

## **A Workshop on Preparing a Living Archive on Migration**

organised by

**Calcutta Research Group**

In collaboration with

**Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung-South Asia**

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### **Concept Note**

#### Introduction

The practice of building an archive requires creative thinking about an institution's research agenda. Therefore, in fulfilling the core research agenda, archivists try to document the incidents and actors of a particular period to help themselves and future researchers. A living archive refers to a growing and evolving repository of the events of the socio-economic and political environments which connect an institution to the realities with which it is working or intends to work, negotiating with the inclusions and exclusions that traditional archives are formed on. It could be a collection of news clippings, videos, interviews, photographs, posters, pamphlets, leaflets, booklets, weblinks, etc. from different platforms that represent a specific theme of interest to the institution, scientifically catalogued and digitised for ease of access.

Documenting the migrants, especially the migrant workers and the public health crisis during the COVID-19 pandemic is the focus areas of the present archive. Calcutta Research Group (CRG) became interested in building this archive after witnessing the suffering migrant labourers during the pandemic induced ensuing lockdown. The living archive on CRG's website presently contains news clippings, YouTube videos, Facebook links, podcasts, short documentaries and blogs on the crisis inflicted on migrant labourers by the pandemic. The archive, on one hand, tries to document the life of the migrants and their struggle during the pandemic, the migrant worker as the resilient subject of migration. On the other, it documents the various kinds of precarity that the migrants face.

CRG aims to take this initiative forward and collect more resources on the theme of migration and forced displacement, made available in a digital format on its website. The present archive also has had an analytical report based on the existing resources.

#### The Workshop

To develop and move forward with the concept of a living archive, Calcutta Research Group will organise a day-long workshop with scholars, archivists, library professionals, journalists and civil rights activists regarding designing and preparing a database on migration and labour problems, peace and conflict, refugees and their identity questions, reflections of contemporary issues in law, literature and society. The discussion will be divided into two parts along with a keynote lecture on the necessity of living archives in migration studies.