

NEPAL INDIA RELATION : IN MIGRATORY PERSPECTIVE

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Introduction :

Nepal, a small Himalayan Kingdom enclosed with two Asian giants; China and India. It's importance has been seen from the international perspective lies not in it's size or it's strategical location. But, Nepal a strip of mostly mountainous territory approximately 100 miles wide forms a buffer state, between the Tibetan autonomous region of China and economic and demographic heartland of India. The high potentiality of Terai has not only attracted the Nepalese hill people, but at the same time it has attracted Indian immigrants from the adjoining provinces of India.

Nepal-India ties constitutes the overall aspects; history culture trade, commerce affinities from the very time immemorial. It is not a relation of recent time and, which have been nursing by a rich and deeply pervading inheritance of historic evolution, geographical proximity and socio-cultural identities. This economic and strategic variables yielding a complex dynamics of intimate interactions. (Nuni: U73)

The evolution of Nepal-India relations has been made by the geographical proximity. Since it's more than 170 kms of accessible border with India make the peoples of both countries easy for their movement from one side to another. Nepal has been experiencing internal as well as international migrations. Owing to the logic of geographical and socio-cultural interdependence migratory process is becoming viable. After Sugaul: Treaty, peoples of adjoining states of India and Nepal felt more feasible to penetrate from one side to the next. The Nepal India migration pattern is unique in the sense of free accession for the peoples of both countries.

The tides of migration has surged across Nepal from Indian territory since the dawn of civilization. Mostly, the normal migration can be studied broadly within the framework of push and pull factors. The most effective reason under which Indian immigrants have been penetrating because of the provision of bilateral treaty like 1950 peace and friendship treaty permits the nationals of both countries to take part in any industrial and economic development of such territory and to the great concessions and contracts relating to such development.

It is complex to analyse that what are the reasons of a large numbers of migration. It is to be studies the reasons of move and professional migration and land settlement. Due to lack of clear cut land policies during the Rana regime migration process has become unplanned (Baral : 1990).

As the consequence of migratory process, population distribution

has become uneven. During and after the malaria eradication scheme a sizeable sections of fertile lands had already been owned, cultivated and tilted by the people of Indian origin. It is the study of the overall relationship between two close neighbours specifically based on migration. We can obviously seem that Nepal India relations are unequal in terms of size, population and economy.

The bilateral problem of migration is highly diluted in the big country. In this way, the conferment of the same privileges in the matter of residence ownership of property and etc. Generally, problems of migration is arising from a few distinct causes, if the migrants come from a poorer provinces, in the initial stages they often supply certain essential services not easily available. So that, they are not perceived as a threat to the country's resources of cultural and social life. Unfortunately the very success of the initial migration contains the seeds of tensions. Alternatively, the migrants are so productive that they generate and bring capital and other resources that they soon exercise a visible control over the economy of the nation. The problem of migration in and from Nepal arises from both these causes. However, it must be admitted that the problems of migrations soon transcend its origin. In the meantime, as far as their impact on the equilibrium of a nation is concerned, perceived causes are as important as any. By the same token, the Nepal-India relationship can also be heavily impressed with the flow of migrating process. Moreover, the growing numbers of Indian migrants settling here within this small Himalayan Kingdom is causing great eco-political instability in the days to come.

History of Migration :

The populations movement across the international borders in recent years is having a significant impact on international relations. Almost daily there are reports in the press of conflicts between states involving population movements. Migration is geographical mobility that involves a change of usual residence between defined political or statistical areas or between residence areas of different types.

There are certain types of human migration with which we are concerned, first we may note examples of creeping expansion (Dahal and Mishra : 1987). The slaves thus at one time pressed westward in Europe as far as the Elbe, and then the Germans, Chinese and Zulus of South Africa. In the context of International migration, what might be called as the Golden Age of Migrations began about 1500 A.D. and is still in progress. Many changes have taken place in the distribution and composition of the world's people. The migration process and trends has been influencing by changing international and national eco-political conditions, since the Second World War. But it is nevertheless possible and useful to identify four broadly distinct phases of International migration during this area (Cox : 1996).

Labour migration is the leading form of International movement in Asia, it attracted chiefly the vigorous but untrained labouring classes from one state to another most of them are agricultural and industrial

labour. Migratory process differs with one other nations in various aspects. The geographical proximity, open border and close socio-cultural and religious ties are seem to be two of the major causes for the presence of large population, when the political boundaries of South Asia was different because of the British Colonial rule movement between Nepal, Bhutan and India was strictly restricted, this was allowed with a view to provide labour for the development of specific regions. Nepal is sandwiched between China and India, the most populous countries of the world, the population of China is 67 times and that of India 46 times larger than that of Nepal. Nepal's demographic picture has been influenced by migration both from China and India at different periods of history. India's territory lying to the south of Nepal, that is, the gannetic plains, the most populous part of India as well as the most accessible from Nepal.

While the northern territory of Nepal adjoining with the Tibetan plateau of China. The average density of population of the bordering states of India as; U.P. Bihar west Bengal and Sikkim is 418 persons China is per square kilometre. Whereas the density of population of the Autonomous region of Tibet is 8 persons per square kilometre. Thus, geographical and demographic necessities compelled Nepal and India to come close to each other. Therefore, there has been a large scale movement of population between India and Nepal as compared to the population movement Nepal and China.

The large scale migration of population between Nepal and India for economic opportunities started in the 19th century. When India was subjected to exploit under the British colonial rule and Nepal came under the grip of the autocratic and oligarchic Rana rule. After the Sugauli Treaty in 1816, Indian Migration to the Terai region of Nepal was encouraged. The peoples from the over populated neighbouring states of India became tempting by uncultivated fertile land in Terai of Nepal.

Migration was accelerated, when Junga Bahadur Rana made provision in the first legal codes of Nepal entitling the alienation of land through sale or purchase to the foreign Nationals residing in Nepal. The migration became more intensified from the time of Bir Shumshere, Trade Prospects and business interests are seem as some of the others reasons. That have attracted Indians to Nepal.

The 1950 Peace and Friendship treaty between the two countries served as an impetus to the Indian community who grow to be privileged. The development of the Terai has been made possible essentially through large scale immigration of the Indians before the eradication of Malaria from the Terai. Lacking of the enterprising and dynamic manpower within the country has made it quite easy for the immigrant labour to dominate the non-agricultural activities in Nepal.

It is a paradox that the seasonal migrants from the Nepalese hills are reluctant to work in the non-eastern states of India as; Sikkim, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Himanchal Pradesh and Punjab. The

migrants may be classified into different categories on the basis of occupation. Most of the migrants from the Indian side in Terai are; agricultural labours businessman, industrialists teachers medical practitioners and transport owners.

One of the most important phases in the migration of Indians to Nepal took place in the Rana and British regime. They encouraged the cheap labourers from the neighbouring states of India. Bilateral treaties and the designation of open border are historical legacy for the escalation of the migratory process.

In accordance with the provision of Nepal India Peace and Friendship Treaty 1950 grants a reciprocal (Muni : 1992) basis to nationals of both countries in matters of residence, ownership of property, participation in trade and commerce, a similar nature in both countries. The estimated numbers of persons born in India and of Indian origin residing in Nepal around 2,780,000 (M.C. Madhavani 1985). The history of migration between Nepal and India dates back to the time immemorial and especially has taken effective shape after the Sugauli Treaty of 1816 and follows with 1950 Peace & Friendship Treaty.

Causes of Migration :

The causes of migration in international sphere is so great. It's not a trip for pleasure or business, nor it's a shift from one locality to another in the same town. It involved permanent or at least considerable period of time. Sometimes International migration may involve covering less distance as Bihar to Nepal than Indian internal migration as from Tripura to Kerala.

Migration today is being increasingly looked upon as the major contributing factor to the ubiquitous phenomena of urban surplus labours. As we talk the determinants of migration the factors influencing the decision to migrate are complex in nature, since migration is a selective process affecting individuals and which contains; social, economic educational and demographic characteristics. The relative influence of economic and non-economic factors may vary not only between nations and regions but also within defined geographic areas and populations. The following factors influence the migration decision (Ghosh : 1985).

Social factors, these factors will include social obligation, marriage, cultural change, the desire of migrants to breakaway from traditional constraints of social organisations; Demographic factors includes a very high man land ratio pressure of population employment and under-employment and the lack of alternative openings. People from high density areas will try to migrate to the low density areas where demographic pressure is low. Physical factors comprises of climate and disasters like floods and droughts. Despite these communication cultural affinity also encouraged to transfer from one place to another.

The causes of migration have changed over time. Throughout the history migration followed the movement of peoples as they required new territory or merged with other peoples. Movement was therefore a

matter of conquest, settlement intermarriage or the religious conversion of prior inhabitants. Various pull and push factors force the migrants. Push and pull factors cause to leave the places where they born and brought up. Lack of employment opportunities, increasing pressure of population, education and health care problem, backwardness of the country, life, insecurity etc. Push the people of rural areas to seek better postures elsewhere.

The pull factors are opposite of push factors. They include higher income in the urban areas or expectations about higher incomes. The possibilities of acquiring education and skill and hence increasing the employment, the presence of high law and order situation health and medical services the transport and communication facilities. The freedom from the idocy of the country life in the urban areas are attracting the people from the rural areas. Even highly prosperous agriculturalists start living in urban areas.

Socio-cultural factors have become less important now for inducing migration unless political factors intermingle with them. Especially the following push and pull factors are causing the migrations; push factors; unemployment and under-employment, economic under development, low wage and salary, political instability, over-production and under-utilization of talented people, lack of research and other academic environment, lack of freedom, discrimination in recruitment and promotion system, religious disparity and poor working facilities. Beside these lack of scientific tradition and culture, unsuitable institution, desire for better urban life higher academic milieu and recognition and existence of surplus labour are also other key factors of migration.

Similarly, the migratory process has been escalating because of the following pull factors; better economic prospects, higher salary and income, better level of living and way of life including better working conditions and employment opportunities. No discrimination and relative political stability are also the leading causes of attraction of the foreign peoples inward from the outside as international migration. Low density of population and better housing as well as the increasing demand for labour and skill are the other crucial factors of migration. International migration caused by the various factors not only the aforementioned determinants.

Indian migration to Nepal in modern times dates back to the eighteenth century upto the end of world war II. About 3.1 million Indians migrated to various parts of the world. Mostly, poorly educated agricultural labourers have scattered into many countries. The current population situation in Nepal results in part from both migration and immigration. Historically, three forms of immigration can be taken as the evident; movement related to military recruitment mainly Gorkha recruitment, movement for agricultural and other economic activities in rural areas among low wage workers such as; durban kulli: watchman prostitutes and marriage migration.

According to Myron Weiner suggestions (Weiner : 1985) give a framework for the analysis of international migration. He suggests that there are four clusters of variables such as; wage differentials and differences in employment rates and land prices. Many economic studies have emphasized three variables in explaining migration patterns.

He further suggests spatial variables such as distance and transportation costs constitutes the second cluster. Many geographers and demographers have emphasized those variables as well. This cluster of variables seem as constraints facilitators in migration. Out of the different variables affinity variables comprise the third cluster. Religion, culture language and kinship network are the major variables in this cluster. Large numbers of population movements across borders are being induced by high differentials, small distance, close affinity and unrestricted rules of entry and exit, these variables can apply into international migration in Nepal. Nevertheless, wage differential does not seem important in shaping the migration excess between Nepal-India. The initial clearance of the malarial Terai forest and it's settlement is door to Indian immigration in Nepal. Indians from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh were mainly responsible for it.

In regard to immigration, indian imigrants were employed in skilled or semi-skilled sectors and were mainly concentrated in the Terai. This has been the case immediately from the establishment of industries in Terai. Lack of required skilled and semi-skilled local manpower for industrial work in the Terai, made feasible employment in the Terai, made feasible employment opportunities to migrate from North India. Thus the role of employment opportunities appears important in Nepal-India migratory system. The differentials in land prices also make possible the peoples to move one place to another, which can be applied in Indian migrants to Nepal. This ingredients can apply to the agro-based migrants and help to explain the direction of Nepal India migratory history until 1960's.

Easy accession to the land is other significant reason for migration. Since the hill peoples were reluctant to move in the Terai Indian migrants were encouraged even by the regime towards the Terai region. Among the various causes of migration, time, distance and space are also the crucial factors. Geographical proximity increases the size of the migratory flow. It is hugely shaping the immigration pattern in Nepal having the concentration of about 96% of China born population in the Terai shows that proximity to the areas of origin as one of the variable determining immigration pattern in Nepal. The heart of Terai is an extension of the Indo-Gangetic plain, despites the short distance the relatively inexpensive Indian railway lines constructed during the British Administration also facilitated the movement from North India to Nepal. The wide spread extension of Indian railway network upto border of Nepal was a particularly positive implication to Nepal. It also facilitated the Indian labour recruiting agent and rice traders to extend in their activities to Nepali villages.

Most people of Nepal and India share a common religion and beliefs. They observe the common festivals and visit temples and religious shrines in both the countries. Considerable ethnic similarities among the people of Nepal and India also inspired the people to across the border. Linguistic similarities between the plains areas of Nepal and India leads to increase cross flows of migrants. Marial relationship has been representing a continual and active reason for cement of the cultural ties between the both country.

The rule of entry and exit of governments impact in two ways; by allowing unrestricted entrance and exit to those the Indians and Nepalese. Any citizen of either country can freely move into the other and stay as long as they desired. These all situations explain much about the movement between Nepal and India. Treaty provisions also has further enhanced the free movement between the two states.

Changing Trends in Migratory Process :

Nepal India migration pattern originated from ancient times. The process of making Nepal, a seperate, independent national entity has been mainly influenced by people who migrated from India. It became intense after the unification of Nepal, many treaties and policies adopted by the both government and state escalated the numbers of population. Especially after signing of Sugauli Treaty of 1816 Nepal became a population exporting, nation in the sense of Gurkha recruitment in British Indian Army (Baral : 1990).

Since the mid of the 19th century thousands of young Nepalese had migrated to India to serve in the Gurkha regiments of the British Indian army. Moreover, others migrated toward India to work as tea plantation laboures or cultivators in Sikkim, Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri districts of West-Bengal Lakhimpur, Darrang and Kamrup districts of Assam some border districts of U.P. and Bihar are the fertile areas for Nepalese young to work as watchman in factories, offices and residences (Weiner : 1974).

The end of Anglo-Nepal war in 1815 forced Nepal to give up it's claim on territory east of Mechi river. The situation allowed Nepalese to live in the lost territory as the Prabashi Nepali (i.e. immigrant Nepali) in Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri districts. On the one hand the large scale immigration of Nepalese to India for the recruitment in the Indian Army was the result of feudal socio-political culture and the deteriorating economic condition of Nepal and the other hand, the British Government had encouraged the Gurkhas with their families in British-India. The largest settlements can be seen in the Kangara valley. Dharmashala (Bakshu), Darjeeling, Dehradun and Shelling area are other sizeable areas the Nepalese imigrants used to settle (Kanskar : 1989).

During the world war I more than 200,000 Nepalese were recruited by the British Indian government. That represented 20 percent of the eligible male population of the country. Demand for security personnels, land labourer drew a large body of Nepali imigrants from hill Nepal. (Kanskar : 1989) The expansion of commodity market and urbanisation

further impetus to Nepali immigrants to India. Later on, the Peace and Friendship Treaty of 1950 agreed to grant on a reciprocal basis, to the national of one country in the territories of the other. The same privileges in the matter of residence, ownership of property, participation in trade and commerce movement and other privileges of a similar nature.

Indian immigrants have a strong hold on commercial and industrial sector. They are dominating in big contracts in governmental and non-governmental sectors due to their better organisation investment and entrepreneurial capacity. Many immigrants have already acquired Nepalese citizenship certificate too.

A large number of immigrants are working in urban areas of Nepal as; vendors, plumbers electricians, carpenters, tailors and barbers. They virtually displace Nepalese traders and businessmen by monopolising these aforementioned sectors. On the contrary Nepalese in India have limited capability to compete with Indian in a relatively more advanced Indian economic system (K.C. 1987).

The data on India born population is indicating a declining trend upto 1981. It declined from 324,159 persons in 1961 to 322,718 in 1971 (Kanskar : 1989). The flow of migration was further deteriorated as, 222,278 in 1981. Out of the total foreign born peoples, Indian born constituted 96 percent. Nearly, two-thirds of the Indian born population consists of female indicating large scale of marriage migration on either side of the Nepal-India border.

The tradition of free movement of people across the border has continued with only minor aberration in 1975, when India threatened to seal open border with Nepal. But an agreement was signed in Kathmandu for the normalisation of bilateral relationship in the matter concerned with the exit and entry. Procedures for Nepalese to the so called 'restricted and protected areas' in India. The armed conflict for 'Gurkhaland' in the hill areas; Darjeeling and Kalimpong of West Bengal and the whole sale expulsion of settlers to Nepalese origin peoples from Assam and Meghalaya has generated a stream of return migrants to Nepal. At the same time His Majesty the government of Nepal introduced the work permit system for all immigrants working in three districts of Kathmandu valley, India vehemently objected to the application of work permit system to the Indians in Nepal.

Nevertheless, the Indian objection to the introduction of work permit system in Nepal as against the spirit of the treaty of peace and friendship, the continued settlement of India-born immigrants into the Terai may eventually pose several problems. Despite the provisions in 1950 treaty for reciprocity, in the matter of residence and the acquisition of property in one country by the nationals of another, the government of Nepal has not been in a position to allow an unrestricted immigration of Indian nationals into the country. The migratory process is escalating day by day bilaterally. There is no obvious solution on it through unilateral endeavour.

Conclusions :

Political relations of states more often influenced by the actions and interactions of them. In the process of regulating the bilateral relationship between Nepal and India, international migration involving unrestricted emigration and immigration can be taken as beneficial, if it is regulated properly, the magnitude, causes and the consequences of International Migration between these two countries has raised several issues.

There has been large scale exchange of population between Nepal and India. The migratory moves are daily, seasonal and permanent with varying deviations in political demography. Indian immigration to Nepal is influenced by different as opportunity for employment, demand for skilled and unskilled manpower. Small distances low cost of transportation, unrestricted entry and exit side departriation of earning and closer activity in religion culture, language and family ties. The hill emigrants are not equal with Indians in culture, language and family ties and they are facing the problems of acculturation in the given socio-economic situation of India, Migratory Process and implications between two countries is marked by dispersal situations. India, a huge country which is 45 times larger in population and 22 times bigger in size always can overcome by sending more peoples in comparison with Nepal.

Nepali emigration to India is tied to a number of processes; central to the politics, economics and culture religious community and familial linkage. A sudden cutting off of the emigratory routine would here serious economic and political consequences at all level of Nepalese society and state two. It is a serious matter which can't be discarded easily even by the efforts at the state level. Migration may changed the demographic shape of small country like Nepal.

Despite some positive contribution of immigrants in manufacturing transport and export based trade by importing useful technology and skills, their business entrepreneurial vested interest can jeopardise the national economy. Migration in the past was considered to be a symbol of the friendliest relationship constituted customs social belief, traditions, history and economy. But, nowadays this perception is changing fastly, since it has creating a lot of economic, ethnic, ecological and political crisis, migratory system is seem, as a major-irritant to Nepal-India relations.

The emerging issues caused by emigration and immigration need to be tackled through diplomatic channel with non-conventional perspective. Notwithstanding traditional ties over and above will continue as factors for influencing our bilateral relationship. If India has worked as a safety valve for Nepal by providing employment to the millions of Nepalese in India, Nepal may also become the green pasture for the Indians who are seeking opportunity. They are beneficiaries due to their trading skills, resources, technical know how, skilled and semi-skilled manpower.

Having as such population, a small country like Nepal with limited resources must impose restrictions on the influx of immigration from

the densely populated adjoining states of India, government should take steps to set up machinery for keeping the record and control of emigration and immigration. Policies and programmes for the resolution of Nepal's population problem and national identity should urgently be issued and implemented.

Besides regulation of the borders with India, specific policies for suitable transformation of people should be taken by the state. Mutual understanding bilateral co-operation frequency of dialogue, are the mutually agreeable and essential ingredients for the settlements of problems raised by migration in both countries. It is related with socio-economic, cultural and the political matters, so the need for bilateral approach to deal with the problems at government and academic lands by both countries is urgent.

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