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While poverty persists there is no

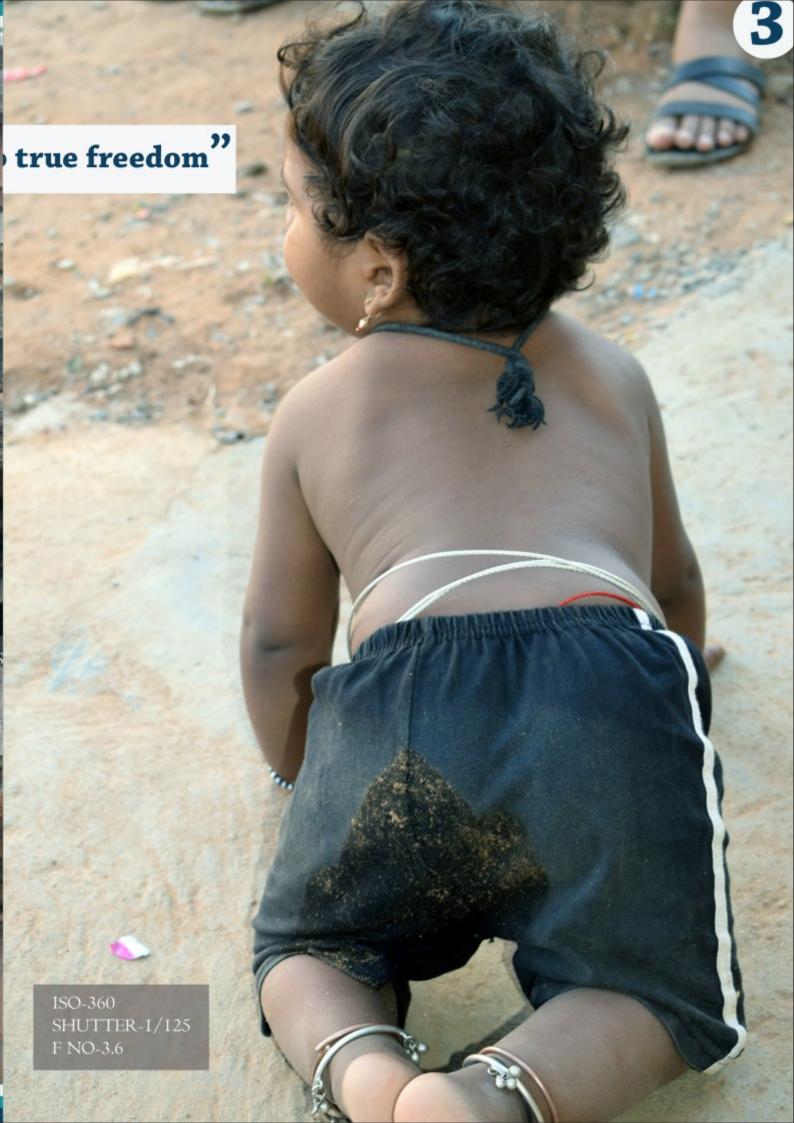
Nelson Mandela's words are still relevant in our country. The country which identifies a decent life as a human right is struggling to provide basic necessities to one and all.

The most affected are the children. Babies are born, crawl, toddle and live in poverty. Till death, they try to come out of the unforgiving cycle of poverty. What we need is proper legislature which will reach the poor effectively. The low economic status can put children at high mental risks. Children often identify themselves as failures and will create a sense of hopelessness. But even their faces are illuminated with an innocent smile. When we with four meals a day and a roof over our head complain about everything in our life, that is where these children are different. In the most hopeless situation, they smile.

Nelson Mandela

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PORTRAITS LIFE IN SLUM MAYHEM OF COLOURS





RESPONSIBILITY BIGGER THAN THE AGE



Story Credit-Sristy Chhetri

Responsibility is a gift which one gives himself, and it changes everything. The moment we realise that we are the one who are capable of and responsible for changing things, life becomes more beautiful.

Every morning Annaya's daily wage working parents depart, leaving their two daughters behind. Annaya being the eldest, takes up the responsibility of looking after her plastic hut and protecting her sibling. Carrying her sister always in her arms forming a cocoon she spends her entire day.

Ananya never leaves her alone because the slum they live in is not so clean. Like any other big sister Annaya does her best to keep her sibling safe and happy. In the evening when all the children come out to play, Annaya along with her sister comes out to see her friends playing. She won't dare to join them unless someone is there to look after her sister.

Even though life has been tough for Annaya in this young age, a smile always shines on her face.

SOME WISH FOR THE MOON AND SOME FOR THE SCHOOL

Story Credit-Sristy Chhetri

9 year old vaishnavi, wants to go to school and learn new things. She wants someone to buy her orange coloured school bag and books to read. She also wishes school for her sister and friends. But sadly, she cannot attend school because she has to look after her younger sister, as every morning her parents go for manual work. She has no idea about the things that happen in school and she cannot do anything to make her future good. She has seen children of her age attending school and have always wished to join them.

According to HUMANIUM - an international child NGO, about 58 million children in the world have no access to education just because they cannot afford to attend an educational institutions. Less than half of India's children between the ages of 6 to 14 go school. Even though education is a human and fundamentalright, many children like Vaishnavi do not get the chance to attend school due to poverty. Also, Girls are far less likely to attend school compared to boys.



Millions and Millions of money is being used to search life on the moon, but the life here is a quest for survival. The amount of money the governments of different nations use for inventions and technology, a very small percentage of that money is more than enough to provide for every child's healthy life. As, the good earth is rich and can provide for everyone.

Story Credit-Sristy Chhetri

Its human tendency to complain so much about life, everyone wishes for more than what they have, But on the other hand, there are the few unfortunate souls who are not sure whether they will get their next meal or not. Life in a slum, especially for the children is very sad and heart-breaking. The slums have become the indispensable and dark part of our country. Children from slums, will never have the beautiful childhood memories, their dreams and wishes are lost somewhere in the darkness of their surroundings. The angels of slum will never know how exactly the outer world looks like, they will never know that a few kilometres from their home someone is wasting tons of food, which they pray for. While the fortunate cry for brands, these souls only wish for a piece of sheet to cover their body in the chilly nights. It's only the hope that keeps them alive, deprived of basic facilities like food, water, toilets. These kids face their life with a smile on their face and hope that one day good fortune will come their way, filling their stomachs thrice a day...

WAR BETWEEN BRICKS AND TARPAULIN

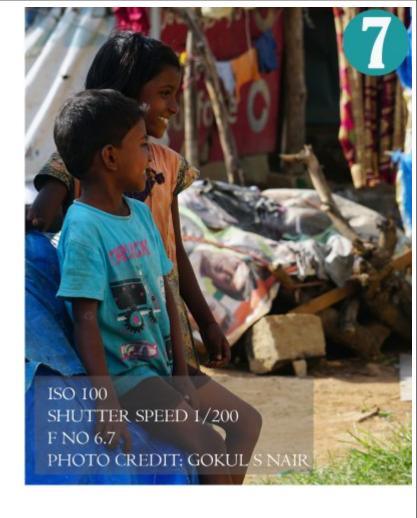
Story Credit- Nishitha S Phirangi

Homelessness is a humiliation not only for our country, but also to the humanity.

India defines 'homeless' as those who do not live in houses, but stay on footpaths, roads, railway platforms, staircases, temples, streets, in pipes, or other public spaces.



TOGETHER THEY HIDE THE PAIN





More than 90 million people in India make less than 150 rupees per day, which sets us below the global poverty threshold.

The number of people living in slums of our country has doubled in the past two decades.

About 78 million people in India live in slums and tents. India contributes to 17% of the world's slum dwellers. There are 18 million children who live on streets and most of them are highly prone to both physical and mental illness.

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Story Credit- Abey Jacob

Slums are home to nearly one billion people in the world and are expanding at an exponential rate. The slums typically lack proper sanitation, safe drinking water, or systematic garbage collection; there is usually a severe shortage of space inside the houses where the children live.

The people in the slum lack regular jobs and thus income. Children born in the slum have to struggle for food. It is impossible for them to have four meals a day. Hunger remains a frightening dream for them.

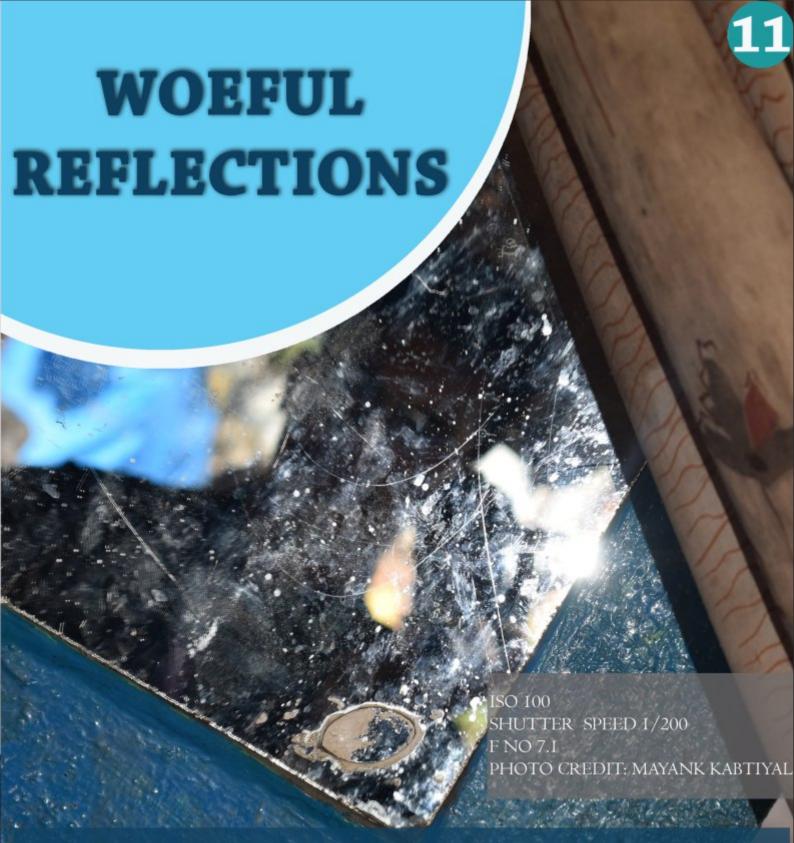
In such a situation where there is nothing to share, they share what they have with others. Greediness in not their attribute even in the utmost situation. Children take up responsibilities at a young age andlook after their siblings when their parents work hard to make the two ends meet. Children share a strong bond among them, love each other, feed each other and support each other. It is with this love and affection they forget the harsh certainties around them.

When rest of the world wastes food they crave for it. For them every single grain counts.



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PHOTO CREDIT: MAYANK KABTIYAL



Story Credit- Abey Jacob

The life of slum dwellers is woeful. The reflection in the mirror portrays their life of plight and worries, their everyday struggle for survival. The mirror shows the harsh reality of the people who are often seen as the second-class citizens in the society and are frowned upon.

What do these people see in the mirror? Is it hope amidst hopelessness or being drowned by the unforgiving circumstances of their lives? When the poor people look through the mirror, they find that their goals and ambitions are being put to stop in their life just to survive. The mirror stands as a spectator who witnesses the dreams and hopes of slum inhabitants being faded away as time passes.

The slums and the people are the reflection of the

The slums and the people are the reflection of the society we live in. Like a mirror image their life is very evident and clear to the rest of the world yet their problems never find a place in the mainstream.



HANGING DREAMS



Story Credit- Nishitha S Phirangi

If there is reality, there is a dream. A dream becomes a memory and gradually fades away. We wake up from dreams but we don't wake up from reality. But does the person we dreamt of ever wake up from the dream? Or does their 'reality' just end for them?

The same way, what does the economically deprived dream of? A slice of bread? Some water to quench their thirst? A meal a day? Shelter for the day?

They dream of everything that we take for granted, that too on an everyday basis. They realise that there is a huge gap between their reality and dreams. But can they do anything about it? Are they okay with it? Are they in peace with it?

But children do not worry of the future. They aren't worried about what tomorrow will be like or do not know what awaits them.

Children have a heavenly point of view, and in heaven poverty means nothing, that is why we see how children are not so bothered about their economic status in the society.



BORN POOR?

Story Credit - Irene Jose

Children born into poverty are likely to remain in poverty.

But hopes for them too exist. As kids we all aspire for the most sophisticated life. A life in front is not known to us.

We spend our entire lives working on things we don't love, spend money we don't have, to buy things we don't need, to impress people we don't like. But the poor children do not get a chance to see, feel or eat what they desire or wish for. All they have is poverty.

But that doesn't stop them. Children are curious about the outside world and question the scenario in which they live. They have a strong determination to become what they dreamt of.

Now the question is who will support them to achieve their dream?





