

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights (DCPCR)** Government of NCT of Delhi

22 September, 2021

#### **22 children rescued from begging and rag-picking in West Delhi.**

New Delhi

5 rescue operations were conducted on 15/09/2021 at the following hotspots: (1) Rajouri Garden to Raja Garden Road; (2) City Square Mall; (3) TDI Mall; (4) West Gate Mall; (5) Tagore Garden metro station to Subhash Nagar metro station. 22 children, including 9 girls and 13 boys, were rescued from begging, rag picking and street situations.

These children spend their childhood on the street, living under terrible conditions. As per DCPCR's survey, over 70,000 children in Delhi live on the street. Another randomized survey conducted by DCPCR revealed that close to 50% of street children are addicted to substance abuse and more than 50% have no basic facility of food, water and electricity at their dwellings. These circumstances make them susceptible to economic and sexual exploitation, slavery and trafficking. They do not even wear face masks, further exposing them to the deadly COVID-19 virus.

The rescue operation was led by Mr. Ranjeet K. Singh, SDM, Rajouri Garden and Ms. Meenu Mehta, Chairperson, Child Welfare Committee-I with the support of Delhi Police (West), District Child Protection Unit - IV, Civil Defence Force (West), Childline (West and South West), and DCPCR representatives.

All the children rescued were minors, and aged between 1 to 15 years. Post rescue, they were provided with medical care and COVID testing under the supervision of respective CDMO. The rescue team deployed by the SDM, Rajouri Garden did a splendid job in ensuring the safety measures required during the course of the operation. Additionally, they made sure that all the rescued children felt secure in the premises, and were well taken care of.

District Magistrate Ms. Kriti Garg and SDM (Rajouri Garden) Mr. Ranjeet K. Singh have displayed deep commitment to ensure their district becomes a model district and no child is found begging on the street.

During a conversation with the children, two rescued siblings, Astha\*<sup>1</sup> and Sunil\* informed the authorities that they beg on the streets of Rajouri Garden and stay with their family in a *Jhuggi Jhopri* in Tilak Nagar. CWC Bench explained to Rita\*, their mother, about the care and protection that is provided to the children at the Children Home under the jurisdiction of CWC-I. On visiting the Children Home, Rita was deeply impressed by the hygienic environment maintained and the joyful spirit of the children there. She expressed her desire to send Astha, Sunil and her other two children (who were not rescued on 15/09/2021) to the Children Home so that they could also receive proper education, lead a fulfilling childhood and have a brighter future. Rita assured the CWC bench that she would visit her children every month and stay in constant touch with them.

Currently, 6 children, under the age of 4 years, have been restored to their respective mothers. 16 children have been placed in Children Homes, and will be rehabilitated or restored after following due process. The parents of the children present at CWC-I, were counseled on the importance of well-being, safety and education of their children. They were also made aware of the schemes available for the benefit of their children.

Mr. Anurag Kundu, Chairperson, DCPCR highlighted that *“Such rescue and rehabilitation interventions are important for addressing the issue of child begging. The need of the hour is to have a dedicated mission-mode campaign focused on rescue, relief and rehabilitation of children living on the streets. It is extremely critical that adequate measures are undertaken to ensure their well-being.”*

DCPCR is dedicatedly working with the relevant government authorities and NGOs in Delhi to save the children on the streets. The Commission has identified 37 hotspots across Delhi, of which rescue operations have been conducted at 6 hotspots so far.

We humbly request all the citizens of Delhi to join hands with us to secure the future of these children by reporting child begging on our helpline number +919311551393.

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<sup>1</sup>\* denotes names changed for confidentiality reasons

## Photographs from the Rescue Operation

(Source: Childline)

Date: 15/09/2021

### 1. Rescued children provided with food and water at Child Welfare Committee-I



## 2. Rescued children provided with medical services at Child Welfare Committee-I

