

Managing Migration

This volume of the bulletin focuses on the issues of labour migration from Asian economies

International Headlines

Labour migration from the large low and middle income Asian economies have been characterised by the lack of clear and user friendly legal channels coupled with the acute skill mismatch. This is particularly concerning in the light of the advancing 4th Industrial Revolution, with high skilled jobs being the call of the hour. This has also led to the reduced demand for low skilled human labour, which constitutes the majority of the migration from Asian countries such as Sri Lanka and Vietnam. Migrant contribution through remittances has seen a spike over the years with Sri Lanka migrant remittance inflow growing at 155%. This is also reflected in the case of Vietnam with the growth of remittance inflow at 134% (World Bank, 2019). Current initiatives, especially the ASEAN Safe Migration Campaign of 2018 appears problematic. This can be attributed to the assumed linkages between safe and regular migration that the initiative seeks to promote. It may be wrong to assume that regular migration is always safe, without defining clearly the meaning of 'safe' migration. Additionally, the campaign lacks the fundamental idea that the locus of control with regard to migration must be in the hands of the migrant workers. However, labour migration within and outside Asia has been characterised by wage exploitation, poor working conditions and the absence of social security. The strong growth of remittances and therefore labour migration indicates the need for policies that promote and protect the interest of the migrants.



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On the National Front



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The need for migration that is sustainable, orderly and effective is imperative for India as well. This becomes important more so in the context of the cultural, economic and social diversity that exists in the country. Similar to its Asian neighbours, migration in India too has been predominantly exploitative, with lack of support and pathways for regular migration, especially for low skilled workers. This has prompted the setting up of institutional architecture to promote migration in lines with the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals. Keeping this in mind, the Government of Karnataka has entrusted Public Affairs Centre with the development of the International Migration Centre- Karnataka, a first of its kind three tier institutional framework to support the needs and entitlements of migrants to orderly and safe migration.

Recommended Read of the Week

'Uncertain Journeys: Labour Migration from South Asia', published by Speaking Tiger Books, brings together the dark side of labour migration from the South Asian economies in this short read. What the book does is give the readers the stories and experiences behind the otherwise cumbersome migration data available. The volume contains essays written by various authors from different parts of South Asia, details the struggles, hopes and aspirations of migrants.

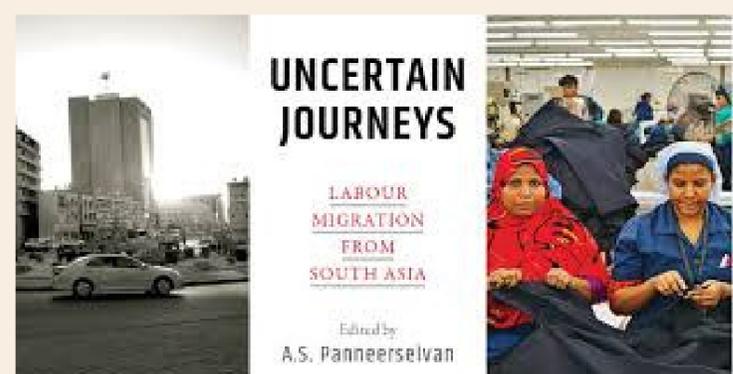


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