

# Mid Day

## AN INDIA, NOT SO SHINING

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**G** EXHIBITION



Tsunami surviving children going for fishing on a small wooden raft in Kadaloor district



Hands of a Bharat Coking Coal Limited worker in Danbad district



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## PHOTOGRAPHER SHRIKANTH KOLARI PEERS THROUGH HIS CAMERA LENS INTO A WORLD STRICKEN BY PAIN, LOSS AND CONFLICT

AMRITA BOSE

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City-based photographer Srikanth Kolari is very clear about using his camera to only shoot real pictures that capture social issues. He wants to delve deep into an India, the real India which is not limited to just a hazy view of militancy in Kashmir or the grief stricken faces of victims of the Tsunami that hit the Indian coasts in 2004 as seen on television. Instead his 36 frames titled Thereafter that opens

Srikanth  
Kolari

tomorrow show coarse hands corroded by toxic carbon of a coal miner in Dhanbad district in Jharkhand or the vacant eyes of a Kashmiri woman who was blinded in the eye by the security forces with electric shocks who came to find out about their son a militant.

Srikanth, who started travelling all across India since 2009 has captured glimpses of a Kashmir bent over by the tussle between the militancy and the forces, slowly eroding human lives and the topography of Jharia, a coalfield near Dhanbad, Jharkhand and the

Tsunami ridden coastal areas of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Pondicherry, Kerala and Andaman & Nicobar islands.

Srikanth says, "All my projects are social issues and it comes from the heart. There is no planning as such for any shoot I do." Srikanth spent about five -and-a-half months in Kashmir shooting people in the valley, and one- and-a-half months in Jharia.

Since all his pictures involve evoking pain, grief and conflict and catching them at their vulnerable most, he had to gain the trust of each and every subject he shot. "There had to be mutual trust between the subject and me. I had to break the ice very carefully because of the sensitive subject I was shooting. Taking pictures actually came much later, in the end," says Srikanth for whom each picture was the result of hearing the subject's personal narrative and making it his story. From the bleak images of a Kashmiri couple seen through the frosted glass waiting at a psychiatric hospital for consultation in Pulwama, Jammu & Kashmir to a woman sitting against the backdrop of a sulphurous smoke rising from an open fissure in Jharia to a fisherwoman waiting at the door for her husband who went missing during the Tsunami in Kadaloor district in Tamil Nadu, the pictures are beautiful yet each character reeks of grief and dejection.

The 31 year-old photographer got trigger happy by accident at the age of 22. After trying his hands at various genres of photography and working with Outlook magazine for a couple of years, Srikanth found his true calling in documenting social issues through his camera.

**AT** Tasveer, Sua House, Kasturba Cross Road  
**ON FROM** April 1 to April 20, 10 am to 7 pm, Sundays closed  
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Ghulam Nabi Khan and his wife were tortured by the security forces in Kashmir.



Sulphurous smoke rises from fissures in the earth in Dhanbad district