

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 SHINE ON INTERNATIONAL STREET CHILDREN'S DAY THROUGH THEIR VOICES, TALENT, AND DREAMS

Balaknama Reporters: Kishan, Veera, Jyoti, and Kajal

Every year, International Street Children's Day is observed on 12 April to recognize and support millions of children who are forced to spend their childhood on the streets, in slums, or under extremely difficult circumstances. These children also dream big — they want to study, improve their families' lives, and live with dignity and respect. However, poverty, lack of education, insecurity, child labour, and social discrimination often become major barriers in their lives. Despite these challenges, they continue to struggle every day to build a better future for themselves. This day serves as an important reminder to both society and the government that every child deserves a safe, happy, and dignified childhood.

To provide a platform for these children to express their dreams, struggles, and talents, CHETNA organized a special event on 11 April at the Aiwane-Ghalib Auditorium in Delhi. More than 450 street and working children from

Delhi, Noida, Jaipur, and Gurugram participated in the programme. The atmosphere throughout the event was filled with energy, enthusiasm, and confidence as children came together to showcase their abilities and share their stories.

The programme began with the National Anthem, creating a sense of unity and pride across the auditorium. Excitement was clearly visible on the children's faces, as for many of them, it was the very first time they had received an opportunity to speak on such a large platform and present their talents before a wider audience.

The event was graced by distinguished guests, including Mr. S.M. Ali, Deputy Director, Department of Women and Child Development; Mr. Vinod, Assistant Director, Department of Women and Child Development; Anita, Joint Commissioner, Income Tax Department; Mr. Givonie Soledad, Chief Technical Advisor on Child Labour, International Labour Organization; Kashyapi and Ayusha from Haldiram

Skill Academy; Preeti and Neha from SBT; Ekta, Ishita, and Smita from the Delhi Commission for Women; Lakshmi Dubey, Assistant Commissioner of Police, Special Police Unit for Women and Children; Mr. Anamitra from M Carbon; Mr. Mannu, Group Manager at HCL; and Sugandha, Reporter from The Times of India.

During the programme, children performed a powerful street play titled "Aao-Aao Natak Dekho" (Come, Watch the Play). Through the performance, they portrayed the harsh realities faced by children living and working on the streets. The play highlighted how children continue to hold onto their dreams despite poverty, social neglect, and difficult living conditions. The performance deeply moved the audience, and the auditorium echoed with continuous applause.

Children also used music and awareness songs to raise important issues related to child protection laws, the Right to Education, and child safety. Through their songs and performances, they delivered

a strong message that every child deserves education, protection, and respect. The performances not only entertained the audience but also helped spread awareness about children's rights among the participants and guests present at the event.

A self-defence demonstration was another major highlight of the programme, where children confidently showcased techniques to protect themselves in difficult situations. The multicultural dance performances added vibrant colours to the celebration, with children from different states presenting their cultures and traditions through dance. The audience highly appreciated their confidence, enthusiasm, and stage presence throughout the programme.

One of the most emotional moments of the event came when 12-year-old Neha (name changed) shared her story from the stage. She said that although her childhood had been spent on the roadside, her dreams were very big. Despite facing

hardships, she never gave up hope and believed that if given an opportunity, she too could create her own identity and showcase her talent to the world. Her words touched everyone present in the auditorium, and the audience responded with loud applause and emotional appreciation.

During the "Street Talk" session, children openly shared their personal experiences and life journeys. Fifteen-year-old Disha (name changed) from Bihar explained how financial difficulties had prevented her from attending school for a long time. Due to family responsibilities, she had to take care of her younger siblings. However, after joining CHETNA, she resumed her education and is now studying in Class 10. She dreams of becoming a teacher and providing free education to underprivileged children in the future.

Twelve-year-old Sarita (name changed), who lives in a temporary settlement in Noida, shared that she lost her parents at a very young age. She was raised by

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GROWING TREND OF "GUCCHI" GAME AMONG CHILDREN WORRIES PARENTS

Talkative Reporter - Veer
Reporter - Kishan

In the slum areas of Sector 78, Noida, a money-based game called "Gucchi" is rapidly becoming popular among children. When Balaknama reporters visited the area, they observed that not only young children but also older boys and youth were playing this game. This has become a matter of concern for parents living in the community. At first glance, the game seems simple, but its impact is not positive. A small circle is drawn on the ground, and players place coins inside it.

Then, taking turns, they try to hit and knock the coins out of the circle. If a player succeeds, they win money; if they miss, they have to pay. Gradually, this game is turning into a form of gambling. Many children are using the money given by their parents for food on this game. As a result, not only is their money wasted, but they are also developing harmful habits. A parent, Jamali Devi (name changed), aged 42, shared her concern: "We repeatedly try to explain and stop our children, but they do not listen. When older boys play this game, younger children learn by



watching them." She also mentioned that during the game, children have started

using abusive language and getting into fights. Some children are neglecting their

studies and not taking care of their health. When corrected, they become upset and speak disrespectfully to elders. All this indicates a lack of proper guidance and constructive activities for children. Adults should set good examples and guide children in the right direction. Money-based games like this can lead children toward negative paths, so it is important to stop them in time. As a community, everyone should work together to ensure that children focus on education, engage in healthy activities, and learn good values for a better future.

FATHER'S VIOLENCE OVER A NORMAL SCHOOL INTERACTION HIGHLIGHTS LACK OF UNDERSTANDING

Talkative Reporter – Navya
Reporter – Kishan

A concerning incident has come to light from the slum areas near Sector 1, Noida. A young girl had to face her father's anger and violence after a normal incident at school. This case shows how lack of communication and misunderstanding within families can create serious problems for children.

Manisha (name changed), a 14-year-old student of Class 6, shared the story of her friend Rubina (name changed,

16 years old). Rubina, a Class 8 student, often faces health issues. One day at school, she suddenly had severe stomach pain. At that time, no teacher had medicine available, so she asked a male classmate to bring medicine from outside. After school, this information reached Rubina's father through a boy from the neighbourhood. Without understanding the full situation, her father became very angry. It was reported that he was also under the influence of alcohol at that time. In his anger, he beat his

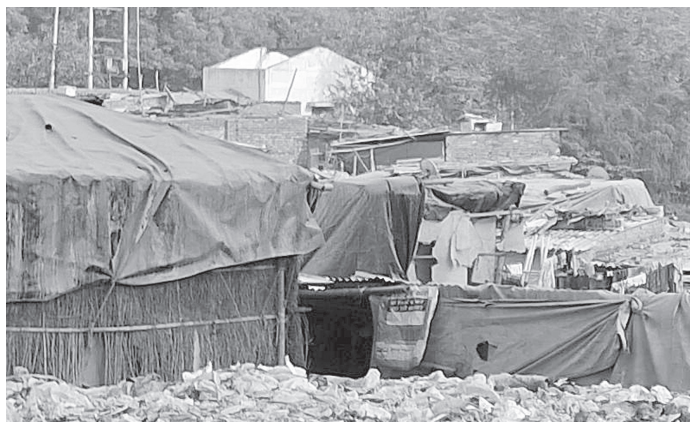


daughter with a stick, causing swelling in her hands and legs. The situation worsened when her younger sister added her own assumptions, and there was also mention of a complaint from a teacher regarding school studies. This further increased the father's anger. This incident raises important questions. Is it wrong for a girl to take help from a boy in school? We believe it is a normal situation. If a child is in trouble and seeks help, it should not be viewed negatively. While parents' concerns may be

valid, violence is never the right solution. It creates fear in children, lowers their confidence, and discourages them from communicating with their parents.

If the father had responded calmly instead of reacting with anger, the situation might not have escalated. Parents should listen carefully to their children and try to understand them. This incident reminds us that our thinking needs to evolve with time. Love and communication are far more effective than fear and violence when guiding children.

FAMILIES LIVING IN UNSAFE CONDITIONS IN NOIDA'S SLUM SETTLEMENTS



Bureau Report

A distressing situation has come to light from the slum areas around Sector 76, Noida. More than 400 slum dwellings are located here, where many families have unknowingly fallen into a serious problem. They believed they were building small homes for themselves, but it has now been revealed that the land belongs to the government and was sold to them fraudulently. Samar (name changed), a 14-year-old boy living in the settlement, shared his concern: "When my father bought this land, he did not know it was government

land. The people who sold it did not provide proper documents. We thought we would finally have our own home, but now we are afraid that everything may be taken away." According to local residents, some influential middlemen illegally occupy government land and then sell it for ₹1 to ₹2 lakh. Poor and unaware families, hoping to secure a roof over their heads, fall into their trap. They invest their life savings, but instead of security, they are left with fear and uncertainty. This fear increases as every three to six months, police and administrative teams visit the area and issue warnings to

remove the slums. At such times, the people who sold the land are nowhere to be found, leaving residents feeling helpless and abandoned. Families living in the settlement also have to pay for basic necessities like water and electricity, yet they do not have any official connections or legal rights. This means they are living in constant insecurity. As the truth gradually emerges, many families have started leaving the area. Some are renting out their huts and trying to move to safer and legally secure places. However, this is not easy for everyone. This situation raises serious questions: why do such injustices continue to happen to poor families? Why is the dream of owning even a small home so difficult for them? It is important for the authorities to take strict action against those who exploit vulnerable people. At the same time, families should be provided with accurate information and protection so that no one else becomes a victim of such fraud. After all, every person deserves a safe home where they can live without fear.

Talkative Reporter – Pooja
Reporter – Kishan

A disturbing incident highlighting the fragile condition of street and working children has come to light from Noida. Behind the shining malls and tall buildings of Sector 15 lies a harsh reality that can shake anyone. Ruby (name changed), a 15-year-old girl living in a nearby slum, shared that many families in their area are engaged in waste picking and segregation. There are several very young children, around 4 to 5 years old, whose parents go out all day to collect scrap. She explained that when parents bring back waste, it often contains leftover food such as fruits, stale bread, or discarded fast food. Food thrown away by households or from parties is picked up by these children and eaten without hesitation. As parents remain away for long hours, children are left on their own and are unable to understand what is safe to eat. They consume whatever appears edible, relying on discarded food to satisfy



their hunger. Most of them eat fast food, biscuits, and chips, even if they are spoiled. Although many people in the community witness this, no one intervenes, and everyone remains occupied with their own work. Such eating habits are extremely harmful and can lead to infections, stomach diseases, and malnutrition. Ruby also pointed out that continuous consumption of such food is negatively affecting children's physical as well as mental development. This situation is not just a social issue but also raises serious concerns about our sensitivity and systems. There is an urgent need for the government and society to take concrete steps so that these children can live with dignity instead of searching for food in garbage.

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her grandmother and used to collect scrap materials to support the family. After becoming associated with CHETNA, her life began to change significantly. She was interested in modelling, and this programme gave her the opportunity to walk on stage as a model for the first time in her life. The moment was extremely emotional and special for her. She is now preparing for school admission and feels excited and hopeful about her future.

Fourteen-year-old Bhaskar (name changed)

from Jaipur shared that due to financial hardship, he had to leave his studies and work in bangle-making factories. The long working hours affected his health and caused several physical difficulties. However, after connecting with CHETNA, he restarted his education and is now moving forward to fulfil his dreams. Bhaskar has a special interest in painting, and some of his artwork has even been displayed in his school. He encouraged other children never to give up on their dreams, no matter how difficult life becomes.

Throughout the programme, children demonstrated through theatre, dance, songs, poetry, and personal stories that they are not merely symbols of struggle, but also examples of courage, confidence, resilience, and hope. For many children, this platform became their first opportunity to raise their voices and build their identity before society. The event significantly strengthened their confidence and helped them realize that their voices matter.

Representatives from the Department of Women

and Child Development, the International Labour Organization, and the police department were also present during the event. Sanjay Gupta, Director of CHETNA, shared that most of the participating children come from families of labourers, domestic workers, waste pickers, drivers, and roadside workers.

He highlighted that many of these children are the first generation in their families to attend school and move toward a better future.

This annual programme organized by CHETNA provides children with a

meaningful platform where they can freely express themselves, share their experiences, and establish their identity in society. Such initiatives not only strengthen children's confidence but also send a powerful message to society that every child deserves equal opportunities, dignity, and a secure future. Every child living on the streets is not merely someone in need of help, but a human being full of dreams, talent, and potential — requiring only an opportunity and support to move forward in life.

WORKING CHILDREN IN NOIDA RAISE THEIR VOICE, DEMAND BETTER HEALTH CHECK-UPS

Talkative Reporter – Laxman
Reporter – Kishan

An important issue has emerged from Sector 126, Noida, where working children have raised concerns about inadequate health check-up facilities. Kabir (name changed), a 13-year-old, shared that he and other children attend classes on the “Nanhe Parinde” van run by Chetna organization. The children expressed that the health check-ups conducted once every three months are neither sufficient nor effective. They said that

whenever they visit a doctor, they are usually only asked about common symptoms like fever, cold, or cough, and medicines are given based on those symptoms alone. According to them, such basic check-ups only address surface-level illnesses and fail to detect any underlying health issues. Another child added that while they can manage minor illnesses themselves, it is important to know if there are any serious problems inside the body, which requires proper examination through medical equipment. The



children have demanded that health check-ups be

improved, with doctors using modern machines and

tools instead of relying only on verbal symptoms, so that diseases can be detected at an early stage.

They also pointed out that many serious illnesses are not identified in the beginning and become severe by the time they are diagnosed. Therefore, regular and thorough medical examinations are essential. In the end, the children appealed to the authorities to take this matter seriously and ensure better healthcare facilities in hospitals so that their health remains safe and well-maintained.

GARBAGE DUMP OUTSIDE SLUM POSES SERIOUS HEALTH RISK TO CHILDREN

Talkative Reporter – Preeti
Reporter – Kishan

A major concern has been raised by children living in slum settlements built along drains on government land between factories in Sector 62, Noida. Sona (name changed), a 12-year-old girl, shared that a large heap of garbage has recently been dumped right in front of their settlement, making the situation extremely unhealthy. Earlier, waste used to be disposed of at a designated ground, but now municipal workers have started dumping it near their homes.

The children said that their environment was once relatively clean, but now it is filled with filth, foul smell, and decay. They are forced to play near the garbage, where their belongings often fall, and while retrieving them, they get injured by nails, broken glass, and other sharp objects. Many times, they unknowingly touch contaminated waste and then put their hands in their mouths, leading to frequent illness. Other children



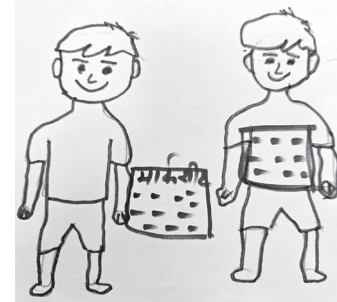
reported a rapid increase in fever, cough, skin infections, and stomach-related diseases. The growing number of flies and mosquitoes has further increased the risk of disease. Despite repeated complaints to municipal authorities, no concrete action has been taken, causing frustration among residents. Experts warn that open dumping of waste is extremely harmful to both the environment and

human health, especially for children with weaker immunity. Local residents are demanding an immediate halt to garbage dumping in the area and proper arrangements for regular cleaning. This issue once again highlights the urgent need to prioritize basic sanitation and public health alongside urban development, as neglecting it could lead to even more serious consequences in the future.

DETERMINATION TRIUMPHS: STREET AND WORKING CHILDREN SUCCEED IN CLASS 10 EXAMS

Balaknama Reporter – Damini
Talkative Reporter – Virat

Examinations and their results play a crucial role in shaping a child's future. In 2026, a total of five children enrolled in the alternative education centers run by Chetna organization appeared for the Class 10 board exams. Among them, children from the Khor settlement in Jaipur achieved notable success despite facing difficult circumstances. This year, three students passed with first and second division, bringing pride to their families, community, and parents. One inspiring example is Virat (name changed), aged 16, who passed with second division. He was enrolled in a Government Senior Secondary School in 2023 through the efforts of Chetna. Despite his interest in studies, he faced many challenges. His mother is often unwell, and with his elder brother living in the village, the



responsibility of the household fell on him. Living with his father and two brothers, he managed all household chores, including cooking, cleaning, and taking care of his younger sibling, while attending school regularly. To support his family financially, he also worked by playing drums, assisting in wedding lighting and catering, and setting up swings. Even during exams, he continued working and studied late into the night. Similarly, 15-year-old Rampal (name changed) passed with first division, and Megha (name changed), a 15-year-old girl from the Mangyawas community in Jaipur, passed with second division. These children achieved success through dedication and perseverance despite hardships. Their achievements show that with determination and hard work, no obstacle is too great. These streets and working children have proven that even with limited resources, big dreams can be achieved.

TINA TAKES ON BIG RESPONSIBILITIES AT A YOUNG AGE

Balaknama Reporter – Deepak
Talkative Reporter – Tina

During a visit by Balaknama reporter Deepak to the Mangyawas settlement in Jaipur, an inspiring story came to light. He met 13-year-old Tina (name changed), who, despite her young age, is taking responsibility for her family and moving towards becoming self-reliant. Despite limited resources, Tina does sewing work at home while also studying at the alternative education center in Mangyawas. Her family situation is not easy—her



mother works as a domestic helper, and her father earns a living by playing the dholak. In such circumstances, Tina contributes to the family

through her skills. She is not only interested in her studies but also earns some money by doing small sewing tasks. She saves her earnings wisely and uses them to meet her own needs as well as to buy essential items like notebooks and books for her younger siblings. Tina dreams of becoming independent through education and providing a better life for her family. Her hard work, sense of responsibility, and determination are inspiring other children in the community. It is encouraging that her Aadhaar card has been

made, and she is expected to get admission to school in the upcoming academic session in July 2026. Truly, if one has strong determination, even a young age cannot become a barrier to fulfilling big dreams and responsibilities.

**CHILDREN'S HELP
LINE NUMBERS**

CONTACT THESE TOLL FREE
NUMBERS IF YOU FACE ANY
PROBLEM.

Child line Number

1098

Police Helpline Number

100

CHILDREN SHINE IN KABADDI AND KHO-KHO AT INDIAN STREET SPORTS CARNIVAL

Balaknama Reporter – Damini
Talkative Reporter – Aamna

Sports play a very important role in children's lives as they not only keep the body healthy but also build confidence, discipline, and teamwork. With this aim, the Indian Street Sports Carnival was organized on 28 March at Chaugan Stadium by the social organization Chetna to encourage children and nurture their talents. The event began with the national anthem, creating a respectful and energetic atmosphere. Several organizations, including Punyartham, Manav Seva Trust, Tabar, and Impact Beyond Border Foundation, participated in the event. A total of 15 teams

from different age groups took part enthusiastically in Kabaddi (senior and junior) and Kho-Kho (senior and junior) competitions. The stadium was filled with energy as children played to the beats of drums and cheered loudly, with participation from over 300 children making the event truly special. The players displayed strong discipline, teamwork, confidence, and sportsmanship throughout the games. Rajasthan Police DSP and Pro Kabaddi player Raju Lal Chaudhary attended as the chief guest and motivated the children by highlighting the importance of sports in building discipline and team spirit. Paralympic gold



medalist Devendra Jhajharia also inspired the children, stating that with the right direction and opportunities, they can bring pride to the nation. Other guests, including the President of the Traders' Association and Child Protection Officers, also encouraged the

participants. In the results, Khor Ke Sher won the senior Kabaddi category, while Damdaar Dhurandhar team won the junior category. In Kho-Kho, Street Star team won the senior category, and Hasanpura Kings won the junior category. When asked about their experience,

children shared that the competition was both fun and a great learning experience. Ritik (12, name changed) said that Kho-Kho improved his quick thinking and agility. Aamna (14, name changed) shared that participating in the competition boosted her confidence and helped her overcome fear. Aryan (13, name changed) described Kabaddi as a game of strength and strategy, while Simran (11, name changed) said it taught her the importance of teamwork and trust. Overall, the event proved to be more than just a sports competition—it became a platform for learning, building confidence, and personal growth for the children.

NEGLIGENCE WORSENS SITUATION AS DRAIN WATER BECOMES A THREAT TO CHILDREN



Reporter – Preeti

Balaknama reporter Preeti visited the N-86 community in Delhi, where a serious issue was highlighted. Priya (name changed), a 14-year-old girl, shared that the drain in their area does not function properly, causing dirty water to overflow. Often, this wastewater spreads onto the nearby railway tracks,

creating a risk of slipping for people passing through. She also explained that wastewater from surrounding homes—such as water from bathing, washing clothes, and cleaning utensils—flows directly into this drain. However, due to a lack of regular cleaning and the dumping of garbage and stones into the drain, the flow of water gets blocked. As a result, the water accumulates

and overflows onto the railway tracks.

Gauri (name changed), a 15-year-old resident of the same community, confirmed the issue. She mentioned that many houses are built very close to or even above the drain, making the situation worse. Some residents carelessly throw waste and stones into the drain, preventing the water from flowing smoothly. This not only leads to water accumulation on the railway tracks but also causes it to overflow into the streets. Gauri added that sanitation workers had once appealed to residents not to dump waste into the drain, but despite this, no significant improvement has been seen. This problem is affecting children and the elderly the most, as it becomes difficult for them to move around safely. The slippery railway tracks increase the risk of accidents, while the stagnant dirty water raises concerns about the spread of diseases.



PARENTS JOIN IN, CHANGING MINDSETS BOOST CHILDREN'S INTEREST IN EDUCATION

Balaknama Reporter – Damini
Talkative Reporter – Rehana

The annual exam result announcement and enrolment festival at the Government School in Khar Ki Dhani, Jaipur, was celebrated this year with great enthusiasm and joy. A special highlight of the event was the active participation of parents, who joined their children in creative activities like rangoli and drawing. This positive involvement reflects a significant shift in people's attitudes toward education. Earlier, the situation was very different. Parents from the Jaisinghpura Khor settlement were hesitant to send their children to school, as they had to walk nearly 4 kilometres through fields and forest areas, raising concerns about their safety and ability to travel such a long distance daily. However, over time, there has been a remarkable change in

mindset. With the efforts and awareness initiatives of Chetna organization, parents are now not only sending their children to school regularly but also supporting their studies. This positive shift has led to encouraging results, with all enrolled students passing with good marks and being promoted to the next class. Parents are now actively participating in both academic and cultural activities, helping boost children's confidence and creativity. Rehana (name changed), an 11-year-old girl, shared, "When our parents encourage us to study and come to school with us, it makes us feel happy and motivates us to learn more." The school in Khar Ki Dhani has become a strong example of how collaboration between the community and school can overcome challenges and ensure that the light of education reaches every home.

KOMAL FROM VALMIKI CAMP TOPS HER CLASS THROUGH HARD WORK AND DEDICATION

Balaknama Reporter: Amrit

Thirteen-year-old Komal (name changed), a resident of Valmiki Camp, has achieved a remarkable success through her hard work, dedication, and discipline. In the recently declared final examination results, she secured the first position in her class, bringing pride not only to her school but also to her family and the entire area. Despite limited resources, her achievement has become a source of inspiration for everyone. Throughout the academic year, Komal studied



regularly and performed well in all subjects. She managed her time effectively and focused on daily revision along with her studies. To understand difficult topics, she repeatedly approached her teachers and kept trying until she fully understood the concepts.

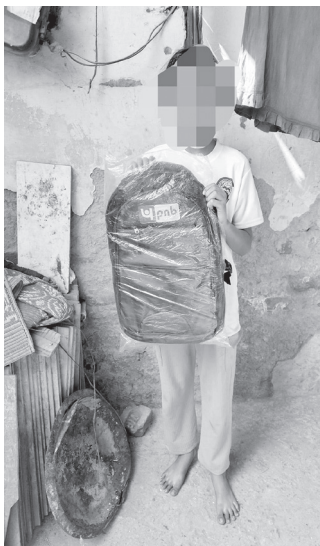
According to her teachers, Komal has always been a sincere and disciplined student who actively participates in class and also performs well in co-curricular activities. The school principal appreciated her achievement and said that her hard work serves as an inspiration for other students. Komal credited her success to her parents and teachers and said that consistent practice and proper guidance made this possible. She also expressed her desire to continue working hard in the future to make her school and family proud.

CHILDREN FORCED INTO WORK INSTEAD OF SCHOOLING: A GROWING CONCERN IN DELHI'S SLUMS

Balaknama Reporter Farooq
Talkative Reporter Ajarul

During a visit to a slum in his area in Delhi, Balaknama reporter Amrit uncovered a worrying situation where many children were engaged in small jobs instead of going to school. Instead of books and notebooks, tools of labor were seen in the hands of these children, raising serious questions about their future. While children should ideally be studying in schools, many are being forced into work due to compulsion or negligence. Conversations with local residents revealed that most parents leave early in the

morning for work and return late in the evening in order to earn a livelihood. As a result, they are unable to pay proper attention to their children. No one ensures that the children attend school regularly or monitors their studies. Consequently, children gradually drift away from education and become involved in work. When reporter Amrit spoke with 12-year-old Ankush (name changed), he shared that he used to attend school regularly but has now stopped going. He said, "Earlier I



His statement highlights how important guidance and supervision are in a child's life. Like Ankush, many other children in the settlement have also dropped out of school and taken up small jobs. Some work in shops, while others are involved in labor work. Although they earn a little money, their education suffers, and their future gradually becomes uncertain and dark. Experts believe that parents play the most important role in a child's life. If parents do not pay attention to their children's education, daily

routine, and future, children can easily move in the wrong direction. Concerned members of society have also expressed worry that if this issue is not addressed in time, it could become a serious social challenge, leaving many children deprived of education. Therefore, it is essential for parents to understand their responsibilities and prioritize their children's education. It should be ensured that children attend school regularly, study properly, and move forward toward fulfilling their dreams. Only then can children's future become secure, bright, and better.

ONLINE GAMING ADDICTION AMONG CHILDREN AFFECTS STUDIES AND HEALTH

Balaknama Reporter – Kajal

In the Kamla Nehru Camp slum area of Delhi, the habit of playing online games among children has been increasing rapidly these days. Many children spend hours playing games on mobile phones, which is negatively affecting their studies and daily routine. Earlier, children used to spend time playing outdoor games or studying after school, but now most of their time is being consumed by mobile gaming. This problem is continuously growing, and local residents are also concerned about it. According to local people, many children pick up their mobile phones immediately after returning from school and play games for long hours. This is affecting their education, sleep, eye health, and mental well-being. Many children are unable to complete their



homework on time, and their interest in studies is gradually decreasing. During a conversation with Balaknama reporter Asif, 13-year-old Rohit (name changed) said, "I play games every day after coming from school. Sometimes I play so much that I don't even feel like studying." Meanwhile, 15-year-old Akash (name changed) said, "I enjoy

playing games, but now my family scolds me because my studies are getting affected." Some parents say that after getting mobile phones, children are spending most of their time on them and have almost stopped going outside to play. This is also affecting their physical development, and they are gradually becoming accustomed to staying isolated. Experts believe that prolonged use of mobile screens can strain children's eyes, cause sleep problems, and increase mental stress. Therefore, it is important to limit mobile usage for children and encourage them towards sports, studies, and creative activities. People in Kamla Nehru Camp want children to be guided in the right direction and kept away from mobile addiction so they can focus on their future. If addressed in time, children can perform better in their studies and life.



ANJU AND ARMAAN EMERGE AS EXAMPLES OF SUCCESS AMID STRUGGLES

Balaknama Reporter: Preeti

During a visit to the N-86 community in Delhi, a Balaknama reporter met two children, Anju and Armaan, who shared inspiring stories of struggle, responsibility, and determination. Eleven-year-old Anju (name changed), a student of Class 6, said that her mother met with a bike accident that caused serious injuries to her hands and required hospitalization. With her mother admitted, the responsibility of the household

suddenly fell on Anju's shoulders. At a very young age, she had to manage cooking, cleaning, and other household chores, while also visiting the hospital daily to care for her mother. At the same time, her exams were ongoing. Despite the dual pressure of household duties and studies, Anju did not give up and managed both responsibilities effectively. Her hard work paid off as she scored good marks in her exams.

Similarly, 14-year-old Armaan (name changed) shared an equally inspiring journey. He lives away from his family in Delhi to pursue his education and also manages household work alongside his studies. He is associated with Chetna organization, through which he secured admission to school, and is currently studying in Class 8. Armaan said that during his exams, he studied with dedication, discipline, and proper time management. His efforts paid off, and he passed with good marks. When he shared his results with his mother and teacher, both were very happy. Armaan also mentioned that he initially lacked confidence in himself, but after seeing his results, he was pleasantly surprised and his confidence has now increased significantly. The experiences of both children show that even in difficult circumstances, success can be achieved through hard work, courage, and determination.

CHILD WORKING NEAR ROADSIDE MEETS WITH SERIOUS ACCIDENT, NARROWLY ESCAPES

Balaknama Reporter: Asif

A 13-year-old boy, Suraj (name changed), living in the Kamla Nehru Camp slum area of Delhi, was involved in a serious accident but narrowly escaped with his life. The incident occurred when he had gone near a debris site to collect wires. According to available information, many children like Suraj are forced to take up such dangerous work due to difficult circumstances. During the incident, a truck carrying debris arrived at the spot, and Suraj climbed onto it. Suddenly, he slipped and fell down, coming under the truck's wheel. A person present at the scene showed immediate courage and pulled Suraj



out, preventing a much more severe accident. However, one of the truck's wheels ran over his leg, causing a fracture. Suraj lost consciousness at the time of the incident. Soon after, his

elder brother reached the spot and rushed him to the hospital, where he is currently receiving treatment. At present, Suraj is facing significant difficulty in walking and carrying out

his daily activities. While speaking to Balaknama reporter Asif (name changed), a local resident said, "If no one had stepped in to help at that moment, the accident could have been much worse. The child was in severe pain." This incident highlights the dangers children face while working near debris sites. Such work is extremely unsafe and can lead to serious accidents. Members of the community stated that due to poverty, children are often compelled to engage in such risky work. They believe that authorities must ensure a safe environment and provide better access to education so that children can stay away from hazardous work and build a better future.

MISUSE OF INTERNET AFFECTING CHILDREN'S EDUCATION, RAISING CONCERNS

Balaknama Reporter: Amrit

In today's modern era, the internet has become an important tool for education, but its misuse is seriously impacting children's studies. The increasing use of mobile phones, social media, and online gaming has significantly distracted children from their academic focus. Earlier, children spent more time reading books and playing outdoor games, but now most of their time is spent in front of mobile screens, leading to noticeable changes in their study habits. It is commonly observed that children spend long hours on their phones. Even during study time, they remain engaged in social

media, watching videos, or playing games, which repeatedly distracts their attention. In many cases, they ignore homework and school assignments, directly affecting their academic performance and resulting in declining grades. Experts believe that the growing addiction to the internet among children is becoming a serious issue.

Excessive usage is leading to problems such as lack of concentration, eye strain, headaches, sleep disturbances, and mental stress. Additionally, behavioural changes are also being noticed—children are becoming more irritable and are distancing themselves from spending time with



their families. A declining interest in studies has become a major concern.

According to a survey, a large number of children are experiencing reduced attention spans and increasing disinterest in studies, largely due to excessive use of mobile phones and the internet. This issue is particularly rising among younger children, who are becoming addicted to mobile devices at an early age. Education experts warn that if this problem is not addressed in time, it could have serious consequences for children's future. Therefore, it is essential to teach children the correct and balanced use of the internet. It should be used for learning, gaining knowledge, and exploring

new ideas, rather than only for entertainment. Parents also have a crucial role to play. They should monitor their children's internet usage, set time limits, and encourage them to engage in outdoor games, reading, art, music, and other creative activities. Spending time with family is equally important for children's mental and emotional development. While the internet is a vast source of knowledge, its misuse can become a threat to children's future. It is important for both parents and children to maintain a healthy balance and use technology in the right direction so that it becomes a tool for growth rather than a barrier.

CLOGGED DRAIN OVERFLOW CREATES UNSAFE CONDITIONS FOR CHILDREN NEAR RAILWAY TRACKS

Balaknama Reporter: Preeti

In West Delhi's N-86 community, poor drainage has become a major concern for residents. During a visit, a Balaknama reporter spoke with 13-year-old Priya (name changed), who explained that water from the local drain does not flow properly and often spreads onto the nearby railway tracks, creating a risk of slipping for people passing through the area. According to Priya, wastewater from nearby homes—such as water from bathing, washing clothes, and cleaning utensils—flows directly into the same drain. However,

due to irregular cleaning and the dumping of garbage and stones into the drain, the flow of water gets blocked. As a result, water accumulates and overflows onto the railway tracks, where it stagnates. Twelve-year-old Gauri (name changed), another resident of the community, confirmed the issue and added that many houses are built over or very close to the drain, which increases the difficulty for residents. She said that some people carelessly throw garbage and stones into the drain, preventing the water from flowing further. This not only leads to waterlogging on the railway



tracks but also causes water to spread into the narrow lanes, making it difficult to walk. Gauri also mentioned that sanitation workers had once appealed to residents not to dump waste and stones into the drain, as it worsens the problem. However, despite this request, there has been little improvement in the situation. The problem is particularly affecting children and elderly people, who face difficulties in moving around. The slippery railway tracks increase the risk of accidents, while the stagnant dirty water also raises concerns about the spread of diseases.

CHILDREN DENIED RIGHT TO PLAY DUE TO CLOTHING AND BACKGROUND

Balaknama Reporter: Amrit

For many children in West Delhi, even playing has become a struggle. Play is a basic right of every child, and all children deserve the freedom to enjoy it. However, when a child is stopped from playing simply because of their clothing or where they live, it deeply affects their dignity and emotional well-being. A similar incident was reported involving 13-year-old Rohan (name changed), who lives in Valmiki Camp. According to information, Rohan had gone to a nearby park with his friends to play. However, a guard present there stopped him from entering the park simply because of his simple clothing and the fact that he came from a slum

area. Another guard also told him, "Don't play here, go and play in some other park." Being stopped without any fault left Rohan deeply hurt. In a conversation with Balaknama reporter Amrit, Rohan expressed his feelings, saying, "We just came to play. What wrong did we do? It felt very bad, and we felt that we were treated unfairly." Rohan's friends, who were with him, also confirmed that such incidents were not new. His friend Sonu (name changed) said, "We come to this park many times, but the guards stop us because of our clothes and where we live. They refuse us as soon as they see us, while they don't say anything to other children." Another friend,



Ajay (name changed), added, "It feels very bad when we are chased away like this. We also want to play like other

children, but we are not given a chance. It feels like we are being discriminated against." Their statements clearly show

that this is not a one-time incident; they have faced such discrimination multiple times. Such behaviour creates feelings of inferiority and sadness among children and also affects their confidence. Parks and playgrounds, which should be spaces of joy and learning for children, become places of exclusion due to such actions. This incident raises an important question—are all children truly being given equal rights? Playing is every child's right, regardless of their background or living conditions. Society must understand that such discrimination is wrong and must be stopped, so that every child can play freely, without fear or bias, and enjoy a happy childhood.

VOICES FROM THE STREETS: WORKING CHILDREN SHARE THEIR STRUGGLES AND DREAMS

Balaknama Reporter: Amrit

A special program organized in Delhi by Chetna NGO brought forward the harsh realities of street-connected and working children in a deeply emotional and impactful way. More than just an event, it became a powerful platform where children raised their voices openly for the first time and shared their life struggles with confidence. Balaknama reporter Amrit was present at the event and closely observed the entire program. The event began with great enthusiasm and energy, gradually drawing a large gathering of children, social workers, and members of the public. The atmosphere carried a mix of curiosity and strong emotional intensity. As soon as the children got the opportunity to speak, they began sharing their real-life experiences without fear. Many children revealed

that their names were not officially registered anywhere, which made it extremely difficult for them to enrol in school. One girl shared that she wanted to study but was repeatedly denied admission due to lack of identity. After much struggle and support, she was finally able to get registered and is now attending school. Some children also spoke about how financial difficulties forced them to leave school and start working, but their desire to move forward and achieve something in life never faded. Their honest stories moved the audience deeply, leaving many in tears. The children not only spoke about their challenges but also showcased their talents and confidence through various performances. They presented street plays highlighting their struggles, social realities, and rights in a powerful manner, which



left a strong impact on the audience. In addition, they performed vibrant dance routines that reflected their energy, confidence, and joy. These performances were not just entertaining but also symbolized their hidden talents and strong determination. Each act was met with loud applause,

encouraging the children further. Several social workers and attendees also participated in the event, listening carefully to the children's stories and appreciating their courage. They emphasized that such programs play an important role in spreading awareness and motivating children

to move forward. A key highlight of the event was that it was organized on the occasion of International Street Children's Day, which is observed globally to raise awareness about children's rights, education, safety, and better future opportunities. Chetna NGO used this occasion to provide children with a platform where they could not only express their concerns but also become more aware of their rights. Through their voices, the children delivered a strong message that every child deserves identity, education, and respect. The event became a memorable experience for many children who have long struggled for recognition. It clearly demonstrated that when given the right platform and support, children can confidently share their stories and take meaningful steps toward their dreams.



SANITATION CRISIS IN SHAKUR BASTI: ENTIRE COMMUNITY DEPENDS ON A SINGLE TOILET

Balaknama Reporter: Jahana

A ground-level survey and investigation in the Shakur Basti community of West Delhi have revealed that residents are facing serious difficulties due to the lack of basic sanitation facilities. This situation is not only affecting their daily lives but is also becoming a major threat to public health. During the assessment, it was found that there is only one public toilet available for such a large population, which is extremely inadequate. As a result, people have to stand in long queues every day, leading to wasted time and increased inconvenience. The situation is further worsened by the location of the toilet, which is quite far from the residential area, making it difficult and unsafe—especially at night or during emergencies—for children, women, and the elderly to access it. The condition of

cleanliness is also alarming, as the toilet is not cleaned regularly, leading to filth and strong odors that discourage its use. This raises the risk of diseases such as cholera and typhoid. Due to these challenges, dissatisfaction among residents is growing, and many are forced to practice open defecation, which pollutes the surrounding environment and negatively impacts overall sanitation. This situation also goes against the objectives of government cleanliness campaigns. Community members have urged the authorities to address this issue promptly, stating that constructing at least two to three additional toilets within the community and ensuring their regular maintenance would significantly reduce their problems, improve hygiene and health conditions, and enhance safety.

DESPITE LACK OF RESOURCES, CHILDREN OF KAMLA NEHRU CAMP SET AN EXAMPLE IN EDUCATION

Balaknama Reporter: Asif

In the slum settlement of Kamla Nehru Camp in Delhi, a group of children has taken a commendable initiative to strengthen their studies. Despite limited resources and difficult living conditions, these children are not giving up and are making continuous efforts to improve their future on their own. Although the environment of the settlement is challenging, the children have strong determination. Understanding the importance of education, they are consistently trying to move forward. After completing household chores, small jobs, and other responsibilities throughout the day, they gather in the evening at one place to study. This scene reflects that if there is a willingness to learn, no difficulty can become an obstacle. Sitting in open spaces or in small corners, these children study together and motivate each other to move ahead. Some of the older children in the settlement have started teaching the younger ones. They help them with homework, explain difficult questions in simple language, and solve study-related problems together. This is not only creating a positive learning environment but also developing a sense of



cooperation and mutual support among the children. Gradually, this initiative is moving towards positive change, and the children's confidence is also becoming stronger than before. During a conversation with Balaknama reporter Asif, 15-year-old Neha (name changed) said, "We all sit together every evening and study. If someone does not understand a question, we help each other. Studying together feels good and makes learning easier." Similarly, 14-year-old Amit (name changed) said, "Earlier we used to study alone, but now studying together makes it easier and more interesting. We try to study every day and also remind each other." "Members of the community say that this initiative by the children is highly commendable. Not only is

it benefiting these children, but it is also inspiring other children in the settlement to focus on education. Many parents are now encouraging their children to join this group, which is further strengthening the learning environment in the area. Some people are also helping by providing notebooks, books, and other essential study materials. This initiative shows that if children are given the right direction, support, and encouragement, they can move forward to achieve their dreams even in difficult circumstances. Small efforts can lead to big changes over time, and this initiative is a strong example of that. Such efforts are also an inspiration for society, showing that collective efforts can make every difficulty easier to overcome.

VOICES OF STREET AND WORKING CHILDREN ECHO AT AKASHVANI PLATFORM

Balaknama Reporter – Damini
Talkative Reporter – Kajal

On 8 April 2026, street and working children got a special opportunity to visit All India Radio (Akashvani). The children appeared very excited and happy, as it was the first time in their lives that they got a chance to visit such a prestigious place and showcase their talent. For many of them, it felt like a dream come true, and they actively participated in every activity with great enthusiasm throughout the visit. On reaching Akashvani, the children were warmly welcomed. They presented a beautiful memento made from waste materials and expressed their gratitude by giving a bouquet. Seeing this gift, Director Dr. Archana Sinha became emotional and happy, and she appreciated the children's effort, creativity, and thinking. After this, the children were given information about the studio, recording room, and the entire radio broadcasting process. Their curiosity increased after seeing microphones, mixers, and other equipment. When a microphone was placed in front of each child, they felt very special. Many of them were visiting such a large



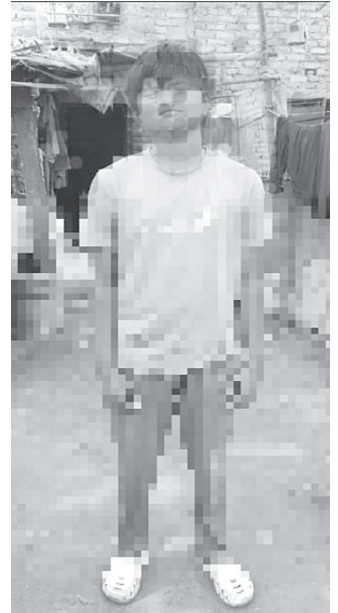
studio for the first time, and their faces clearly showed happiness and confidence. During the program, the children also gave their performances. Thirteen-year-old Manvi (name changed) presented a beautiful song highlighting the challenges of street and working children, possible solutions, and child rights. Fourteen-year-old Sejal (name changed) recited an inspiring poem on the importance of the Hindi language, which everyone listened to attentively. Fifteen-year-old Ali (name changed) presented an engaging and motivational story with expressive gestures. Meanwhile, thirteen-year-old Janak (name changed) performed traditional Nagada drumming. When asked

where he learned this art, he shared that his father and grandfather used to do the same work, and he learned it by watching them. The confident performances of the children deeply impressed the Akashvani team. This visit was not just a tour, but a memorable life experience that gave them a new platform to express their voice and talent. This special presentation was broadcast on 12 April 2026 in the "Balvani" program on All India Radio Pink City channel, giving the children a sense of pride in being heard on radio. It became a major achievement and a memorable moment for them. After the program, the children also shared their experiences. Sejal said, "Speaking on the microphone for the first time felt very good; it felt like people could hear our voice." Ali shared, "Seeing Akashvani made us feel that our dreams can also come true. We learned many new things here and gained confidence." This opportunity brought new energy, confidence, and inspiration for the children. The visit became an unforgettable experience of learning, expression, and recognition, which they will always remember.

DEEP IMPACT OF FAMILY CONFLICTS ON CHILDREN'S EDUCATION AND MENTAL HEALTH

Balakanama Reporter: Amrit,
Talkative Reporter: Shikha

When Balak Nama reporter Amrit visited a settlement in Delhi, 13-year-old Rohan (name changed) shared that a child living nearby is deeply disturbed due to constant fights at home. According to Rohan, there are frequent conflicts between the child's parents and siblings, which is directly affecting his mental well-being and studies. In such a stressful environment, the child does not feel safe and remains in a constant state of fear. Local residents reported that during household disputes, the child becomes anxious and often tries to intervene to restore peace. However, he is sometimes scolded or even beaten by his siblings, which increases his fear and makes him feel isolated and sad. Gradually, his confidence is also declining. The stressful home environment is clearly affecting his education as well. He is unable to focus on studies, his homework often remains incomplete, and his attention in school has also decreased. Earlier, he showed interest in studies, but now it is gradually fading. Neighbours believe that constant exposure to



domestic conflicts has a strong negative impact on children's minds and behaviour. Experts emphasize that for a child's healthy development, a peaceful, safe, and supportive home environment is essential. Parents should keep their disputes away from children and maintain a calm atmosphere at home so that children can study properly and grow with confidence. This situation highlights how deeply family environment shapes a child's life, future, and emotional well-being.

CHILDREN FALLING INTO THE GRIP OF GAMBLING AND BETTING, CHILDHOOD MOVING TOWARDS RUIN

Balaknama Reporter: Amrit

The growing trend of gambling and betting in a locality of Delhi has now become a serious concern for children's future. During a visit by Balaknama reporter Amrit, it was observed that people were openly playing cards and betting in some areas. What was even more alarming was that several children were also present nearby, with some of them standing and watching these activities. According to local residents, some gamblers even pay children small amounts of money to do tasks such as bringing water, delivering items, or running errands. Attracted by this, many children are gradually being drawn towards these spots. Slowly, this habit is affecting their behavior and daily routine, pushing them away from studies. Some children are now spending more time around these places, which could prove harmful for their future. Some parents in the area said that children's time should be spent

on studies, sports, and positive activities, but due to these gambling spots, their attention is getting diverted. Often, children are seen roaming around these areas after returning from school instead of going straight home, which has increased concern among families. Social workers believe that if the issue is not addressed in time, both childhood and the future of children may be affected. Living in such an environment can also lead children towards bad habits, which is harmful for their overall development. Therefore, it is very important for children to have a safe and positive environment. Local residents have demanded strict action from the administration against such gambling spots and the creation of a safe environment for children. At the same time, it is also the responsibility of families and society to pay attention to children, guide them in the right direction, and encourage them towards good activities.

CHILDREN FORCED TO QUIT EDUCATION DUE TO POVERTY, BEGIN WORKING IN FACTORIES



Balaknama Reporter – Asif

In Kamla Nehru Camp, Delhi, several children are living in extreme poverty, due to which their families are unable to afford the cost of education. Because of their weak financial condition, these children are forced to leave school and start working in factories, which falls under the category of child labour. At a very young age, taking up the burden of work not only disrupts their education but also affects their childhood. Recently, police received information that several minors were working in factories in the area. Following

this, a raid was conducted and many children were taken into custody. This incident created an atmosphere of fear and concern in the locality. After about seven days, the police released the children, but the incident had already left a deep impact on them and their families. During a conversation with Balaknama reporter Asif, one of the children, 15-year-old Firdous (name changed), shared his struggle, saying, "We are very poor. My father earns, but it is not enough to run the household. He also drinks alcohol, so I have to work to support the family." His

words clearly reflect how poverty is forcing children into labour. Reporter Asif then informed Firdous about the Child Labour Prohibition Act and explained that employing minors in factories is illegal and dangerous. After understanding this, Firdous realized that he should not be working at this age and instead should focus on his studies to build a better future. When the reporter spoke to Firdous's mother, she expressed her concern, saying, "I was very scared when the police took Firdous away. But if he does not work, how will we manage household expenses?" This question remains a harsh reality for many families in Kamla Nehru Camp. The incident raises serious concerns about how poverty and compulsion are depriving children of their childhood and future. There is a strong need for support systems so that children can continue their education instead of being forced into labour.

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