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INTRODUCTION

A child is the future of every generation. He should be provided everything he needs to ensure that he can make his future bright and enlightening. Every person whether a child or an adult has basic human rights which no one can deprive or infringe. Every child is entitled to a happy childhood and education but in case of a child beggar these things may not have a place. Childhood is the purest phase of life we all have. There are millions of street children who scamper to the under bridges, railway stations, street parks and footpaths to ensure they have a safe place to at the night. These children beg to fulfill their need for food. Most of them are forced to beg by the cartels.[1]

Around three lakhs of children are forced to beg across India. These children are subjected to harsh conditions, brutality, torture and impoverished lives. The children are left with no option but to beg to sustain their livelihood. Many children get injured and forced to beg to give the money to traffickers and they often buy drugs and alcohol from the money people give them to buy clothes and food. These children are also sedated. These children are mostly from poor background and no one is there to look after them.

CHALLENGES AND ISSUES THEY FACE WHILE BEGGING ON STREETS

1. Abuse and torture

The children begging on the streets face a lot of abusive behavior and torture. They are abused by their parents, guardians, traffickers and other peoples. Sometimes they are sexually abused, beaten, tortured and forced to beg on the streets without any excess to shelter and food.

2. Discrimination

Due to the discrimination between men and women in India, many people abandon their girl child. The child is then forced to live on street and beg. Some Childs are indulging in prostitution. People think these children are thieves and they are often seen as dirty. The children are also discriminated from other children by people from wealthier backgrounds and families.

3. Poverty

Ever tried sleeping without eating anything? The children begging on the streets belong to the poor background. These children beg with the whole family. The only motive for them to beg is to get food. Food is their priority. They are forced to beg as their families are big with no source of income. Hungary stomach and a need for food make them beg.

4. Homelessness

How can a person barely managing food can have excess to the shelter. These children may have a poor family or they might be alone. Finding a Shelter is a great hurdle. They beg for the whole day and at dusk, they find a shelter. They live on streets and railway stations and etc. with a hope to at least get a roof and some food to sustain and fulfill basic necessities of their families.

WHY CHILDREN ARE FORCED TO BEG

1. Children forced by their parents or guardians

Children from impoverished backgrounds are usually forced to beg by their parents or guardian. They belong to a very poor family and their parents either work under harsh conditions or also beg to survive. Sometimes the whole family gets involved in the begging as it seems to be the easiest way of earning to at least get a street shelter and some food to sustain their lives and family. The children are often forced by their families to beg which even goes beyond any acceptable family discipline which is unusual.

2. Children forced by the other persons

Children are also forced to beg by the mafias and the traffickers by use of violence, torture and etc. they are given [2] daily targets for their begging trips.

LEGAL FRAMEWORKS FOR CHILD BEGGAR

To eliminate the children begging practices the government and constitution have a set of legal frameworks. These laws are anti-child begging practices and help to promote the welfare of a child in every aspect.

1. Juvenile justice(care and protection of children) act, 2000

The act provided the anti-child begging provisions under [3]section 24(1) which states that whoever abetting, employing, forcing or indulging a child into the begging practices is liable and can be imprisoned up to three years as well as can also be held liable for the fine.

2. Indian penal code, 1860[4]

Section 363A of the Indian penal code 1869, states that whoever kidnaps or maims a child for the purpose of begging shall be held liable for the punishment of imprisonment up to 10 years and can also be held liable for the fine.

3. Railways act, 1989

In India, children are often seen begging in trains. These children sing or simply raise hands to beg towards the passenger. [5]Section 144(2) of the Railways Act, 1989, prevents these children and adults from begging in the trains and states that any person who begs in any train or railway station shall be liable for the punishment up to one year and shall also be held liable for the fine.

4. The children act, 1960

Under [6]section 42 of the children act, 1960, it is provided that whoever employs a child for the purpose of begging or indulges a child into begging or

makes him beg shall be liable for the imprisonment which may extend to one year or a fine or both. The abetment of the offence is also punishable and the nature of the offence is cognizable.

5. The Bombay prevention of begging act, 1959

The act criminalizes begging and aims to prevent the beggars from begging and move them to some other improved employment. The act also provided that the children under the age of five years old indulged in the begging shall be forwarded to the courts under the children act, 1969, and his mother shall be detained for taking care of him/her.

HOW TO HELP CHILD BEGGARS

1. Reporting to the authorities

If you see a child begging in the streets or in railway stations the first thing you can do is reporting to the authorities like the police or railway department. The authorities can save their life by finding a good future for them.

2. NGO's

You can report to the child care and welfare NGO'S which will find their family and help financially. These NGO'S also work for the education of these street beggars and help them by giving them food and shelter.

SUGGESTIONS- NEED FOR WELFARE OF DOWNTRODDEN

CHILD BEGGARS

1. More stringent provisions should be made by every state government to deal with this issue by considering the motive of the welfare of the children.
2. Awareness of the NGO'S should be more enhanced to reach out to those children who are suffering a lot as fewer people know about its working and helping the environment.
3. The government should provide access to basic necessities like food and shelter to these child beggars and their families in order to change their habits or needs to beg.
4. Education is everyone's fundamental right. The education of these children should be promoted. An educated person can at least earn from his/ her knowledge and is not bound to beg for the living and family.
5. The better employment opportunities should be given to their family. NGO'S helping these child beggars should be provided with adequate financial facilities so that they can help without any tension of funds assistance.
6. The abused children should be taken to the proper shelter which can maintain them. The children with malnutrition should be taken care properly by the authorities and NGO'S.

CONCLUSION

The phase we all want to live back, is childhood but what if the same gets converted into a nightmare. Ever had a thought of waking up daily and beg for the whole day to get some food or getting abused by family or traffickers. The situation these children are facing is no change. They are not begging due to they enjoy it but they are forced to beg and live a terrible life. The government is doing a tremendous job to make their life better by making various provisions like shelter homes for homeless and etc. the constitution also has some provisions against the child begging practices with punishments who forces and employs a child to beg. But still, there is a need to change the mindsets of the society as it's not the only government's job or constitution's liability but our responsibility to protect our future and take steps towards the welfare of these children.