



A lot of us leave our homes, families, communities to make our lives overseas.

We are tagged as 'NRI' or Non-Resident Indians.

Our passports prove that we are Indian  
We abide by Indian Laws  
We pay Indian taxes

But strangely we lose our right to vote! WHY?

Our remittances hit US\$ 8.5 Billion in 2013;  
The largest sum is remitted to India by our migrant workers; our hard-working blue and white collar NRI workforce.

Interestingly we are invited to invest in our country, but the country stops investing in us. WHY?

Just like every law abiding proud citizen of India, we bolster India's growth.

Yet recent statistics prove that NRI's are the most vulnerable workforce. WHY?

<http://youtu.be/tiTnO51ziuA>

In reality it would seem that we become Not-Required Indians; second class citizens for our own great country.

Why is our representation so weak? WHY?

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5t8tUnoXcCc>

The importance for an NRI's 'Right To Representation' became apparent when I followed the case of 17Indians on death row for the murder of 1 Pakistani.

Having lived in the UAE for the past 25 years, I have huge respect for the humaneness of the Sharia Systems; but for the first time, March 29<sup>th</sup> 2010; even my faith hit shaky grounds when I heard that **17 Indians were given the death penalty for the murder of 1.**

**Finding Reports revealed that 1730 more Indians languish in UAE prison (200 approximately in similar situations facing capital punishment).**

<http://youtu.be/n1r7RBLUN6g>

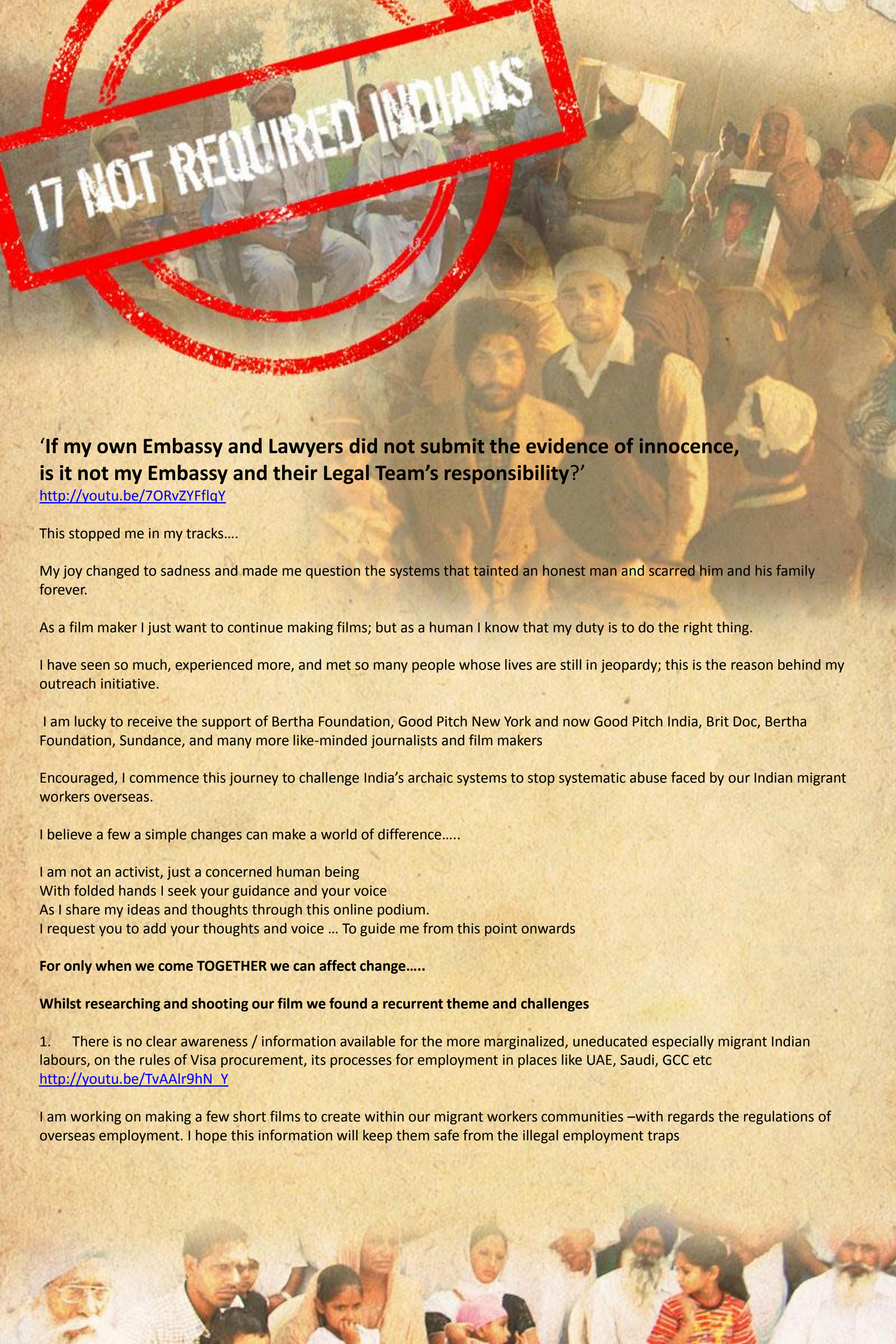
I couldn't look away anymore. Adding my voice, to the many others that were raised in unison, we sought for a fair trial for these men.

It was a tough 4 year journey that gave me a deep understanding into the challenges Indian overseas migrant workers and their communities face.

Finally following the return of these 17men to India, it was wonderful to see their homecoming. But when I attended an interview session with them, when Harjinder Singh one of the 17accused asked with tears in his eyes







**NOT REQUIRED INDIANS**

**'If my own Embassy and Lawyers did not submit the evidence of innocence, is it not my Embassy and their Legal Team's responsibility?'**

<http://youtu.be/7ORvZYFflqY>

This stopped me in my tracks....

My joy changed to sadness and made me question the systems that tainted an honest man and scarred him and his family forever.

As a film maker I just want to continue making films; but as a human I know that my duty is to do the right thing.

I have seen so much, experienced more, and met so many people whose lives are still in jeopardy; this is the reason behind my outreach initiative.

I am lucky to receive the support of Bertha Foundation, Good Pitch New York and now Good Pitch India, Brit Doc, Bertha Foundation, Sundance, and many more like-minded journalists and film makers

Encouraged, I commence this journey to challenge India's archaic systems to stop systematic abuse faced by our Indian migrant workers overseas.

I believe a few a simple changes can make a world of difference.....

I am not an activist, just a concerned human being  
With folded hands I seek your guidance and your voice  
As I share my ideas and thoughts through this online podium.  
I request you to add your thoughts and voice ... To guide me from this point onwards

**For only when we come TOGETHER we can affect change.....**

**Whilst researching and shooting our film we found a recurrent theme and challenges**

1. There is no clear awareness / information available for the more marginalized, uneducated especially migrant Indian labours, on the rules of Visa procurement, its processes for employment in places like UAE, Saudi, GCC etc

[http://youtu.be/TvAAIr9hN\\_Y](http://youtu.be/TvAAIr9hN_Y)

I am working on making a few short films to create within our migrant workers communities –with regards the regulations of overseas employment. I hope this information will keep them safe from the illegal employment traps





**Working with an NGO Video Volunteer we seek to produce 25 short 'Public Advisory Videos' through which we can guide workers on their rights and the rules of employment overseas in UAE.**

**We are hoping to tie up with TV Channels, Online Sites, Money Transfer Units, and other channels that provide high visibility and can effectively create awareness amongst migrant worker communities. We are looking at targeting worker communities in UAE/ Kerala/ Punjab/UP/ Bengal.**

**We are looking for partners to produce these Advisory Videos with us. We are also seeking partners who will support our endeavor; We invite you to give us your suggestions and guidance on how we can reach Indian workers who are dreaming of migration.**

**Would you also support us and put up a link on your site?**

2. During the course of my research and filming; we met a lot of workers stuck in labour camps and prisons. They all complained of a lack of communication from the Embassy. This is something I heard again and again when I visit the prisons.

Undoubtedly Indian Embassy is one of the busiest Embassies; with a large number of migrant workers and NRIs to service, I am sure isn't an easy job. <http://youtu.be/YRjnsrxyxtw>

But we need to find ways to ensure that an Indian in trouble can reach the Embassy!

Can we, as Indians, afford a simple recording service to log the calls of an Indian trapped in jail? Or in a labor camp? <http://youtu.be/hkf7j4DseR0>

I will humbly submit a petition to the newly formed Indian government, to make their international missions transparent for their vulnerable overseas citizens- especially migrant workers.

If you too feel that it is important to safeguard the interest of overseas Indians please join me in signing this petition, as your voice will strengthen mine... so together we seek governance on creating an important support system

We are also looking at speaking with local and international Telcos/Media Companies to assist us in creating this hotline.

We also invite our overseas and local communities to participate. If any of you know of anyone who needs assistance or is in a dire state; please just make a phone recording and send it out to us info@ [www.awaam.com](http://www.awaam.com)

We promise to try and pass this information along to the Embassy.

3. Besides inaccessibility, we were told that there is a lack of involvement from the Indian Embassy, with no responsibility nor accountability even towards missing migrant workers or their families.

Can our missions overseas not dedicate at least one small section for missing workers on their website?

Can they not put out a 'Missing Persons' board on their premises? <http://youtu.be/wmOZEyhB6o>

4. Workers often get lost in these camps or are arrested and their families are in anguish. Lack of information is a tangible edge of suffering felt both by Migrant Workers and their Families.

<http://youtu.be/S2-Y7ERNBJk>

We are seeking the advisory of Sharjah Police to commence building a pilot project for missing individuals.

Does anyone have ideas for how we can build a community site for Missing Persons Report? Please do share it with us at [Info@awaam.com](mailto:Info@awaam.com)

5. Most legal papers are signed in Arabic, including Employment Contracts in UAE. Most Indian migrant workers don't have access to such translator services and this makes them vulnerable.

Can we not provide resources on our Embassy's websites? Can we not provide a subsidized translation service at our Embassy?







From our end, we are seek Legal partners to assist us in creating pre-translated standard contracts and other informative resources in Hindi / English/ Punjabi/ Kanada/

We will upload through our Facebook page and on [www.awaam.com](http://www.awaam.com)

6. UAE Courts conduct trials in their national languages-Arabic. Most of our migrant workers are unable to read, write or even understand what is being said during these trials. Even in the case of these 17men, the biggest challenge they faced was in finding a legal translator. Finally the UAE Court intervned and provided Legal Translation-pro bono. But what will happen in the other cases?

What does the Indian Embassy not assist uneducated and poor migrant workers; especially ones whose lives are at risk with a Legal Translation Service? <http://youtu.be/nyTHejL1mwU>

I will seek your advice on how to make legal translation available for Indian Citizens who are at high risk overseas.

7. Passports are often held by Employers in UAE; this is illegal even by UAE Laws but most of us are guilty of this. There is a burning need to educate our migrant work force on the importance of securing and keeping their passport. <http://youtu.be/tiTnO51ziuA>

I will be working on creating short films to showcase the liability of such an act.

I am seeking partners who will support me in launching them across UAE/ Kerela/ Punjab/ UP based websites and channels to help me create awareness.

8. There is a lot we can do as a community. You and I!

I am absolutely elated when I see the work being done by the youth in our communities; supported by their teachers and their schools.

I on my part will highlight their good work by creating media awareness.

As the men have been tagged as 'Guilty, Murderers & Criminals' their passports have been revoked; others who had lost their passport during their arrests have been rejected from the passport office.

We started our outreach by getting a letter of clearance from the Defence Teams; this helped three of them to get their passports back.

We are working on a pilot project with the regional design community to give new skills and opportunities to women inmates at the existing Prison Workers Program at Sharjah Central Jail. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9KG5RKs5vfg>

I invite out community to assist me in building Skill and Creative Camps Or Sports Programs and amenities into the Camps.

**Don't the men who build our skylines deserve a simple playing ground?** <http://youtu.be/mwZ6U3na6Jo>

If you feel there is anything, we as a community can do to help better the lives of our Indian brother's overseas... please advise us through [info@awaam.com](mailto:info@awaam.com)

