

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.

STREET AND WORKING CHILDREN SHARED THEIR VIEWS ON INDIA'S 75TH INDEPENDENCE DAY

Reporter Kishan, Ravi, Aanchal, Sangeeta etc.

As we all are well aware that on the 15th of August 2022, India completed its 75 years of independence. This time special preparations were also made to celebrate the 75th anniversary of independence with great pomp. Every citizen of the country participated enthusiastically in the celebration of independence and the tricolour theme of "Har Ghar Tiranga" made our Independence Festival even more memorable. This year, the tricolour flag was seen everywhere in comparison to before. Badhte Kadam (a federation of street-connected children) members organized rallies on the occasion of 75th Independence Day in the cities of Noida, Lucknow and Delhi with pomp and raised slogans related to Independence Day

and also hoisted the tricolour flag.

During the field visits to the roadside or vulnerable slums, Balaknama reporters interacted with street and working children at different places and tried to know their thoughts on Independence Day and asked them "what does freedom mean to them.?" The children said that "There was a time when the whole country was under British control and used to live like a slave to the British. What the British asked us Indians to do, we then used to work according to their instructions and also had to face many types of discrimination such as caste-related discrimination, colour discrimination (black and white), rich-poor etc. But the country got independence in 1947 due to the hard work and fighting of our soldiers and leaders. For the last two or three years, due



to COVID, we have not been able to celebrate any festival well. But this time Independence Day was celebrated with different pomp. Our reporters tried to know the view of working children on Independence Day at places like Noida, Delhi, Agra, Lucknow, etc. and asked them the question "Do Street and working children consider themselves free?" Children, who still work from morning till evening in facto-

ries, companies, roadsides, hotels and dhabas, do they feel that they are free? Are they able to play, study and learn like other children or are they spending the whole day in child labour? The more serious the topic is, the more seriously the children answered these questions. Vikas (name changed) said, "I have 7 members in my family, three brothers, three sisters and a mother. Mother works as a maid in the Kothi. My father

died 2 years ago. People have rightly said that children cannot enjoy as much as they can in the presence of a father. Since my father died, I have had to fulfil all my responsibilities and I had to leave my studies and I had to work. At present, I do water supply work from 7 in the morning to 10:00 in the evening and with 6000 rupees to support myself and my family. I run the expenses. I have a dream to study but if I don't work, what will I eat?"

14-year-old Jyoti (name changed), living in West Delhi, said that "We live next to the railway track, most of the people in this place do the work of selling liquor and many children living in this area are engaged in selling liquor for money. Even when the police come here for a visit, then by bribing them, the whole thing is

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STREET AND WORKING CHILDREN ARE READY TO TAKE EVERY RISK OF TWO TIMES MEAL

Talkative reporter Usha and reporter Kishan

When the Balaknama reporter came to meet the street and working children living in Noida, a child shared that a 14-year-old boy lives near his house. He works in a roadside eatery shop from 6 am to 5 pm. That boy has come from his village to Noida to work. He lives in a rented room with some of his village friends in Noida. He stays in the room with his companions because the rent of the room is three to four thousand rupees and he cannot pay that much money alone. That boy does the work of making bhatura (Fluffy deep-fried leavened sourdough bread) at the shop. When he is pouring the bhaturas in a pan of hot oil to fry the bhatura, sometimes oil spills fall on the body while pouring the bhaturas, due to which his hands etc. also get burnt. At this time, it is raining daily and when the rain is about to come, he puts a tarpaulin on the top



of the cart so that they can save themselves from raining water. Then due to heavy rain, the rain splashes on the hot oil and the boy stands next to the kadhai due to which there is more possibility of getting burnt. The problem is that whenever it starts raining in the morning, then the owner of that child does not give him the money for that day and that child has to stay at home, he does not have any other option to earn that day. If he does not work, his family won't be able to run their daily household expenses.

CHILDREN PLAYING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD CAN BE THE VICTIMS OF ANY MAJOR ACCIDENT

Talkative reporter Anjali and Balaknama reporter Aanchal

Inflation is also increasing day by day in the country, due to which street and working children are facing many problems. You all must know this thing that if you want to drink water, then that too is not available for free, you have to buy a pouch of water for 2 rupees and drink it. Due to so much inflation, if working children want to eat something their favourite food or wear their favourite clothes, then they too are not able to do it now in the wake of this inflation. When our Balaknama reporter Aanchal visited Vinayakapuram Basti in Lucknow, she found some children playing badminton in the middle of the road. Cars were also crossing to the place where those children were playing badminton. Reporter Aanchal asked those children why are they playing badminton in the middle of the road. So, the children told us that there



are huts all around the place where we live, and there is no park nearby in which we can go to play. There is a park nearby but the people of the settlement go to defecate in it, due to which we cannot even go there. That's why we are compelled to play in the middle of the road. The reporter asked the children that "If you play any game in the middle of the road, then your life can also be in danger. You can have

an accident with any vehicle." So, the children said that "We get to know whether the car is coming from behind or not because whenever the car comes out, it blows the horn, after hearing which we get to the side and when the car leaves, then we again start playing. It seemed from the words of the children that no matter what happens, whether a car comes or not, it does not make any sense to them, they just have to play.

CHILDREN ARE MISSING FROM OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL



Bureau Report

Whenever we visit a temple, we see small children begging for money and fruit outside. After talking to the children, Balaknama reporters find out that there are more than 60 children that are involved in

these activities. In addition to this, they also attend school. The children complain that many children these days are being kidnapped from school. Further, when our reporters contacted school attending children, one girl, 12 years old, told us about how one

week ago, when school ended, a boy was heading toward his home, which is about 1-1.5 km away from school, and someone gave him chocolate to eat, which led to his kidnapping. When the child did not return home, the family members began searching for him and filed a report with the police station. After 10 days of searching, the police were also unable to locate the boy. It has been reported that children are going missing from the school and the temple at an alarming rate. Children are abducted from these places, their body parts are cut, and they are forced into begging. The children of the slum area are very shocked after hearing about these incidents taking place in their locality. The children are also refusing to go to school. These days, children prefer to go to school in groups of 5 or 6.

NO ONE IS THERE TO LISTEN, HOW TO SURVIVE WITHOUT WATER



Reporter: Yasir and Kisan

Reporters from Balaknama visited 600 slum areas and found that water issues are most prevalent there. A lone

government tap is present in the entire slum area, but water does not flow from this tap. A single tanker arrives and only then does the water flow. All the families depend on a sin-

gle tanker for water. Around 100-150 people queue up to fill a single water tank. There is so much huge crowd filling water that all the people are not able to fill water. Occasionally, even fights break out between people. The contractor and the Pradhan of the areas do not pay attention to the issue of the people of the slum areas. A special tanker is arranged for them. Whenever some water remains over after filling them, it is distributed to the slum area. All the people who live in slum areas do contribute money for the repair of the tap when it stops working. This becomes the bone of contention among the people. The people who contribute have also stopped giving money. Neither the contractor nor the Pradhan has any difficulties, so they don't intervene. Because of this, the local people have to deal with the consequences.

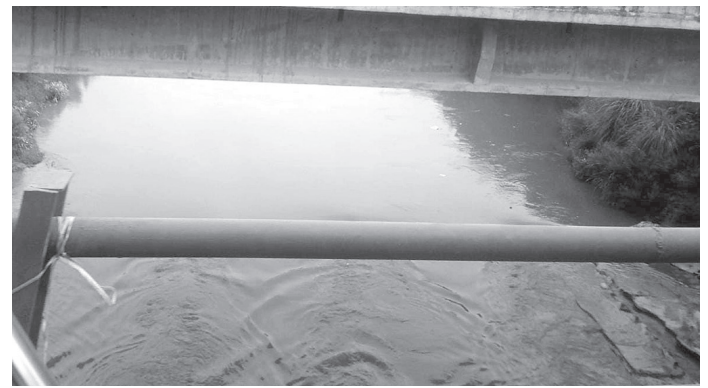
STREET AND WORKING CHILDREN SHARED THEIR VIEWS...

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resolved immediately. We children want that the consumption and sale of drugs should be completely stopped in India. And sometimes these people lose their lives due to the consumption of intoxicants and the result of all this is the small children of the family have to suffer. Vishal (name changed), the 15-year-old boy, living in the Noida slum said that "I work as a rag picker with my parents in the slum, working from 5:00 am to 5:00 pm as there are total 8 members in the family and only two members earn. My mother's health is generally sick so she stays at home, me and father work as rag pickers, and the whole day is spent at work,

due to which there is no time to study. I also want to become a good police officer, but I do not think that in such a situation I will be able to study. 12-year-old Niharika (name changed) said, "There is a college near my home where most of the government jobs exams are conducted and students from all corners of the country come to take the exams. At the gate of the college, there are many children who are around 12-13 years old, they sit near the college as a beggar with their 1-2-year-old siblings in their laps. Whenever I see these children, I feel very sad because these children also have the right to freedom. 14-year-old Rekha (name

changed) from Lucknow said, "We need to be free from our orthodox mentality, imagining a society where there is no discrimination on the basis of gender, caste, colour, status etc. After listening to the views of street and working children, the Balaknama reporter explained to the children that education is very important in our life, that's why all of you should study well, take care of yourself, and stay away from dirty kicks like drugs etc. Only then can we really call ourselves free. Seeing you, other children will also learn how to be good and successful people in spite of difficulties. It just needs perseverance and determination in the mind.



CHILDREN ARE RISKING THEIR LIVES BY JUMPING INTO THE RIVER TO COLLECT MONEY

Talking Reporter Abhishek and Reporter Kishan

Younger children are forced to do any kind of work to meet their expenses. Similarly, street and working children living in Noida are forced to do such work due to which they suffer a lot. They earn money by risking their lives. There is a river near the village of Char Murti of Noida, children take bath in that river because there is a lot of water conflict in their slum. Whatever garbage and worship items of the temple are in that river, people throw them in the river. Along with the garbage of the temple, people also throw some money in that river as they believe that their wish will come true if they throw

the coins in the river. Children who are taking a bath in this river, when they see them throwing garbage, they immediately reach for that garbage so that they can get whatever money is inside it. Some such children also take bath in the river, who do not know how to swim at all, but due to greed, they go to the middle of the river and start drowning. The child who knows how to swim saves that drowning child, but whenever those children are bathing in it, they do not know how to swim, and they drown because of this. The problem is that now the villagers have opened the drain in that river and the water of that drain comes inside that river, due to which the children are also falling ill.



CHILDHOOD CRUSHED UNDER THE BURDEN OF HOUSEHOLD RESPONSIBILITIES

Talkative reporter Laxmi and reporter Kishan

To make their dream come true, children have to face many difficulties, and even they are not able to fulfil their dream. We are talking about a 12-year-old girl who works as a rag picker. When asked why are you doing this work and why don't go to school, the girl said, "We used to go to school a few months ago, but suddenly she is unable to speak due to tonsils in her throat nor is she able to do school homework, and because of this she has to stay at

home and do all the household chores like cooking, sweeping, washing clothes all day long. After doing this work, as much time as she gets in the whole day, she goes to pick up the junk. After doing household chores for the whole day, she takes a rickshaw and goes out to collect the junk and then sorts that junk after coming home. Because of this, she does not get time hence she is not able to go to school. Now, this is her life and she has stopped dreaming. What is the use of having a big dream that can never be fulfilled?

**CHILDREN'S HELP
LINE NUMBERS**

**CONTACT THESE TOLL FREE
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PROBLEM.**

Child line Number
1098
Police Helpline Number
100

CHILDREN LEFT HOMELESS DUE TO THE DEMOLITION OF THE HUTS, NO PLACE TO STAY AND EAT

Talkative reporter Roshni and Balaknama reporter Aanchal

In this big world, there are some problems in the life of every person, which they solve themselves. But our street working children have to face a new problem every day. Recently, when Balaknama reporter reached to meet the children living in Secretariat Basti of Lucknow, it was found that there were many such children whose houses were ruined and they were wandering from door to door in search of another place. When we talked to some of the children there, it came to the fore that some persons who came from the side of the Municipal Corporation asked to remove the huts and almost all the children and their families became homeless in less than 48 hours. Due to this, the children are going in search of another place. When we had constant conversations with those chil-



dren on this subject, the children said that Didi, "As you also know how many problems we have to face when we go from one place to another. If we leave from here, we will neither be able to study nor do any work. With great difficulty our parents got work here, they too will be missed. How will we manage our household expenses due to lack of work? We have suffered a lot due to

the loss of our hut, when we build a new hut, we have to bring new items for it. Now we have to buy a lot to build a new hut. God knows how we will be able to do our work and study again and run our lives. Amid all these things, the children also said Didi, our parents will take a loan from somewhere and make it again, but if we go from here then our future will also be spoiled."

CHILDREN LEARNED ABOUT GOOD TOUCH AND BAD TOUCH THROUGH THE WORKSHOP



Talkative reporter Malik Ali and Balaknama Reporter Aanchal

Friends, life skill is such an art which is useful not only for children but also for elders. If we talk about children, then it is very important to teach this to every child. Because it not only helps children to do their routine tasks properly but because of this, but children are also able to think and work well in their future. But the problem here is that such activities keep happening in expensive schools like private schools or convent schools etc. But those children who work

day and night under flyovers or at red lights, do not get such things at all and they are always deprived of such learning opportunities. Perhaps this is the reason why those children live on the street even after earning money. Because if they are also taught life skills in the right way, then they too can use those things in the right way. Keeping this in mind, a life skill session was conducted with the street and working children and more than 200 to 250 children participated. First of all, the Chetna team members told the children that if someone

touches you, then how can you know whether that person has touched well in love or whether there is some thief or wrong feeling hidden in the intention of touching? the children learned about Good Touch and Bad Touch. Along with this, many questions and answers were also done such as has anyone ever touched you in such a way that you felt strange? Or do you feel like refusing it because you don't feel safe? Because children had never learned or heard such things before. So almost all the children denied any such incident happened. But when the team members showed the children a play about Good Touch Bad Touch. This topic was discussed in depth, and then the children understood the same. By the end of the day, children understand about good touch and bad touch. Children shared that if such incidents happened to any of them or with anyone around them, then they should immediately report such incidents to someone whom they trust.

STREET AND WORKING CHILDREN ALSO CELEBRATED 75TH INDEPENDENCE DAY WITH GREAT POMP

Bureau Report

This year on 15th August we celebrated our 75th Independence Day with great pomp. This time the tricolour theme of every house also filled a special enthusiasm among the countrymen. That is why this year's Independence Day became even more special. Along with this, we also saw that the Prime Minister told about many schemes on the Red Fort and also told about many schemes which are already underway. But as our country has been free from things like child labour, drug abuse, etc.? Do street and working children understand the importance of freedom in the country? Can they also openly keep their point in front of society?

Keeping all these things in mind, CHETNA NGO celebrated the 75th Independence Day of the country with more than 400 children coming to study at a mobile education van called NanheParinde. During the celebration, first of all, the national anthem was sung by making all the children stand in a careful posture in the line. Along with this, the importance of the National Anthem was also explained to the children.

After that, the children were told about the importance of freedom and also that we did not get this freedom just like that. Many people had fought for this and many even sacrificed their lives. After that, today we can make the 75th Independence Day of Independence. Then serious issues like child labour intoxication were discussed with all the children.

They were told that we will not be truly free until the children of our country come out of many types of intoxicants like cigarettes, ganja, tobacco, and Gulshan. At the same time, the children were also told about the importance of education and that education was the only weapon in liberating India, based on which we were able to drive out the British who ruled for 200 years from our country. If all our agitators were illiterate, perhaps this work would not have been done till today. That is why education is as important as freedom for us, all of you children study diligently so that in the coming times, you can help the country by freeing the country from drugs, unemployment, illiteracy, discrimination and crimes that are happening at present.



CONTAMINATED WATER IS HAVING A BAD EFFECT ON THE HEALTH OF CHILDREN

Talking reporter Zainab and reporter Sangeeta Lucknow

With the arrival of the rainy season, the more it rains, the more rainwater fills in the place. Due to this street children get very upset as they struggle to have a place

to sleep. Similar is the situation with our street and working children, when our Lucknow-based Balaknama reporter organized a support group meeting in Daliganj and tried to know the problems of the children, the child told us that Didi it rains more nowadays, due to which there is a pile in front of our house. All the water fills up. People bathe the buffalo in the water that gets filled and the children of our settlement also take baths in the same dirty water.

Even if someone scolds those children, they do not listen and keep taking baths in the same water. But those children are unaware that if they bathe in this dirty water, then they can also get many diseases. But still, when it rains, all the children keep bathing in the same dirty water.

CHILDREN SUFFERING FROM EXTREME HEAT DUE TO LACK OF ELECTRICITY

Talkative Reporter Bilkis and reporter Sangeeta

Children living on the streets of Sachiwalay Basti, Lucknow have been facing severe problems due to regular power outages. When the reporter of Balaknama reached there and interacted with the street children, she found that the street children and their families are facing a lot of difficulties. This



includes: they have to live without fans in this extremely hot weather, have to cook food at the night with the help of a mobile torch which also does not last for very long, children have to give up their studies etc. Moreover, the problem is not as simple as it appears, but it is deeply rooted and complex. These street children's families don't have

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WATER IS PRECIOUS, USE IT WISELY

Talkative reporter Roshni and reporter Anchal

Almost every human being knows about how important water is in our life. But this does not apply to those people who still do not even know the definition of the importance of water in our lives. On this subject, our Lucknow-based Balaknama reporter conducted a meeting with children on the topic of "the importance of water" and tried to know the opinion of the children on this. The children shared that as you also know that there is no such arrangement for any kind of facilities for the street children, which they can take advantage of without worrying.



There is no concrete arrangement of water in most of the vulnerable settlements so we

can use it. That's why we use water very carefully. The children also shared that whenever it rains, we fill or collect the water that drips from our hut in a bucket and washes the dirty clothes with that water. Also, a girl told Didi, we also take bath with that rainwater, due to which we feel fresh because rainwater is generally cold. While talking to that girl, we asked that girl, does no one stop you from doing this? So that girl said that Didi, no one stops her. But it has an advantage that a bucket of water is saved in our house.

It was evident from the words of the children that they understand that water is very important in their life and they use it wisely.



ALCOHOL RUINED THE FAMILY

Talking reporter Babita and reporter Sangeeta Lucknow

Balaknama reporter held a support group meeting in Lavkush Nagar and talked to the children and asked them about their problems, then a child, whose age is about 7 years, told that Didi my mother works as a swiper in big houses. Whenever her mother falls sick, then the owner of the house says if "You do not come, then send your daughter to work. Right now,

my sister's age is also about 9 years, so she also has to go to work. Our father lives in the village. He drinks a lot and after drinking, he fights with his mother." When my father visits us, he forcibly takes us away, hence our mother is very upset and then she has to go to the village to take us back. We are very upset and our father is not even ready to give up on alcohol. If he leaves alcohol and starts working, then the financial condition of our house will also improve.

THE 9-YEAR-OLD BOY WAS THE VICTIM OF THE BRUTALITY OF THE SCHOOL MANAGER AND WAS BEATEN TO DEATH

Talkative Reporter Jenab and Reporter Anchal

This news is of 9-year-old Nitesh living in Agra city. During the visit, the Balaknama reporter met Nitesh and talked about his problem. The boy said that I study in Raj Public Higher Secondary School in class II. Also, the boy said that there is a change of dress every day in our school. One day I did not wear the dress that day, so because of this the school manager first threw me out of the school and after some time the school manager started hitting me with thick sticks. I kept shouting but the manager hit me so badly that



my hands and feet turned blue and I suffered a head injury. I kept apologizing but the school manager did not spare

me. I was moaning in pain but they didn't let me go home until school was over. At the same time, the child told me that if I am not going to go away, then the school manager himself left me at home. My mother got scared seeing me in such a condition and cried. Then Balaknama reporter went to the Malpura police station with the child and his family members and lodged an FIR against the manager. The police registered an FIR against the manager and now the proceedings are underway. Simultaneously, the reporter admitted the child to Rishabh Hospital, where he got treatment.

EARNINGS HALVED DUE TO AN INCREASE IN THE PRICE OF GAS CYLINDER

Talkative reporter Jainab and reporter Anchal

You also know that our country has made progress in everything. But do you know that some things still have not changed even today? So, let's take a look at them and introduce them to you. By the way, you must have seen many types of news, whether on TV or in other newspapers. If any accident happens in any corner of this world, then that news reaches you somehow. But do you know that if any kind of accident happens with our street and working children, then no one can see it? So let us tell you through this Balaknama newspaper, that our street and working children are going through what kind of circumstances in the present time.

When our Lucknow reporter visited the Daliganj where children live under the bridge, Anchal saw that many such children are doing various types of work. One of those children was a child who was

going to sell gas-filled balloons from cylinder gas. When we talked to that child and asked him what are you doing with the gas of this cylinder? The child said we fill the gas of this cylinder in the balloon so that we can sell this balloon.

At the same time, that child also said that we earn a bit by selling this gas-filled balloon, which also helps our parents run the household expenses. But it also takes a lot of investment to do this work, because gas cylinders have to be filled, only then we can do this work, and as you also know how much money does it takes to refill a cylinder? Due to this, we have some problems but later it also gives some relief. During a constant conversation with that child, that child also said that there is no space for education in the life of children like us because there are so many responsibilities on our shoulders but until we have this life then we help our parents and no matter if we have to work day and night.

CHILDREN SUFFERING FROM EXTREME HEAT DUE TO LACK OF ELECTRICITY

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access to electricity in their homes. By hooking up the wire to the main connection line, they get electricity, but people often cut this off too, and so they are not allowed to receive electricity. Econom-

ically they are not so well off that they could afford to pay for the meter connection. In addition, it seems impossible to pay the meter rent. These children's families are struggling for two meals a day, but somehow, they can get

by with their hard work. The lack of electricity has caused street children's lives to grind to a halt. They are deprived of basic services like water and electricity. This causes a lot of distress to both street children and their families.



Talkative Reporter Babita and reporter Sangeeta

Children residing in the street and slum areas have to face a lot of difficulties due to ad-

verse climatic conditions as compared to children who live in concrete houses. Due to the rain, street children and children in slums are facing a lot of hardship. Children com-

CHILDREN LIVING ON THE STREETS OR IN SLUMS HAVE TO BEAR THE BRUNT OF EVERY SEASON

plain to Balaknama reporters that when it rains, they do not have a place to live or food to eat. Moreover, due to scarcity of money and high inflation, they are unable to re-fill the gas cylinder on time. During rainy days, water enters their home and wets the wood and stove.

As a result, they are not able to cook their food. Even if they were able to fill their gas cylinders, then they would have to cook food outside the house on the road. There is al-

ways a threat that something will fall into their food. The entire space gets muddy and dirty. All the members of the family do not have access to gas. So, they are not able to

cook food and feed their children. That's why both children and adults have to sleep on an empty stomach. Small children are the most affected by this.

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DESIRE TO FULFIL DREAMS DEPENDENT ON A GOAT



Reporter; Kamini and Anchal

In today's society, it seems that everyone is ready to do any work to fill his stomach. The situation is similar for street and working children living in Purnia Basti of Lucknow. As Balaknama reporter met the

children, he learned that every day a goat is sacrificed on the railway track. Due to these residents of the affected areas, including children, are concerned. After learning about the problem, the reporter tried to figure out what was going on. It turned out that the parents

of the kids kept goats in their homes. To make a profit from them. They buy baby goats and feed them till they grow up, and then they leave them to graze on their own. While grazing, they fall under the railway tracks and die. The family has a lot to endure. They buy goats so that they can sell them when they grow up and earn money. They use this money to pay off debts, get married, get something big, etc. But all these dreams remain in abeyance when their goats die after coming under the train tracks. After paying RS 300-400, they purchase a baby goat. Their parents collect money very slowly and buy in the hope of making a profit but their death under the train track, makes them suffer a lot.



LIVING AMONG POISONOUS SNAKES IS NOT FREE FROM ANY DANGER

Talkative reporter Jainab and reporter Anchal

Street and working children have to work all the time for a two-time meal, cloth and shelter. Wherever they live, the fear of some influential people or their grandfathers or brothers remains around them. But what if you live in a house where the shadow of death hangs around all the time? In Noida Sector 62, where street and working children live, poisonous snakes keep coming out of their homes every day. Amid those snakes, all those children and their families live their lives. Changed name Rajkumari told me that this incident happened recently when I was lying in my slum with my mother. He looked up to see a snake followed by a mouse, although he did not believe it at first. But then after

that when he looked at him in that manner, it was a snake. People also came and saw and they said hey this is a small child. He will run away. But caring about himself and his children, he did not listen to him. He called a brave person and got him out of the house. When that snake was taken out. So its length was 2 to 2.5 meters, seeing which the people of all the slums got scared. However, many people also called the forest department. But due to the non-availability of the number of any forest department, no one could call the rescue team. People, worrying about themselves and their children, beat that snake to death with sticks. This is not a single incident. Such creatures often come out in the slums there. And the children there are forced to live amid such troubles by risking their own lives.

DUE TO LACK OF ELECTRICITY FACILITY, STREET AND WORKING CHILDREN DO NOT STUDY

Talkative reporter Mansi and reporter Aslam

Street and working children also have a passion for reading and dreams of becoming doctors, officers etc. The journalists noticed that some children were playing outside in the sun when they visited Ghasola village in Gurugram. After talking to them, the journalist found that the children were concerned about the difficulties they faced due

to lack of electricity. There is no light in their house so they have difficulties studying. Moreover, the children complain about the rude behaviour of the owner towards them and that the owner uses abusive language towards them. These owners use bad practices, such as lowering the MCV, to reduce the light emitted by these people. They can't even complain to them because he starts pressurizing them to pay their rent or

vacate their rooms. That is why they remain silent in fear and endure torture. There are times when there is a surge of high voltage which damages the fan and cooler of these children. After their fan stops working, they cannot afford to buy a new one due to financial constraints. They all remain subdued by the master. In summer, if there was 24-hour light in their house, they could read, write, and fulfil their dreams.

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Children living on the streets of Sachiwalay Basti, Lucknow have been facing severe problems due to regular power outages. When the reporter of Balaknama reached there and interacted with the street children, she found that the street children and their families are facing a lot of difficulties. This includes: they have to live without fans in this extremely hot weather, have to cook

food at the night with the help of a mobile torch which also does not last for very long, children have to give up their studies etc. Moreover, the problem is not as simple as it appears, but it is deeply rooted and complex. These street children's families don't have access to electricity in their homes. By hooking up the wire to the main connection line, they get electricity, but people often cut this off too, and so they are not allowed to receive electricity. Econom-

ically they are not so well off that they could afford to pay for the meter connection. In addition, it seems impossible to pay the meter rent. These children's families are struggling for two meals a day, but somehow, they can get by with their hard work. The lack of electricity has caused street children's lives to grind to a halt. They are deprived of basic services like water and electricity. This causes a lot of distress to both street children and their families.

CHILDREN LIVING ON THE STREETS OR IN SLUMS HAVE TO BEAR THE BRUNT OF EVERY SEASON

Talkative Reporter Babita and reporter Sangeeta

Children residing in the street and slum areas have to face a lot of difficulties due to adverse climatic conditions as compared to children who live in concrete houses. Due to the rain, street children and children in slums are facing a lot of hardship. Children complain to Balaknama

reporters that when it rains, they do not have a place to live or food to eat. Moreover, due to scarcity of money and high inflation, they are unable to re-fill the gas cylinder on time. During rainy days, water enters their home and wets the wood and stove. As a result, they are not able to cook their food. Even if they were able to fill their gas cylinders, then they would have to cook

food outside the house on the road. There is always a threat that something will fall into their food. The entire space gets muddy and dirty. All the members of the family do not have access to gas. So, they are not able to cook food and feed their children. That's why both children and adults have to sleep on an empty stomach. Small children are the most affected by this.

80 FAMILIES LEFT HOMELESS DUE TO SLUM COLLAPSE

Bureau Report

If the government is a bit lenient, no one's house would be destroyed. They have no idea how much damage they cause to people in this haste. The children living in Ghasola village told that there are more than 80 slums there. These slums are very close to the road. Their life was going very well, but one day a notice came from the government to demolish all our jhuggis and all the jhuggis were demolished. They raised their voice but their voice was suppressed by the senior officers. They were told that it was illegal to live here. Thus, they were forced to flee and

even abused. If they speak too much, the police show up and beat them up. That is why they all had to leave their slums and settle somewhere else. Some of our comrades even took rooms on rent and others went to other places. Still, they try to talk to the government, but no one helps them. They feel very hurt that although they also live in India, they do not have any rights. Anyone can break into their home, kill them and make them move from one place to another. If the government provides them with a decent place to live, then they can also study and write and thus elevate the name of their society.

**CHILDREN'S HELP
LINE NUMBERS**

CONTACT THESE TOLL FREE
NUMBERS IF YOU FACE ANY
PROBLEM.

Child line Number

1098

Police Helpline Number

100

HOW DOES THE STREET VENDOR SURVIVE? SOMEONE GETS PUNISHED BECAUSE OF SOMEONE ELSE'S FAULT



Reporter: Jatin and Kisan

Empty stomachs force everyone to work so that they can feed themselves and survive. But is it morally right to punish someone else for another's a mistake? In the course of interacting with the street children of Noida 18, our reporter learns about a story. After fur-

ther investigation, he found a boy named Amar (changed name) who used to run a food stall on the footpath near the market with members of his family. The market is very big and usually, it is very crowded. A lot of people visit the market and eat food from the stalls. It creates heavy traffic and disrupts the flow of movement.

As a result, traffic police arrive and instruct everyone to clear the space. Even the vendors are asked to close their stalls. If they refuse, committee members come and spread their goods on the road and drag their carts with them. Taking back the cart requires paying Rs 5000-10000, which is a lot of money. That's why most of them never return to retrieve their carts. Nowadays they are so afraid that they don't put their stall on the side of the footpath anymore. Many people have stopped working in this occupation. For others, this is their only source of income, so they still place their stall, but on a side street far from the main road and hidden away. So that they can earn some money which can fill the basic needs of their family.

NO ONE CAN TAKE THE PLACE OF A REAL MOTHER

Talkative reporter Bilkiss and reporter Sangeeta Lucknow

As we all must know that our mother is most important to us and the way she takes care of us, no one can take care of us as well, nor any relative, nor any neighbour. Recently Balaknama reporters went to slums near the Lucknow secretariat to conduct support group meetings with the children and during the community visit, they found a girl who has very big burn scars and wound. of burnt during the community visit. Our reporter asked the



girl how did you get burnt, and then that girl shared her grief and said that her sister

my stepmother had poured boiling hot oil on her and that's why she got burnt. And still, the pain continues. If we go to a hospital to see a doctor, then the hospital people scold us and drive us away. Moreover, we have been thrown out of the house due to which we now live on the street. They fill their stomach by picking up the garbage on the road and begging. From morning to evening we spend on the streets and miss our real mother a lot. I think if she was there, I would never have to wander on the streets alone in this condition.

WE WILL NOT LEAVE THIS FRIENDSHIP



Reporter: Komal & Anchal

Friendship is a sacred relationship that remains with us for a lifetime once it is formed. Friendship requires a lot of responsibility and honesty. The street children and

working children under the Dalliganj Bridge live together as friends. Children don't hate each other, but they look out for one another. When the reporter of Balaknama talked to the school-age children and wanted to know how they were doing with their studies.

Then he answered, "everything is fine, but they are not able to enjoy themselves as much as they used to. Upon asking the boys why they do not enjoy school, they replied that since they do not have friends there, they do not enjoy it. In the past, all the friends used to go to school together, read, and play together, which was a lot of fun. But now due to the pandemic, all the friends are involved in different works. We are no longer all together now. According to the reporters, the child feels alone without his friend at school. He wants to bring back his friends to his school so that things become normal again and they can enjoy their lives as their former selves. When we extend a hand of friendship to someone, we should do it until we die.



WORKING CHILDREN KEEP OTHERS SAFE BY PUTTING THEMSELVES INTO TROUBLE"

Talkative reporter Fareen and reporter Kishan

The majority of us know how to keep our feet safe, but we don't know how sleepers are made, what materials are required, and what challenges are involved.

Our reporters found children colouring the lace of the sleepers as they wandered through Delhi's slums. A reporter interacted with these children and the younger girl told the reporter that all these children coloured the lace of the slippers they bought from nearby companies. People working for the companies bring the lace to the house to be coloured.

A single packet contains ap-

proximately 4-5 thousand laces. Some companies even provide boxes of different colours, such as white, black, yellow, and green. The box of colour smells very bad when it is opened since there are chemicals inside. The chemicals are so powerful that both children and adults faint. People who have been working for many years don't put safety measures in their mouths, but those who aren't habitual put handkerchiefs in their mouths. Each lace has a mark up to which it needs to be coloured. If there is any mismanagement, money is cut. For completing 24 pieces, they will be paid Rs150. In a single day, they can earn Rs 200.

CHILDREN FORCEFULLY GO TO WORK IN A FISH FACTORY UNDER COMPULSION

Talkative reporter Rishi Balaknama Reporter Aslam

This news is from Ghata village where children go to work in a fish factory and their parents force them to work. In spite of children's interest in studying and reading, they are forced to work in fish factories.

There is no conducive environment for children there. It smells very unpleasant, and children often get cut on their hands while cutting

the rotten fish. In addition to their employer's rude behaviour, he sometimes beats them and abuses them. They were forced to continue working with a wounded hands. Children always wished that if their family members were good, they would be getting a high-quality education somewhere. This would enable them to spend their lives working in the fish factories. By studying well, they could have become a good police officer.

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WE HAVE NO OTHER OPTIONS THAN TO DRY CLOTHES



Reporter: Kamini and Anchal

Despite so many challenges in their everyday lives, the way these children are living their life is courageous in itself. These children are not frightened by a small problem but are brave enough to face it. Reporters from Lucknow

demonstrate how they thrive despite not having facilities. As the reporter walked to Pornia Crossing Basti to meet the children, he noticed that many stones were lying beside a railway track. On top of those stones were piled washed clothes. Afterwards, the reporter asked him why

he spread the clean cloth here. He explained that in the basti there is space where he can spread the cloth for drying. That's why he placed the cloth on the stone. Additionally, the children said that they spread the cloth until the train did not show up. Once the train arrives, it also brings dust and garbage with it, which again makes them dirty. We also ensure that we remove the cloth as soon as we become aware that the train will arrive. We don't have any option for them to choose from. Thus, they are forced to do so even though there is so much risk involved in this. But they have to make sure that they can wear clean cloth



CHILDREN WANT TO FULFIL THEIR DREAM, WHICH THEIR PARENTS COULD NOT DO

Talkative Reporter Reeta and reporter Anchal

The blessing of our family members is one of the most important events in our lives. Even though the Balaknama newsletter addresses various issues and concerns of children and reaches out to a wide range of children. As our reporters make their way around, they encounter a variety of children. They observe that every child believes that if their parents had studied, then their lives would have been very prosperous as well as successful. They would have eaten their most delicious food, spent

time visiting new places, doing things that made them happy, etc. Their situation would have been different from what is right now. They would not have to work at the age when it would be time for them to start school. The reality is that getting these things is like a dream come true for them. Despite the hardships and difficulties these children face, they do not lose hope. They know the past cannot be changed. What they can do is improve their future by working on the present. That's why it is so crucial that they study and achieve all the success that their parents fail to achieve.

CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES ARE UPSET DUE TO WATERLOGGING IN SLUMS



Talking reporter Anjali and reporter Sangeeta Lucknow

The onset of the monsoon poses a big problem for the children living in the streets and slums. When there is ex-

cessive rain, water fills up the roads, the streets, and inside people's houses. Also due to the lack of concrete houses, these people suffer a lot from this. Their clothes, food, and everything else gets wet. A re-

porter from Balaknama held a meeting with children in Lucknow to find out what problems they face during the rainy season. The reporter finds that they are living a miserable life after interviewing them. They don't have a safe living space. The room fills with water as a result of leakage. Also, there is no proper drainage system in the slum areas so it takes several days for the water to dry up. Until that water dries up, they have to sleep outside their huts and cook outside. Their clothes, bedding, and all their food get soaked because of flooding in their houses. Nonetheless, it is very difficult for their family members to arrange meals for survival during the rainy season.

POOR CHILDREN HIT BY THE ECONOMIC CRISIS



Talking reporter Nikki and reporter Sangeeta Lucknow

We all have to face some kind of problem in our life. No matter how big or small that problem is. However, if we consider the children living on the streets and working, they are surrounded by plenty of problems every single day. Several of the children lack a place to live, and the financial situation of the families is terrible. The children living in Shram Vihar, Lucknow are facing some similar problems. Our Balaknama reporter tried

to learn about the problems facing the children there. He found that most of the parents of the children are laborers. In some households, both parents work. When they don't get work, they have to face a lot of difficulties because they don't have money to feed the family. In that case, they borrow money from the market. The interest keeps on increasing if they are not able to pay back the loan. That puts the parents in distress. By looking at their parents in distress the children also become tensed and upset.

STREET AND WORKING CHILDREN TRAVEL BY METRO BY SPENDING MONEY FOR COLD AIR

Talkative Reporter Sachin and Reporter Kishan

Our reporters share the problems of the street and working children with all of you every month through the Balaknama newspaper. Like the changing of the seasons, the problems of these street and working children also change. Due to the heat in the summer season, children living in the streets and slums have to face many problems. However, the working children have found enjoyment in escaping the summer and enjoying the cool air of the air conditioner. One of our reporters was passing through a metro route when



he spotted a 15-year-old child enjoying the cool air inside the metro. After interacting with the little boy, he found that they live in the slum and

road area. They pick up junk, sort junk, work in the factory, and also work at roadside carts. After an entire day of labour, when they get home, they rarely have electricity. A 15-year-old boy shared that "We have no electricity in our slum, so it is difficult for us to breathe. All the children living in the slum gather in the evening after work and go to the metro station to enjoy the cool air. They take a ticket of 10 to 20 rupees and roam from one station to another in the metro for an hour. Children have no other way to get cool air to escape the heat, so they spend a bit of money and enjoy the cool air by sitting in the metro.

THE SLUMS OF DELHI'S CHUNA BHATTI TURNED INTO A DEN OF DRUGS

Bureau Report

On the roads, near red lights and at stations, most of the children are seen consuming many types of intoxicants such as gutkha, tobacco, whitener, ganja etc. These intoxicants are easily available to these children without any restriction. While visiting the Chuna Bhatti community in Delhi, Balaknama reporter noticed that most of the children aged between 14 and 17 were intoxicated and sleeping near the railway track. After that, the reporter spoke with the children living in the slum and tried to learn where these children were getting their intoxicating drugs from. Upon speaking with the 14-year-old Tanya,



the reporter learns that most of the children drink near the railway tracks and sleep next to them at night. Harmful intoxications are easily available in the market, but the intoxication that these children consumed was charas (hashish). With the help of people from slum areas and outsiders, charas is being sold out in the area. Charas can easily be obtained by children by paying 100-150 rupees. Charas

consumption is common in those areas. Most people consume it. There are two railway tracks coming up next to slums. One railway track is on the lower side and the other railway track is on the top side. There is also a very dense forest area upstairs. The sale of charas takes place in the area. The parents used to have charas and when it is over, they ask their child to bring that intoxicant. As they are easily available in the surrounding areas, they go and collect them. The seller is not afraid of being caught by the police. He sells charas openly in the slum areas. Everyone knows who sells the same in their areas. All children and adults have become accustomed to it.

AS I AM AN ORPHAN, THERE IS NO ONE TO TAKE CARE OF, HAVE TO SURVIVE BY PICKING UP JUNK

Reporter-Aslam

Children who do not have parents, there is no one to take care of them. Raju, a 6-year-old boy living in Paldavillage, Gurugram whose parents died as soon as he was born. It was her grandmother who raised him. He lives with her at her grandmother's house. When the reporter talked to him during the visit, he told her that he had no one in this world except her grandmother. Her grandmother scolds him all the time so he picks up junk and doesn't study because her grandmother won't let him. Even her grandmother does not provide him with food. Whatever he earns from collecting junk and bottles. It used to satisfy his hunger. He misses his parents terribly. When he thinks about their parents, he always wonders if their parents had been there,



he would have gone to school to study as well. Boys dream of becoming reporters like Balaknama reporter if they get a chance to study.

CHILD THIEF GANG ACTIVE IN LUCKNOW, PARENTS ARE WORRIED ABOUT THE DISAPPEARANCE OF CHILDREN

Talkative reporter Roshni and Balaknama reporter Aanchal

On this issue, our Balaknama journalist met the street and working children living in Secretariat Basti. When Aanchal talked to the children about this issue, she found that the rumour of children being stolen is indeed real and true. A reporter was told by the children that 10-12 people were wearing black clothes and covering their faces with black clothes, coming from a black car towards their settlement. They

also have a spray with which they make the children unconscious. Once, these people sprayed on 4 children, of which 3 got unconscious and the fourth was not affected at all but acted unconscious. As soon as they loaded all 4 children into the car and went looking for more children, the conscious kids came out of the car and started shouting in the locality. Suddenly many people gathered. Due to this many people gathered. The parents of the children who had come to take their children also tried



to catch them, but only one person was able to catch

them. The parents of the children beat the person so

much that his hand got broken. After that, he was taken to the police station and put in jail. Due to this accident, the children's parents have become very scared of the children. As a result, children are no longer allowed to go out alone anywhere. Even because of this fear, they do not even let them go to school, lest their child gets trapped in the quagmire of death. Both the children as well as the parents are terrified of this incident and as a result, many children have stopped going to school.



CHILDREN ARE ATTRACTED TOWARDS JUNK FOOD, PARENTS ARE ALSO EQUAL PARTNERS

Talkative reporter Anjali and Balaknama reporter Aanchal

A journalist in Lucknow, Aanchal, spoke to children from Vinayakapuram Basti. The children said that whenever anyone comes to sell food and drink, they insist on eating a lot. For this child starts insisting

their parents for money so that they can eat fast junk food such as chowmein, momos, batashe, etc. These days, children are more attracted to these foods. The children aren't aware of the dangers of consuming too much junk food and how it affects their bodies. In fact, the parents of the children

are not as concerned about their children's health and activities, such as what they are doing or where they are heading. They don't have any information about their child. There is too much carelessness on the part of the parents. It would have an adverse effect on their child in the longer run.

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

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