

Migrant Crisis

Why in news?

The recent case of alleged assault on migrant workers in Tamil Nadu has once again brought attention to migrant workers and the problems they face.

Who are migrants?

- **Migrant** - A person who moves away from his place of usual residence, within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, for a variety of reasons.
- Migrants are defined as those for whom the last usual place of residence any time in the past is different from the present place of enumeration.
- The term includes a number of well-defined legal categories of people, such as migrant workers.

What is the legal framework for migrant welfare?

- The *Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act, 1979* looks into the welfare of the labourers.
- The Act mandates that the establishment which proposes to employ migrant workers be required to be registered with destination states.
- Contractors will also have to obtain a licence from the concerned authority of the home states as well as the host states.
- However, in practice, this *Act has not been fully implemented*.
- This Act has been subsumed into the four broad labour codes notified by the Centre:
 1. The Code on Wages, 2019
 2. The Industrial Relations Code, 2020
 3. The Code on Social Security, 2020
 4. The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020.
- These have not been implemented yet.

What is the data on migration?

- **Census** - 2011 census reported the number of internal migrants in India at 45.36 crore, making up 37% of the country's population.
- This number included both *inter-state migrants and migrants within each state* and the annual net migrant flows amounted to about 1% of the working age population.



- **CMM** - Developed states take positive Cohort-based Migration Metric (CMM) values reflecting net immigration.
- A report, *Migration in India 2020-21*, released by the Ministry of Statistics and

Programme Implementation, reported that 0.7% of the country's population was recorded as a temporary visitor.

Temporary visitors are defined as those who arrived in households after March 2020 and stayed continuously for a period of 15 days or more but less than 6 months.

- While females recorded a higher share of migration rate of 47.9%; 48% in rural and 47.8% in urban areas, migration rate for males was 10.7% with 5.9% in rural and 22.5% in urban areas.

Which states have tried to implement the Inter-State Act?

- **MoU** - In 2012, with the help of the *International Labour Organisation*, a MoU was signed between *Odisha and Andhra Pradesh* to track labourers migrating.
- **Facilitation centres** - Kerala has set up facilitation centres for migrant workers whom the state refers to *as guest workers*.

What is the Jharkhand migrant crisis and how did it respond to the situation?

- Jharkhand government started thinking about migrant labourers' welfare during reverse migration in the pandemic, and found that roughly 9 lakh labourers had returned to Jharkhand.
- **SRMI** - Jharkhand started the Safe and Responsible Migration Initiative (SRMI) in 2021, aiming at enabling systemic registration of migrant workers for monitoring and analysis in the source and destination districts.
- The priority of SRMI is to generate data and then map the labourers who move out to several states for work.

References

1. [The Indian Express | Why migrant workers' issues recur?](#)
2. [The Indian Express | Concern over north Indian workers in Tamil Nadu](#)
3. [The Hindu | On rumours and fake news about migrant workers in TN](#)