

**CHILDLINE – BHUBANESWAR**  
**RUCHIKA SOCIAL SERVICE ORGANIZATION**  
A report on the Survey of Beggar children in Bhubaneswar

### Child Beggary in Bhubaneswar

Beggary is a global phenomenon. But India contributes the highest number of beggars in the world of which more than 50% are children. There are at least 300,000 child beggars in India with some estimates being as high as one million children forced into beggary. Being one of the poorest states of India, Odisha shows a rising trend of growing child beggary both in the city and rural areas. As the capital of Odisha and a major railway hub of the east coast, Bhubaneswar attracts a countless number of impoverished homeless and unemployed families and the children from different parts of the state as well as neighboring states. In addition, nomadic tribes and gypsies are proliferating who set up their tents on the vacant land. Living condition of these families is deplorable and depressing. Without family guidance and sometimes with the consent of the parents the children are often forced into a life of beggar. The issue of child beggary is an overt form of trafficking in that the children are exploited and coerced, often by force, against their will. It has been noticed that the children adopt different strategies to beg as follows:

- a) Naked /half-naked children beg at the railway station / bus stop with a bowl.
- b) Use photo of different God/Goddess for begging.
- c) Sit in the line of leper beggars in front of temples.
- d) Mothers carry babies and beg displaying these undernourished children.
- e) Children with white bandages on the feet / hand pretend as lepers and beg.
- f) Mothers put their young children under the sun and beg drawing attention of the public.
- g) Adolescent girls/ boys beg to the passengers with half naked / torn dresses and sometimes acting as mutes.
- h) Young adolescents sweep the railway compartments with a short broom or with their shirts and beg the passengers.

In addition the children and parents adopt many innovative methods to beg.

### Law that prevents child beggary

As per the section 24. 1. of J.J. Act. 2000 “ whoever, employs or uses any juvenile or the child for the purpose or causes any juvenile to beg shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years and shall also be liable to fine.”

Section 24. 2. of the act also says that “Whoever, having the actual charge of or control over, a juvenile or the child abets the commission of the offence punishable under sub-section (1), shall be punishable with imprisonment of a term which, may extend to one year and shall also be liable to fine.”

### Beggar Intervention of RSSO/CHILDLINE

Beggary intervention is the prime concern of the Ruchika Social Service Organisation. Acknowledging the formidable challenges faced by the beggar children of Bhubaneswar railway station, Mrs. Inderjit Khurana started a fun school at the Railway platform in 1985. The beggar children who did not have any family ties were provided with shelter and all basic facilities required to lead a normal life. Ruchika runs 12 such platform schools in Orissa and caters to the basic needs of 400 children who are either engaged in begging and in wage earning unorganized labour sectors like rag picking, cleaning the station, or petty vending.

Childline also had initiated a program viz. “**Operation Childhood**” in 2006. Aim of the program is to combat child beggary from the Bhubaneswar city. In its process of intervention Childline has rescued hundreds of child beggars and have restored them to their families. But many of these children are often found back to this profession.

### INITIATION OF SURVEY ON CHILD BEGGARS IN BHUBANESWAR

We are happy to know that the menace of child beggary has attracted the attention of Govt. of Odisha. The Director, Social Welfare is highly concern about the issue and has shown her interest to take necessary steps to combat child beggary from Odisha. As per her instruction, this survey has been conducted in the city of Bhubaneswar.

#### Survey sites

The sites were selected on the following basis.

The railway station and the bus stops are the entry points. Ram Mandir is a tourist place. And other four places are the crowded area of the city. The child beggars are available mostly at entry points and at the crowded areas and traffic post where vehicles stop for some times. The tourist places and religious places are normally chosen by the child beggars, because people (tourists and devotees) normally tend to give money on charity. That is why the following sites were selected. Due intimation was sent to the Director.

1. Railway station and Master canteen area
2. Rajmahal Area
3. Unit – 1 market
4. Ram Mandir

5. Big bazar.
6. Vanivihar area
7. Bus stop

## Methodology of Survey

The childline staff were divided into groups and conducted the survey of the children begging at all the above sites. A survey format was prepared. Information was collected by interviewing the children individually at the site. In addition, their parents were also interviewed. Steps were taken to prevent duplicity of the names.

## DETAILED REPORT OF THE SURVEY

**Table – 1 : Sex wise distribution of child beggars identified from the sites.**

Sex	Raj Mahal	Unit – I Market	Railway Station	Kalpna	Ram Mandir	Big Bazar	Baramun da Bus stop	Vani Vihar	Total
Male	03	03	13	01	07	03	11	04	45
Female	02	08	06	04	05	01	03	02	31
Total	05	11	19	05	12	04	14	06	76

Out of total 76 children there were 45 (59 %) male children and 31 (41 %) female children were found from the sites.

**Table – 2 : Age wise distribution**

Age	Raj Mahal	Unit – I Market	Railway Station	Kalpna	Ram Mandir	Big Bazar	Baramunda Bus stop	Vani Vihar	Total
Male below 6 yrs	01	0	02	00	02	00	00	00	05
Male 7-10 yrs	02	02	03	01	05	03	06	02	24
Male 11-14 yrs		01	01	00	00	00	05	02	09
Male 15 – 18 yrs		00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00
Female below 6 yrs		00	06	00	04	00	00	00	10
Female 7-10 yrs	02	06	07	04	00	01	02	01	23
Female		02	00	00	01	00	01	01	05

11-14 yrs									
Female 15 – 18 yrs		00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00
Total	05	11	19	05	12	04	14	06	76

This table indicates that the children in the age group of 7 to 10 years are the maximum in these sites. Out of 76 children 23 girls and 24 boys, total 47 children are in this age group which is 61 % . In the age group 11-14 there are 05 girls and 09 boys = 14 children or 18 % . Especially the girls in this age group are highly vulnerable to forcible sex. Alarmingly 10 girls and 5 boys below the age of 5 are begging which is 19 % . 61 children are in the school going age (6 – 14 years).

**Table – 3 : Native place of child beggars**

Native Place	Raj Mahal	Unit – I Market	Railway Station	Kalpana	Ram Mandir	Big Bazar	Baramunda Bus stop	Vani Vihar	Total
Bhubaneswar	01	04	04	02	02	01	01	03	18
Odisha (outside BBSR)	03	03	11	03	10	00	13	00	43
Outside odisha	01	04	04	00	00	03	00	03	15
Total	05	11	19	05	12	04	14	06	76

This table points out that more than 76 % (58) children do not belong to Bhubaneswar. They have either come from other districts of Odisha or other states of India to beg at Bhubaneswar. Their families are settled in Bhubaneswar. Some families are the nomadic tribes. They visit from one place to another.

**Table – 4 : How long the child is in the begging**

Duration	Raj Mahal	Unit – I Market	Railway Station	Kalpana	Ram Mandir	Big Bazar	Baramunda Bus stop	Vani Vihar	Total
Less than one month	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00
2months to 1 year	01	06	05	01	09	00	04	00	26
More than	04	05	14	04	03	04	10	06	50

one year									
Total	05	11	19	05	12	04	14	06	76

The above table gives an idea that 66 % children (50) have been begging for more than one year on the street. It is to be noted that, these children have already adopted begging as their profession. It is very difficult to change the mindset of the child if he/she is engaged in one occupation for more than one year. Other 26 children are also begging for more than 2 months.

**Table – 5 : Per day earning of the child beggars**

Sex/earning	Raj Mahal	Unit – I Market	Railway Station	Kalpana	Ram Mandir	Big Bazar	Baramunda Bus stop	Vani Vihar	Total
Male less than Rs. 50	01	01	04	00	00	00	01	03	10
Female Less than 50	02	05	07	00	00	00	02	02	18
Male 50 – 100	02	02	02	01	02	03	10	01	23
Female 50-100	00	03	06	04	02	01	01	00	17
Male > 100	00	00	00	00	05	00	00	00	05
Female > 100	00	00	00	00	03	00	00	00	03
Total	05	11	19	05	12	04	14	06	76

This table indicates their earning level. Maximum number of children (30 ) earn 50 to 100 rupees per day through begging. 08 of them even earn more than Rs. 100/- a day. However 28 children earn less than 50 rupees a day. The average earning of the children per day = Rs. 65/- per day.

**Table – 6 : Children whose mother is a beggar**

Sex	Raj Mahal	Unit – I Market	Railway Station	Kalpana	Ram Mandir	Big Bazar	Baramunda Bus stop	Vani Vihar	Total
Male	02	01	02	00	06	02	09	03	25
Female	00	02	06	01	05	01	01	00	16

Total	02	03	08	01	11	03	10	03	41
-------	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----

A total number of 41 child beggars are there whose mothers do beg on the street. They insist their children to beg with them. As soon as the children get used to it and learn techniques they beg independently and give the money to their mothers.

**Table – 7 : Children whose father is a beggar**

Sex	Raj Mahal	Unit – I Market	Railway Station	Kalpana	Ram Mandir	Big Bazar	Baramunda Bus stop	Vani Vihar	Total
Male	00	00	00	00	00	01	03	01	05
Female	00	00	00	00	00	01	00	00	01
Total	00	00	00	00	00	02	03	01	06

There are a very few children found whose fathers are also begging. The number is only six.

**Table – 8 : Monthly Family income of the child beggars**

Income	Raj Mahal	Unit – I Market	Railway Station	Kalpana	Ram Mandir	Big Bazar	Baramunda Bus stop	Vani Vihar	Total
Less than 1000	01	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	01
1000-2000	02	02	04	01	00	00	00	00	09
2000-3000	02	03	06	00	00	00	00	03	14
More than 3000	00	06	09	04	12	04	14	03	52
Total	05	11	19	05	12	04	14	06	76

There are 52 children (68 %) whose family income is more than Rs. 3000 per month. Even it is reported that the family income of some children is more than 5000 per month.

**Table – 9 : Children live with their parents in the city**

Sex	Raj Mahal	Unit – I Market	Railway Station	Kalpana	Ram Mandir	Big Bazar	Baramunda Bus stop	Vani Vihar	Total
Male	02	03	13	01	07	03	11	04	44
Female	02	08	06	03	05	01	03	02	30
Total	04	11	19	04	12	04	14	06	74

All most all children (74 out of 76) are living with their parents (either father or mother or both father and mother) in the city.

### Highlighting Points

1. Since 97 % children live with their parents, it will be easy to remove them and put in the school. But parents are the main hindrance in putting the children into school.
2. 80 % child beggars are in the school going age (6-14 yrs.). They are losing their childhood in begging for a coin when they should be in the school. It is a social shame.
3. 54 % children's mothers are also begging. Probably they are the motivating factor for the children to beg.
4. Only 18 out of 76 children are the resident of Bhubaneswar. Other 58 children or 76 % of them are from outside. They have chosen begging as their profession.
5. There are many causes which have prompted them to beg. One of them is poverty. However it has come to our notice that the people find it easy to beg and earn for their livelihood. Some people have chosen begging as their family profession and they have been begging from generation to generation. Children are forced to be put in to the same trade. The family does not want their children to be removed from this.
6. Earning of the family is adequate to live. It indicates that if initially only children are removed from the profession and put into the school, the parent(s) can manage the family with whatever they earn.
7. The major problem of the menace is, most of the families do not have a home or a specific place to live. They live on the pavement or on the bus stop or railway station or they move from place to place with their bags and baggage. Where ever they go they do not leave their profession.

### SUGGESTIONS

We really respect all those kids who actually do their best to fight all the odds that life has offered them and still staying "in the game" and giving begging a strong opposition. And those who beg we hope we all are aware, to an extent, how they are being forced to do the same.

To combat child begging we need to take a strong action in the government and NGO level. The police, Juvenile Justice System, Childline, government machinery and child care institutions should get together and plan for an effective strategy. The below mentioned points may be suggested.

1. Parents need intensive counselling and are to be sent back to their native place with a specific support plan. They should be included in poverty alleviation schemes on a priority basis. State government may issue special order circular to the concerned district collectors / block level officers to include them in these schemes.
2. The widows should be immediately included in the Madhubadbu pension scheme.
3. Every family needs to have proper place to stay. The district administration should provide a small plot of land if any of them is found to be land less and help them to construct a house under IAY scheme.
4. The family should be helped by the block administration to get a small loan along with the support service to start an income generating program.
5. Children should be helped to go to school with all education stationeries, uniforms, shoes etc. There should be no burden of child education on the parents in the first year.
6. The DSWOs of the concerned district should help Childline or /and Child care institutions to rehabilitate these families properly. The local sarapanch, ward member, nominees also should be intimated about the family so that these families can be suitably rehabilitated and it can prevent further drop out of the families from the mainstream society.
7. The concerned DI of schools should be directed to take care of these dropped out children and to take necessary action to impart special remedial coaching to enable them to coop with their age appropriate classes.
8. A monetary package may be allotted for the homeless families for their economic rehabilitation. The support should be provided to these families through the concerned CWC / DSWO/ Local NGO with an intimation to the district / block administration.

9. Police intervention is very necessary to remove these families from the streets of the city and to escort them up to their home village. The concerned local police also should be informed to keep an eye on the families.
10. Bhubaneswar Childline can help police and government to identify the child beggars and escort them with police upto their home village and intimate the local CWC / DSWO.
11. The families belong to the city, who do not have a place to live may be helped with a small land and a support to construct their house in the slum settlement colonies. Till that time the families should be provided with shelter support in any NGO homes.
12. Above all since child begging is a crime as per section 24 of Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2000, legal proceedings should be initiated against the parents who use their children in begging. All the police stations under Commissionerate of Police should be directed for the same.

To say that the children are the future citizen of this country is to understate a great truth in reality children are future themselves. It is the duty of every one of us to see that children, the greatest asset of the mankind get the best possible environment in which they can grow without any obstruction or impediment. Child beggary is a crime against humanity. Let us join hands to combat child beggary from our society.

**Data collection : Childline, Bhubaneswar**

**Date compiled and report preparation**

**Benudhar Senapati**

**Member , Managing Committee,**

**Ruchika Social Service Organisation**

**Member, Child Welfare Committee, Khordha,**

**3731-A, Sriram Nagar, Old Town, Bhubaneswar.**

**Email – [rssobbs@hotmail.com](mailto:rssobbs@hotmail.com) / [benudhar.ruchika@gmail.com](mailto:benudhar.ruchika@gmail.com)**

**Phone – 9853616279**

**Report Submitted to :**

**Sujatha Kartikeyan, IAS,  
Director, Social Welfare,  
Department of Women and Child Development,  
Govt. of Odisha, Bhubaneswar**

**Date : 20.07.2012**