

Insight Young Voices Blog

| A Dalit Youth Magazine |

- [Home](#)
- [About](#)
- [Contact](#)
- [Disclaimer](#)

[Subscribe](#)

Babasaheb Ambedkar and ‘the Dalits of Europe’

By Pardeep Singh Attri

Dispatches from Hungary - I



Jai bhim Network's logo

Jai Bhim Network is a group that is working among the **Romas** (derogatorily referred as Gypsies) in Hungary. In their effort of creating linkages with the Dalit movement of India and draw inspiration the network has been in constant interaction with many of the young Dalit activists in India. The network is also instrumental in inviting young Dalit students and activists to stay with the community in Hungary and exchange their views. Towards this three of us – me, Swati Kamble and Bharat are in Hungary since last fortnight and will be writing for our blog on our experiences. Here is my first post.

It was 14th April 2008, when I wrote an article titled [Schools, Toilets or Temples?](#) On the same day I got an email from one Mr. Derdak Tibor, appreciating the article. He is a Hungarian activist working with the Roma community in the country.



Hungarian Roma community leader Janos Orsos
with Buddhist kids in Maharashtra, December
2005

This was the beginning of long email exchanges between us where I was able to learn a lot about the lives and the problem faced by Romas (derogatorily referred as Gypsies), especially in Hungary. Till then I had a very limited knowledge about the community, derived mostly from the English movies that I saw.

‘Gypsies’ are normally considered to be a nomadic group with the worldwide population of about 12 million, originally from south Asia. With their 8 million population in Europe they constitute one of the biggest minority blocks in many European countries and have the history of being discriminated, stigmatized and persecuted by white Europeans based on their prejudices and stereotyping of the community. They are still mostly found segregated from the mainstream, hated and ridiculed by the white society.

After communicating with Tibor, as an Indian Dalit I was not surprised to recognize the fact that most often than not these movies displayed the prejudices and stereotypes that are prevalent in Europe against the Romas.

Babasaheb as a source of inspiration

One of the most interesting facts that Derdak Tibor informed me was that his group of Roma activists and community leaders in Hungary derive their inspiration from Babasaheb Ambedkar and Buddhism and trying to inculcate Ambedkarite thoughts in their movement towards equal rights for the Roma community. They have created a support network called Jai Bhim Network, embraced Buddhism and opened an high school in the name of Dr Ambedkar High School for the Roma children in Hungary.

Roma activists find their situation in the otherwise ‘white’ Hungary almost akin to the Dalits of India and therefore they now call their community, ‘the Dalits of Europe’ as the Romas are also found in other European countries too and face the similar prejudices and discrimination every where.

Apparently, the connection with Babasaheb and the Indian Dalits started when Derdak Tibor found a book on Babasaheb in Paris and got inspired after reading it. He was immediately able to draw the linkages between the discrimination faced by Indian Dalits and Romas in Europe. Fascinated by the life and struggle of Babasaheb, he together with his group of Roma activists interacted with Friends of World Buddhist Order (FWBO), a group that has been working with Ambedkarite Buddhist in India for quite some time now.

This interaction led Derdak Tibor and Janos Orsos (one of the Roma leaders) to visit India and to meet Dalit activists, particularly in Maharashtra in December 2005. By then both of them knew about the work of Babasaheb and had been deeply impressed by what they had read of his work and the suffering of his people. But after visiting India they felt very deep connections with the Dalits here and got convinced that

Babasaheb's message of social transformation is deeply relevant to the Romas as well.

After this visit, both these activists started introducing Dr. Ambedkar and his philosophy of social transformation amongst the Romas in Hungary and are making huge efforts to bond with Indian Dalit movement by creating various linkages through their platform 'Jai Bhim Network'.

One of them is to invite young Dalit activists to Hungary and provide them opportunities to interact with the Roma community and through this to provide exposure to both the Indian Dalits and the Hungarian Dalits about each other's struggle towards a just and humane society.



Recently held Roma community's protest in Budapest, Hungary, against their segregation

I am writing these dispatches from Hungary being part of one such Indian Dalit delegation that has been invited by the Jai Bhim Network to visit, interact and stay with the Roma community living in a small town called Sajókaza in Northeast Hungary.

In Sajókaza

On 24th September 2009, me and Bharat reached Budapest, the capital city. Both of us were little nervous being travelling abroad first time and were much relieved to see one Mr Saboj from Jai Bhim Network waiting for us at the airport. Within no time in the company of Mr. Saboj, we felt completely at ease and started interacting as if we knew each other since decades.

Perhaps our respective movements created some synergy between us and I immediately felt a fellow feeling, a bond and a deep relationship between us though we lived thousands of miles apart and were meeting for the first time. At night we reached Sajókaza village where we had to stay with the Roma community. Swati Kamble, our fellow companion from India, had already arrived there.



Roma Houses are located outside the village

Sajókaza is a village about 30 km north east of Miskolc and has a population of about 3300 people with half of them from the Roma community. It is a very beautiful village. Big fields around the village refreshed my memory of the villages of Punjab.

However, majority of the Romas live in the outskirts of village in the ghettos. Their life style is totally different from other Hungarians of the village. Once upon a time, in 1900s, almost all Romas of the village were employed in the nearby mines but now there are all unemployed and live on monthly benefits, which they get from the government.

Hungarian people consider Roma people the most problematic community of Hungary as they are different from the other Hungarians. Hungarian people hate them just because they need someone to hate in difficult times and being helpless Romas are the easy target. Even a local police chief Albert Pasztor said publicly that, “The perpetrators of all crimes are gypsies”.

The Roma kids are forced to sit in the separate classroom. The children grow up constantly being dehumanized, humiliated, persecuted and rejected. I read there were separate cup plates for their kids around 10 years back.

I also became aware that the Roma kids are declared mentally challenged and are send to special schools and now days around 90% of special school students are from this community only. Even the special schools seems to take more interest in these students rather than other students, may be because they get higher grants/money/benefits in the name of these ‘mentally challenged’ kids.

It was very interesting to find that, during our travel, most of the Hungarian people thought that we were also Hungarian Romas till the time we spoke English. Then only they could understand that we are not Romas but from some third world country.

Our physical similarities with the Romas are so striking that even many Romas thought that we belong there. It made us feel like at home, being among our own community and people and delighted me to no end. It became a bit emotional when old Roma women, knowing that we have come from India and are from the Dalit community, said, “You are like my grand children”. Perhaps the Indian origin of Romas, our physical similarities and similar conditions of facing prejudices and discrimination from the rest of the society made us feel that we belong to one community.

During our stay, on the first hand itself it became very clear that the life of Roma people is not an easy one and suffer as much discrimination as faced by us Dalits in our every day lives. There are 3 churches in Sajókaza, but not even a single Roma visit them. When I asked why it is so? The young Romas replied, “We are not treated well in the society and are looked down. Hence we don’t feel like visiting them”. It immediately reminded me of the Hindu temples in India that actually prohibits our entry.

Later during our stay we were invited to teach more about India, its culture and the problem of caste at Dr. Ambedkar High School there. Our students included Roma children and women from all age group.

All of them listened us patiently and were very curious to know more about our community, its struggle to reclaim human dignity which they found resonating completely with their own struggle in Hungary.

I was also pleasantly surprised to know that due to the regular activities of Jai Bhim Network, most of our students were aware of the caste virus and the role of Dr Ambedkar. Our next stop was at nearby place called Hegymeg and we interacted with the students of Dr Ambedkar High School there also on the same lines.



Roma kids playing near their ghettos

Next evening, we went to the local community centre called Pink House accompanied by two other young Roma activists Benö and Kubu to teach English to the women and also attended an awareness programme organised by Roma activists for nourishing dreams of good life among Roma people. There we also participated in the drama and singing classes organised by Benö where we danced to our heart content.

During the proceedings of awareness programme, I enquired one participant about her dream. She replied, “I would like my kids to go to school then university and get some good jobs and earn well”. She was pained with the stigma that gypsies are lazy and are not interested in education. Her sentiments perfectly echoed that of any person from our community who also share the same dream of being free from caste-based stigmas and is able to provide for education of his/her children. We also visited the nearby kindergarten in Sajókaza and interacted with the kids and played with them.

English Language and Romas

However, before writing more about my other experiences here working with Jai Bhim Network, I would like to write about English language. The local Roma community speaks a dialect of Romanian language and not many can speak and understand English.

However, the Roma activists understand the significance of English language in today’s world and are making efforts to promote English among the community that will open new opportunities for young Romas in globalised world together with creating an avenue to highlight about their discrimination and to get support from the international community.

In this, the Roma activists give example of the Indian Dalits who due to their struggle for education and relative access to English language is able to globalise their struggle. While interacting, I also tried to emphasise on the importance for English for our emancipation and empowerment and narrated the

struggle of Jotiba Phule and Savitribai Phule for modern English education and their urgings for Dalits and other marginalised sections of the society to learn English.

During one of our interactions, I even recited one poem written by Savitribai Phule known as ‘Mother English’. I also referred to the appeal of our Babasaheb for Dalits to come out of their ghettos/villages and march towards cities. In contrast to Gandhi’s silly romanticism about villages, it was the farsightedness of Babasaheb that knew that the development of the Dalit community is not possible till they live in ghettos/villages. Only coming to the urban centres could get them better access to schools and other facilities. I feel the same is true with the Romas too.

While interacting with the students of Dr. Ambedkar High School at Sajókaza, I mentioned about the language problem that I was facing there and told about my helplessness in interacting with them with more freedom. I got an interesting reply from one of the student (Benő’s brother) that “Till recently we were not given right to study, now we are learning and you come again next year, we will learn English by them”.

Jai Bhim Network and its work

Not many Europeans are interested in knowing Roma people and are grossly insensitive towards the problems faced by them. Jai Bhim Network inspired by Dr B R Ambedkar’s work is working mostly in the northern part of Hungary, where they have been running a school named Dr Ambedkar High School in Sajókaza and another one in the same name in Hegymeg. They are working in the areas where the chances for Roma kids to get higher education are very low. Hardly anyone there goes even to secondary schools.

The objective of the Network is to uplift the living standards of Roma people, to help them come out of poverty and to achieve equal social & economic status in the Hungarian society. Moreover the Network is soon going to start Microfinance Institution on the lines of Grameen Bank from Bangladesh, which changed millions lives there.

to be continued...

October 14th, 2009 in [Culture](#), [History](#), [Identity](#), [Language](#), [Travel](#) | tags: [Ambedkar](#), [Derdak Tibor](#), [Europe](#), [FWBO](#), [Gypsies](#), [Hungary](#), [Jai Bhim](#), [Janos Orsos](#), [Roma](#)

26 Comments

[anu](#) October 14th, 2009 at 8:41 am

Wonderful article and very informative! Thanks for sharing, looking forward to the rest of the series.

Regards
anu

Ashutosh October 14th, 2009 at 8:48 am

wow! what an eye-opener for me. Thanks, Pradeep. Keep up the good work.

Ravindra October 14th, 2009 at 11:51 am

Thats really heartening...I was just thinking that internet has really made this world smaller...Pradeep Bhai thanks for this article...We are not alone in this struggle...

Dr Anand Teltumbde October 14th, 2009 at 1:52 pm

Thanks for a very informative and inspiring article. We must intensify our bond with all the oppressed

communities in the world. Our struggle cannot end until we render the world free of every kind of oppression and exploitation!

[ann](#)October 14th, 2009 at 3:27 pm

nice job, pradeep. give my love to my friends in sajokaza. xo ann

[The Dalits of Europe at Blogbharti](#)October 15th, 2009 at 12:41 am

[...] Pardeep Singh Attri meets the Roma and learns about how they're

[Anand](#)October 15th, 2009 at 1:04 am

Dear Pradeep, This is a well-written and timely piece, coming as it does when Navi Pillay has taken a strong position against caste at the UN with Nepal in support. Look forward to the second instalment. You have a great gift for telling a good story, building a narrative... Convey my wishes to Jai Bhim Network. Navayana would be happy to ship one set of all its books to Jai Bhim Network in Sajókaza.
Anand

PardeepOctober 15th, 2009 at 3:16 am

Jai Bhim friends,

I am really happy to see all these replies. Thank you everyone.

@Anand

Thank you brother, i will ask Mr. Tibor to make you a phone call. We had already told him regarding your publication, regarding Insight and offered him book "Khairlanji: A Strange and Bitter Crop" by Dr. Anand Teltumbde. I hope these people will be happy to build stronger relationships..

KantaOctober 15th, 2009 at 10:53 pm

Nice article.

ShrutiOctober 16th, 2009 at 11:12 am

Great article...loved it very much 😊

[ck.vishwanath](#)October 18th, 2009 at 7:07 am

it is an interesting article.my friend dula who has written me about the tragic condition of roma community of europe.but,the interaction between roma community and non-roma communities is so important.

[‘The Dalits of Europe’ » GLOBALISTAN](#)October 18th, 2009 at 11:30 am

[...] reading Pardeep Singh Attri's account of his experiences as a Dalit activist traveling in Hungary in the brilliant Insight Young Voices [...]

Ravi Shankar SumanOctober 19th, 2009 at 11:47 am

Your experiance and your work both are great... Keep it up Dude

Ankit VermaOctober 20th, 2009 at 1:05 am

Dear Pardeep

thanks a ton for such a wonderful write up and i loved every bit of it. The message of Babasaheb has

relevance for any discriminated group and your write up has proved that. His motto of Educate, Agitate and Organise will soon resonate the entire world and we the sons and daughters of Babasaheb has our task cut out - we need to engage more and more with outside world and take Babasaheb's message and our struggle outside this country as much as possible.

Samuel Miguel October 20th, 2009 at 1:55 am

nice article .. Inspirational

Liberal October 20th, 2009 at 8:49 am

Its an interesting article. Roma have their roots in the Indian subcontinent, believed to be mainly from Rajasthan/Gujarat region. They have been consistently treated with contempt, hatred and suspicion and even persecuted by Nazis during holocaust.

There is more info available on Wikipedia about them : http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romani_people

J.S.Jironekar October 21st, 2009 at 8:56 pm

Thanks for the article showing a reality in lives of the western Dalits .There are many human groups across the world who are neglected hence need connected to right thoughts,education,health & information technology etc. . Dr.Babasaheb Ambedkar's life and struggle will be the inspiration for all the oppressed population as well as the progressive minded people in the world.

I am sure that all such segregated, sidelined population will come forward and contribute for the well being of the world, like we Indian Dalits.

[Insight Young Voices Blog » Blog Archive » Babasaheb Ambedkar and ... | Hungary today](#) October 23rd, 2009 at 9:01 pm

[...] See the rest here: [Insight Young Voices Blog » Blog Archive » Babasaheb Ambedkar and ...](#) [...]

Dilip Katare October 26th, 2009 at 6:10 am

It is very informative article ,it is also came to notice that the dalits are not only in India but also spreaded world wide . the Roma community is one of them who are neglected and not allowed in main stream .It is need of time to connect all of them under one Banner.

Anoop Kumar October 26th, 2009 at 6:41 am

Dear Dilip,

I don't see bringing discriminated people under one banner is possible ever and/or feasible. The need of the time is to learn from each other's movements and show our solidarity. Every discriminated community like dalits, romas or burakumins of Japan have their unique sets of problems and are located in different settings and each require different approaches.

Cynthia October 27th, 2009 at 3:11 am

I have been aware of the issues of the Romas for some years due to my work in the women's sector. So I think it would be very good if Swati also wrote about her interactions with Roma women as there are some unique things about the way gender manifests itself in the community. This will give some insights into how discrimination works in women's lives among them and point to some solutions for us as well. Thanks to Pardeep for his excellent despatches from the ground. Looking forward to reading Anoop too.

[dr.chetana sawai](#) November 11th, 2009 at 8:56 am

really nice article...tons of thnx to preamble of constitution DR. BABASAHEB AMBEDKAR, even thnx wud not b enough..i immensely appreciate this team. n i wud like to say as our babasaheb had given a last message..

“SHIKSHIT BANO,SANGHATIT HOWO,SANGHARSH KARO”

SwatiNovember 19th, 2009 at 10:30 am

Dear Cynthia

Thank you for your comment regarding me writing about my Interaction with Roma Women. In Jai Bhim Network I am an intern as a part of my Masters studies and will be here for longer than Pardeep and Bharat, Thus I am working towards developing an article on Roma Gypsies. Specially on the political participation of Roma women in Local self government. I also have approached UNICEF in Hungary for creating a learning tool for Roma children and students on various issues like gender equality, Integration to basic issues such as personal hygiene there is similar learning tool an animated movie in India developed by UNICEF called Meena and in south afrika it is called Sara. I wish to make a similar one with the co-ordination of UNICEF Hungary, Central European University (Media Department) that I am part of and Jai Bhim Network where I am in intern. I shall soon post a write up regarding my findings .

yashpal jogdandNovember 20th, 2009 at 6:04 am

Wonderful piece of information. This shows the universality of Babasaheb's work.....

PARAM JITNovember 24th, 2009 at 5:04 am

I first time read your articles regarding roma community in Hungry and your feelings about that community are great. I appreciate that you are doing a good job for Dalit community.

PARAM JIT VILL FATTUWAL MUKERIAN PUNJAB

rahul sardarDecember 14th, 2009 at 12:29 am

Jaibhim,

Really nice to know about the romas and thier bonding with our Dalits of India. lets unite worldwide to fight against the evil of discrimination and bring the universe of buddha's thought which was been dreamed by DR.B.R.Ambedkar.

Regards,
Rahul Sardar

Leave a comment

Your comment

Name (required)

Mail (will not be published) (required)

Website

Insight Young Voices Blog

| A Dalit Youth Magazine |

- [Home](#)
- [About](#)
- [Contact](#)
- [Disclaimer](#)

[Subscribe](#)

Reclaiming Human Dignity: The Protest and ‘Gypsy’ Stereotypes

By Pardeep Singh Attri

Dispatches from Hungary - II



Roma Protest at Budapest, October 11, 2009. Photo Credit - szentkoronaradio.com

Ours is a battle not for wealth or for power, it is a battle for freedom, it is a battle of the reclamations of human personality. – Dr B R Ambedkar

11th October 2009, Sunday

It has been raining since last few days with cold waves blowing all over the country. While the rest of the Hungarian people still sleeping, Romas are busy preparing for their demonstration against the segregation and discrimination faced by them in their own homeland.

Since early morning, thousands of Romas have started gathering at Heroes Square in Budapest, the capital of Hungary. I am informed that this is going to be the biggest ever Roma protest against their segregation and for equal rights.

We also reached Budapest at around 11 am after two and half hours journey from Sajókaza village. Our troop included two buses filled with Roma people and Jai Bhim Network activists from the village and neighbouring areas.

Despite the fact that it is raining, I can see around thousand people already there preparing for the show of their strength to secure their rights. More people are continuously arriving in buses and cars.

There are around dozen media persons at Hero Square since I arrived and they have been busy clicking and interviewing many protestors. Though I am unable to understand the language and therefore their interactions but I feel the urge to listen to what the Roma protestors were saying to the media and also try to gauge the reactions of media people too.

Is Hungarian media as hostile to Roma rights as our media is towards us in India? I wondered.

Since now I have been in Hungary, with Roma people, for more than a fortnight, I could always get some one to translate a bit for me. How I wish I knew Hungarian and Roma languages, I would have got to understand each and every word. Anyways with the help of my English knowing friends, I am able to gather some information on what Roma protestors were saying.



Protestors assembling since early morning at Heroes Square, Budapest

Some of the main demands of the protestors as displayed by their colorful banners are -

“We want our kids to go to same schools, where non-Roma ones go”,

“We want equal rights as others have”,

“We don’t want privileges but equal opportunities”,

“We need work instead of benefits”,

“United we can change the world”,

The two which I particularly like is against the stereotyping of school going Roma kids.

“Child’s head is not a pot which need to fill, but a torch which is necessary to ignite”,

“The learning is nothing more than the discovery of possible”

Unfortunately, just like our Dalit kids, the maximum brunt of discrimination against Romas is borne by their kids in the schools. They are often refused admissions and are sent to schools meant for mentally disabled. It is indeed shocking.



Protesters carrying three flags. Photo Credit - szentkoronaradio.com

I can see lot of people carrying three flags together. One is Hungarian, another European Union Flag and the third one is their own Roma flag. The Roma flag is internationally recognized and is used to denote the communitarian solidarity of Roma people living across Europe, dispersed in different countries.

In the protest, along with Romas there are many social activists, human rights defender, researchers and students are also present lending their voices in support of Roma rights. Derdak Tibor got me introduced to many of them. I also get to meet my friend Luisa Steur, a research scholar from Netherland, who has done extensive field work on the problems of Dalits in South India. She came along with her colleague Paul from Mexico to join the protest.

Later we were joined by another two human rights defender from Canada and few from the neighbouring country of Romania.

I can see some tourists too, who are visiting Heroes square, interacting with the protestors but the Hungarian police is trying to stop them to come near to Roma protestors. May be they don't want others to know about the poor status of Romas in their country!

In the afternoon, we are joined by a group of people who are carrying the petition that has been drafted in order to present it to the President's office at Budapest They have traveled more than 100 km by foot to carry the petition to Budapest.

Then for next two hours there are speeches by Roma elders, activists and other prominent people. My friends Janos and Benu from Jai Bhim Network also deliver their speeches. Janos talks about the role of education for Roma people whereas Benu exhorted the community to stand together and fight for their human dignity. To their credit, the protestors are listening and appreciating each and every speech despite being standing in rain for so long.



Roma protestors marching at Duna River Bridge moving towards President House

Around 3 pm, everyone started walking towards the Royal Castle, to the President's house to hand over their petition. On the way we were shouting slogans like "Bread and Work", "Workers united are never been defeated" etc.

At the time of crossing the Duna River Bridge, I look back and I see flood of people singing, dancing and raising slogans for Roma rights. I sense that much more people have assembled for the protest than I imagined. Due to our march, it seems that all city life has stopped.

After an hour long march, we reach Royal Castle and the delegates from Roma community meet the delegates of President's office. They hand over their petition to them. Some promises are being made through government officials to uplift the position of Romas. But I see elders complaining that these are nothing new. The promises are always made but nothing ever happens.

I just cannot but remember what Dr Ambedkar said, "Lost rights are never regained by appeals to the conscience of the usurpers, but by relentless struggle". I sincerely wish that Romas are able to achieve what they aspire for due to their struggle, not just depending upon the promises made by ruling class.

"Gypsies" and stereotyping

Stereotype reflects the ideas, beliefs that some people have about others who are not similar to them and become very potent tools for spreading hatred towards them. This happens with every persecuted community which becomes prisoner of various stereotypes propagated by the dominant community. The 'gypsy' image of Roma people is full of stereotyping by the white Europeans which is the bane for the community.

While my interaction with the protestors, I came to know about many such 'images' and its impact on the community.

The 'gypsy' for an average white European means cheaters, beggars, thieves, people who live in very dirty conditions and don't like to work, pickpockets, nomads who don't want to settle down etc.

It is really funny how in Hollywood movies, often Roma characters are shown living in tents, dancing around bonfire and indulging in some magic mumbo-jumbo (almost same as our Adivasis are 'shown'), but

I could not find any traces of such people while living with the community since last fortnight having visited many Roma settlements of North-East Hungary.

They are no more nomads, moving from one place to another in carvan but have made their permanent settlement in the rural places long ago. However due to their 'gypsy' image they have to live in the outskirts, segregated and rejected by others and still considered nomadic.



One of the most horrific things that I heard was that white Hungarians believe that 'gypsy' women beat their wombs during their pregnancies so as to give birth to child with mental disability and claim social benefits from the government. This is sheer madness and extreme limit of hatredness towards any community.

Recently a mayor of the city in Hungary echoed the same regarding Roma mothers and there was huge protest against him organized by Jai Bhim Network activists. It should give you a clear cut indication about the level of discriminatory attitude full of hatred towards Romas that is prevalent in the society.

Another image of 'gypsies' is that of being petty thieves. It is believed by the non-Romas that 'gypsies' cut their forefingers so that they could easily steal money from the pockets of other people. It is also believed that 'gypsy' kids wear long clothes so that they could hide chickens which they steal from white farmers' houses.

The image of 'gypsies' being thieves is so strong that they are the first one who are being rounded by the police, if there is any crime in the neighborhood. Most often they become an easy victim to the police inefficiency to catch hold the real culprits and are brutalized just for being a 'gypsy'. Almost every family I interacted with talked about the police discriminatory behaviour towards the community. This stereotype hampers the progress of Roma kids in the schools and their job prospects if they succeed in getting some education.

It is altogether a different matter that I could not find even one Roma with chopped forefingers and could see Roma kids wearing ill fitted clothes more out of poverty than any other reasons.

Gypsies are also termed as beggars, lazy people who prefer to beg rather than work. But I don't think it is true. I meet many Roma women working in the fields and even travelling to other parts of the country for the sake of some dependable jobs. I didn't find any beggars too. I did find Romas feeling hopeless over the situation and struggling to find decent jobs due to the discrimination.

Then there are usual stereotypes like gypsy don't value the education, are not good in studies, parents are not interested in teaching their kids etc. If such is the case then why thousands of Romas assemble in Budapest to demand better schools and conditions for their kids? While talking about Roma kids being unintelligent, no one dares to say about the treatment which is met to these kids.

Apart from the regular harassment, taunts and abuses, the kids often face discriminatory behaviour from the teachers too and either drop out or loose any interest in their studies which again strengthen the stereotype of Roma kids not intelligent enough. It is a vicious cycle that can only broken by the will of the entire community.

How will you feel when your perfectly normal child is forced to take admission in special schools for kids having learning disabilities just because the teachers think that our kid is not intelligent enough to be taught with other white kids?

Then poverty brings out another demon, another stereotype – ‘Gypsies are unclean and unhygienic and so avoid any interaction with them’.

Do our readers need an explanation for that? Do all these stereotypes sound little too familiar?

To be continued...

In my next dispatch I will write about the celebration of Dhamma Chakka Parvartan Divas on 14th October in Sajókaza on the occasion of Babasaheb's converting to Buddhism 53 years ago.

[Dispatches from Hungary - I](#)

October 24th, 2009 in [Assertion](#), [Culture](#), [History](#), [Identity](#), [Language](#), [Politics](#), [Protest](#), [Travel](#) | tags: [Ambedkar](#), [Budapest](#), [Derdak Tibor](#), [Europe](#), [FWBO](#), [Gypsies](#), [Hungary](#), [Jai Bhim](#), [Janos Orsos](#), [Roma](#)

8 Comments

[Darryl Coleman](#) October 24th, 2009 at 3:01 am

I must say this is a great article i enjoyed reading it keep the good work 😊

[Ankit Verma](#) October 24th, 2009 at 11:06 am

Thanks so much Pardeep. Reading your article gives me a kind of first hand experience of Romas and their problems. I am eagerly waiting for the third part. Please post it as soon as possible. I must say that articles like this make this blog rocking :). I hope to read many more such articles from INSIGHT

[Insight Young Voices Blog » Blog Archive » Reclaiming Human ... | Hungary today](#) October 24th, 2009 at 1:08 pm

[...] The rest is here: [Insight Young Voices Blog » Blog Archive » Reclaiming Human ...](#) [...]

[Gaurav](#) October 26th, 2009 at 1:09 am

we appricate your efforts. Keep it up. It would have much better if You give comparsion of Indian poor people with Roma / Gypsies in all fields of life just as Education living standard Occupation, Working conditions, Sociology and Habbits etc.

[Pardeep](#) October 27th, 2009 at 12:25 am

Thank you everyone.

@Gaurav

I will try to write about these mentioned aspects soon. Thank you.

CynthiaOctober 27th, 2009 at 2:22 am

Yes, this is really an important account as it is an eyewitness account, given by young people who are there in their personal capacities and out of their own interest, and not by NGO activists. This makes a huge difference, I must say. I also would like to challenge the European NGOS and civil society to also take a good hard look at their own backyards even as they come in with their support and solidarity with our people.

PardeepOctober 27th, 2009 at 6:58 am

I will suggest to read story of “Benu”, guy whose name i mentioned few times in my articles from this link..

<http://www.ambedkar.eu/istvan-lazi-leaving-the-ghetto/>

Ranjith SutariOctober 29th, 2009 at 7:37 am

Jai Bheem,

Here in India, there are many poor people 99% of them are dalits. Who move from one place to other place giving hard labour far away from home. They can't even think of educate their children.

From the past till now dalit are preferred to work as sewage worker, but don't even think to make chief of a village.

Leave a comment

Your comment

Name (required)

Mail (will not be published) (required)

Website

Submit Comment

Insight Young Voices

visit Magazine Web-page

Recent Posts

- [“Let us promote untouchability and humiliation at all cost”](#)
- [“Assault on any Dalit is almost never an attack on individual but targeted towards entire Dalit community”](#)
- [“Don't take benefit of reservations, if you can't pay back”](#)
- [Mapping Contemporary Dalit Movement: Issues and Patterns of Mobilisation](#)

- [A chair/A life](#)
- [Marichjhapi and the Revenge of Bengali Bhadrakok](#)
- [A Forgotten Liberator - The life and struggle of Savitribai Phule](#)
- [Feminism or Womanism?](#)
- [Chengara / Varkala : Beware of the Dalit](#)
- [Reclaiming Human Dignity: The Protest and 'Gypsy' Stereotypes](#)

Recent Comments

- [“Let us promote untouchability and humiliation at all cost” \(2\)](#)
 - [Cynthia](#)
 - [Pardeep Attri](#)
- [“Assault on any Dalit is almost never an attack on individual but targeted towards entire Dalit community” \(3\)](#)
 - [Gyan](#)
 - [P.P. Lakshman](#)
 - [Cynthia](#)
- [Chengara / Varkala : Beware of the Dalit \(18\)](#)
 - [ranju](#)
- [Babasaheb Ambedkar and ‘the Dalits of Europe’ \(26\)](#)
 - [rahul sardar](#)
- [Feminism or Womanism? \(62\)](#)
 - [Cynthia](#)
 - [Cynthia](#)
- [My father! The earth is moving around you !! \(59\)](#)
 - [meena lokhande](#)

Archives

- [December 2009](#)
- [November 2009](#)
- [October 2009](#)
- [September 2009](#)
- [August 2009](#)
- [July 2009](#)
- [June 2009](#)

Tag Cloud

Authors

- [Anoop Kumar](#) (16)
- [Ranjith Thankappan](#) (34)
- [Pardeep Attri](#) (19)

- [Philip Vinod Peacock](#) (27)
- [Ashokan Nambiar](#) (1)
- [Karthik Navayan](#) (2)
- [Cynthia Stephen](#) (4)
- [Sudeep K S](#) (18)
- [Anu R.](#) (16)

Meta

- [Log in](#)
- [Entries RSS](#)
- [Comments RSS](#)
- [WordPress.org](#)

Copyright © 2008. All right reserved Insightyv.com