



Centre for Labour Research
and Action



Rosa Luxemburg
Stiftung - South Asia

Towards A Seasonal Migration
Atlas of India



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Compilation of travel data from
the first phase of COVID 19

2022

By Centre for Labour Research and Action

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CONTENTS

1	<i>Foreword</i>
2	<i>Executive Summary</i>
3	<i>Chapter 1: Introduction - Describing the Scope of the Study</i>
4	<i>Chapter 2: Defining Seasonal Migration and its Magnitude: Literature Review</i>
5	<i>Chapter 3: Methodology</i>
6	<i>Chapter 4: Findings and Observations</i>
7	<i>Chapter 5 : Concluding Remarks</i>
8	<i>Appendix</i>
9	<i>End Notes</i>
10	<i>List of Tables and Maps</i>
11	<i>Glossary</i>
12	<i>References</i>

FOREWORD

Seasonal migration is among the most important, yet poorly understood, forms of migration in India which constitutes the dominant mode of labour engagement in sectors like construction, agriculture, manufacturing and services. Situated in the lowest socio-economic strata, both at the source and destination, seasonal migrants have remained invisible in policy discourse until recently, when the COVID-19 induced lockdown brought to fore the large challenges faced by these groups and the sectors they are involved in.

The short-term workers constitute the most vulnerable sections of the informal working class, lacking both physical and social capital, stemming from the lack of social safety nets and the absence of adequate policy. The problems with policy-making in particular arise from a lack of strong data – a lack which became glaringly evident during the post lockdown exodus of migrant workers from different cities across the country. This absence has continued to stymie efforts by national and state governments to identify and formulate effective social welfare schemes for this section of the population.

At the governmental level, there exists an uneven division of data gathering where national data gathering agencies like the Population Census do not provide data on seasonal migration, while dedicated rounds of the National Sample Survey (NSS) and India Human Development Survey (IHDS) provide a national-level picture of seasonal/circular migration flow. Moreover, such data as has been collected suffers from various problems, often of a conceptual nature. For example, the NSS 64th round (2007-08) on 'Employment, Unemployment & Migration' estimated a figure of 13.5 million short-duration out-migrants who were away from their usual place of residence for a period of two to six months, which

Courtesy: thewire.in



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underestimated the volume of circular migration, as they considered six months as the upper limit to define a short-term migrant. In fact, most of the circular flow takes place for a longer period, a point which IHDS has used to broaden their definition of seasonal migration. The IHDS-II (2011-12) estimated a figure of 22 million short-duration migrants who had migrated within five years preceding the survey. The figure is 13.2 million if a reference period of the last one-year preceding the IHDS survey is considered. However, the number of stranded migrants in cities and those who returned home shortly following the announcement of the nationwide lockdown in March 2020 was far beyond the estimated figures by NSS and IHDS, even after considering the possibly increased numbers at that juncture. In addition, both these data sources do not provide estimates at disaggregated levels, making the absence of granular data a key issue in policy formulation.

The pandemic has for the first time brought to light the need for real-time data on migrants with details on the volume, places of destination and sectors of work. In this regard, it is of utmost importance to complement the state-level official statistics with primary data collected by Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). In this, the 'Seasonal Migration Atlas of India' is a pioneering attempt, prepared by the Centre for Labour Research and Action is a welcome move to address the data deficits that have plagued policy makers over the years. I hope this Atlas will be of immense benefit to the CSOs, researchers and practitioners working in this area. It will also be useful for evidence based policy formulation and materialising an inclusive agenda in the country.

-Professor Debolina Kundu



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



This report presents findings from the first year of a study to develop a Seasonal Migration Atlas of India. The Atlas seeks to (i) generate macro estimates of seasonal migrant workers at the state and national levels and (ii) document major migration streams. The groups whose numbers the Atlas seeks to capture are the seasonal or circular migrants and the semi-permanent or long-term circular migrants. Seasonal or circular migrants comprise individuals, or groups of individuals, who migrate for temporary periods, either moving from place to place or to a fixed destination. Semi-permanent or long-term circular migrants comprise individuals who migrate for comparatively longer periods year after year, often to the same work place, and then revert back to the areas of their origin after their work life is over.

This phase of the research has used data generated on the number of workers who went back to their home states during the first phase of COVID lockdowns as a shadow indicator to estimate state level figures of seasonal migrant workers. It is assumed that the majority of the people who were stuck during the lockdowns and went back to their home states comprised seasonal migrants as described above. This data has been backed up by older state level profiles and case studies at the district and sub-district levels wherever available.

Through a series of compilation exercises and exhaustive desk research, the research team estimates that approximately 13.5 million workers returned to their home states during the first phase of COVID. The number of workers who left their destination states is approximately 14.6 million. While there is a slight mismatch between these two sets of figures, the high degree of congruity between them shows

Courtesy: lawnn.com

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that the figures derived from various sources for incoming and outgoing workers proves to the veracity of data and approach adopted.

The state-wise estimates of migrant workers are also in agreement with the existing literature on seasonal migration patterns. The data set shows that the Eastern parts of the country – comprising Eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, and Odisha – are the largest source of migrant workers. The states of Maharashtra and Gujarat form the largest recipient states followed by the Northern cluster of NCR – Punjab and the cluster of Southern states – Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Telangana.

The use of the shadow indicator – travellers during the lockdowns in the first phase of COVID, is constrained by certain limitations, some that were obvious and some that emerged after the data compilation exercise. The travellers included other categories besides migrant workers and there is a possibility that all the migrant workers did not go back. The data does not seem to have captured short distance and intra state migrants, which would include migrant agriculture workers. Moreover the huge exodus immediately after the announcement of the first lock down has not been captured in this set of data.

In carrying forward this project, it was necessary to develop a network of partners comprising field-based agencies and research organizations. The Centre for Labour Research and Action (CLRA)

reached out to several such organizations in the major sending- and receiving-states, and got positive responses from seven of these organizations. These include Gram Vaani in Delhi and Bihar, Centre for Migration and Inclusive Development in Kerala, Partnering Hope Into Action (PHIA) Foundation Jharkhand, Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action (YUVA) in Maharashtra, Gram Vikas in Odisha, Samaj Pragati Sahyog in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, and Community Awareness Research and Education Trust (CARE-T) in Tamil Nadu.

The Atlas project will continue working on this topic over the coming years, with attention to the major gaps that have emerged in this data set. These include the estimation of short distance intra-state migrants, mapping out of large tribal clusters of seasonal migrants in Central West India, development of state level profiles of seasonal migrants, and gender segregation of data.



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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION:

THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Economic growth in India has failed to generate secure, regular, and decent incomes for the vast majority of the workforce. Seasonal migration is now the dominant mode of labour engagement in many sectors of the economy, especially the sectors that require manual labour including primary sectors like construction, agriculture, and brick kilns; and extending into the manufacturing and the service industries as well. Given the nature of the work that these groups engage in, they constitute the most vulnerable sections of the informal working class as demonstrated during the COVID exodus. One of the key reasons for this vulnerability lies in the lack of data on seasonal migration, which was brought into stark focus during the post-lockdown exodus of migrant workers. The non-availability of this information meant that the Central Government imposed the lockdown without the ability to consider its impact on a large number of seasonal migrants. As such, the Central Government created unrealistic estimates on the number of seasonal migrants using incomplete or faulty data at various fora including the Supreme Court. Ideally, the Labour Department should be the primary source of data as many labour legislations need it to furnish a list of workers. However, with the onset of liberalization and informalization, very few workers are reflected in the rolls of the establishments that they work in. With this scarcity of information, the phenomenon of seasonal migration has begun to draw the interest of researchers, who themselves can do little more than provide guesstimates. Academics rely on official sources like Census and NSSO for macro data and when such data is lacking, their own work suffers. These estimates from those sources provide little detail on the migration streams that constitute the flow of seasonal migrants across and within states. Thus, this document is a step towards fulfilling these crucial information gaps.

The need for generating a database on seasonal migrants cannot be over-emphasized. The lack of a verifiable database on this huge section of the most vulnerable workforce means that the issues and concerns of this section of the population do not get addressed in official policies. As the state takes cognizance of the phenomenon of seasonal migration in the post-COVID-19 period and comes out with migrant-friendly policies in areas like housing and PDS, the implementation of the policies will be facilitated by the availability of strong datasets. These datasets can then be used by a variety of agencies to promote the welfare of migrant workers. This would include official agencies like



Courtesy: Business Standard



Municipal bodies to ensure decent housing and access to infrastructure services like drinking water and sanitation; Railways and State Road Transport Corporations to plan train and bus services for peak season requirements; Education, Health, ICDS, and PDS departments, to provide services; Labour Departments to ensure compliance with labour laws; and civil society organizations to provide sites for intervention to organize workers and provide them with legal and welfare services. This document seeks to consolidate the data that emerged during the first COVID-19-induced lockdown as a first step towards preparation of a comprehensive

nationwide data base on seasonal migrant workers which will be presented as a Seasonal Migration Atlas of India.

The number of workers documented during the exodus that happened after the announcement of the first lockdown provide a very good shadow indicator to estimate the seasonal migrant workforce, making it a good stand-in for secondary data sources. Given the manner in which the lockdown unfolded, almost all the seasonal workers got stuck in the destination areas where they were working, forcing the state to manage their stay and return while they were stranded at workplaces. State Governments, of both

The Invisibles



Courtesy: Newsclick.in

source and destination areas, sought to register workers through various online portals and different organisations had to rally to provide special services which in turn generated important datasets. For example, the Indian Railways ran Shramik Special trains to ferry back the migrant workers to their state of origin and civil society agencies also documented migrant workers in their own ways. Together this database provides a rich opportunity to collate a nationwide picture of migration flows across the states.

Following this introduction, the second chapter presents a brief survey of the literature, elaborates on the definition of

seasonal migration as used in the study and how the phenomenon has been understood in the context of India. The third chapter on Methodology details the sources that were relied on to collate and compile the findings of the study, how this data was vetted with civil society organizations in various states, and includes a discussion on the limitations of this data. The heart of this study lies in the fourth chapter which presents the major findings and observations including the national and state level consolidated figures for workers who left their workplaces to go back and workers who reached back their homes during the first phase of COVID - 19. This chapter has a sub-section curated by the team dealing with case studies and presents state specific data that the team came across while undertaking the national level consolidation. This data throws light on different aspects of seasonal migration for Kerala, Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Uttar Pradesh (UP). Among these states, Kerala is perhaps the only one with available studies that capture the state wide profile of seasonal migration; data from Odisha presents profiles of seasonal migrants from four blocks in four districts of the state; data generated during COVID lockdown in UP gives a profile of migration from different regions of UP; and data from Chhattisgarh gives both source and destination of seasonal migration from the state. The concluding chapter offers a discussion on the trends and patterns that emerged from the exercise with a brief discussion of a possible way forward.

Chapter 2



Courtesy: WPC

Defining Seasonal Migration and Estimating Its Magnitude: Literature Review

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The recent nationwide employment data show that in 2009–2010, there were an estimated **91.4 million casual workers in agriculture** and **58.6 million casual workers in non-agriculture**. Of the latter, **32 million** were employed in the construction industry alone.

A key issue for an exercise like this is how to define seasonal migration. Migration occurs for a variety of reasons and occur at different times for different groups of people. Furthermore, migratory groups are characterized by enormous economic and social diversity spanning across socioeconomic variables such as caste, landholding size, age, sex, education, family size and composition, activity, consumption levels and more. It is, therefore, necessary that it be made clear in the beginning as to what type of migration is this study dealing with.

One of the leading scholars on migration studies Prof. Ravi Srivastava has defined three types of migration (Srivastava 2011) – permanent, semi-permanent or long-term circular and seasonal or circular.

Migration can result in the permanent relocation of an individual or household, which we may term permanent migration. But if individuals migrate leaving their families and land and property in the area of origin, they may do so with the intention of reverting back to the area of origin. This is more likely to happen if the individuals have precarious jobs in the destination areas or if the cost of permanent relocation is high relative to its benefits. In such a case, although individuals may find a toehold in the destination areas, we may term such migration as semi-permanent or long-term circular. If individuals, or groups of individuals, migrate for temporary periods, either moving from

place to place or to a fixed destination, such migrants are seasonal or circular migrants. Usually, these three types of migrants have different modal characteristics (Srivastava 2011, p10).

This study is concerned primarily with the migrants in the last two categories – (i) semi-permanent or long-term circular migrants, and (ii) the seasonal or circular migrants. These two groups constitute the more vulnerable categories which were most affected by the exodus of migrant workers during the COVID-19, while permanent migrants are automatically excluded by virtue of having settled in destination areas.

The magnitude of seasonal migration:

Most existent data on migration comes from Census and National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO), both of which produce data sets that do not fully capture the category of seasonal migration, due in no small part to the fact that these data sets include permanent migration and, to a lesser extent, the second category of semi-permanent migrants. NSSO has made attempts to capture information on different aspects of migration including its seasonality through its 55th (1999-2000) and 64th (2007-08) rounds. In the 64th round, short-term migration was defined as migration for 30 days to six months during the previous 365 days. At the national level, the rate of short-term migration was 1.7 per cent in the rural areas and almost negligible (much less than 1

per cent) in the urban areas. Moreover, in rural areas, the rate was nearly 3 per cent for males and less than 1 per cent for females (NSSO 2008). The report showed an estimated 15.2 million short-duration out-migrants, of whom 12.9 million (85.1 per cent) were male, and 13.9 million (71 per cent) were rural out-migrants (that is, census-

migration occurs over a longer timeframe.

Srivastava made an estimate of nearly 45-50 million short-term seasonal migrants as given below

The recent nationwide employment data show that in 2009–2010, there were an estimated 91.4 million casual workers in agriculture and 58.6 million casual workers in



Courtesy: globalgiving.org

adjusted figures). Further many times the whole family migrates together. Seasonal migration in brick kilns exhibits both these characteristics. The report has been criticised by independent researchers for not capturing the phenomenon of seasonal migration in its entirety due to the artificial limit of six months, whereas a good deal of seasonal

non-agriculture. Of the latter, 32 million were employed in the construction industry alone. Casual workers in construction work in and around large urban centres are principally migrants. Some studies have estimated that 90–95 per cent of casual workers are migrants. But the figure may be lower in small towns and rural areas. Rough estimates

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by the authors show that about 35–40 million labourers – almost half the number of casual labourers outside agriculture – and 10 per cent of agricultural labourers (about 9 million) could be seasonal migrants. It is more difficult to put a figure on circulatory migrants who are self-employed or work on regular wages. But several million circulatory migrants work either as self-employed in the informal sector or as informal regular workers on piece rates or wages. These numbers constitute a very large segment of workers and a large proportion of waged and self-employed workers in the non-agricultural informal economy (Srivastav 2011, p. 26).

Seasonal and circular migration of labour has become one of the most durable components of the livelihood strategies of people living in rural areas (Deshingkar and Start, 2003). Although panel data on seasonal migration in India are lacking, a growing number of micro-studies have established that seasonal migration for employment is growing both in terms of absolute numbers and also in relation to the size of the working population as a whole. Millions of footloose and impoverished men, women and children in India, migrate from the countryside each year to cities – in crowded trains, buses, trucks and sometimes on foot – their modest belongings bundled over their heads, in search of the opportunities and means to survive (Mander and Sahgal, 2012). High seasonal demand for manual labour in labour-intensive industries like brick manufacturing and agriculturally productive areas pull a large number of seasonal migrants. The National Commission for Rural Labour has estimated, based on their numbers in industries employing migrant workers, that the number of seasonal and circular migrants is 10 million in rural areas alone,

of which, an estimated 4.5 million are inter-state migrants. Other informal estimates put the total number close to 30 million (Smita, 2008).

Further studies show that these patterns of migration are on the rise, as the NSSO data of the 64th round showed an increase in seasonal migrants over its 55th round, despite a slight change in definition. Deshingkar et al. (2008) in their study of villages in Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh between 2000–2001 and 2006–2007 indicate an increase in seasonal migration. The percentage of households involved in seasonal migration grew from 40 per cent to 52 per cent over the survey periods. Mosse et al. (1997) also report an increase in seasonal migration in the Bhil villages studied by them.

Jan Breman, one of the earliest researchers who studied the phenomenon of seasonal migration, and coined the term Footloose Labour, estimates that the seasonal migrants account for *at least one-fourth of the rural workforce and thus constitute a major segment of the country's economically active population estimated to be between 450 and 475 million* (Breman 2020).

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Chapter 3



Courtesy: The News Minute

Methodology

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For the first year, the study team has primarily focused on the data generated during the first phase of COVID lockdowns of the workers who returned to their states. This data has been supplemented in two ways:

- State level macro data sets (where available)
- Micro level studies at the district / sub-district level

Data Generated During COVID-19:

The CLRA team has used data generated during the first phase of the COVID lockdown of people who were stranded and returned to their homes to estimate the number of seasonal migrant workers. It is reasonable to conclude that the vast majority of such persons included in this dataset would have used trains, buses, various means of road transport, and sometimes even walking to return to their homes, and can be classed within the two categories defined in the methodology.

There are three primary sources of data for the COVID exodus during the first phase.

- **Shramik Train data:** This is a very reliable set of data released by Indian Railways on the number of Shramik special trains run by them.
- **Registration of workers who wanted to go back from destination states and come into source states:** Both the source and destination states captured data on stranded persons - source states for those who wanted to return and destination states for those who wanted to leave. Nonetheless, it is still advisable to take these datasets with a grain of salt as there is good reason to be sceptical about whether they reflect the total numbers. At the very least, it is possible to conceive that not all the workers registered and some perhaps registered twice.
- **Registration of workers who returned to their homes:** After the first exodus that followed the announcement of the lock-

down, the state Governments made extensive arrangements for workers entering their states. Police check posts were set up at various levels and quarantine centres were provided for returning workers. With the possibility to verify data from these multiple sources it is expected that, by and large, data from receiving states will be reliable.

This data has come into the public domain through various means – questions answered in Parliament and state assemblies, Government submissions in Supreme Court and High Courts in response to PILs filed in these courts, and press releases by different departments.

The briefs were prepared from the following sources:

- Response by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India in the Lok Sabha to the question regarding the Interstate Migrant Workmen Act dated 08.03.2021
- Response by the Ministry of Railways, Government of India in the Lok Sabha to the question regarding Shramik trains dated 16.09.2020
- Response by the Ministry of Railways, Government of India in the Lok Sabha to the question regarding Shramik trains dated 03.02.2021
- Response by the Central government in the Supreme court to the Suo Motu Writ Petition (Problems and Miseries of Migrant Labourers) dated 28.05.2020
- Response by the state of Gujarat in the Gujarat High Court to the Suo Motu Writ Petition (C/WPPIL/42/2020) dated 29/05/2020
- The news articles and reporting released during the first phase of the Covid lockdown

Limitations:

The attempt to use COVID data as an indicator for seasonal migration has to be adjusted

by certain factors. Some migrant workers would not have been enumerated while some other categories besides migrant workers would have got enumerated. These factors are described below. Some of these are also overlapping categories.

Coverage of other categories like students, pilgrims, and tourists: The exodus did not comprise migrant workers alone, rather, it included categories like students, pilgrims, and people stuck during travel. The proportion of other categories in the registration data is not available for most states, barring Karnataka, which reported that 80 per cent of people who registered were workers.

Migrant workers who did not go back. There remains a possibility that some workers did not go back. This seems to be the case for Kerala where the number of Shramik trains has no correlation with the number of migrant workers in the state as estimated by studies. It is reported that as migrant workers had good living facilities, there was no rush to go back home.

The first wave immediately after the announcement of the lockdown. A large number of workers came out on the streets as soon as the first lockdown was announced on March 24 for 21 days. As train movement had been suspended, the workers took to the roads. Some found various means of road transport and others walked back all the way to their homes. It is likely that a large number of these workers were short-distance migrants and would have come from enterprises that had shut down, leaving them with no alternative, or, were workers who lived under tenuous conditions on-site. Construction workers and many factory workers would fall into this category. The majority of these workers succeeded in reaching their home states quite early on, and thus bypassed the all the registration systems which had not yet been put in place, which automatically excludes them from the COVID-19 migration data.

Intra-state and short-distance migrants. Many states have a large incidence of intrastate,

short-distance seasonal migration, which is especially true for states that have large tribal populations within or adjacent to their boundaries, like Gujarat and Maharashtra – two major destination states. Tribal communities also occupy large swathes of land in Central and peninsular India and demonstrate high incidence of seasonal. National Capital Region is also expected to have a large number of workers from its surrounding districts in various sectors from manufacturing to service. Such migrant groups who travel fairly short distances could go back to their homes with their own means and without getting registered and would do so as soon as the lockdown was announced, but possibly even after registration posts were set in place, through routes that were not patrolled by police.

Agriculture seasonal migrants. Peak agriculture operations generate large seasonal migration and comprises mainly short-distance migrants in central and peninsular India. It can be safely said that all river valleys and irrigated command areas are likely to see huge amounts of seasonal migration during peak agriculture operations like sowing and harvesting. The lockdown came during such a peak agriculture operation when the Rabi crop harvest season was just beginning. It is expected that some of the agriculture migrants would have gone back during the first wave while others would have stayed back till the season ended and could have continued for the next season.

As mentioned in the beginning, the data generated during COVID has been backed up by two other data sets where available

State level Macro Data Sets: State-level exercises to estimate the number of seasonal migrant workers have been carried out in three states – Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Rajasthan. In Kerala and Tamil Nadu, the exercise was carried out by state agencies while in Rajasthan, it was done by Aajeevika Bureau. The Kerala report is available, while the Tamil Nadu report is not. Only the total number of migrants documented has been reported.

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Micro-level studies at the District and Sub District level: Seasonal migration has begun to attract the attention of CSOs and donor agencies for some time with a number of CSOs beginning to work with seasonal migrant labourers and a few of them have undertaken mapping exercises in their area of operation. As there does not exist official data on seasonal migrant workers, mapping of workers is an essential first step for development interven-

and invited to participate in the exercise through consultation and contribution to the Atlas itself. Eight of these organizations responded with affirmation. An online consultation was held in the month of September which was followed by one-to-one meetings to discuss state-specific data. These individual meetings were conducted with the following agenda:

- Verify the data and the numbers that we

S. N	State	Partner Organization
1	Bihar	Gram Vaani
2	Delhi	Gram Vaani
3	Jharkhand	Partnering Hope Into Action (PHIA) Foundation
4	Kerala	Centre for Migration and Inclusive Development
5	Maharashtra	YUVA and Samaj Pragati Sahyog
6	Madhya Pradesh	Samaj Pragati Sahyog
7	Odisha	Gram Vikas
8	Tamil Nadu	Community Awareness Research Education Trust (CARE- T)

tions focusing on migrant workers.

Developing a Network of Field and Research Organizations

CLRA is fully aware that achieving the aims of the proposed Atlas will be impossible without collaboration, coordination and support from the regional organizations and partners across the states that form the major sources and destinations of seasonal migration in India. For the pilot phase, CLRA has chosen the following major source and destination states:

Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Delhi, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu.

CSOs from all the major receiving and sending states were given a detailed concept note

have found through our review of the literature

- Share collected data and information on potential sources
- Address the gaps that emerge in the existent data

The states from where the initiative has received positive responses are Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Bihar, Delhi, Maharashtra, and Madhya Pradesh. The list of organizations who have consented to be the partners in the above exercise is given in the chart above:

With this context and the methodology, the subsequent section discusses the main findings for the eighteen states – that formed the major source and destination for seasonal migrants.

Chapter 4



Courtesy: Scroll.in

Findings & Observations

At the level of the nation the following data was collated on the migrants who returned to their source states:

- Road Transportation: 41laks (Supreme Court Suo Motu petition, 2020)
- Shramik Trains – 4621 trains operated between May 1st 2020 to 31st August 2020 that transported 63.19 lakh passengers (Ministry of Railways, 2020)
- According to data compiled by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, more than 1.06 crore migrant workers, including

those who travelled on foot during the lockdown, returned to their home states (Ministry of Labour and Employment 2020)

- Total inward migration as per the numbers presented in the Lok Sabha by the Ministry of Labour and Employment stands at 1,14, 30,968 migrant workers

The adjoining table has been collated from the various government sources at national and state levels to present the volume of mi-

Table 2: Movement of migrant workers (During the first phase of COVID)			
Sr. No	State	Inward	Outward
1	Andhra Pradesh	2,00,000 ¹	1,73,193 ⁷
2	Bihar	28,00,000 ²	4,65,766 ⁷
3	Delhi	2,047 ³	6,50,000 ²
4	Chhattisgarh	5,26,900 ³	10,85,000 ⁸
5	Jharkhand	9,66,394 ⁴	2,791 ⁷
6	Karnataka	1,34,438 ³	9,10,000 ⁹
7	Kerala	3,11,124 ³	5,11,980 ⁷
8	Gujarat	0 ³	23,00,000 ²
9	Madhya Pradesh	7,53,581 ³	22,454 ⁷
10	Maharashtra	1,82,990 ³	25,91,573 ¹⁰
11	Rajasthan	13,08,130 ³	11,92,290 ¹¹
12	Odisha	10,70,000 ⁵	77,000 ¹²
13	Punjab	5,15,642 ³	17,19,000 ¹³
14	Haryana	1,289 ³	10,93,000 ¹³
15	Tamil Nadu	1,26,000 ⁶	6,55,226 ⁷
16	Telangana	37,050 ³	4,70,768 ¹⁴
17	West Bengal	13,84,693 ³	11,075 ⁷
18	Uttar Pradesh	32,49,638 ³	7,23,691 ⁷
	Total	1,35,69,916	1,46,54,807

grants that returned to a state (inward) and migrants that left the states to return to their sources (outward) during the first phase of COVID.

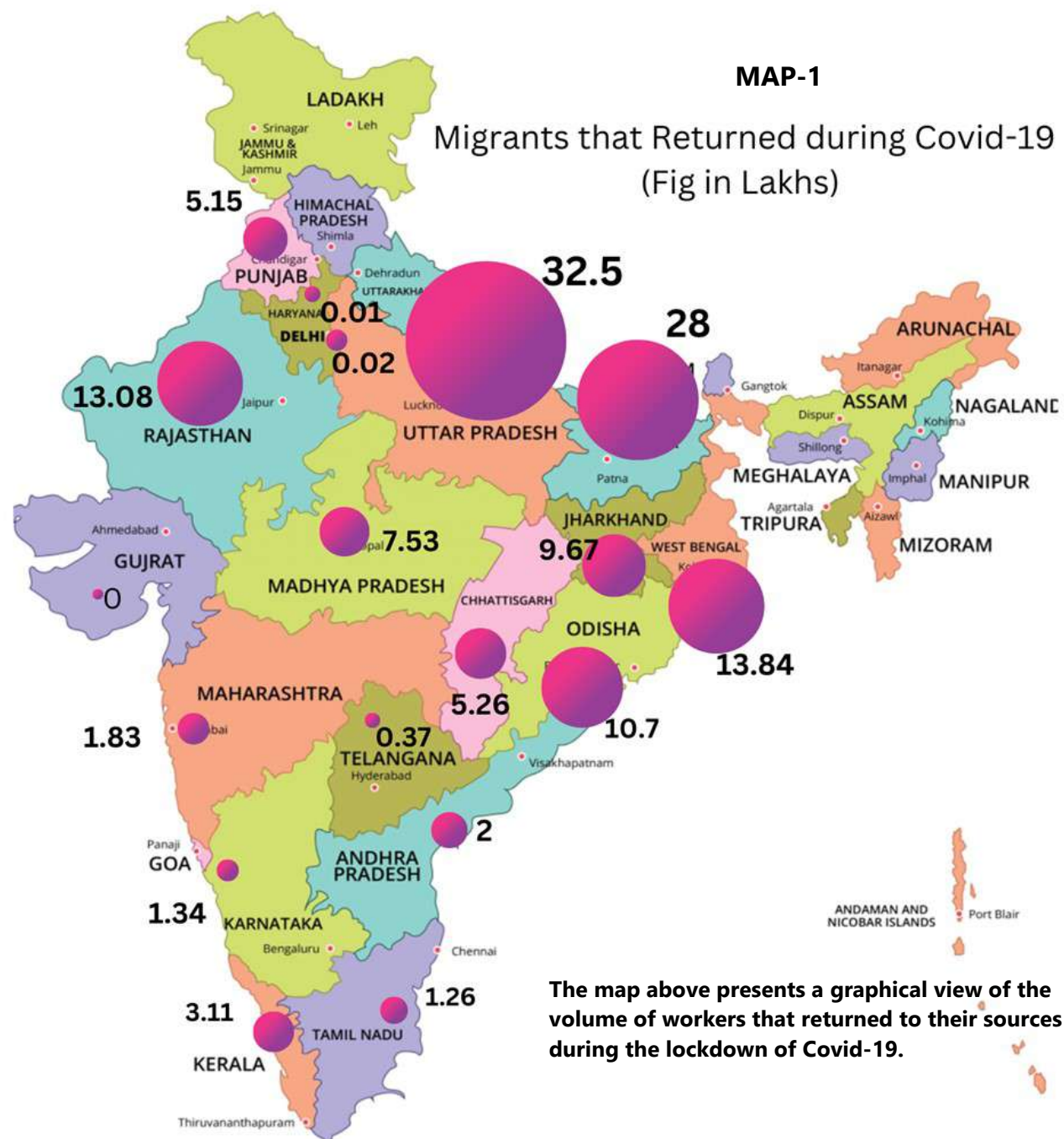
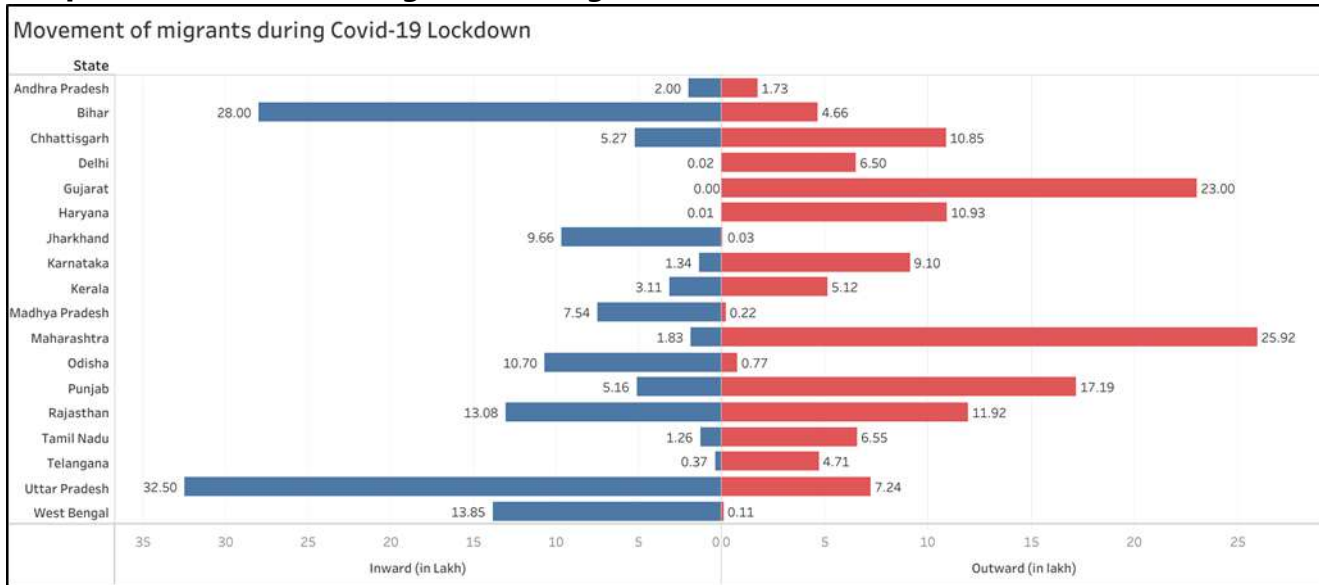
Inward Data. For migrant workers who returned to their home states, the answer given by the Ministry for Labour and Employment to unstarred question number 2110 in parliament on March 8, 2021 is the key

source. It provides a comprehensive list of state wise figures for the number of migrant workers who returned to their home states after the first COVID lock down. This data has been revised for states where it was contradicted by alternate available figures that were more realistic and closer to ground reality like the data from Shramik Trains. This was the case for Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, and Tamil Nadu. The data for Bihar is quoted from the Supreme Court Suo Moto Petition for the migrants that returned to the state. For other states, the data has been drawn from the registration numbers released by the State Labour departments.

Outward Data. The numbers quoted in the table in the second column had to be compiled from multiple Government sources and reports commissioned by the State Departments. The source for the numbers quoted is as follows:

- Registration data at the level of the State Labour Department was used for Delhi and Karnataka.
- The Telangana Police released registration figures for the stranded migrant workers in the state was used for the state of Telangana.
- The figure taken for Chhattisgarh was released by Chief Labour Commissioner.
- The data quoted by the Solicitor General in the Supreme Court writ petition on the number of migrant workers stranded in the state was used for Gujarat.
- State-level registration data was used for Delhi, Odisha, Rajasthan, Punjab, and Haryana.
- Due to a lack of registration data for the states like Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh, the figures have been arrived at by conflating the figures released by the Ministry of Railways for the Shramik Trains. This has been complemented by a ratio of 1.66 which is the

Graph 1: Movement of Migrants during COVID-19 lockdown



Maps Source: <https://worldmapwithcountries.net/2020/03/12/india-map-with-states/>

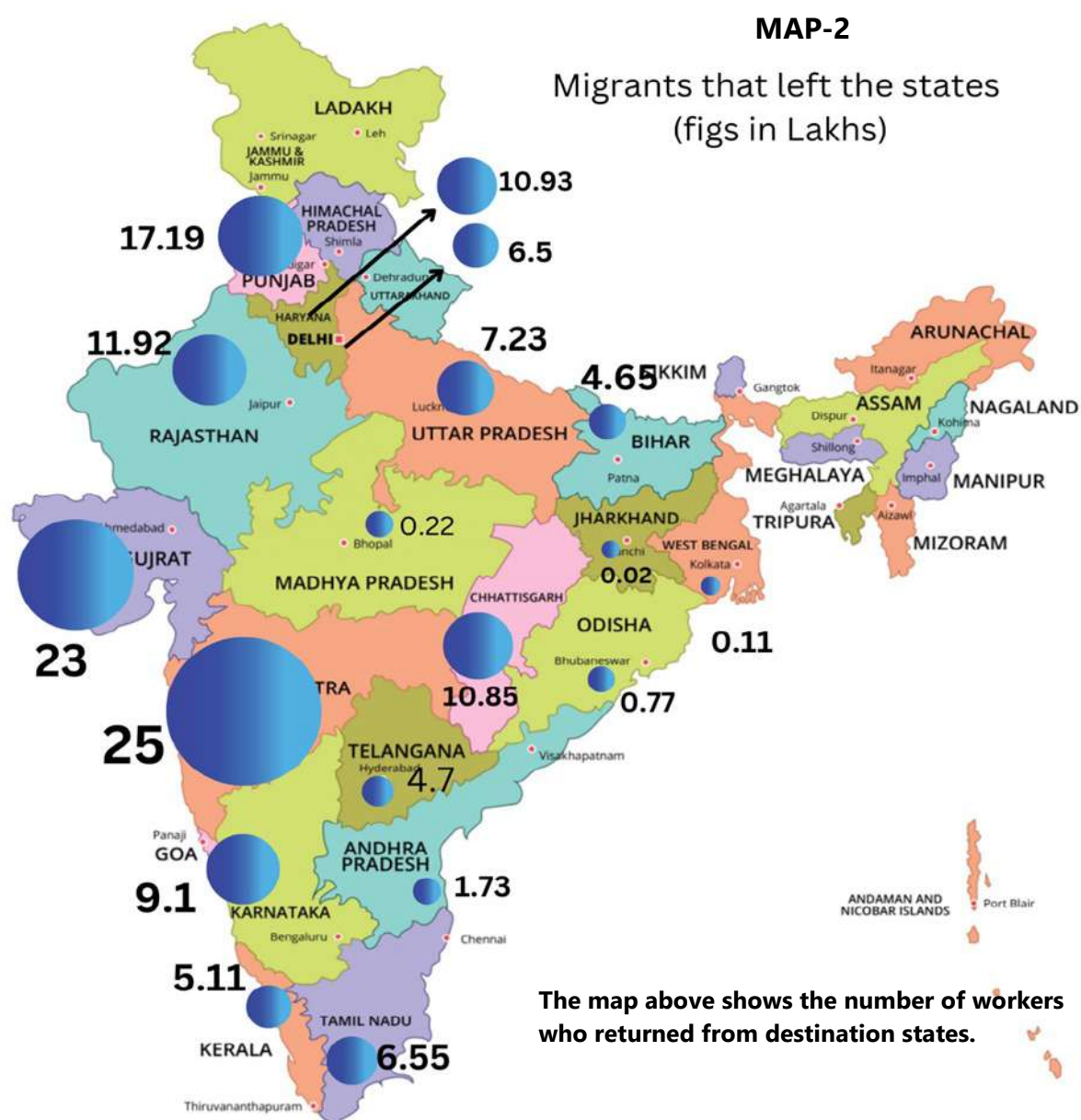
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ratio between number of passengers ferried by Shramik trains and the number of migrants ferried by road transport as given in the response by the Solicitor General in the Supreme Court writ petition.

Table 2 along with the graph state the volume of the movement of migrant workers across 18 states covered in the study. The compilation shows that the total number of migrant workers that returned to their sources for the 18 states stands at 1,35,69,916; while the work-

ers that left the destination of migration to return to their sources stands at 1,46,54,807.

Although the numbers on both sides of the axes do not match, the mismatch is not huge. This corroborates the overall veracity of the data. There are many factors that have to be taken into account when using COVID figures to represent the number of seasonal migrant workers. These have been discussed in the methodology section. Many figures that do not seem correct in the left table are identified and discussed in a later section in this report.

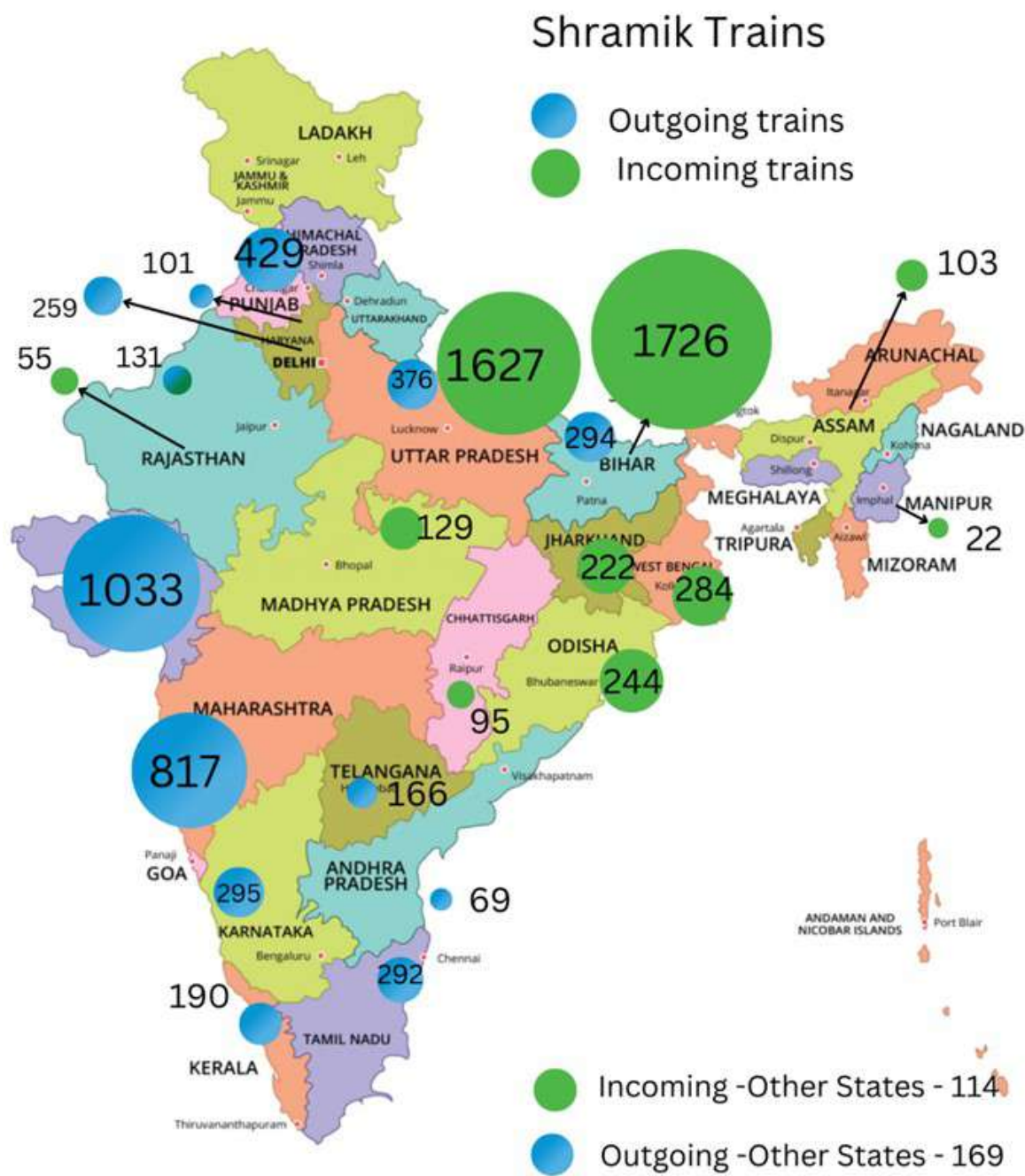


Maps Source: <https://worldmapwithcountries.net/2020/03/12/india-map-with-states/>

The trends from our collation suggest:

- The numbers verify to a large degree the accepted knowledge that the migration is from the North and East parts of the country towards South and West with NCR and Punjab being the only major destination clusters in North.
- The majority of the seasonal migrant workers that returned to their sources during the Covid 19 lockdown were from Ut-

Map 3: Map depicting the movement of migrant workers by Shramik Trains



Maps Source: <https://worldmapwithcountries.net/2020/03/12/india-map-with-states/>



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tar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Odisha, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh.

- The eastern belt, comprising Eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, is the largest source of seasonal migrants across the nation. This will be expanded in the section scrutinising the region-wise data for UP later in the report.
- Maharashtra and Gujarat are the two largest receiving states.
- The NCR and Punjab are two significant destination clusters in North.
- The Southern states of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Telangana have emerged as major destination states in recent years. While the figures do show significant migration to these states, the numbers are not large. The reasons for this are captured in a later section.
- The large states in the North that send out the most workers, including Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, and Bihar, also receive significant number of workers from outside.

The data released by the Ministry of Railways for Shramik trains in the map below confirms and re-enforces the trends and observations as discussed above. The eastern states were the
Courtesy: thenation.com

major source of migration for seasonal workers migrating across the country. While western states of Maharashtra and Gujarat emerged as the major destination for the migrant workers.

The Southern Destination Cluster:

By all accounts, the demographically advanced Southern states, especially Tamil Nadu and Kerala, are a major destination for migrants from North and East. These states, especially Kerala, seem to be under represented in the above collation. One possible reason cited for Kerala is that the workers chose not to go back during COVID. The majority of the migrant workers in Kerala were taken care of by employers/contractors, the CSOs and the State itself.

Tamil Nadu and Kerala were the only two states that had undertaken documentation of migrant workers in their respective states. For Kerala – a survey conducted by the State Planning Board of Kerala also mapped the incidence of seasonal migrants in the state while documenting the incidence of migrants in the state (Parida & Raman, 2021). The study reported that about 21 lakhs were seasonal migrants out of the total number of 31.4 lakhs of interstate migrants in Kerala. However, it is to be noted that the Study defined seasonal mi-



Table 3: States with Doubtful Data on Migrants			
S. No	States	Figure	Reason for scepticism
1	Chhattisgarh	Outgoing 10,85,000	Overestimate. CG is widely recognized to be a source state. The table shows CG receiving more workers than sending out. There is only one source that quoted Chief Labour Commissioner released data stating 10.85 lakhs migrants were present in the state during the pandemic
2	West Bengal	Outgoing 11,075	Underestimate. There were no figures available for West Bengal outgoing workers. West Bengal has been a destination centre for Eastern region. The Shramik Train figure for Out
3	Punjab	Incoming 5,15,642	Overestimate. Punjab is a destination state. There does not seem to be any basis for such a high number of persons to have returned to Punjab.
4	Kerala	Incoming 3,11,124	Not representing seasonal migrants. While the Kerala incoming figure seems correct, it is highly likely that the incoming population were not seasonal migrant workers that are the focus of this study.

gration as migration undertaken for less than 3 months at a stretch. A study by the Gulati Institute of Finance and Taxation estimated that Kerala had 25 lakh migrant workers (Narayana et al. 2013) in 2012. Similarly, for Tamil Nadu, Times of India in 2016 reported that as per Tamil Nadu's State Labour Departments survey report in 2016 (Philip C, 2016) - Tamil Nadu was home to more 10.67 lakh migrant workers, a majority of whom are unskilled workers. The team has filed an RTI to seek the survey report, but, as of printing the current report, no response was recorded from the concerned department.

Suspect, Under reported, and Missing figures:

Some of the figures reported in the table (above) seem suspect as they run counter to accepted wisdom, some figures are not available and some seem to be under-reported. The table below lists such figures and documents

what is wrong with these figures.

Case Studies and State Profiles:

The Study Team accessed a large number of studies related to seasonal migration across the years before deciding to focus on COVID related movement figures in the first phase of the study, four important studies on seasonal migration are showcased in this section. Two of these relate to studies done prior to COVID and the other two are based on data generated during COVID. The state profiles serve as examples of undertaking state-wise documentation of migrant workers. These profiles briefly discuss the method of documenting workers, how the migration streams were identified and the aggregate numbers of workers that undertake migration to various sectors at the national level.

Case study 1

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Labour Migration to Kerala – Trends and Patterns:

Kerala was one of the few states where state-level reports were prepared capturing the seasonal migration phenomenon across the state, acknowledging and elaborating on the pivotal role played by the inter-state migrant workforce in the state. The two studies by Parida and Raman for the State Planning Board of Kerala (2021) and the Centre for Migration and Inclusive Development (2017) - while the former attempted to capture the aggregate numbers of migrants in Kerala and the latter identified migration streams and sectors in which migrants in Kerala were employed.

“A study on in-migration, informal employment and urbanisation in Kerala” - a report submitted to the State Planning Board by Parida and Raman (2021), estimated the number of inter-state migrants, and their working and living conditions in Kerala using primary data, i.e., a baseline survey conducted through clustered sampling in 400 industrial enterprises spread across all the districts of Kerala, and the secondary data from NSS and the Census. The report suggested that the total number of other state domestic migrants in Kerala was about 31 lakhs during the year 2017-18 and about 80 per cent of the sample migrants (about 21 lakhs) undertake seasonal or temporary moves (however, the report defines seasonal migration as less than 3 months at a stretch). It also stated that 17.5 lakhs of the total other state migrants are engaged in the construction sector itself, followed by the manufacturing sector with 6.3 lakh workers. About 3 lakh migrants were estimated to be engaged in agriculture and allied sector activities and the rest were found to be engaged in the service sectors like hotel and restaurant services (about 1.7 lakh), wholesale and retail trade (about 1 lakhs) and other elementary services (1.6 lakh) (Parida & Raman, 2021).

However, the report acknowledged that it

was unable to document footloose labour or daily wage labours on labour nakas who constitute a substantial part of seasonal migrants as the study drew its sample size from industrial clusters.

This brief discussion focuses on the state profiling undertaken by CMID – Kerala with respect to inter-state migrants. CMID had undertaken a massive exercise of a qualitative survey using exploratory research design across all 14 districts of Kerala during 2016-17 to provide insights into the profile of migrant labourers in Kerala, their spatial distribution, the sectors they're employed in and the major migration corridors.

The study reported migrants from 194 districts across 25 Indian states/Union Territories working in Kerala and nearly 60 per cent of the source districts belonged to the eastern and north-eastern states of India. The study listed construction, hospitality, plantation, iron and steel, wooden furniture, marine fishing, mining and quarrying, plywood, textile and apparel, seafood and footwear as the major economic sectors in Kerala that engaged migrant workers in large numbers.

The discussion below gives a brief of the findings of the study:

From the 1990s onwards, labour migration corridors have been established over long distances ranging from 3700 kms to 2300 kms. The table below discusses some of the longest migration corridors from Assam and West Bengal to various districts of Kerala. The study traced the migration streams from Dibrugarh & Nagaon (Assam) to Kollam (Kerala) – where migrants travelled over 3500 kms to find work in Kerala.

The study indicated that the interstate migrants from the southern states of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh constituted single men and women, as well as couples and families. However, migrants from other parts of the country comprised predomi-



Table 4: Some of the newest and longest corridors in India to Kerala

No	Destination	Source District	Source State	Distance
1	Kollam	Nagaon	Assam	3,500
2	Kollam	Cooch Behar	West Bengal	3,000
3	Kollam	Jalpaiguri	West Bengal	3,000
4	Kottayam	Jalpaiguri	West Bengal	2,900
5	Kottayam	Dibrugarh	Assam	3,700
6	Ernakulam	Nagaon	Assam	3,300
7	Ernakulam	Murshidabad	West Bengal	2,500
8	Ernakulam	Saharanpur	Uttar Pradesh	2,800
9	Malappuram	Bardhaman	West Bengal	2,300
10	Kozhikode	Bardhaman	West Bengal	2,300
11	Kozhikode	North 24 Parganas	West Bengal	2,300
12	Kozhikode	South 24 Parganas	West Bengal	2,300

Source: Peter & Narendran, "God's Own Workforce", 2017

namely of single male migrants from poor agrarian and backward communities, though the presence of single women/girls migrants, especially in the sea food packaging sector, along with family migration was seen to a de-

gree.

In terms of caste distribution of the migrant population in Kerala, the study reported that migrants in Kerala originated from largest tribal populations in India. The study further re-



Courtesy: Deccan Chronicle

ported that four out of the five districts with the largest Scheduled Caste populations in India evolved as corridors mainly originating from West Bengal.

Minority and disadvantaged groups constituted the migrants who worked in Kerala - groups such as Muslims, Christians, senior citizens, women, and nomadic groups found employment sectors in Kerala more favourable than the other parts of the country.

The following sections describe the sector wise destinations:

- A. Construction and Infrastructure in Kochi, Thrissur, Kozhikode, Thiruvananthapuram - Vizhinjam Port, IT Parks, Kochi, Refinery Expansion, Kochi Metro, where migrants from all the source states find employment in the construction sector across the state
- B. Hospitality (All Kerala) Hotels, restaurants, resorts, parlours across the state employs migrants from the North-east states of

The Invisibles

India Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, Assam, Mizoram, Manipur in addition to other states also as well as & Nepal.

- C. Plantations and Private farms of Tea, Coffee, Cardamom Diary, Poultry, Agri Nurseries spread across Idukki, Palakkad, Wayanad, Thrissur have Jharkhand, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Assam, and Tamil Nadu as source states.
- D. Fishing in Neendakara, Kochi, Ponnani, Beypore, Puthiyappa, Koilandi, and Azhikal employ two kinds of migrants from two different sources: traditional fishers from the Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka; and in the Harbour, unskilled migrant workers from Assam, West Bengal, Jharkhand and Odisha.
- E. Mining and Quarrying in Mookkunnimala (Trivandrum), Indianoor (Malappuram), Thrithala (Palakkad), Blathur, Oorathoor, Irikkoor (Kunnur) and Periya (Kasargod) are populated by migrants from Assam, Odisha, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Karnataka.
- F. Plywood in Ernakulam, Kannur, Wayanad employs skilled & unskilled migrant workers predominantly men but women as well from Assam, West Bengal, and Odisha.
- G. Sea Food processing in Alappuzha, Kollam, Aroor, Eramalloor, Sakthikulangara and Neendakara is one sector that employed Women and Girls predominantly. These workers were migrants from Assam, Odisha, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka.
- H. Footwear Industry employs skilled and unskilled labour from Bihar and West Bengal.
- I. Garment industry employs men and women migrant workers from tribal communities in Odisha, North eastern states and West Bengal.

Case Study 2

Understanding Labour Migration from Rural Odisha- Studies in Four Blocks:

Over the decades, Odisha has remained one



Courtesy: DownToEarth

of the major source states for seasonal migration. Even though a study covering the entire state could not be found, there have been several micro-level attempts at uncovering seasonal migration from Odisha.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, an intensive exercise was undertaken by Gram Vikas and CMID to study the various aspects of migration in four Blocks in four Districts in Odisha to uncover the migration from these locations and the impact of the COVID pandemic on their communities. The migrant survey covered areas such as the socio-demographic profile of the migrant workers, factors that influenced migration, wages, living arrangements, access to services and

social protection using a semi-structured interview method. The survey covered 440 households and 84 migrants from Thuamul Rampur block, 421 households and 168 migrants from Jagannath Prasad, 440 households and 139 migrants from Rayagada and 417 households and 94 migrants from Baliguda block between December 2019 to March 2021. The study focuses on inter-state migration and migration for a period of more than 30 days.

The study has found that the household migration rates were the highest for the households from Scheduled Castes with nearly half of the households with a history of migration. More than half the population

The Invisibles

of the following regions belong to scheduled castes – Rayagada (77%), Baliguda (56%) and Thuamul Rampur blocks (49%), followed by OBCs and SCs. Across all blocks, fairly young (22-30 years of age), single-male outmigration was more predominant. As per the report, less than one-third of these migrant workers had studied up to the higher secondary level. Except for Jagannathprasad (40%), in all three blocks, more than half of the migrant workers belonged to the semi-skilled/unskilled category. The median wage income earned at the destination site as reported by the migrant workers ranged between 10,000-12,000 per month.

Pre-Covid, almost 38% and 18% of households from Jagannathprasad had at least one person who migrated outside the district and the state respectively with similar figures for other districts like 34% and 31% respectively for Rayagada; 21% and 18% for Baliguda, and around 20% and 19% for Thuamul Rampur. Post-Covid, approx. 30% and 22% of households from Jagannathprasad, 18% and 15% for Rayagada and 12% and 11% for Baliguda had at least one person who migrated outside the district and the state, respectively.

Regarding seasonal migration, the study revealed that 28.6% of the households from Rayagada, 10.7% from Jagannathprasad, 5% from Thuamul Rampur and 3.4% of households from Baliguda had at least one person migrated for work outside the district or state for a period of six months or less.

Out of the total population of the block, 12.4% of people from Jagannathprasad, 9.3% from Rayagada, 5.3% from Baliguda and 5.8% from Thuamul Rampur migrated outside the district for work.

Almost 47% of workers from Rayagada, 30% from Thuamul Rampur, 20% from Baliguda and 17% from Jagannathprasad who migrate out of Odisha were engaged in the construction sector.

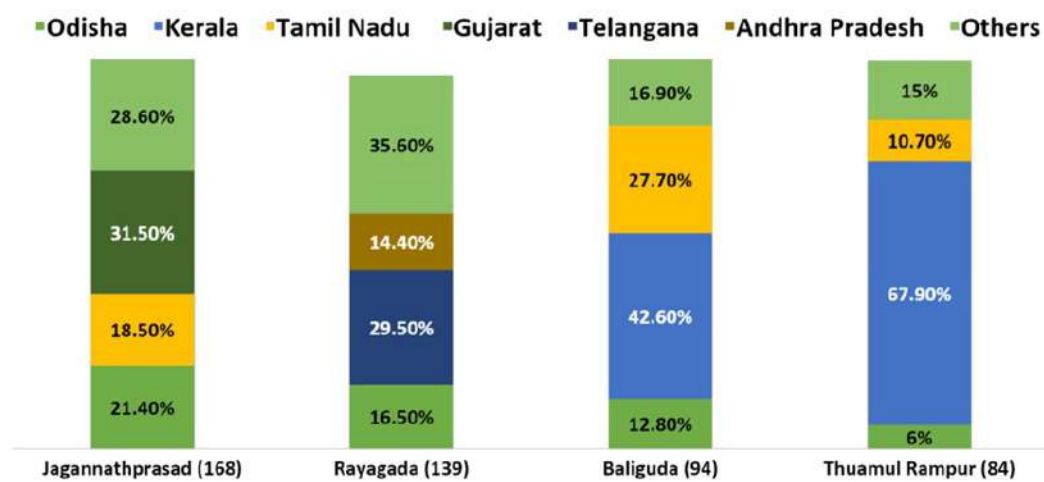
Similarly, over one-third of the migrant workers (around 36%) from Jagannathprasad, and 16% from Baliguda were employed in a shop or establishment. 21% of the migrants worked in the garment industry. In the case of Rayagada, factories emerged as the second largest employing sector after construction (15%) followed by domestic work which employed around 6% of the migrants.

Three out of every ten workers from the

Table 5: Distribution of Migrant workers by State in which they worked

Destination States

Distribution of migrant workers by State in which they worked



Source: Gram Vikas & CMID, "Labour Migration from Rural Odisha" (2021).

Baliguda block worked in factories. The construction sector absorbed over a quarter of the migrant labourers from tribal communities and 10 per cent of the migrants from Other Disadvantaged Communities. About three-fifths of all workers from Thuamul Rampur were engaged either in the hotel industry or in the construction sector. While hotels/restaurants absorbed the largest proportion of workers from Other Disadvantaged Communities, the construction sector engaged the largest proportion of workers from tribal communities.

As per the study, Kerala emerged as the top destination state for the people migrating out of Baliguda and Thuamul Rampur blocks, while Gujarat secured the top spot for outmigration from Jagannathprasad. A significant proportion of the people from Rayagada block migrated to Telangana and Andhra Pradesh (around 30% and 15% respectively).

Case study 3

Returning to Chhattisgarh during the Pandemic:

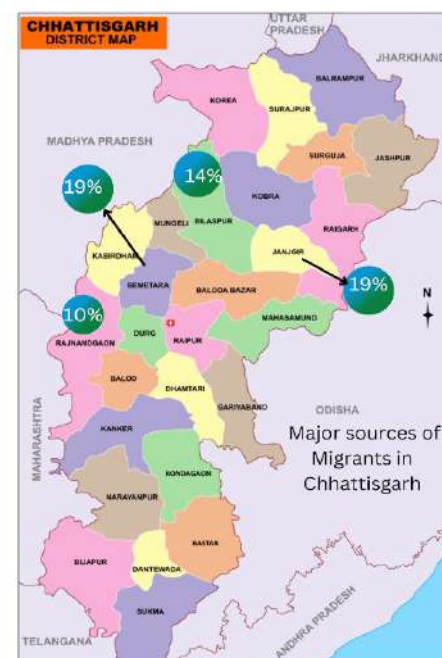
In Chhattisgarh, Evidence for Policy Design India at KREA University and Indus Action partnered with the Government of Chhattisgarh to collect data from migrants returning to their rural homes in Chhattisgarh to support the state's Covid-19 pandemic response efforts. During the Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdown, in many states, civil society organizations were assisting and supporting the state governments to enumerate migrants so that relief work could be extended to them and their families. The discussion details the findings of the study wherein the teams of researchers reached out to over 27,000 migrants and surveyed 12,4071 of them over the phone between May 29 to July 7, 2020.

Based on this survey, a report published by the organisation titled, "Returning to Chhattisgarh through the pandemic - Findings from a survey of return migrants," makes the follow-

ing observation:

- The age group of the returning migrant respondents were fairly young, with 61% of those surveyed under the age of 30, and 94% under age 45.
- The team reported that just over two in three migrants were males indicating that single-male migration was more predominant than family migration.
- Of those that migrated - the majority of them belonged to (48%) belonged to the Other Backward Class, followed by Sched-

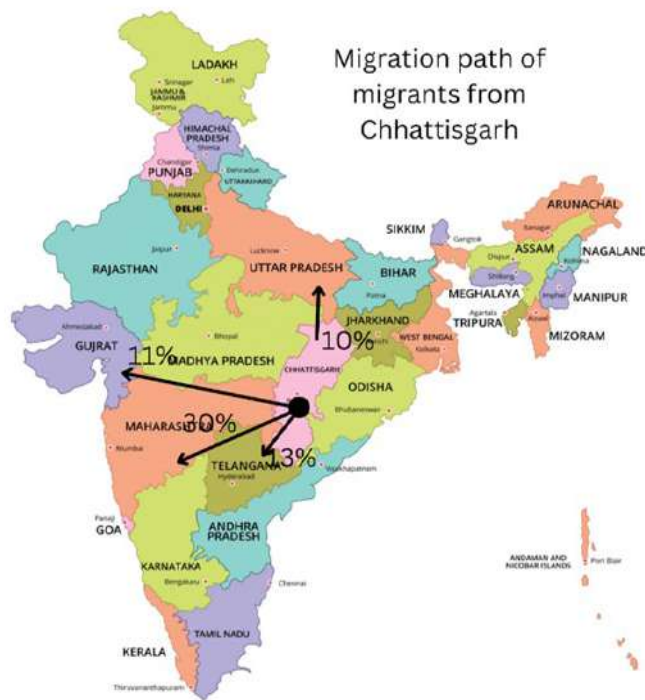
Map 4: Major Source districts of Migrants from Chhattisgarh



Source: <https://www.drishtiias.com/state-pcs/chhattisgarh-gk-state-pcs-english>

- uled Castes (25%) and Scheduled Tribes (22%).
- Out of the total sample size, 30% of the returnee migrants had arrived from Maharashtra; another 13% came from Telangana, 11% from Gujarat and 10% from Uttar Pradesh.
- Most migrants returned that returned to Chhattisgarh belonged to centrally located districts including Bemetra (19%), Janjgir

Map 5: Migration path from Chhattisgarh



Source: <https://worldmapwithcountries.net/2020/03/12/india-map-with-states/>

Champa (19%), Bilaspur (14%), and Rajnandgaon (10%).

- The majority of the migrants from Chhattisgarh migrating to other states like Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Telangana were non-agricultural labourers.
- The survey further revealed that over four in five of the returned migrants had been employed in non-agricultural work at the destination states prior to their return to the state before the Covid-induced lockdown.

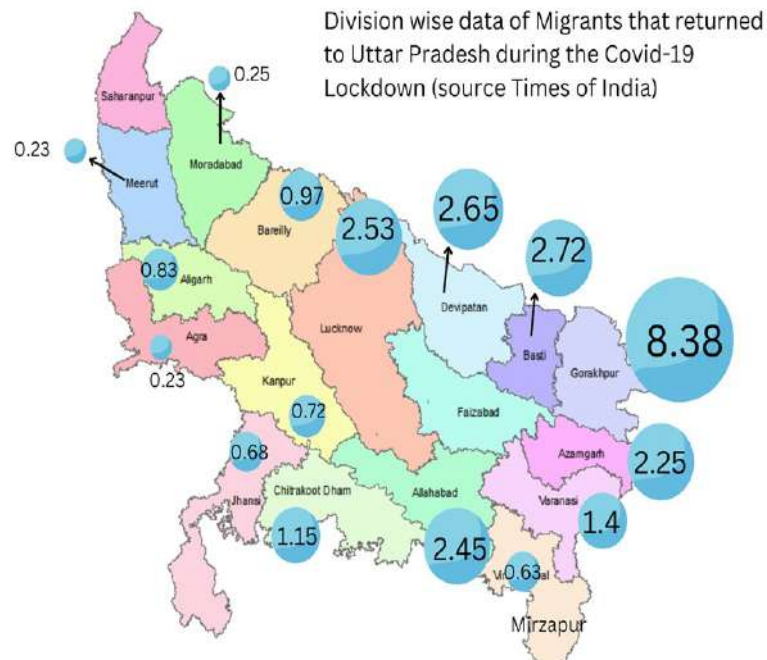
**Case Study 4
Regional Distribution of Outmigration from Uttar Pradesh:**

In June 2020, the Times of India reported a division-wise break-up of the migrants that returned to the state of Uttar Pradesh. The report details the following observations and is

reflected in the map below:

- Gorakhpur Division, Maharajganj district received the highest (7.11 lakhs), followed by Kushinagar and Gorakhpur with 50,293 and 44,047 migrants, respectively.
- Out of the top 10 divisions from where maximum migration was reported, 7 were from East Uttar Pradesh and Bundelkhand.
- After Maharajganj, the other districts that received the maximum number of migrants: - Prayagraj (1,38,311), Sant Kabirnagar (99,941), Mau (97,073), Bahraich (91,956), Balrampur (88,522), Siddharthnagar (83,451) and Basti (82,000).

Map 6: Division-wise data for Uttar Pradesh for migrants that returned during the Lockdown



Source: <https://uttarpradesh.pscnotes.com/uttar-pradesh-general-studies/uttarpradesh-polity/division-and-district-of-uttar-pradesh/>

Conclusion and

The first round of data collation was done on the hypothesis that the figures generated after the first COVID lockdown would be fairly representative of seasonal migrant workers, which was largely borne out. After exhaustive desk research and compilation exercises, the research team arrived at the following estimates for the seasonal interstate migrant workers in India:

- Migrants that returned to their home states (Inward): 1,35,69,916
- Migrants that left the state to return to their home states (Outward): 1,46,54,807

While there is some mismatch, it is not significant, considering the scope and nature of this project. There are many problems with the data released, such as contradictions and numerical mismatches in the datasets despite almost all of these sets originating from state sources. Nonetheless, the fact that the figures derived from a diverse sources for incoming and outgoing workers align quite closely, proves to the veracity of the data and approach adopted.

The dataset accords with the accepted knowledge on seasonal migration patterns and shows that the Eastern parts of the country – comprising of Eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, and Odisha – are the largest source of migrant workers, with the NCR, Punjab and Southern and Western parts of the country – comprising Gujarat, Maharashtra, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Telangana, being the chief destination for these workers.

The team has also identified the state level figures that seem problematic, such as with states like Kerala, where alternate data sets are available.

Besides capturing macro, state-level figures, the exercise has also generated micro-level details and case studies. Some of these have been shared.

The first year of data collection is a pilot exercise. It is only the first step in developing a comprehensive document that would generate quantitative and qualitative data on seasonal migrant workers, the most vulnerable segment of the work-

the Way Forward

ing class. It is hoped that this would provide the ground for discussion and collaboration amongst the interested stakeholders to carry forward this exercise.

The Way Forward

It is proposed to continue the exercise through the second year with the focus on covering some of the major gaps that have been left.

Covering short distance short term migration. As shared earlier, one major gap is that the data set captured in the exercise leaves out short distance migration. Almost all the flourishing economic clusters like NCR and Gujarat are likely to have significant short distance migration where people from adjacent districts come in to work in large numbers.

Mapping the Central-Western tribal belt. The Western-Central tribal belt, stretching across four states – Rajasthan, MP, Gujarat, and Maharashtra is a major source for short term casual workers in agriculture and construction, and other sectors for the West Indian states of Maharashtra and Gujarat and also smaller growth centres in the peripheries. However, this short-term seasonal migration has not been adequately captured.

Developing state profiles. States are the building blocks of the National Atlas, but only very few states have studies capturing their migration profile. These include Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Rajasthan. In Jharkhand, an exercise has been planned to undertake a state level profile and it is now proposed to develop state level profiles for other states as well.

Addressing the gender gap. One of the major feedbacks received during the presentation of the draft report was that there is no gender segregation of data, despite female workers constituting a significant proportion of seasonal migrants. This was a result of the fact that the secondary data accessed had no gender segregation. The project team has filed a series of RTI queries to generate gender specific data sets to address this shortcoming.

END NOTES

¹ NewIndianXpress. "Covid-19: With Two Lakh from Andhra Stranded across India, Government Working to Bring Them Home." The New Indian Express. The New Indian Express, May 4, 2020. Accessed on December 11, 2022 <https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/andhra-pradesh/2020/may/04/covid-19-with-two-lakh-from-andhra-stranded-across-india-government-working-to-bring-them-home-2138909.html>.

² SUO MOTU WRIT PETITION (CIVIL) No(s).6/2020: PROBLEMS AND MISERIES OF MIGRANT LABOURERS (Supreme Court June 2020).

³ MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT. 2021. INTER-STATE MIGRANT WORKMEN ACT, GoI (2020).

⁴ Angad, Abhishek. "Jharkhand Govt Launches Initiative to Enable Systemic Registration of Migrant Workers." The Indian Express, December 17, 2021. Accessed on December 11, 2022 <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/jharkhand-safe-and-responsible-migration-initiative-hemant-soren-7677318/>.

⁵ Barik, Satyasundar. "Children of Migrant Labourers in Odisha Face an Uncertain Future." The Hindu, February 27, 2021. Accessed on December 11, 2022 https://www.thehindu.com.cdn.ampproject.org/v/s/www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/children-of-migrant-labourers-in-odisha-face-an-uncertain-future/article33951850.ece/amp/?amp_gsa=1&js_v=a9&usqp=mq331AQKKAFQArABIACAw%3D%3D#amp_tf=From%20%251%24s&aoh=16684937309165&referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com&share=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.thehindu.com%2Fnews%2Fnational%2Fother-states%2Fchildren-of-migrant-labourers-in-odisha-face-an-uncertain-future%2Farticle33951850.ece.

⁶ Jesudasan, Dennis S. "1.26 Lakh Tamils Residing Outside State Register with Govt. to Return Home." Return to frontpage, May 3, 2020. Accessed on December 11, 2022 <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/126-lakh-tamils-residing-outside-state-register-with-govt-to-return-home/article31496403.ece>.

⁷ For states such as Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh the team had to rely on Shramik trains data and the road transportation data. The figures arrived at were had to be adjusted to incorporate migrants travelled by road transportation along with the Shramik trains.

⁸ Mishra, Soni. "Chhattisgarh Has Most Number of Stranded Migrant Workers as per CLC

The Invisibles

Data." The Week. The Week, June 5, 2020. Accessed on December 11, 2022 <https://www.theweek.in/news/india/2020/06/05/chhattisgarh-has-most-number-of-stranded-migrant-workers-as-per-clc-data.html>

⁹ Kumar, Chethan, and Sandeep Moudgal. "Migrant Workers Karnataka: 11.6 Lakh Want to Leave Karnataka, 80% of Them Workers: Bengaluru News - Times of India." The Times of India. TOI, May 29, 2020. Accessed on December 11, 2022 <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/bengaluru/11-6-lakh-want-to-leave-karnataka-80-of-them-workers/articleshow/76084999.cms>

¹⁰ Based on the figures received through the following sources, our estimation is that 25,91,573 migrants left Maharashtra via rail and road transport.

- a. Ministry of Railways, SHRAMIK EXPRESS TRAINS: UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.415, GoI (2020).
- b. Siddique, Iram. "781 Shramik Trains Left Maharashtra, 30 More Needed: Officials." The Indian Express, May 31, 2020. <https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/mumbai/781-shramik-trains-left-maharashtra-30-more-needed-officials-6435232/>.

¹¹ Agarwal, Subodh. "How Rajasthan Managed the Migrant Worker Crisis." The Hindu Business Line, June 25, 2020. Accessed on December 11, 2022, <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/opinion/how-rajasthan-managed-the-migrant-worker-crisis/article31915228.ece>

¹² Sahu, Priya. "Covid-19: Odisha's Subarnapur Sets Example by Treating Stranded Migrants with Dignity." Down To Earth, April 16, 2020. Accessed on December 11, 2022 <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/food/covid-19-odisha-s-subarnapur-sets-example-by-treating-stranded-migrants-with-dignity-70503>

¹³ Dash, Dipak. "After 2,050 Shramik Runs, Just 30% of Migrants Have Managed to Leave: India News - Times of India." The Times of India. TOI, May 22, 2020. Accessed on December 11, 2022 <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/after-2050-shramik-runs-just-30-of-migrants-have-managed-to-leave/articleshow/75878703.cms>

¹⁴ NewIndianXpress. "Telangana Sees Another Exodus of Migrants amid Second Wave of Covid ." The New Indian Express, April 16, 2021. Accessed on December 11, 2022 <https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/teelangana/2021/apr/16/teelangana-sees-another-exodus-of-migrants-amid-second-wave-of-covid-2290596.html>.

APPENDICES



Courtesy: lse.ac.uk

"There is a responsibility that we can't end the conversation after Covid. If we want to document migrant worker stories, this is just the beginning." - Ms Ho, a chinese migrant worker

The Invisibles

Over the course of our study, the following briefs were prepared to review the status of the data available for various states pertaining to the number of migrant workers which form the foundation for our final compilations. The figures below reflect the multiplicity in terms of the data collection at various states by the Government and as quoted in various reports and news/media articles.

The figures in the following state-wise compilation includes state-specific case studies or documentation that was undertaken during the COVID 19.

Andhra Pradesh:

Inward:

- The Central government reported that 32,571 migrants returned to Andhra Pradesh in the Lok Sabha in March 2021 (Ministry of Labour and Employment, 2021).
- The New Indian Express (May 4th, 2020) reported that the Andhra Pradesh government had received about 500 applications on Spandana (spandana.ap.gov.in) to return to the state. Spandana is the Chief Minister's One-Stop public grievance redressal platform for the citizens of Andhra Pradesh.
- It is estimated that two lakh people from Andhra Pradesh are stranded in other states. By first week of May, the state has details of 12,542 people stranded in other states. Of them, 4,000 fishermen were stranded in Gujarat, 3,000 fishermen in Tamil Nadu, 1,100 others in Odisha and 9,000 from Rajasthan (the New Indian Express, May 4th 2020).

Outward:

- The statement released by the Ministry of Railways stated that 69 Shramik trains were

sent by Andhra Pradesh (Press Information Bureau 2020). 104,915 passengers left Andhra Pradesh to return to their place of origin (Press Information Bureau 2021).

Other news reporting:

- Times of India (Mar 25, 2021) reported that about 1.3 lakh migrants were sent home to Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Telangana, Madhya Pradesh. The state witnessed reverse migration of nearly 1 lakh people which includes those who migrated to other districts within the state. Srikakulam received the highest number of migrants at about 13,000. Nearly 4,600 fishermen stranded in Veraval, (Gujarat), Madh Island (Maharashtra) and Malpe village in Udupi (Karnataka) were brought back in special buses.
- Another reporting by Business Today (May 01, 2020) noted that the state government had mapped 13,060 state residents working in other districts outside their native. Of these, 8,079 were ready to return home and another 4,981 wanted to stay back and continue to work. Most of these people were agricultural and industrial workers.
- Outward: The article continued to report that the state had mapped 13,255 migrants working in various sectors in different districts of Andhra Pradesh. Of them, 12,794 migrants expressed willingness to return to their home states and only 461 wished to stay back. Of the total, as many as 10,696 migrant workers were lodged in government-run relief camps while another 2,098 in camps run by non-governmental organisations. The highest number of 2,602 migrant workers were from Uttar Pradesh, followed by 1,110 from Bihar, 1,086 from Telangana, 822 from Karnataka, 745 from Madhya Pradesh and 499 from West Bengal,

he said. Most of these workers were engaged in industries, agriculture sector, hotels and restaurants in the state (ibid).

Bihar

Inward:

- The Hindu (May 31, 2020) reported that as many as 29 lakh migrants had registered with the government's app to avail the assistance of ₹1,000 each announced by the Chief Minister. According to government officials, around 25 lakh migrant workers had returned to Bihar till 31st May 2020 and nearly 1.5 lakh more were expected to arrive.
- According to the Central Govt's response in the Lok Sabha 15,00,612 migrants returned to Bihar in March 2021 (Ministry of Labour and Employment, 2021).
- According to the Ministry of Railways - 1627 Shramik trains were received by Bihar as per the govt data (Press Information Bureau 2020). Although, the exact number of migrants that returned by Shramik trains has not been quoted by the Ministry of Railways, estimations reveal that an approximate of 22,24,841 workers would have returned to Bihar by Shramik trains.
- As per official figures, more than 21 lakh people have returned by Shramik special trains since May 2, 2020. Others have returned via road, either by hitch-hiking or by foot (Tripathi, 2020).
- As per Mint (23rd June 2020) the analysis of the data generated from mapping of six states under Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan showed that as many as 23.6 lakh migrants returned to Bihar. Three of the top districts with highest returnee populations were Siddharthnagar from Uttar Pradesh with 1,60,000 returnees, and East Champaran and Katihar from Bihar with over 1,50,000

and 1,40,000 returnees respectively (Verma, 2020)

- The state government initiated the process of skill-mapping as soon as the migrant workers started returning. As per figures available with industries department, out of the 16-lakh skilled and semi-skilled workers, around 8.40 lakh workers have been identified as construction workers, 57,000 tailors, 41,000 carpenters, 4,000 food processing workers and 1,400 handicraft workers among others (ibid).
- Another reporting by NDTV (2nd June 2020), the state received 2 lakhs migrants with the help of the Delhi and Uttar Pradesh state governments by June 2020 (Kumar 2020).

Outward:

- The Ministry of Railways indicated that 294 Shramik trains carrying 2,82,147 passengers were sent by Bihar (Press Information Bureau 2020) (Press Information Bureau 2021).

Chhattisgarh

Inward:

- The Central Government 5,26,900 migrants returned to Chhattisgarh as per the response given in the Lok Sabha in March 2021 (Ministry of Labour and Employment 2021).
- Ministry of Railways released that 95 Shramik trains were received by Chhattisgarh as per the govt data (Press Information Bureau 2020). Approximately 129908 passengers might have returned to Chhattisgarh by Shramik trains.
- A report by Samarthan Centre for Development (2020) disclosed that 7 lakh workers returned to Chhattisgarh during the lockdown.

The Invisibles

Outward:

- The press release by the Ministry of Railways stated that 1,556 passengers were sent via Shramik trains from Chhattisgarh to other states (Press Information Bureau 2021).
- Chhattisgarh has the largest number of stranded workers at 10.85 lakh as per the data released by the chief labour commissioner in June 2020 (Mishra, 2020). The report continues to state that in Chhattisgarh, the vast majority of the workers (8.6 lakh) live in migrant clusters, and only 4,018 are in relief camps or shelter homes. Around 2.2 lakh workers in the state live in-situ at their workplaces (ibid)
- Times of India (Oct 18, 2020) and Daily Pioneer (Oct 18, 2020) report that Chhattisgarh was reported as the top-ranking state of the country in terms of providing facilities to the migrant labourers, according to a survey report by the Interferential Survey Statistics and Research Foundation (ISSRF). However, the report could neither be located nor the articles mentioned the aggregate number of migrants in Chhattisgarh.

Migration Stream:¹

From Koriya, Jaspur, Sarguja, Ambikapur, Janjagir Champa, Mahasamand, Baloda Bazaar– to Goa (Panjim), Delhi (NCR, Gurgaon, Delhi), Jharkhand (Ranchi), Telangana (Karimnagar), Punjab (Hoshiarpur, Patiala), Gujarat (Ahmedabad- Vadodara), Rajasthan (Ajmer, Bhilwara), Odisha

Sectors: Domestic Help, Construction, Agriculture, Fishery, Textile Industry, Brick Kilns

Delhi

Inward:

- As per the numbers presented by the Central Government in the Lok Sabha in March 2021, it was reported that 2,047 migrants returned to Delhi during the Covid Lockdown (Ministry of Labour and Employment 2021).
- Outward:
- As per the writ petition in Supreme Court, 6.5 lakh individuals had registered themselves on the web portal of the Government of NCT of Delhi to go back to their native places by June 2020 and 2 lakhs migrant labourers chose not to go to their native places:
- Till June 2020, about 3 lakhs migrant workers were sent to their native places by 236 trains and about 12,000 workers had been sent by buses as per Shri Sanjay Jain, according to the Solicitor General who appeared for NCT of Delhi in response to the Suo Moto petition of the Supreme Court (SUO MOTU WRIT PETITION (CIVIL): PROBLEMS AND MISERIES OF MIGRANT LABOURERS 2020).
- The press release by the Ministry of Railways stated that 259 Shramik trains were sent from Delhi to other states that carried 308,181 passengers (Press Information Bureau 2020) (Press Information Bureau 2021).

Haryana

Inward:

- As per the Central government's response in the Lok Sabha dated March 8th, 2021 (Ministry of Labour and Employment 2021) 1,289 migrants returned to Haryana.

1. Some of the streams have been taken from Disha Foundation's policy brief on Tribal Livelihood Migration in India : Situational Analysis, Gap Assessment and Future Direction in 12 states of India

Outward:

- A press release by the Ministry of Railways concerning Shramik Trains revealed that 154,014 passengers were sent from Haryana to other states till August 2020 (Press Information Bureau 2021).
- 10.93 lakh migrants were registered till 14 May 2020, including 80.4 per cent for Bihar and UP alone, for moving out of Haryana (Thakur, 2020).

Jharkhand**Inward:**

- As per the Central government's response in the Lok Sabha dated March 8th, 2021 (Ministry of Labour and Employment 2021) the number of migrants that returned to Jharkhand stands at 5,30,047 migrants.
- A press release by the Ministry of Railways concerning Shramik Trains revealed that 222 Shramik trains were received by Jharkhand from other states till August 2020 (Press Information Bureau 2020). The exact number of migrants who were sent back by Shramik trains remains unclear, though it is possible to estimate that around 3,03,574 workers might have returned by Shramik trains.
- According to the state government estimates (Jharkhand migrant control room), between March 27, 2020, to October 31, 2021, a total of 9.66 lakh workers returned to Jharkhand (Angad, 2021), (PTI 2021).
- A skill mapping was carried out on the instructions of Jharkhand CM between May 2020 to June 2020 which revealed that about 7 lakh workers, stranded outside the state had registered with the government to return home (Dey 2020).

Case study:

According to a block profile survey of Dumka district done by the Jharkhand State Livelihood Promotion Society, updated till 11th July 2020, 14,036 migrants migrate out of the district and the majority out of the state.

However, the dataset contained many duplicities.

Outward:

- A press release by the Ministry of Railways concerning Shramik Trains revealed that 1,691 stranded passengers were sent by Shramik trains to other states till August 2020 (Press Information Bureau 2020).

Karnataka**Inward:**

- As per the Central government's response in the Lok Sabha dated March 8th, 2021 (Ministry of Labour and Employment 2021) the number of migrants that returned to Karnataka stands at 1,34,438 migrants.

Outward:

- A press release by the Ministry of Railways concerning Shramik Trains revealed that 295 Shramik trains carrying 417,378 were sent from Karnataka to other states till August 2020 (Press Information Bureau 2020, 2021).
- As per the Times of India reporting (29th May 2020), 9.1 lakh stranded workers registered to go back to their states of origin on the state registration portal (Seva Sindhu app) till 29 May 2020 (Kumar & Moudgal 2020).

The Invisibles

Kerala:

Inward:

- As per the Central government's response in the Lok Sabha dated March 8th, 2021 (Ministry of Labour and Employment 2021) the number of migrants that returned to Kerala stands at 3,11,124 migrants.
- From May 2020 till Jan 2021, when travel was allowed after the easing of the first COVID-19 lockdown, 13,19,270 Keralites have come back to the state from within the country. Of those, the maximum number of people returned from neighbouring Tamil Nadu (3.12 lakh), followed by Karnataka (3.11 lakh) and Maharashtra (1.37 lakh) (PTI. "Covid-19 impact: 8.7 lakh expats return to Kerala; half of them due to job loss", 2021).

Outward:

- According to the State Government's data, the number of workers stranded in Kerala stood at 3.6 lakhs (Radhakrishnan 2020).
- During the lockdown, approximately 3.96 lakh labourers were stranded in Kerala as per the official website of Kerala police ("Guest Labourers." 2020).
- According to the data published by the labour Commissionerate (2021), the department had conducted 21,556 camps that accommodated 4.34 lakh migrants during the first Covid-19-induced lockdown (2021). The data also stated that two areas - Payipadu in Kottayam and Perumbavur in Ernakulam district were migrant-worker-intense.
- A press release by the Ministry of Railways concerning Shramik Trains revealed that 190 Shramik trains were sent from Kerala to other states that carried 3,10,142 passengers till August 2020 (Press Information Bureau 2020), (Press Information Bureau 2021).

- A study by the Gulati Institute of Finance and Taxation estimated that Kerala had 25 lakh migrant workers (Narayana et al. 2013). However, the survey based on long-distance trains entering Kerala did not consider those from the neighbouring states such as Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, who arrived using other means of transport.
- According to the report submitted to the Kerala State Planning Board in 2017-18 (which also took seasonal migrants into consideration), it is estimated that the total number of other state domestic migrants in Kerala is 31.4 lakhs during 2017-18. Out of which, 21 lakhs are seasonal migrants (less than 3 months at a stretch) (Parida & Raman 2021).

Madhya Pradesh:

Inward:

- As per the response given in the Lok Sabha in March 2021, 7,53,581 migrants returned to Madhya Pradesh (Ministry of Labour and Employment 2021).
- As reported by Economic Times (2020), 7.3 lakh migrant workers registered with the state government through Rozgar setu portal till June 2020 (Sharma, 2020).
- As per the govt data, 129 Shramik trains were received by Madhya Pradesh (Press Information Bureau 2020). Although the exact number of migrants who were received by Shramik trains remains undisclosed, as per our estimations the number could be around 1.41 lakh workers who returned to Madhya Pradesh by Shramik trains.
- According to additional chief secretary ICP Keshari, in charge of the state control room, over 5 lakh migrant workers from Madhya Pradesh, who were stranded in different

parts of the country had been brought back to their homes till 23rd May 2020. At least 3.52 lakh migrants returned by buses (Have brought back over 5 lakh migrant workers to MP: Govt 2020).

- As per a statement released by the chief minister of Madhya Pradesh, 6.5 lakh workers had returned to Madhya Pradesh till 28th May and a total of 10-13 lakh were expected to return.

Outward:

- The Ministry of Railways reported that 13,602 passengers were sent from Madhya Pradesh to other states by Shramik trains (Press Information Bureau 2021).

Maharashtra:

Inward

- The central Government reported that 1,82,990 migrants returned to Maharashtra as in the Lok Sabha in March 2021 (Ministry of Labour and Employment, 2021).

Outward:

- As per the home minister, a total of 20 lakh migrants, the bulk of them from Bihar and West Bengal had registered with the MH government to go back till 17 May 2020 (PTI. "20 Lakh Migrants, Bulk from West Bengal and Bihar, Register with Maharashtra", 2020).
- Till June 2020, more than 5 lakhs passengers have been ferried free of cost by buses of Maharashtra Road Transport Corporation. About 37,000 were still waiting to return as per Shri Chitnis, learned counsel, appearing for the State of Maharashtra in response to the Suo motu petition by Supreme Court.
- The Ministry of Railways reported that 817

Shramik trains carried 1,241,573 migrants from Maharashtra to other states (Press Information Bureau 2020), (Press Information Bureau 2021).

- An estimated 24 lakh inter-state migrants have left Maharashtra since the nationwide lockdown began on March 25, with over 75 per cent from Mumbai and the extended Mumbai Metropolitan Region, according to official estimates. While nearly 11.24 lakh left in 781-odd Shramik Special trains that have operated since May 1, another 5 lakh workers were dropped to various state borders in state transport buses and around 8.5 lakh left in private vehicles to destinations outside the state as well as within (Indian Express, 2020).
- Based on all the figures received from different official sources, our estimation is that 25,91,573 migrants left Maharashtra via rail and road transport.

Case Study:

Mumbai:

Outward migration: As per the Mumbai police, 3.5 lakh workers had registered in Mumbai alone to return to their home states till May 2020 (Dash 2020).

Migration stream: As per the report published by YUVA, their data collected from 13,801 traveling migrant workers revealed that multiple states to which these groups were travelling included— Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand. The highest number were returning from Mumbai to Uttar Pradesh (19.14 per cent), followed by Rajasthan (6.38 per cent) and other places within Maharashtra (2.38 per cent) (Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action, 2020).

Out of the total sampled other state

The Invisibles

migrants, 7,001 (50.73 per cent) were travelling back by train, followed by 1,416 (10.26 per cent) going back by truck, and 1,184 (8.58 per cent) workers who walked home (Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action, 2020).

Odisha:

Inward:

- The Central Government quoted a number of 8,53,777 migrants that returned to Odisha in the Lok Sabha in March 2021 (Ministry of Labour and Employment 2021).
- Rough estimates put Odisha's migrant worker population at around 20 lakh (Mishra A, 2020).
- The Ministry of Railways had released in September 2020, 244 Shramik trains were received by Odisha (Press Information Bureau 2020). As per our estimations, about 3,33,658 passengers travelled to Odisha through Shramik trains.
- Odisha Labour Minister Sushant Singh told the State Assembly that 10.07 lakh

labourers had returned from other States to Odisha since October 2020 (Barik, 2021).

- According to the economic survey in Odisha 2020-21, from April to September 2020, majority of the 8,53,777 migrants returning to Odisha were from three states i.e., Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Further, the state government paid Rs 9 crore to the East Coast Railway (ECoR) towards the transport cost of the migrants in 277 Shramik special trains (4,15,000 passengers).
- The Economic Survey continues to state that during the COVID-19 lockdown, OSRTC provided 384 special buses to rescue people who were returning to their homes on foot.²

Outward migration:

- As per the statement released by Ministry of Railways in February 2021, 3,788 passengers were sent by Shramik trains from Odisha to other states (Press Information Bureau 2021).
- It was reported that the data available till 16

Table 4 : Returned Migrants to Odisha

States	By Trains	By Vehicles	Total
Gujarat	130537	11684	142221
Telangana	60053	23588	83641
Tamil Nadu	54968	57818	112786
Karnataka	25339	12907	38246
Kerala	23716	6815	30531
Other States	63788	93913	157701
Total	358401	206725	565126

Sources: COVID-19 dashboard, 2020

2. Determining the exact carrying capacity for the buses is tricky here. Assuming these were buses with 52 seats and given the social distancing norm that was applicable then - about 25 to 30 passengers would be seated in these buses. Thus, by approximation about 10,500 to 11,000 passengers could have been transported in that period by 384 buses.

April 2020 revealed that around 77,000 migrant workers from other states were stranded in Odisha. The state government has been providing them with food and accommodation in 2,553 camps across the state (Down To Earth, April 2020). Many of them were from different districts in Odisha, while others were from Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, and Rajasthan.

- More than 1,815 migrant workers (1,096 men, 396 women and 325 children) stuck in the district of Subarnapur in Western Odisha were approached by the district administration by April 2020 (ibid).

Punjab

Inward:

- As per the Central government's response in the Lok Sabha dated March 8th, 2021 (Ministry of Labour and Employment 2021) 5,15,642 migrants returned to Punjab.

Outward:

- 17.19 lakh migrants had registered with the state government to return to their native places and 2.7 lakh had already left Punjab by Shramik trains till 22 May 2020 (Dash 2020).
- A press release by the Ministry of Railways concerning Shramik Trains revealed that 429 Shramik trains carrying 5,28,587 passengers were sent from Punjab to other states till August 2020 (Press Information Bureau 2021).
- A survey was conducted by parvasi wing of the SAD-BJP government in 2016 and the estimated population of migrants at that time was 39 lakhs. Over the years, this has increased to nearly 43 lakhs, revealed Ram Chander Yadav, president of the parvasi wing of the SAD (Jagga, 2022).

Rajasthan

Inward:

- The Central Government reported that 13,08,130 migrants returned to Rajasthan in the Lok Sabha in March 2021 (Ministry of Labour and Employment, 2021).
- Ministry of Railways reported that 55 Shramik trains were received by Rajasthan (Press Information Bureau 2020). Approximately 75,210 workers would have returned to Rajasthan by Shramik trains.
- As per the reporting by Hindustan times (14th May 2020), around 19 lakh migrants registered with the government through various portals, of which around 13 lakhs registered to return to Rajasthan (Rawal, 2020).
- According to the State-level committee's 'Interstate Migration Report,' till June 6, over 24.68 lakhs migrant labourers had called and registered requests for help to reach home. Of these, 51.69 per cent for inward (12,75,709) (Agarwal, 2020).
- As per the data submitted by the state government in the High Court, till May 17th, 2020, a total 23 special trains had brought back 28,490 migrant workers to Rajasthan from different states ("Hari Singh Rajpurohit vs State of Rajasthan," 2020).
- Mr. Moti Singh Rajpurohit, the learned counsel appearing for the petitioner submitted that 20,79,412 migrant workers have got themselves registered on the e-portal of the State of Rajasthan for inward and outward journey (ibid).
- 13.43 lakh migrants had returned to Rajasthan by bus by June 2020 (Kumar 2020).
- By arranging over 174 trains and 14,000 inbound/outbound bus/private vehicle trips, the Rajasthan Government helped 13.43 lakh inbound and 6.13 lakh outbound

The Invisibles

migrant labourers (ibid).

- As per the online registration data till first week of May 2020 provided by the Rajasthan government, 21,456 migrant workers, pilgrims, tourists, students and others from Rajasthan were stranded in Delhi, of which 6,900 had their own vehicles registered to leave for their homes (Business Standard, 2020).

Outward:

- The Ministry of Railways stated that 131 Shramik trains carrying 176,404 were sent by Rajasthan (Press Information Bureau 2020), (Press Information Bureau 2021).
- According to the State-level committee's 'Interstate Migration Report,' till June 6, over 24.68 lakhs migrant labourers had called and registered requests for help to reach home. Of these, 48.31 per cent were registered for outward travel (11,92,290) (ibid).
- As per the data submitted by the state govt in the High Court, 46 special trains carrying 57,055 migrants had already transported passengers from the State of Rajasthan to other States till May 17th, 2020 (ibid).
- Frequent routes involved: Bihar, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh (Solan), Madhya Pradesh (Shivpuri, Gwalior, Sheopur, Morena), Uttar Pradesh (Hathras), Delhi, Maharashtra (Yavatmal). (Kumar 2020).

Tamil Nadu

An article in The Hindu, 2019 reported that there approximately 18 lakhs migrants working in Tamil Nadu as per census 2011 (Radhakrishnan & Vasanth, 2019).

Inward:

- As per the response given by the Central

government in the Lok Sabha in March 2021, 72,145 interstate migrants returned to Tamil Nadu (Ministry of Labour and Employment 2021).

- Till 3rd May 2020, over 1.26 lakh Tamils then residing or stranded in other States and countries registered themselves with the Tamil Nadu government to return to Tamil Nadu (Jesudasan 2020). About 1.75 lakh migrant workers not registered with the Government had gone back during the period.

Outward:

Till 6th May 2020, more than 2.5 lakh migrant workers in Tamil Nadu registered to go back to their native states. A majority of the migrant workers hailed from Odisha, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Assam and Northeast States and Rajasthan (Shanmughasundaram 2020).

292 Shramik trains were sent from Tamil Nadu to other states between 1st May 2020 to 31st August 2020 carrying 396,916 stranded passengers/migrant workers to their home states, as per the press release by Ministry of Railways (Press Information Bureau 2020), (Press Information Bureau 2021).

Telangana

Inward:

- The central Government reported that 37,050 migrants returned to Telangana, as per the response given in the Lok Sabha in March 2021 (Ministry of Labour and Employment 2021).

Outward:

- The ministry of railways reported that 166 Shramik trains carrying 191,005 were sent by Telangana till August 31st, 2020 (Press Information Bureau 2020, 2021).

- As reported by the Telangana police, by 9th May 2020, 3 lakh migrants had registered to return to their homes after which the registration process was halted (The News Minute, 2020).
- During the nationwide lockdown imposed in March 2020, more than 4,70,768 migrant labourers had left the State, as per the data from the Labour Department (Gupta 2021).
- The Federal reported that Hyderabad was home to about 10 lakh workers migrated from various states like Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Odisha. With no transport available, hundreds of these workers started trudging along the highways to reach their places of origin (Dharur, 2020).

Uttar Pradesh

Inward:

- As per the Central government's response in the Lok Sabha dated March 8th, 2021 (Ministry of Labour and Employment 2021) the number of migrants that returned to Uttar Pradesh stands at 32,49,638 migrants.
- A press release by the Ministry of Railways concerning Shramik Trains revealed that 1,726 Shramik trains were received by Uttar Pradesh from other states till August 2020 (Press Information Bureau 2020). The exact number of migrants who were received by Shramik trains remains unclear. A fair estimate of the number would be 23,60,219 workers returning by Shramik trains.
- As per the data submitted by the director in May 2021, Training and Employment (UP), 37,84,255 migrant workers returned to their native places during the entire pandemic period ("Uttar Pradesh Govt's Handling of Migrant Crisis Draws Praise from Supreme Court," 2021).

Outward:

- A press release by the Ministry of Railways concerning Shramik Trains revealed that 376 Shramik trains carrying 438,390 were sent by Uttar Pradesh to other states till August 2020 (Press Information Bureau 2020), (Press Information Bureau 2021).

West Bengal:

West Bengal, the fourth largest state of the country in terms of population, was a major recipient of migrants since the late nineteenth century (Chakraborty, M., Mukherjee, S. & Dasgupta, 2022). Chakraborty, Mukherjee, and Dasgupta document how over the past two–three decades, with the relative slowing down of the economy, West Bengal has experienced higher intensity of male out-migration from economically and agriculturally depressed areas (2022). The existent literature is replete with evidence that the increasing number of out-migrants from West Bengal, mostly from rural areas to other states over the decade is due to shortage of work opportunities (ibid), the current data also confirms.

Inward:

- The Central Government reported in Lok Sabha in March 2021 that 13,84,693 migrants returned to West Bengal (Ministry of Labour and Employment 2021).
- Ministry of Railways reported that 284 Shramik trains were received by West Bengal till September 2020 (Press Information Bureau 2020). As per our estimations, approximately 3,88,356 migrants travelled back to Bengal.
- As per the State Governments response to the Suo motu petition of the Supreme Court, 6,82,558 workers were awaiting to come to West Bengal from different states till June 2020.
- Shiv Sahay Singh (2020) quoted the Chief Minister of Bengal to report that over a million migrant workers have returned to Bengal. The

The Invisibles

reporter continues to state that by 10 June 2020, 2.4 lakh had returned by train, 6.5 lakh by bus and another 1.5 lakh were scheduled to return by train, taking the total to 10.5 lakh, as per the Chief Minister while she addressed a video conference with district and State officials (ibid).

The Anandabazaar newspaper on June 25 quoted government sources saying, according to a preliminary list, 12 lakh migrant workers had returned to Bengal and about 80 percent did not want to go back to the other states (Chandraprabh Bhattacharya, "Giving work to migrants is a big thought", Anandabazar Patrika, June 25, 2020, in Aich 2020).

Outward:

- The press release by the Ministry of Railways stated that 6,709 passengers were sent via Shramik trains from West Bengal to other states (Press Information Bureau 2021).

Glossary

COVID-19 – Coronavirus

NCR – National Capital Region

YUVA – Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action

NSSO – National Sample Survey Organization

PDS – Public Distribution System

ICDS - Integrated Child Development Scheme

UP – Uttar Pradesh

MP – Madhya Pradesh

CSO – Civil Society Organization

OBC – Other Backward Class

SC – Scheduled Castes

List of Tables and Maps

Table 1: List of Contributing Partners for the States

Table 2: Movement of migrant workers (During the first phase of COVID)

Table 3: States with Doubtful Data on Migrants

Table 4 : Returned Migrants to Odisha

Graph 1: Movement of Migrants during Covid-19 lockdown

Map 1: Migrant that returned to their sources states during the lockdown

Map 2: Migrants that left the destination states during the lockdown

Map 3: Shramik Train Table

Map 4: Major Source districts of Migrants from Chhattisgarh

Map 5: Migration path from Chhattisgarh



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