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Migrant worker, stuck on IIT-Bhubaneswar campus due to lockdown, ends life

The deceased mason and other members of his group reportedly had an argument with their employer a few days back over making arrangements for their return to their native villages.



Published: 10th May 2020 05:44 PM | Last Updated: 10th May 2020 05:44 PM

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IIT Bhubaneswar. (Photo | Facebook/ IIT Bhubaneswar)

By Express News Service

BHUBANESWAR: A migrant worker allegedly committed suicide at an under construction building on the campus of Indian Institute of Technology's (IIT) campus Jatni police limits late on Saturday night.

Police confirmed that a migrant worker hanged himself. However, they are yet to ascertain all the other details, including the name and address of the deceased.

Sources said the deceased, who was working as a mason, was a native of Malda district in West Bengal. He was reportedly upset as there was no work in the institute after the nationwide lockdown was imposed on March 25 leaving him with very little money. The deceased is survived by his wife, two daughters and a son.

The deceased mason and other members of his group reportedly had an argument with their employer a few days back over making arrangements for their return to their native villages. The police had to step in to resolve the matter.

"There are about one thousand migrant workers staying in three different colonies on IIT campus and they are natives of different States," said an electrician, **16179** an Khan of Uttar Pradesh's Maharajganj district. Their employer was paying them Rs 400 to Rs 500 per week and they were purchasing ration using that money. The labourers who were living with their families soon fell short of money.

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A bus from Bihar reportedly carried the workers stuck here on Saturday.

"In our group, there are seven persons and the employer turned a deaf ear towards our request of arranging a bus saying that a passenger vehicle cannot be arranged for such a small batch," said Khan, adding that there are also many workers from Uttar Pradesh, who are staying in other colonies on the campus.

Khan and his group are not arranging a private vehicle as it would cost a lot to each one of them and they alleged that they were also not able to take the help of the State Government due to the restrictions on not leaving the campus.

A tiles mason, Anikul Hassan of West Bengal's Murshidabad district, said their employer assured that the work will commence few days after the first phase of the lockdown was imposed in March but so far the construction has not started.

"Our employer is telling us that West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is not allowing migrant worker's entry into the State. We are running out of money from the last three months and now we are desperate to return and meet our families for Eid," he added.

Meanwhile, the police said they have registered a case of unnatural death and further probe into the matter is on.

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