

Indian Emigration to Gulf Countries: Opportunities and Challenges

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Abstract : International migration is an important subject and gaining more significance and interest among scholars in recent years. It is defined as crossing of the boundaries of political or administrative units for a certain minimum period for reasons such as education, employment, etc. International migration is not new for India because it has a long history with the Gulf region since ancient period. India is also one of the largest migrant-sending countries after China in the world. Migration towards the Gulf region became more prominent during early 1970s due to oil boom which led to rapid increase in the demand for foreign labour. Of 25 million Indian emigrants are living across the world, about six million Indian emigrants working in the Gulf. Most of these migrants were either unskilled or semi-skilled. Both the pull and push factors behind labour emigrate to Gulf countries. India is world's leading receiver of remittances and the flow of remittances to India has been increasing steadily since the 1970s. In 2011-12, it was about 4 percent of GDP. Emigrants play a significant role in the economic development and growth of the country via the remittances and knowledge and skill transfer. Scholars see remittances as vital tool in the development for origin country. This paper examines the recent trend and pattern of migration from India to Gulf countries and explores impact of remittances on emigrants' families at home country. It also highlights opportunities, challenges and the need for strengthening multilateral cooperation to transform migration into an efficient, orderly and humane process. The study propose to undertake a primary survey for this purpose. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods will be used to study the above issues.

Keywords : development, international migration, remittances, unskilled labour

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