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Four migrants run over by a truck in Virar

The four migrants were part of a group of seven who wanted to reach their villages in Rajasthan after crossing into Gujarat.

Written by [Mohamed Thaver](#), [Sadaf Modak](#) | Virar | Published: March 28, 2020 4:59:24 pm

Sources said the inspector took Rs 500 each from the desperate workers and shoved them into the rakes, which were not going anywhere.

Four migrants who were turned back from Bhillad on the Maharashtra Gujarat border and were walking back to Vasai were killed after being run over by a truck at Virar on the Mumbai – Gujarat highway around 3 am on Saturday. The four were part of a group of seven who wanted to reach their villages in Rajasthan after crossing into Gujarat. The driver of the truck who fled from the spot was later arrested by the police.

The migrants, including three who worked at a tea stall and canteens in Mumbai and its suburbs wanted to return to their hometown in Rajasthan following the [COVID-19](#) measures that made it difficult for them to earn a living. The seven form a part of a large group of people from Mumbai who have been attempting to reach their hometowns in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh among other places from where large scale migration to the city takes places.

The incident took place at Bharol village in Virar on the Mumbai – Ahmedabad highway around 3 am. The group had taken rest some time back and had begun walking when a truck came from behind and rammed into them.

The four deceased were identified as Ramesh Bhatt (55), Nikhil Pandya (32), Naresh Kalasuva (18) and Kaluram Bhagora (18) all from Baswada in Rajasthan. Several people working on tea stalls and canteens in Mumbai hail from villages in Baswada district. Ramesh is married and has two children and worked at a canteen in Vasai. While Nikunj worked at Goregaon, Bhagora worked in Vasai and Naresh worked in Bhandup.

The injured were identified as Mayank Bhatt (32), Kalpesh Joshi (34) and an unidentified person

[Rahul Bhatt](#), brother of Mayank, who is injured and recuperating at the Highway nursing home said, " They had left for Rajasthan around 6 pm on Friday from Vasai. When they were not allowed to cross over, they had to come back. They started walking early morning on the highway hoping they will reach Vasai where they worked and lived by the morning."

Rahul added, " We understand that the government had to enforce the lockdown but atleast they could have given us some time to go back to our villages." Pravin Upadhyay, who also hails from the same village as the deceased and employs people at tea stalls in the city said, " We have tried to stop migrants from trying to walk upto Rajasthan. But the situation is grim for them. They eat what they earn on a day to day basis. Maximum they will have stock for four days. What will they do after that. They think better we reach our village before we run out of stock."

He added that the canteens usually provide food to many smaller units or offices around the area. Since all of them are shut, there is no business. Many employers have no means to pay for these men and hence beyond a few days of ration, they cannot sustain living here.

The next challenge for Rahul and Upadhyay will be to ensure that the bodies reach Rajasthan.

" We have just told the families there that they have met with an accident. They have not been told that the four have died. The least we can do is get them to see the deceased once before performing the last rites," Upadhyay said as he was waiting outside the mortuary of the Virar government medical facility for permissions from the local police. He also said that arranging for ambulances is proving to be difficult.

Once the bodies reach the village, another challenge crops up. Majority of the young boys working at tea stalls are from ST community. Those employing them coming from the same village come from dominant castes and are entrusted with taking care of the boys. "The families of the boys maybe upset with us for not taking care of the boys. We will have to involve the village Sarpanch and other authority figures to ensure things do not get out of hand," another man from the community said.

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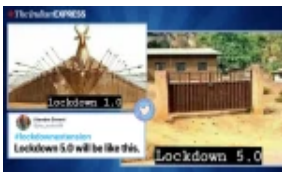
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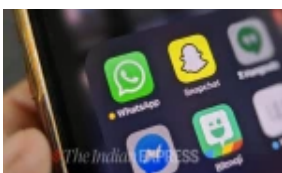
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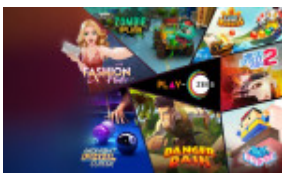
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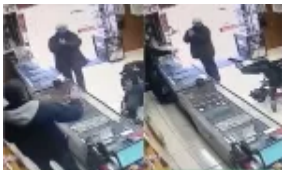
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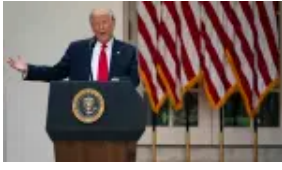


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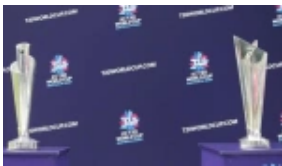
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