The Pandemic COVID-19 has made us believe that we truly live in a global village. We share same fever, fear, agony, pain, joblessness, dejection and demise. From initial news telecast to holocaust, the virus has travelled faster than light and in no time stormed into our bedroom from global arena.

Apart from health, the economic ravage is no less significant. The choice between survival and sustenance has placed 'humanity in hanging'. From lockdown -1 to unlock -1, our country has been receiving severe pounding, be it in the sector of life or livelihood. The joblessness, exodus from worksite and frantic attempts of migrant labourers to trudge back home at any cost, has unearthed a problem of the century for our country. Purulia is no exception. The district, which mainly depends on agrarian economy, is customised to significant out-migration, especially in lean agricultural season. The COVID-19 pandemic has pressed the panic button. In last two months Purulia has witnessed the return of around two lakh migrants of the state, out of which about sixty five thousands are district dwellers. Needless to mention, that these people have bet their lives for their homecoming!

The Purulia district administration has explored the solution with a humane face. At the outset, all returnees have been screened and mandatorily quarantined to facilitate their mainstreaming in later stage. Food and best available shelters have been provided to them and health testing has been done for the symptomatic to wipe out the fear of community transmission. Simultaneously, a skill based mapping of all home comers have been prepared to facilitate an 'Employment Plan' for all the blocks. Unskilled labourers have been provided job under MGNREGA and Matir Sristi schemes and for the skilled, development of entrepreneurship in suitable MSME sector is on. A district level e-employment platform, 'Viswakarma' has been developed and will be operationalised shortly with an aim to provide a facility for online employment exchange for the returnees.

The post-COVID strategy is not a straight line and here one size does not fit all. The issues are multi-sectoral and multi-dimensional and solutions should encompass welfare, development and empowerment strategies – ranging from giving dole to an infirm to providing tool to a workman.

The pandemic has robbed everything off the home comers - but not their skills! In fact, the adversity is a blessing for the district in a disguise, as Purulia has got its best skills back. The Viswakarmas are back, the anvil is hot and ready, let the hammers strike with a big bang!

Rahul Majumder, WBCS (Exe.)
District Magistrate, Purulia
Total Migrants returned to Purulia: 67032
A. Inter State: 41348
B. Inter District: 25684
Total Migrant put in Institutional Quarantine: 11131
Total Migrants put in Home Quarantine: 37092
No. of Migrated transited through our District: 1,17,774

* Data updated till June 25* 2020
Reception at

NAKA POINTS

Total No of Naka Points : 16
No. of Migrant labourers received at Naka Points : 184812
No of Migrant labourers received at Naka points who travelled by foot : 12654

The Naka points worked 24X7, medical teams were available in those naka points round the clock for health screening of the migrant labourers. Those arriving on foot were received with food packets and drinking water.
Reception at
PURULIA MEDICAL COLLEGE
HATUARA

Total No. of Vehicles and buses received at Hatuara : 527
Total No of Migrant Labour received at Hatuara : 104139

This facility functioned not only as a quarantine centre but also as a receiving point of migrant labourers who were brought back to West Bengal by various means of road transport. Thorough medical screening was done and they were provided with meals, drinking water, guidelines for home quarantine and chemoprophylactic drugs.
Reception at PURULIA RAILWAY STATION

Total No. of Trains arrived at Purulia: 8
Total No. of migrants arrived via Trains: 3116

It was a herculean task to receive special shramik trains at various hours of the day and arrange for their medical screening and further journey, all the while maintaining social distancing.

Migrant Labours of other districts were sent to their respective districts after primary health check up and transportation arrangements were made by the Purulia District Administration.
Counselling, Medical Treatment and facility for entertainment at institutional quarantine centre.

Distribution of temporary food coupons and food grains to the Migrant Labourers: Steps taken for physical wellbeing as well as psychological motivation of the inmates of different Quarantine Centres of Purulia.
### Economic Revival & Mainstreaming

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Unskilled Migrant Labourer returned to the district</td>
<td>22944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of skilled/semi-skilled labourer returned to this district</td>
<td>34365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of job card issued to these migrants</td>
<td>4310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of person participated in entrepreneurship development programme</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Unskilled Migrant Labourers**

A multilateral plan was chalked out for economic upliftment of the migrant labourers. The unskilled workers were engaged in the **MGNREGA** and **MATIR SRISTI** schemes.
Skilled MIGRANT LABOURERS

The skilled and semi-skilled workers were encouraged for entrepreneurship development under MSME sector. Steps were taken for upgrading the skills of semi skilled migrant labourer in Recognition of Prior Learning (RPF) method under Utkarsha Bangla.

HUMAN RESOURCE MAPPING
INTER-STATE MIGRANT LABOURERS

Major Skills of Inter-State Migrants

- Construction: 13484
- Mechanic:
- Hotel & Restaurant:
- Carpenter:
- Painter:

Blockwise Unskilled Migrants

Jhalsa M: 48
Pondla M: 64
Gadhawalpur II: 224
Gadhawalpur I: 754
Baliguda: 302
Jhalsa I: 399
Biblihar: 461
Baliguda: 567
Khabarap: 765
Jhalsa II: 892
Baliguda: 928
Baliguda: 1129
Jhalsa II: 1140
Baliguda: 1240
Puruli: 1410
Hura: 1485
Jhalsa I: 1600
Pondla: 1705
Gadhawalpur I: 1707
Pondla: 17324
Gadhawalpur I: 33482

MAJOR SKILLS OF INTER-STATE MIGRANTS
পৃথক প্রশিক্ষণের তথ্যপূর্ণ তৈরি শুরু

মূলনীতি

পৃথক প্রশিক্ষণের মাধ্যমে একটি উন্নত পাঠানোর প্রেক্ষাপটে উন্নত প্রশিক্ষণের প্রাক্তন প্রশিক্ষণ সম্পন্ন করা হবে যা পাঠানোর প্রথম পর্দায় তৈরি করা হবে তাই প্রশিক্ষণের তথ্যপূর্ণ তৈরি শুরু করা হবে।

’মাটির সৃষ্টি’ প্রকল্পে ২০০ পরিয়ায়ীকে কাজ

মূলত বিশ্বাস

প্রকল্পের সময় পরিয়ায়ীরা পৃথক প্রশিক্ষণের মাধ্যমে প্রশিক্ষণ গ্রহণ করে। প্রশিক্ষণের সময় পরিয়ায়ীরা প্রশিক্ষণের মাধ্যমে প্রশিক্ষণ গ্রহণ করে এবং পরিয়ায়ীরা পৃথক প্রশিক্ষণের মাধ্যমে প্রশিক্ষণ গ্রহণ করে।
Globally, distress migration is the biggest cause of brain waste and desertion. Coupled with other evils of unemployment, the current Covid migration tragedy marks the foremost challenge today in front of administrators and policy makers alike.

Purulia District Administration has tried to approach this dire issue with a multi-pronged holistic approach. The first is anticipation and forecasting heterogeneous skill demand and market need assessment. The skills of the returnees are identified, mapped and analyzed. A labor market information system has been created to achieve optimal labor market integration. Skill development, counseling and awareness about entrepreneurship opportunities have been then scheduled and organized. All of these activities are done alongside relief and welfare activities like health checkups, food security, social security net and psychological counseling.

We aim to create a legacy of preservation of skills and elevate livelihood distress by providing alternate gainful employment.

The hundreds of kilometres traversed on foot and under tormenting travel conditions are a testimony to the anguish of the daily wage earners of our district. Our attempts are to buffer them from further vagaries of a volatile labour market and in this process ensure that all eligible social security schemes of Government of West Bengal reach the most deprived.

These survivors of this devastating pandemics carry a badge of strength, courage and resilience. We hope that we pay due respect to their tribulations by this humble endeavour Godspeed.