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โพสต์โดย alobem - 26 ธ.ค. 2025 08:54

Rajesh Chouhan had covered 620 miles (1,000 kilometers) in five days. His legs were swollen and his blisters had burst. A piece of Styrofoam trash he'd found on the roadside was soaking up the pus seeping from his feet.

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But he didn't stop walking. He couldn't.

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The 26-year-old migrant worker was in the heart of India and only halfway home.

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When India announced its nationwide lockdown on March 24 to stop the spread of the novel coronavirus, despite having less than 450 cases at that point, its cities ground to a halt. About 100 million rural Indians have moved to cities for work. Overnight, many like Chouhan were stranded without jobs, food or savings.

With no way to survive in the cities, and India's vast railway network mostly shut down, many made the extraordinary decision to walk thousands of miles back to their families.

Many didn't make it. In one incident, 16 laborers were run over by a freight train as they slept on rail tracks. Roadside accidents took the lives of others. Some died from exhaustion, dehydration or hunger. Those picked up by police were often sent back to the cities they had tried to leave.

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