

# Himalayan State Uttarakhand: Cursed By Migration (Etymology, Causes And Challenges)

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## Abstract-

Migration is not a common problem nor a today's problem Migration from villages to cities still happens the same way as it used to happen before. Gandhi advised the Satyagrahis of Bardoli in 1928, the Harijans of Kentha in 1935 and the people of Lambdi, Vitthalgarh and Junagadh in 1939 to adopt the means of Hijrat. "Hijrat" is a word which means voluntarily leaving one's permanent and traditional place of residence and settled in other geographical place. we are discussing the problem of migration from village and shifting towards city, this issue was also raised by famous Hindi writer Munshi Premchandra in his famous novel godaan.<sup>1</sup>

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## I. Introduction-

Migration is defined as the movement of a person or a group of persons from one geographical area to another geographical area. there are many reasons behind Migration which may be due to physical, natural, social and religious reasons. the major reason of Migration is the lack of basic facilities however social and self respect are also important factors for migration of people. In Indian social system, caste is also a factor which may cause migration. In many Indian states, especially in villages, many people are migrating from villages to cities due to humiliation of caste sentiments, and inhuman orders of social divisive elements like Khap Panchayats. Uttarakhand is also not untouched by the impact of this system. Lack of basic facilities like education, health and livelihood is one of the major reasons of migration. Former President and Missile Man Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam used to say that rural migration can be stopped only by taking cities to villages.<sup>2</sup> There is also a bitter truth behind this fact that compared to cities, villages has only 5 percent basic facilities. Even today the village is lagging behind in basic facilities like education, health, livelihood, electricity, water and transportation.

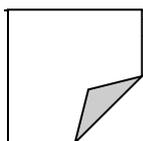
### Types of migration -

- Safe migration** - Under this, a person goes away from his village for livelihood but his emotional attachment to his village-home remains. Like Nepali laborers living in Uttarakhand
- Unsafe migration-** This is the migration in which the person completely abandons the village due to lack of basic facilities. This problem is becoming acute in Uttarakhand.

### Uttarakhand and Migration-

Kas holo uttarakhand, kes holi Rajdhani  
Raga-baagi yo, aj karla apni manmani  
Yo batuak khuli khulas Gairsen karulo  
Hum ladte reya bhuli, hum ladte raiya

As Girish Tiwari Girda (popular poet of Uttarakhand) quoted these lines in his poem are relevant in recent decades even 23 years after the formation of the state. The expectations and problems of migration on which this state was formed have been neglected by the politicians here as before. an old adage is true i.e, "the hill's water and hill's youth are not useful to the hilly areas is indicative of the misfortune of Uttarakhand". After the formation of a separate hilly state, this story of migration continues unabated. In 15 years after the formation of Uttarakhand



state, about 40 percent migration has taken place in three thousand hill villages. However, in the name of development, approximately Rs 15 thousand crores have been spent in the hilly areas in these years. Despite this, the emptying of villages has not stopped.<sup>3</sup> Professor Dr. Kiran Dangwal of Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna Central University, Srinagar, while referring to the Push and Pull Theory, says that the nature of the society is to move towards better facilities. There is a tendency of migration in the society for livelihood, amenities and availability of education, health and transportation. The same is happening in hill villages also. Retired Block Development Officer KK Thapliyal does not consider lack of amenities as the reason for migration. Disputes between brothers over farms, houses and roads sometimes escalate to such an extent that capable people say goodbye to the village to get rid of the daily hassles.<sup>4</sup>

In the report Migration in India of the Central Government's National Survey Organization (NSSO), an interesting fact was revealed that migration is taking place not only in villages but also in cities in Uttarakhand. According to the Migration in India report, in Uttarakhand, 486 people per thousand people are migrating to cities, while in rural areas this number is 344 people per thousand. A large part of this is those people who are leaving their villages and cities in search of employment. In cities, 397 per thousand men and 597 per thousand women are migrating. Whereas the picture in the villages is that 151 women per thousand men and 539 women per thousand women are migrating from the villages.<sup>5</sup>

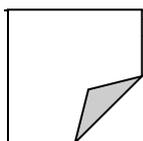
According to government data, the migration rate from the hills has increased to 86 percent from 2000-2010. Migration has been seen the most in Pauri Garhwal, Pithoragarh, Chamoli, Bageshwar and Almora districts.<sup>6</sup> In Uttarakhand, which has a population of more than 6 crores, the external concept of development is successful, but it is hollow from within. Tourist places and very special cities are shining, but the remote hilly areas are shrouded in darkness. There has been migration in 11 out of 13 districts of the state. There has been about 9 percent migration in urban areas and about 19 percent migration in rural areas. According to the 2011 census, 69 percent of the population lives in villages, which was 74 percent in 2001. In Almora and Pauri Garhwal, the population has increased by -1.73 and -1.51 percent.<sup>7</sup> The population of the remaining hilly districts Chamoli, Rudraprayag, Pithoragarh and Bageshwar has increased at a rate of less than 5 percent. Whereas the average population growth of the country is 17 percent. In the plain districts of Uttarakhand, the population of Udham Singh Nagar 33.40, Haridwar 33.16, Dehradun 32, Nainital has increased at the rate of 25 percent. This means that till now more than 35 percent of the population has left the state.

If we estimate the income of a hill villager from agriculture and animal husbandry, we find that it comes down to only Rs 6374. That means the situation is such that every villager in the hills has to survive on Rs 531 every month. Call it the irony of development that in a state which is experiencing a growth rate of around 9 percent, around 32 lakh 89 thousand villagers of the hills are forced to survive on Rs 17 per day. Talking about health facilities, the time taken to reach a doctor in an emergency in the field is 4 hours 48 minutes. On the other hand, the proportion of people here in government jobs has also declined rapidly after the formation of the state.<sup>8</sup>

Economist Dr. Mrigesh Pandey says that migration from Kumaon for jobs started in 1930. People started going out to join the army. Later people started going out for army recruitment. At that time educational institutions up to Intermediate were in Almora Nainital. From here, migration started to Allahabad and Lucknow for higher education. Now the number of schools and colleges has increased here, but due to lack of quality education, migration continues unabated. The main problem of migration here is lack of basic facilities. This is the reason why the number of uninhabited villages is increasing rapidly. The structure of the service sector in the hills is very weak. Natural disasters have made the situation more serious. Teacher and litterateur Mahesh Punetha says that good education is a major reason behind migration from villages. Secondly, economy is also a big question, villages have not yet been made self-reliant.<sup>9</sup> Before independence, people of Kumaon used to go to Kolkata and Burma (Myanmar) for employment, whereas Garhwali used to go to Meerut, Delhi, Punjab for employment. But this move was temporary and the families of these people used to earn their livelihood by living in their village. Till 1980, Uttarakhandis did not break their ties with their villages for employment. But now the retiring generation has started getting used to living in urban areas.

In Uttarakhand, group life, the basis of rural culture, has almost ended. Mutual cooperation and harmony is continuously decreasing. In the mirror of modernity, the hill society which was culturally, socially and economically connected to each other has been left behind in the race of urbanization and modernity. According to the data of the Ministry of Agriculture, in 2001 only 769944 hectares of agricultural land was cultivated, which has reduced to 701030 hectares in 2014-15. Now in most of the villages, instead of agriculture, people earn Rs 7500 through MNREGA after working for 50 days. As food grains are becoming available at cheaper rates under the Food Security Scheme, the hill farmers are trying to avoid farming. Apart from this, damage to agricultural crops by wild animals due to destruction of forests is also a major factor in migration from agriculture and villages.

This mountainous state with a population of one crore has a population of 60 lakh in the hilly region and more than 30 lakh Uttarakhandis live in many places in the country and abroad. Possibly. It is at the forefront of migration areas in the country. After formation of Uttarakhand, about 17 thousand families have migrated from Pithoragarh district alone. Most of them have settled in Haldwani or Terai areas. Migration is giving rise to social,



political and cultural problems. Migration has not only reduced the political representation of the hilly areas and migration of the people as well as the leaders here will not create a security crisis for this state situated on the borders of two countries. The saddest thing is that maximum migration is taking place from the border areas because the rays of development are reaching the least places in those places.<sup>10</sup>

One of the important reasons for migration is the economic situation here. In 1972-73, research scholar Ramprasad Dhyani wrote on the economic problems of Uttarakhand - The population in the Uttarakhand region is sparse and scattered. There is a lack of means of transport, because the facility of seasonal or link roads is still not available in most parts of the division. There is lack of facilities like electricity, irrigation and marketing etc. The facility of clean drinking water is not available in this area.<sup>11</sup> In this area, the problem of unemployment and underemployment is acute due to the slow pace of industrialization and non-full utilization of the available potential of orchards, tourism, forest and mineral resources.<sup>12</sup> This report of 1972-73 is more or less in the same form even today.

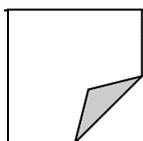
In last one and a half decade, out of lakhs of unemployed people in Uttarakhand, only 31145 people have got government jobs. The situation of education is that complete physical and human resources are not available in the schools of the hills. (Sridev Suman University(2012), Soban Singh Jeena University Almora(2020) are newly opened government universities, in their initial phase it is too early to say that they will become the standard for higher education and progress in the mountains. The situation of health is also the same; health facilities in the mountains are meager. Villages cannot be populated merely by posting advertisements of Hito Pahad Re, Mera Gaon Mera Desh Dhan Yojana. What could be more irony than this, no Small industrial unit has been set up in the hills.<sup>13</sup> Today the basic problem of the hilly area is the ineffectiveness of development plans. The model of development of hilly areas is not specific, but is the model of development of plain areas. Due to lack of proper mechanization in agriculture in hilly areas, production is decreasing and as a result, import of food grains and all essential commodities is increasing. A large part of the income from various sources like money order, MNREGA etc. is spent on importing resources of living. That is, all the income earned from outside goes back outside.<sup>14</sup>

Disaster is also a reason for migration. In a seminar organized on Saturday, July 20, 2013 at the Municipal Corporation Auditorium of Dehradun on the lessons of the disaster, responsibility of the government and questions of the public, famous environmentalist Chandi Prasad Bhatt Vikas said - Himalayas are the roof of the world. By building underground tunnels in the Himalayan regions, we are weakening the earth while building unplanned roads, dams, unscientific and big constructions on the earth. More than 70,000 hectares of land along the river banks has been lost due to the disaster. There are 10 helicopter companies operating in Kedar Ghati alone, whose dozens of helicopters ply the sky. Will this not cause any environmental change in the high marginal Himalayan areas? There are 558 dams under construction and proposed in the state of Uttarakhand. Most of these dams are to be or are being built in the environmentally sensitive Himalayan valleys. In Kedar valley alone, Phataphyung and Singoli Bhatwadi projects have been constructed while Rambada Hydropower is in its initial stages. The debris dumped by these projects and directly after unplanned road construction in the valley have raised the water level of the river by 15 feet, which can lead to flood-like situations. And situations like catastrophic disasters are forcing a person to think escapist.<sup>15</sup>

### **Inverted Glasses Of Migration-**

We have discussed many aspects of migration here. We get to read many thoughts and facts in this context every day in the academic world. Despite many facts and opinions, one fact that is often ignored is the social perspective of migration. This point of view has always remained untouched or rather this topic is deliberately not discussed. The rural ecosystem of Uttarakhand still maintains the same social form that it had taken decades ago. Although many scholars will call it cultural continuity and cultural richness. Many such superstitions, inertia and customs are present in the society which are still working to germinate the seeds of migration.

This new spectacle of migration may seem counterintuitive to you. Because material resources and economic factors have always been considered responsible for migration. Migration based on Religion, caste, gender and social bases may seem irrational and imaginary to the bearers of intellectual culture and propagators thinkers of a specific culture. Social contempt can be easily understood in rural and urban areas. The figures of Census 2011 clearly explain that migration from Uttarakhand is happening at a rapid pace towards the urban and industrial centers of Uttarakhand and towards other states outside Uttarakhand. The main reason for migration is unavailability of employment and poor economic condition in rural areas. When the migrating migrants return to their native villages during their short-term stay, despite their good economic condition, they have to face the same contempt and exclusion as they had in their previous social status. Whenever the other socially upward migrant comes to his native villages during his short-term stay, he follows the same social traditions which are based on the system of social contempt and exclusion. The intellectual class that claims social equality still follows the same elements of social discrimination and exclusion in rural areas, which are adopted by their brothers and sisters or the people of rural areas. They use only their water resources which are located in their own field or



area, maintaining a certain social distance from a particular caste, exclusion based tradition based behavior in family and social functions like marriage etc. continues unabated. There has been no significant change in the status of women either. The level of education, especially higher education, is still very disappointing. Even today, many women in rural areas have to suffer five days of hell considering the natural process like menstruation as impure. Without improving these conditions, it is dishonest to talk about stopping migration into the mountains. It is not that this situation does not exist in cities or metros, but perhaps a little less.

## II. Conclusion-

### Efforts and possible measures to stop migration

To stop migration in Uttarakhand, efforts should be made to adopt the concept of sustainable development. This is a way of using resources so that not only the needs of the present can be met, but it also meets the needs of future generations. The Brundtland Commission was the first to use this term. Consolidation can prove to be a boon to stop migration. An example of this is Himachal Pradesh which is a state with similar conditions like Uttarakhand. Garib Kranti Abhiyan is a campaign whose effort is to improve the farming system by unifying the hilly areas of Uttarakhand through consolidation. Social workers like Ganesh Singh Garib and Kapil Dobal are providing leadership to this movement. There is a need for government protection and initiative.<sup>16</sup> Environmentalist Dr. Anil Joshi, pioneer of the Save Village Movement in Uttarakhand, says that villages play a major role in the prosperity of the country and for the betterment of villages, there should be a resource-based economy. Under this, local products can be linked with the economy. Dr. Anil Joshi and his team are working on a large scale especially in Uttarakhand. These people have succeeded in making furniture from Kurri (which is also called wild grass), this furniture is as strong and beautiful as the furniture made from bamboo. Apart from this, Gharat Water Mill development was started from which later the work of getting electricity started. Dr. Anil Joshi says that in pilgrimage places like Badrinath and Kedarnath, chalai and pumpkin prasad should be offered, as in Katra, Jammu, maize laddus are made and offered because it is cultivated the most here. The annual income of Parkhal village alone is Rs 40 lakh.<sup>17</sup>

In this sequence, I tried to analyze the efforts of Isha Arya, a student of RICE, Lweshal, as a possible option for migration. Which has been published by Kafal Tree Online. In which in 2019, Isha made beautiful artefacts (baskets, etc.) from pine leaves, which is called Pirul in the local language and has been unused in the mountains till now, which were not only beautiful in appearance but also lasted for a long time. Can also be used up to.<sup>18</sup>

In this way, the economy can be increased by using local resources, and this can become a possible alternative to the problem of migration. It is necessary to control the unplanned model of development and the ever increasing human activities in the high Himalayan regions. Necessary initiatives should be taken to re-establish the employment opportunities that have ended in the hills. On the basis of construction and impact of hydro-electric projects, construction of unscientific roads, impacts of disasters on the state in the global scenario based on human factors, rehabilitation and environment policy of the state should not only be made but should also be implemented on the ground. It is also important from strategic point of view as it is connected to the international border of China and Nepal. The migration situation can also become frightening for the Indian security system. Therefore, the responsibility of the Centre, the State and us on an important problem like migration is important. Such a policy is essential for the creation of the state of Uttarakhand, and also for the survival of the state. Apart from this, the social basis of migration also needs to be changed through equality, coexistence, strong policy functioning and strengthening of laws. Health, education, transportation, employment are very important, but self-respect, equality and social consciousness are equally important. The current form of migration can change only after gaining self-respect, self-awareness and basic facilities.

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