

The background of the journal cover features a top-down view of a desk. On the left, a pair of black leather brogue shoes is partially visible. In the center, an open notebook with lined pages and a silver pen lies on a light-colored wooden surface. To the right, a black leather bag with a zipper and a black leather watch with a silver face are also visible. A large, semi-transparent white rectangular box is centered over the image, containing the journal's title and ISSN information.

INTERNATIONAL LAW
JOURNAL

**WHITE BLACK
LEGAL LAW
JOURNAL**
**ISSN: 2581-
8503**

Peer - Reviewed & Refereed Journal

The Law Journal strives to provide a platform for discussion of International as well as National Developments in the Field of Law.

WWW.WHITEBLACKLEGAL.CO.IN

DISCLAIMER

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored, transmitted, translated, or distributed in any form or by any means—whether electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning, or otherwise—without the prior written permission of the Editor-in-Chief of *White Black Legal – The Law Journal*.

All copyrights in the articles published in this journal vest with *White Black Legal – The Law Journal*, unless otherwise expressly stated. Authors are solely responsible for the originality, authenticity, accuracy, and legality of the content submitted and published.

The views, opinions, interpretations, and conclusions expressed in the articles are exclusively those of the respective authors. They do not represent or reflect the views of the Editorial Board, Editors, Reviewers, Advisors, Publisher, or Management of *White Black Legal*.

While reasonable efforts are made to ensure academic quality and accuracy through editorial and peer-review processes, *White Black Legal* makes no representations or warranties, express or implied, regarding the completeness, accuracy, reliability, or suitability of the content published. The journal shall not be liable for any errors, omissions, inaccuracies, or consequences arising from the use, interpretation, or reliance upon the information contained in this publication.

The content published in this journal is intended solely for academic and informational purposes and shall not be construed as legal advice, professional advice, or legal opinion. *White Black Legal* expressly disclaims all liability for any loss, damage, claim, or legal consequence arising directly or indirectly from the use of any material published herein.

ABOUT WHITE BLACK LEGAL

White Black Legal – The Law Journal is an open-access, peer-reviewed, and refereed legal journal established to provide a scholarly platform for the examination and discussion of contemporary legal issues. The journal is dedicated to encouraging rigorous legal research, critical analysis, and informed academic discourse across diverse fields of law.

The journal invites contributions from law students, researchers, academicians, legal practitioners, and policy scholars. By facilitating engagement between emerging scholars and experienced legal professionals, *White Black Legal* seeks to bridge theoretical legal research with practical, institutional, and societal perspectives.

In a rapidly evolving social, economic, and technological environment, the journal endeavours to examine the changing role of law and its impact on governance, justice systems, and society. *White Black Legal* remains committed to academic integrity, ethical research practices, and the dissemination of accessible legal scholarship to a global readership.

AIM & SCOPE

The aim of *White Black Legal – The Law Journal* is to promote excellence in legal research and to provide a credible academic forum for the analysis, discussion, and advancement of contemporary legal issues. The journal encourages original, analytical, and well-researched contributions that add substantive value to legal scholarship.

The journal publishes scholarly works examining doctrinal, theoretical, empirical, and interdisciplinary perspectives of law. Submissions are welcomed from academicians, legal professionals, researchers, scholars, and students who demonstrate intellectual rigour, analytical clarity, and relevance to current legal and policy developments.

The scope of the journal includes, but is not limited to:

- Constitutional and Administrative Law
- Criminal Law and Criminal Justice
- Corporate, Commercial, and Business Laws
- Intellectual Property and Technology Law
- International Law and Human Rights
- Environmental and Sustainable Development Law
- Cyber Law, Artificial Intelligence, and Emerging Technologies
- Family Law, Labour Law, and Social Justice Studies

The journal accepts original research articles, case comments, legislative and policy analyses, book reviews, and interdisciplinary studies addressing legal issues at national and international levels. All submissions are subject to a rigorous double-blind peer-review process to ensure academic quality, originality, and relevance.

Through its publications, *White Black Legal – The Law Journal* seeks to foster critical legal thinking and contribute to the development of law as an instrument of justice, governance, and social progress, while expressly disclaiming responsibility for the application or misuse of published content.

CITIZENSHIP AND HUMAN RIGHTS OF MIGRANT WORKERS: CONSTITUTIONAL AND POLICY GAPS

AUTHORED BY - ASHUTOSH KUMAR SINGH¹

Abstract

The internal migration of labour in India represents one of the most significant yet precarious socio-economic phenomena of the twenty-first century. This research paper examines the profound disconnect between the formal status of citizenship and the substantive enjoyment of human rights for migrant workers within the Indian federal structure. Drawing upon extensive data, including the surging estimate of over 600 million internal migrants by 2025, the study investigates the “triple exclusion”—economic, welfare, and political—that defines the migrant experience.² Through a detailed analysis of the “Golden Triangle” of the Indian Constitution (Articles 14, 19, and 21), the paper explores how judicial activism led by seminal jurists like Justices P.N. Bhagwati and V.R. Krishna Iyer expanded the scope of the “Right to Life” to encompass dignity, livelihood, and fair wages. However, the transition from the Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act of 1979 to the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code of 2020 reveals critical policy gaps, including higher applicability thresholds and a shift toward a less adversarial “facilitator” enforcement model that may dilute worker protections.³ The study further critiques contemporary digital interventions like the e-Shram portal and the One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) scheme, identifying technological and gendered barriers that hinder the portability of rights. Finally, the paper addresses the disenfranchisement of millions of absent voters and evaluates the potential of Remote Voting Machines (RVMs) to restore political agency. The research concludes with evidence-based recommendations for a rights-based national policy to bridge the gap between constitutional promises and lived realities.

Keywords: *Internal Migration, Human Rights, Indian Constitution, Golden Triangle, e-Shram, Political Enfranchisement, Social Security Portability, Judicial Activism.*

¹ Ph.D. Research Scholar, Faculty of Law, Dr. Shakuntala Misra National Rehabilitation University, Lucknow.

² ‘India’s Migrants: Exclusion by Design’ (*The India Forum*, 8 October 2025) <<https://www.theindiaforum.in/economy/indias-migrants-and-exclusion-design>> accessed 27 October 2025.

³ Aaditya Bhatt, ‘Inter-State Migrant Workers: Enhanced Protections and Registration Mandates’ (*Bhatt & Joshi Associates*, 3 December 2025) <<https://bhattandjoshiassociates.com/inter-state-migrant-workers-enhanced-protections-and-registration-mandates/>> accessed 11 January 2026.

The Ghost in the Machine: Introduction to Migrant Precarity

The narrative of India's economic development is frequently told through the lens of rapid urbanization and industrial agglomerations. Yet, the essential workforce that fuels this growth remains largely invisible in the corridors of power. As of 2025, it is estimated that over 600 mn. people—approximately 42 % of the national population—have migrated within India's borders, driven by recurring agrarian crises, urban pull factors, and the search for better livelihoods. Within this vast demographic, nearly 200 million are classified specifically as labor migrants, individuals who have crossed state or district boundaries to engage in remunerated activities.

The migrant worker is a figure of profound contradiction. While they contribute approximately 10 % to India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), they are systematically denied the basic rights and social securities. This “systematic invisibilization” is not merely an administrative oversight but, as some scholars argue, exclusion by design. By keeping migrant labor informal and mobile, the state and private capital are able to maximize exploitation while minimizing the cost of social reproduction.⁴

This research paper investigates the socio-legal landscape of migration in India, focusing on the constitutional and policy gaps that leave migrant workers in a state of “triple exclusion.” We explore how the Indian law, which promises universal equality and freedom of movement, often fails to deliver these rights across state borders. The study analyzes the historical role of the judiciary in championing the underprivileged and assesses whether modern policy shifts—such as the new Labour Codes and digital welfare platforms—are truly bridge-building or merely new forms of digital exclusion.

Mapping the Demographic Shift: Statistics and Sectoral Trends

To understand the magnitude of the policy challenge, one must first confront the scale of the movement. In India, internal migration has increased significantly in the post-pandemic era, reflecting deep-rooted regional disparities in economic development.

The Scale of Mobility

In 2011, Census recorded 450 million internal migrants. Whereas in 2025, this figure has ballooned to over 600 million. This increase highlights a dynamic where the Northern and Eastern states (the “source regions” such as Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Jharkhand) increasingly

⁴ ‘India's Migrants: Exclusion by Design’ (n 1).

export labor to the Southern and Western states (the “destination regions” such as Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Tamil Nadu).⁵

State/Region	Migration Detail	Estimated Volume
National Total	Total internal migrants (2025)	600,000,000
Bihar	Post-pandemic out-migration (4.5 years)	11,700,000
Jharkhand	Inter-state migrants (2023 Survey)	4,500,000
Odisha	Inter-state migrants (2023 Survey)	1,700,000
Inter-State Workers	Total (Census 2011 baseline)	41,422,917
Global Context	Migrant workers as % of workforce	4.7%

The data provided by the Labour Ministry and the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) suggests that migration is no longer a peripheral feature of the labor market but its defining force. However, the official numbers often fail to capture the nuances of circular and seasonal migration, where workers move back and forth between their villages and cities multiple times a year, often remaining outside the reach of formal registration.⁶

Sectorial Concentration and the Informal Trap

Migrant workers are predominantly absorbed into the unorganized sector. In unorganised sector no labour law of the country is followed. Hence, minimum protections and high risks. Their work is often cyclical and distress-led, shaped by immediate economic pressures rather than long-term career planning.

- **Construction and Real Estate:** This sector is the primary absorber of male migrant labor. It is characterized by high occupational hazards and a reliance on the “sub-contracting” model, which insulates the principal employer from legal liability.
- **Agriculture and Plantation:** Millions of workers move seasonally from Bihar and

⁵ ‘LATEST DATA ON INTER-STATE MIGRANT WORKERS’ <https://sansad.in/getFile/annex/267/AU422_L5FcRZ.pdf?source=pqars> accessed 12 June 2025; ‘Labour Migration’ (*Migration data portal*) <<https://www.migrationdataportal.org/themes/labour-migration-statistics>> accessed 11 January 2026.

⁶ Manoj Kumar, ‘Status of Inter-State Migrant Workmen in India: Challenges, Legal Framework, and Policy Imperatives’ (2025) 10 *Journal of Information Systems Engineering and Management* 545.

Odisha to the fields of Punjab and the plantations of the South. These workers often face debt bondage and sub-minimum wages.

- **Manufacturing and Textiles:** Hubs like Surat and Tiruppur rely almost exclusively on migrant labor. Here, workers often live in “factory-adjacent” conditions, with minimal access to clean water or sanitation.
- **Hospitality and Domestic Work:** A sector with a high concentration of female migrants. Unlike the male-dominated construction sector, domestic work remains largely isolated, leaving women vulnerable to unpaid care roles and socio-cultural norms that hinder their professional mobility.

The Constitutional Blueprint: Rights and Realities

The Indian Constitution provides a robust framework that, in theory, protects every citizen regardless of their location. The interplay between Fundamental Rights (Part III) and Directive Principles of State Policy (Part IV) forms the moral and legal backbone of migrant protection.⁷

The Golden Triangle: Articles 14, 19, and 21

Honourable Supreme Court has various times invoked the “Golden Triangle” to strike down arbitrary acts of state that tarnish human dignity. For the migrant worker, these three articles provide the following protections:

1. **Article 14 (Equality before Law):** Art. 14 ensure that No person is deprived either of *equality before the law or equal protection of the laws*, even the state itself cannot deny this. This means that any state government cannot constitutionally deny welfare benefits to a migrant worker merely because he was not born in that state. As established in *E.P. Royappa v. State of Tamil Nadu*⁸, equality is the sworn enemy of arbitrariness.
2. **Article 19 (Freedoms of Movement and Residence):** Specifically, Article 19(1)(d) and (e) guarantees the right to move, settle, reside freely throughout the country. This right is essential for a unified national labour market, yet it is often challenged by ‘sons of the soil’ ideologies that favour local residents in employment.
3. **Article 21 (Right to Life and Personal Liberty):** This article has been the most significant tool for judicial expansion. The *Right to Life* is interpreted not merely as animal existence but as the right to live and enjoy every facet with dignity, which

⁷ Piyush Pandey, Vaishali Choudhary and Ashish Kumar Pandey, ‘Labour Rights under Constitutional Law and Their Influence on Industrial Relations’ (2025) 8 1522.

⁸ AIR 1974 SC 555.

includes the right to livelihood, shelter, and health—amenities that are often systematically denied to migrants.

Directive Principles as Constitutional Mandates

While Fundamental Rights are justiciable, the DPSP are not but they are *fundamental in the governance*. They are the guidelines for legislature and shows the state should move toward a socialist pattern of society.

DPSP Article	Mandate for Migrant Welfare	Implication
Article 38	Minimize inequalities in income and status	Mandates the state to bridge the North-South economic divide.
Article 39(a)	Right to means of livelihood	Directly protects the migrant's right to work in any state.
Article 41	Right to work and public assistance	Compels the state to provide support during periods of unemployment.
Article 43	Securing living wage and decent living conditions	Ensures that economic growth does not come at the cost of labour dignity.

The SC in *Minerva Mills case*⁹ emphasised that Fundamental Rights and DPSP are the two facets of development and termed them as *two wheels of the chariot* of the Constitution. Meaning, they are complementary and supplementary to each other. However, the non-justiciable nature of DPSP means that welfare is still a question of administrative discretion rather than a legal right for the migrant worker.

⁹ AIR 1980 SC 1789.

Juristic Giants: Bhagwati, Krishna Iyer, and the “Rule of Life”

The evolution of human rights in India is inseparable from the judicial innovations of Justice P.N. Bhagwati and Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer. During their tenure in the 1970s and 80s, they transformed the Supreme Court from an “elitist” institution into a “people-oriented” one.

The Expansion of Locus Standi

The traditional doctrine of *locus standi* (*place of suing*)—where only the aggrieved person can approach the court—was a major barrier for impoverished migrant workers. Justice Bhagwati in the *Bandhua Mukti Morcha case* (discussed below) recognized that the poor lack the resources to litigate. He relaxed the doctrine of standing, allowing any public-spirited citizen or NGO to file petition on behalf of the deprived persons whose rights are violated but who cannot go to court themselves. This was the beginning of Public Interest Litigation (PIL) era and ‘epistolary jurisdiction’. Epistolary jurisdiction means the court takes cognizance of letter written to it by a prisoner or a worker as a formal petition.

Landmark Judgments on Labour Dignity

- **Bandhua Mukti Morcha v. Union of India¹⁰**: This case concerned bonded laborers in stone quarries who were “working like slaves”. Justice Bhagwati ordered an investigation by the district collector, finding that workers lived in terrible conditions without education or freedom to leave. He ordered the release of 10,000 workers and their rehabilitation through NGOs. The court held that the right to live with human dignity includes protection from bondage and the right to fair wages.
- **Asiad Workers Case (PUDR v. Union of India¹¹)**: The court ruled that the non-payment of minimum wages amounts to “forced labor” under Article 23 of the Constitution. This was a revolutionary interpretation, as it expanded the concept of bondage from traditional debt-bondage to economic exploitation.
- **Maneka Gandhi v. Union of India¹²**: Although a case about passports, it established that the “Golden Triangle” must be read together. Any law depriving a person of liberty must pass the triple test of being fair, just, and reasonable. This is vital for migrants who are often subjected to arbitrary detention or evictions.

¹⁰ AIR 1984 SC 802.

¹¹ AIR 1982 SC 1473.

¹² AIR 1978 SC 597.

The Upendra Baxi Critique: “Exodus Constitutionalism”

Contemporary jurists like Upendra Baxi have critiqued the state’s failure during mass social disasters, e.g. COVID-19 lockdown.¹³ Baxi terms the mass movement of workers during the pandemic as “Exodus Constitutionalism” where the constitutional system was tested by a mass displacement and it was proved that the infra was ill-equipped to handle.¹⁴ He contends that human suffering must be taken seriously, if human rights are to be taken seriously.¹⁵ The judicial response to the pandemic—initially hesitant but later proactive through *suo motu* cognisance—highlights the persistent tension between the state’s power to manage crises and its obligation to protect the most vulnerable.¹⁶

Legislative Evolution: From 1979 to the 2020 Labour Codes

The legislative framework for migrant workers has undergone a fundamental shift. While the 1979 Act was born out of a specific need to curb contractor-led exploitation, the 2020 OSH Code reflects a broader ambition to consolidate labor laws for the modern economy.

The Inter-State Migrant Workmen (ISMW) Act, 1979

The ISMW Act was established following the recommendations of the Compact Committee of 1977.¹⁷ It applied to establishments or contractors employing five or more inter-state migrant workers. It mandated:

- 1. Registration and Licensing:** Establishments had to register and contractors had to obtain licenses for each state they operated in.
- 2. Basic Amenities:** Mandatory provision of suitable residential accommodation and free medical facilities.
- 3. Allowances:** A “displacement allowance” (at the time of recruitment) and a “journey allowance” for the travel back home.

Despite these robust provisions, the Act was notoriously under-implemented. Most migrants migrate independently, not through formal contractors, leaving them outside the Act’s

¹³ Upendra Baxi, ‘Some Newly Emergent Geographies of Injustice: Boundaries and Borders in International Law’ (2016) 23 15.

¹⁴ Upendra Baxi, ‘Exodus As Mass Civil Disobedience’ (*The Leaflet*, 1 April 2021) <<https://theleaflet.in/analysis/exodus-as-mass-civil-disobedience>> accessed 11 January 2026.

¹⁵ William Twining (ed), ‘Upendra Baxi’ *Human Rights, Southern Voices* (1st edn, Cambridge University Press 2009) <https://www.cambridge.org/core/product/identifier/CBO9780511808364A027/type/book_part> accessed 11 January 2026.

¹⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁷ ‘INTER-STATE MIGRANT WORKMEN | Chief Labour Commissioner’ <<https://clc.gov.in/clc/acts-rules/inter-state-migrant-workmen>> accessed 11 January 2026.

definition of a “workman”.

The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSH) Code, 2020

The OSH Code subsumed 13 acts, including the ISMW Act, into a single framework of 143 provisions. This shift is significant for several reasons:

- **Expanded Definition:** A migrant worker is now defined as someone who migrates on their own or is recruited through a contractor, provided they earn less than ₹18,000 per month.
- **Threshold Increase:** The Code applies to establishments with 10 or more migrant workers, up from the 5 workers threshold in the 1979 Act. This higher threshold may exempt millions of micro-establishments from compliance.
- **Journey Allowance:** The Code mandates an annual “lump sum” journey allowance, recognizing that workers return home for festivals and social obligations, not just at the end of a contract.
- **Portability of Benefits:** A crucial enhancement is the portability of cess-based benefits for building and construction workers, allowing them to access social security in the destination state.
- **Inspector-cum-Facilitator:** The Code replaces the traditional inspector with a “Facilitator,” aiming to reduce the “Inspector Raj” and move toward a model of compliance through guidance rather than just punishment.

Feature	ISMW Act, 1979	OSH Code, 2020
Worker Definition	Strictly through contractor	Contractor-recruited + Self-migrated
Applicability Threshold	5 Workers	10 Workers
Allowance Model	Initial recruitment/displacement	Lump-sum annual journey allowance
Registration	Mandatory for employers	Provisions for self-registration by workers

Enforcement	Powers of seizure and strict inspection	Guidance-based “Facilitator” model
--------------------	---	------------------------------------

Policy Gaps and the Digital Divide: e-Shram and ONORC

In the aftermath of the pandemic, the Indian government launched several digital initiatives to bridge the welfare gap. But, the programs often face ‘technological hurdles’ and ‘administrative friction’ that prevent them from reaching the most marginalized.

The e-Shram Portal: A Database Without a Delivery System?

Launched on October 21, 2024, as a “One-Stop Solution,” e-Shram aims to integrate different social security and welfare schemes. By mid-2024, over 280 million workers had registered.¹⁸

- **The Goal:** is to create a national database for unorganized workers to facilitate the direct transfer of benefits.
- **The Gap:** Registrations remain incomplete, and there is weak integration with existing state-level schemes. Critics argue it serves more as a database for policy mapping than a functional tool for immediate relief. Furthermore, the “digital divide” excludes the 43 % of households without reliable internet access.

One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC): Portability Challenges

ONORC was introduced to ensure that migrants do not lose their right to subsidized foodgrains when they move states. While over 95 % of Fair Price Shops are integrated, the ground reality remains complex.

Challenge Category	Survey Findings (2024 Report) ¹⁹
Awareness vs. Usage	70.8% aware, only 50.5% attempted to use it
Success Rate	Only 58.6% of those who tried were successful
Dealer Refusal	53.5% reported refusal by shop owners

¹⁸ ‘India’s Elusive Safety Net For Migrant Labourers’ <<https://thesecretariat.in/article/india-s-elusive-safety-net-for-migrant-labourers>> accessed 11 January 2026.

¹⁹ Pranjali Tripathi, ‘ONE NATION, UNEQUAL ACCESS’ (Centre for Labour Research and Action 2024).

Stock Issues	47.4% reported stock shortages
Tech Failures	30% reported biometric authentication failure

The “split family” dynamic is a significant policy oversight. Many male migrants leave their families behind in the village. Current systems often struggle to handle “ration-splitting,” where half the family collects food in the source state and the other half in the destination state.

The Silent Majority: Voting Rights and Political Disenfranchisement

Perhaps the most damaging form of exclusion is political. The inability of migrants to vote in their destination states means they have no “political voice,” and therefore, governments have no electoral incentive to care for their welfare.

The “Ordinary Residence” Barrier

Section 19 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950, requires a person to be “ordinarily resident” in a constituency to vote. For a migrant worker, this poses a dual challenge:

- 1. De-facto Disenfranchisement:** Migrants cannot afford to travel back home to vote. In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, Bihar’s turnout was 10% lower than the national average, largely due to the “absentee” migrant population.²⁰
- 2. Registration Hurdles:** Registering in a new city requires address proof (Aadhaar or Rent Agreements), which most workers in informal housing do not have.

Remote Voting Machines (RVMs): Opportunities and Risks

In 2023, the Election Commission developed a prototype for a Remote Voting Machine (RVM) capable of handling votes for up to 72 different constituencies.

- **Potential:** It would allow a worker in Mumbai to vote for their home constituency in Bihar without traveling.
- **Challenges:** Political parties have expressed “trust deficiencies,” fearing tampering or violation of voting secrecy. There are also logistical challenges in setting up thousands of RVMs for migrants from diverse constituencies in a single city.

²⁰ ‘General Elections to Lok Sabha - 2024’ (Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, Tamil Nadu).

International Standards and India's Position

The protection of migrant workers is a cornerstone of international labor law. India's compliance with these standards is a subject of ongoing debate.

- **ILO Constitution (1919):** Calls for the protection of workers when employed in countries other than their own.²¹
- **Convention No. 97 & No. 143:** These ILO conventions promote “equality of opportunity and treatment” for regular migrant workers and their families.²²
- **ICRMW (1990):** The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families defines a migrant worker as a person engaged in remunerated activity in a state where they are not a national.²³

India has not yet ratified the ICRMW. However, judicial interpretation of Article 21 often draws from these universal human rights to mandate humane working conditions and access to healthcare.

Bridging the Gap: Conclusion and Recommendations

The crisis of the migrant worker is a failure of both administrative imagination and constitutional fulfillment. To move from “Exodus Constitutionalism” to “Inclusive Constitutionalism,” India must adopt a rights-based framework that treats migration as an integral part of development rather than a problem to be solved.

Actionable Recommendations

1. **A National Migrant Policy:** India requires a unified national policy (like the draft *Shram Shakti Niti 2025*) that harmonizes state-level assistances and ensures that rights are not lost at state borders.²⁴
2. **Social Security Portability:** Welfare entitlements must be delinked from a fixed address. The e-Shram portal should be empowered as a functional delivery mechanism integrated with healthcare (Ayushman Bharat) and insurance schemes.

²¹ ‘International Labour Standards and Labour Migration | International Labour Organization’ (28 January 2024) <<https://www.ilo.org/topics-and-sectors/labour-migration/international-labour-standards-and-labour-migration>> accessed 11 January 2026.

²² *ibid.*

²³ ‘International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families | OHCHR’ <<https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-convention-protection-rights-all-migrant-workers>> accessed 11 January 2026.

²⁴ Mihir Umesh Inamdar and Abhijeet Ramkrishna Dhere, ‘Constitutional Framework Protecting Socio-Economic Rights Of Migrants In India: A Comparative Analysis’ (2026) 30 *Academy of Marketing Studies Journal* 1.

- 3. Inter-State Coordination Cells:** Source and destination states must establish joint labour management bodies. For example, Bihar's Joint Labour Commissioner in New Delhi serves as a model for inter-state grievance redressal.
- 4. Enabling Remote Voting:** The Election Commission should fast-track the RVM pilot projects, starting with high-migration corridors, to ensure that 200 million labour migrants are no longer politically invisible.
- 5. Addressing Housing and Sanitation:** The government must transition from temporary labour camps to Affordable Rental Housing Complexes (ARHCs) that provide dignity and security to migrant families.
- 6. Education and Language Support:** Under the Right to Education Act, migrant children must be mapped and provided with local-language teachers at their destinations to prevent a second generation of educational exclusion.

In conclusion, the migrant worker is not a guest in the urban economy but its primary stakeholder. Ensuring their human rights is not merely a matter of charity or "handouts" but a constitutional obligation that underpins the legitimacy of India's democracy. As Justice Krishna Iyer famously said, the "rule of law" must ultimately sustain the "rule of life". For India's 600 million migrants, that life must finally be one of dignity, security, and equal citizenship.

WHITE BLACK
LEGAL