

Documentation of Industrial and Dependent Labour Lives in Delhi: An Oral History Approach

Report of the Summer Project Completed with Integrated Labour History
Research Programme of V. V. Giri National Labour Institute, NOIDA

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A SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

INTRODUCTION:

This is an age in our history when every minute detail of various events in our life can be had with the click of a mouse. There is a record of every step that Government takes up; there is a record of every cricket match being played, a statistics of numbers of car in every city. There are also statistics about industrial workers, but mere statistics and data can only supplement history, it is not at all sufficient to create history or bring history to life. Precisely at this juncture, a need was felt to go out in the open and listen to what the unknown labour force, that runs the city of Delhi, has to say about various things in their lives. Until a few decades back industrial workers were able to make their voice felt through strikes and protests and thus to some extent were able to write their own history. But in this era, with diminishing bargaining power, it seems as if labour force has become voiceless and invisible mass of workers and hardly anything is heard about the labour world; so it became even more important to them to narrate their past and present, thus creating life histories and which can open up other aspects of study in this field in perpetuity.

This endeavour to render voice to the voiceless mass of labourers assumes more importance in the context of Delhi after the industrial closure as per the Supreme Court verdict, forcing the deprived labourers to come out violently on the streets. This episode of industrial closure, which ignited violent spurning, was without doubt an important incident in the labour history of Delhi. So, this incident in the backdrop certainly called for venturing into the anonymous world of labour and a probe into their lifestyles. This

particular incident as stated in the 'statement of problem' played the most important role in shaping up this project, at least at the level of initial ideas.

METHODOLOGY AND ITS PROBLEMS:

The objectives set for the project were to create individual life histories schematizing them under broad themes of migration, socio-economic background, present socio-economic condition and so on. Keeping in mind the objectives, Oral History approach was proposed as the tool of methodology, which totally digresses from the traditional methods and gives back history to the people in their own words. It is said that oral history allows 'heroes' not just from the upper layers of the society, but also from the 'unknown' majority of people.

In this context it is noteworthy to talk about Raju, a young tea stallier in Karampura, who writes songs and aspires to make it big some day. Even when he is making tea in his roadside stall, he carries his dairy to jot down any thing that comes to his mind or in a hope that someone will respect his talent and listen to his creations. Raju talked in length about his past life, present condition and future aspirations and in fact he was happy to find good listeners in us, for almost 15 days, but refused to give recorded interview. Raju's meandering life history, as he called it, and his aspirations would have been recorded on the tapes had he not declined to the interview.

Another worker, Ranjit Singh who was born and brought up in Delhi, had many interesting things to say about his personal and proletariat life, but he also declined to record interview, probably because he couldn't rest his confidence in totality with us or may be he thought it to be too insignificant.

Our lack of knowledge, as we had no formal training in handling in-depth interviews, was one of the major handicaps that came in the way. Another major obstacle on our part was the obvious psychological fear, as a result of the then recent episode of industrial closure. Due to the closure, every stranger who was interested in knowing about the labourers was

perceived as someone who could be spying for the authorities. Apart from this, the existence of a 'huge wall' in the mindsets of the people as a dividing line on the basis of class played its own role to inhibit the workers from talking to someone who looked so alien. After a few encounters with labourers, another problem that came up was in the selection of narrators because it was observed that teastallers, 'panwallas', vegetable vendors, barbers etc. were much more articulate, but those who worked in factories were in many cases didn't go beyond a single word answer. It was probably because of the insecurity caused by the industrial closure.

The first one-week, which was allotted for establishing initial contacts in the areas of fieldwork, was a phase of 'ironic experiences'. It was a fact that there was a sea of unwinding stories and different polemics of society to be discovered. Every face in that sea of workers seemed to hold back a story; a history with different dynamics, and probably a listener was needed to unwind each and every story. Ironically, we were roaming around the streets to listen to these stories, but we were unable to convince anybody to tell us about their stories. For that short period it felt like as if the crowd chatting over a cup of tea in a kiosk had no past, as if they were robots working in factories and workshops and would go on working forever.

Instead of the seeming fact that there has been an immense feminisation in the work force in Delhi, we were able to interview only two women which, perhaps, was because there was no women in the team. It was also observed in the process of interviews that they were more reluctant to talk than their male counterparts.

While discussing the problems and limitations of the methodology, it might be noteworthy to mention that it was very difficult to divide the whole project under a very rigid time frame. As mentioned earlier, one week was allotted to establish initial contacts, but it took more than two weeks just to develop rudimentary contacts and rapport in most of the areas of fieldwork. Whereas, in Seelampur we were not able to establish any contact. Seelampur, having a history of being a communally sensitive area and also an area where maximum number of violent incidents occurred after the industrial closure,

Police was still very high handed and existing factories and workshops were not very visible to outsiders. It was very difficult even to talk to the general public and the workers were very apprehensive to reveal that they worked in factories. Most of the closure-affected workers have left Seelampur, which used to nest a large number of Muslim Bengali migrants.

Nonetheless, the areas of fieldwork zeroed down to Karawal Nagar, Badarpur, Okhla and Karampura in Delhi. After careful observation and over view of these areas; initial contacts were established in places where workers were often to be found; in most cases they were tea stall, saloons, markets etc. After informal interaction, whenever possible with the workers, probable narrators were identified and further interaction with them were carried on.

When the interviews were recorded on tapes, special care was taken that the narrator feels at ease. The places of interview was left to be their choice and in most cases in their own home. It was observed during the interviews that the place of interview plays a very important role in the quality of narration, as for instance, Kanhya Lal, who was interviewed at his friend Raju's home (the tea staller, about whom it has already been mentioned) was not at all relaxed questions had to be asked repeatedly.

Special care was taken to initiate the interviews by asking very open ended and general questions about themselves and their life. Open-ended questions invoked different reactions in different individual and allowed them to reflect or bring out unconsciously which aspect of their life is predominant, more formative. Being from different regions and different social and cultural backgrounds, they reflected their own distinct identity. The limited time period and limitations of oral history approach played their role in the interviews for dominance and overshadowing of one aspect over another about the life of the narrator. For example, Kishan Murari in his narration goes on to talk about politics, Ram Singh (name changed at the request of the narrator) about his criminal life and how he was drawn into the world of crimes; Raghunath on his desire to go back to his village and his obsession with exercise. Thus broadly different themes emerge most strongly in

the interviews, but the overshadowing premises which was almost present in every interview was poor socio-economic condition or in other words, poverty.

Considering the small number of interviews and limited interactions that have been done, it will be misleading and inappropriate to make any conclusive statement or to talk about the general pattern of the class of labourer as a whole. Still it is interesting to notice a few commonalities in the lives of different individuals who fall under the same economic section of a society.

PROLETARIANISATION:

It has been observed that in most cases the need to enter the labour market was because of decrepit economic condition of the narrator. Most of them were from agricultural background with little land holdings, which was not sufficient to meet the needs of the family through out the year. This forced most of them to start working as wage labourer in their native places, as for instance Ram Bhavan or Sochindar Mandal had been working as a daily wage labourer in Kharilabad or Theho respectively before coming to Delhi. So, this need arising out of circumstances to shoulder family responsibility at a very young age forced most of them to enter the unorganised labour market. At times the pull of city life also played an important role to push some of them to enter the labour market. Ram Singh or Madan Lal, who had a sound family background, ran away with their friends to Delhi and had to look for job to survive in Delhi.

As far as the need to start working as labourer is concerned, it is very clear that the overwhelming reason was poor economic background, but the reason why they joined small factories, whatever the amount of money one was provided with, was probably lack of vocational training, which do not give them any bargaining power vis-à-vis the owners of the factories. In this context, Kanbaya Lal and Sochinder Mandal can be cited as an example, they narrate that they had to strive for a job even in small manufacturing units, because they had no formal vocational training.

Again, being devoid of proper education because of socio-economic constraints, many of the interviewed workers expressed the feeling that they had to be self-satisfied with whatever they earn in the small-scale industries. Amresh Rani laments that had she been well educated, she would have been able to earn much more than she is earning today. However, some of the interviewed workers have expressed a totally contradictory feeling to Amresh's point, Dashrath Prasad, who is better educated compared to others (10+2 passed) told us that he knew it is not possible to get Government job and was ready to take up any odd job coming his way. Madan Lal adds that he won't like his sons to waste time on studies because he feels that it won't get them to anywhere and would very soon summon them to Delhi to work and help earning more money for the family.

Most of the older workers whom we encountered are of the opinion that a few decades back, when they came to the city, jobs were not as difficult as today to get and these easy availability of jobs attracted people who were without any formal vocational training to become proletarians.

In cases of the two women, Sehlo had to enter the labour market as her husband died in a road accident and thus the responsibility of earning a livelihood for the family came on her shoulders, whereas for Amresh, it was because of her husband's 'laziness' and 'stupidity' that she was compelled to work outside (and in case of Sochinder's wife, she wants to enter the labour world because Sochinder is not able to earn enough being an unskilled labourer).

MIGRATION PATTERN:

Poor economic conditions and the need to support the parental family as well as their own and lack of avenue for work in their native villages seem to be the driving force behind the migration pattern of most of the interviewees. Most of the interviewees had something to say about this fact, which reflects the deplorable economic condition in rural north India and gets echoed in the words of Sunil Kumar, when he says, " Gaon

mein koi dhanda ya kuch karne laasyak nahin tha. Karlo to chalta nahin tha" (In my village there was no prospect of any work, even if you get some work you can't survive). It was also observed that most of the labourers whom we encountered came from rural areas to Delhi as the first choice of destination, but this doesn't negate the presence of inter-city migration that exist even amongst those who were interviewed. Angad Yadav first went to Punjab to look for work but returned to his village. Then he went to Karnal and worked there at a construction site as 'Raj Mistri' (mason), but again went back to his village and finally came to Delhi. Dasrath Prasad first went to Calcutta to look for job, couldn't find any, so he came to Delhi. It is noteworthy to mention that most of the labourers working in the unorganised industrial sector (whom we interviewed) are from the states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

Though, many of the workers left their villages because of poor socio-economic conditions, but today also they are dependent on them for many of their needs like food grains (and emotional support) because their earnings are not enough to save much. This is mostly with the workers who have some land for their survival in villages but there is no ready cash with them to invest in agriculture or to meet other requirements, so they are here to earn that extra. In some cases, they always felt that if tomorrow something drastic happens and they are forced to leave the city then they can always fall back on their villages for support, this is well reflected in Radhe Shyam words that '*gaon hi to sahara hai hamara, ye jagah to sarkar ki hai who jab chahne bhaga sakti hai*'.

Even though many of them left their villages, but they always want to go back to start a business or stay with their family happily, because they seems to be tired of the daily living conditions here. Many of them feels that though are able to earn but they have lost their self respect, owners treat them very badly, even government blames them for all the filth and power thefts in the city, at times they have to listen to the abuses from general public, in a way they are looked down by the well of sections in the city. They feel that it is a compromise, which they have made in order to make out a living, to quote Radhe Shyam '*halat se samjehuta karke bas sadhai kam kar raha*'.

The longing to go back to their native villages is a common feature, or rather an illusion, for they also know the fact that lack of avenues for employment had driven them away and that nothing much has changed for the better in terms of social and economic conditions. Raghunath Dantam is the only labourer we met who hails from the southern part of India, and his case is an exception not only because of that but also because he got so disillusioned with the prospects of job in Delhi that he was just about to return to his village, to continue what he was doing earlier- farming.

In many of the cases, in the process of migration a relative or some one from the native Village who is already working in Delhi comes to play a major role. At times, these 'veterans' become the 'inspirational' figures to venture out of their village for the newcomers.

When most migrated for the first time, it is observe that there is a good mixture of those whom migrated individually and those who migrated with their family members. For most of the interviewees, the nature of migration is permanent but the presence of seasonal migration between their native places and Delhi seems to exist prominently amongst the informal labourers.

Lack of interest in studies, failure to do well in examination are also one of the factors that drove them to Delhi, a point to be noted here is that these are basically true of only men, whereas for the two were interviewed the reasons for their migration were due to marriage.

POLITICAL AND ORGANISATIONAL EXPERIENCE:

The political and organizational experiences of most of the workers, whom we met, were very little or insignificant. It is one amongst our observations that even in the issue of

labour unionism they have not been involved very much, it is also noticed that there is a dividing line between the older generation who were working in the decades preceding 1990 and those of the later generation in aspect, as we find that the former in one way or the other took part in issues relating to labour, whereas the latter seems to have stayed out. But these generational demarcations do not suggest any definitive conclusion.

However, there has been a shift in the manufacturing sector in recent decades leading to division of bigger units into smaller ones and coming up of assembling units preventing aggregation of large number of workers at one place. This has benefited the owners in two respects firstly, workers don't get a chance to interact amongst themselves and form a union secondly, it gives them a chance to exploit workers and make them work on their terms and conditions. Again there has been a change in the recruitment policy, factory owners have stopped employing labourers directly rather they have resorted to contractual methods and temporary employments which keeps workers very much insecure and don't give them an opportunity to form unions.

Though most of the workers we interviewed lacked union activities but there were like Krishna Murari, and Vishwanath who filed cases in courts against the management for irregularities in payment and other benefits of workers through unions, and at the same time there were likes of Radhe Shyam, Beerpal, and Raju who lost their job because of the union formation in their factories. This dichotomy may be observed because of the simple fact that it is possible for workers in Pvt. Ltd. Factories to go to court and demand their rights and where as those in informal sector can't do anything against the owner who can always close the factory and move to other place. Many a times workers in informal sector did try to go to labour unions operating in the area but they found it to be defunct and corrupt, the leaders there were busy making money and engaged in further exploitation by taking advantage of workers ignorance and illiteracy. Workers have also refrained from political activities due to shrinking job market in formal sector and growing informalisation of industrial scene in Delhi in last decade.

Many of them participated in the workers' strike of 1988. Desrath Prasad recalls how he participated in that strike when he was working in a factory in Okhla and he along with his compatriots ensured that no work is carried out during the strike in nearby factories. There were incidents of violence as workers came on the road, but he also said that nothing fruitful came out. But it is interesting to observe that the recent industrial closure, which rendered thousands of workers jobless, didn't spark a very united and enduring strike or protest movement, even though it sparked spontaneous reactions and brought worker on to the streets.

Finally, the workers apathy towards the political activities can be well reflected in the words of Radhe Shyam, "*ladai jhagada se hum door hi rakhte hain, bus halaat se samjhadta karke aadmi kaam kar raha hai,*" (we keep away from fighting and all, it is a compromise which we have to make to earn our livelihood). Though they seem to be not much involved on the issues of labour politics, they are supporters of mainstream political parties and some of them are even politically active during elections and tries to maintains close relation with local politicians and it is also observed that they are quite concerned about the development of their localities.

WORK EXPERIENCE:

The question of work experience to the interviewees didn't arouse much curiosity; many of who had changed at least a dozen jobs in their small period of stay here in search of better pay scale and work atmosphere, which include owners behaviour, their fellow beings attitude, nature of work, hours of work, and holidays etc. In general, the work atmosphere was not encouraging except for few working in Pvt. Ltd. factories; nature of work was tough and it was very much inhospitable and they were exposed to accidents. There were very few holidays for them, and often they were misbehaved; for workers it meant the loss of self respect, often they were made to do jobs not befitting to their status and any refusal resulted in them losing jobs. Again there was nothing for the entertainment of workers during the breaks or any kind of safety scheme to meet any

eventuality. Many of them opined that owners always exploited the labourers; one was lucky if he got a good and kindhearted employer.

As far as their pay was concerned, proper grade scale were rarely paid to them, only those in Pvt. Ltd could expect full payment in accordance to govt. laws with all other benefits. The informal sector saw more exploitation because they were illegally run and workers were also very much available in large numbers. A division was observed in the sample, those who has been working for quite some time and had acquired some skill, were better paid than those who were unskilled and fresh in the field. Workers also talked of the discrimination in work place amongst themselves on caste lines, gender and religion; Amresh Rani was paid less than the male workers in her factory or Kanhaya Lal being a Harijan, had to use separate tumbler for drinking water in his factory. Overall it can be said that there was total lack of any kind of Social Security Scheme for the workers in informal sector, once they lost their job they were on roads. For most of them the job was just a means of survival it never acquired a wider social significance, though the labour was not much rewarding, they always strived to save significant amounts to improve their standard of living and start something independently.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITION:

Most of the workers we interviewed lived in the jhuggis in the slums either on rent or privately owned, some of them had even bought plots in the J.J.colonies and built regular houses. The living conditions in slums were very low, characterized by poor drainage, lack of civic amenities, narrow lanes and flies to keep company all around. Water connection to these clusters are very limited and often there are petty fights over collection of water amongst the residents, rows of containers in morning and evening hours is a common sight in the area, there is no legal electricity connection to them, they have to rely on the illegal connections which survives in connivance with the local electricity officials, though they want to have legal electricity meters installed in their jhuggis. The condition of basic amenities can be well gauged from the fact that Madan

Lal gets up early in morning every day just to avoid the long queue in front of public latrine which is very less in number compared to the population.

Moving on to social milieu of the jhuggis, it is observed that they reflected the well established traditions and customs of the rural India. Residents mostly belonged from one particular region of the country or more particularly one caste but it was not always possible and all caste people stayed there creating different caste divisions amongst themselves. They feel that political parties who play caste politics are responsible for the caste divisions in the society. They react sharply to the allegation that they are responsible for the power thefts and the filth in the city, and complain about the step motherly attitude of government towards their plight. They feel that government remembers them only at the time of elections or whenever there is something wrong in the city be it crime rate or pollution or ugliness of the cityscape to put the blame on them. All this has been reflected in the recent industrial closure, removal of jhuggi clusters or introduction of CNG buses that has affected these people most.

Well if we try and make a comparison about the general status after their stay here and before then we find that there has been an improvement in their standard of living in socio-economic terms. Though their income has substantially increased and so has the cost of living but then also they have saved enough to buy a plot or a jhuggi in a corner of the city to build their houses and support their starving families back in villages. On social front also they have shown increased awareness with respect to education and family planning, most of them are worried about the future of their child for example Sochinder's wife is concerned about the future of her child who is yet to born or Kanhaya Lal and Radhe Shyam who want their child be doctors and engineers. They have also learned to take better care of their health and other needs like entertainment for which most of them have access to television or some kind of sports like playing cards. All this has contributed in a way to the socio-economic development of the country on whole, but then also the standard of living remains far from the desired levels due to total apathy of government.

SEHLO DEVI

PERSONAL INFORMATION

AGE– 35 YEARS.

PLACE OF BIRTH– VILLAGE NUNAI, AGRA (UP)

PRESENT RESIDENCE– PREMVIHAR, KARAWAL NAGAR, DELHI– 94.

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION– NIL.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING– NIL.

MARITAL STATUS– MARRIED.

CHILDREN– 2 (BOTH BOYS).

PRESENT OCCUPATION– UNEMPLOYED (LOOKING FOR A JOB).

1.MIGRATION PATTERN:

SEHLO MIGRATED PERMANENTLY FROM HER BIRTH PLACE BECAUSE SHE GOT MARRIED TO AN INDUSTRIAL LABOURER FROM DELHI (SEELAMPUR) IN 1984.

2.PROLETARIANISATION:

DEATH OF HUSBAND IN AN ROAD ACCIDENT IN THE YEAR 1996 COMPELLED HER TO ENTER INTO THE LABOUR MARKET.

3.POLITICAL AND ORGANISATIONAL EXPERIENCE: NONE.

4.WORK EXPERIENCE:

IN A PERIOD OF 5 YEARS SEHLO DEVI WORKED IN TWO SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES IN KARAWAL NAGAR. BOTH INDUSTRIES HAVE BEEN DECLARED AS POLLUTING UNITS AND SUBSEQUENTLY WERE CLOSED DOWN AFTER THE SUPREME COURT ORDER IN MAY 2001.

HER PAY SCALE AND DURATION OF WORK IN BOTH THE INDUSTRIES ARE GIVEN BELOW IN THE TABLE-

<i>YEAR</i>	<i>PAY SCALE</i>	<i>WORKING HOUR</i>	<i>INDUSTRY</i>
1. 1998 to 2000	Rs. 1000 to Rs.1200 per month	8 hours	Cycle Rim Factory. Karawal Nagar.
2. 2000 to 2001	Rs. 1000 per month	8 hours.	Plastic Toy Factory. Karawal Nagar.

SEHLO DEVI

A SHORT BIOGRAPHY

Sehlo Devi was born in Nunai, a small village in Agra, Uttar Pradesh in around 1966. She has been staying in Delhi for last seventeen years, from the time she got married and it turned out to be a life of great difficulties.

Sehlo Devi has difficulty talking as a result of a very tragic road accident few years back in which she suffered mouth and head injuries and her husband had serious head injury and died in hospital after twelve months. This particular incident has totally jeopardised her life and has in fact overshadowed her experiences and memories of early life, which is again very clearly reflected in this interview.

Sehlo was not very keen to talk about her childhood. All she said was that her family didn't have any agricultural land. Her father used to repair scooter tyres. She has four brothers, who earn their living by repairing electrical appliances and generators. As she grew up into a matured girl her parents married her to a boy in Delhi who worked in a printing press. Sehlo's husband was born and brought up in Delhi and had a small house in Seelampur.

Everything seemed to be fine for Sehlo, but then suddenly one day everything turned upside down. As Sehlo narrates once they were coming back from Mathura to Delhi their bus collided with another bus and Sehlo along with her children were badly injured and her husband was profusely bleeding. It was only when some policemen noticed they were taken to hospital. The accident left, Sehlo's husband struggling for life in hospital for one year. He eventually died leaving everybody in the family in a jeopardised situation as there was no bread-earner left.

Now Sehlo is fighting a case in the court for compensation. She is hopeful that she would be compensated for her husband's death, so she would be able to support the children. The untimely death of her husband in 1996 also forced Sehlo to work. In the period of five years Sehlo worked in

two small industries in Karawal Nagar. Both the industries were declared polluting units and were sealed after the Supreme Court order in May 2001.

In her short history of proletariat life, Sehlo became aware of what it means to work for eight hours daily in a factory and how the employers can exploit the workers. The gates are often locked from outside and push the workers in an upper hall, when officials would come for an inspection. While describing the factory Sehlo says that, it was a huge hall with no lights, ventilation or fans. There was only one entrance to the factory which was always shut in the working hours and everybody had to work in darkness.

With the closure of the industrial units, Sehlo has been rendered jobless and she is desperately looking for a job. At present she owns thirty three yards of land of which half has been rented out. Now the only mean of income for her is in the form of rent she gets, which amounts to Rs.500/- per month.

She lives a life which is so full of tensions and she doesn't even know where the next meal will come from, so we were anxious to know what importance has education in Sehlo's opinion. When asked she said it doesn't have much value under the circumstances her family is living. Her two sons Sunil who is thirteen years old and Amit who is twelve years, goes to government schools and Sehlo wants them to get into some kind of work after they complete their tenth standard. For that matter we were also anxious to know about Sehlo's interest in election politics. When asked whether she votes, Sehlo replied that it doesn't matter to her if she votes or not. She would vote whoever her neighbours would vote for. Now there are only two things which Sehlo looks forward to in her life, firstly the future of her children and secondly the compensation—money which she hopes to get.

AMRESH RANI

PERSONAL INFORMATION

AGE- 30 YEARS.

PLACE OF BIRTH- VILLAGE BADOT, UTTAR PRADESH.

PRESENT RESIDENCE- PREM VIHAR, KARAWAL NAGAR, DELHI- 94.

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION- 5TH STANDARD.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING-NONE

MARITAL STATUS- MARRIED.

CHILDREN- THREE, TWO DAUGHTERS AND ONE SON.

PRESENT OCCUPATION- WORKS AS A HOUSEMAID

1.MIGRATION PATTERN:

AMRESH RANI HAD TO MIGRATE PERMANENTLY FROM HER BIRTH PLACE BECAUSE HER HUSBAND SOLD HIS MEAGRE LANDHOLDING IN HIS VILLAGE, MIGRATED TO DELHI WITH HIS WIDOW MOTHER IN 1988 AND BOUGHT A SMALL PIECE OF LAND IN EAST DELHI(KARAWAL NAGAR).

2.PROLETARIANISATION:

AMRESH RANI IS A CLASSIC EXAMPLE OF A HOUSEHOLD WOMAN WITH RURAL BACKGROUND, STEPPING OUT OF HOME TO WORK AND SHOULDERS THE BURDEN OF HER FAMILY ALL ALONE. HER HUSBAND, SHE SAYS IS A, 'LAZY , STUPID AND A CHILDISH

CHARACTER'.THE BURDEN OF FINANCIALLY SUPPORTING THE FAMILY IS ON AMRESH'S SHOULDERS FOR MOST OF THE TIME AS HER HUSBAND OFTEN SITS IDLE AND REFUSES TO WORK.

3.POLITICAL AND ORGANISATIONAL EXPERIENCE: NONE.

4.WORK EXPERIENCE:

LIKE HER HUSBAND, AMRESH RANI IS NOT PURELY AN INDUSTRIAL WORKER. THE KIND OF WORK SHE HAS BEEN ENGAGED WITH RANGE FROM BABY-SITTING IN SCHOOL, HOUSEMAID, PACKAGING OF DRY FRUITS, MAKING RAKHI, VEGETABLE VENDOR AND WORKING IN A BUTTON MAKING FACTORY.

HER PAY SCALE AND KINDS OF WORK ARE GIVEN BELOW IN THE TABLE-

<i>KIND OF WORK</i>	<i>INCOME</i>
Housemaid	Rs.300/- per month
Baby-sitting in school	Rs.500/- per month
Vegetable vendor	Rs.300/- to Rs. 600/- per month
Packaging of dry fruits (seasonal)	Rs.4/- per 100 Kgs (Rs.40/- to Rs. 60/- per day)
Rakhi making (seasonal)	Rs.2/- per 12 Rakhi (Rs. 60/- to Rs. 80/- per day)
Button making in Dhankar Factory, karawal Nagar.	Rs. 800/- per month.

BEERPAL(AMRESH RANI'S HUSBAND)

PERSONAL INFORMATION

AGE- 33 YEARS.

PLACE OF BIRTH- VILLAGE SHAMLI, UTTAR PRADESH.

PRESENT RESIDENCE- PREM VIHAR, KARAWAL NAGAR, DELHI- 94.

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION- 10TH STANDARD.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING-NONE

MARITAL STATUS- MARRIED.

CHILDREN- THREE, TWO DAUGHTERS AND ONE SON.

PRESENT OCCUPATION- MACHINE MAN IN CYCLE RIM FACTORY, GAZIABAD.

1.MIGRATION PATTERN:

BEERPAL PERMANENTLY MIGRATED FROM HIS BIRTHPLACE ALONG WITH HIS TWO BROTHERS AND HIS MOTHER AFTER THE DEATH OF HIS FATHER AS THEY SOLD OFF THEIR LAND AND CAME TO DELHI EXPECTING EASY JOB AND GOOD PAY .HE GOT MARRIED TO AMRESH AS SOON AS HE GOT A JOB IN AN INDUSTRY .

2.PROLETARIANISATION:

BEERPAL HAD TO ENTER THE LABOUR MARKET BECAUSE HE WAS NOT WELL EDUCATED AND HIS LAND HOLDING WAS VERY MEAGRE, SO HE HAD NO OTHER OPTIONS. FURTHERMORE INDUSTRIAL JOBS WERE NOT VERY DIFFICULT TO GET AT THAT TIME.

3.POLITICAL AND ORGANISATIONAL EXPERIENCE:

BEERPAL WAS A MEMBER OF THE LOCAL LABOUR UNION IN MAYAPURI AND TOOK PART IN A STRIKE AGAINST THE EMPLOYER DEMANDING AN INCREASE IN THE WAGES.

CONSEQUENTLY ALL WORKERS WHO TOOK PART IN THE STRIKE LOST THEIR JOBS AND AFTER THAT INCIDENT BEERPAL WAS NOT INVOLVED IN ANY FORM OF LABOUR UNIONISM.

4.WORK EXPERIENCE:

BEERPAL NEVER TOOK HIS WORK SERIOUSLY AS TOLD BY HIS WIFE AND HAS CERTAIN INHIBITION IN ENTERING IN FACTORY PREMISES. IN A PERIOD OF FIVE YEARS(1996 to 2001) HE HAS CHANGED WORK FOR ATLEAST EIGHT TIMES.

HIS NATURE OF WORK AND PAY SCALE ARE GIVEN BELOW-

<i>NATURE AND PLACE OF WORK</i>	<i>PAY SCALE</i>
Nut and bolt factory, Mayapuri.	Rs.1200/- to Rs.1500/- per month
Cloth dying factory, Karawal Nagar.	Rs. 1000/- to Rs. 1200/- per month.
Card board and Gatta factory, Karawal Nagar.	Rs.900/- to Rs.1000/- per month.
Button making factory, Karawal nagar.	Rs.800/- to Rs. 1000/- per month.
Cycle rim factory, Gaziabad.	Rs. 800/- to Rs.1200/- per month.

Beerpal refused to give an interview for some unknown reasons. All information regarding his life are based on his wife's accounts.

AMRESH RANI

A SHORT BIOGRAPHY

Amresh Rani is a classic example of a brave woman from rural India who despite her inhibition towards the outside world, stepped out of her house to work and support her family all alone.

Born in a small village, Badot in Uttar Pradesh in 1971, Amresh had to face many problems in her childhood days. The fifth child of her parents, Amresh had six siblings. She had to take care of all the domestic works and also had to attend school. Amresh's mother who was from a very poor family was very strict with her and she was expected to do a lot of work at home denying her of the share of childhood fun she deserved.

She went to school till class five and was pulled out of school because her parents argued that girls don't need to go work and should stick to household work. However Amresh regrets this and wishes that had her education been better she would have earned more than what she is earning today.

According to Amresh her father was a barber and was a very simple man. He was very liberal and loved his children and wife very much. Amresh says that since her father was very innocent and was ignorant about family planning he went ahead to have a very large family. Because of the same ignorance he was afraid of getting an operation done.

When Amresh reached the age of eighteen her parents started looking for a suitable groom. Hindi films had a heavy influence on her dreams about her married life – as she would see in films she would think of bed sheets and curtains being changed everyday. She would think of the things she would get as she gets married– the furniture, a make up mirror, a radio and ofcourse a television, without a television she couldn't imagine about her married life. Amresh thought of a small house and a husband who would look after her needs. She was also very fond of watching movies. She hardly missed an opportunity of watching films, she would go with her brothers or with her relatives to see film in the talkies.

However to her shock and surprise, none of her dreams was materialised after her marriage .Amresh was married to Beerpal in 1989 and in the process she migrated to Delhi permanently. Beerpal had also a migrated from a village in UP. He along with his brothers and his widow mother had come to Delhi in search of better livelihood, after they sold off their land in the village.

At the time of marriage ,Beerpal was working at an industrial unit of nuts and bolts in Mayapuri and was earning around Rs.1200/- month.

In first four years of their marriage they had no children because of some health problem of Beerpal. But after resorting to medical help they had a baby girl. Their relatives were not very happy over this but that was not how Amresh felt, she was happy to have child after all that effort. She narrated incidents of her husbands stupidity and carelessness. She told how he never came to see her during her pregnancy at her mother's place. He gave her some money and asked her to look after herself, as if only money suffices everything, she told us.

She complains about her husband's laziness, he goes to factory only when he feels like, often waste his time smoking or chatting with friends and she further says that he never improved because of his laziness and always believed that Rs.1500/ was enough for them.

Two years later when local Mayapuri workers union launched a strike for increase in wages Beerpal joined it and as a result he and many of his friends was thrown out of the factory. It became very difficult for them to support their family and from then onwards life became very difficult for her. They were left with just two options—either Beerpal looked for some work or she starts work. As expected considering Beerpal's nature he refused to look for work,even pressure from his relative didn't work and finally she went out looking for the job in neighbourhood and in schools. She could earn only around Rs. 400/- to Rs.500'/- a month and it became very difficult for her to support the family. she also did some seasonal works like making rakhis and packaging of dry fruits. But even that couldn't bail her out of he crisis . Sometimes later Beerpal got some petty works to do but he never stuck to them. He was looking for some good job in industrial units which were very hard to come by, so he remained idle most of the time.

Talking of her husband's bad behaviour she says he would leave home everyday for work at cycle rim factory in Ghaziabad but would never enter the factory citing some stupid reasons like evil spirits overpowered him and that stopped him from entering the factory.

She felt very awkward to facing her relatives but Beerpal remained the same and didn't do anything to improve the condition .Looking at their plight her relatives helped them set up a vegetable shop but that too didn't go well and had to be closed. Their situation worsen and sometimes they had to go to bed without food and then she would go to her parents and ask for something.

Things didn't improve much and it became even more difficult when Beerpal contracted TB. She took him to hospital for treatment, but she was hurt and felt very awkward when the staff asked who the man was, "as though he didn't look like her husband".Finally she had to tell the staff that he was her husband and he was quite dumb and remained a spectator throughout the whole incident. She has fought with him over these grievances many a times but he has failed to change. In their twelve years of marriage she has carried most of the burden.

Two more members were added to their family, one son and one daughter,increasing their requirements. This compelled her to leave her job as a maid and look for job in some factory. She took up a job in a button making factory for Rs.1000/- for eight hours of work a day. Later on she worked at construction sites as a wage labourer to fulfill her family need. Unlike her husband she kept changing jobs to meet the needs of her family.

The closure of the polluting units in Delhi left her jobless and that made the situation even more worse. After the closure it has become even more difficult for somebody like Beerpal to find work. Today both of them are looking for work. Amresh has again started working as a maid and Beerpal is still in search of work in the industrial sector. Certainty has become only dream in their unstable way of life.

RADHESHYAM **PERSONAL INFORMATION**

AGE-36 YRS.

PLACE OF BIRTH-DEORIA DISTRICT, UP

PRESENT RESIDENCE-58, RAMA ROAD, DELHI

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION-MATRICULATION (SECOND DIVISION)

VOCATIONAL TRAINING-NONE

MARITAL STATUS-MARRIED

CHILDREN- OLD DAUGHTER (TWO AND HALF YEAR), ONE SON (ONE AND HALF YEAR)

PRESENT OCCUPATION-ASSISTANT DYE MAKER IN HINDUSTAN AIRCON PRIVATE LIMITED.

1.MIGRATION PATTERN:

THERE WAS NOT ENOUGH LAND IN VILLAGE APART FROM THAT HIS FATHER HAD A SMALL BYCYCLE REPAIRING SHOP ,THE INCOME FROM WHICH WAS NOT ENOUGH TO MEET THE FAMILY EXPENDITURE .SO HE CAME TO DELHI IN 1981 AFTER GIVING HIS MATRICULATION EXAM TO LOOK FOR JOBS.

2.PROLETARIANISATION:

OFTEN HE USED TO HELP HIS FATHER AT HIS BYCYCLE SHOP IN SPARE TIME.AFTER HIS MATRICULATION EXAM IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE FOR HIM TO CONTINUE HIS STUDIES AND CARRY ON THE WORK AT SHOP.SO HE CAME TO DELHI AND WITH THE HELP OF HIS COUSINS AND HE STARTED WORKING IN A FACTORIES.

3.POLITICAL AND ORGANISATIONAL EXPERIENCE:

THERE IS NOTHING VERY SIGNIFICANT, BUT BY COMPULSION HE HAD TO JOIN A UNION WHERE HE WAS WORKING. CONDITION DIDN'T IMPROVE, RATHER THE FACTORY WAS CLOSED AND THEY WERE RENDERD JOBLESS.

4.WORK EXPERIENCE:

HE HAS WORKED IN MANY FACTORIES IN LAST TWENTY YEARS, MAINLY IN SEARCH OF BETTER PAY AND FACILITIES.BUT HIS EXPERIENCE SAYS THAT OWNERS ALWAYS TRY AND EXPLOIT WORKERS AS MUCH AS THEY CAN.

YEAR	DURATION	PLACE	NATURE OF WORK	SALARY
1981	1-2 months.	Khyala.	Helper on Lathe machine.	RS.80/-
1981	3-4 months.	Patel Nagar.	-Do-	RS.150/-
1982	1 year.	Moti Nagar.	-Do-	RS 300/-
1983	1 month.	Anand Parbat.	-Do-	RS.350/-
1983	2 years.	Okhla.	-Do-	RS 500/-
1985	No information.	Mansarovar Garden.	-Do-	RS.900/-
1987	No information.	Bassi Darapur.	-Do-	RS.1000/-
1988	2-3 years.	Wazirpur.	Worked on Lathe machine in washing machine factory.	RS.1100/-
NA	1 year.	Tri Nagar	Worked on Lathe machine.	RS.2400/-
1995	2 year.	Anand Parbat	-Do-	RS.2500/-
1997	Presently working.	Dev Nagar.	Assistant Dye-Maker.	RS.2300/- (Excluding overtime)

RADHESHYAM

A SHORT BIOGRAPHY

"Jab aadmi sangharsh mein hota hai to sangharsh ke hi sapne aate hai"(When a person has to struggle constantly, his dreams are also about struggle.), tells Radheshyam, a migrant from Deoria district, U.P, when asked about his dreams. This perfectly echoes the sentiments of thousands of workers in the unorganized sector, who are putting in their sweat and hard work to earn two meals a day for their families back in village. Radheshyam migrated to Delhi in 1981, just after his matriculation, in search of livelihood and also to support his family comprising of mother, father, three younger brothers and two sisters.

"Maa baap ka aashirwaad hi tha hamare paas"(I had with me only the blessing of my parents). This is all he had when he came to Delhi. Today after twenty years of work in almost the same number of factories, he says *"Kaafi sudhar ho gaya hai, tarakki kar liya hai hamne"*(The condition has improved, I have progressed a lot). Starting with a meagre income of Rs. 80/- per month as a labourer, today he earns around Rs.5000 to Rs.5500/- per month as an Assistant Dye-maker in Hindustan Air Con pvt. Ltd. Now he has a "pucca" house in his village and his brothers are also settled in an unsettled way working in factories in Delhi and his sisters are living happily married. In fact one of his younger brothers is doing M.A in Russian at Delhi University. In a way he is trying to make up for his own education that he manages with very difficulty with the help from his teachers.

Radheshyam's father, after resigning from his job as a bus conductor in U.P Roadways due to mental problems opened a cycle repairing shop in the village. A small portion of land, a small shop and a big family of eight to be fed, meant a normal childhood distant dream for Radheshyam but it was in consonance with childhood by millions of children in our villages. His childhood day passed in doing household works, going to school and sitting at his father's shop. About childhood playshe narrates, *"iccha hoti thi, par stithi*

aisi thi ki purti nahi hoti thi"(there was desire but conditions didn't allow). With support from teachers and meager grants he managed ac second division in matriculation from Govt. high school, which was 6-7 kilometers away from his village. In reply to a question about his interest in literature or stories he says that in a village where newspaper was difficult to get, it was impossible to get Premchand or Ramdhari Singh Dinkar. And now when he has the awareness time is not in his hands. In a way his struggle of life began in his early childhood.

After coming to Delhi he started working in a factory as a helper and got Rs.80/- per month. Even though it was not sufficient he tried and save something from that amount for his parents. He kept switching his job from one factory to another till he got to work on lathe machine. The change was always in search of better pay and environment. After working with many factory owners he says, "*Dilli men shoshan to karte hi hain malik log mazdooron ka, halat se samjhouta karte admi service kar raha hai.*"(Exploitation in factories is very rampant here, it's nothing but a compromise that labourers are working there). But then also he has been working with all his sincerity and honesty, never giving a chance for complains. As a result of his hard work and sincerity, today he earns around Rs.5500/- per month whereas his colleagues are struggling for Rs.3000-Rs.3500/- per month.

Talking about safety in factories he tells about SI (as told by narrator, it's a kind of safety scheme which pays for medical bill) but this is not available to everyone, only a few who happen to work in Pvt. Ltd factories are covered by this; for the rest of the labourers in unorganised sector there is no safety measures or compensation.

In literal sense Radheshyam never participated in any political activities but he is very much aware of his rights. He does his work sincerely, for which he is paid but refuses to oblige to owners' pressure of any kind. Sometimes he had to suffer because of his straight forwardness and plain talking.

In 1987 he got married bearing all expense by himself, though arranged by his relatives. After that he married off his brothers and sisters as well. Today only his youngest brother

is unmarried. Right now he is pinning all his hopes on his youngest brother to lift their family status and name. He says, "*abhi usko chance de rahe hain, ham dukh jhel lenge per dikkat nahi hone denge*" (Right now we are giving him a chance, even though we are facing difficulties). He would be disheartened if his brother decides to stay alone because he wants to maintain a joint family where everybody can support each other.

Talking of future plans he says, "*Mauka mila to kol business karenge ya phir videsh jayenga*" (Given a chance I would go for business or maybe go abroad), all for getting more money for his family. He says everyone needs more money "*lekin inmandari se ho, bhagwan se bhi prarthana hai kuch galat na karen*" (but by fair means, I pray to God to abstain me from wrong deeds). He wants his daughter to be a doctor and son to be an engineer. On a lighter vein he says if he gets a chance he would like to participate in *Kaan Banega Crorepati* (A popular T.V show) as well.

Moving on from this he tells us that movie always attracted him. When he came to Delhi he used to watch movies and hang around at historical sites and markets in the city. But today movie tickets are too expensive that he just can't afford so he developed interest in cricket and enjoys watching it very much. He narrates, "*cricket ka shouk hai, agar raat ko bhi jag kar dekhna pade to dekhte hain.*" (I like watching cricket, even if I have to wake through out the night I do and watch).

Though he has progressed much more than before, he would like to go back to his village and spend the rest of his life there. His love for his village can be seen in these lines, "*gaon hi to sahara hai hamara, gaon jaate hain to aane ki ichcha hi nahi hoti, yahan aab oob chuke hain .bahut-bahut oob chuke hain.*" (Village means everything for us, everytime we visit it we don't feel like coming back. We are tired of Delhi). Today when he looks back in his life, he is a satisfied man, but somewhere at the back of his mind lie fast changing world of labourers and factories in Delhi, which gives no surety of job to anyone. He says, "*samay bahut badal gaya hai, ek bar kam chhutne ke baad aaj aadmi phootpath par aa jata hai.*" (Time has changed a lot; once somebody leaves his job he or she lands up being on the footpath).

KISHAN MURARI

PERSONAL INFORMATION

AGE– 40 YEARS.

PLACE OF BIRTH– VILLAGE UMRARA, BULANDSHAHAR (UP)

PRESENT RESIDENCE– MUKHIYA MARKET, KARAWAL NAGAR, DELHI– 94.

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION– 10TH STANDARD (DROPOUT).

VOCATIONAL TRAINING– NIL.

MARITAL STATUS– MARRIED.

CHILDREN– 2 (BOTH BOYS).

PRESENT OCCUPATION– RUNS A WORKSHOP OF BATTERIES AND ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES.

1.MIGRATION PATTERN:

KISHAN MURARI PERMANENTLY MIGRATED ALL ALONE TO DELHI IN 1973–74 FROM HIS BIRTH PLACE AND IN 1979 HIS FAMILY JOINED HIM.

KISHAN MURARI HAD AN IMAGE OF DELHI AS A CITY WHERE THERE IS SOMETHING FOR EVERYBODY. THIS IMAGE COMBINED WITH HIS COMPELLING NEED TO SUPPORT HIS FAMILY BROUGHT HIM TO THIS CITY.

2.PROLETARIANISATION:

BEING A HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT KISHAN MURARI AFTER COMING TO DELHI HAD NO OPTION BUT LOOK FOR JOB IN SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES. AND HIS NEED TO SUPPORT HIS

FAMILY AND SENT MONEY BACK HOME COMPELLED HIM TO TAKE UP WHATEVER OPPORTUNITY CAME ON HIS WAY. HE WORKED IN SMALL MACHINES FOR PALTRY Rs.50/- PER MONTH TO BIG INDUSTRIES. IN HIS HISTORY OF PROLETARIANISATION HIS RELATIVES PLAYED AN SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN THE PROCESS.

3.POLITICAL AND ORGANISATIONAL EXPERIENCE:

KISHAN MURARI WAS A MEMBER OF SAMAJWADI PARTY LABOUR UNION (LED BY A MAN CALLED SHYAM SUNDAR YADAV) FOR ABOUT FOURTEEN YEARS(1978 TO 1992), BUT HE WAS NOT VERY ACTIVELY INVOLVED.

KISHAN MURARI HAD FILED A CASE AGAINST HIS EMPLOYER (PIONEER PLASTIC INDUSTRY, WAZIPUR) SOMETIME IN THE 80's FOR NOT GIVING HIM THE DUE AMOUNT OF WAGES BY DENYING THE WORKERS OF GOVERNMENT SCHEDULED HOLIDAYS. THE CASE WENT ON FOR SIX MONTHS AND EVENTUALLY WON BY KISHAN MURARI ON BEHALF OF THE WORKERS.

4.WORK EXPERIENCE:

IN A PERIOD OF ABOUT 27 YEARS IN DELHI ,KISHAN MURARI CHANGED A NUMBER OF JOBS AND PLACES .EVEN THOUGH HE HAD NO FORMAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING HIS ENGAGEMENT WITH VARIOUS KINDS OF WORK GAVE HIM AMPLE EXPERIENCE IN MANY FIELDS .THE FOLLOWING ARE THE SKILLS HE LEARNT AT VARIOUS PLACES-

A)CUTTING WOODS ON LATHE MACHINE.

B)TRAINED IN MAKING AUDIO CASSETTE, ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES-BATTERIES AND EMERGENCY LIGHT IN PARTICULAR.

C) MAKING LEATHER VALVES FOR HAND PUMPS.

D)MAKING FOLDING BEDS AND CHAIRS.

HIS PAY SCALES AT DIFFERENT TIMES OF HIS LABOUR LIFE ARE GIVEN BELOW-

YEAR	PAY SCALE	NATURE OF WORK
1973-74	Rs. 50/- per month	Lathe machine at Sarai Rohilla.
1974-76	Rs. 130/- per month	Mechanic in Pioneer Plastic Industry, Kirti Nagar.
1976-78	Rs. 350/- to Rs. 400/- per month	Mechanic - foreman in D.O.Plastic Industry, wazipur.
1978-92	Rs. 600/- per month	Mechanic - foreman in a factory, Krishna Nagar.

KISHAN MURARI

A SHORT BIOGRAPHY

Kishan Murari was born in a small village, Umrara of Bulandshahar in Uttar Pradesh in the year 1961. He claims himself to be from the Brahmin lineage. His upbringing is thus in a family which was very sensitive to Brahmin ethics and teaching. As far as his childhood and his educational background is concerned, he was made to sit in the school at the age of five. To prevent him from bunking his school he was sent to a school outside his own village. His primary education was much more than going to school. He spent most of his time playing and wandering in the fields.

Murari says that as a child he learnt things very quickly. He was gifted in singing and dancing. By the time he passed his fifth standard, he began to show his talent on stage. He would sing dance and act in dramas. Recollecting his memories about his performances in school days, he would sing a song, which he sang while enacting the role of Radha, "Shyam pather na maro buri bat hai, aur sab bana khel mera bigar jayega, phoot jayegi matki mere sanvre, aur makhan bhi sara bikhar jayega" (Krishna don't stone my butter pot or else all my labour will be wasted). He would go on in great details to tell us about how once chief guest took him for a girl while enacting the role of Radha in a performance.

Murari's childhood was very interesting and unforgettable. He, from the beginning lived in a joint family with his grand parents and uncle. His father and uncle were engaged in brick making. His father would go to Raniganj and Jharis to bring coal for baking of brick. His father was against his taking part in singing and dramatics. Thus only when his father was out for his work Murari would go for his performance. He takes pride in telling about each and every thing he did in his childhood and would give examples praising him. Narrating instances from later part of his education, he would speak of how he failed in the tenth standard. He blames his schoolteacher who did not want him to pass and created problems in his study and recalls that all his friends except one failed because of his teacher. Kishan got married even before he could reach tenth standard. He speaks with lot of pride that his father got all sons and daughters married in a single year. Despite the fact that their family was under huge financial debt, it was something brave on his father, says Murari. However it was at this time that they were facing real financial difficulties. They were under debt

and secondly their work of brick backing was declining. This more or less explains the migration pattern of Murari's family. All brothers decided that their father should carry on with whatever he can with the brick baking and they would look for work outside their village. Kishan migrated alone for the first time to Delhi in 1973-74. This was a permanent migration and after settling, he brought his family too in Delhi. Kishan had heard of Delhi as a city where every one gets to eat and work. However he had to struggle initially in Delhi and thought that he would stay with one of his relative in Delhi who claimed that they had big kothi (room) but when he went to their residence what he found was a jhopari. Murari had few strange notions about Delhi, which began to change slowly. He got a job on lathe machine with a Sardarji as an employer. Murari was perplexed about how a Sardar looked like, whether they are young or old because in his village he had a different notion of the turban being used by only old people. He also had difficulty in negotiating with the Punjabi language. The first time he took a job was for a paltry, Rs.50/-. He worked with a sardarji for few months but one day when the Sardarji refused to give him a leave for some urgent personal purpose he left the job.

Kishan Murari says that he entered into the labour market not by his own effort but mostly by the help of his relatives, who came to help him to get a job when he needed it the most. The first industry in which he worked was an electrical appliance factory with a salary of Rs.130/- per month. Murari points out that in the 70's it was much easier to get a job. There were some bad experiences in his proletariat life. In connection; he narrates an incident in which his employer made him work continuously for seventy-two hours. Even when other workers were on leave the employer would not grant him a leave, so he fought with his employer and left the job. Abusing the employer, Murari would shout that he never has and never will do 'gulami' (slavery) and opines that doing 'gulami' of a private aadmi (person) is like living under the British rule. He recalls, in contrast, how workers were treated like their own brother in their brick kiln. He also says that those who try to keep others in control and in exploitative condition would never flourish in life. He also abuses big industrialists and capitalists by saying, " they are dead people who have lost their sense of humanity".

Losing another job was a big blow to Murari, since after this he had to wander around for at least two months in search of a job and was running out of all his money and had no money left even to pay his house rent. Then he went back to his village and in almost filmi style asked for his wife's jewellery. Praising his wife Murari says that her jewellery proved to be a boon for him, not only he

came out of his financial difficulties but also, he got a job in D.O. plastic factory, Wazirpur, with a good salary.

Speaking about his industrial work experiences, Murari says that in the new factory at Wazirpur he had to encounter difficulty and had to face opposition from a group of Bihari workers for he was paid higher wages than the others. They wanted to get rid of him because he could do more work than them in stipulated hours and thus get more pay for which he was even threatened, but he negotiated with them with the help of their employer and only from then the opposition from the 'Bihari Bhaiyas' (Bihari brothers) sat in the thanda basta (cold sack) "like those of today's politician who sit in the thanda basta after a scam", claims Murari.

Murari says that his employer was so much impressed by his sincerity that from a worker on a machine he was promoted to a foreman. After working there for sometime one of his relatives who got him a job on an earlier occasion, requested him to work in his own factory of electrical appliances where he worked continuously for fifteen long years.

In his twenty-eight years of stay in Delhi till now, Kishan has changed a number of jobs and places. When he came to Delhi he had no vocational training but with his engagement with various kinds of plastic and electrical appliance industries, he gradually mastered many skills. After leaving industrial work in 1992, he finally settled down with a workshop of battery and electrical appliance of his own.

Murari says that he had done what ever he could do in his life. Now it is up to his sons to make some further progress. His younger son Sonu does not take education seriously and like his father wants to be an electrician, whereas his elder son, who is doing his graduation, wants to get into government service.

Murari is very sensitive to political and social issues and daily reads the local newspaper with lots of interest. He goes on to speak about politics, on the question of marriage, issue of gender, corruption, reservation and voting in great details. He speaks with a lot of vigour and frankness about his likes and dislikes on controversial issues like Babri Masjid and the role of Dalit politics. In his narration, he makes a mockery of the state policies and the Prime Minister.

While abusing the politicians charged with corruption, he says that even the Constitution can't handle them. According to him it is the common masses, the weak and the poor who struggle and fight for their rights, shout slogans, it is them who ultimately get suppressed, whereas the politicians at the upper level continue to enjoy their privileges.

Talking about Dalit politics in U.P, Murari cites example of Mayawati, whom he accuses of gaining political mileages in the name of uplifting the Dalits whereas the fact is that the highest numbers of Dalits were killed in Mayawati's reign. The fact, according to him, is that politicians like Mulayam Singh helps in making robbers and bandits like Phoolan Devi a minister.

While opposing the provision of the marriageable age for boys at the age of 21 years and of girls at the age of 18 years, he says that he is against this provision and he opines that this would not allow employment in govt. sector under U.P. govt. "O.K. I would not marry my sons before they reach the age of 21 years, but only on the basis of that would the U.P. govt. give them a job?" Argues Murari (the narrator believes that there is a link between age bar for marriage and unemployment, but didn't elaborate why he thinks so). These formulas are against the constitution and, according to Murari, the fact that there is a rise in sexually intimidation and abortion before marriage is precisely because of this provision. Furthermore the young girls of poor families would continue to elope since their parents would not be able to marry them early because of the above provision, says Murari.

Talking about the law and constitution of India he says that they are meant only for the weak and the poor and not for the politicians. Murari says that if a "yadav" becomes a minister then in every department there would be yadava, in police, in administration, etc or if a dalit becomes a minister, then the dalit would be ringing bells every where.

Murari further says that if there would be Dalit politics, there would be more and more political parties, Coalition government would continue to rule the country; Atal Bihari Vajpayee would continue to operate his knees, since vein of his knees has been divided among twenty-eight. Manmohan Singh pulls his veins on one side and Samta on the other, thus the veins break and operation is often needed.

He opines that the RSS and BJP have done a bad thing by taking out the Ratha Yatra agenda for building the Ram temple. Everyone knows that it was a mandir and never a masjid – this issue is so clear. It should not have been pulled into politics. BJP is totally responsible for present situation. Murari argues passionately that no Muslim has any power to stop the construction of Ram temple

on Ramajanmabhoomi. If however, the court decides otherwise then this country would no longer be Hindustan, but Pakistan.

Citing example of the Kandhar hijack episode, Murari points out that the state is very weak and that if they killed our men, we should have killed there's. According to him government Approach is "hum pitate rahe, marte rahe aur public ko marvate rahe aur Hindustan men sau bar ye dikhai de ki hum bahut badhiya pradhan mantri paida karwe hain."

Kishan Murari lives in an area where the Shiv Sena activists and the RSS are very active. It is also an area, which is communally very sensitive with a Muslim colony very nearby. On being asked, about his views on the RSS and the Shiv Sena, he says that though the RSS mainly works in the area for health and fitness, he doesn't go for that because those who go to shakha, resort to violence incase somebody criticises the Sangh's policies; whereas those in Shiv sena are always looking for opportunity to fight against the Muslims.

Though Kishan criticizes the Congress party politicians, he prefers Congress to BJP. In the end he says, the janta knows well that both the Central government and Delhi government are responsible for deteriorating socio-economic condition of the people in Delhi. Everyone knows that people are dying of hunger and committing suicide due to unemployment. People are selling their land in villages and migrating to Delhi and still they are not earning bread. Like earthquakes, turmoil and lawlessness in Delhi would remain forever, concludes Murari.

KANHAYA LAL **PERSONAL INFORMATION**

AGE- 26 YEARS.

PLACE OF BIRTH- AZAMGARH, UP.

PRESENT RESIDENCE- 58, RAMA ROAD, DELHI

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION- 5TH STANDARD.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING-NONE.

MARITAL STATUS-MARRIED.

CHILDREN- ONE DAUGHTER(ONE AND A HALF YEARS OLD).

**PRESENT OCCUPATION- WORKS IN A MOTOR PARTS
MANUFACTURING UNIT.**

1. MIGRATION PATTERN:

HE STAYED IN VILLAGE TILL HE WAS 10 YEARS OLD. THEN HE HAD TO COME TO DELHI BECAUSE OF SOME SERIOUS ILLNESS IN 1984 AND STARTED LIVING WITH HIS FATHER WHO WAS ALREADY HERE WORKING AS MASON.

2. PROLETARIANISATION:

DECRIPIT ECONOMIC CONDITION FORCED HIM TO ENTER THE WORLD OF PROLETRAITS, AS HIS FATHER'S INCOME WAS NOT SUFFICIENT TO MEET THE EXPENSES.

3 .POLITICAL AND ORGANISATIONAL EXPERIENCE: NONE.

4. WORK EXPERIENCE:

SINCE HE HAD NO VOCATIONAL TRAINING IT WAS VERY DIFFICULT FOR HIM TO GET JOB IN FACTORIES. SO HE STARTED WORKING AS A DAILY

WAGE LABOURER. AND THEN HE FINALLY MANAGED TO GET THROUGH IN SOME FACTORIES. BUT LACK OF TRAINING REMAINED A HANDICAP FOR HIM. AND HIS PROLETRAIT LIFE HAD BEEN SWINGING BETWEEN WORKING IN FACTORIES AND DAILY WAGE WORK. BUT SINCE 1995 HE HAS BEEN WORKING IN A MOTOR PARTS MANUFACTURING UNIT IN KARAMPURA.

KANHAYA LAL

A SHORT BIOGRAPHY

'Kanhaya Lal was born in Azamgarh district of U.P and spent a part his early childhood there. He doesn't have very cherishable memories about his childhood. When he was ten he was seriously ill and therefore landed up in Delhi for treatment. Thus his primary education was very haphazard. Due to decrepit financial background, Kanhaya Lal couldn't study beyond fifth standard. His family was very large with two brothers and five sisters and his father, who worked as a mason, was the only bread earner. Narrating instances from his childhood Kanhaya told us how his father would insist that he studied, but he would instead be playing in the fire station near his school and watching films. Recollecting his memories, he says that the first film that he watched in the theatre was 'Chameli ki shadi' (Chameli's marriage). After that he started stealing money to watch films. Often his mother beat him but that did change in him.

Kanhaya Lal was not a good student but still boasts about his handwriting on the 'takhti' (slate board) and how his teacher appreciated it. His early realization of his bad financial condition made him to stop his education.

Kanhaya Lal migrated permanently to Delhi in search of jobs in order to support the growing need of his family. They had a small piece of land in their village, which was cultivated by his uncles .The financial condition of their family was very bad and it was always a case of hand to mouth existence. His elder brother had already migrated to Delhi so that he could shoulder the responsibility of the family.

The first experience of work in Delhi was in areas like Shastri Nagar and Sudershan Park. He was making shoes on a contract basis. But at both places his contract did not last long and in a year he had to change his jobs twice. Speaking about his initial work Kanhaya

says that the employer was harshly exploitative. They would make him work in extreme heat and difficult condition for less wage. After few months he began to working at Karampura in a workshop where motor parts were being manufactured. He has been working there since 1995. Blaming the industrial closure he says that since the closure his earning has gone down and workload has increased drastically. Before the closure there was a scope for working for twelve hours, which could enable him to earn around Rs.1200 to Rs.1300/- and extra from overtime. But due to the gradual decline in work the number of employee has also reduced to ten or twelve. With his meagre earning he can only support himself and his small family. His father who still works on daily wage doesn't earn much now and is ageing fast.

Complaining about the uncertainty in the employment sector in the industries he says that the closure has rendered lots of people jobless. To add to that the police shoves away people, who came looking for daily wage jobs on roads. Because of this, his father barely earns any money.

When asked about his marriage, Kanhaya said that he married with the consent of his parents. However the fact that his marriage happened in poverty disturbs him. His wife keeps complaining about a good house .He has a younger sister who is in class 9th currently. But due to financial crunch it seems that she would not be able to continue her studies further. He is also worried that with the meagre amount of income that he earns he would build his house or spend it on his child's education. Kanhaya lives in an underdeveloped colony, talking about the problems of his colony he complains of lack of basic necessity and sanitation like drinking water, roads, lack of public toilets etc. He says that in colonies caste segregation plays a big role. Being a Harijan, he himself has to face discrimination sometimes at workplace as well. Citing the reasons, he says all of them have come from villages where the caste system still maintains its hold and so it continues here as well. Kanhaya says people often engage in fighting after drinking. Fighting also sometime mars celebration in festivals.

Talking of the closure he says there was a talk of shifting factories to other areas away from cities, then how would they survive. How will they survive on paltry Rs.1600/- per month? They will have to pay for house rent, fare, and other things. However his main

concern is low income, which compels him to live only from hand to mouth. Kanbaya is a bit hesitant to talk about his interest and hobbies. He doesn't have time for that. He feels unfortunate to be born in a poor family and he wishes if he was rich then could go to nice hotels to eat and since his voice is good he would have released music albums and would have achieved a status of his own in this competitive world. Despite all his difficulties Kanbaya seeks solace in the fact that there are much poorer and less fortunate people around him.

MADAN LAL

PERSONAL INFORMATION

AGE-42 YRS.

PLACE OF BIRTH-DEORIA DISTRICT, UP.

PRESENT RESIDENCE-58, RAMA ROAD, DELHI.

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION-INTERMEDIATE (FAIL).

VOCATIONAL TRAINING-NONE.

MARITAL STATUS-MARRIED.

CHILDREN- DAUGHTER-THREE SONS.

PRESENT OCCUPATION- WORKER IN ELCTRICAL APPLIANCES
MANUFACTURING UNIT, MAYAPURI.

1.MIGRATION PATTERN:

AFTER FAILING IN INTERMEDIATE EXAM, HE WAS FORCED TO MOVE OUT OF HIS VILLAGE AND LOOK FOR WORK IN DELHI TO SUPPORT HIS FAMILY.

2.PROLETARIANISATION:

HIS BROTHERS WERE ALREADY WORKING IN FACTORIES IN DELHI,SO IT WAS EASY FOR HIM COME TO DELHI AND LOOK FOR WORK.THEY GOT HIM

A JOB IN A FACTORY AND HE BECAME A MEMBER OF THE LABOUR WORLD.

3.POLITICAL AND ORGANISATIONAL EXPERIENCE: NONE.

4.WORK EXPERIENCE:

PLACE OF WORK	DURATION	SALARY
Basai Darapur.	In 1978.	Ra.100
Anand Parbat.	4 years.	Ra.700
Steve Fab India Limited,Mundka.	4-5 years.	Information not available.
Anand Parbat.	3-4 years.	Information not available.
Aquaguard factory,Kirti Nagar.	2-3 years.	Information not available.
Mayapuri.	Presently working.	Ra.2700-3000

MADAN LAL

A SHORT BIOGRAPHY

When Madan Lal failed to clear his intermediate, he ran away to Delhi in 1978 and started looking for work. Two of his brothers were already working in Delhi at that time. So, he didn't face much difficulty in looking for jobs. In fact at that time, jobs were easily available in Delhi. But he never took it seriously and kept switching over from one job to another. Most of his salary was spend on useless activities and didn't save anything. Many a times he stole his brothers' savings as well. Once his brother discovered this, so he run away to Calcutta, where his brother-in-law was staying, without even informing his brothers. With this his first phase of stay in Delhi came to end.

Madan Lal, being the youngest of his family, was well supported by his family. He had done his primary education in village school; latter on he went to high school, which was ten kilometers away from his village. Everyday we would take a train to attend his classes. His daily routine started with work in the field and ended in the field itself, except for the school hours in between, so he didn't get much time to play for which he bunked many a classes in his high school days to play and roam around the town; went to movies. He tells us that he failed probably because of these distractive habits. He didn't change much even after coming to Delhi and that same insincerity compelled him to run away again.

When he returned to his village from Calcutta, his brothers were also there. They all decided to give him one more chance, so he landed up in Delhi once again. This time he started his work with sincerity and stuck to a job in Anand Parbat for five years drawing salary of Rs.700/- per month. Then he switched to a factory in Kirti Nagar and worked there for three years. In this way, he worked in a number of factories, mostly in electrical appliances unit. He always changed jobs in search of better oppurtunities, but it was rare to come by. Once, he got a good job in a factory, but after four or five years, it shifted

from Mundaka to a far off place in Bahadurgarh, so he had to do away with that job. Right now he works in a Pvt. Ltd. Factory in Mayapuri. But, he is not satisfied with it and often feels bad that his contemporaries are paid better. He thinks that he is not very lucky enough in this matter and sometime pays homage to God by visiting temple for better luck in future. Though he has a permanent job there, but situation is deteriorating day by day after the industrial closure. For last three months, he has not got his salary in time. He says, with the closure of smaller units, larger units like his, has suffered because there is a direct relation between large and small units. He explains that larger units are generally assembling units and parts necessary for assembling are manufactured in the small factories. In his opinion, the verdict of industrial closure is wrong on part of government, it is not only the factories, which is polluting; vehicles are equally responsible for it. As a result of the closure, thousands of workers have been left jobless and he further speculates that this might be a plan to force workers out of city, but Madan Lal feels that, "hum chhote log factory mein kam nahin Karen, production na ho to bade logon ka kam hi ruk jayega." (If we poor people stop working and if there is no production then even well to do people can't work and earn their living) – then why this step motherly attitude towards them, he asked.

When asked about the living condition in the Jhuggis, Madan Lal cites an example that every day he gets up at 4 o'clock just to avoid the long queue outside the outside the public latrine, condition is deplorable in Jhuggis (slums), Government doesn't pay any attention thinking that they are responsible for all the filth and power theft in the city. He is married since 1974 with three sons, but his whole family stays in village, as his income is not sufficient to support his family here. His sons are studying, but he feels, education will not get them anywhere; so in near future, he would call them to work in Delhi. Narrating about his village, he points out with nostalgia that everything changes with time; it has changed his village as well. There are always tensions related to caste, property and even over petty things, it is no longer the same place where he grew up. With the same nostalgic undertone, he speculates, if he would be able to celebrate 'Janamashtmi' in the way he use to, in his locality; people have changed with the time. (It seemed that the narrator has some fond memories about the celebration of 'janamashtmi',

but he didn't share those memories in the interview). Today, he spends most of his leisure time chatting or playing cards with his friends. Movies do fascinate him, but he simply can't afford to do that in the theatres and fulfills his desire by watching them on TV.

Madan Lal is works here just to earn his living, he says, his memories of village is still very fresh, he would love to return and live with his family.

VISHWANATH **PERSONAL INFORMATION**

AGE- 50 YEARS.

PLACE OF BIRTH- DEORIA DISTRICT, UP.

PRESENT RESIDENCE- 58, RAMA ROAD, DELHI

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION- 8TH STANDARD.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING-NONE.

MARITAL STATUS-MARRIED.

CHILDREN- ONE DAUGHTER AND TWO SONS. ELDEST SON IS DOING M.A FROM DELHI UNIVERSTIY AND YOUNGER IS STUDYING IN VILAGWE HIGH SCHOOL.

PRESENT OCCUPATION- CAMPA COLA PVT. LTD (NOW CLOSED).

1. MIGRATION PATTERN:

WHEN HE FAILED IN CLASS 8TH, HIS FATHER ASKED HIM TO COME TO TOWN AND WORK TO SUPPLEMENT FAMILY INCOME.

2. PROLETARIANISATION:

DECRIPIT ECONOMIC CONDITION OF HIS FAMILY.

3 .POLITICAL AND ORGANISATIONAL EXPERIENCE:

NONE AT THE LEVEL OF LABOUR POLITICS, BUT IS A MEMBER OF BAHUJAN SAMAJ PARTY (BSP).

4. WORK EXPERIENCE:

WHEN HE FIRST CAME TO DELHI IN THE EARLY 1970'S, HE STARTED WORKING AS A HELPER IN A SWEET SHOP. BUT FROM 1975 HE HAS BEEN WORKING AT CAMPA COLA PVT LTD. IN KARAMPURA.

VISHWANATH

A SHORT BIOGRAPHY

“Sabse jyada pollution to Government hi phaila rahi hai, factories se aadmi ko rojgar milta. Usse kamata khata hai. Per ab factories se pollution aadmi mein aa gaya hai, sarkar mein aa gaya hai. Pollution to bas bahana hai.” (Government itself is polluting extensively, factories are source of livelihood for us. Now people have become polluted and so has the Government. Pollution is just an excuse). These are the words of Vishwanath who ^{has been} sitting idle for the last four to five months after the closure of Campa Cola Pvt. Ltd, as a result of the recent industrial closure. As opposed to 2000-2500 workers, who were working earlier, right now only around 650 workers are employed, who are fighting a case against the Government to restart functioning of the factory and for their pending payment. Vishwanath had been working there for the last 24 years.

After coming to Delhi in early 70's he started working in a sweet shop as a helper. He worked there for a few years and then joined Campa Cola. He had never imagined that a situation like this would ever come. Campa Cola, once one of the leading soft drinks company is now facing challenges from Pepsi and Coca Cola. He says, “Hindustan ke log bahut nakalchi hain” (People in India are expert in imitating.) Pepsi and Coca Cola are no better than Campa, but it's ‘videshi’ (foreign). At this stage Vishwanath can't even think of looking for home elsewhere because jobs are hard to come by after the industrial closure.

Vishwanath came to Delhi, or it should be said that he was forced to come to Delhi when he failed in Class 8th. His father had a small wood shop, which was not sufficient to support their family. His elder brother was good in studies so he studied further and got a Government job. Today both the brothers stay separately; his father is no longer alive and his wife and two children live in his native village with his mother. Vishwanath doesn't remember much about his childhood except the fact that he used to help his father in his work and sometimes roam around in the village.

When he started working he used to get around Rs.175/- per month which was sufficient for him and to take care of his hobbies as well he could go to theatres and watch films, but today tickets are so costly that he simply can't afford to continue watching films. There was a time in his life when he could go for family outings in and around Delhi and he says that today he can't even do that as bus fares have gone up so much since then. Whatever he earns today is just barely sufficient to take care of his family needs.

The place where he lives today is an unauthorized cluster of jhuggis (slums), but he is of the opinion that if Government wants, it can easily be regularised; Government can't even evict them, as they form a major chunk of vote, the Government has provided them with few facilities like water connections and a few concrete pavement to keep them satisfied. Though the residents want to have regular electricity connection, the Government has been showing reluctance to provide them with it. It is just during the elections that politicians appear in the scene.

Vishwanath idolises Dr.Bhim Rao Ambedkar and he says, is a member of Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) himself because it is the Political Party, which follows, or atleast claims to follow the ideals of Dr. Ambedkar. He says that Dr.Ambedkar didn't believe in inequality and casteism, unlike today's politicians who exploit social issues for political mileage. In fact, caste politics has even crept into the small 'Jhuggi' cluster (slums), he lives in. He says, "jatiwad to harek jagah chalta hai, Government to nam ka jatiwad mitana chahati hai, per jab election asta hai, to jati ke anusar hi candidates khara karti hai". (Casteism is prevalent everywhere. Government wants to eradicate casteism just on papers. Even in elections candidates are nominated on the basis of caste). Even the Government's allegation that Jhuggi dwellers engage in all anti-social activities is nothing but creation of the Government and a handful of influential people in the society, says Vishwanath. He doesn't deny the involvement of these people parse. Maybe that 1% of these people indulges in these activities, for the rest, they are very busy earning two meals a day.

Though Vishwanath himself is not very well educated, his experiences in this metropolitan city and interactions with people from different rung of the society has opened his eyes to certain things about which people in rural areas or people from economically lower sections of society are not very aware of. As for example, he doesn't confirm to the idea of early marriage and feels that unless one starts earning enough to support his family, should not get married. He also considers education as a very important element in one's life. His eldest son is doing MA from Delhi University, which can be an indication of his achievements and high belief that he has, considering the fact that he lives in a slum, where people are the least bothered about education. It is one amongst Vishwanath's hopes to see his son become an IAS officer. We had a chance to talk to Vishwanath's son, Vijay, and we got the impression that his son is a talented man who is struggling very hard to continue his studies. He doesn't feel good about the environment, he lives in and the way people treat him in college. Criticising Government policies and the education system, he pointed out that closure of factories, CNG buses and eviction of jhuggi clusters are all policies against the toiling masses. Vishwanath is ready to face hardships for Vijay's education; he feels that someone has to sacrifice for it, be it himself or his son and in this context he says, "Tyag to karna hi hoga, hum Karen ya baccha Karen". His other son is studying in the village high school.

Vishwanath would like to be remembered by others and he believes that it can happen if one does some good work for the community and not by just working for himself, which is nothing but just a medium of earning one's own living; with this idea he has built a Durga Temple in his locality. But now he often feels cynical which gets reflected in these words of Vishwanath, "aadmi ke berozgar ho jane par sab log bhool jate hai. Bure waqt mein koi saath nahi deta hai." (When one is unemployed, everybody forgets. Nobody stands beside in hard times).

Now all his hopes are pinned on Vijay for he thinks that only Vijay can hold his name high by getting some decent job, and he would be able to go back to his village and stay comfortably with his wife in his old days. But at this moment, he is waiting for the Supreme Court decision to reopen the Campa Cola factory where he was working, so that he can get his salary regularly.

SUSHIL KUMAR
PERSONAL INFORMATION

AGE- 27 YEARS.

PLACE OF BIRTH- VILLAGE THEHO, SUPAUL DISTRICT, BIHAR.

PRESENT RESIDENCE- OKHLA PHASE-2, DELHI.

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION- 7TH STANDARD.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING-NONE.

MARITAL STATUS-MARRIED.

CHILDREN- 2 DAUGHTERS.

PRESENT OCCUPATION- DYE-MAKER.

1. MIGRATION PATTERN:

DECREPT ECONOMIC CONDITION BROUGHT SUSHIL TO DELHI TO LOOK FOR BETTER LIVING FOR HIMSELF AND ALSO TO SUPPORT HIS FAMILY BACK HOME.

2. PROLETARIANISATION:

SUSHIL BEING THE ELDEST OF HIS SIBLINGS, HAD TO SHOULDER THE BURDEN OF HIS FAMILY AND THUS CAME TO WORK AS LABOURER WITH THE HELP OF A PERSON WHO WAS ALREADY WORKING IN DELHI.

3. POLITICAL AND ORGANISATIONAL EXPERIENCE:

TOOK PART IN THE STRIKE OF 1988. OTHER THAN THIS STRIKE SUSHIL DOESN'T HAVE AND POLITICAL AND ORGANISATIONAL EXPERIENCE.

4. WORK EXPERIENCE:

AFTER CHANGING THE JOB, HE STARTED WITH IN DELHI, HE WORKED FOR TWO YEARS IN AN ELECTRICAL WORKSHOP FOR A SALARY OF RS.562/- PER MONTH. THEN HE WORKED AS AN APPRENTICE TO A TECHNICIAN FOR SOMETIMES, AFTER GRADUATING INTO A TECHNICIAN HIMSELF HE STARTED HIS OWN WORKSHOP WITH A MEAGRE INVESTMENT OF RS.10000/- TO RS.15000/-. BUT THE BUSSINESS FAILED AND NOW HE WORKS AS A DYE-MAKER IN A FACTORY IN FARIDABAD WITH A SALARY OF RS.3300/-

SUSHIL KUMAR

A SHORT BIOGRAPHY

Sushil Kumar was born in a village called Theho in Supaul district of Bihar. His childhood was not very pleasant. He belonged to a very poor family, which was heavily indebted. He managed to study only till class five. Being the eldest son, he started working early to shoulder the burden of responsibility. Due to lack of good opportunities in his village, he moved to Delhi, encouraged by another man from his village who was already working in Delhi.

In the beginning, it was very tough for him to cope and settle down in Delhi but as time went by he assimilated himself to the working and living conditions here. First he started off as a helper in a factory (he didn't mention the name of the factory), but after few months changed his job and started working as a technical apprentice in a workshop of electrical appliances for a salary of Rs.562/- where he worked for around two years. After graduating into a technician, he started his own workshop with a meagre investment of Rs.10000/- - Rs.15000/-. However, the business failed and he had to shut his workshop down (the causes and circumstances are not mentioned by the narrator). In the meantime he contracted some disease and it forced him to go back to his village, where he stayed for few months before returning to Delhi.

On returning he found himself in a desperate situation and had to land up in the same factory where worked for the first time. Understandably, he says he would have loved to stay back in his village, but poverty and lack of opportunity has seemed to become a rule of life in his village. His family possessed only a small piece of land and it couldn't support them throughout the year. So it is not difficult to guess that socio-economic factors played an overwhelming role in his migration.

About his political involvement, he talked about 1988 workers' strike, he narrated in his own perspective, how it became successful when all workers of Delhi came together and pressurized the government for their demands. The strike continued for a week and the Government had to bow down and accept their demands. He says that the workers didn't suffer much as they were also paid for the week they were on strike. Other than that strike, Sushil had no political and organizational involvement. Further, he went on to talk about the recent episode of industrial closure in Delhi and says that it severely affected him and increased his burden. Just after the closure, he was rendered jobless for sometimes. He wonders why he and his family should always suffer because of the different policies of an inconsiderable Government.

At present Sushil is working in dye-making factory in Faridabad with a salary of Rs.3300/- per month and he has to make both ends meet with this meagre amount. Sushil just wants to lead a simple life and wants to see his family happy. He managed to buy a plot of 25 square metres in Okhla Phase-2 and has built a single roomed house, where he lives with his wife and children. He has two daughters and is very happy with his marriage though he desires a son. He wants to educate his children well. In the midst of all difficulties, these sentences reveal his self contentment - "Mein jitna pareshan hoon, use aage dekhta hoon to mere se bhi zyada pareshan hai log hai. Voh dekhke apna peechhe ka dard bhool jate hoon". (When I look around me, I can see more troubled people than me; looking at them I forget all my pains of the past.)

SUNIL KUMAR
PERSONAL INFORMATION

AGE- 24 YEARS.

PLACE OF BIRTH- RAJOPUR, UP.

PRESENT RESIDENCE- HARINAGAR, DELHI.

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION- 5TH STANDARD.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING-NONE.

MARITAL STATUS-MARRIED.

CHILDREN- 2 DAUGHTERS.

PRESENT OCCUPATION- BICYCLE FITTER (RUNS HIS OWN REPAIR SHOP).

1. MIGRATION PATTERN:

POOR ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND LACK OF WORK AVENUES IN HIS VILLAGE FORCED HIM AND HIS ELDER BROTHER TO MIGRATE TO DELHI

IN SEARCH OF BETTER AVENUES.FIRST, HIS BROTHER CAME TO DELHI AND THEN IN 1993, AT THE AGE OF 16, SUNIL CAME TO DELHI.

2.PROLETARIANISATION:

HIS DECREPT ECONOMIC BACKGROUND PUSHED HIM TO THE WORLD OF PROLETARIAT. AND RIGHT FROM THE BEGINNING HE WAS INTO SERVICE OR ALLIED LABOUR SECTOR, AS HE RUNS A BICYCLE REPAIR SHOP.

3.POLITICAL AND ORGANISATIONAL EXPERIENCE: NONE.

4.WORK EXPERIENCE:

IT HAS BEEN ALREADY MENTIONED; RIGHT FROM THE BEGINNING SUNIL WAS INTO SERVICE OR ALLIED LABOUR SECTOR. AFTER COMING TO DELHI, HE WAS WORKING AT HIS BROTHER'S BICYCLE REPAIR SHOP, BUT LATER HE SET UP HIS OWN SHOP. HE SAYS THAT BEFORE THE INDUSTRIAL CLOSURE IN DELHI, HE USED TO MANAGE A DAILY EARNING OF RS.120/- TO RS.150/-, BUT AFTER THE CLOSURE HIS INCOME HAS DROPPED TO AROUND RS.50/-PER DAY.

SUNIL KUMAR

A SHORT BIOGRAPHY

Sunil Kumar is a good example of how the industrial has affected the livelihood of not only workers in the factories and industries but also of those people who are in the service labour and are indirectly dependent on factories.

Sunil runs a temporary bicycle repair shop on the road near a canal passing through Badarpur industrial area. Earlier he use to manage a daily earning of something between Rs.120/- to Rs.150/-, but after the closure most of the workers who use to work in the closed down factories have either gone back to their native places or have moved to other part of Delhi in search of work. But now (as Sunil's work is totally based on service labour) his income has gone down and he manages only around Rs.50/- per day. He laments, "pehle jaha din bhar mein 120-150 rupeye ho jate the, wahin ab 50 rupeye bhi nikalna muskil hai. Ab yahan koi log aise hain hi nahi jo cycle se kaam par jaye. Mujhe to bahut ghata hua"(In a place where one used to earn Rs.120/- to Rs150/- per day now it is difficult even to earn Rs.50/- per day.Now there is no one who comes to work on bicycle .It has affected my business very much) There might be hundreds of Sunil in Badarpur alone, not to talk of Delhi, whose life has become very difficult because of this industrial closure.

Sunil hails from Rajopur village of Uttar Pradesh and was born and brought up there. He tells us that his childhood passed like any other normal kid, sheltered from the understanding of the burden and reality of life. But things changed when he was eleven years old. His father, who was the only earning member of the family, passed away. Now it was the responsibility of Sunil's eldest brother to shoulder the burden of the family.

Sunil was fortunate that even then he was able to go to school, but as the liability kept increasing and only meagre income was the amount that his brother earned, he had to leave school in class eight.

Sunil's brother migrated to Delhi in search of better avenues of work and started as a bicycle fitter in Badarpur (Delhi). After two-three years Sunil's brother summoned him to Delhi and in 1993 he came to Delhi at the age of 16. Initially both the brothers worked together, but later he managed to set up his own bicycle repair shop, even though in a makeshift form.

Sunil's entry into labour market was evidently because of poor economic condition of his family. When asked, why he migrated or for that matter why his brother migrated to Delhi, he promptly replied, "Goan mein koi dhanda ya kuch karne laayak nahin tha. Kar lo to chalta nahin tha." (In my village there was no avenue of work, even if you get some work you can't survive). He recalls the good things of his village and said that people still lives in respect for each other in his village unlike cities.

He has been married since 1999 and his income is hardly sufficient to make both ends meet, he also has to send money to his mother back home and tries his level best to keep his wife happy, infact he claimed that she is very happy with whatever he is able to earn. On the question of leisure, Sunil's answer probably holds for almost every labourer. He said that the only source of pleasure is a good income at the end of the day. He has never been to cinema hall with his wife and doesn't keep any interest in music or any other popular form of entertainment, he feels it might distract him from the battlefield where he has to constantly fight for the keeping of his family and to ensure a better future for his children. And whenever his mind is not preoccupied, he tries to fill the vacuum by taking a look at the newspaper. At the end of the day, when he needs to vent out his tiredness, he often finds solace in the T.V screen or by talking to his wife. Being a vaishnavite, he abstain himself from alcohol, cigarette etc. and is only addicted to some extent to Khaini (mixture of tobacco and lime).

When asked about the locality (Hari Nagar) he lives in, he informed us that when he first came to stay, there was no electricity, water and basic facilities, but now things become much better and all the residents of the locality are trying to improve it further with the help of the local M.L.A, Mr. Ram Singh.

Sunil's living condition and lifestyle also speaks about the lives of thousands of laborers in Delhi, if not about all. He is so engaged to make both ends meet that he can't even afford to think about any entertainment and has never taken his wife out for a single evening. Nonetheless, even though his life is a tight rope walking, he dreams of happy days when he will have a stable source of income and his family would be able to live happily.

ANGAD YADAV

PERSONAL INFORMATION

AGE- 26 YEARS.

PLACE OF BIRTH-MADHEPURA, BIHAR.

PRESENT RESIDENCE-VILLAGE ALIPUR, DELHI.

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION- 3RD STANDARD.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING- NIL.

MARITAL STATUS- MARRIED.

CHILDREN- TWO (BOTH BOYS)

PRESENT OCCUPATION- RICKSHAW PULLER.

1.MIGRATION PATTERN:

DECREPIT ECONOMIC CONDITION OF ANGAD'S FAMILY FORCED HIM TO VENTURE OUT OF HIS VILLAGE IN SEARCH OF BETTER INCOME OPTIONS TO SUPPORT HIS FAMILY. SO FIRST HE WENT TO PUNJAB BUT LATER DECIDED TO COME TO DELHI. HIS NATURE OF MIGRATION IS NOT PERMANENT AND MIGHT GO BACK TO HIS VILLAGE.

2.PROLETARIANISATION:

BEING THE ONLY SON OF HIS PARENTS HE HAD TO SHOULDER THE BURDEN OF FAMILY RESPONSIBILTY. AFTER COMING TO DELHI LANDED UP PULLING RICKSHAW.

3.POLITICAL AND ORGANISATIONAL EXPERIENCE:NONE.

4.WORK EXPERIENCE:

EVEN IN PUNJAB ANGAD WORKED AS A WAGE LABOURER DOING ANY ODD WORK COMING HIS WAY, BUT HIS EARNING WAS HARDLY Rs.40/- PER DAY. BUT AFTER COMING TO DELHI HE STARTED TO PULL RICKSHAW AND EARNS SOMETHING BETWEEN Rs.120/- TO Rs.130/- PER DAY.

ANGAD YADAV

A SHORT BIOGRAPHY

Alipur is a suburban village of Delhi near Badarpur. We were going to Mithapur, another nearby village, and on the way we decided to hire a rickshaw. After some time, we started a conversation with the rickshaw puller with the idea that we might be able to interview him. After that long conversation and after interviewing him we got the idea that he overrated everything he talked about, his ideas about society, his background, and his perception of work. But nevertheless, it opens up some aspect to analyse; to examine the hypothesis that lies has psychological truth behind it.

Angad Yadav who is 26 years old, started pulling rickshaw from the mid 90's in Delhi. Now, he is twenty-six and earns around Rs.125/- -130/- daily, out of which, he says, he saves Rs.50/- to Rs.60/-. Since, he operates in an industrial area, his income has drastically gone down after the industrial closure because many of the workers have returned to their villages, he says, *“jab se factory band hui hai log yeham se ghar wapas cahle gae, humara din bhar ka kamai dedh soo se ghat kar ek soo ho gaya”*. Angad is not very happy pulling rickshaw, because for the effort, which he puts in, he earns very little. In a morseful tone he said, *“ hum roz sadhe chhah baje uthte hain aur nasta kar ke rikshaw लेकर chawk par chale jate hain aur raat gyarah baje ghar wapas aate hain. (I wake up at 4.30 in the morning and immediately after eating breakfast, take the rickshaw to the chawk, and come at 11 in the night.)*

Angad was born and brought up at Madhepura, in his childhood he never showed any interest in studies. His father was not very rich but had enough to feed and lead a decent life. Angad always bunked school and often landed up playing with his friends. They played all sorts of games like hide and seek, kabbadi, swimming fishing etc.; in a way he did everything except for studies. He recalls that his father would often scold him and complain to his teacher; who would then, send other students to fetch him back to class

and give him a good beating. He regrets that even after all the effort of his father and his teachers, he never developed interest in studies and dropped out of school in 3rd standard.

Angad says that right from his childhood he was very idealist and romantic, but nobody in their village respected his sentiments and his way of thinking. Further, he says that everybody in the society got 'infected' with the idea of earning money; and soon he also decided to go out of the village and earn a living for himself. He had some friends working in different cities, so with one of them, Angad, went to Punjab, only to return to his village in a month's time. After few months of stay in the village he went to Karnal and worked as a 'raj mistri' (mason) for a while in a construction site, but again he came back to his village and stay for a longer period; finally in the early 90's came to Delhi. Initially he worked in some factories, but later switched on to pulling rickshaw, because he says that he doesn't like to be commanded by others. He says that though there is not much money in this profession, one can be master of him.

Angad got married in 1989 and claims it was a love marriage. His wife is matriculate and the daughter of village mukhia (village headman), though he claims that she is very happy with him, it doesn't seem to be true. She started living with Angad after their 'Ganna' (second marriage ceremony as per Hindu tradition prevalent in Bihar and eastern UP) in 1995. They have two sons, both below five years. Angad says that he can't think about their education now as he earns just enough to survive.

Talking of his parents and family background, he says that his ancestors were very rich and possessed hundreds of acres of land, but today they have very little, just enough for survival and now he has to send money to his parents. He says his ancestors distributed all the land amongst villagers. But we got the feeling that these were flowing from his imagination and sounded away from reality.

When we ask about recreation and how he spends his leisure, he replied that he has nothing but a music system worth Ra. 500/- to sooth his mind, he has no time to go theatre hall. He also says that he doesn't earn enough money to spend on recreation.

RAM BHAVAN
PERSONAL INFORMATION

AGE- 43 YEARS

PLACE OF BIRTH- KHARILABAD, UP.

PRESENT RESIDENCE- HARINAGAR, DELHI.

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION- 5TH STANDARD.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING-NONE.

MARITAL STATUS-MARRIED.

CHILDREN- THREE.

PRESENT OCCUPATION- UTENSIL POLISHING.

1. MIGRATION PATTERN:

RAM BHAVAN MIGRATED PERMANENTLY TO DELHI, BECAUSE OF POOR ECONOMIC BACKGROUND, THE YEAR 1992 ALONG WITH HIS FAMILY.

2. PROLETARIANISATION:

DUE TO DECREPIT ECONOMIC BACKGROUND HE STARTED WORKING AS A DAILY WAGE WORKER FROM 1990 IN KHARILABAD. SINCE HE WAS NOT WELL EDUCATED, HE HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO ENTER THE LABOUR MARKET.

3. POLITICAL AND ORGANISATIONAL EXPERIENCE: NONE.

4. WORK EXPERIENCE:

AFTER COMING TO DELHI HE STARTED WORKING AS A HELPER IN A PRIVATE COMPANY AND DURING THAT PERIOD ACQUIRED GOOD AMOUNT OF EXPERIENCE IN BUFFING AND POLISHING. IN 1993 HE ESTABLISHED HIS OWN BUFFING AND POLISHING UNIT. SINCE THEN HE HAS BEEN RUNNING HIS OWN UNIT, EARNING A MONTHLY INCOME OF RS.5000/-

RAM BHAVAN

A SHORT BIOGRAPHY

"Gam khushi to hamesha hamare pas rehta hai. Chahe gam bhi ho ya khushi bhi ho to hum hamesha ek hi jaise rahte hain. Shaam ko daru pee lena, raat mein so gaye, sabare uthe to dhandhe mein lag gaye."(Good and bad times are always with us. Be it happiness or sadness we always remain the same; evening is the time for alcohol, night calls for sleep and in the morning back to work.) These lines capture the personality of Ram Bhavan who works on a contractual basis from his residence in a jhuggi in Badarpur, Delhi. Unlike his fellow labourers, he looks happy and satisfied in life. This is all what Ram Bhavan From nearby factories he gets utensils for polishing and manages to earn around Rs.5000/- per month, which, he think, is sufficient to run the needs of his family needs of his family of five members .His mild nature and temperament have made him become a sort of 'take life easy ' kind of individual. Whenever asked about the difficulties in his life, he always answered like a self satisfied individual, which was also echoed by his wife though he also narrates that there were times when he did not have enough to eat, but he never complained thinking that God would reward them since they were hard working people

Ram Bhavan was born and brought up in U.P. Due to decrepit economic condition he had to migrate to Delhi. After he came to Delhi in the late seventies, he was staying at Harikeshnagar with his brother, who was then working in Delhi in a private company, and he started working the same kind of job in the same unit. Later, when the personal relationship between the two brothers went down and started living separately. Ram Bhavan also started working as a helper in a utensil-polishing unit. He kept switching over his jobs only in this kind of factories. Based on his interview, nothing much can be said about his early proletarian life in Delhi. Gradually when he got experienced in buffing and polishing he put up his own unit at his residence at Harinagar after purchasing a plot in 1993, since then his economic condition has improved, though he also narrates that there were times when he didn't have enough to eat.

Ram Bhavan says that he doesn't remember much about his childhood except for the fact that he got married at a very early age. He recalls how the bride (his wife) was in her father's lap; though he had a vague idea about what was going on, his wife was too small, only five year old, even to figure out that she was getting married. However they started living together only when their 'Gauna' took place (second marriage ceremony as per Hindu marriage tradition, practiced in Bihar and eastern part of UP). He tells that his wife has always been very supportive, though he has not been able to give her anything more than two meals a day, and doesn't get the time to take his wife out. He further informs that she has always been busy looking after the household chores and paying attention to their three children. He and his wife would love to send their children to school and hope that someday their children will get decent jobs. But at time he is skeptic about his dreams to get realised, as he expresses by saying, " sab unper nirbhar karte hai."(Everything depends upon God)

Ram Bhavan likes watching movies though his busy work schedule doesn't spare him enough free time. He hardly gets time to sit in front of the TV set and enjoy watching films. Going to cinema halls is out of question as tickets are too costly for him to afford. So whenever he manages to find some free time from his work he pays visit to his friends or helps his wife in household works. He says that festivals are a time for celebrations, so in order to enjoy the festive mood; he likes to go out with his family and visit his relatives who stay in other parts of Delhi.

Ram Bhavan complains about the minimal facilities in his locality and points out that Government has not provided them with electricity and water connection and he is struggling along with his friends to get these basic necessities. Though he doesn't have any particular political affiliation, he is active in the area during elections and is very conscious about political and civil rights. He doesn't like to be oppressed or to follow others' command and he says that it is the why he started his own work During the 1987 workers' strike, he didn't involve himself much, but when one worker was treated harshly by the owner, he participated in an agitation in Okhla area in the 80's. Narrating the incident he informs that nothing much happened after the agitation, even though the

industrial area remained closed for four days and few vehicles and factories were gutted to ash.

Ram Bhavan would like to live a decent and respectable life and doesn't aspire much like having a big house or a car, for he thinks that these are beyond his capacity to acquire. But he would certainly like to educate his children well. That Ram Bhavan is a self satisfied man is revealed in the lines, when he says, " ham apni zindgi se bahut khush rahte hain chabe jab mein paise ho ya na ho, khane ko milti rahe kafi hain". (I am very happy with my life, even if the pocket is empty; getting two meals is enough)

DASHRATH PRASAD
PERSONAL INFORMATION

AGE- 37 YEARS.

PLACE OF BIRTH- VILLAGE THEHO, ANANDPUR, BIHAR.

PRESENT RESIDENCE- OKHLA PHASE-2, DELHI.

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION- INTERMEDIATE (10+2).

VOCATIONAL TRAINING-NONE.

MARITAL STATUS-MARRIED.

CHILDREN- THREE (ONE DAUGHTER, TWO SONS).

PRESENT OCCUPATION- UNEMPLOYED.

1. MIGRATION PATTERN:

IN QUEST OF JOB HE FIRST WENT TO CALCUTTA, BUT THERE HE COULDN'T GET ANY JOB. THEN HE MIGRATED TO DELHI ALONE AND BROUGHT HIS FAMILY AFTER TWO YEARS.

2. PROLETARIANISATION:

SINCE DASHRATH WAS EDUCATED HE HAD AN IDEA HOW DIFFICULT IT IS TO GET GOVERNMENT JOB. SO HE WAS READY TO TAKE UP ANY KIND OF JOB AND HE WAS LUCKY ENOUGH TO GET JOBS LIKE SECURITY GUARD, SUPERVISOR IN A PRIVATE COMPANY AND SO ON.

3. POLITICAL AND ORGANISATIONAL EXPERIENCE:

HE WAS A MEMBER OF A LOCAL LABOUR UNION WHICH WAS SUPPORTED BY SOME POLITICIANS FROM MAINSTREAM POLITICAL PARTIES. HE ALSO ACTIVELY PARTICIPATED IN THE 1988 WORKERS' STRIKE.

4. WORK EXPERIENCE:

AT FIRST HE GOT A JOB AS SECURITY GUARD EARNING RS.500/- PER MONTH AND THEN HE JOINED THE TAJ GROUP WHICH FETCHED HIM A SALARY OF RS. 700/- PER MONTH ONLY. AFTER THAT HE GOT A JOB AS A SUPERVISOR IN A PRIVATE COMPANY IN NOIDA WITH A SALARY OF RS.5000/- PER MONTH.

DASHRATH PRASAD

A SHORT BIOGRAPHY

In 1986, Dashrath left his home, in search of job and today almost whole of his family is in Delhi. He doesn't feel like going back to Bihar; for him it is here in his locality. Most of the residents in his colony in Indira kalyan vihar are from Bihar. Today he earns around 5000/ per month, which is good enough to support his family. Right now he doesn't have a regular job. Few months before he was forced to take voluntary retirement from the factory, he was working in, because it was running in loss.

Dashrath is right now without work and is planning to do something of his own. He has migrated from Supaul in Bihar. There was not much problem for him in his village rather being the youngest child of the family, they wanted him to study and get a decent job. But he was not very good as well as less interested in studies than sports and use to spent most of his free time in playing football, volley ball etc. And sometimes he use to herd their cattle out for grazing and his family didn't like him engaging in agricultural activities rather wanted him to pay all his attention in studies. After his primary schooling in his village, he was put in a hostel in a high school at Dagmara. He managed to pass matriculation exam with good marks and then was admitted to Nirmali College, but when it came to intermediate exams in 1982 he got a compartmental in English. So, he ran away to Calcutta thinking that he would work there and earn a living. But life was not that easy as he had thought. He says that the ruling communist government at that time took care to see that no outsiders get any job, so people advised them to learn driving to earn something, which didn't appeal much to him, so he came back to his village and completed his intermediate. For next three to four years he was very perplexed about his future. Finally in 1986 he decided to come to Delhi and earn his livelihood, as jobs were very difficult to come by in Bihar.

In Delhi, after looking for few months, he got a job as security guard for Rs.500 per month. But just after three –four days he left it. Then he went to Okhla looking for job with the help of his relatives. Finally he got a job in Tulsan Inspect Pvt. Ltd., Which manufactured leather goods, for Rs.500/- per month. He was supposed to help assembling the final products. After few months, when a new manager came he promoted him to the post of supervisor, with an increase of Rs.100/-. He got well with the new manager, so when manager had a fight with the management, he also left the job. Both of them joined a new factory in D-40, Noida, sector-11 and drew a salary of Rs. 700/- per month. There, workers from all over India were working, staying in different parts of Delhi. So a bus used to ferry them daily to the factory. In a way his life was comfortable, because, earlier, he had to go to factory by bicycle.

But things changed in 1988 strike. Many unions joined together and started demanding benefits, which they were entitled to. Dashrath participated actively in it, he ensured that there was no work carried out in the nearby factories. He narrates, at times, strike turned violent, but even police couldn't break their seize of the factories because of the unity amongst workers. Finally strike ended after seven days and many of the workers' demand were accepted. Infact they were paid for the seven days strike when they didn't work.

But after that Dashrath had to leave the job. This time he got a better job in one of the shoes factories, which were coming up in Noida at that time in large numbers. He joined Taj shoes Pvt. Ltd., for Rs 1200/- per month. He worked there for ten years but company was in loss and it was becoming difficult for the management to run the factory. So they decided to shut it down, but workers refused and went on strike for three months. Situation didn't improve and management succeeded in persuading few of them to seek voluntary retirement. Now Dashrath had no other option left, but then also he fought with the management for better terms and condition of retirement. Finally he took voluntary retirement on some negotiated terms in 2001.

He was satisfied with his earnings, which was sufficient to meet his family needs. After marriage he brought his wife to Delhi. After marriage his responsibilities increased, so he bought a plot of land in Okhla phase-2, Indira Colony. The area is not much developed and its like any other J.J.colony in Delhi, where there is no water connection, and no legal electricity connection being provided by the Government. Talking of the improvement in the area, he says, local MLA, Ram Singh, is trying to provide some facilities but nothing much seems to be happening.

Dashrath didn't had much spare time when he was working, so whenever he got time he would sit with his friends or visit his relatives in other parts of city. He has a colour television but he hardly gets time to watch. He has two sons and a daughter and is trying hard to give them proper education. His wife is not educated but he says, they have a good understanding amongst them, which makes life easy for them.

In future, he don't want to go back to Bihar because there is a lot of unemployment, it is said that getting a job in Bihar is like meeting God as reflected in the saying that "*Bihar mein tapasya kar ne se bhagwan mil jata hai lekin naukri nahi milega*". (*In Bihar if you try, you might attain union with God, but you can't find jobs*) He says every year; around 50 -60 people come to Delhi from his village alone, in search of work. Right now he wants to start something of his own rather than looking for work in factories. He has enough for his survival so he wants to give his children proper education, which would get them some status in society. There is no other pressure on him from parents because they are happily living in village from the land which they have.

SOCHINDRA MANDAL

PERSONAL INFORMATION

AGE- 27 YEARS.

PLACE OF BIRTH- KALARIPATTY, BIHAR.

PRESENT RESIDENCE-BADARPUR, DELHI.

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION- 2ND STANDARD.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING- NIL.

MARITAL STATUS- MARRIED.

CHILDREN- NONE.

PRESENT OCCUPATION- POLISHING OF STEEL.

1.MIGRATION PATTERN:

BECAUSE OF TENSIONS IN THE FAMILY SOCHINDRA MIGRATED WITH HIS WIFE TO DELHI TO MAKE A LIVING ON HIS OWN.

2.PROLETARIANISATION:

SINCE SOCHINDRA'S FAMILY WAS A JOINT FAMILY WITH VERY LITTLE LAND, HE BECAME AN AGRICULTURAL WAGE LABOURER IN HIS VILLAGE AND LATER ON COME TO DELHI TO WORK.

3.POLITICAL AND ORGANISATIONAL EXPERIENCE:

SOCHINDRA'S POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT AS FAR AS LABOUR POLITICS IS CONCERNED IS ALMOST NIL. BUT HE HAS BEEN SUPPORTING A LOCAL M.L.A AND TRIES TO MAINTAIN CLOSE RELATIONS SO AS TO IMPROVE PUBLIC FACILITIES IN HIS COLONY.

4.WORK EXPERIENCE:

WHILE HE WAS IN VILLAGE AND WORKING AS AN AGRICULTURAL WAGE LABOURER HIS EARNING WAS VERY MEAGRE BUT NOW HE IS WORKING IN A FACTORY WHERE HE HAS TO POLISH STEEL AND EARNING AROUND Rs. 3200/- PER MONTH.

SOCHINDAR MANDAL

A SHORT BIOGRAPHY

Sochindar Mandal's family is a classic example of landless family of rural India where each of the members has to shoulder their own responsibility. Sochindar could never go to school after the first standard; he started helping his parents and brothers who were working as agricultural wage labourers. All his childhood memories were confined to the paddy fields like other children of agriculture labourers. He did not have fond memories to share with us, except for the poverty and hardships his family had to face in off seasons when there was no work to be done in the fields. Many a times they had to sleep without food or survive on a single meal a day.

Sochindar also started working as an agricultural labourer at an early age to contribute to his family income. But when he got married, he decided to come to Delhi, so that he could provide a decent living to his wife and to bail out his heavily indebted family. In Delhi there was no one to help him in getting a job that would fetch him more money. He started working as a daily wage labourer in small units, but he never got a permanent job. At times he was rendered jobless only after working for a month or two and he had to look for work again. He attributes this to lack of vocational training and at the same time increased unemployment after the industrial closure.

However his wife is literate, she often tried to save money from his meagre income with which they bought a plot and are staying in makeshift jhuggia. She also wants to contribute to family income by working, but Sochindar discourages her and do not

provide any help in this matter. She is not happy with this because their income is hardly enough for survival and to pay back the family debt. But Sochinder is a self-contented man; he tries to be happy even in difficult times. His wife feels that he is very gentle and innocent, of which others take advantage and at times they use him for their own benefits. But she doesn't seem to be right in her opinion; Sochinder along with his friends is opposing few people who are demanding more money for fixing electricity meters in their houses.

Now Sochinder is working as a polisher in a utensils unit for Rs.1600/-Rs.1700/- per month. His wife manages most of his household very efficiently with the little money he earns. She doesn't feel bad for the fact that Sochinder never took her for outings, because she can understand his position and consoles herself with whatever she is getting. Right now she desperately wants someone to help her to get a job so that she can supplement the household income. They don't have a child at present, but, nevertheless, she is worried about the future of her child. As of today, Sochinder has no grand future plans except for getting a permanent job which will provide him with enough money to take care of all his needs and he think that only then will he have time to think of his future.