

# With ₹20 in pocket, IIM-B students live the life of have-nots

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**Bangalore:** Just Rs 20 in pocket. Surviving on single banana for breakfast, rice dish from roadside vendor for lunch, biscuits for tea time. Not a life that you would expect the future CEOs from the most prestigious B-school of the country to lead. But this is what some of the IIM-B students experienced for a day early this week — just to know what it is to be poor.

As part of their elective programme 'Inclusive Business Models', 75 students were exposed to another world — that of people who live with just Rs 20 per day (the below poverty line cut-off).

The students, in groups of five, went to different slums in and around Bangalore, interacted with the slum-dwellers, trying to understand their lives and finally come up with suitable business solutions that can help them. Interestingly, some of them even went on to experiment what it is to live with only Rs 20 to get a hands-on experience.

"My strategy was to have

two meals — Rs 10 each. But I wanted to make sure it was wholesome so I do not feel hungry. I could not get anything from campus for that much."

"So I ventured into the smaller lanes outside the campus. I could get three akki rotis and two bananas within Rs 10. I know it's not possible for me to survive for a long time like this, but may be for a day or two. It was a life-time experience, it makes you realise the value of money," said Justin T. "Mine was an abject failure. I found it was impossible to live with Rs 20. I did not touch my car, used the mobile only to receive calls, went out to Bilekahalli market to get bananas, ate from roadside vendors, got low quality vegetables, yet it did not fit in," said Varun Sharma.

While some gave up smoking for the day as cigarettes were expensive, there were others who gave up on luxuries like using a laptop.

From understanding the aspirations of slum-dwellers to sending their children to English medium schools, students got a peek into the lives of the poor.