



DAILY EDITORIAL ANALYSIS

TOPIC

**LEVERAGING LEGAL MIGRATION IN
INDIA TO HARNESS THE DEMOGRAPHIC
DIVIDEND**

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LEVERAGING LEGAL MIGRATION IN INDIA TO HARNESS THE DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND

Context

- In order to solve labor shortages in high-income nations and support its own economic growth through remittances and skill development, India may use legal migration channels to establish itself as a global talent center.

About Migration in India

- It is a significant socio-economic phenomenon, encompassing both internal and international movements.
- It plays a crucial role in shaping the country's demographic, economic, and cultural landscape.

Types of Migration	
Internal Migration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movement within a country (intra-state and inter-state). • Primary Streams: <i>rural to rural, rural to urban, urban to urban, and urban to rural</i>.
International Migration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movement across national borders (for work, education, or asylum) • It includes immigration (moving into a country) and emigration (moving out of a country).
Voluntary Migration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movement by choice (for better economic opportunities or lifestyle improvements)
Forced/Involuntary Migration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is because of conflicts, natural disasters, or persecution. • It includes refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and asylum seekers.
Seasonal/Temporary Migration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is based on seasonal work, such as agricultural laborers moving for harvest seasons.
Reverse Migration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movement from urban areas back to rural regions
Legal Migration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movement of individuals across borders through authorized channels, such as work visas, student visas, or family reunification programs.
Illegal migration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It involves unauthorized entry or overstaying in a foreign country, often driven by economic hardship, conflict, or persecution.

Need for Legal Migration Routes For India

- **Labor Shortages:** High-income countries are projected to face a cumulative labour gap of 40-50 million people by 2030, rising to 120-160 million by 2040.
 - ♦ It spans various sectors, including industrial workers, healthcare professionals, teachers, engineers and researchers.
- **Untapped Potential:** Indian diaspora is over 30 million, with migrants generating over **\$125 billion (about 3% of the country's GDP)** in remittances annually.
 - ♦ India's migrants constitute **about 1.3% of India's population**, substantially lower than **Mexico (8.6%), the Philippines (5.1%), or Bangladesh (4.3%)**.
- **Boosting Remittances and Reducing Poverty:** A study among 71 low-income nations has revealed that a 10% rise in remittances reduced poverty by 3.5%.
- **Skill Transfer and Innovation:** Overseas employment fosters skill transfer, entrepreneurship, and innovation, benefiting both India and destination countries.
- **Strengthening Bilateral Relations:** Legal migration routes can deepen ties with partner nations, creating mutually beneficial economic and cultural exchanges.

Key Suggestions For Utilising Migrants Potential

- **Setting Up of Institutional Framework:** It strengthens the MEA's central migration department to discover new destination markets, sign bilateral agreements, and assure industry-wide supply-demand skill matches.
- **Aligning Skilling & Accreditation Systems With International Standards:** It might include teaching foreign languages and global skills, campaigning for mutual recognition agreements with critical corridors, and obtaining joint certifications with international organizations.
- **Easing Financial Mechanism:** The costs associated with acquiring the necessary skills and certifications and meeting other requirements can be prohibitive for many prospective migrants — these can range from Rs 1-2 lakh for GCC countries to Rs 5-10 lakh for Europe.
- **Best Practices From Existing Models:** To negotiate the removal of bureaucratic visa barriers, facilitate socio-cultural integration, and reinforce the recognition of Indian qualifications. For example:
 - ♦ The **Philippines** offers a model at the centre, state regional offices, and migrant workers offices in host countries.
 - It secured agreements with over 65 countries, successfully streamlining visa processes and ensuring global recognition of Philippine qualifications.
- **Setting of Industry Standards For Ethical Recruitment:** There is a need to establish a **mobility industry body** to support India's overseas recruitment sector and to address the current fragmentation and lack of regulation.
 - ♦ It can set industry standards for ethical recruitment and work to align qualifications with international benchmarks.
- **Establishing a Robust Social Welfare Framework:** India can establish norms for minimum wage assurance, standardising contracts, ensuring timely salary disbursement and safe living conditions, healthcare access, legal assistance, and providing mechanisms to report workplace abuse or contract violations, based on **ILO's guidelines**.
- **Prioritising Support For Returning Migrants:** India should prioritise support for returning migrants to ensure their successful reintegration into society and the economy. Returning migrants bring valuable skills and international exposure that can significantly contribute to local development and economic growth.

Policy Recommendations

- **Integrated Migration Policy:** India lacks a dedicated national migration policy. A National Migration and Mobility Policy (NMMP), aligned with SDG targets and ILO conventions, is critical.
- **Migrant Resource Centres:** Scale up Migrant Help Desks at both source and destination areas.

Government Initiatives

- **eMigrate Portal & MoUs with Destination Countries:** It is managed by the **Ministry of External Affairs**, facilitates safe and legal migration for Indian workers seeking overseas employment.
- **Skill Development Tailored to Migration Patterns:** Migrants are often employed in sectors like construction, hospitality, domestic work, and manufacturing.
 - ♦ Initiatives like Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) and Skill India Mission aim to enhance the employability of Indian workers in global markets.
- **India for the World Programme:** It refers to various initiatives undertaken by India to provide **development assistance and capacity building to other countries**, particularly those in the developing world.
 - ♦ These programs focus on areas like technology transfer, training, and sharing India's expertise to help other nations progress in their development goals.

Conclusion

- By strategically leveraging legal migration routes, India can unlock the full potential of its demographic dividend, addressing global labor shortages while driving domestic growth.
- This approach not only positions India as a global talent hub but also ensures sustainable development and poverty alleviation through remittances and skill enhancement.

Mains Practice Question

[Q] How can India successfully leverage legal migration channels to maximize its demographic dividend, while tackling difficulties such as skill development, global labor shortages, and growth fueled by remittances?

Source: IE

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