

## **Violence against Migrants - Gujarat**

### **Why in news?**

\n\n

Gujarat has witnessed the violence against Hindi-speaking migrants recently.

\n\n

### **What is the background?**

\n\n

\n

- A child was allegedly raped by a man from Bihar.
- This has triggered the violence against Hindi-speaking migrants.
- The alleged rapist had been arrested on the same day.
- However, incidents of “revenge attacks” against “non-Gujaratis” were followed and has triggered a mass exodus to Bihar, UP and MP.

\n

\n\n

### **What are the larger problems?**

\n\n

\n

- Though the child rape is the immediate trigger of violence, there are some structural issues regarding the employment scenario in Gujarat.
- As in other States, Gujarat is seeing increasing discontent over the lack of adequate jobs for young Gujarati people.
- The CMIE’s unemployment rate monthly time series shows that 4.6% of those surveyed and actively looking for work in Gujarat were not employed in September 2018.
- This is less than the national average (6.8%), but there has been a relative increase in this number since the previous year in Gujarat.

- \n
- Lack of job opportunities for the locals bubbled up the demand for limiting jobs for migrants and the associated resentment against 'outsiders'.

\n

\n\n

## **How Gujarat benefitted from migrants?**

\n\n

- \n
- The Economic Survey in 2016-17 pointed out that Gujarat is among the States, including Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and West Bengal, with the highest net in-migration of workers.
  - It also found that States that were relatively better developed than the rest of the country were also host to more migrants.
  - Migrants have played a vital role in greasing the wheels of growth by providing cheap labour in the many small and medium enterprises in the manufacturing and construction sectors.
  - The industry and commerce associations in Gujarat have complained about the recent flight of migrants, with the festival season looming.
  - This reflects the importance of migrant labour in Gujarat.

\n

\n\n

## **What were the governmental measures?**

\n\n

- \n
- According to a government resolution passed in March 1995, locals are defined as people living in the state for the last 15 years in Gujarat.
  - The criterion has now been reduced to 7 years.
  - As per the original resolution, all private, state and Central government entities in Gujarat have to ensure that 85% of jobs in the workers' grade are reserved for local residents.
  - The percentage can be 50% for managerial and supervisory positions.
  - The Gujarat government recently announced that it will soon introduce a law

that mandates industries set up in the state to ensure that 80% of the workforce are Gujaratis.

\n

- The rule is already present but currently there is no Act to back it up and penalise those who violate it.

\n

- The government is also trying to fine-tune the definition of “domicile” in the state.

\n

- The state government also plans to ensure that 25% of those hired are from the area or region where the industry is set up.

\n

- However, 92% of the workforce (total 8.23 lakh jobs) were locals in about 4,700 large industrial units in the private sector in Gujarat.

\n

- In the state government-controlled establishments, the percentage of locals was as high as 98.9.

\n

\n\n

## **What should the government do?**

\n\n

\n

- The State must follow a more holistic policy of creating incentives for firms leading to greater employment, instead of merely dictating higher recruitment of locals.

\n

- Nativist arguments against migrants neither serve the interest of the State concerned nor address the issue of ensuring job-oriented growth.

\n

- Apart from steps to arrest the violence against the migrants and to stop the exodus, the Gujarat government must commit itself to a facilitating role for job-creation.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

**Source: The Hindu**

\n



**SHANKAR**  
**IAS PARLIAMENT**  
*Information is Empowering*