfew being imposed in Noida from 10:00 pm to 6:00 am at present, what are the problems faced by street and working children due to this? When Balaknama reporter talked to street-connected children living in the slums of Noida Sector 49, a 17-year-old boy told that "Most of the children here work as garbage pickers and the children had a rickshaw

of 3 tires which they take with them to pick up the garbage." You must know that the rickshaw that we have, sometimes its brakes get damaged, then we take it to the mechanic's shop and get it repaired. While fixing the brake, the shopkeeper throws the extra wire on the road because those wires would have been damaged, and some children collect those wires. These children do the work rag picking at night because the children say that "there is not much traffic jam on the



road at night and due to this it becomes easy to pick up

the garbage at night. Children pick up the junk at 11:00 in the night." they take a rickshaw and mostly go around such places where they are likely to find more wires lying around. Children keep the wires in a sack, if they do not find anything while picking up the junk, then they also pick up beer bottles, plastic bottles, and paper boxes, etc. The problem with the children is that due to the night curfew in Noida, the children are able to go out to work only at night, whenever they are driving

a rickshaw on the road, the police catch them at the red light. The police scold the children and say that "curfew is in place, you guys don't roam outside like this, go to your home." The children are forced to take the other way to go back home, then all the children pick up the wire and bring it to their house and separate the iron and plastic from it. Children sell plastic for Rs.15 a kg and iron for Rs.20 a kg, and with this small amount, they are surviving with great hardships.

TO SATIATE HUNGER STREET-CONNECTED CHILDREN HAVE TO CLEAN TOILETS



Reporter Kishan and talkative reporter Prashant

This news is from a slum in Noida. BalaKnama reporter organized a support group meeting with the children, in which the children actively participated and discussed the problems of the children. The 13-year-old boy shared that "Some children have migrated from Bihar and settled in Noida and there are 5 members in their house. Parents and three

brothers live in the village and two brothers live in Noida, out of which one brother is 12 years old and the other brother is 15 years old and lives in a rented room in Noida. Both the brothers do the work of cleaning the toilet. Parents do not give these children money to eat snacks from the market, so these children do the work of cleaning the toilet so that they can collect some money. As you must be aware that people migrate to big cities like Delhi,

Noida and live in small rented rooms and such rented rooms do not have private toilets. In such places, the same toilet is used by all, that's why one person does not clean the toilet and the tenant asks the landlord to get the toilet cleaned and in such a situation, the landlord gets the toilet cleaned by paying some money to a sweeper. Children interact with these landlords and request to let them clean the toilets. As we all know if a person cleans a toilet then he takes ₹ 200 and the landlord gives these kids only 50 rupees for cleaning the toilet. Landlords give acid to the children to clean the toilet and when these children clean the toilet with acid, they have to face a lot of problems in cleaning as it smells bad. The toilet is very dirty due to which the children vomit and they also fall ill and when the children are not able to clean the toilet properly, the landlord talks very rudely and does not even pay the money.

WHY ARE CHILDREN FALLING SICK?

Talkative reporter Vicky and Reporter Deepak



After all, why does Vicky (name changed) want a clean place? Let's know this. This news is from at least 2000 families living in the slums of East Delhi, these people work as a maid, sweeper and polish the shoes on the roadside. There are a total of 6 members in Vicky's family, Vicky's first father died many years ago, then his mother got married again but the second father was so addicted to drugs that he also died in the last lockdown. Vicky's mother works in the kothi as a maid and runs all the household expenses. Vicky shared that "There is so much filth and garbage in the area where we live that it becomes difficult to breathe and small children play and eat and drink barefoot in the same dirt, filth, and garbage, due to which children often fall ill." When the parents of the children go to the nearby government

dispensary to get medicines, seeing the long line there, they are forced to go to the private doctor for treatment, but after a day or two, they have no money for the third-day treatment. Children have to live in fever. In this area, the sanitation workers do the cleaning, but due to the overpopulation and too many streets nearby, a lot of dirt and filth spreads again soon after cleaning. It is requested that the cleaning staff will give the necessary attention to this matter and do the cleaning twice a day instead of once so that we children can stay healthy.

LIVING IS A CUMBERSOME TASK FOR STREET-CONNECTED CHILDREN



Talkative reporter Rohan and reporter Shambhu

10-year-old Raj (name changed) lives with his family in a slum in Noida. Raj's father works as a laborer and his mother works as a maid in different houses. Like Raj, many other children also live with their families in a house made of foil and wood. All these families also pay rent every month to the owner of the area. The landlord also has some such rooms in this area which are made of brick and

cement and these rooms have bathroom facilities. But the families living in houses made of foil and wood and plastic have no access to toilets and bathing facilities. Water comes only once in this area and most of the people have to face water scarcity. All the family members and children living in the slums go out to defecate in the open and the girls are forced to take bath in the open. When the families requested the landlord to get the bathroom built, he flatly refused. Since the covid lockdown parent's work is put on hold or not going well and they are not able to pay the rent on time, due to that the landlord uses abusive words with the parents. The child does not like that the landlord uses abusive words with his father and neighbors.

DESTRUCTION OF SLUMS BY AUTHORITIES: MAJOR PROBLEM

Reporter Kishan and talkative reporter Bharti

Street-connected children living in slums in Noida Sector 49 are facing a lot of problems. Balaknama reporter discussed their problems in detail during a conversation with some children, in which a 16-year-old girl said that "There are about 180 slums just away from my home and the children living there work in cycle shops, pick up rags, etc. These children have to face a lot of problems like there is no provision of the bathroom to take bath in their slums due to which the children have to take bath in the open on the roadside near their slums. Boys still take baths in the open but little girls



and women can't take baths in the open. All the women and girls keep a big water drum in front and take bath in some way hiding behind it. People coming from the road try to peep these girls while bathing, which makes the girls very embarrassed and upset. Girls can't even make a separate

place for bathing in the slum because the contractor of the slum has already refused and these girls can't put the tarpaulin on the side of the road separately, otherwise, the authority people will come and destroy it. Now, what should these innocent girls do to escape from this trouble?

ILLICIT WORK AFFECTING THE MENTAL WELL BEING OF THE STREET-CONNECTED CHILDREN



Talkative reporter Nikki and reporter Sangeeta

Let's know what Aarti (name changed) wants to share through this news? Aarti lives in a slum in East Delhi and most of the families who live in this area work as rag pickers. 11-year-old Aarti, while narrating her problem, said, "Obscene acts are being done in front of our slum. Here women and girls openly do obscene acts by

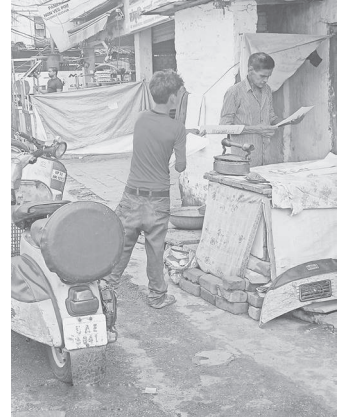
calling men with gestures. Once upon a time, "I want to play. When I had gone to the nearby park, an aunt came out from behind the tree and she held my hand. After luring me with money, she told me that 'she will give you a lot of money if I will be ready to come with her, then I ran away from there by shaking my hand loudly. But this obscene work has increased so much that many small children are

being affected here too. No girl comes out hereafter 8:00 pm. Any girl has an emergency or toilet. Even if she has to go, she definitely takes an elder member with her, it is not possible to go alone. Seeing many girls alone, the people around start saying many abusive words. But the police also do not say anything to them. In such a situation, we children think that those who are responsible for giving us justice are also not stopping all these wrongdoings. After all, where children would go for help? The parents have also become very upset by these obscene acts because it is directly affecting all the small children. I want to convey my point of view to those who do justice for the children through this news. All wrongdoings should be ended as soon as possible and the future of our children can move towards a better direction.

DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES PUSHES STREET-CONNECTED CHILDREN TO WORK

Talkative reporter Sunil and reporter Sangeeta

During a conversation with Balaknama talkative reporter Sunil, he shared that "A child was distributing paper outside the coaching center in Hazratganj, then talked to him and tried to ask the reason for working, then the child told that earlier he was in class 5th and used to study but now he has to do this work under a lot of compulsion because his mother had an accident. She is still admitted to the hospital, the mother has to get treatment and father alone will not be able to bear the cost of the mother's treatment, that's why his father him to help him with money by doing some work'. It is also necessary to fill up his stomach and get his mother



treated too. He lives on the road, sometimes goes home only to hand over money to his father. He sleeps outside when the sidewalk shops are closed at night. He lives on the road so that he can get some work or earn some money so that his mother can get treatment and she will soon be fine."



HELPLESSNESS COMPELS TO DO SCARY WORK

Reporter Sangeeta

We must have seen many times while on the road or in our surrounding areas that some small children are performing stunts, but we are in such a hurry that we do not even think about them that under what compulsion are these children doing such risky work? Balaknama talkative reporter told that "Some people come to our slum to perform these stunts on road with one adult and some children. We have seen such feats in many places. These days a little girl comes here on the road every day to perform stunts, that

little girl does such dangerous stunts that we are scared to see her. Sometimes the girl walks on a thin rope with a stick and sometimes she stands on top of the glass. The rope is tied at a great height from the ground, it is very scary to see how a little girl can walk on the rope on which we dry clothes. People watching the skits sometimes give ₹2, ₹5, or ₹10. With all this money, the family survives, and to get one-time food, this girl is so compelled that she has to work so hard. She is playing with her life. She earns so that she can get food two times! The girl does not even study, she is far away from education.

LIFE OF STREET-CONNECTED CHILDREN FILLED WITH NEVER-ENDING ATROCITIES

Talkative reporter Sargam and reporter Deepak

As you all know, nowadays food is cooked on gas, not on the stove, but still, there are some places in the metropolis cities where no change has taken place and this place is where street-connected children live! This news is about the children living in the Assamese Basti of Lavkushnagar, whose homes do not have a gas cylinder facility and they use clay stoves. To find out the problems that these street-connected families faces while cooking on the clay stove, the reporter of our Balaknama interacted with the children, and during this time children shared that "For



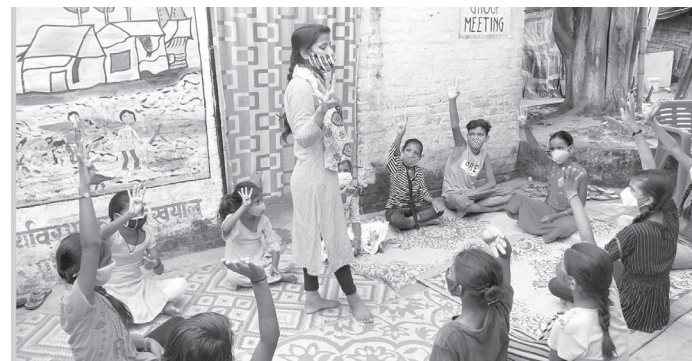
cooking food on the stove, they would need wood as a first thing for which children have to go out looking for wood, if someday they are

unable to get the wood, then it becomes very difficult to cook food!" The biggest problem for these children is when it is a rainy season because the clay stove is made outside their home, so whenever it rains, the stove breaks down, and then again they have to make a clay stove which requires a lot of hard work. Children are forced to make the stove again because if they don't make the stove, then how will they cook food?" It is a big deal that on the one hand, the government is giving free gas-stove, while on the other hand in a metropolis city like Lucknow, people continue to cook food on the stove, due to which their life and belongings are in danger.

DRAINAGE WATER: BREEDING GROUND FOR DISEASES

Talkative reporter Nikki and reporter Sangeeta

When the Balknama reporter interacted with the children of Shram Vihar Nagar Basti through video call and conference call and tried to know the problems of the children, the children told to the talkative reporter Nikki that "Many people are falling ill due to the changing weather, the biggest problem is that there are a lot of mosquitoes here. The place where the children play is flooded with sewer water, due to which there are a lot of mosquitoes, and when we go to play, we



get a lot of mosquitoes bite. We are not even able to sleep properly due to excessive mosquitoes. Due to waking up late in the morning, we get late in going to school and also we scold up by teachers

because of reaching late to the school. Children are also falling ill due to mosquito bites then they are forced to take school leave. Children also miss a lot of homework, due to which there is a



lot of problem during the examination. Due to the sewer water in our community, we are unable to put an even step on the playground. It has also become difficult and does not even feel like eating food

because of the smelly sewer water What should we do to solve this issue? Here the sewer water comes from the nearby colony and even after saying many times, they have done nothing on the matter."

THE PANDEMIC WILL NOT LET US LIVE IN PEACE



Talkative Reporter Sunil and reporter Aanchal

As we all know people working outside face many problems. Similarly, our

working and street-connected children also work outside and face many issues. During the pandemic, these issues just increases, our Balaknama reporter interacted with

children who work all day and night for their survival. They met a child who sells ice-creams door to door from morning till evening. He stated that "there is no earnings and people scold us if we go to their homes for selling ice-creams due to coronavirus as people avoid human contact." It has become difficult to survive and we are unable to feed our families. He said, "every day with hope I go to work for earning money but I do not earn any at the end of the day." Our reporter also stated that this child works hard without taking care of his health.



STREET-CONNECTED CHILDREN INDULGED IN DIFFICULT TASKS

Talkative Reporter Suresh and Reporter Aanchal

Balaknama reporter visited some places in Lucknow and during the visit saw that many children were selling the water pouches and the kids were putting all the pockets in a big bucket and hanging on their shoulders. When the Balaknama reporter talked to the children, the children told that "it is very difficult to do this work but due to the financial condition of our family we have to do this work." After having a detailed discussion with them, 11-year-old Rupesh (name changed) said "All day we children have to carry buckets and sell water pouches but sadly this bucket is very heavy because to keep the water cold we have to put in big pieces of ice in the bucket

as well which increase the weight of the bucket and our hands start hurting by hanging the bucket on the shoulder. But what to do, we are forced to do this work. Not only this, but the children also had to say that we have to board many buses throughout the day so that water pouches can be sold, but many times it happens that we children run to board the bus and the bus driver accelerate the bus very fast and due to that many times we children also fall while boarding the bus and get hurt. Similarly, the children also told their daily routine that how much money they earn from this work throughout the day. 10-year-old Rahul (name changed) said, "He sells a water pouch for Rs 2 and working hard for the whole day, he can earn up to 150-200".

WORKING CHILDREN ARE DEPRIVED OF THEIR HARD-EARNED MONEY



Talkative reporter Sunil and reporter Sangeeta

Street-connected children are forced to do risky work to run the household but even after that, they do not get their due and hard-earned money.

One such news told us by a talkative reporter living in Noida that "His brother is 17 years old and he works in a barbershop. During the conversation with the child, it came to know that during the hiring he was promised

₹ 6000 a month and the child was made to work for the whole month with the assurance of this. But even at the end of the month, he was not given the full amount. The boy told that "he worked for a whole month but he got only ₹ 2000 a month, on asking for the remaining ₹ 4000, the contractor said that 'he has not received money from his boss, whenever the money comes, he will give it to child'. Similarly, the rest of the laborers are also stuck in this trouble, their money has not come yet. If our contractor does it with everyone, how we will run our home? If no steps against them will be taken then our families will be in a lot of trouble."



WILL THIS HAPPEN?

Talkative reporter Muskaan and reporter Jyoti

Our Balaknama reporter visited Noida and interacted with children and got to know that many children work hard day in and day out for their survival. Rahul (changed name) stated that "we leave for work in the morning around 7 AM and return in the evening at 8 PM. We have to face many problems like we used to roam in the scorching heat

and even after that we are unable to sell even one mat in a day." The disheartening fact is that these children work so hard to earn money but their fathers do not bother about this and they play gambling all day. Looking at the other children in the community who have indulged in the game of gambling. These children want police authorities to visit their communities so that these people stop playing such games.

WILL OUR MOTHER COME BACK TO US?

Reporter Sangeeta

This news is from Rajnagar Basti of Agra city. Our Balaknama reporter visited this place, interacted with 3 kids, and tried to understand their problems. First child Kukku (age 8 years), second child Anshu (age 6 years), and third child Ausi (age 4 years). There are 5 members in their home consisting of mother, father, and 3 sisters are brothers. These children live in the slum near Raj Nagar Basti. The father of these children works as a shoemaker in the factory, from which he earns 200 rupees a day and spends all the money on drinking alcohol. Father does not give even 1 rupee to run the expenses of the house. When the Balaknama reporter got detailed information about this subject from the children, it came to know that the children's mother was having an affair with someone and when this thing came into the



light, there was a lot of fight between the parents. The children's mother runs away saying to the father that "I do not want to be with you." These children currently live with their aunt's daughter and their father lives somewhere else. Aunt's daughter takes care of the children and the father of the children sometimes comes to meet these children and also gives 200 or 300 rupees to the children occasionally. Aunt's daughter takes some money from the same money for herself and gives

pennies to those children to buy toffees. Aunt's daughter makes Kukku (age 8 years) do all the housework, if he refuses to do any work, then aunt's daughter scolds the children as well as taunts that "Your father is an alcoholic and mother run away with someone else and you all three children living on our mercy." The children are very sad to hear these things and they start crying silently. The children play that "Wherever our mother is, come back and we start living a happy life again."

CHILDLINE TEAM: A SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN



Reporter Poonam

This news is about four innocent children residing in the slums of Agra. When we interacted with these children then the eldest son 11 years old

Rajiv (name changed) stated that “our mother died a few years back and after her demise, my father married to her sister-in-law. My aunt has two kids one son and one daughter.” All the children live with their

father. He told us that, “our parents had a fight and because of which our mother left. Our father pushes us to sell toys at the traffic lights. We can earn Rs. 200-300 in a day. When we do not go for work our father scolds us and beats us.” These children didn't go to work for a few days and their father dismissed them from the house. They went to their grandmother's home but she also did not allow them to stay so they had no other option except to spend their lives on the streets. These children met a kind-hearted person who took them to childline and then our Balaknama reporter talked to the childline coordinator they said that after their medical they will provide shelter homes by Child Welfare Committee.

NAIL-BITING: UNHEALTHY PRACTICES

Talkative Reporter Suresh and Reporter Anchal



You must be aware that whenever someone does not feel like working, he starts biting his nails. Balaknama reporter discussed with the children what are the problems we may have to face if we chew and eat nails. Nail chewing is injurious to health, due to which a person may have to face a lot of problems such as colon cancer, by chewing nails, the bacteria of the nails reach our intestines and diseases like colon cancer can also occur. People who have a habit of biting their nails have to face diseases like dermatophagia and the formation of sores on the skin, which can damage the nerves and can be fatal. By chewing nails, people also become a victim of stress and

by chewing nails, the dirt of the nails reaches the teeth, due to which the teeth become weak and also start breaking quickly. Human papillomavirus infection causes lumps near the lips and mouth if someone has a habit of chewing their nails. On chewing nails, bacteria go into our stomach, due to which we also get stomach infections. Balaknama reported explained to the children that “We should cut the nails from time to time and keep the nails clean so that we can avoid the problems caused by dirty nails.”

STREET-CONNECTED CHILDREN ARE EMPOWERED

Talkative Reporter Javed, Reporter Ravi

Balaknama presents several issues and problems faced by street-connected children in society. At times we bring their problems in front of you and at times we present their acts of bravery. Following the legacy, we present an empowering story of a child who showed resilience during

difficult times and continued their studies through CHETNA's intervention. Street-connected children have so much pressure that they are unable to study. In this view, the Government has proposed Open Basic Education for the children who are dropouts from school or who cannot go to school due to any reason. CHETNA enrolls working



and street-connected children | through OBE. Our street

educators teach them on a daily basis and recently they gave exams in the head office of the organization situated in Gautam Nagar. The children have also been awarded certificates namely, 11 children of class 3rd, 38 children of class 5th, and 44 children of class 8th. This shows that if given the right direction these children can do wonders.

CHILDREN PROMISED TO STAY HEALTHY

Talkative Reporter Sunil, Reporter Anchal

Our Balaknama reporter surveyed the slum areas of Lucknow and tried to find out how the street-connected children are surviving in the slum areas. Our reporter visited the slums and saw an astonishing event. They saw children throw stones to get fruits from the tree and the fruits fell at dirty



places without cleaning and washing the fruits they eat. After seeing this, our reporter aware children of the ongoing terrors of COVID-19 and how important it is to maintain hygiene during this time. Our reporter is aware of the children that they should eat clean fruits and vegetables to avoid health problems. Children promised to maintain hygiene and practice good health.



EARNING MONEY HAS BECOME A TEDIOUS JOB

Talkative Reporter Jamshed, Reporter Kishan

People from some other states come from villages to cities like Delhi-Noida to earn money with their families and feed their families by doing daily wage work. Our Balaknama reporter spoke to Raju (name changed) at one such place in Delhi and tried to know his problem. Raju works with his father to sell vegetables on a cart. The income earned from selling vegetables is used to run the household expenses. Raju says that “There is no free space to park the cart in the place where they live, that's



why they keep the cart next to their house by locking it. Some people live under the metro flyover and consume a lot of intoxicants. There is a total of four to five people involved in

theft, out of which two people look around to see if no one is coming and the other two people are engaged in the work of stealing. Sometimes they are caught by the police while stealing, then the police kill them a lot and threaten to take them to the police station. People but get away from there by paying some bribe to the police. The person whose cart is stolen then they have to face a lot of troubles they don't have enough money to buy a new cart again and they are forced to put them in the basket I have to sell vegetables by putting them in it, but by doing such work their income becomes very less.

PARENTS DO NOT GET RESPECT FROM SCHOOLS

Bureau report

Parent's teacher meeting plays a pivotal role in a child's life. In the education clubs run by CHETNA parents-teacher meeting is conducted monthly where educators tell parents about their children's progress, aware about their studies, and encourage them to go to schools. During the meeting, we got to know that there are many parents who do

not go to school. Upon asking the reason children and parents told that the teachers do not talk nicely with the parents and at times they do not give reply to their questions. This kind of treatment becomes disheartening for both the parents and children. The children get scared from the teachers and hence at times they hesitate in asking questions to them and clear their doubts.

CHILDREN'S LIVES CAN BE IN DANGER DUE TO DRAINAGE



Talkative Reporter Sunil and reporter Aanchal

Our Balaknama reporter went to conduct a survey in Lucknow on the way they saw big drainage which was surrounded by many slums. Our reporters tried to extract the information from children about the problems faced by them due to the drainage then the children stated that “We have to

face many difficulties as the water sweeps into our homes. Our siblings play in this dirty water. Recently a part of drainage has broken and we are scared that due to bad weather conditions our shanties should also not get collapsed.” There are a lot of unfortunate incidents happening in and around these slum areas they do not have proper shelters and not even their own lands.

WHY DO STREET-CONNECTED CHILDREN FACE ATROCITIES?

Talkative Reporter Veer, Reporter Jyoti

Our Balaknama reporter interacted with children residing on streets in Noida and got to know that there are many children who are involved in making plastic bags for water in a factory. There are some children who are migrated from different states and some children who reside the nearby areas who work in the factory. Vishal (changed name) stated that “Earlier I used to study and parents used to work. As the pandemic came my parent’s work was put on hold and I was compelled to work about the financial condition of the family.” The child works in the factory from morning 10 AM to 8 PM in the evening. It is a cumbersome job because if any unfortunate thing



happens the owner decreases money from their salary. After working for long hours and so much hard work, he only gets RS.80 at the end of the day in which the family bears their expenses. Our Balaknama reporter asked the children whether they get money for

having lunch? To which they said, “We bring lunch from our home. Our owner at times beats us if we drop any plastic bag and he has said if any outsider comes in the factory and asks you about education tell them that you study and comes here just to see things.”

CHANGING WEATHER CONDITIONS LEADING TOWARDS SICKNESS

Talkative reporter Sunil and Reporter Anchal

Balaknama reporter visited some places in Lucknow and during this visit tried to know about the conditions of the street and working children are living in settlements at present. But the shocking thing is that when Balaknama reporter also saw the children like this in the settlement, the reporter was shocked. So let’s get to know in detail about this topic. The reporter saw that some children were trying to pluck the fruit from the tree, but the way the children plucked the fruit was different. The children



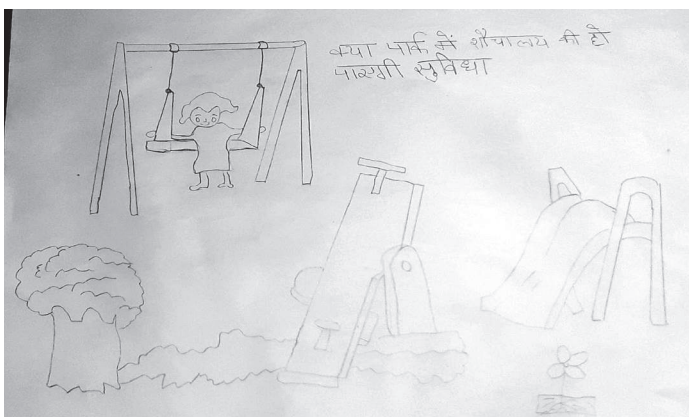
were trying to get the fruit by throwing stones at the fruit, even after targetting the stone many times at fruit, the fruit was not falling on the ground. After trying many times, the children were finally getting the fruit with

the help of a stone, the place where the fruits were falling from the tree was very dirty and the children were eating the fruit without washing it. Seeing this, the reporter made the children understand that the way Corona is

wreaking havoc right now, in such situations, all children should take special care of cleanliness so that no child got sick. Balaknama reporter was explaining this to the children when a child said that “we are not afraid of any disease, this disease is nothing.” Then the reporter explained to the children and

said that do not think like this, to keep yourself healthy, you should eat clean things and if you eat things like this from dirty places, then all of you will fall sick, so eat clean food and stay healthy. After getting this information, the children were very happy and promised that from today onwards they will not make such mistakes and will inform other children not to make such mistakes.

WILL PARKS HAVE TOILET FACILITIES?



Talkative Reporter Priti, Reporter Kishan

This news is from the slum areas of Noida. Our Balaknama reporters conducted a meeting with

children and they stated that there are many parks in the area and the parks are huge. Children used to go to school in the morning and after they return they used to go to the park for recreational

activities. The major problem in the park was that there were no nearby public toilets in the park, so people used to release themselves in the open spaces in the park. When the guard used to go on rounds in the park, there used to be a stinking smell and they blamed the children for doing ill activities in and around the park. When the children tried to explain to him that it was other people who used the open spaces for the toilet then the guard used to scold them and didn’t allow them to enter the premises. Children are worried if the park didn’t get public toilets then they won’t be allowed to visit the park.



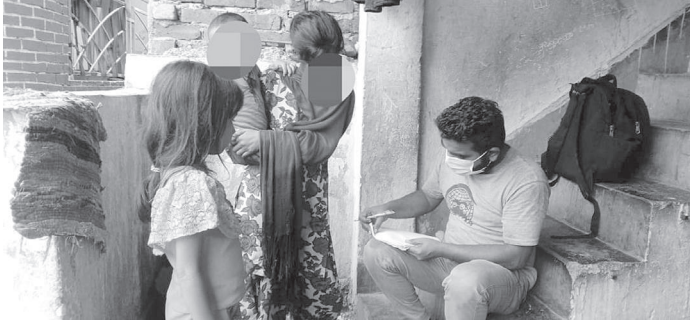
AADHAR CARD: IDENTITY CRISIS FOR CHILDREN

Talkative Reporter Rohan, Reporter Shambhu

This news is from the slums of Noida of the street-connected children. The families of these parents are indulged in labor work and due to the pandemic their work was put on hold and now it is difficult to get work. The major problem of these families as they do not have any savings and all the money they earned was spent on the rent and

meeting the living expenses. These families do not have important documents of their children which are required for enrollment in school and they do not have enough money to get their Aadhar Cards made or updated. These families want the Government should provide some provision of Aadhar Card camps so that these children can also get their documents and prevail their right to education.

I LIKE TO STUDY



Reporter Ravi

Today through the medium of Balaknama news we would like to share news of a child's struggle that you would like to encourage for studying and prosper in life. This news is of a 13-years-old girl named Shabana (name changed). She

hails from a small town in Uttar Pradesh and resides in the slums of South Delhi. The family came to Delhi 10 years before in the search of employment. Her father is an auto driver and her mother is a housewife. She has four younger siblings and one elder sibling. They live in a small rented house.

She has to look after her siblings and do household chores. She told our reporters that she has never been to school. Her intervention with CHETNA made her release the importance of education, and gradually she started studying. Our educator encouraged and counseled her parents about the importance of education so that she can also help her siblings to study. Whenever she gets time, she comes to the education club to study and also participates in different activities. Presently, she is enrolled in OBE (open basic education) in class 3rd and her parents are so encouraged that they have motivated her to go to tuition also.



EDUCATION: A DISTANT DREAM FOR STREET-CONNECTED CHILDREN

Reporter: Poonam

The Balaknama reporter intervened with street-connected children residing in Agra. Children shared their woes and anxieties about their enrollment in schools. 8 years old Shikha stated that "there is a Government school nearby in our community in which children want to take admission. When they went to take admission along with their parents, they were informed that the school admissions have been completed for the academic

year and it's closed now." The school authorities refused to take admission of 10-12 children. The inability of taking admissions of the Government schools has made children furious. Their parents are daily wage earners and due to their financial crisis, these children are unable to take admission in private schools. They cannot take admission in Government school as well. They wish to take admission in Government schools so that they can continue their studies hassle-free.

CHILDREN GAVE A SECOND LIFE TO A BIRD

Reporter Kishan, Talkative Reporter Aayush

Our country got Independence on 15th August 1947. Every citizen of the country celebrates it in different ways. Children with great zeal and enthusiasm celebrate this day by flying kites and rejoicing in open spaces. Our Balaknama reporter spoke to a child residing in the slums of Seemapuri. Vishal (change name) stated that on the eve of Independence Day he and his friend was



flying kite when they saw a pigeon in the sky. The pigeon got stuck in the thread of the kite which is very sharp and broke its leg. Vishal and his friend saw that and the pigeon was bleeding. The children went to buy a plastic bag and wrapped the bird in it. They took the pigeon to the caretaker and finally they took him to the place where people feed birds. Vishal and his friend from time to time took care of the pigeon and ensured he gets food and recovered soon.

STREET-CONNECTED CHILDREN FACE A LACK OF SUPPORT

Talkative Reporter Sahana, Reporter Deepak

13 years old Sahana (name changed) hails from Bihar but for the past 8-9 years she has been residing in the slums of East Delhi. There are 12 members in her family. Last year in the lockdown, her father expired due to tuberculosis because of which the family's financial condition became worst. Her mother was compelled to sell fish, which Sahana also used to accompany her mother.



The work couldn't last long and it was put on hold due to

the pandemic. In Sahana's neighborhood, people used to rent small shops and sell groceries, but Sahana has seen police bothering these people. The police charge RS. 500 from these people and if they are unable to give them then they beat them and destroy their shops and didn't allow them to set up their shops again. Sahana didn't like all of this and she was determined to bring this issue in front of society through Balaknama to portray how the police are misusing their powers.

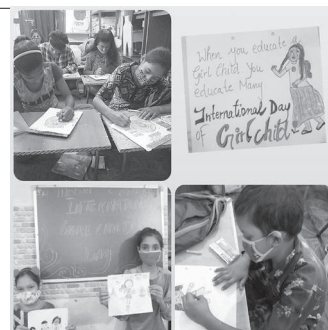
BALANAMA AND BADHTE KADAM IN HEADLINES



On the occasion of Dussehra, children gave the message of good over evil.



Hygiene Kit distribution to children by Uttar Pradesh Police Officer



Children made colorful pictures on International Girl Child Day.

OPEN DEFECATION: A SEVERE PROBLEM

Talkative Reporter Mohini, Reporter Saurav

Our Balaknama reporter conducted a Support group Meeting in Noida sector 62 and discussed various issues and problems of children. The children were told that there are no nearby toilets in the area and they have to walk 1.5 KM to another village. People who have rickshaws can easily go but for others who do not have, it becomes

an issue. There are many people who avoid walking so they practice open defecation during the night and children also release themselves in open spaces. There are only two public toilets and there is a long queue. During the nighttime, it is very scary to go to the washroom as it gets dark, and on the way their many people who pass comments on girls so we do not have any option except to practice open defecation.

WHAT IS OUR IDENTITY?

Reporter Ravi

Dear readers, you must be confused after reading the headline but this is an important issue related to street-connected children as they have an identity crisis. There are several reasons behind this crisis to name a few are the documents of children being destroyed by parents during their fights, or the children being born conventionally at their homes, illiteracy amongst parents about the childbirth certificates. Our Balaknama

reporter went to Sarai Kale Khan and interacted with children and concluded that many children in the area do not have any identity cards. If we talk about the whole city of Delhi then the numbers would be astonishing. The question which arises here is that, "how these children can prove their citizenship?" As we all know everything is digitalized now, but these children even lack smartphones so they cannot even take online appointments, and they do not have enough money to get their identity cards.

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.