

# A Case Study of Reverse Migration Due To Impact of Covid 19 on Migratory Poulation,

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**ABSTRACT:** Migration is the most dynamic activity ever since human came in to existence, it plays a vital role in the demographic scenario both at the place of origin & destination. According to the demographic dictionary of United Nation "Migration is such an event in which people move from one geographical area to another area leaving their place of residence & go to live permanently in another area then, it is called migration"

The study attempts to analyse and investigate the present scenario of reverse migration that occurred due to Pandemic. In this paper Bahadurganj a block of Kishanganj district of Bihar is taken as case study area, paper will highlight the factors responsible for out migration from this region, classification of these migrants will be based on religion, age, sex and the occupation they were engaged at migrant land. Study will help to understand the current situation that they are facing at their native place due to covid19.

A Situation of "PERVASIVE" – A Global Threat.

**Key words;** Reverse migration, Migrant labour, Vulnerable, Pandemic, Covid19.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Migration is third important factor after fertility and mortality though it is not biological like birth rate & death rate but definetly sway the social cultural economic political scenerio of any region or a country.It brings a huge change in the structure and growth of population than that of the birth rate & death rate when it takes place in a large scale .migration has both negative and positive impacts for the place of origin and destination.

When we dig in to the history of mankind, the process of migration was very much there it is considered as non stop process which involves the movement of people as nomadic. Migration is a historical reality which in today's world is supported by modern means of transportation. Urbanisation and industrialization worldwide giving rise to pull and push factors. Migration threfore is indivisible from the other determinats of demography ,it holds special place in the study

of Demographic structure of any region among the researchers.

## II. OBJECTIVES.

1. To study the present scenario of reversed migration
2. To analysis the problems and challenges that migrant labourer might face post Covid 19.
3. To investigate the future problem that these migrants might face post covid19.

## III. DATA BASE & METHODOLOGY.

The present study is based on the primary data collected from field from where these migrants first enter the region. The informative conversation was made with the migrants also with heath workers present. Total 1300 migrant labour are interviewed, and the data generated are analysed n intepreted accordingly. Paper has also used ssecondary data from census and news channels and tried to incorporate the facts and findings of different experts including reseach studies done on migration, poverty, and social problem of Bihar.

## ABOUT STUDY AREA.

The selected study area is called Bahadurganj which is a Tehsil/block of Kishanganj district of Bihar. The latitude & longitude of Bahadurganj is 26° 15' 51.3072" N and 87° 49' 41.8008" E respectively, It has an average elevation of 51 metres (167 feet). Bahadurganj is a municipality town nestled in the tarai region of Himalayas. Total area of Bahadurganj is 297 km<sup>2</sup> including 267.36 km<sup>2</sup> rural area and 29.17 km<sup>2</sup> urban area. Bahadurganj has a population of 2,53,582 peoples, of which 51.02% are males while 48.98% are females. There are 52,574 houses in the sub-district. There are about 95 villages in Bahadurganj. Literacy rate of Bahadurganj city is 61.90 % higher than state average of 61.80 %. In Bahadurganj, Male literacy is around 68.42 % while female literacy rate is 55.02 %. Population of Children with age of 0-6 is 7019 which is 18.97 % of total population of Bahadurganj. As per census of India 2001, migrants from mainly two states UP

(2.6 million) & Bihar (1.7 million) has migrated to the States like Maharashtra, Delhi & West Bengal. Based on net migration during last decade, difference between in migration and out-migration in each state, Maharashtra stands at the top of the list with 2.3 million net migrants, followed by Delhi (1.7 million), Gujarat (0.68 million) and Haryana (0.67 million) as per 2001 Census.

Migration in Bihar is a very common phenomenon, it is governed by the two most important factors of migration i.e pull and the push factor.

There have been many studies on migration of Bihar in the past which came out the with interesting findings like one of it is that, it is cyclic. The reason like poverty unemployment, caste system, zamindari system has played its optimum level for the out migration from region. As the study area is in the northeastern side, this small town was set up in the middle of 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is less developed comparatively, here multicultural settlement, communities comprise of Bihari, Rajbongshi, begin close to international border with Nepal and state border with West Bengal the community also comprises of Nepali and Bengali living here in a harmony. The study area is also called as "kala pani of Bihar" as the water of the region contain high concentration of iron, causing water logging and hampering other agricultural activities & the local are depend on cultivation of jute only, there was no industries and big factories to support the livelihood in the region. To add to this, almost every year the area gets hit of natural calamities and it is the flood which brings lots of sorrow and insecurity among the people who are very vulnerable to it and are compelled to move out in search livelihood. Initially the migrants of this region used to move to the places like Punjab, Haryana, and Delhi as there was a spike on the demand of agricultural labour, it continues till date but presently due to green revolution & advancement in technology now a day's demand of skilled labour is more in comparison to unskilled labour.

During the survey an oral history was narrated by one of the senior person of the region, that, in late 80s & 90s there used to be a bus

running every Wednesday carrying these migrant straight to Punjab, Haryana by thikadhar (agent). For those bus full of migrants it was their escape from the social differences, poverty and sorrow that they experienced at the place of origin. It was a journey of hope for these vulnerable section to earn livelihood and to send remittances for the family back home perhaps it is the only way out for them. But from the recent time it is seen that these migrants have changed their pattern from going to old destination to new modern or more urbanised metropolitan cities like Rajasthan, Mumbai, Maharashtra, Bangalore, etc. Here they have taken up jobs according to their skills. Among these migrants there is young generation who are more in number got attracted by these big cities, place like Rajasthan has also attracted these migrants as worker in tile factories and brick kiln. Social networking and transport facilities has played a vital role for these migrants to explore other destination too.

#### IV. DISCUSSION.

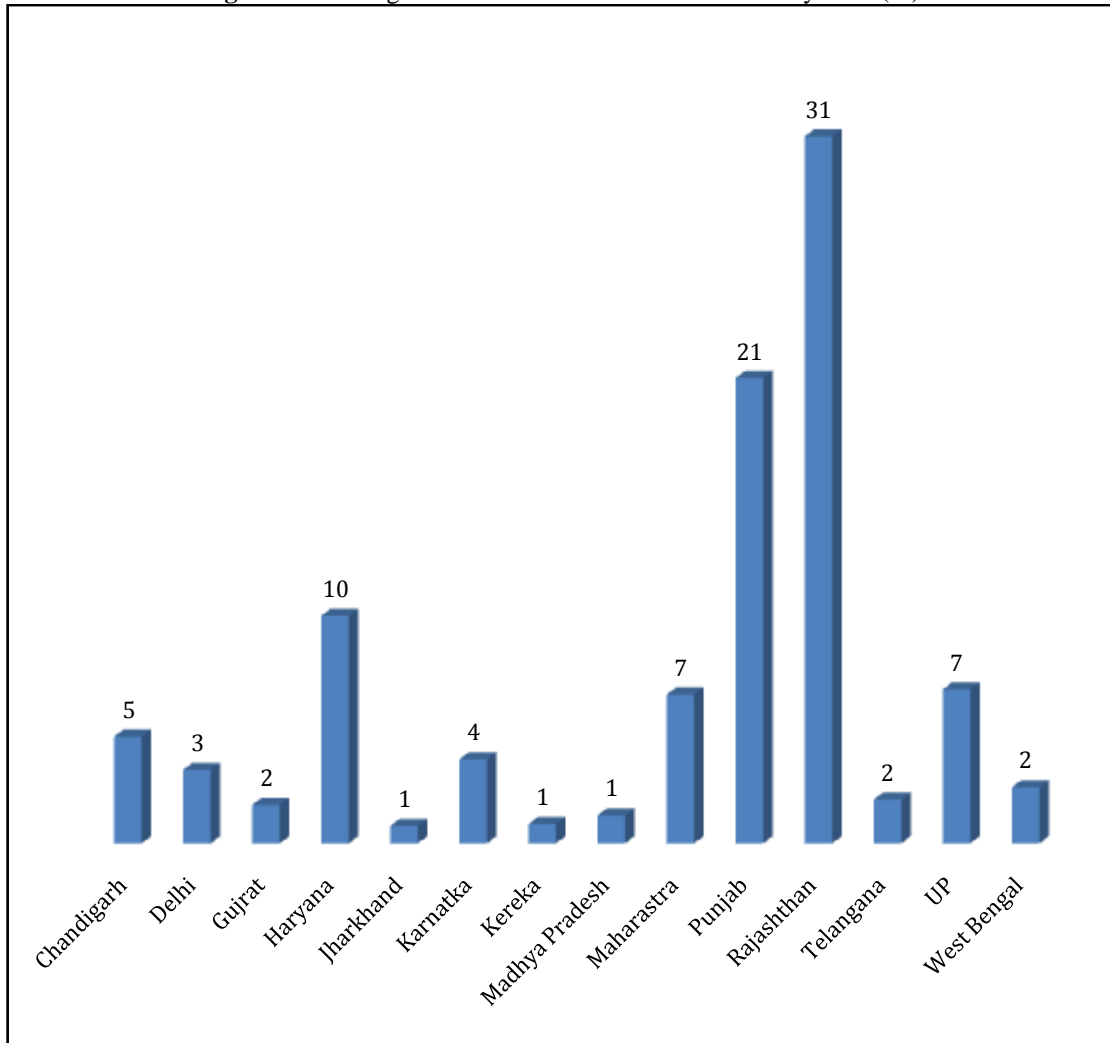
The total number of reversed migrants interviewed for this study were 1286, out of which 1280 were male which accounts 99.5% and out of them 83% were muslim, 13% hindu and 4% others. If we observe age wise distribution of the migrant's maximum are from the age group of 21 to 30 years (44%) followed by 31 to 40 years (21%) and in the age group 16 to 20 years that counts for 20% of the total number. Maximum out migration from Bahadurganj is to these three states respectively Rajasthan 31%, Punjab 21%, and Haryana 10%.

Migrants from this area prefer to migrate alone & keeping their family back at home, as observed during interview there were only 6 migrants who migrated with their family out of 1286 migrants.

As this is a backward area having a conservative society, females (Daughter in Law) are not preferred to accompany their husbands. Due to strict child labour act, they have stopped taking their underage male child along with them. They wait for the male child to achieve the age of 14 years so that they can also accompany them for more earnings.

**V. DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPITATION**

**Figure 1:** Out migration to different states from the study area. (%)

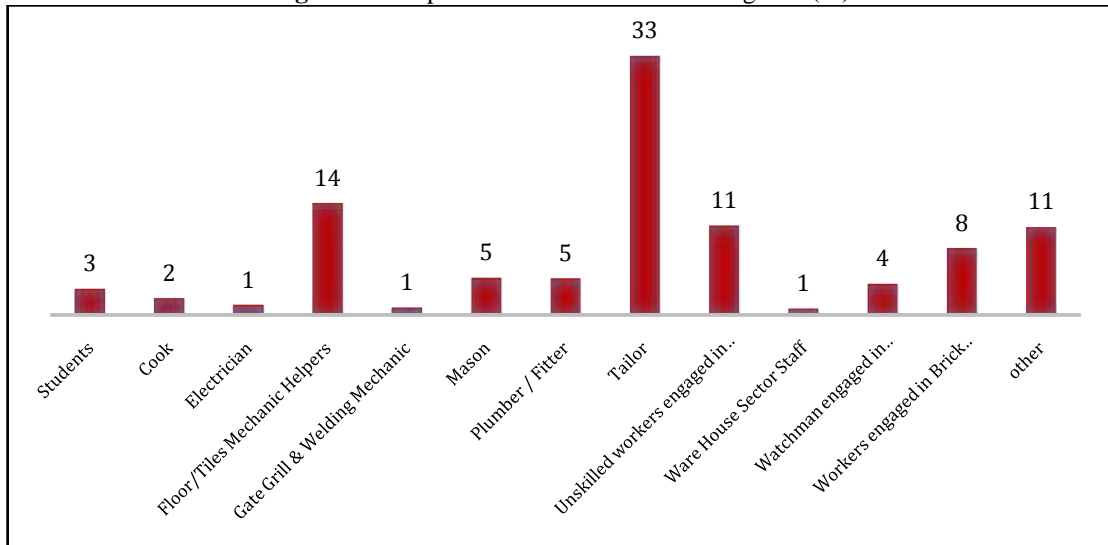


Source: Field Survey, 2020

Maximum migration from Bahadurganj is in Rajasthan with 31%, followed by Punjab 21 %, Haryana 10 %, Maharashtra & UP 7 %. This chart also shows the changing pattern of migration. In past maximum migrant were unskilled workers & they use to migrate for agricultural activities &

their preferred destination was used to be Punjab, but now many of them has developed skills & technology know how, so pattern & profession of migration is changing & now they are migrating to metros for their livelihood.

**Figure 2:** Occupation wise distribution of migrant. (%)

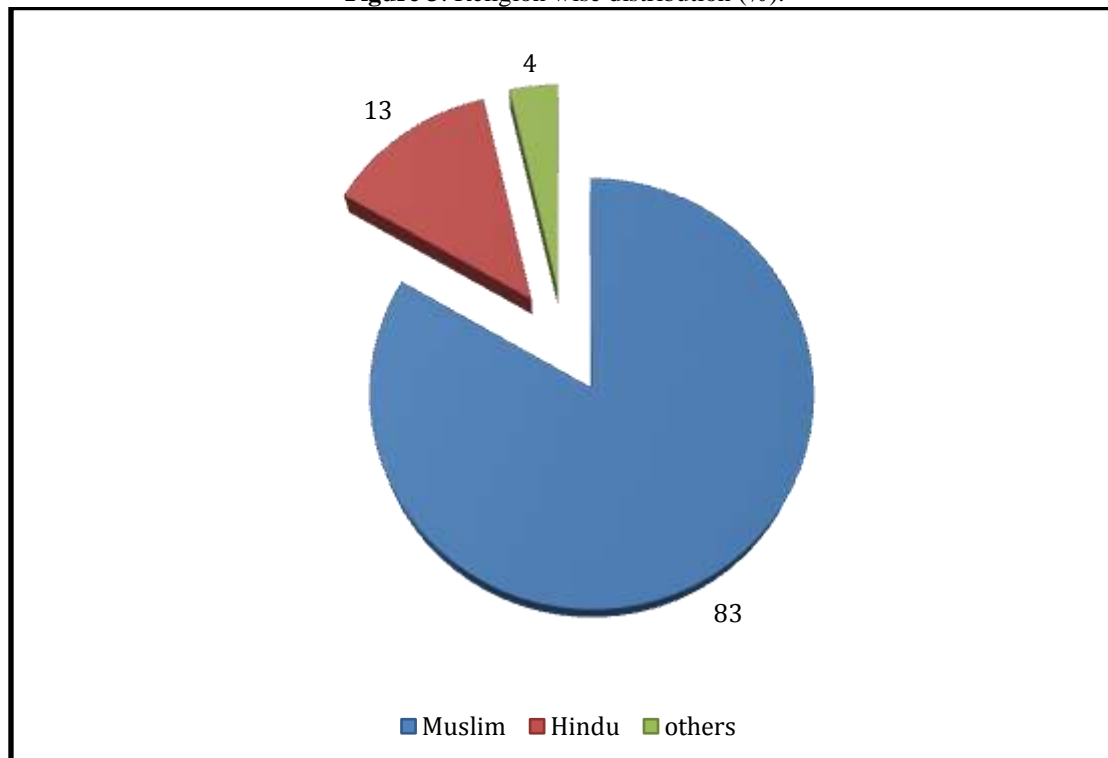


Source: Field Survey, 2020

In 1980 or 1990 people from Bahadurganj area use to migrate mainly to get involved in agriculture work as they were not skilled & their main destination for migration was Punjab, but as above chart shows these migrant over the time have developed skills & now they are migrating to

metros & getting themselves involved in other professions also. As above chart shows 33 % of these migrants use to work as Tailor, 14 % as Floor/Tiles mechanic & so on. The data of unskilled worker is at 11 %.

**Figure 3:** Religion wise distribution (%)

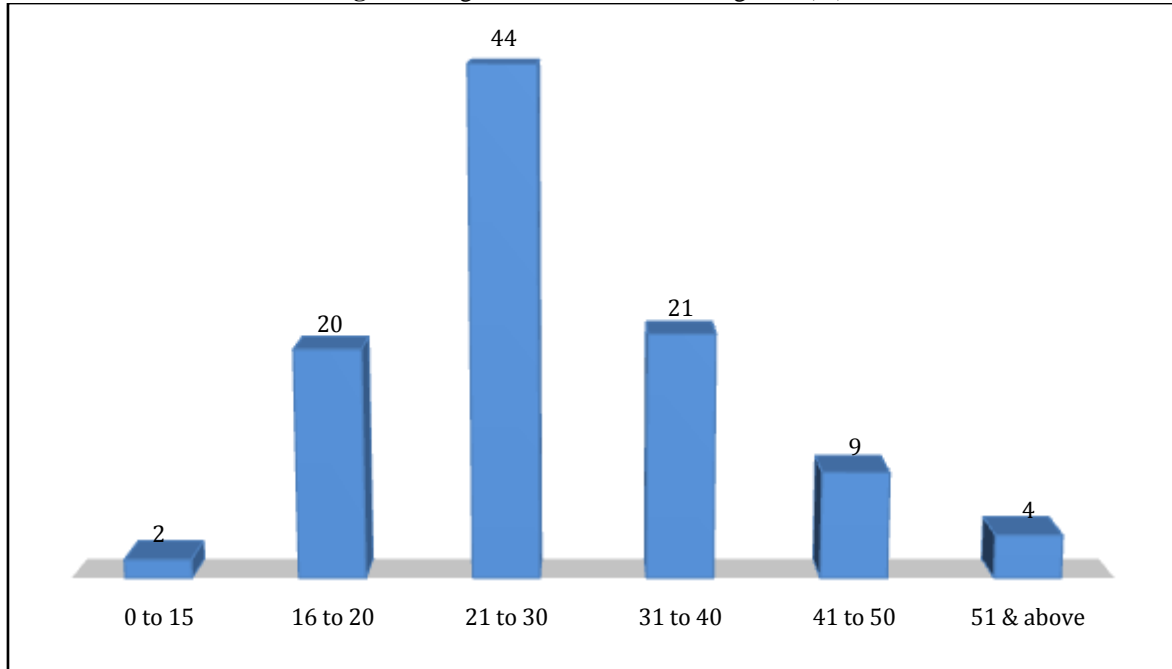


Source: Field Survey, 2020

As Bahaduganj is a Muslim populated area, naturally maximum migration is from Muslim community & it accounts of 83 % of total collected

data whereas Hindu community contributes 13 % & others are 4 % ( Adivasis, Chirstians).

**Figure 4:** Age wise distribution of migrants (%).



Source: Field Survey, 2020

As it is clear by above mentioned chart that, maximum migration 44 % is in the age group of 21-30 years, followed by 21 % in 31-40 years & 20 % in 16-20 years. These days young group of people are having mobile & internet connectivity

which help them for social networking, in a way helps them to choose the job oppurtunity & also the place of destination.

**Figure 5:** Sex wise distribution (%).



Source: Field Survey, 2020

As it is clear by the data that migrants from the region migrate individually & without their family. As per collected data out of 1286 only 6 females were there who migrated. Due to close society & orthodox thinking migrants from this area prefer to leave their partners back at home looking after their family members & help them in day to day activities.

## VI. FINDINGS

Further the study tried to analyse the data to understand the scenario & changing patterns of migration to new destinations & also involvement of migrants in different occupation in those destination. Rajasthan being on top with 31 % , followed by Punjab 21 % & Haryana with 10 % migration from this area.

**Table 1:** showing occupation wise migration (%).

% wise data	Rajasthan	Punjab	Haryana
Student	2	3	1
Cook	3	1	1
Floor/Tiles Mechanic Helpers	43	0	3
Plumber / Fitter	6	1	11
Tailor	11	75	50
Unskilled workers engaged in construction	9	12	16
Brick manufacturing & stone crushing	25	8	2
Fabrication sector	0	0	4
Watchman	0	0	12

As by above mentioned table we can see that as Rajasthan is known for its Marble work, major people migrating to Rajasthan are getting involved in Tiles or Marble related work (43 % & 25 % respectively), whereas as Punjab is a textile hub major migrants are involved in clothing work (75 %) & in Haryana too majorly migrants are involved with Textile industry (50 %). Remaining are engaged as per their skills & job opportunities available for them.

## VII. CONCLUSION.

Sharing the international border with Nepal and the inter-state border with West Bengal and very close to the international border of Bangladesh and connecting the north eastern states with other parts of the country, Kishanganj is also known as Chicken Neck. But despite being so important from the strategic point of view, nothing special has happened in the name of development till date in the district and the result of this is that, millions of people migrate from the district every year and stay in different regions of the country for their livelihood. It is found that large number of wage supervisors or construction workers are working in places like Delhi, Mumbai, Haryana,

Punjab, Rajasthan & also some southern states of the country. In addition to this some people from other states are also engaged in other types of work, but the number of Biharis is very high among the laborers in different sectors, and even in this, if we talk about people going from Bahadurganj, then there is no village or house from where male members have not stepped out as migrant to these places.

In a situation, when lockdown was announced due to the global Pandemic reason bring Corona across the country. Due to lockdown the work was stopped and these migrants who were based on daily earnings where hand to mouth had to go through the tough time which lead to the reverse migration of large number of migrant laborers to their native place. There was no other way left for them except to return to their home. For their survival without thinking much, they traveled through any means they got some left by bicycle, some on foot, some came through trucks etc. In search of bread & butter, they left their own countryside and they never thought that life would be so terrible. As soon as the lockdown occurred, the definition of life changed. The behavior of the employers changed where they were working. They

were left to die just like that. Neither paid nor ration were provided to them or any aid was given. During the first phase of lockdown they tried to adjust with the situation but soon after this their situation was a crises situation in areal sense as they had very little to survive . When life was on the threat, the only goal for them was was to return home, some came from Mumbai and some from Pune even on a cycle without thinking much and risking their lives way back home.

When the life in danger then the fear of death is reduced. Perhaps this is the reason why these laborers and workers living in different parts of the country moved to their village-house. They did not know how and when they will reach home but still they dare to move on. They felt to die in the strange city, is way better to die at their native place in the lap of their dear ones . Later, the government started train named as SHARMIK SPECIAL where many left migrant made their journey back home. The railways also brought thousands of laborers to their homes.

They are the one who can/should be considered as the main workforce to develop those cities but when such situation arised they were the one who had to face the most adverse impact of the lockdown. For several days they had to survive without food & shelter. The disdain and disrespect they experienced in these cities during the lockdown has changed their dimension of thinking about these cities. When they could not take the pain of lockdown, they put their life at stake and sidelined the government declarations & started their journey way back to their native places. After reaching to their homeland they came to a decision that, whatever it may be the situation they will never leave their native places in search of better livelihood. Whatever they get they will live with it, at least they will be there at their home among their people.

But unfortunately ,their this time return was with bare handed & with the expectation of this that they will be supported by their family & society, here also they had to face social problem like stigma attached to Corona and a burdern to the family who are already in trouble due to lockdown, these migrants were seen as corona carriers rather than the earning member of the family. However, the government has promised that according to skill, they will be provided employment in their own region.

According to the estimation , more than 70 thousand skilled and nun-skilled workers have returned to Kishanganj. Looking at their numbers, it will not be easy for the government either. Everyone is finding it difficult to get work in the

fields. The district administration is arranging work for them through MNREGA. Under the seven decisions, efforts are being made to connect them with the water-life, green-water campaign along with tap-water, pucca-street-drain. The administration says that work will be provided at the village and panchayat level. For this, skill mapping has also been done to test the skills of the quarantined migrants. Along with this, the MNREGA job card has also been made available to the workers. Work has also started in many panchayats, but the situation is not the same everywhere and most migrants are finding it difficult to find a livelihood in their village. These people are not confident on the government's claim and this is also true, Because the government does not have any Aladdin lamp that can generate employment for so many people overnight.

### VIII. SUGGESTION

Hunger is a disease that can force people to do everything & anything & as the rural economy is deprived, these migrants may have to face even bigger problem at their native places. If the same situation continues to prevail here & if this migrant are not taken care of properly by the authorities it can lead to many social problems in the region like increase in crime, Suicide, domestic violence etc. The job cards have been issued to these migrants & this is a hope that they will get locally some employment opportunities. It is the need of the hour for the government to focus more on the rural development & the establishment of small scale industries in the region.

Today Prime Minister shri Narendar Modi has announced Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan which will provide work for 125 days in 25 areas to the migrant workers in 116 districts of six states. Besides Bihar, these states include Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and Jharkhand. Modi said the works targeted under the scheme are based on the needs of different villages. For instance works like building community toilet, Anganwadi centre, village markets, digging well and panchayat bhawan will be targeted in Telihar village in Khagaria district of Bihar from where the scheme was launched, he said.The prime minister said under the scheme houses for the poor would be constructed, trees planted, sheds for animals built and potable water made available. The workers will be paid according to the stipulated minimum wage in the respective schemes of the government.

If the state government & the local authorities utilise this scheme properly it will help to mitigate the migrant issues , which are unseen & upcoming issues in future.

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