



NATIONAL PLATFORM FOR SMALL SCALE FISHWORKERS (INLAND)

April 12, 2020

Shri Ajay Kumar Bhalla, IAS.

Secretary,
Ministry of Home Affairs,
Government of India.

Sub: Request to arrange for return of 4,000 migrant fish workers from Andhra Pradesh stranded in Gujarat.

Respected Sir,

We have noticed with appreciation the efforts taken by the Government of India in evacuating Indian migrant workers from foreign countries like China, Iran and Italy in the face of Corona virus pandemic.

National Platform for Small Scale Fish Workers (I) has been very concerned about the migrant fish workers working in larger fishing vessels in Gujarat. While the passage of migrant workers from Gujarat and Maharashtra is easier to arrange and some of them have already moved to their native places by sea route, around 4,000 migrant fish workers from Andhra Pradesh have been stranded in Gujarat. These fish workers were engaged as vessel crew fish workers on larger fishing vessels. Most of them (more than 3,000) are in Verabal and others are in other harbours like Mangrole or Porbandar. They are not allowed to get down from the boats and have been herded together in some boats. Though they are being supplied with food, other conditions are not very hygienic or congenial. They are also suffering mentally. They need to return to their homes and families.

We have been given to understand that a delegation of officers from the Government of Andhra Pradesh have visited them. But there has been no information regarding the arrangement of their return.

We would request you to kindly look into the matter and arrange for a sealed train with arrangements of food, water and medical care to take these migrant fish workers from Gujarat to Andhra Pradesh. Since these migrant workers are hailing mainly from Vishakapatnam, Vijaynagaram and Srikakulam districts of Andhra Pradesh, the train should stop at those stations and compartments should be earmarked for specific districts. This will enable minimising the risk of cross infection, if any. The migrant fish workers have already been medically screened and may be allowed to board the train.

We are giving below the contacts of fish worker leaders from Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh. NPSSFW(I) and its affiliates are eager to assist the Government their level best in this.

Thanking you,

With best regards,

Gujarat: Shailesh Suiany, Secretary, Macchimar Adhikar Union. Mobile:9033315357	Andhra Pradesh: D. Pal, General Secretary, Democratic Traditional Fishers Workers Forum. Mobile:8555809779
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