Migration and development nexus in the world is a complex and unsettled one. Any attempt to understand it, requires an extensive look into the dynamics of both. Paralleling the growth of economy has been the concomitant increase in the growth of trade and financial flows as well as movement of people across borderless economic system, which tightly integrates the social and economic fortunes in the impacted regions. Rates of rural-urban migration have swamped the absorptive capacity of both formal-sector industry and urban social services. Facilitating or constraining such human mobility represents one of the biggest social, developmental and political challenges of the twenty-first century in many parts of the world. In India migration is mostly due to lack of opportunities rather than a spirit of exploration. Such inadequacies in the rural areas are forcing people to opt for the surrounding industry belts, which act as magnets for migrant labours. This process of alienation from the traditional agriculture based economic setup leads to the circumstances where ecology itself is destroyed without any concern for conservation and custodians of ecology are converted into refugees. To this regard, an employment guarantee scheme is proposed, so that the choice to migrate is dictated more by the spirit of exploration rather than compulsion.

Keyword: Unemployment, Human Mobility.

INTRODUCTION

Migration and development nexus in the world is a complex and unsettled one. Any attempt to understand it, requires an extensive look into the dynamics of both. Since past few decades, growing evidence in India suggests that the country is moving fast in the overall development. Structural transformation in the 1990s has propelled the growth of the economy further leading towards remarkable and in many ways unprecedented demographic growth spurt in the cities of the developing world. With acute concentrations of people, urban agglomerations are finding it difficult to cope economically, environmentally, and politically. Although Indian economy is predominantly agricultural, the proportion of work force engaged in agricultural activities has fallen significantly. This reduction is perhaps, a sign of enhanced job opportunities in other sectors. Paralleling the growth of economy has been the concomitant increase in the growth of trade and financial flows as well as movement of people, making contemporary urban areas, the growth poles of economic progress and the lightning rods of political and social unrest. Migration, being an important feature of human civilization, reflects human endeavour to survive in the most testing conditions, both natural and man-made. In spite of the fact that cities offer cost-reducing advantages of agglomeration economies, economies of scale and proximity among many others, the social costs of progressive overloading of housing and social services, along with increased crime, pollution, and congestion, tends gradually to outweigh these historical urban advantages. The urban sizes are becoming so huge that any economies of location are dwarfed by costs of congestion. The rapid population growth has far outpaced the growth of human and physical infrastructure needed for even moderately efficient economic life and orderly political and social relationships. Moreover, there is a school of thought promoting accelerated growth for India on the path of industrialization, which is the compelling element heading towards migration. Migration in India is in existence historically, but, in the context of Neo Liberal Globalisation assumes special significance, for civil society. As a consequence of the neo-liberal policies followed by the successive governments, there are serious income disparities, agrarian distress, inadequate employment generation, vast growth of

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informal economy and the resultant migration from rural to urban areas in the most appalling conditions. It must be remembered that people leave their place for a reason. And when they leave, the factors that led them to leave do not disappear. The way these factors are addressed, will fundamentally determine, impact of migration in India. At present, growth oriented policy prescriptions direct Indian economy to get rid of agriculture, but it is necessary to realize the uselessness of a vehicle in the absence of an engine. And, this engine of Indian economy demands urgent solutions in the light of changing paradigms in agricultural landscapes. It is therefore prudent to look for solutions within, as the borrowed concepts may not work for India.

The present study on the conceptual, empirical, and policy-relevant linkages among unemployment, urbanization, rural–urban migration, and economic development reviews the recent trends and future scenarios for urban population growth. It intends to explore the dynamics and social implications of internal migration. It also examines the extent of employment oriented migration and the issues associated with it. Moreover, shifts in the political spectrum, from moderately pro-migration to seeing migrants as incomplete citizens or aliens are highlighted in the paper. Dealing with the mainstreaming of anti-migrant discourse remains a daunting humanitarian challenge and a long way before the problem is fully addressed. To this effect, an employment guarantee scheme is proposed, which has the potential to act as a magical weapon for exonerating the country from several evils viz. poverty, food crisis, unemployment, inflation explosion, regional disparity, migration control, climate change etc.

**MIGRATION DILEMMA**

Migration in India is predominantly influenced by regional disparities. Its fundamental premise is based on the Neo classical economic theory\(^1\) of migration. Although neo-classical economic theory is used to explain migration flows between countries, it is particularly appropriate with regard to internal migration, in the sense that inter-regional wage differences are usually linked to geographic labour demand and supply. The course of migration proceeds in response to urban-rural differences in expected income rather than actual earnings. Generally, migrants and their families consider various labor-market opportunities available to them in the rural and urban sectors and choose the one that maximizes their expected gains. In essence, members of the labor force, both actual and potential, compare their expected incomes for a given time horizon in the urban sector (the difference between returns and costs of migration) with prevailing average rural incomes and migrate if the former exceeds the latter. Thus, facilitating or constraining human mobility represents one of the biggest social, developmental and political challenges of the twenty-first century in many parts of the world.

For many years, rural-urban migration was considered as an economic opportunity, and therefore, viewed favorably in the economic development literature. Internal migration was thought to be a natural process in which surplus labor was gradually withdrawn from the rural sector to provide needed manpower for urban industrial growth. The process was deemed socially beneficial because human resources were being shifted from locations, where their social marginal product was often assumed to be zero to places where this marginal product was not only positive but also rapidly growing as a result of capital accumulation and technological progress. Overall, human mobility was associated with cost reduction, efficiency, greater competitiveness, and meeting skill shortages. It represented one of the most important mechanisms for interregional risk-sharing\(^2\). In contrast to the pro-migration view, the current experience clearly shows that rates of rural-urban migration have greatly exceeded rates of urban job creation and swamped the absorptive capacity of both formal-sector industry and urban social services. Migration is no longer viewed casually by economists as a beneficent process necessary to solve the problems of growing urban labor demand. On the contrary, migration today remains a major factor contributing to the phenomenon of urban surplus labor; a force that continues to exacerbate already serious urban unemployment problems.
caused by the growing rural-urban economic and structural imbalances. In the absence of appropriate, more labor-intensive production technologies, this rapid supply increase and lagging demand (jobless growth) tend to convert a short-run problem of resource imbalances into a long-run situation of chronic and rising urban labor explosion. Migration in excess of job opportunities is both a symptom of and a contributor to underdevelopment. Clearly, when we cannot feed millions of citizens who are hungry, when we commercialize agriculture and ask the corporate giants to take over, when we ask the World Bank for aid only to kill our farmers and not use the money for self-sufficiency, when we cannot provide food to those who provide us with food, what is the guarantee that secure livelihood will be provided to people who migrate from rural to urban areas? In fact, there are strong possibilities that they might be neglected and may die of hunger. Thus, understanding the trends, causes, determinants, and consequences of internal rural-urban labor migration is central to understanding the nature and character of the development process and to formulating policies to influence this process in socially desirable ways. Growth in the magnitude of migration over a period of four decades is clearly visible from the last four census data and is expressed by the chart 1.

Chart 1: Magnitude of Migration (1971-2001)

The rising trend in the magnitude of migration is observed throughout the study period. However, growth during the period 1991-2001 is the highest. It refers to the collective growth in migration including individual, couple and family migration as well as one-step migration between the point of origin and the destination, and multi-step migration, involving intermediate stays in a third place before final settlement. Such multitude of migrant labor makes enormous contributions to the Indian economy through major sectors such as construction, textiles, small industries, brick-making, stone quarries, mines, fish and prawn processing and hospitality services. But they remain on the periphery of society, with few citizen rights and no political voice in shaping decisions that impact their lives (Kabeer 2005). Unlike countries in Southeast Asia and East Asia, the bulk of the migrant workforce in India has little or no education (Srivastava 2003). In fact migrants are poorly endowed all-round; they come from poor families where access to physical, financial and human capital is limited and where prospects for improving living standards are constrained by their inferior social and political status. Historically disadvantaged communities such as the Scheduled
Castes, Scheduled Tribes\(^1\) and Other Backward Castes are heavily represented in migration. Poor migrants are absorbed in informal sector jobs, much maligned for being insecure, poorly paid and unproductive but offering the only option to improve their capabilities. Hence, the important aspect of migration studies is to analyze the reasons for migration.

**Reasons for Migration**

People move for different reasons. These differences affect the overall migration process. The conditions under which a migrant enters a receiver population can have broad implications for all parties involved. Past experience of migration studies suggests that different causes of migration will produce different outcomes observable from a sociological perspective. Moreover, psychological trauma of fleeing their homeland can complicate their adjustment to the new environment. To arrive at the pertinent solutions of the stated issue, it is necessary to unearth the important reasons of human mobility. Table 1 provides the gender specific data on the number of probable reasons for migration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Number of Migrants</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Migrants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Persons</td>
<td>Males</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work/Employment</td>
<td>14,446,224</td>
<td>12,373,333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>1,136,372</td>
<td>950,245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>2,915,189</td>
<td>2,038,675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td>excluded</td>
<td>excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moved after birth</td>
<td>6,577,380</td>
<td>3,428,673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moved with households</td>
<td>20,608,105</td>
<td>8,262,143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9,517,161</td>
<td>5,164,065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>55,200,431</td>
<td>32,217,134</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Table D3, Census of India 2001*

The total number of migrants as per the census of India 2001 was 98.3 million. However, if we exclude those migrants who moved due to marriage, the total number of migrants falls to 55.2 million. The number of migrants among males and females were 32.2 million and 22.9 million respectively. The most important reason for migration among males was due to work/employment (38.4%), followed by those who cited ‘Moved with households’ as the reason for migration (25.6%), who had to move when the households moved for any reason. Among female migrants, 53.7% reported migration due to ‘Moved with household’ as the reason. Number of females migrating due to work/employment is 2.0 million in the country. Various reasons given by work/employment related migrants include:

- In search of employment
- In search of better employment
- To take up employment or better employment
- Transfer of service/contract
- Proximity to place of work

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\(^1\) Scheduled Tribes: Scheduled Tribes are defined by the Indian government as a backward class of people who are disadvantaged due to their traditional lifestyle and lack of opportunities.

Shahani Jiya K.
It may be interesting to note that about 6.5 million migrants cited ‘Moved after birth’ as the reason for migration, a reason added for the first time in 2001 Census. In other words, at least 6.5 million children were born outside the place of residence of their parents. There are about 9.5 million migrants, who have cited ‘Other’ reasons for migration.

A simple yet crucial step in underlining the centrality of the migration phenomenon is to recognize that any economic and social policy that affects rural and urban real incomes will influence the migration process directly or indirectly. This process will, in turn, tend to alter the pattern of sectored and geographic economic activity, income distribution, and even population growth. Because all economic policies have direct and indirect effects on the level and growth of either urban or rural incomes or of both, they all will have a tendency to influence the nature and magnitude of the migration stream. Although some policies may have a more direct and immediate impact, many others, even though less obvious, will be no less important in the long run.

Rationale for feeble Legal Provisions

The Government of India made an enactment in 1979 in the name of “Inter-state Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act 1979”. Though the act covers only inter-state migrants, it also lays down contractor obligations in the sense that they must pay timely wages equal or higher than the minimum wage, provide suitable residential accommodation, prescribed medical facilities, protective clothing, notify accidents and causalities to specified authorities and kin. The Act provides right to raise Industrial Disputes in the provincial jurisdiction where they work or in their home province. The act sets penalties including imprisonment for non-compliance. At the same time the act provides an escape route to principal employers if they can prove that transgressions were committed without their knowledge. Needless to say, that the Act remained only on the paper. The record of prosecutions or dispute settlements is almost non-existing. The Migrant Labourers face additional problems and constraints as they are both labourers and migrants. Hence, in spite of the legal provisions, there is no improvement in the working and living conditions of the migrant workers. There is lack of sincerity on the part of the Rulers and Policy makers in ensuring compliance of the barest minimum of the so called legislation. There are no structures either, to adequately address the basic issues concerning migrant labour relations for obvious reasons. The Government desires large pool of cheap migrant labour, be made available to the capital, both Domestic and Foreign. The Indian Judiciary occasionally comes to the rescue of the Migrant Labour and makes pronouncements and observations to fill the gap in the justice delivery system. On the contrary, Rulers and Policy makers conveniently ignore and bypass with impunity. Legislation failed, because, regulatory mechanisms are over stretched, inadequately structured, manpower deficient and resource crunched. State lacks sincerity, but, migrant workers are not organized sufficiently to lobby and form a pressure group against it. Lack of organisational structures, awareness and desire on the part of the Civil Society Organisations permit such deprivation and exploitation.

IMPLICATIONS OF HUMAN MOBILITY

The increasing speed and volume of human flows across borderless economic system have tightly integrated the social and economic fortunes in the impacted regions. The chief benefit of migration is that it provides an opportunity to take advantage of quantitative and qualitative complementary distribution of labour resources. This allows recipient economy to mitigate bottlenecks and mismatches in labour resources by inviting the types of labour that are in short supply. This would contribute to an increased production and a more efficient economic performance in the recipient country. It will also enhance economic development at the broader, regional level. The complementarities of labour force among different, especially neighbouring states benefits both sending and receiving countries, as well as the broader region as a whole.
However, profound studies of the push and pull factors of migration reveal that the pull factors of education and employment opportunities along with higher wages in urban areas, causing external migration, are restricted to skilled and semiskilled workers. Migration of professionals such as Engineers, Medical Practitioners, Teachers and Managers to developed countries constitutes a very small fraction of the total economic migrants. However, the bulk of migrants are low skilled labourers and guest (temporary) workers migrating in pursuit of a better life in greener pastures. This type of migration is contributing to growth in informal sector or non-standard job contracts that elude regulations and government authority and create a hotbed for abuses. These workers run the risk of unfair exploitation and human rights violations too. Since their employment is illegal, neither it is virtually possible to keep track of them, nor afford them any protection. Moreover, many of these unorganized workers are at the mercy of vindictive brokers who find them jobs and dictate their terms of employment. This leaves them exposed to a variety of potential abuses, including restrictions on their freedom of movement, violation of their contracts, and embezzlement of their wages. They are vulnerable because of their illegal status, and their ability to make complaints about unfair treatment is further limited by their lack of knowledge about the place and their inability to speak the local language. Women are particularly vulnerable and are often prey to illegal traffickers who force them into sweatshop labour, domestic servitude, or sexual slavery. In spite of this, however, the numbers of low skilled migrants are not decreasing. This is due to the growing disparities between rich and poor regions, which continue to exert pressures for massive labour migration (Stalker 2000).

In the organized sector, employers are unable to lower wages to save on the labour cost thereby increasing their profits, because they are likely to meet resistance from labour unions and other organizations, hence they work around it by hiring low cost labour, consisting of unskilled or semi-skilled migrant workers. Indeed, all the labour flows in this century seem to have been deliberately initiated by the industrialized super powers, resulting into workers exploitation, as well as producing serious destabilization of societies even within national context. This is evident, for example, in rural to urban migrations, which is causing demographic explosions and increased poverty in third world cities. Even within developed countries, internal migrations of workers seeking employment in urban centres are changing the face of demographics and distributions of wealth in these countries.

**DUALISTIC ECONOMY – THE PRO-MIGRATION MECHANISM**

According to Classical theories, migration is a rational decision made by an individual to move from a less advantageous situation, to a more advantageous one after weighing risks and benefits. Migration in India is mostly due to lack of opportunities in their native place rather than a spirit of exploration, creating social problems in the region they move to. Though considered by many as a natural and, at times, a beneficial process, it has led to several problems in the Indian scenario. There are two categories growing in the ‘Rising India’, the super rich, and the abysmally poor. The equilibrium needs to be set from within. Hence a major focus of development theory has to be on the dualistic nature of the Indian economy, the existence of a modern, urban, capitalist sector geared toward capital-intensive, large-scale production and a traditional, rural, subsistence sector geared toward labor-intensive, small-scale production.

After the liberalization of Indian economy in 1991, Indian agriculture became non-remunerative, taking the lives of 100,000 peasants during the period from 1996 to 2003, i.e. a suicide of an Indian peasant every 45 minutes. Such events accelerated the migration of rural people from the downtrodden and backward communities or backward regions to far distances, seeking employment at the lowest rungs, in construction of roads, irrigation projects, commercial and residential complexes, in short, building the “Shining” India. Gandhiji wrote in Village Swaraj: “The British have exploited India through its cities. The latter have exploited the villages. The blood of the villages is the cement with which the edifice of the cities is built. I want the blood that is today inflating the arteries of the cities to run once again in the blood vessels of Shahani Jiya K.
villages.” Planning process did try to develop the villages through community development projects, and Green Revolution provided a great opportunity for the rural people to increase their share in national and per capita income. However, widening rural-urban divide has made the regional borders extremely porous, through which, large number of workers continue to flow in search of stability and higher income. Such migrants create pressure on locals who are in the same job market. While freedom to migrate within the country is an enshrined right, the uneven development, levels of desperation and other factors have created friction points.

Most people migrate because of a combination of push and pull factors. Lack of rural employment, fragmentation of land holdings and declining public investment in agriculture are some of the major push factors, whereas urban areas with industrial development, offering better prospects for jobs as well as self-employment signify important pull factors. Existence of high levels of regional disparity in terms of population distribution and development indicators has given rise to a very high rate of internal migration in India. Social structures and patterns of regional development too have great influence on the rate and magnitude of migration. According to new economics, households migrate not only to improve absolute income, but also to increase their incomes relative to others in the community. Relative Deprivation theory depends on where a household is located in the income distribution; the greater the share of income earned by households above it, the greater the sense of relative deprivation. The awareness of the income difference between neighbouring or other regions leads to either individual or family migration. The incentive to migrate is higher in areas that have a high level of economic inequality. As a result, migrants will tend to gravitate from low-income to high income regions, from high unemployment to lower unemployment regions and the larger the expected income differential between the regions or the cheaper it is to move, the greater the number of migrants. If wages and opportunities at the destination are higher and plentiful, migration offers a particularly attractive and effective strategy for minimizing risks and overcoming capital constraints (Stark 1991; 1986). This immediately takes the emphasis from the individual (the core of neoclassical economics) to the household (society) and away from absolute income correction to relative income determinants where “relative deprivation” is a greater incentive for migration than the wage gap (Stark and Taylor, 1989).

Regional disparities and Migration

Unfolding of the causal link between regional inequality, urbanization and migration over the national space of India reveals that most of the north Indian states are poor in infrastructure facilities and are also highly populated. Hence a large number of people from states like Uttar Pradesh, Orissa and Bihar migrate to other states in search of jobs. Low and variable agricultural production coupled with lack of local employment opportunities are the biggest cause of movement of people outside the state. In states like Orissa, landlessness and marginalisation of the poor people turns out to be the main cause of their movement to other more developed regions of the country in the hope of a better livelihood. Though factors like internal conflicts and political unrest have not become a significant cause for migration as yet, government must guard against them in the long run, particularly in the Naxalite belt.

Maharashtra, Gujarat, the south Indian states and some states in northern parts of the country like Haryana, Punjab and Delhi have become attractive destinations for the migrant population. Rapid urbanisation and industrialisation of these areas have generated more employment opportunities and also created better infrastructure. People migrate to these regions perceiving them as greener pastures. However several factors make these migrants vulnerable as they enter new territories. They create pressure on the job market and start competing with the local populace. Since migrant people are usually more willing to work on lower wages, they dent the employment prospects of locals in the area. This creates a situation of social and ethnic unrest and has even lead to violence in many states in India. Additionally, climate
change crisis, as a result of factors like deforestation and environment degradation have exacerbated labour migration. People have been shorn-off livelihood choices and survival has become tough, forcing people to opt for the surrounding industry belts, which act as magnets for migrant labours. This process of alienation from the traditional agriculture based economic setup and the consequent uprooting of the people from the familiar arboreal ecological context, leads to the circumstances where ecology itself is destroyed without any concern for conservation.

**Development Strategies and fate of Migration**

In the name of Special Economic Zones (SEZs), the government has been on a land grabbing spree, promising to rehabilitate the displaced ones. In what is called as the “National Land Loot act” by Arindam Chaudary in his article ‘Blood billionaires, scam billionaires,’ he explains how people are displaced from their natural habitat. The land that is grabbed from poor people is resource rich and income-generating one. Be it Yamuna expressway or the Sardar Sarovar project, in this whole process, ecosystem people are converted into ecological refugees. For several years, these people have lived on those lands, generating income through agriculture, producing food for the country and now, food is snatched away from them, their homes are demolished and they are asked to leave the place. In the name of development, government is destroying people’s lives and depriving them of basic rights they are entitled to. This deprivation leads to mass migration and therefore, the migration rate has increased rapidly. As a result of migration, urban poor’s population is also on the rise. Many of these migrant labourers dwell in slums, where most of the settlements lack clean water, sewage systems, and electricity. Along with the rapid spread of urbanization and the urban bias in development strategies, has come the prolific growth of huge slums and shantytowns. The dwellers of such places are generally farmers who work as labour for minimum wages in the cities with a notion that their job assures them a pay, unlike agriculture which is more a failure than success these days. But the apprehension is that the benefits of living in urban areas do not trickle down to the ‘migrants’. Clearly, the unquestioning pursuit of the orthodox development strategies of the past few decades, with their emphasis on industrial modernization, technological sophistication, and metropolitan growth, created a substantial geographic imbalance in economic and noneconomic opportunities and contributed significantly to the steadily accelerating influx of rural migrants into urban areas. To absorb them in the urban economy, there is an urgent need to formulate a planned, long-term strategy. Though the government has launched several anti-poverty and infrastructure generating schemes, most of the villages in India still do not have even the bare minimum amenities. The crux to solving this problem is to generate full-time employment opportunities in the rural areas.

**NREGA, the Migration-Unemployment Resolution**

Unemployment as a major socio-economic evil of independent India has kept economists, social scientists, and policy makers distressed for the last six decades. But hope has crawled its way in, through an innovative programme called NREGA - National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. NREGA is a programme that addresses multiple problems simultaneously, in particular, rural-urban migration and unemployment (Goparaju and Shome, 2009). The programme is built on lessons learnt from previously implemented developmental schemes, which makes NREGA a special and also an innovative policy of its kind. There are several supporting and sustaining factors for NREGA’s continuation. These include inclusive growth agenda of the government, support from across political lines, and the information dynamics unleashed by the Act. The Act has been implemented across India and has succeeded in many parts of the country. It has also received media attention. The NREGA machinery has worked reasonably well and caught international attention. While these factors favour the continuation of NREGA, there are some hurdles, viz., saturation of project ideas, and unclear long term goals of the government that can potentially weaken the implementation of the Act. Given these arguments, it is assumed that NREGA is now at the cross roads. It being too young,
there are gaps in the structure and at the level of implementation. To surmount such flaws, administrative and technical capacity at block, panchayat and village levels must be strengthened, which will enable proper community planning. Moreover, promise of 100 days under NREGA does not provide sufficient economic security for poor families. As a result, there is a shortfall in rural employment, which impels many families to migrate for work, often accepting dangerous conditions for less than the minimum wage. The voice of these victims must ring louder and clearer in the corridors of power driving policy makers to develop the counter measures. Since NREGA has reduced distress migration to some extent, it is prudent to expand its scope and coverage to all the districts in each of the states.

TRIPLE NREGA, THE MAGNIFICENT SOLUTION

To extend the outreach of NREGA, rethinking the act in the form of taking further steps towards ensuring self sufficiency in rural India is must. In this connection, it is proposed to extend the employment guarantee to 300 days in a year under NREGA. Tripling the number of workdays available would mean more work for the poor, huge budget allocation for NREGA and thus more funds to plan rural development and create productive assets. The areas that deserve immediate policy attention include – development of suitable project pipelines, allocation of adequate funds for fruitful implementation along with well designed evaluation mechanisms for the Act.

Development of Project pipelines

For achieving the rural development of every state, there is a need to promote the concept of Green Infrastructure development aiming at recreating a system which is robust and self sustaining. To design and manage it as a multifunctional resource capable of delivering a wide range of economic, social, environmental and quality of life benefits, there is need to initiate NREGA mission. Emphasis of the NREGA mission would be the development of mechanisms for transforming villages into productive economic zones and enlargement of employment as the sole objective to make use of rural manpower in various development activities. The mission will attempt to propel economic development without population transfers and aspire to achieve reconciliation between employment and GDP growth objectives. To quote the late Prof A. M. Khusro: “Instead of moving human beings where infrastructure exists, it is better to take infrastructure to villages where human beings live.” The concept would act as the response to the need for creating social, environmental and economic infrastructure. This will create a climate, conducive for investment in rural areas by the private sector. Some of the important projects in the pipeline would include:

- Promotion of horticulture and floriculture products, apart from agriculture in collaboration with nearby agricultural universities and research institutions
- Development of agro-processing industries for value addition to horticulture produce
- Creation of dairy and fish farms for providing additional non-farm revenue to farmers
- Development of clean energy technologies
- Revival of all existing water bodies in the state
- Promotion of handicraft and tourism enterprises

Fruitful implementation of such projects will provide an enticing opportunity for farmers and other rural populace to participate actively in the growth of the economy without migrating to unfamiliar locations. In fact, it is not possible to achieve the goals of ‘green economy’ disregarding farmers, as they are true experts of green solutions. Moreover, compelling them to quit agriculture and work in cities is akin to asking them to leave paradise and descend to hell. And if, they are forced to go there, so would we. Thus, overall development of green sector is crucial, as the new lands of the ‘green world’ would require more people generating abundant green-collar jobs. In the words of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, India
needs another Green Revolution to deal with the food crisis issue. However, it is advocated that, apart from the stated issue, Green Revolution has the potential of solving multitude of problems such as poverty, unemployment, regional disparity, migration explosion, inflation containment, climate change etc. With the adoption of Green Revolution agenda, level of forced migration will come down to tolerable limits, per capita income of the green cluster will increase manifold and people living below poverty line would gradually come down to zero.

**Allocation of funds**

A thick layer of investment is required to initiate such projects and achieve the objectives of Green Infrastructure development. However, owing to its low capital intensity, Green Infrastructure development requires only a fraction of the capital investment as compared to the highly capital-intensive grey infrastructure, offering considerable savings to developing countries often plagued with capital shortages. Chart 2 exemplifies the enormous cost differences in Implementation of green or grey infrastructure practices.

**Chart 2: Green Infrastructure can be Less Expensive than Grey Infrastructure**

| New water filtration plant | $8-10 billion* |
| Watershed conservation | $1.5 billion* |
| Wastewater treatment plant upgrades | $8.56 |
| Forest buffers | $3.10 |
| Conventional wastewater treatment system | $3.24 |
| Free water surface wetlands | $0.47 |

Filtering drinking water for New York City (capital and operating costs)
Reducing nitrogen pollution in Chesapeake Bay ($/lb)
Treating wastewater ($/1,000 gallons treated)

*Figures represent U.S. dollars

Source: Kenny 2006; Wieland et al. 2009; Chesapeake Bay Commission 2004; Corps of Engineers 2003

Note: Estimates do not include the economic values of other, non-watershed related ecosystem services provided by green investments or the natural resource damages caused by grey infrastructure, such as the loss of fisheries associated with dams.

Chart 2 shows the comparisons of investments required for green against grey infrastructure development through examples of three different water management solutions.

Many payments for watershed services are actually investments in forests instead of human-engineered solutions, concrete, and other technologies to maintain the ongoing provision of watershed services over time. For example, to meet drinking water quality standards implemented since the late 1980s, researchers
expect that treatment plants across the United States will have to invest hundreds of billions in infrastructure (Dissmeyer 2000; Maxwell 2005). Green infrastructure investments could obviate the need for a significant portion of these expenditures. In the Boston area, three watersheds received a filtration waiver, avoiding costs of about $200 million due to commitments to maintain upstream forest conditions (Barten et al. 1998). In a water quality trading program, a wastewater treatment plant could finance a landowner to restore riparian forests instead of investing in plant upgrades. These investments in green infrastructure are designed to save money relative to investments in grey infrastructure. Indeed, many of the Green Infrastructure projects, apart from being self-sustaining have the potential of generating income through trading in carbon credits. Thus investing in Green Infrastructure has a dual advantage of enormous cost savings along with added benefits. Additionally, if the government is able to provide employment guarantee for 300 days out of 365 days in a year, many of the social security and welfare schemes will be left redundant, providing an opportunity of redirecting the allocation of funds towards a single multi-gain scheme of ‘Triple NREGA’.

**ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Formation of a state-level NREGA body in every state and union territory, consisting of members from small-scale industry, financial institutions, co-operatives, technical persons and representatives of panchayats will facilitate proper implementation of the ‘Triple NREGA’. The body so built will perform the function of allocating the projects to various regions in the state as per pipeline and monitoring their progress. It will also prepare and compare the lists of eligible candidates to be benefited by the scheme and actual beneficiaries. The network of state bodies will report to the national NREGA body which will carry out the periodic assessment and prepare the state-wise evaluation report. The combined and dedicated efforts of diverse participants in the achievement of specific objectives of ‘Triple NREGA’ would ensure its success.

- To regulate multilevel migration, there is an urgent need to develop a regulatory body at national and state level that is comparable to the regulations for trade, money, and finance. The fundamental difference between migrants and other transactions that needs to be considered is that migrants could be part of a voluntary or involuntary movement as against other transactions, which do not have their own will.

**CONCLUSION**

There are hundreds of millions of very poor, landless peasants, workers and unemployed, denied of any education, hope and aspirations for betterment, chained to fatalism, submissiveness and traditionalism, designedly and deliberately pauperized through centuries of exploitation, murderous invasions, colonization and induced underdevelopment, ceaselessly struggling throughout their lives for barest sustenance. This is the true picture of the bulk of migrants in India. With their emaciated faces, moist eyes and tattered clothes, the roaring sound of their struggle for survival and silent suffering is constantly echoing and yet is unheard in the corridors of power. No sordid statistics can tell their poignantly sad stories of dismal existence. Hence, there is a need to generate due resonance, so that governments dispense with their currently hostile attitude towards migrants and maintain a more positive and sympathetic stance. To deal with the issue, government has to play a crucial role in shaping the informal sector so that it contains production and service activities that provide the most value to society. Though it is not possible and even advisable to stop migration completely, the approach should be of managing it in such a way that no ethnic or social frictions are created across the country. Rural areas across the country must have all the amenities to ensure that people of younger generation choose to remain in there instead of moving to the bigger cities. If they still decide to migrate to bigger cities, the choice should be dictated more by a spirit of exploration, rather than compulsion due to lack of opportunities.
The proposed scheme under NREGA deserves the highest allocation under union budget, as it has the potential of inviting smiles to each and every Indian’s face, which all other endowed welfare schemes together have failed to. The employment created through Triple NREGA will increase the demand for consumer goods in rural areas. Even if a part of these goods are supplied by local manufacturers, it will create additional local job opportunities which will be a ‘multiplier effect’ of NREGA (Schumacher, 1993). With the implementation of the scheme, people will witness the unfolding of economic opportunity to a large section of the human population for the first time in global history. Social science scholars from around the world will bear witness to this economic spectacle similar to how astronomers gather to watch a celestial sight. In other words, there would be lessons for other countries too from the Triple NREGA experience.

Notes

1. The theory states that the main reason for labour migration is wage differences between two geographic locations
3. These groups accounted for more than 250 million people in India in 2001 (167 million SCs, 86 millions STs and other minorities). Official statistics show that SCs and STs are more deprived than other social groups. At the all India level, poverty among STs was about two times higher than non SC/STs, the poverty gap ratio being 2.10 and 1.7 times higher among SCs compared to non SC/ST groups. But there were variations across states.
4. The theory was given by Stark in 1991

References