

Home and away: On rumours and fake news about migrant workers in TN

Migrant workers must feel safe and as **integral** part of the community

The **rumours** and **fake news** about migrant workers in Tamil Nadu being attacked **have** seen the quick **intervention** of the authorities, **assuring** the workers of their safety. **Many workers**, most from Bihar, **have** been seen at railway stations waiting to leave for their home State after **a video clip** of violence between two groups of migrant workers **was interpreted** as an attack on migrant workers by locals. In any case, some of the workers were planning to be home for Holi festivities. Even before the problem could **snowball**, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin did well to contact his Bihar **counterpart** Nitish Kumar. There has been quick **follow up elsewhere** too. The Tamil Nadu police filed cases against those spreading rumours, which included the editor of the Dainik Bhaskar, under various sections of the **Indian Penal Code**. A person has been arrested in Jamui district of Bihar for sharing a **misleading** video clip. The Bihar police have also found some videos and news reports to be misleading and fake. **Officials** from Bihar and Jharkhand **have** visited the migrant **hubs** of Coimbatore and Tiruppur, and industry **representatives** are **doing their bit** to **reassure** the workers.

The issue has, **unfortunately**, **paved the way for chauvinistic** politics in Tamil Nadu and Bihar. The **role** that migrant workers play in different fields of economic activity in Tamil Nadu, particularly real estate, **is** well known. According to CREDAI Tamil Nadu, the migrant community **oversees** 85% of the work in big projects and 70% in medium-scale projects. It also has a visible presence in manufacturing, textiles, construction, and **hospitality**. A Tamil Nadu Labour Department survey in 2015 **estimated** that the State had around 11.5 lakh migrant workers. The **episode** has only **highlighted** the need for politicians to **exercise caution** and **restraint** when commenting on issues regarding migrant workers. **Under the garb of** protecting the interests of local people, many leaders have often **denigrated** migrant workers or held them responsible for problems such as locals facing unemployment. The message, as Mr. Stalin highlighted in his conversation with Mr. Nitish Kumar, that **workers** “who help in the State’s development are our workers”, **should** be **internalised** by all political parties across the **spectrum**. At the same time, the **government**, which has been **rolling out** welfare measures for the community, **should** include the supply of pulses and **edible oil** at **concessional** rates under the **Public Distribution System**, **supplementing** what is being given under the ‘One Nation One Ration Card’ scheme. An exclusive **wing** can be formed to **address** the issues and problems migrants face. The government can also **institute** a fresh and **comprehensive** study of migrant workers and help in their **integration** with the local community, to **make them feel at home**. [Practice Exercise]

- Red/blue coloring of words in the sentence indicates subject verb relationship; where ‘red’ denotes ‘subject’ and ‘blue’ denotes ‘verb’.
- **Indian Penal code** (noun) – Anyone found guilty of a crime is punishable under the IPC.

Vocabulary

1. **Rumour** (noun) –doubtful truth; circulating story, gossip अफवाह
2. **Migrant worker** (noun) – a person who moves to another country or area in order to find employment, in particular seasonal or temporary work. प्रवासी कर्मचारी
3. **Integral** (adjective) –entire, intact, essential, complete, full अभिन्न
4. **Intervention** (noun) – involvement, intercession, interceding, interposing हस्तक्षेप
5. **Assure** (verb) – Ensure, guarantee, confirm, secure, substantiate आश्वस्त करना
6. **Interpret** (verb) – understand, construe, take to mean समझ लेना
7. **Snowball** (verb) – Increase rapidly; intensity, magnify, escalate तेज़ी से अधिकाधिक बढ़ना
8. **Counterpart** (noun) – equivalent, opposite number, peer, समकक्ष
9. **Follow up** (phrasal verb) – to take further action connected with it किसी काम को जारी रखना
10. **Elsewhere** (adverb) – somewhere else, at another place, in another place अन्य जगह
11. **Misleading** (adjective) – deceptive, false, fallacious, deceiving, specious भ्रामक
12. **Hub** (noun) – the effective centre of an activity केंद्र
13. **Representative** (noun) – Delegate, spokesperson, agent प्रतिनिधि
14. **Do one's bit** (phrase) – make a useful contribution to an effort or cause. अपना फर्ज अदा करना/ प्रयास करना
15. **Reassure** (verb) – Assure, Comfort, Encourage, Soothe, Calm, Restore confidence पुनः आश्वस्त करना
16. **Unfortunately** (adverb) – Sadly, regrettably, unhappily, woefully दुर्भाग्य से
17. **Pave the way for** (phrase) – create situation that allows something to happen. के लिए मार्ग प्रशस्त करना
18. **Chauvinistic** (adjective) – somebody with an excessive or prejudiced loyalty to a particular gender, group, or cause अंधराष्ट्रीय
19. **Oversee** (verb) – supervise, superintend, inspect, administer देखरेख करना

20. **Hospitality** (noun) – the activity or business of providing services to guests in hotels, restaurants, bars, etc.
21. **Estimate** (verb) – evaluate, judge, assess, calculate, gauge अनुमान करना
22. **Episode** (noun) – incident, event, occurrence, happening, occasion घटना
23. **Highlight** (verb) – underline, underscore, call attention to, focus attention on, stress, emphasize प्रमुखता से दिखाना
24. **Exercise** (verb) – use, employ, make use of, utilize, avail oneself of प्रयोग करना
25. **Caution** (noun) – Carefulness, thoughtfulness, attentiveness, attention, care, restraint सावधानी
26. **Restrain** (noun) – Self-control, control, self-possession, self-discipline संयम
27. **Under the garb of** (phrase) – in the name of, for the sake of की आड़ में
28. **Denigrate** (verb) – criticize unfairly; disparage. बदनाम करना
29. **Internalise** (verb) – incorporate within oneself सम्मिलित करना
30. **Spectrum** (noun) – Range, Field, Gamut, Variety, Scale विस्तार, रेंज
31. **Roll out** (phrasal verb) – Officially launch or introduce a new product or scheme
32. **Edible** (adjective) – safe to eat, fit to, eatable, fit to be eaten खाद्य/खानेयोग्य
33. **Concessional** (adjective) – Discounted, reduced, lower रिआयती
34. **Public distribution system** (noun) – a system of management of scarcity through distribution of foodgrains at affordable prices
35. **Supplement** (verb) – add an extra element or amount to. जोड़ देना, पूरा करना
36. **Wing** (noun) – group, branch, arm, faction शाखा
37. **Address** (verb) – tackle, see to, deal with, confront, grapple with सुलझाना, निपटाना
38. **Institute** (verb) – introduce, found, start, inaugurate, establish स्थापित करना
39. **Comprehensive** (adjective) – inclusive, all-inclusive, complete विस्तृत
40. **Integration** (noun) – the action or process of successfully joining or mixing with a different group of people
41. **Make someone feel at home** (phrase) – feel relaxed and comfortable

Practice Exercise

1. **What was the reason for migrant workers leaving Tamil Nadu for their home State?**
 - A. They were attacked by locals in Tamil Nadu
 - B. They wanted to celebrate Holi with their families
 - C. They were afraid of rumours and fake news about violence
 - D. None of the above
2. **What action did the Tamil Nadu police take against those spreading rumours about migrant workers?**
 - A. They arrested those spreading rumours
 - B. They filed cases against the editor of Dainik Bhaskar.
 - C. They conducted a comprehensive study of migrant workers.
 - D. Both A and B
3. **What is the estimated number of migrant workers in Tamil Nadu according to a survey conducted by the Tamil Nadu Labour Department in 2015?**
 - A. 11.5 lakh
 - B. 85%
 - C. 70%
 - D. None of the above
4. **What is the role played by migrant workers in different fields of economic activity in Tamil Nadu?**
 - A. They oversee 85% of the work in big-scale projects.
 - B. They have a visible presence in manufacturing, textiles, construction, and hospitality.
 - C. They help in the State's development.
 - D. Both A and B.
5. **What message did Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin highlight in his conversation with Bihar counterpart Nitish Kumar?**
 - A. Workers "who help in the State's development are our workers".
 - B. Bihar should take better care of its migrant workers.
 - C. The Tamil Nadu government will no longer allow migrant workers in the State.
 - D. None of the above.
6. **What is the tone of the passage?**
 - A. Angry
 - B. Objective
 - C. Fearful
 - D. Sarcastic
7. **What is the theme of the passage?**
 - A. Migrant workers in Tamil Nadu are not safe
 - B. Politicians need to exercise caution while commenting on migrant workers
 - C. Migrant workers play a significant role in the economic activity of Tamil Nadu

D. The welfare of migrant workers is not a priority for the government

Answers

1. C 2. D 3. A 4. D 5. A 6. B 7. C

Explanations

1. C) They were afraid of rumours and fake news about violence.

Explanation: The article states that a video clip of violence between two groups of migrant workers was interpreted as an attack on migrant workers by locals, leading to rumours and fake news about migrant workers being attacked. This caused many workers to be seen at railway stations waiting to leave for their home State.

2. D) Both A and B.

Explanation: The article states that the Tamil Nadu police filed cases against those spreading rumours, which included the editor of the Dainik Bhaskar, under various sections of the Indian Penal Code. This shows that the police took strict action against those who spread rumours about migrant workers.

3. A) 11.5 lakh.

Explanation: The article states that a Tamil Nadu Labour Department survey in 2015 estimated that the State had around 11.5 lakh migrant workers.

4. D) Both A and B.

Explanation: The article states that the migrant community oversees 85% of the work in big projects and 70% in medium-scale projects. It also has a visible presence in manufacturing, textiles, construction, and hospitality. This shows that migrant workers play an important role in various fields of economic activity in Tamil Nadu.

5. A) Workers “who help in the State’s development are our workers”.

Explanation: The article states that the message Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin highlighted in his conversation with Bihar counterpart Nitish Kumar was that workers “who help in the State’s development are our workers”. This message shows that migrant workers are an integral part of the community and should be treated with respect and dignity.

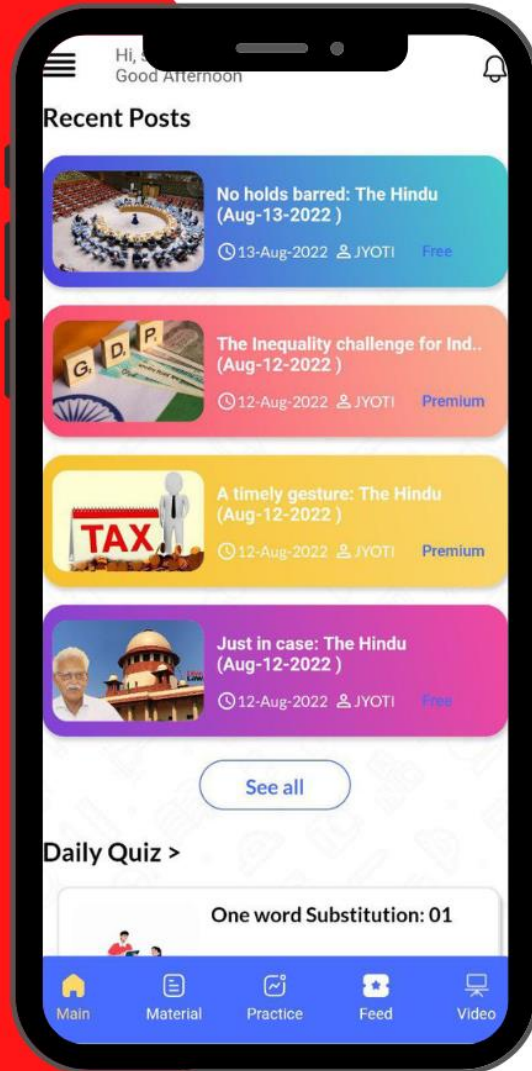
6. B) Objective

Explanation: The passage presents the issue of rumours and fake news about migrant workers in Tamil Nadu being attacked and the subsequent actions taken by the authorities. The tone of the passage is objective as it presents the facts and the actions taken without any bias or emotion.

7. C) Migrant workers play a significant role in the economic activity of Tamil Nadu

Explanation: The passage discusses the significant role played by migrant workers in the economic activity of Tamil Nadu, particularly in real estate, manufacturing, textiles, construction, and hospitality. The passage also highlights the need for politicians to exercise caution while commenting on migrant workers and for the government to take measures to integrate migrant workers with the local community and ensure their welfare. However, the

central theme of the passage is the significant role played by migrant workers in the economic activity of Tamil Nadu.



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