

Deshpande is a partner in the Gospel in New Delhi. He started a school in a slum in Delhi and has managed it for over a decade. The school is for Banjaras. Banjaras are a nomadic tribe in India very similar to the Roma or Gypsies of Europe. They are seen as thieves and pickpockets and aren't trusted by their neighbors. Those who earn money through legitimate means do so by selling peanuts, books, water, or coconuts on the roads to drivers at red lights. They all lost their income from the lockdown. These two pictures are of the tents that the school students live in. Not all students live in such tents, but the poorest do.



One of our former students was in Rajasthan with all his family except his father when the lockdown began. His father was in Delhi selling things on the roads. The lockdown meant he couldn't sell anything, so he spent three days walking to Rajasthan to reach his family. They all sleep on the streets there. The former student can bank on his phone, so we were able to send them some money for food. The picture to the left is the men of his family with their beds laid out on the road. You can view a short video the student sent us after his father

arrived and his brother was massaging his legs by clicking this link

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/bazcpmc2464gmf7/VID-20200507-WA0001.mp4?dl=0>



Here is a picture of the school before the lockdown when a team of Americans visited.

During the lockdown, we gave some money to one of our teachers and she went to the school and opened the doors. One by one she called the mothers of the students to the school and gave them enough money for a month's supply of food. She cried when she shared her stories with us because she felt like she had actually saved some of their lives. There are stories in India of families getting so desperate that they turn to suicide rather than starve to death, and some of the mothers felt that same desperation.



To the left is Shankar. He's a cobbler that sat outside our office everyday cleaning and repairing shoes. He became good friends with our staff through daily interaction. He died of a heart attack during the lockdown. It was illegal for him to sit outside and manage his cobbler station, so he lost his job during the lockdown and the stress must have got to him. We gave three month's wages to his family to help them during this time. Because of the lockdown, only five members of his family were able to attend his funeral.