

**IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON MIGRANTS' WORKERS IN INDIA**
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**Abstract:**

India has been lockdown since March 25,2020 due to covid-19 pandemic. When the government of India announced the sudden lockdown in March to contain the spread of the pandemic, the migrants without job and money have no other option to sustain in the host city except coming back to their native place. Thousands of migrants were forced to walked hundreds of miles back to their home villages through the stony railway track and streets. This desperate movement of huge number of migrants in the pandemic situation has created a bigger challenge for the country to address the life and livelihood issues simultaneously with a limited resource and infrastructure facilities. The increasing trend of COVID-19 and it prolong nature has posed challenge for the India Government to contain it and revive the economy at the earliest.

**Key words:** Creativity, intelligence, fluency, flexibility, originality, gender

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**1. Introduction:**

With the number of coronavirus cases in India on the rise, the lockdown has been extended four times and is in force till 31 May 2020, as of date. Early lockdown announced by the Government of India helped slowdown the spread of the infection in the country. This lockdown and its subsequent extensions, has resulted in disrupting life of all. The lockdown caused confinement of millions of citizens in their homes. Businesses across the length and breadth of the country were shut, and nearly all economic activity was stopped, thereby negatively impacting workforce employed in both the formal and informal sectors. Construction sites were abandoned after the announcement of lockdown. At the same time, most of the residential societies and colonies shut their gates for all but the residents. The prominent sectors which employ migrant workers who are essentially members of the informal economy, are construction and building industry, manufacturing units, trade set-ups, transport, and hospitality. Also, some of these migrant workers might work as domestic helpers (maids, drivers or watchmen), street vendors, workers in tiny and roadside businesses (tea-shops, dhabas, etc

**2. Migration: The concept:**

Migration is the movement of people away from their usual place of residence, across either internal (within country) or international (across countries) borders. The latest government data on migration comes from

the 2011 Census. As per the Census, India had 45.6 crore migrants in 2011 (38% of the population) compared to 31.5 crore migrants in 2001 (31% of the population). Between 2001 and 2011, while population grew by 18%, the number of migrants increased by 45%. In 2011, 99% of total migration was internal and immigrants (international migrants) comprised 1%.

Internal migrant flows can be classified on the basis of origin and destination. One kind of classification is: i) rural-rural, ii) rural-urban, iii) urban-rural and iv) urban-urban.

As per the 2011 census, there were 21 crore rural-rural migrants which formed 54% of classifiable internal migration Rural-urban and urban-urban movement accounted for around 8 crore migrants each. There were around 3 crore urban-rural migrants (7% of classifiable internal migration). Another way to classify migration is: (i) intra-state, and(ii) inter-state.

Das (2020) states that the migrant labourers are individuals who travel from their States of residence or so-called domicile to other States in the nation looking for employments and a job.

### 3. Government Initiatives

#### Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY)

The Ministry of Finance on their official website on the press release states that 42 crore poor people have received financial assistance of 65,454 crore under the above-mentioned scheme as on 20June, 2020 (pib.gov.in). As a part of the scheme, the Government announced free food grains and cash payment to women and poor senior citizens and farmers. The other examples include, Rs 500 deposit to Jan Dhan accounts of women, additional allocation to MGNREGA for jobs to returned migrants, credit facilities, package for revival of economy so that migrants can get back their job etc

#### Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package

##### Total Direct Benefit Transfer till 19/06/2020

Scheme	Number of Beneficiaries	Amount
Support to PMJDY women account holders	1st Ins - 20.65 Cr (100%) 2ndIns –20.63 Cr 3rd Ins -20.62 (100%)	1stIns –10,325 Cr 2ndIns – 10,315 Cr 3rd Ins –10,312 Cr
Support to NSAP (Aged widows, Divyang, Senior citizen)	2.81 Cr (100%)	2814 Cr
Front-loaded payments to farmers under PM-KISAN	8.94 Cr	17891 Cr
Support to Building & Other Construction workers	2.3 Cr	17891 Cr
24% contribution to EPFO	66 Cr	996 Cr
Ujjwala	1st Ins – 7.48 2nd Ins – 4.48	8488 Cr
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>42.84 Cr</b>	<b>65,454 Cr</b>

Source: Ministry of Finance , GOI , Press Release <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1632863>

**4. Conclusion:**

Migrant workers occupy a special position in the overall development. The covid-19 pandemic has come with extraordinary, intense uncertainty among the migrant workers. It is difficult to estimate how long and to what extent will the impact of pandemic be on the lives of people and economy of the country. At the national level, greater co-ordination is required between government agencies separately tasked with migration and health mandates. There is also need to relook at the national migration policies, which should accommodate the assistance and protection of migration arriving from, or faced with the prospect of returning to, the areas affected by health crisis. Rural social protection schemes, such as public works under MGNREGA, should be expanded to urban areas, and other welfare measures, such as maternal and child protection and PDS, should be made portable.

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