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RURAL AND AGRARIAN TRANSFORMATION IN INDIA

- Programmes of rural development, Community Development Programmes, Co-operatives, poverty alleviation schemes.
- Land, credit, labour and social change.
- Changing modes of production in Indian agriculture.
- Movement of rural labour (migrant migration).

PROGRAMMES OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES, CO-OPERATIVES, POVERTY ALLEVIATION SCHEMES :

Programmes of Rural Development and Community Development Programmes

Economic Aspect	Social Aspect	Spatial Aspect
Agricultural Productivity	Rural Housing	Transport & Communication
Land Improvement	Drinking Water	Small Scale Industries
Minor Irrigation	Electrification	
Animal Husbandry	Education - Family Welfare	Village & Cotton
Fisheries	Family Welfare	Industry
Minor Forest Produce		

MEANING OR CONCEPT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Rural development is defined as an attempt to help the rural areas in the hands of low-income population to bring about a better and making the people of that area self-sustaining. It embraces all those programmes that touch the allied fields of rural living e.g. agriculture and related matters, irrigation, communication, education, health, drinking water, employment, housing training and social welfare. The concept of rural development is a much broader concept than the concept of agricultural development. While agricultural development is concerned primarily with cultivation and allied activities, rural development embraces all areas of rural life including all matters. Since agriculture is the backbone of the rural population, rural development also takes into account the issues facing the agricultural sector.

1st PHASE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Community Development Programme (1952) CDP emerged as a result of inspiration derived from the success of some earlier pre-independence programmes for rural development. It looked at village as a common commodity - having a common interest of villagers. For Narmada CDP are of vital importance not in terms of materialistic achievements but more so because they seem to build up community as well individual making them builder of their own village.

Three phases of CDP

- National extension programme. Areas selected were equipped for hundreds of providing services on ordinary pattern with for government expenditure.

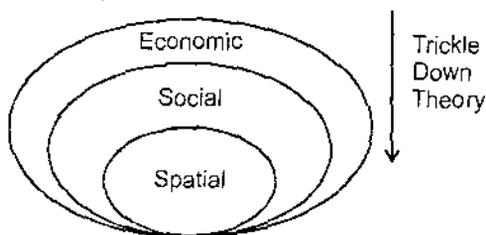
- Intensive Community Development phase: Blocks selected for purpose were subjected to intensive development schemes with high government expenditure.
- Post development phase: It was presumed that initial two phases have created a self-perpetuating process so, Government role was reduced to only supervisory role.

• In 1957 the 4th evolution report of CDP divided it into 4 major categories:

- Constructional programme (roads, schools etc.)
- Irrigation (wells, tube wells, pump sets etc.)
- Agriculture (waste land dev., soil, manure etc.)
- Institutional programmes (youth, women clubs, dispensaries, smokeless chulhas etc.)

Critique of 1st phase (CDP)

- CDP created community dependence on government rather than self-dependence.
 - Village divided into various sectional interests where interest of landed class was not common with service and occupational castes.
 - Bureaucracy responsible for its implementation lacked social service ethos.
 - Development Communication was top down that led to confusion regarding functions within the bureaucratic organization.
 - Land owners were the prime beneficiaries of CDP.
 - Gram Sewak was often from land owning communities, he was only succeeded in heightening inequalities.
 - According to **S.C.Dubey** general apathy remained on the part of the village population.
 - Much emphasis on economic aspect with little emphasis on social and spatial aspect
- Strategy -



- **Satyadev** found out that how co-operatives benefitted to the local dominant castes that used loans for the co-operatives, occupied various posts of the co-operatives and subsequently hijacked subsidy benefits meant for the rural poor.

2nd PHASE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

- Land Reforms – 60's (early)
- Green Revolution – mid 60's
- Post Green Revolution
- Area Centric programmes – 70's
- Employment, Poverty alleviation 80's.

Land Reforms : The failure of CDP led to the land reforms in early 60's.

- It gave ownership rights to tenants.
- Many legislations were passed; Ninth schedule was included in the Constitution. As a result twenty million household become owner cultivators.
- Tenancy reforms regulated the rent and provided security of tenure.
- It was declared that rent should not exceed 25 % of produce without special permission of government.
- Consolidation of land holding became inevitable.
- Redistribution of surplus land. (For detail refer to Rural and Agrarian Social-Structure)

Critique of land reforms

- Implementation of land reforms was not as expected.
- Abolition of intermediaries was a success. Nearly twenty million households become landlords but it did not benefit land labourers.
- Ceiling was fixed very high of doubly cropped irrigated land which generated less surplus.
- Sizeable part of land remained locked in court cases even beneficiaries could not be properly identified.

- According to **Alexandra George** the ceiling laws were merely a Mann over for political ends.
- According to **Bandopadhyay** ceiling was very high. Still 12% land could be declared surplus. But in reality only 1.8% was declared as surplus.
- According to **V.M. Dandekar** barely 1% of area has been redistributed, 99% remained unchanged except for West Bengal where 10% was surplus and 7% was distributed.

Green Revolution

In mid 60's land reforms were followed by Green Revolution. After two wars (Indo-Pak and Indo China) the planning strategy shifted from self sufficiency to self-reliance which required increase level of production. High Yielding varieties were introduced to increase the production which gave a great impetus to Indian agriculture.

Consequences of Green Revolution

- A middle peasant class structure emerged where rich landlords at the top followed by middle peasantry and then landless labourers and small peasantry.
- Resource distribution was highly skewed at rural level due to which there was straight correlation between caste and class.
- It results in more inequality where wages increased but the difference was maintained.
- HDG group (NGO) found that wages increased by 89% but the price rises by 93%
- **Bhalla and Chadha** in their study on Punjab observed that in long run labour demand increased. But after mechanization labour demand decreases. Increase in land alienation.
- **Francis Frawell** found that green revolution is successful in wheat growing areas most that in rice growing areas. Polarization is much greater in Green Revolution areas.
- According to **Joan Mencher** in Chingleput even official attitude was to ignore the farmers

having 5 acres of land. Money begets money. Very few farmers in lowest category who owned a tube well got the benefits. Thus benefits accrued unequally so disparity increased.

3rd PHASE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Post Green Revolution - Soon after green revolution it was realized that the benefits were not accrued by the poor farmers. Structured mass poverty remained intact. Rate of rural unemployment also increased. Government focused its attention on two key areas;

Area development programmes :

- Draught prone Area Programme
- Hill Area development Programme
- Command Area development

Programmes meant for specific groups and areas :

- 20 point programme
 - Rural electrification programme
 - Comprehensive child development programmes
 - Informal literacy plan etc.
 - Eighties saw versatile programme touching different aspect of rural development but with special emphasis on poverty alleviation and employment centric programmes.
 - Indira Awas Yojana
 - Rural cleanliness programme
 - Crop Insurance Scheme
 - Social Security Insurance Scheme
 - National rural employment scheme
 - Rural landless employment guarantee scheme etc.
 - Minimum Need Programme
- Increased productivity :
- (i) Growth
 - (ii) Employment
 - (iii) Generation
- Poverty alleviation.

Critique

- Growth with redistribution was the slogan in 80's but growth remained lack sided.
- Social Work Research Centre found that agricultural workers were employed for 3 months only.
- Class conflict took caste dimension. Political leaders and bureaucrats lack will to disturb this structure.
- Landless labourers were unable to create demands.
- Fourth rural labour enquiry commission (1983) observed that almost half of the population was in perpetuative debt. These debts have little chance to repaid.
- There was a decline in poverty but in absolute number poverty.
- We had a subsidy based approach to pull people above poverty line which at best created a perpetual dependence upon state.
- They remain highly vulnerable enough to sustain back to poverty.

FOURTH PHASE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Steps taken during 90's became the watershed in strategies of rural development. The India economic was getting alienated with the world economy. Technological upgradation was also lacking. In this background 90's saw open policy of Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization. Privatization implies a greater role for private enterprise and capital in the functioning of an economic. Liberalization implies giving greater freedom to economic agents to take their own economic decisions. Globalization means increasing integration between different economies, cultures, societies of the world.

COOPERATIVES

Evolution of Cooperative in India : The First Plan approached the issue more judiciously and recommended that small and medium farms in particular should be encouraged and assisted to group themselves into **cooperative farming**

societies. The Plan did not talk of any enforcing powers to the state through it did envisage some amount of compulsion when it suggested that if a majority of the owners and occupancy tenants in a village, owning at least half the land of the village, then their decision should be binding on the village as a whole.

The early planners had hoped that the village panchayat activated by motivated party workers and aided by the trained workers of the newly launched Community Development programme (in October 1952) would not only help implement rural development projects but would help bring about critical institutional changes in Indian agriculture, for example by assisting in the implementation of land reforms, by organizing voluntary labour for community work and by setting up of cooperatives. Further, there was a high and growing level of expectation, in the initial years, regarding how much such institutional changes, particularly cooperativization, would substitute for investment outlay in agriculture, in achieving the planned targets of rapid increases in agricultural production.

The Second Plan reflected this expectation by declaring that 'the main task during the Second Five-Year Plan is to take such essential steps as will provide sound foundations for the development of cooperatives so that over a period of ten years or so, a substantial proportion of agricultural lands are cultivated on cooperatives lines. However, even the ambitious plan of having a 'substantial' proportion of agricultural lands under cooperatives within ten years soon appeared to be too modest once exaggerated reports started pouring in of the dramatic increases in agricultural output achieved by China through measures such as cooperativization. (It was many years later, after Mao's death in 1976, that this myth was destroyed. By one estimate, China agricultural growth rate between 1954 and 1974 was only 2 per cent, which was actually lower than India's which was 2.5 per cent.)

In the middle of 1956 two Indian delegations, (one of the Planning Commission, the other of

the Union Ministry of Food and Agriculture), consisting of leaders of the cooperatives movement in India, members of parliament bureaucrats involved with cooperatives, technical experts and planners, were sent to China to study how they organized their cooperatives and achieved such rapid increases in agricultural output. Underlying these visits was the feeling that the targets of agricultural growth envisaged by the Second Plan were inadequate and required an upward revision and the Chinese experience could show how these targets could be achieved without significant increases in outlay.

The two delegations arrived at quite similar conclusions. It was reported that China had achieved remarkable increase in foodgrains production and extension of the agricultural infrastructure through cooperativization. They both recommended a bold programme of extending cooperative farming in India. Jawaharlal Nehru, who was deeply committed to the idea of cooperativization, started putting pressure on the states to emulate the Chinese example and commit to higher food production on the basis of institutional changes in agriculture, i.e., without demanding additional funds for investment in agriculture. The National Development Council and the AICC now set targets even higher than the one envisaged by the Second Plan, proposing that in the next five years agricultural production be increased by 25 to 35 per cent if not more, mainly by bringing about major institutional changes in agriculture such as cooperativization. The states, however, resisted any large-scale plan for cooperativization, agreeing only to experiments in cooperative farming and that too if they remained strictly voluntary.

The Congress under Nehru's persuasion continued to mount pressure in favour of an agricultural strategy based critically on institutional change.

The Third Plan, in sharp contrast to the Second, reflected the mellowed position regarding cooperativization and took a very pragmatic and cautious approach. As regards cooperative

farming, it accepted a modest target of setting up ten pilot projects per district. At the same time it put in the caveat that 'cooperation in credit, marketing, distribution and processing, the growth of rural industry, and the fulfilment of the objectives of land reform. This sounded like a wishful platitude not a plan of action.

Structure and Significance of Co-operatives

The cooperative structure in India consists of different constituents. At the bottom of this structure are the **primary societies** which render various types of services. Of this large number about 80% is concerned with agriculture. Most of these societies, about 60% deal with credit only. Thus a large majority of primary societies are related to agriculture and credit. They perform various functions such things as credit, irrigation, marketing, transports etc. These are generally divided into two groups:

- Credit societies, and
- Non-credit societies.

Each of these two sub-groups is further split up into sub groups:

- Agricultural societies, and
- Non-agricultural societies.

Agricultural societies (both credit and non-credit are found in urban areas. For supervision and financial assistance to cooperative credit societies there are central banks and state cooperative banks. The central banks supervise the functioning of the primary societies of a district or part of a district and offer financial assistance to them. Their capital is drawn from public deposit, share capitals and loans from other sources. Because of variety of sources from which these banks can draw money, they act as a link between cooperative societies and the money market. They function is balancing centers by diverting funds of surplus societies to the needy societies; they also perform ordinary banking functions also.

At the top of the cooperative credit are the **state cooperative banks**, at the state level,

known as the apex bank. It controls the working of central banks and provides financial help. It also acts as the link between Reserve Bank of India from which it borrows and the co-operative banks and primary societies. It directs the cooperative movement in the state. Its capital comes from share capital, public deposits and loans and advances from the state and Reserve Bank of India. The National Cooperative Union of India is the apex organization promoting the cooperative movement in the country.

All the above mentioned institutions are concerned with short and medium term loans of people. Long term loans are given by Development banks which have a unitary structure having branches at different places. These banks obtain their funds from share capital, reserve deposits, issue of bonds and debentures. However, the major part of their resources is raised from the floating of ordinary debentures in the market.

The investors in these debentures are LIC, commercial banks, cooperative banks, central and state governments and Reserve Bank of India. Cooperation in a vast country like India is of great significance because.

- It is an organization for the poor, illiterate, unskilled people.
- It is an institution of nature help and sharing.
- It softens the class conflicts and reduces the social cleavages.
- It reduces the bureaucratic evils and fulfills political functions.
- It overcomes the constraints of agricultural development.
- It creates conducive environment for small and cottage industries.

Limitations of cooperativization

Given the policy statement reached, it is not surprising that the progress that the cooperative movement in India has made largely fell far short of the goals set by the early proponents. Most of the weakness that Daniel Thorner, the British

economist, had observed during his sojourn of 1947-48 in the cooperative sector all over India between December 1955 and May 1958 remained largely true in the years since then.

As the types of co-operatives and cooperatives were observed:

First, there were those that were formed essentially to evade to land reforms and other state initiatives offered by the state. Typically these cooperatives were formed by defectors of tenant families. Formerly a cooperative helped evade the being laws of tenancy and the land ceiling laws. Some of the farmers used by the large members who were based well above the village level of tenancy. However, forming these co-operative was supposed to be beneficial to the tenants who had a substantial financial assistance offered by the state in the form of a subsidy, as well as get priority for acquiring scarce agricultural inputs like fertilizers, improved seeds and even tractors, etc.

Second, there were the state-sponsored cooperative farms in the form of pilot projects. These were generally poor, or almost uncultivated land was made available to the landless tenants, displaced persons and such under-privileged groups. The poor quality of land, lack of proper irrigation facilities, and the fact that these farms were run like government agencies, all projects rather than genuine efforts of the individuals led that, while generally expensive, unproductive experiments.

In any case, the hope that the service co-operatives would ease the transition to a cooperative farming had spread to neglect the role of the government projects and the co-operative movement.

Third, there were the co-operatives formed by the government and the state of the Indian people, but which had to be reformed to be effective. The government of the co-operatives

i.e., its president and treasurer, consisted of the leading family or families of the village which not only owned a great deal of land also controlled trade and money lending. These well-to-do families, the 'big people' or the 'all in alls' of the village were thus able to corner for themselves scarce agricultural inputs, including credit. In fact, quite often, low interest credit made available through cooperative rural banks was used by such families for non-agricultural business, consumption and even money lending!

- It was a case of public subsidy being used by a non-target group for private investment. These institutions were in taken over by the dominant section in the village, which used them to further buttress their economic and political influence.
- The village poor got little out of these institutions in the early years. An example at hand is the constant refusal to implement the elaborate recommendation made by the Reserve Bank of India in 1954 that rural credit cooperatives were to give credit to the cultivator as the producer of a crop and not as the owner of land. This refusal of the cooperatives to issue 'crop loans' or loans in anticipation of the crop being produced, and their insisting on credit being given land as security, meant that the landless were essentially excluded from this scheme.
- In 1969, The Reserve Bank observed that tenant cultivators, agricultural labourers and 'others' secured only 4 to 6 per cent of the total credit disbursed. The Report of the All-India Credit Review Committee, 1969, and the Interim Report on Credit Services for Small and Marginal Farmers produced by the National Commission on Agriculture, 1971, confirmed the virtual exclusion of the landless and added that the small and marginal farms were also at a considerable disadvantage vis-à-vis the bigger cultivators in accessing credit from the cooperatives and even from the nationalized banks.
- A common shortcoming of the cooperatives movement was that instead of promoting people's participation it soon became like a huge overstuffed government department with officials, clerks, inspectors, and the like, replicated at the block, district, and state levels. A large bureaucracy, generally not in sympathy with the principles of the cooperatives movement and quite given to being influenced by local vested interests, instead of becoming the instrument for promoting cooperatives, typically become a hindrance.
- Yet, over time, the service cooperatives, particularly the credit cooperatives, performed a critical role Indian agriculture. The Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS), which were village level cooperative societies performed better.
- The cooperative credit societies, however, suffered from a major drawback, that of failure to repay loans and, consequently, a very large percentage of overdues. Between 1960 and 1970, overdue of the primary societies rose from 20 to 38 per cent of the credit disbursed. The situation continued to deteriorate with the all-India average of overdue. Rising to 45 per cent in the mid-seventies and many provinces reaching totally unviable figures, like 77 per cent in Bihar. Quite significantly, it has been observed that the defaulters were not necessarily the poor and small farmers but more often the well-to-do ones. With the growing political and economic clout of the well-to-do peasant, the problem of overdues had reached dangerous proportions, affecting the viability and growth rate of rural credit institutions. Populist measures like the decision of V.P. Singh's National front government in 1990 to write-off all rural debts up to Rs 10,000 not only put a heavy burden on the national exchequer but further eroded the viability of rural credit institutions.
- Service cooperatives had started to play a very important role in rural India. Their role in

making available a much increased amount of cheap credit to a wider section of the peasantry was critical. They not only helped in bringing improved seeds, modern implements, cheap fertilizers, etc., to the peasants, they also provided them with knowledge how to access them. And, in many areas they also helped market their produce. In fact, in many ways they provided a necessary condition for the success of the Green Revolution strategy launched in the late sixties, which was based on intensive use of modern inputs in agriculture.

- **A study done by the World Bank** of Operation Flood details how the effort to replicate the 'Anand Pattern' paid rich dividends. A brief summary of the finding of this study how the complex multi-pronged, similar to those achieved in Gujarat, were now spread to other parts of the country.
- The obvious impact of Operation Flood was the considerable increase in milk supply and consequent increase in income of the milk producers, particularly the poor. While national milk production grew at 0.7 per cent annum till 1969, it grew at more than 4 per cent annually since the inception of Operation Flood. Further, village level enquiries showed that dairying was increasingly becoming an important activity of the farmer and in some cases becoming the main source of income, particularly among the poor. It was estimated that 60 per cent of the beneficiaries were marginal or small farmers and landless, and the extremely poor and needy (destitute, widows, landless, and near landless) in certain "spearhead" villages (was) unusually noteworthy. Milk cooperatives thus proved to be a significant anti-poverty measure.
- In this connection, the World Bank report highlighted an important lesson learnt from Operation Flood, a lesson with major politico-economic implications. The 'lesson' was that 'by focusing a project on a predominant activity of the poor, "self-selection" is likely to

result in a major portion of the beneficiaries being poor' thus reaching 'target' groups which generally prove 'elusive to reach in practice'. Further, it may be added that the Anand type milk cooperatives reached the poor irrespective of caste, religion or gender, without targeting any of these groups specifically. Similar objectives were met by the Employment Guarantee Scheme first launched in rural Maharashtra in the mid-seventies, followed by a few other states including Andhra Pradesh. The chief beneficiaries of this scheme were the landless who were predominantly from among the Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes, i.e., they got 'self-selected' though the scheme did not exclusively target these groups. Such programmes had the important advantage of reaching certain deprived section without exclusively targeting them. This prevented an almost inevitable opposition or even a backlash among the groups excluded, which has so often been witnessed in scheme in India as well as in other countries, such as the US, where benefits were sought to be given exclusively to a particular community or group.

- As in the case of Anand, the impact of milk cooperatives and Operation Flood went way beyond just increase in milk supply and incomes. As the World Bank study reported, 'A by-product impact of Operation Flood and the accompanying dairy expansion has been the establishment of an indigenous dairy equipment manufacturing industry (only 7 per cent of dairy equipment is now imported) and an impressive body of indigenous expertise that included animal nutrition, animal health, artificial insemination, management information system, dairy engineering, food technology and the like. The indigenization of the infrastructure and technology and the training of rural labour for performing a wide range of technical functions is said to have considerably lower costs, making it possible

to procure and account for minute quantities of milk brought in by the producers, without raising costs to an unviable level.

- Operation Flood spread and even intensified the impact of the milk cooperatives on women and children and on education. Realizing the potential of empowering women through this movement, Operation Flood in cooperation with NGOs like SEWA (Self-Employed Women's Association) established about 6,000 women dairy cooperative societies (WDCS) where only women were member and the management committees also were constituted exclusively of women. These cooperatives were seen to be generally more efficiently run than the male-dominated cooperatives. They gave women a greater control over their lives through the milk income accruing to them and also enabled them to participate in decision-making outside their homes, giving full play to their managerial and leadership potential. Further, field level observation showed that the milk income in the poorer villages often made it possible for children to attend school, while in better-off villages it contributed to children staying in school longer, that is, it reduced the dropout rate. In still wealthier villages, where all children went to school, a part of the earning of the cooperative was used to improve the facilities in the school. The field surveys also confirmed that increased school attendance for girls was perceived as a very common effect of the dairy cooperative societies. Greater family income and the women involved in dairying being able to stay at home instead of going out for wage labour relieved children from having to earn a wage or look after household chores. Instead, they attended school.
- The spread of the 'Anand Pattern' was not to be limited to milk. Cooperatives for fruits and vegetable producers, oilseeds cultivators, small-scale salt makers and tree growers were started at the initiative of the NDDB.

Again the Kaira Union provided the technology as well as the trained personnel to help this process. Often the resistance from vested interests, particularly the powerful oilseeds traders, was vicious. In some regions of the country, the NDDB team which tried to make the initial moves towards setting up cooperatives was threatened with physical violence and there were cases where workers died in 'mysterious' circumstances. Yet, the movement has progressed. In many parts of the country cooperative of fruits and vegetables are beginning to be as common as milk outlets. The 'Dhara' brand of vegetable oils, a child of the NDDB effort, is beginning to represent in the area of vegetable oils what 'Amul' does in the area of milk and milk products.

CONCLUSION

This has been one of the major achievements of post-independence India. The search for cooperatives led to Indian delegations going to China in the mid-fifties; today scores of countries send delegations to India to study and learn from the Anand experience. An indication of the impact this experiment had at the grassroots level was the statement, made by a poor farmer in a village near Anand in 1985, 'Gujarat is fortunate to have one Kurien; if only God would give one Kurien to every state, many of India's problems would be solved.' This poor Gujarat peasant who in his personalized way trying to explain to us the magnitude of the success of this experiment with reference to Kurien, a Syrian Christian from Kerala, will surely feel out of tune with the Hindu communal upsurge his state witnessed in early 1999, where Christians were hounded and attacked, their religion presumably making them anti-National!

POVERTY ALLEVIATION SCHEMES

Many poverty alleviation schemes have been launched by the central government for the rural poor, comprising small and marginal farmers, landless labourers and rural artisans. The important programmes currently functioning are:

- 20 Point Programme:** Launched for reducing poverty and economic exploitation and for the uplift of the weaker sections of society. The important goals were: controlling inflation, giving impetus to production, welfare of the rural population, lending help to the urban middle classes and controlling social crimes. The programmes included in the 20 point programme were: increase in irrigational facilities, increase in programmes for rural employment, distribution of surplus land, minimum wages to landless labourers, rehabilitation of bonded labour, uplift of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, growth of housing facilities, increasing power production, formulating new programmes of family planning, tree plantation, extension of primary health facilities, programmes for the welfare of the women and children, making primary education measures more effective, strengthening of public distribution system, simplification of industrial policies, control of black money, betterment of drinking water facilities and developing internal resources.
- The Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) was launched by the centre in 20 selected districts, but from October 1982, it was extended to all districts in the country. This programme considers a household as the basic unit of development. IRDP is a major instrument of the government to alleviate poverty. Its objective is to enable selected families to cross the poverty line by taking up self-employment ventures in a variety of activities like agriculture, horticulture and animal husbandry in the primary sector, weaving and handicrafts in the secondary sector and service and business activities in the tertiary sector. The aim of the IRDP is to see that a minimum stipulated number of families are enabled to cross the poverty line within the limits of a given investment and in a given time-frame. Thus, the three variables involved are: (a) number of poor households, (b) resources available for investment, and (c) the time-span over which the investment would yield an income which would enable the family to cross the poverty line.
- A number of institutions have undertaken studies with respect to the implementation of working of the IRDP. They point out flaws in the implementation of the programme. None of these studies have, however, questioned the utility of the programme. The main criticisms against this scheme are:
- There are leakages in the programme and all assets created under IRDP are not with the poor. Thus is mainly because of three factors: the poor are unable to pay large bribes, fill up complicated forms, influence the village headman and find 'guarantors' for themselves; bank officials are often reluctant to deal with poor borrowers because they believe that giving loans to the poor is risky since recovery is often used as a major indicator of the performance of a particular branch of a rural bank; the poor themselves take inadequate interest in the programme because they are afraid of being cheated or of not being able to repay.
- There is much corruption, misuse and malpractice in the implementation of the loan programme. The loans are often misallocated with little apparent violation of the guidelines of the schemes.
- The programme is household- based and is not integrated with the development needs or resource base of the area. Thus, the IRDP loan neither raises the living standards of the beneficiaries nor does it have any impact on rural poverty by raising the poor people above the poverty line. This has been indicated by studies in several districts in Rajasthan, Gujarat, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka. The latest study was conducted in seven districts in Rajasthan under a World Bank project on poverty.
- The scheme called Training Rural Youth for Self-Employment was started on August 15,

1979 to provide technical skills to the rural youth to enable them to seek employment in the fields of agriculture, industry, services and business activities. Only youth in the age group of 18-35 and belonging to families living below the poverty line are eligible for training. Priority for selection is given to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe persons, ex-servicemen and those who are ninth pass. One-third seats are reserved for women. Stipend to the trainee's ranges from Rs. 75 to Rs. 200 per month. On completion of training, TRYSEM beneficiaries are assisted under the IRDP. The main criticisms against this programme are: its coverage is very small in relation to need; skills provided have not been linked with rural industrialization process. Training is provided on the basis of ad hoc considerations and skills imparted are of low level and amount of stipend is rather inadequate to motivate the youth to go for training.

- The National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) was planned for creating additional employment opportunities in the rural areas with the help of surplus foodgrains.
- Initially, this programme was called Food for Work Programme (FWP). Under this scheme, millions of man days of employment were created every year by utilizing lakhs of tones of foodgrains.
- The works undertaken were flood protection, maintenance of existing roads, construction of new link roads, improvement of irrigation facilities, improvement of irrigation facilities, construction of panchayat ghats, school buildings, medical and healthy centres and improvement of sanitation conditions in the rural areas.
- It took care of those rural poor who largely depended on wage employment and virtually had no source of income in the lean agricultural period. These important points on which stress was laid in the implementation of this

programme were: 10 per cent allocation was earmarked exclusively for drinking water well in harijans colonies and community irrigation schemes in Harijan areas. Likewise, another 10 per cent was earmarked for social forestry and fuel plantations; only such works were undertaken which had some durability. Allocations were made both at the inter-state and inter-district/block levels. The central government released the state's share of the NREP allocation in cash every quarter. Maintenance of assets created under this programme was the responsibility of the state governments. PRIs were actively involved in this programme. This programme has now been merged in Jawahar Rozgar Yojana.

- **The Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP)** aimed at providing supplemental employment to the poor on public works at a very low wage of Rs. 3 per day. Maharashtra was one state which had used the Employment Guarantee Scheme (EGS) for the unemployed in rural areas by levying EGS surcharge or collections land revenue, sales tax, motor vehicles, irrigated holdings and on professionals. The amounts so collected, with matching contributions from the state government, were credited to an EGS fund for taking up employment works. This programme too has now been merged into the JRY.
- **Jawahar Rozgar Yojana:** Under the scheme, it is expected that at least one member of each poor family would be provided with employment for 50 to 100 days in a year at a work place near his/her residence. About 30 per cent of the jobs under this scheme are reserved for women. Both the rural wage employment programmes (i.e., the REP and the RLEGP) were merged in this scheme. Central assistance to the scheme is 80 per cent. The scheme is implemented through village panchayats. This scheme covers 46 per cent of our population.

- **Antyodaya Programme:** 'Antyodaya' means development (udaya) of the people at the lowest level that is, the poorest of the poor. This programme for special assistance to the people below the poverty line. The idea was to select five of the poorest families from each village every year and to help them in their economic betterment. Initially, a random survey was undertaken in 25 villages situated in different ecological region of the state and information about individual families with regard to indebtedness, dependency ratio, physical assets of land, cattle, occupation, educational level, income and size of the family was collected. Thereafter, a detailed scheme of Antyodaya was drawn up.
- The task of identification of the families was entrusted to the village assembly (Gram Sabha). Under this scheme, help was given in the form of allotting land for cultivation, monthly pension, bank loan or help in getting employment. Each selected family was given a pension of Rs. 30-40 per month. A bank loan was sanctioned for purchasing bullocks, carts, animal husbandry (purchasing buffaloes, cows, goats and pigs), basket making, purchasing carpentry tools, operating a tailor's shop or tea shop or a barber's shop or a grocer's shop and for manufacturing activities like soap-making etc.
- **National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme:** Salient Features of the Programme Right Based Framework Adult members of a rural household who are willing to do unskilled manual work may apply for registration to the local Gram Panchayat, in writing, or orally.
- The Gram Panchayat after the verification will issue a Job Card. The Job Card will bear the photograph of all adult members of the household and is free of cost.
- A job Card holding household may submit a written application for employment to the Gram Panchayat, stating the time and duration for which work is sought. **Time Bound Guarantee**
- The Gram Panchayat will issue a dated receipt of the written application for employment, against which are guarantee of providing employment within 15 days operates. If employment is not provided within 15 days, daily unemployment allowance, in cash has to be paid. Liability of payment of unemployment allowance is of the States.
- Work should ordinarily be provided within 5 km radius of the village or else extra wages of 10% are payable.
- Wages are to be paid according to minimum wages. Disbursement of wages has to be done on weekly basis and not beyond a fortnight. **Women Empowerment**
- At least one-third of persons to whom work is allotted, work have to be women. **Work Site Facilities** Work site facilities such a crèche, drinking water, shade have to be provided. **Decentralized Planning**
- The shelf of project has to be prepared by Gram Sabha. At least 50% of works have to be allotted to Gram Panchayats, for execution. Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) have a principle role in planning and implementation. **Labour Intensive Works**
- A 60-40 wage and material ratio has to be contained. Contractors and use of labour, displacing machinery is prohibited. **Public Accountability**
- Social Adult has to be done by the Gram Sabha.
- Grievance redressal mechanisms have to be put in place for ensuring a responsive implementation process. **Transparency**
- All accounts and records relating to the Scheme are to be made available to any person desirous of obtaining a copy of such records, on demand and after paying a specified fee.

Evaluation of Programmes

Various studies have shown that programmes have not been able to make a dent in the poverty level of the rural people. A large mass of villagers still live without basic needs. This is because,

- Policies are guided by ideologies of politicians and bureaucrats whims rather than by compulsions of the ground realities and requirements of the rural people, with the result that the dimensions of rural economy are ignored.
- Since every programme is launched often with an eye to the next election, the programme is carried out in a piecemeal fashion and many programmes thus wither away after some time.
- Programmes are designed in such a way that they are in fact imposed on the rural economy without taking into accounting their unique vocational patterns and local requirements. Consequently, the assets created are not durable.
- Programmes focus more on the agricultural sector. Rural industrialization seems to be getting nowhere near the attention that it deserves.
- Despite the fact that the government has given top priority to agricultural production and productivity, removal of social and economic disparities and reduction in income inequalities, the fruits of these schemes, have not reached the poorest in all parts of the country. Water resources, credit, subsidy and other facilities have been usurped by a handful of big farmers and the medium and poor farmers have to buy these things at a much higher price.
- There is no coordination among various programmes. After the merger of various employment programmes into the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana, the government is even now not able to pass on funds to the panchayats on time.

- Officials associated with these programmes do not appear to have much faith in the goals set by the government. They lack commitment to the roles assigned to time. As such, they take least pains either in creating necessary awareness among people for the success of these programmes or in getting their cooperation and confidence. No wonder, the government has not been able to use even the available resources in the most effective manner.
- Central funds in schemes like Jawahar Rozgar Yojna are diverted for party purposes by the states. For example, one study has revealed that money sanctioned by the central government for new irrigation wells in Nalgonda district in Andhra Pradesh were swindled and not a single well was sunk (as shown in the Shyam Benegal's Film Well Done Abba). Planning by itself is not enough. What really matters is sincere and honest efforts on the part of the implementing agencies to make anti-poverty drive a big success.

GREEN REVOLUTION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

What is Green Revolution?

The fundamental change and phenomenal increase in foodgrains production in late sixties in India has earned the name of 'Green Revolution'. The word 'green' here refers to green fields of the countryside and 'revolution' indicates a substantial change.

Story of Green Revolution in India

The availability of adequate foodgrains has been a serious problem in the country till. Foodgrains had to be imported from the developed countries to feed the vast population. Shortage of food was mainly caused by low productivity of land, over-dependence on monsoon and the outmoded agrarian structure. Under these conditions, achieving self-sufficiency in foodgrains became the top priority of our national efforts.

The new agricultural strategy was based on the thinking that intensive application of science

and technology in agriculture would bear fruits in the form of massive increase in foodgrain production. Under this strategy, adopted in early sixties, agricultural development programmes were revised to the needs of the farmers. Major programmes undertaken in this regard are discussed briefly in the paragraphs that follow.

The Intensive Agricultural District Programme (IADP), popularly known as the Package Programme, was started in 1961 on a pilot basis in seven districts of the country. The programme was subsequently extended to cover some other districts. It aimed at combining improved technology, credit, high yielding seeds and assured irrigation for stepping up agricultural production. This experiment of intensive agriculture yielded significant results. Production of foodgrains remarkably increased and the programme was extended to cover larger areas. It resulted in giving rise to a new programme called the Intensive Agricultural Areas Programme (IAAP).

Encouraged by the unprecedented success of this programme some other schemes were introduced in late sixties. They included the High-Yielding Varieties Programme (HYVP), Small Farmer's Development Agency (SFDA) and the Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers Development Scheme (MFALDS). All these schemes were supplemented by the assured supply of inputs like fertilizers, pesticides, institutional credit and increased irrigational facility. Among all these programmes, the HYVP made spectacular impact. The progressive increase in areas under high yielding varieties resulted in substantial increase in foodgrain production. Wheat production more than doubled by 1977-78 and rice production also started increasing. The progress under maize, jawar and bajra was, however, rather slow, but did not remain too far.

Green Revolution, which saw the light of the day in the late sixties, has sustained till date. It began with Wheat Revolution. Other crops like pulses, jawar, maize and bajra also did not remain

too far. It was widespread and it continued its journey from Punjab to other regions of the country. Now we are not only self-sufficient in foodgrains but also have started exporting it. Our view in this regard is amply supported by the latest foodgrains statistics available to us.

Socio-economic Consequences of Green Revolution

Green Revolution has certainly improved the food situation in the country. It has solved the problem of hunger and has given a strong base to the Indian economy for further growth. It has transformed the mindset of farmers. In this respect **Andre Beteille** has aptly remarked, "The Green Revolution has indeed created a new faith in the dynamism of the Indian farmer who has shown himself to be capable not only of quickly absorbing technological innovations but also of handling social arrangements with considerable dexterity."

However, the impact of this programme has not been equally favourable for all sections of agrarian population. Green Revolution has brought destabilizing impact on the socio-economic condition of small and poor peasants, sharecroppers and landless agricultural labourers.

- The new technology and the other inputs such as improved seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, water etc., are beyond the reach of small and marginal farmers. Naturally some regions with large landholdings like Punjab have performed better than others like Bihar and Orissa where marginal and poor farmers are in plenty and institutional credit is not easily available. This has widened the gap between the small and the rich farmers.
- The affluent farmers are enjoying the fruit of increased profits from land but the real wage rate for agricultural labourers has been declining in most places. Most of the sharecroppers are now joining the rank of landless labourers because small holdings are not available for leasing out to these sharecroppers.

- Economic inequality in agrarian sector has widened resulting in increased agrarian unrest in rural areas. During the late sixties and the early seventies numerous cases of conflicts were reported particularly from the Green Revolution belts.
- **The Ministry of Home Affairs** of the Government of India studied the causes and nature of agrarian tensions and admitted the socio-political implications of the new agricultural strategy. The Report concluded that new agricultural strategy has created 'widening gap between the relatively affluent farmers and the large body of small holders and landless agricultural workers'.
- **P.C. Joshi** has argued that conflict and discontent are inherent in the 'outmoded agrarian structure'. While such an agrarian structure provides the basic cause of tension, the 'proximate causes' which have led to the eruption of 'latent' discontent into 'manifest' tension are located in the new agricultural strategy and the Green Revolution.
- The poor peasants, share-croppers and landless agricultural labourers have not been able to share profitably in the general prosperity, which came in the wake of the green revolution. In this context **T.K. Oommen** shows that "the green revolution as such does not led to the welfare of the agrarian poor unless substantial alterations in the prevalent socio-economic and political structure are effected at the grass roots."
- Increased agricultural production has been visible mainly in areas like Punjab, Haryana, western Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra. In this fashion, substantial areas in the country have not been benefitted by this agricultural change.
- Likewise a new class of capitalist farmers has emerged in the green revolution belts.
- Another important trend suggests that the agricultural production has increased but the social index has not changed in the same

proportion. For example, the gender-ratio in those areas where agricultural prosperity has been achieved is still unfavourable.

- However, despite these limitations the Green Revolution has undoubtedly paved the way for faster economic growth and corresponding social change.

CHANGING MODES OF PRODUCTION IN INDIAN AGRICULTURE

The introduction of new technology in agriculture has transformed **the mode of agricultural production**. Resources other than land have assumed importance. Resources such as tractors, mechanized ploughs, pump sets, power threshers and other are acquired through the market. Today even if one has not inherited land through the traditional channel, it is possible for one to join the class of landowners.

- In the wake of changing mode of production the composition of the traditional landowning class is changing in the country. Earlier, most of the landowners inherited land from their ancestors. Land could not be purchased in the market because the land market was not fully developed. But this situation has changed now.
- The restructuring of agrarian system has set in as a result of the land, the reforms and the Green Revolution. In this fashion, a new class of farmers is emerging consisting of persons with different skills and experiences. They no longer belong to the traditional landowning upper castes. They are the people who have retired from the civil and military services and have invested their savings in agricultural farms. This is the story behind the emergence of Gentleman Farmer.
- This group now attracts the people who are educated and wish to make agriculture their vocation. The increased profitability of agriculture is the primary reason behind it. These agricultural farms are run like business firms with all features of modern organizations. In this respect, there is a substantial

difference between the traditional agricultural system and the emerging system.

- The emergence of capitalist farmers is another important development in independent India. The question whether and to what extent capitalism has penetrated Indian agriculture is still being debated. But the trend in agriculture as in industry is clearly towards infusion of capital.
- A capitalist form of wage labour agrarian system has replaced the traditional customary land relation. There is a clear transformation from the peasant family farms to the commercial capitalist farms.
- A powerful class of rich peasants, undoubtedly, existed even earlier but they could not be characterized as capitalist farmers because there was no capitalist penetration in agriculture as such. However, in the recent past, apart from the land reforms, other forces are at work in agricultural sector.
- Introduction of new technology along with several other schemes of agricultural development have facilitated a small section of rich peasantry to emerge as powerful commercial and capitalist farmers.
- Extensive facilities and resources such as supply of high yielding variety of seeds, fertilizers, and improved implements, irrigation as well as facilities of credit and improved transport and communication – all have been fully utilized by these farmers.
- The capitalist farmer hires labourers for accomplishing her/his requirements. The actual tillers of the soil are the wage labourers employed by the capitalist farmers. The latter is involved in agriculture only to appropriate profits from it.
- A surplus is, thus, generated in agricultural production that is reaching to the market.

The size of the class of capitalist farmers is still small in the country today. But its emergence and growth reveal a significant

aspect of change in the agrarian social structure. The emergence of this class has not only increased the efficiency and productivity of agriculture, but also has helped industrial growth and development. However, this trend has widened the inequalities between the rich and the poor farmers between the top and the bottom layers of the agrarian classes have accentuated leading to unrest in rural areas.

PROBLEMS OF RURAL LABOUR-BONDAGE, MIGRATION BONDAGE

Bondage can be conceptualized as a social condition when a 'person sells himself away' to his employer on condition of specific economic privilege. It is a system of institutionalized slavery where the labour does not have independence and freedom of right to work. The service is rendered for debt or in lieu of the interest accruing to the debt.

BONDED LABOUR

Labour which remains in bondage for a specific period for the debt incurred are called bonded labour. The debtor agrees to mortgage his service or services of any or all members of his family for a specified or unspecified period.

Two basic features

- Indebtedness
- Forced labour

Types of Bondage : National Commission on Rural Labour spelled out those four kinds of bonded labour practice present in India:

- Inter-generational bondage
- Loyalty bondage
- Bondage through land allotment
- Bondage of the distressed widows.

CAUSES OF BONDAGE: The main causes of origin, growth and perpetuation indebtedness and bonded labour system are economic. Though the social and religious factors too support the custom.

Economic factors

- Extreme poverty of people
- Inability of people to find work for livelihood
- Inadequate rise of land- holdings to support family
- Lack of alternative small scale loan for the rural and urban poor
- Natural calamities like drought flood etc
- Meaning income from forest produce (tribes)
- Inflation and constant rising price.

Social factors

- Expenses on occasions like marriage, death, feast, birth of a child etc., leading to heavy debts. (R.S.Sharma)
- Caste based discrimination
- Lack of concrete social welfare schemes to safeguard against hunger and illness
- Non-compulsory and unequal educational system
- Migration.

Religious factors : References from religious texts are given and religious arguments are used to convince the people of low castes that religious enjoins upon them to serve people of high castes. Illiteracy, ignorance, immaturity and lack of stability and professional training sustain such attitude.

Broadly speaking it may be concluded that bondage originates mainly from economic and social pressures.

1. **Utsa Patnaik:** Persistence of Feudalism in Indian agriculture is greatly responsible for the continuity of bondage in the countryside. In rural sector feudalism is persistent because traditional landlords do come from upper caste and hence relationship between caste and agriculture is absolutely profound. Low castes either work as tenants or share-croppers going for traditional method of contract and low caste of untouchables who are landless in order to avoid distance migration opt for bonded labour.

2. **Ashok Rudra, Pranav Vardhan and Arvind S. Das:** Bonded labour persists under the disguise of attached labour in capitalist agriculturalist market. More intensive is the capitalist development, highest is exploitation that results in consolidation of bonded labour.
3. **Shashi Kumar :** When man migrates from village the women and children are reduced into bonded labour by the local landlords.
4. **Lahiri:** In West Bengal Baramasic contract system is a form of disguised bonded labour. In this system the labourer is given some advance, free food, shelter to work for the master throughout the year. Due to poverty borrowing continues so is attachment with the family.
5. **Hanumanth Rao:** Bonded labour is a product of regular natural disaster, uneven distribution of land in countryside, fragile ecology, intensive caste based exploitation, perpetual poverty, lack of alternate source of livelihood.
6. **Jodhka:** Bonded labour practice in the country is the product of the survivalist necessity of the rural poor corresponding with the innovative saving techniques identified by rural rich.
7. Due to Green Revolution the states like Punjab and Haryana received high rate of migrant labour from poor states who got trapped in bondage.

Today's Scenario – Magnitude of Bondage in India : Bonded labour system has been enlisting in Indian Society among agricultural labourers in the name of beggar and ryots. Today it has extended to workers working in brick kilns, bidi factories, stone queries, glass factories and in detergent, carpet, gem stones and many other factories.

1. The cultural environment of exploitation under which the practice of bonded labour flourished witnessed all forms of exploitation and oppression ranging from child labour to the sexual exploitation of bonded women.

2. **Nadeem Hasnain** in his study of Kolta bonded labour found that untouchables were barred by custom from owning land. It was further compounded by the social ban on keeping or touching gold, thus making him totally vulnerable to any economic exigencies when a Kolta would be having nothing except his body which becomes a ready object of mortgage.
3. **Foundation and National Labour Institute** in combined study of bonded labour in 1978 found out that around 2.6 Lakh of workers in India are either bonded worker or are attached workers. It is based on survey of thousand villages spreading in ten states.
4. **National Commission on Rural Labour** in a study found out that bonded labour is largely used in agriculture sector, plantation sector. Child labours is bonded from are greatly used in hazardous sectors.
5. Among many socio-economic disabilities the untouchables have been suffering from their customary landlessness, the scheduled castes of today are the worst victims of debt bondage.
6. **Deccan Development Society** found out in its study that 533 children and 786 adults are pushed into the state of bonded labour.
7. **NHRC** in a case brought before it found out in Jharkhand how a person was forced to work for 20 years because of non-payment of Rs.2000.
5. Different NGOs like Sahyog, Mahila Samakhya, Sankalp and Bachpan Bachao Andolan are working in the area of the abolition of bonded labour.
6. The problem of bonded labour should be understood from the perspective of larger social situation.
7. Various policies to eradicate it need to emphasise on poverty alleviation measures.
8. Elimination of feudalistic ideology.
9. Intensive caste based inequality need to be checked.

LABOUR MIGRATION

Labour migration is an important factor affecting the course of socio-economic development in India. Accelerated movement of people originating mainly from the rural and backward areas in search of employment has been one of the most important features of the labour market scenario in India during the post-Independence period.

According to the 1991 Census, 226 million persons have changed their places of residence within the country. Such large scale labour migration obviously has raised a number of concerns in relation to the social and economic policy framework in India. Concern has been expressed over the economic, social and political marginalization of migrant workers, especially of those unskilled people moving from relatively deprived and depressed areas in search of gainful employment and living.

Nature of Labour Migration

- As majority of the occupation in which migrant labourers are engaged do not prefer women workers, most of migrants are males who migrate individually.
- This is, however, not the case in certain occupations in which family migrations is cheaper for the employer. Sugarcane is a case in point. Brick kiln and construction are other examples which attract family labour.

Steps taken and Suggestions

1. Constitution prohibits begar (forced labour) under Act 23.
2. Through Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act 1976 the Government tried to tackle debt bondage head on.
3. NHRC has development a core groups for the identification and rehabilitation of bonded labour.
4. Centrally-sponsored scheme is launched for the abolition of bonded labour for the provision of offering Rs.20000 to every bonded labourer rehabilitated.

- Majority of the migrants belong to the backward and scheduled castes as well as scheduled tribes being either landless or too poor.
- Labour migration is a complex phenomenon and encompasses different streams which vary in duration, nature of origin and destination areas and characteristics of migration process.
- The nature of contemporary labour migration can be examined at various levels depending on the degree and extent of vulnerability to which the migrant worker is exposed. These levels are : migration for survival, subsistence,
- Other reason which cause the migration are failure of land reforms,
- Depletion of resource base for tribes,
- High rates of population growth in the rural areas,
- Increase in the proportion of landless labourers, and
- Lack of adequate expansion of non-farm employment.

CONDITION OF MIGRANT LABOURERS AND THERE EXPLOITATION

Magnitude of Migration

Of the 226 million persons who changed places within the country as per the 1991 Census, only 17.3 million or 8.8 per cent persons are reported to have moved for employment reasons. Several studies and reports on migration, however, have indicated that the Census data suffers from several limitations while estimating labour migration for employment. The main limitation is that the data ignores or severely underestimates short duration and seasonal/circular migrants. The extent of this under reporting is very clearly brought out by the National Commission on Rural Labour (1991). The Commission estimates more than 10 million circular migrants in the rural areas alone. These include an estimated 4.5 million inter-State migrants and 6 million intra-State migrants.

Main reasons for Labour migration

- Accelerated development of capitalist form of agriculture i.e. non-participation of family labour among the rich and middle peasants and changes in frequencies of cropping due to the adoption of advanced technology in agriculture,
- Reduced demand for permanent labour due to mechanized farming and marginalization of farmers and artisans in rural areas due to resource constraint and compulsion to augment their earnings by seasonal labour also affect the migration,
- The migrant workers are generally exploited. They are made to work for long hours and the wages paid to them are lower than the local labourers, in fact, below the level of prescribed minimum wage.
- Taking advantage of their illiteracy and poverty, middle-men practice exploitative recruitment practices and in many cases, retain a major portion of their wages as their own commission. Moreover, wages are adjusted only at the end of the season and workers are paid some advance, which are not at all sufficient to meet even the basic requirements.
- The conditions of women labourers are far more unsatisfactory. Contrary to provisions of equal Remuneration Act, women migrant labourers are invariably paid lesser wages as compared to their male counterparts in many sectors. Sexual exploitation of the women migrant labourers especially the tribals is also a matter of deep concern.
- In addition, migrant workers do not have access to the public distribution system or other municipal services. They are provided with free medical facilities.
- Their non-inclusion in electoral rolls also deprives them of political patronage and results in their extreme political marginalization.
- The employers and contractors also adopt exploitative practices against the migrant labour. They employ various methods to

circumvent the provisions of the Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act (ISMW) farmed by the Centre in 1979 to regulate the employment of inter-State migrant workers. The contractors inter-alia, split establishment in such a way so that license is not required as envisaged under the Act for employing more than 5 migrant workers.

- The contractors also evade the provisions of the ISMW Act by registering migrant labour with the local employment exchange and then contend that ISMW Act does not apply.
- A major shortcoming of the ISMW Act is that it does not apply to those migrants who undertake migration on their own and also to long distance migration whether voluntary or sponsored within the state boundaries. Thus, a significant proportion of migrants are excluded from the purview of the Act.
- The effective implementation of the ISMW Act hinges on its Section 20, which provides for appointment of inspectors to inspect whether provisions of this Act, in relation to payment of wages, conditions of service and facilities are being complied with. But none of the State governments have evolved any institutional modalities for carrying out inspections outside States for enforcement of the Act.

Some interesting insights on migration provided by Census of India 2001

- During the reporting period, 30% reported as migrants by place of birth.
- During the last decade (1991-2001), the number of migrants in India (excluding J & K) rose by 32.9%, the total number of migrants by place of last residence in India (excluding J & k) grew by 34.7% during 1991-2001.
- High growth (53.6%) among inter-state migrants was also observed.
- Total migrants by last residence (0-9 yrs.) accounted to 98.3 million.
- 43.8% moved due to marriage, 21.0% moved with their households, 14.7% migrated due

to work, 6.7% moved after their birth, 3% for educational purpose, 1.2% for business and 9.7% specified other reasons.

- About 42.4 million migrants out of total 65.4 million female migrants cited marriage as the reason for migration. Among males the most important reason for migration was 'Work/Employment', 12.3 million out of 32.8 million total male migrants migrated due to this reason.
- During the decade, out of the urban growth of 30.3 per cent, 6.6 per cent is accounted for by migration to urban areas.
- If one takes away those migrants who moved due to marriage, the total number of migrants falls from 98.3 million to 55.2 million. Total number of migrants among males and females were 32.2 million and 22.9 million respectively.
- Migration streams (during the last decade)
 - * Rural to rural migration within the country: 53.3 million
 - * Rural to urban migration: 20.5 million
 - * Urban to rural migration: 6.2 million
 - * Urban to urban migration: 14.3 million.
- Uttar Pradesh (2.6 million) and Bihar (-1.7 million) were the two states with largest number of net migrants migrating out of the state.
- The total number of inter-state migrants was 42.3 million and those who were born abroad account for 6.1 million. About 97% of these migrants by last residence were from the eight neighboring countries (including Afghanistan).

Major Problems Encountered By Migrant Labourers

Some major problems encountered by the migrants in their areas of employment include,

- Premature termination of job contracts,
- Hanging the clauses of contract to the disadvantage of the workers,
- Delay in making payments,
- Violation of minimum wage standards,

- Forced over-time work without returns,
- In the case of most intra-state and inter-state unskilled and semiskilled migrants, migrant labourers run high risks of exploitation for they are exposed to large uncertainties and lack access to information and knowledge. Thus making it very difficult for them to switch jobs in case of dissatisfaction with the current employer.
- Because of their optionless situation, these labourers lack bargaining power and thereby fail to negotiate reasonable pay scales and fair working conditions with the contractors.
- Most migrants live in open spaces; make shift shelters or illegal settlements, which lack the basic infrastructure and access to civic amenities. They have no local ration which can provide them their food at subsidized rates through the Public Distribution system.
- They are highly prone to occupational health hazards and vulnerable to epidemics including HIV/AIDS.
- Since the migrants are mobile, their children have no crèche facilities or access to schooling. They do not come under the purview of either the local government or the NGO Programmes for they do not belong to that particular region. So citing the problem of monitoring, most agencies leave them outside the scope of development intervention.
- In India, migrant labours are largely found in the developed states. The traditional migrants coming from underdeveloped regions of the country are the most marginalized sections of society, namely the Tribals and the Scheduled Castes. These migrants are entirely without legal protection or social security. They are "invisible", and are not acknowledged. They are denied access even to basic amenities in most of the cases. They have no identity in the places where they live and no voice in the places they have left behind.
- Migration offers a very fertile ground for traffickers. In India, migrants who leave their homes in search for better employment opportunities and marital prospects, fall easy preys to traffickers for want of adequate information. Alongside cross-border trafficking, internal trafficking of women, children and men for purpose of sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, bonded labour and indentured servitude too is widespread.

