

CENTRE FOR NEW ECONOMICS STUDIES

KAPASHERA

A COSMOS OF AFFORDABLE LIVING



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A Home AWAY FROM HOME

Just North-East to the Delhi-Haryana border lies Kapashera; a migrant-worker based residential settlement. A suburban dream for the lower- and middle-income family groups, Kapashera symbolises affordable living.

An ecosystem of support that amplifies co-existence, Kapashera's community of migrants has been able to foster a safe, secure and stable environment for families working and living in a city away from home.

Providing an avenue for all necessary aspects of living, the area includes marketplaces, schools and other businesses. Housing hundreds of families of migrant workers, Kapashera is more than just a residential area, it is a community; a subset of society.

Migrant Workers who live there work in the Udyog Vihar industrial sector with the textile export industry or the IT companies as drivers and watchmen. Earning roughly around Rs 8000-10000 a month, the landlords of Kapashera provide housing options at affordable rates close to the workplace of these migrant workers minimising conveyance charges and commute time.





A tempo carries construction workers in a lane at Kapashera village next to Delhi-Gurugram Border, New Delhi



A man walks next to an under-construction room in a migrant settlement colony in Kapashera Village.

Kapashera is full of buildings. Towering up to 5 floors and consisting of 8-10 rooms on each floor, every building is able to house many workers and families. Landlords typically reside on the ground floors with tenants living higher up.

Amidst a surfeit of choices between other crowded, expensive and structurally poor housing options, Kapashera emerges as the idyllic choice offering utilities, privacy and community.

Rental rates vary across different segments of Kapashera. Organised and divided by lanes, each lane in the area commands a unique rent. This is

primarily because the structure and location of certain lanes are better than the others.

In particular, lanes 1-3 are quieter making for good homes for workers with families. In contrast, lanes 4-8 comprise of mixed crowds and are noisier; these lanes are close to a canal and the buildings have poor structure.

Moreover, the landlords in lanes 4-8 only offer rooms (with corner kitchens) in each building rather than apartments. Hence, the rent for a room in these lanes is roughly Rs 1500-2000, while rents for apartments in lanes 1-3 can go up to Rs 3000 - 4500.

Overhead powerlines cross a building at Kapashera Village, New Delhi





A 10 feet by 10 feet sized room colony at Kapashera Village, New Delhi





Water meters of taps are protected by a metal fencing at a common washroom area of a migrant settlement colony at Kapashera Village, New Delhi

Kapashera follows a unique manner of supplying electricity and water to its residents. One bucket of drinking water is provided per room for free which can be used for both cooking and drinking purposes. Along with this, there is an individual meter-bound bore per family that can be used for bathing and washing purposes at the rate of 1000 litres for 100 rupees. This leads to families of four paying an additional amount of 400 on average.

Nirmala says: 'There are no issues surrounding water supply here. We get water all day; the motor starts running at 6. We get a bucket of drinking water free of charge' Most residents procure drinking water from treated sources near the premises at 15 - 20 rupees per jar.

A similar system is followed for electricity and families pay an additional Rs 600-1000

on average. This is higher in summer when the need for coolers and fans makes residents use more electricity.

Bathrooms and toilets are common spaces. In lanes 1-3, each floor is equipped with 2 bathrooms and 2 toilets for common use of the floormates, in contrast to lanes 4-8, where roughly 20 families share 1 bathroom and 3 toilets.

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Pani pure din aata hai. Pani ka koi dikat nahi hai. 6 baje motor chal jata hai. Peene wala ek balti mil jaata hai. Pene ke pani ka paisa nahi lagta hai

-NIRMALA MISHRA



A water cooler is fixed next to Electricity meters at a colony at Kapashera Village, New Delhi. Electricity bills increase up to 1200 to 1500 rupees if coolers are used in summers.



A boy bathes at a common washroom area of a migrant settlement colony at Kapashera Village, New Delhi



With most residents being migrant workers, the lockdown was not an easy period. They were homebound with no income for 3-4 months and very few savings. The workers residing in Kapashera found themselves trapped with no jobs without being able to return to their villages throughout the year.

Workers realised that the expenses of the return journey were too overbearing for them since the government made no arrangements for travel and almost all trains were suspended. Even today, with few trains running, they find tickets inaccessible and agents cheat them into paying more than the actual amount.

While ration and food grains are distributed to many families, some lanes have been completely overlooked and have received no aid. Many workers have been removed from their previous jobs and the few who remain are hardly able to earn anything due to decreased demand and restricted mobility. While commuting for work, migrants had to cross the Kapashera border where they would have to get tested making travel further restricted.

At a time when the entire nation was confined to the walls of their homes, Kapashera offered respite and refuge to an entire community; a home away from home.



Health department authorities randomly conduct COVID tests on workers arriving at Kapashera, Delhi-Gurugram border on daily basis.



THE TEAM



Ideal youth for Revolutionary Changes is a grassroots non-governmental organization founded in 19th March 2017 by dedicated youth of Kapashera estate in the state of Delhi.

IYRC envisions holistic development of the society by rendering equal opportunities to the vulnerable and under-privileged sections. It strives for the upliftment of the youth by engaging them into meaningful activities and ensures the wellbeing by developing a sense of ownership, dignity, equality and social justice. Education, Women-empowerment, Art and Culture as a medium of expression are its core objectives. IYRC enables all its stakeholders to be good learners, achievers, thinkers, and motivators.

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