

NEW DELHI

# Daily wage earners find the going tough



THE  HINDU



ANESWAR: NOVEMBER 22, 2016 00:00 IST

UPDATED: NOVEMBER 22, 2016 03:58 IST

Trinath Nayak, 48, a daily wage earner, has rescheduled his routine life in past one week – five days at construction site and one day at bank.

Since the demonetisation, Trinath's life has turned upside down.

“After five days of continuous work, I am handed over a banknote of Rs. 2000. What should I do with it when the neighbourhood grocery shop owner and vegetable vendor are not ready to accept it? They have valid reason to say no. In a small transaction, they will have to return a good amount of smaller currency notes. Nobody wants to put themselves into inconvenience,” said Trinath.

“It is better to waste a day by standing in queue outside a bank for exchange of notes than declining the deal,” he said.

## THE HINDU

...asking five of us to distribute among ourselves. After a day's hard labour, it is irritating to find means of dividing the money.”

Similarly, Kalia Jena, another labourer, has not been paid any wage for the past six days as his contractor has requested him to demand money due to shortage of liquidity.

In such a scenario, thousands of construction workers are inconvenienced in addition to doing hard labour as they have no work. After demonetisation, construction activities across Bhubaneswar have been squeezed to a large extent.

At the Nayapalli Labour Market, more than 5,000 workers gather every morning for securing a day's work. Prior to the demonetisation, hardly 500 people used to return home without getting any work. But now, only 2,000 are getting work while about 3,000 are returning empty hand,” said Sebaty.

A similar situation is noticed in labour markets at Kalpana Square and Sailashree Vihar of the city.

Bhubaneswar has seen huge surge of labour force due to booming real estate sector during the past one decade. People from Cuttack, Bhubaneswar, Kandhamal, Nayagarh, Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar and Bolangir districts have migrated to the capital city in search of work. They live here in one-room houses, paying monthly rent ranging from Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 3,000.

As the demonetisation move has hampered the prospects of daily employment, many workers have started returning to their respective villages.

...e community back in village takes care of us when we are in a problem. We will not die of hunger at our native place. We hope the crisis is temporary and would get over within a month,” said Mamina Behera, who plans to return to home in Nayagarh district along with his family due to non-availability here.

THE  HINDU

---