RAJU 20s, Pakistani man working in Dubai to support his family, who live hand to mouth in Pakistan.

A Global Repatriation Program has just been anounced with all expatriates expected to return to their home countries unless there is a reason such as work to keep them abroad. This will take 12 weeks.

At the end of the 12 weeks, all borders will be closed in a bid to stop the spread of COVID-19 and the subsequent variants and viruses that have plagued the world since 2019.

This scene takes place at the beginning of the movie in Dubai at a carpentry workshop made up of Indian and Pakistani workers. Many men will not be in a position to return to their home countries and families as there will be no work for them. No work in Dubai and the subsequent permanent citizenship equals a probable death sentence for them and their families.

EXT. OUTDOOR CANTEEN, DUBAI. CONTINUOUS-DAY

The workers collect basic lunch rations and take seats on the rows of benches. Large red crosses to encourage social distancing are peeling and sometimes ignored.

Whilst they are eating there is a murmuring through the group as they see their FOREMAN accompanied by SENIOR COMPANY MEN, who are dressed in full PPE, exiting the FOREMAN's office.

FOREMAN
Can you all please gather over here.

There is a random division of the work force as the men are guided to stand either side of a line drawn in the sandy ground..

FOREMAN (CONT'D)
Citizenship can only be given if you are needed for work. We are only able to give some of you work. This half...

The FOREMAN turns to the SENIOR COMPANY MEN who indicate the half RAJU is not in.

FOREMAN (CONT'D)
...go and sit on the benches.

There is muttering as no-one yet knows who is being offered what. RAJU's group spreads out in front of the FOREMAN looking concerned.

FOREMAN (CONT'D)
This group, you will not be required to work anymore.

There is anger from many immediately, some delayed as others have to translate.

FOREMAN (CONT'D)
You can stay in your accomodation and will be fed until you are flown home.

The FOREMAN turns to look back at his superiors who indicate that is all with a shoulder shrug.

There is a beat, then the majority of workers start to build to a riot, angry at the ease of dismissal.

A few are stood at the edge, unsure what this means for them. RAJU is with them.