



MONTAGES OF MIGRATION

Stories from Jharkhand Migration Survey 2023

IDENTITY CARD

Name: **Sanjib Nayak**

Age: 36

Address: Nawatoli, Lotwa, Gumla,
Jharkhand.

Designation: Surveyor, Tunnel Worker,
Welder, Blaster, Driller

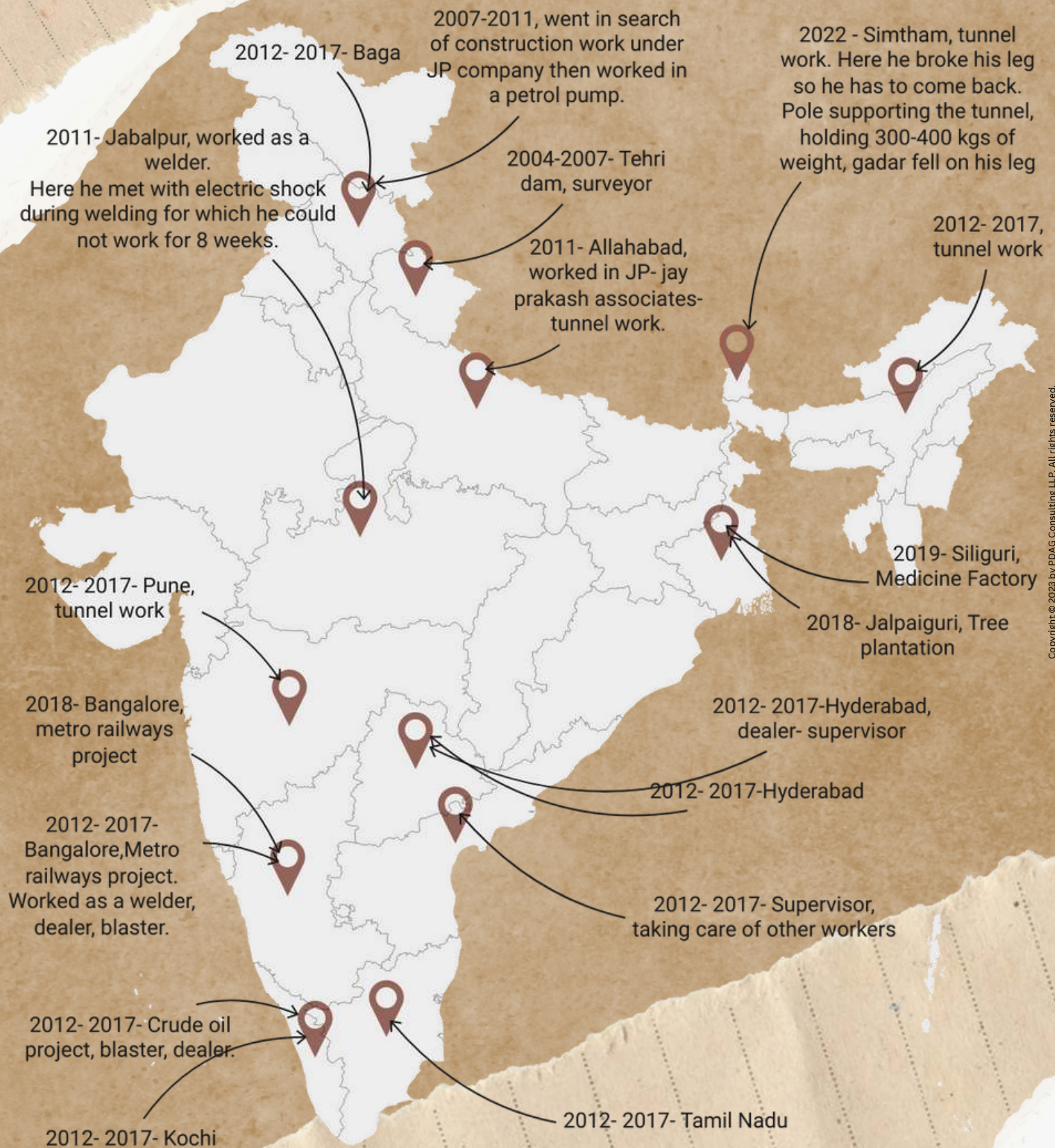


34 kilometers away from the district headquarters of Gumla, Nawatoli is a village which has been sending construction workers for various infrastructural projects across India, over decades.

In Nawatoli one can hear men proudly proclaiming themselves to be the **makers of the renowned Tehri Dam** in Himachal Pradesh.

Sanjib Nayak, is a second generation migrant worker from Nayak community. A father of two, Sanjib was at home, during the interview, due to an injury he suffered while working in Sikkim. He first left home to work twenty years ago at the age of fifteen and since has traveled to thirteen states of India in search of work.

Extent of his travel



Map data: © OSM • Created with Datawrapper

** Sanjib failed to chronologically narrate the locations of his work between 2012-2017, as he had to move from one place to another very frequently. During this period there was also a shift from relatively organized work to more unorganized kinds of work with increased dependence on middlemen.

Factors that led him to migrate

"We were very poor during my childhood. Even now very little has improved as we don't own land"

The Nayaks in Lotwa do not own land historically and over generations have been working on the lands of Rohtiyas as sharecroppers. Being a landless peasant, Sanjib is more vulnerable than his land-owning counter-parts.

"My father also used to migrate"

Sanjib's father was also a migrant worker, who worked outside Jharkhand for ten years at different dam construction projects in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh etc. He used to come back home twice a year, being absent during most of Sanjib's childhood.

Interviewer: Why did you drop out of school?

Sanjib : Because of my mother.

Sanjib's mother, who was an agricultural worker, fractured her leg while working on the field. Attending school while looking after his injured mother and managing other household chores became difficult to manage. He started lagging behind in studies and then dropped out of school.

"The situation at my house kept on deteriorating, so I left home for work... I was not even an adult"

With his mother not being able to work and with his father's income not being sufficient, Sanjib joined the labour force at a very young age. Initially working in Gumla, he then migrated to Himachal within two years in search of better opportunities.

Interviewer : Will you migrate again, without treating your injury ?

Sanjib : What can I do madam ? My daughter is growing up, I have to earn.

Financial burden of fulfilling the social obligation of getting his daughter married has further entrenched his vulnerability, and despite his injury he has to continue to migrate for work.

What if?

No man learns to work from his mother's womb. The work has to be learnt by observing only.

What if he had access to some subsidized institutional training?

"You can't get a certificate if you work under a contractor, you can get an experience certificate if you work under some company directly."

What if there was some mechanism to recognise prior learning?

Interviewer : You didn't get the work of a surveyor after Tehri ?

Sanjib : The sahib who has given me that work retired, so I didn't get that work again..after that I went to Himachal, but couldn't get the work of a surveyor. So I worked in a petrol station there

What if he had received some certification as a surveyor ?

"If I treat my injury right now it will cost me a lot. I don't have money."

What if he had access to accidental coverage and rehabilitative care?

**As per our last conversation with Sanjib Nayek, he shared his exhilarating plans to work in Goa in 2023. What awaits him in Goa? Where will he go next?