

Relief Now!

An Urgent Appeal for Immediate Assistance to Migrant Workers

This is an urgent appeal for assistance to migrant workers who are unable to reach their homes due to the current lockdown – free food, medical care and sanitation at the very least.

The sudden imposition of a 21-day all-India lockdown on 24 March 2020, at just 4 hours' notice, has led to horrific consequences for many. This decision, taken without proper planning, completely overlooked the disastrous impact it would have on 90 percent of our labour force. Extremely disturbing reports of the plight of lakhs of migrant labourers in different parts of the country keep pouring in. Many of them are stranded and starving in the industrial belts where they work. In the absence of any transport, many are walking hundreds of kilometres to their villages on a hungry stomach. Others, in desperation, are packing themselves in lorries, at the risk of contracting or spreading the virus.

We make this urgent plea to the Central Government to pay heed to the situation immediately. The government must use the network of anganwadis, panchayat bhavans, government schools, government colleges, railway stations, bus stations, community halls, block offices, district headquarters etc to set up feeding centres to arrange free cooked food, medical care and sanitation. Foodgrains to the tune of 585 lakh metric tonnes are available in godowns of the Food Corporation of India (FCI) and Central Warehousing Corporation (even before the wheat harvest). Some of it can be used to prepare cooked meals and/or take-home rations in these centres. This assistance should be available to all unconditionally, without any paperwork. This will still leave more than enough food in the godowns to fulfil the Finance Minister's announcements and maintain adequate buffer stocks.

We also urge the government to immediately arrange for sanitised bus and train services to enable stranded workers to reach home safely. Others trapped at their distant workplaces must be assured of a secure living space with enough food, soap, sanitary pads and medical care. This is a national emergency and lakhs of people are in danger of perishing in hunger and trauma. We therefore make this urgent appeal for an immediate response to the humanitarian crisis, to prevent it from snowballing further.

The following people may be contacted for further information and clarification.

Amit Basole (9619649958), Anindita Adhikari (9871832323), Debmalya Nandi (7294184845), Jean Dreze (9471130049), Nikhil Dey (9414004180), Rajendran Narayanan (9620318492), Rakshita Swamy (9818838588)

Endorsements (in alphabetical order of first name)

1. Aaditeshwar Seth, Gram Vaani and IIT Delhi
2. Aarti, Biologist, Hyderabad
3. Abey George, Associate Professor, Kerala Institute of Local Administration
4. Abhijit Sen, JNU
5. Abhiman Das, IIM Ahmedabad
6. Aditya Bhattacharjea, Professor of Economics, Delhi School of Economics
7. Akash Bhattacharya, Azim Premji University, Bangalore
8. Akoijam sunita, Independent writer
9. Akshaya Tankha, Ph.D. Candidate, University of Toronto
10. Alex Thomas, Azim Premji University, Bangalore
11. Alisa Blinova, USA
12. Alok Laddha, Chennai Mathematical Institute, Chennai
13. Ambarish Rai, National Convenor, RTE Forum
14. Amit Basole, Azim Premji University, Bangalore
15. Amrita Johri, Satark Nagrik Sangathan, Delhi
16. Anand Shrivastava, Azim Premji University, Bangalore
17. Anand T. Vaidya, Reader, TIFR Hyderabad
18. Anindita Adhikari, Doctoral Student, Brown University
19. Anivar Aravind, Bangalore
20. Anjali Bhardwaj, Satark Nagrik Sangathan
21. Anjali Noronha, Concerned Citizen, Bhopal
22. Anjor Bhaskar, Azim Premji University, Bangalore
23. Ankita Aggarwal, Doctoral Student, City University of New York
24. Ankur Paliwal, Land Conflict Watch, Independent Journalist
25. Ankur Sarin, Faculty, Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad
26. Annie Raja, National Federation of Indian Women, Delhi
27. Anuradha Dutta, Concerned Citizen, Delhi
28. Anwar Jafri, Samavesh , Bhopal
29. Apar Gupta, Internet Freedom Foundation
30. Aparna Vaidik. Associate Professor, Ashoka University, Kundli, Haryana
31. Apurva Barmezai, Doctoral Student, University of Pennsylvania
32. Ardhendu Sen, Former Chief Secretary, Govt. of West Bengal
33. Arif Ghauri, Former Governance Adviser, DFID, Govt. of the United Kingdom
34. Arjun Jayadev, Azim Premji University, Bangalore
35. Arun Maira, Management Consultant and Former Member, Planning Commission
36. Aruna Roy, Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan
37. Arundhati Dhuru, Social Activist, NAPM Uttar Pradesh.
38. Ashish Ranjan, Jan Jagran Shakti Sangathan
39. Ashok Kotwal, Professor Emeritus, University of British Columbia
40. Ashok Kumar Sharma, IFS (Retd.), Former Ambassador to Finland and Estonia
41. Ashwini Kulkarni, Pragati Abhiyan, Nashik
42. Atanu Sen, Vikramshila, Kolkata
43. Avani Chokshi, CPI (ML), Bangalore
44. Bobby Mahapatra, Texas A&M University
45. Brinda Pancholi, Freelance Consultant, Bangalore
46. C P Chandraskhar, JNU

47. Chakradhar Buddha, LibTech India
48. Chandrika R, Software Engineer
49. Cheryl Dsouza, Campaign for Judicial Accountability and Reforms
50. Danish Khan, Concerned Citizen, Bhopal
51. Deb Mukharji, IFS (Retd.), Former High Commissioner to Bangladesh and former Ambassador to Nepal
52. Debjani Sengupta, Professor, Delhi University
53. Debmalya Nandi, Social Activist, Bangalore
54. Debraj Ray, Professor, New York University
55. Deepika Joshi, Jan Swasthya Abhiyan, Chhattisgarh
56. Dipa Sinha, Ambedkar University, Delhi
57. Dr Sylvia Karpagam, Public health doctor and researcher, Karnataka
58. Dr Vasu H V, Jagruta Karnataka and Gauri Media
59. Dr. Rama V. Baru, Professor, Centre for Social Medicine and Community Health, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi
60. Dr. Sanjaya Baru, Former Advisor to Prime Minister of India
61. Dr. Asifa Nisar, Women's wing, AIMPLB Bengaluru
62. Dr. K. V. Ramaswamy, Professor, Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research
63. Farman, Concerned Citizen
64. Farzana Afridi, Associate Professor of Economics, Indian Statistical Institute, New Delhi
65. G. Balachandran, Retd IAS, Former Additional Chief Secretary, Govt. of West Bengal
66. G. Sankaran, IC&CES (Retd.), Former President, Customs, Excise and Gold (Control) Appellate Tribunal
67. Gabriele Dietrich, Penn Urimay Iyakkam, Madurai, NAPM Tamil Nadu.
68. Gaurav Datt, Associate Professor of Economics, Monash University
69. Gaurav Singh, Right to food Campaign, Chhattisgarh
70. Gautam Mody, General Secretary, National Trade Union Initiative
71. Geetha Menon, Stree Jagruti Samiti, Bangalore
72. Geetha Thoopal, IRAS (Retd.), Former General Manager, Metro Railway, Kolkata
73. Harsh Mander, social activist
74. Himanshu, JNU
75. Himshi Singh, Social Activist, Himachal Pradesh and NAPM.
76. Indrajit Bose, Climate Change Researcher
77. Indrani Gupta, Professor, Institute of Economic Growth
78. Indrani Gupta, Professor, Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi
79. Ishita Aggarwal Choudhary, Consultant
80. Jasmeeta Dubey, Concerned Citizen
81. Jawahar Mehta, VSK, Palamu, Jharkhand
82. Jayati Ghosh, JNU
83. Jayati Sarkar, Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, Mumbai
84. Jean Dreze, Visiting Professor, Department of Economics, Ranchi University
85. Jitendra Rathod, Social Activist, Ahmedabad
86. Jyothi Krishnan, Social Accountability Resource Unit
87. K. Nagaraj, Adjunct Faculty, Asian College of Journalism
88. Kade Finoff, Azim Premji University, Bangalore
89. Kalpana Kannabiran, Professor & Director, Council for Social Development, Hyderabad
90. Karen Coelho, Associate Professor, Madras Institute of Development Studies, Chennai.
91. Karuna DW, Visiting faculty, Azim Premji University

92. Karuna M, Rural Development Consultant, Chennai
93. Kavitha Srinivasan, Bangalore
94. Koninika, National Federation of Indian Women
95. Kripal Singh Mandloi, Khudai Khidmatgar, MP
96. Kshiraja Krishnan, Bangalore
97. Kumar Sambhav Shrivastava, Land Conflicts Watch
98. Leela Visaria, Honorary Professor, Gujarat Institute of Development Research
99. M.G. Devasahayam, IAS (Retd.), Former Secretary, Govt. of Haryana
100. M.R. Sharan, Doctoral Student, Harvard University
101. Madhu Bhushan, Gamana Mahila Samuha, Bangalore
102. Maheen Mirza, Independent Awards Winning Filmmaker, Bhopal
103. Maitreesh Ghatak, Professor, Department of Economics, London School of Economics
104. Manjula, General Secretary, Karnataka Sex Workers Union,
105. Manohar Elavarthi, Swaraj Abhiyan, Bengaluru
106. Mashqura Fareedi, Bangalore
107. Mausumi Das, Associate Professor, Delhi School of Economics
108. Medha Patkar, Narmada Bachao Andolan and NAPM.
109. Meena Gupta, Former Secretary, Ministry of Environment & Forests, Gol
110. Meena Seshu, Sangli, Maharashtra
111. Meera Sanghamitra, National Alliance of People's Movements (NAPM), Telangana
112. Monica Thomas, Consultant Neurologist, New Delhi
113. Nachiket Udupa, Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan
114. Nalini Nayak, Retired Associate Professor, PGDAV(M) College, Delhi
115. Naman Aggarwal, New Delhi
116. Naman Garg, research scholar, Columbia University
117. Nandini Nayak, Ambedkar University, Delhi
118. Narendra Gupta, Prayas, Rajasthan
119. Naresh Saxena, Retired bureaucrat and former Member, Planning Commission
120. Navdeep Mathur, IIM Ahmedabad
121. Navrekha Sharma, IFS (Retd.), Former Ambassador to Indonesia
122. Nawasha Mishra, Right to Food Campaign, New Delhi
123. Neeta Hardikar, Anna Suraksha Adhikar Abhiya, Gujarat
124. Nikhil Dey, Jan Sarokar
125. Nirmal Kumar Shukla, Concerned Citizen, Hoshangabad
126. Nitin Desai, Former Chief Economic Adviser
127. Nitin Sethi, Independent Journalist
128. Nupur Samuel, OP Jindal Global University, Sonapat, Haryana
129. Odisha khadya Adhikar Abhiyan
130. Paaritosh Nath, Azim Premji University, Bengaluru
131. Padmapriya, Delhi
132. Pallavi Gupta, Independent Consultant- Public Health, New Delhi
133. Pankti Jog, RTI activist, Gujarat
134. Parth Shah, President, Centre for Civil Society
135. Paschim Bongo Khet Majoor Samity
136. Piyuli Ghosh, Concerned Citizen, Bhopal
137. Poonam Muttreja, Population Foundation of India
138. Prabhat Patnaik, JNU

139. Pranab Bardhan, University of California at Berkeley
140. Pranab Mukhopadhyay, Professor of Economics, Goa University
141. Prarthna, Ghareloo Mahila Kamgar Adhikar Sangh Bhopal, Bhopal
142. Prashant Bhushan, Lawyer and Activist
143. Pratip Chatterjee
144. Praveen Jha, JNU
145. Pritha Dev, IIM A
146. Priya Iyer, Concerned Citizen, Bangalore
147. Priya Pillai, Mahan Sangharsh Samiti & NAPM (Madhya Pradesh)
148. Pulin Nayak, Retired Professor of economics, Delhi School of Economics
149. Pushpendra, Professor and Chairperson, Centre for Development Practice and Research, Tata Institute of Social Sciences
150. Rahul De, Azim Premji University, Bangalore
151. Rajendran Narayanan, Assistant Professor, Azim Premji University, Bangalore
152. Rajesh, Sangama, Bengaluru
153. Rakshita Swamy, Lead Coordinator, Social Accountability Resource Unit
154. Ram Singh, Professor of Economics, Delhi School of Economics
155. Ramachandra Guha, Satish Dhawan Chair Visiting Professor, Indian Institute of Science
156. Rammanohar Reddy, Editor, 'The India Forum'
157. Ravinder Kaur, Professor, IIT Delhi
158. Reetika Khera, Associate Professor, Indian Institute of Management
159. Ria Singh Sawhney, Advocate
160. Rohini Pande, Professor of Economics, Yale University
161. Rohini Somanathan, Professor, Delhi School of Economics
162. Rohit Azad, JNU
163. Rohit Thakur, Narmada Bachao Andolan and NAPM.
164. Rosey Mukherjee, Individual Volunteer, Bangalore
165. Rupayan Pal (IGIDR)
166. S. Mahendra Dev, IGIDR, Mumbai
167. S.M. Vijayanand, Retired bureauacrat, Former Chief Secretary, Kerala
168. S.Q. Maqsood, Social Activist, Hyderabad
169. Saba Khan, Ayurvedic Doctor, Rajgarh
170. Saba, Insani Biradri, Bhopal
171. Sachin Jain, Right to Food Campaign
172. Sakina Dhorajiwala, LibTech India
173. Sandeep Pandey, Social activist, Socialist party of India
174. Santosh Panda, Retired Professor, Delhi School of Economics
175. Saptarshi Guha, Mozilla, San Francisco
176. Sarika Shrivastava, Action Aid, Bhopal
177. Savvy Sowmya, Oxfam India, Delhi
178. Sayandeb Chowdhury, Assistant Professor, Ambedkar University, Delhi
179. SC Behar, Retd IAS, Madhya Pradesh
180. Seema, Mahila Manch, Bhopal
181. Shankar Singh, Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan
182. Shekhar Singh, Founder Member, National Campaign for People's Right to Information
183. Shikha Nehra, Stanford University

184. Shivan,i concerned citizen, Indore
185. Shivani Taneja, Muskaan, Bhopal
186. Shreekant Gupta, Professor, Delhi School of Economics
187. Shreya Shrivastav, Lawyer
188. Siraj Dutta, Right to Food Campaign, Jharkhand
189. Smita Gupta, JNU
190. Sreenivasan Subramanian, Madras Institute of Development Studies
191. Srijit Mishra, Professor of Economics, Indira Gandhi Institute of Development

Research

192. Subrata Sarkar, IGIDR, Mumbai
193. Sudha N, Independent Researcher/Activist, Bangalore
194. Sudha Narayanan, IGIDR, Mumbai
195. Sugata Bag, Delhi School of Economics
196. Sujata Visaria, Hong University of Science and Technology
197. Sujatha Singh, Former Foreign Secretary, Gol
198. Sumukh Athreya, Software Engineer, Bangalore
199. Sundar Burra, IAS (Retd.), Former Secretary, Govt. of Maharashtra
200. Supriya Nayak, Odissi dancer
201. Surabhi Agarwal, Socialist party (india), Delhi
202. Surashree Shome, Concerned Citizen, Bangalore
203. Surender Kumar, Professor of Economics, Delhi School of Economics
204. Swathi Seshadri, Researcher, Bangalore
205. Sweta Dash, Right to Food Campaign
206. T. R. Raghunandan, ex-IAS and development consultant
207. Tasqeen Machiwala, Concerned Citizen, Bangalore
208. Tridip Ray, Professor of Economics, Indian Statistical Institute
209. Utsa Patnaik, JNU
210. V.P. Raja, Former Chairman, Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission
211. Venkat Srinivasan, Data Scientist, Bangalore
212. Vijay Kelkar, Chairman, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, New Delhi
213. Vikas Rawal, JNU
214. Vivek, Software Professional, Hyderabad
215. Y J Rajendra, PUCL Karnataka
216. Yogendra Yadav, President, Swaraj India
217. Zehra Mehdi, Columbia University, New York City