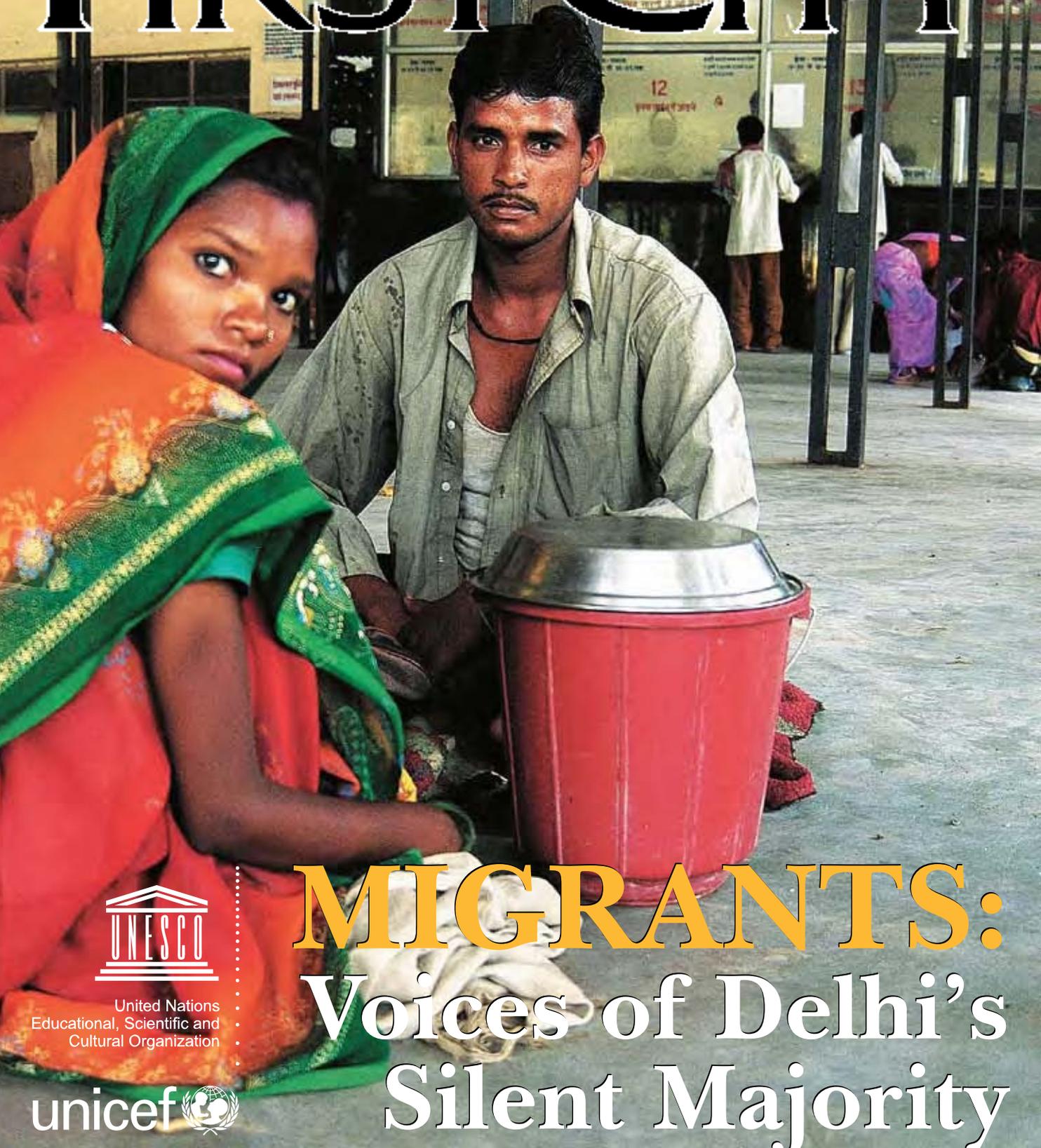


DELHI'S CITY MAGAZINE

DECEMBER 2011

# FIRST CITY



## MIGRANTS: Voices of Delhi's Silent Majority



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



## WHAT IS AT STAKE AND THE CHALLENGES TO BE FACED

### Global Context

- 740 million people worldwide are internal migrants – almost four times as many as those who have moved internationally (214 million).
- Movement within national borders is actually larger in magnitude than movement across borders and has enormous potential to enhance human development.
- Migrants continually face difficulties in becoming a full part of the economic, cultural, social and political lives of society. The constraints they face include lack of formal residency rights, lack of political representation, inadequate housing, low-paid, insecure or hazardous work, limited access to state-provided services such as health or education; religious intolerance; discrimination based on race or gender and social exclusion.

### WHAT IS MIGRATION?

A process of moving, either across an international border, or within a state which results in a temporary or (semi-) permanent change of residence.



### National Context

- India's total population, as recorded in the recently concluded Census 2011, stands at 1.21 billion.
- Internal migration in India accounts for a large population - 309 million or nearly 30 per cent of the total population – as compared to international migration (5 million).
- Approximately three out of every ten Indians is an internal migrant.
- 70.7 per cent of internal migrants are women.
- Two thirds of the migrants (67.2%) are rural and 32.8% urban.
- India's urban population has increased from about 285 million in 2001 to 377 million in 2011. Projections are that by 2030, out of a total population of 1.4 billion, over 600 million people may be living in urban areas.
- Urban migration as a percentage of total migration increased from 28.7% in 1981 to 29.5% in 1991 and further to 32.85% in 2001.
- Lead source states are Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.
- Key destination states include Delhi, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Haryana, Punjab and Karnataka.

### WHO IS A MIGRANT?

A person undergoing a (semi-) permanent change of residence which involves a change of his/her social, economic and/or cultural environment.



## CHALLENGES FOR MIGRANTS IN INDIAN CITIES

- In India, internal migration has been accorded very low priority by the government, partly due to a serious knowledge gap on its extent, nature and magnitude.
- Migrants constitute a “floating” population, as they alternate between living at their home and host location, and in turn lose access to social security benefits linked to the residence, and other informal social networks.
- Internal movement is also impeded by regulations and administrative procedures that exclude migrants from access to the public services and legal rights accorded to local people. Migrants living in urban slums face constant threats of clearance, eviction and rent-seeking from government officials.
- Several studies have pointed out that seasonal/temporary migration is more prevalent among the socio-economically deprived groups such as scheduled castes and tribes, and among the poorest of the poor and landless households, prompted to search for livelihood options when faced with limited assets and resource deficits.
- Poor families with no additional support in their villages have little recourse but to take their children along when they migrate for work, which impacts regular and continued schooling of children. Children are invariably drawn into the labor process at worksites by the employer, by contractors and by parents.
- There is a pressing need to ensure that all migrants have access to services and entitlements as enshrined in policies and law; and to ensure that urban settlements become inclusive spaces as they expand in size and diversity.
- Ensuring migrant inclusion in cities can improve the quality of life for migrants and in so doing create opportunities for more inclusive and integrated societies, thereby balancing economic prosperity, social cohesion and urban diversity.
- Making the inclusion of urban-dwelling migrants a priority is crucial for participatory, equitable, vibrant and economically successful cities.

### WHO IS AN INTERNAL MIGRANT?

An internal migrant is someone who moves to a different administrative territory to reside but stays within national boundaries. Typically this is a change in residence that crosses the provincial or urban boundaries. In the developing world today one of the most common internal migration flows is from rural areas to cities.

### WHAT IS CIRCULAR MIGRATION?

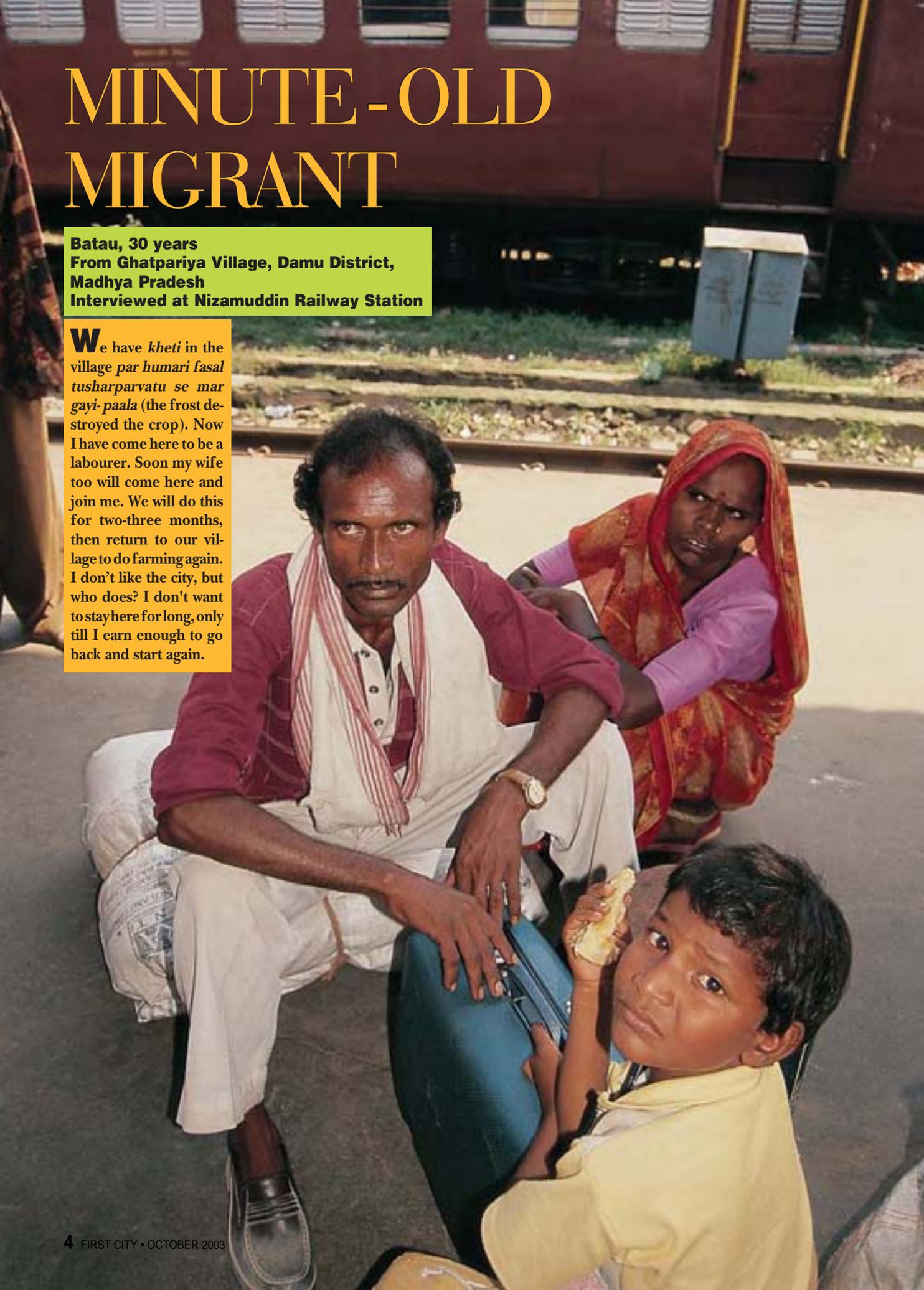
Circular migration has recently emerged as a popular term in policy debate and is at the cutting edge of the debate on migration and development. The process of “circular migration” implies circularity, that is, a relatively open form of (cross-border) mobility. Such migration might involve seasonal stays or temporary work patterns. Usually refers to international migration, but might also involve internal migration between rural and urban areas in the same country.



# MINUTE-OLD MIGRANT

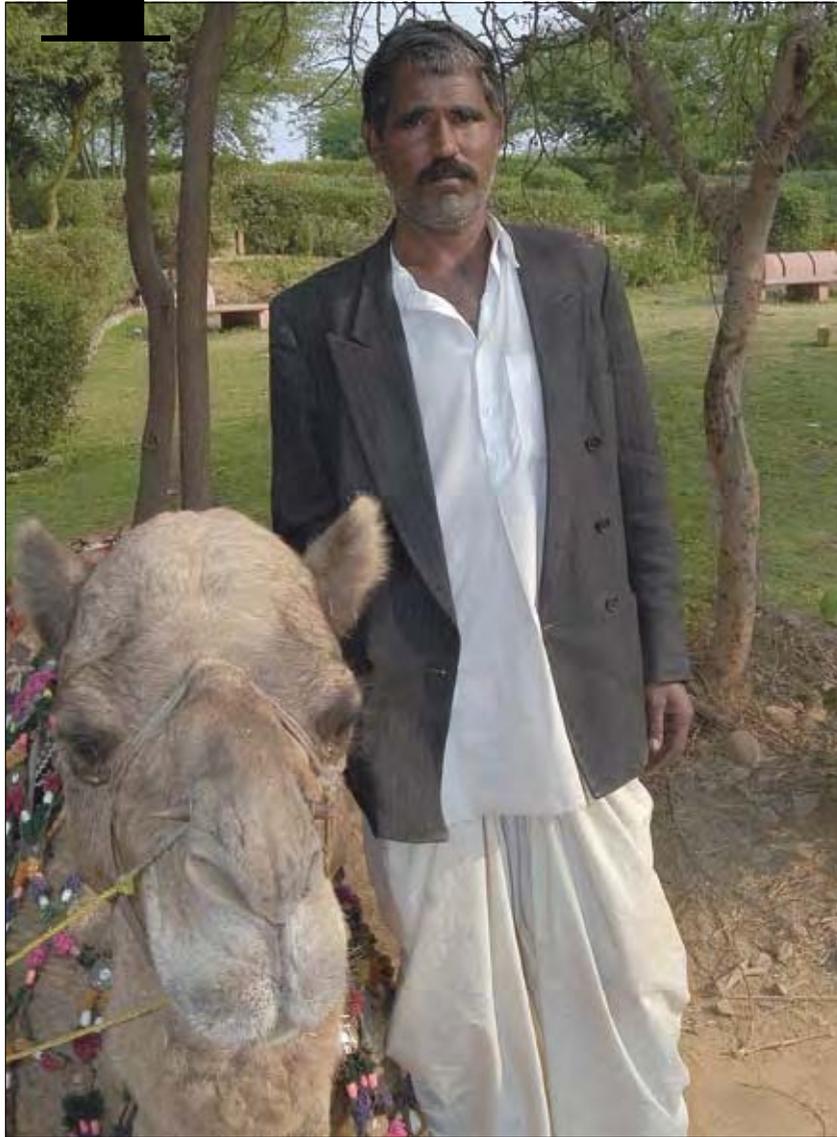
**Batau, 30 years**  
**From Ghatpariya Village, Damu District,**  
**Madhya Pradesh**  
**Interviewed at Nizamuddin Railway Station**

**W**e have *kheti* in the village *par humari fasal tusharparvatu se mar gayi-paala* (the frost destroyed the crop). Now I have come here to be a labourer. Soon my wife too will come here and join me. We will do this for two-three months, then return to our village to do farming again. I don't like the city, but who does? I don't want to stay here for long, only till I earn enough to go back and start again.



# Interview

An insight into the minds of Delhi's silent majority



**An informal chat with “not sure how old I am” Khia Ram, camel rider at the Garden of Five Senses, revealing his views, opinions and aspirations to FIRST CITY**

**Where are you from?**

Nagore in Rajasthan. It's very close to Jodhpur.

**How long have you been in Delhi?**

It's been two years now.

**Do you like Delhi?**

Theek hai (It's okay). Dilli matlab mazdoori (Delhi means work). It gets me

my meals, and that's why I like it.

**Do you stay alone here?**

Yes, I live here alone. My parents - both my mother and father - live in the village.

**Are you married?**

No.

**How much do you earn in a day?**

I get Rs. 2,000 per month from the authorities. For the camel rides, I charge Rs. 10 for a child and Rs. 15 for an adult. I make about Rs. 100 everyday. On weekends - yeh Friday ho gaya, Saturday ho gaya, Sunday ho gaya - my earnings go up, I make upto Rs. 400.

**Do you like your job?**

We've been doing this for ages now. Our family has always been in the *oonth savaari* (camel ride) business. So, I was born into it. I don't know about enjoying it, but it's alright.

**What do you do if you get free time?**

Nothing much.

**Do you watch films?**

I like films, but we always have to be with the camel. So, we don't get to go out much.

**Do you have any favourite actresses/actors?**

*Pasand to sabhi hain* (I like everyone). Don't ask me for names. I don't know any.

**Have you studied?**

No.

**Given the chance, would you like to study?**

Study? Who would look after my camel then?

**Study? Who would look after my camel then?**

**Do you know the name of our Prime Minister?**

No. I don't know these things. If I were educated, I would know. Then, I would know the names of film stars too... If I knew these things, would I be doing what I do? I would get a job. Just like you people.

**Do you like watching cricket?**

No.

**Do you vote?**

Sometimes, I vote. *Jaante nahi par kaun hai* (I don't know about the people contesting). I do what the elders say.

**Do you believe in god?**

Yes. Of course.

**Do you know about AIDS?**

No. What is it?

**It's a fatal disease. Have you never heard about it?**

Never. See, I told you, I don't know these things. I don't want to know. *Kaam hai* (I have work to do). ■

# MINUTE-OLD MIGRANT

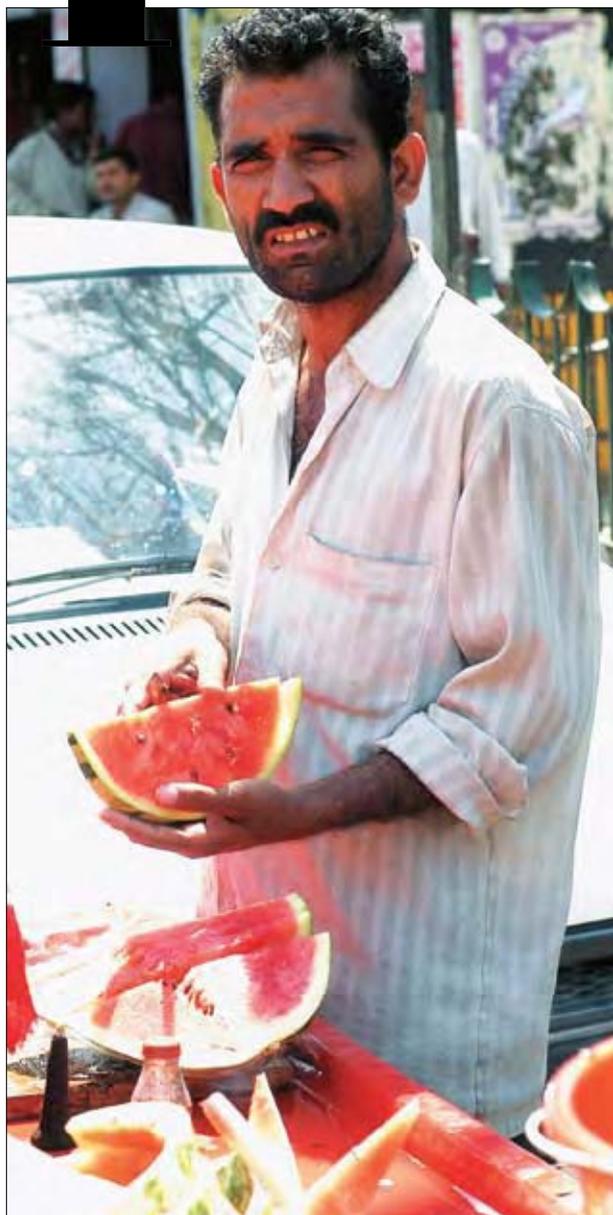


**Ashok, 20 years, from Tikam, near Jhansi, interviewed at Nizamuddin Railway Station**

**B**ack home, we have our plot of land that we cultivate. This time, the harvest was poor, so we decided to come here along with a group of people from our village, looking for work, preferably *chunai ka kaam*. We'll work for two to four months, then go home to our kids and our fields. I don't know anyone here, so I haven't gone out to look for work. Some *thekedars* will come and ask us to work at their sites. Two men from my group have gone to check out some work along with a *thekedar* they've known for quite some time. My wife is here with me; the kids and parents stayed back at the village.

# I n t e r v i e w

An insight into the minds of Delhi's silent majority



**A watermelon seller chats with First City, near the Nizamuddin Railway Station, about his hopes and woes, all the while enquiring, "This will not put me into any trouble, will it?"**

**What is your name?**

Babar Baig.

**Where are you from?**

Bareilly District.

**How long have you been in Delhi?**

I came in January this year.

**Do you like Delhi?**

What's there to like in a place? *Rozi roti kamata hoon*. This city gives me my bread and butter.

**Do you stay alone?**

*Hum char paanch log ek saath rehte hain, kiraye pe* (There are four or five of us who stay in a rented house here).

**Tell us about your family? Are you married?**

I have an old father and mother to look after, a wife and four daughters who are dependent on my income.

**How much do you earn in a day?**

Around Rs. 30 to 50 a day.

**What is your daily routine like?**

I'm here from nine in the morning to eight at night. Some customers talk to me and that's how I pass my time.

**Do you like your job?**

What's there to like? I have to do it.

**What do you do if you get free time?**

I don't get any free time.

**Do you watch films?**

Haven't watched any film here.

**Do you have any favourite actresses/**

**actors?**

*Rozi roti ke chakkar mein yeh sab kahan?* (I'm earning my livelihood, how can I indulge myself?)

**Do you like cricket? Any favourite players?**

No.

**Have you studied?**

Failed in class VIII.

**If you could study, what would you want to do with your life?**

Can't imagine what I would do. *Kismet mein toh yahi likha tha* (I was fated for this).

**Do you know the name of our Prime Minister?**

Hanji, Dr Manmohan Singh.

**Are you interested in the political affairs of the country?**

*Rajniti mein dilchaspi nahi hai* (I have no interest in politics). I'm concerned with earning money to support my family back home.

**I'm earning my livelihood, how can I indulge myself?**

**Do you vote?**

Yes, back home, I do.

**What do you think is the main problem in the country?**

The government never listens to the poor. *Police wale hafta mangte hain, yahan ke committee wale bhi tang karte hain* (The police ask for money, the Municipal Committee people bully us).

**Do you believe in god? Why?**

*Ek woh hi hai jo hamari sunta hai* (He's the only one who hears us). We only have him to help us.

**Do you know about AIDS?**

I've heard about it, but don't know too much. ■

# MINUTE-OLD MIGRANT

**Ghora Beti (*kya pata umr ka? Hum koi padhe likhe thodi hai*), from Jhansi, Madhya Pradesh  
Interviewed at Nizamuddin Railway Station**

I'm here with my *dokhra* (husband). *Gaon mein paani pad gaya* (there was heavy rain/flood in the village), and so, we didn't have any work to do... not even in the neighbouring villages. So, we came here to earn some money for our family back home; I have seven daughters and we need money to marry them off. Here, we were working on a company (construction site). *Wohi*, breaking stones, carrying cement and gravel around. We earned about Rs. 60 a day. I just got news that my *jeth* (brother-in-law) in the village, has died. We're going back to visit, and plan to return and resume our jobs here.



# I Interview

An insight into the minds of Delhi's silent majority



**36-year-old Manku Gaekwad and his wife, sharing their task of making a day's bargain of the basketful of bananas and oranges (Rs. 5 for three) between them, on Tansen Marg, just before the road gets swallowed by the Bengali Market bustle. Manku reveals his opinions, views and aspirations to FIRST CITY, coached by the assenting and dissenting inputs from his wife.**

## **Where are you from?**

We have land and property in Khajuraho, that's where we are from. We go visit our family once a year; my brothers, who are all married and settled with kids.

## **How long have you been in Delhi?**

I have been living in Delhi for the last eight years. I used to live on Minto Road, but then they broke down the *jhuggis* and shifted us to Narela. So I live there now. I like the Khan Market area best in Delhi. There's no cheating-*baazi*, no haggling there.

## **Why did you come here?**

We have *kisani* in the village, we grow *gehun*, *chana*, *dal*, but even there, it's a matter of money. A bag of manure costs Rs. 1,000 and diesel is Rs. 50 a litre (500 a day), so you need an investment of at least Rs. 30,000 to begin with, to get returns of Rs. 50 to 60,000.

## **Do you have children?**

Yes.

## **What do they do?**

My 13-year-old son is studying, he's the youngest. My 15-year-old daughter is working as a maid in someone's house in Kotla. She studied till Class VII, then she had to leave school because we had no money.

## **Tell us something about your work.**

We've been selling fruits for the last three years. When the *makka* season comes, we sell roasted *bhutta* after smearing it with *nimbu-kala namak*. We are selling oranges now, because we are able to save Rs. 3 per dozen we buy and sell. We'll sell oranges for another 15 days, after which only the more expensive ones that are stocked at stores will sell.

## **What did you do before this?**

Waise I am a driver, *achcha-khasa* driver, I can drive any car you give me. I used to take foreigners around, and I've seen lots of places - Agra, Jaipur, Ludhiana - but I like Rajasthan the best. I even had my own car, but I had to sell it to pay for my wife's tubectomy operation. The doctors left a broken needle inside her, and we had to cough up close to Rs. 3-4 lakhs for it. I am working towards renewing my taxi and tourist license; till then we'll do this.

## **How much do you earn in a day?**

These are difficult times for us, we earn barely enough to cover our daily living expenses, and there's hardly any savings. Sometimes Rs. 100, sometimes as little as Rs. 50, is left at the end of the day.

## **What's your day like?**

My wife and I take the morning train everyday and reach Bengali Market by 9 am, and catch the 5.30/6.30 pm train back from Tilak Bridge. We haven't been on the Metro yet; no route from Narela to this side is *chaalu* as yet. And if we don't have any work on the Metro lines, what's the use of getting on?

## **What do you do in your free time?**

We're up since 4 am, and by the time we reach the doorstep, it's 9 pm, and then there's food to cook, a bath... We don't have a television; and even if we did, we wouldn't watch it because we're so exhausted at the end of a day's work.

## **Do you like cricket?**

Never been interested in cricket, didn't even play as a child.

## **Have you studied?**

I've studied till Class V; I left because my parents weren't very well off. Yes, education is very important, but even that doesn't have much value today. You have so many unemployed MAs and BAs desperate even for a job that pays Rs. 2000! So it's *ajeeb paristhiti* (strange situation), you have to pay money to earn money!

**You have so many unemployed MAs and BAs desperate even for a job that pays Rs. 2000! So it's *ajeeb paristhiti* (strange situation), you have to pay money to earn money!**

## **Do you vote?**

I always vote for the Congress. I vote, even though I know that it doesn't make any difference, because whoever comes to power, always thinks of himself.

## **What do you think is the biggest problem in the country?**

The government says that the biggest problem is poverty, that *garibi hatao*, but what they're actually doing is removing the poor from the city itself, breaking down *jhuggis* and sending us to the outskirts.

## **Do you know who the Prime Minister of India is?**

Yes, he's the Sardar that Sonia Gandhi got elected, Manmohan Singh.

## **Do you believe in god?**

Yes, who do you think looks after us? ■

# MINUTE-OLD MIGRANT

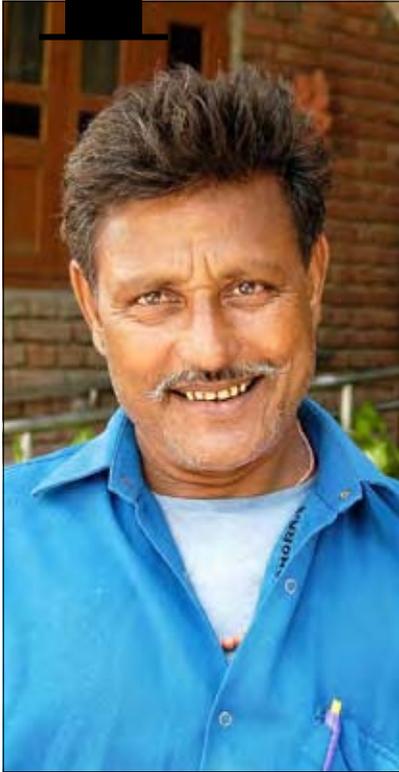
**Santosh, 25, and his wife Uma, from Lalitpur, near Jhansi  
Interviewed at Nizamuddin Railway Station**

**W**e've come from our village to look for work here. There is work in the village, but it's so irregular. Sometimes there's enough, sometimes there isn't any to go around. In the village, we are tailors, we do stitching work. But here, we'll do whatever we get... we need money, so we don't care what we do. Only the two of us have come, we don't have any children. We've come to Delhi four or five times before for work, and each time, we were employed in construction work.



# Interview

An insight into the minds of Delhi's silent majority



**An informal chat with Bhanwar ji, a 45-year-old bioscope guy, at Dilli Haat, revealing his views, opinions and aspirations to FIRST CITY...**

**Where are you from?**

We used to live in Rajasthan.

**When did you come to Delhi?**

We came here in 1975, when the Surajkund Mela happened. It's been 30 years.

**What made you move to Delhi?**

There's no rain or *kheti-bari* in Rajasthan. So I came here looking for work. I didn't get a job, so I bought a bioscope and showed it to people. There was no television at that time, and only the radio was popular, so I could earn quite a bit by roaming in the *galis*, and at government-organised *melas*, like Surajkund and Dilli Haat.

**Where do you stay?**

Kathputli colony in Shadipur.

**Do you like Delhi?**

I developed a liking for it, but now it's

just getting worse by the day. Now, if you see the place where I live, you'll see how they've dug up ditches for the Metro. We've never got any land to live on.

**Tell us about your family.**

(Smiles). I have four daughters and two sons.

**Do they go to school?**

No, one boy drives a doctor's car, *bechaara*. The other one works in a company for those new VCRs - yes, DVD players. The daughters have studied till Class V. I offered them to study further, but they refused.

**What's your day like?**

Days spent at work are good, well-spent. Days spent at home are so boring. I have to go to officers looking for work, *dhakke khana padte hain*.

**How much do you earn?**

Anything earned for such a huge family is never enough! Definitely not with the bioscope. The bioscope is only for people, to show them our tradition; it doesn't yield any profit. Some months, it can be up to Rs. 10,000, with good offers for puppet shows and folk dance performances. But we have no money to save.

**What do you do in your free time?**

I just sit around. Sometimes I watch television serials. Sometimes we get together and sing Holi and Fagun songs. That feels nice.

**Do you watch movies?**

Not now. I used to, especially at the theatres in my *gaon*. I like the old movies, of Rajendra Kumar, Sunil Dutt, Rajkumar, Jeetendra. They had a different *hisaab*; there was something worth understanding.

**Any favourite actors/actresses?**

(Giggles). Jeetu *bhai*. I've met him! I used to run a hotel on the highway in Madhya Pradesh when I was about 13 years old. So Jeetu *bhai*, Jeevant and his crew stopped over at our hotel on their way to a shoot, and asked me if I'd like to come along with them! There must be something they liked about me. But my parents refused to let me go with them.

**Have you studied?**

Yes, till Class I. School was very strict then; the teachers used to pull your ears and that hurt! So I ran away to Mumbai!

**If you get to study, will you?**

Yes, of course. I want my kids to study too, but they're not interested. No matter what people say, I think education really helps if you want to make a life of your own.

**Do you vote?**

Yes. In Delhi. For the Congress.

**What do you think is the biggest problem in our country?**

Politicians come and tell us, give us a vote, and we'll remove poverty. What they mean is that we'll remove poverty by removing your *jhuggis*, and build our *havelis* on this land! When they need votes, they come to us with folded hands. But when we need reforms for our locality, we need to run around in their offices with folded hands.

**Politicians come and tell us, give us a vote, and we'll remove poverty. What they mean is that we'll remove poverty by removing your jhuggis, and build our havelis on this land!**

**Do you know who the Prime Minister of India is?**

(Long pause). No. I don't know so much.

**Do you know about AIDS?**

Haan, they show on the television *na*. *Vehem daal rahe hain logon mein*. In our parents' time, there were hardly three-four diseases you could die of - *mata* (small pox), pneumonia, malaria or TB. New diseases come up everyday, just as new governments do! I just feel like these are doctors' ways of getting more money out of us - *chhote log ko to kuchh samajhte hi nahi na*.

# MINUTE-OLD MIGRANT

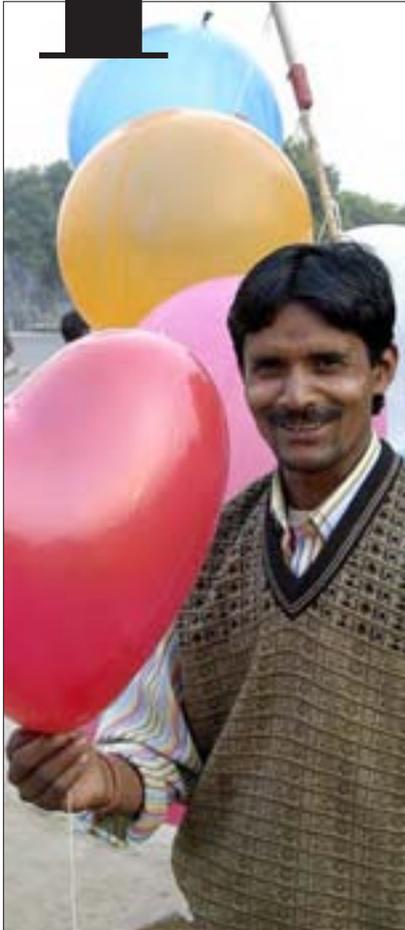
A young man with dark hair and a mustache, wearing a white button-down shirt and blue jeans, sits on a train platform. He is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. Behind him, several other people are visible, including a woman in a blue and orange sari holding a child, and a woman in a yellow and green headscarf. The background shows a train and a sign that says "WAY CONSTN." and "ELWAY CO".

**Manoj, 23 years old**  
**From Jhansi**  
**Interviewed at**  
**Nizamuddin Railway**  
**Station**

I came by today's train, around 5 am. I've come with my friends, and we have all planned to stay here for at least two to three years. We'll stay in Janakpuri. Like everyone else, I too have come with the hope that I'll get work, earn some money. We're looking for *halka-patla kaam*, like labour work. All my family is at home. We have a farm there, we grow wheat, *chane*, *moong*, *urad*, but water is a major problem there, and that's why I came here... why else would I leave home? Why Delhi? We all heard so much about Delhi, and it's close to Jhansi.

# I Interview

An insight into the minds of Delhi's silent majority



*Jaunty bubbles in blue, pink and yellow smile under a robust sun, livening up the winter afternoon. So, as he caters to his customers' fancy for a particular colour, he's surprised at our choice of shape, "Dil wala? Ab? (Heart-shaped? Now)?" but merrily blows a few. "Those that get sold", he quips, when asked about his favourites. "And, those that don't burst quickly. You can never tell the quality of one", he adds. FIRST CITY in conversation with Ramavatar, aged 26, a balloon seller at India Gate.*

**Where are you from?**

Muzaffarabad, Bihar.

**When did you come to Delhi?**

It was still a few months to 2000, that's when I came.

**What made you move to Delhi?**

I had married off my sister to a decent

man, with a steady income, which is the only responsibility my parents had left me with before they died. So, I thought it was time I did something about my life. And, I came to the city to test my luck.

**What were you doing in Bihar?**

I was tilling the land, which didn't pay very much.

**Where do you stay?**

Khan Market.

**Do you like Delhi?**

I like Delhi. One meets many different kinds of people here. I have seen *gore log* and *cheeni log* standing right here at India Gate. *Sab ki alag kahani hoti hogi, hum ko kya maloom, hai na* (Everyone must have a different story to tell; what do we know, right)?

**Tell us about your family.**

I stay with my wife, my brother. No children. I got married just a few months back. My wife also goes out to work, to a school close by.

**When did you start this work?**

Earlier, I used to work in an office in Khan Market, but the salary was too little. I am educated, I have studied in a school, but they paid me as if I did not know how to read and write. So, I quit my job and decided to do something on my own. I started this work around three years ago.

**Do you like your work?**

I like my work. But more than that, I would say, I like this place where we stand right now. *Man lagaa rehta hai.*

**If you could do something else for a living, what would you choose?**

I haven't thought this way. I am happy doing what I do.

**What's your day like?**

I come here by 10 in the morning and stay till 10.30 at night. I buy my balloons once a week from Sadar Bazaar, and keep blowing them with this pump as and when my stock depletes. I got this machine from Sadar Bazaar, as well. It is slightly expensive, cost me three hundred rupees, but is very

useful.

**How much do you earn?**

Just enough for my survival.

**What do you do in your free time?**

I don't really get any free time, as you can understand. Because days when people like you are free, are probably the busiest days for me. But, still, we go and visit my wife's family or my brother, whenever there's time.

**Do you watch movies?**

No. Actually, only when I go to my brother's house. He has a VCD player. The last film we watched was *Don*. The old one. *Bahut pasand hai* (I like it a lot).

**Are you interested in politics?**

No. I don't like politics.

**Do you vote?**

No.

I have seen *gore log* and *cheeni log* standing right here at India Gate. Everyone must have a different story to tell; what do we know, right?

**Do you know who the Prime Minister of India is?**

No. I am not interested in such things. *Sarkar toh har roz badalti hai, kab tak yaad karein kaun kya hai* (the government changes everyday; how long can one remember names of the men in power)?

**What do you think is the biggest problem in our country?**

Employers who take advantage of the lack of job opportunities by hiring skilled workers for less. That is worse than unemployment, I feel.

**Do you know about AIDS?**

No. ■

**Arvai (I don't know my age, but definitely not 40!) & her husband Lakshmi (40). From Tikamgarh, near Jhansi, Madhya Pradesh. Interviewed at Hazrat Nizamuddin Railway Station**

**A**RVAI: We got off the train at 7 am, and have been sitting here since then for the *thekedaar* to come. He is from our village only; he'll take us on for *potai ka kaam, chunai ka kaam*. He says he will pay us Rs. 110 per day. Our three children are in the village with their grandparents. The eldest is 18 years old, then our son is 12, and the other daughter is 10. They all go to school; neither of us has been educated, but we want our children to study. That's why we've come here to work, so we can send back money for them. Guess we'll stay for a month, two months maybe... the moment it rains in the village, we'll go back to our fields. We grow *jowar, sorahi, daana*, but it hasn't rained this year. It hasn't rained since last year, *sukha pada hai*, there's no river nearby and all the ponds and lakes are dry. *Toh kya karein? Pet paalna hai, bachche ko padhana hai.* LAKSHMI: Ya, ya, the Kisan Rozgar Yojna has helped in some villages, to some extent, but you see, there are 500 people waiting to fill a job that requires only 50. The *sahib-log* also don't give out the jobs, *bade-bade aadmi* want money for it. We are too poor for this. I don't know the name of the train we travelled on; *padhe likhe hote toh naam jante. Bas poocha, 'Dilli jaaye gadi?' aur chal liye*, and we paid Rs. 105 to come here.



# MINUTE-OLD MIGRANT

# Interview

An insight into the minds of Delhi's silent majority



We catch him just as he sits down for a quick lunch at a dhaba in RK Puram. A plate of steaming hot rajma chaawal patiently waiting on his lap, he shows us the many shades that maketh a sunny work day, "FM Mirchi, duty wale log jo apne office ke baare mein bataate rehte hain, aur kuch school ke ladke wagerah. It's fun listening to these people. **FIRST CITY** in conversation with 29-year-old Niranjan Kumar, conductor on Blue Line Route number 621.

**Where are you from?**  
Bihar.

**When did you come to Delhi?**  
1994.

**What made you move to Delhi?**

To look for work. This isn't Bombay that I'll come to act in films here. I have studied till class XII, so I thought I could get some work in a factory or something.

**What were you doing in Bihar?**

The same thing. I was helping on a bus.

**Where do you stay in Delhi?**

Mahipalpur.

**Do you like Delhi?**

I like Delhi. But, I don't have much time to explore it. Imagine, I have been in Delhi for almost 10 years, and I still haven't seen Red Fort. Despite the fact that my bus takes me to Mori Gate every day!

**Tell us about your family.**

I am not married. I live with my friends. I have my parents and brothers back home.

**When did you start this work?**

Interestingly, even though I came to work in a factory, I have been working on buses ever since I stepped into Delhi. So, my parents say I have been lucky in a way, but also rather unlucky.

**Do you like your work?**

I don't really have a choice. But, it can be fun also. All these boys here are my age, so it's like being among friends. And then, this is something I have been doing from the very beginning, so I know my work. I can do it well. But sometimes people crib about shelling out Rs. 3 for a ticket. I don't understand this attitude. These are rates set by the government. I wouldn't like to say much when they refuse, but the contractor keeps tab on each and every paisa. So, I have to come down hard on them, but I rarely get into a fight. And you know, some people deserve a sock or two, once in a while. *Seedhe rehte hain.*

**If you could do something else for a living, what would you choose?**

You know, I have always wanted to get into the army. I cleared the written exam too, but they said I have an eye

defect. *Toh physical mein rah gaya* (so, I couldn't clear the physical fitness test).

**What's your day like?**

I am ready for the first trip from Munirka by 6 am. Then, we usually break for lunch around this time. And it's back to the bus for the next seven hours. I usually finish by 11 pm.

**How much do you earn?**

Rs. 200 everyday. *Theek hai, na* (That's enough, right)?

**What do you do in your free time?**

There isn't a lot of free time, but sometimes, we watch a film, sometimes, go to Palika Bazaar to buy CDs and clothes.

**Which was the last film you watched?**

I recently watched *Golmaal*. It has Ajay Devgan. He is one of my favourite actors. Among actresses, I like Aishwarya Rai. She calls herself Aishwarya Bachchan, now, I think. You write that properly, please.

Among actresses, I like Aishwarya Rai. She calls herself Aishwarya Bachchan, now, I think. You write that properly, please

**Are you interested in politics?**

No. I don't like politics.

**Do you vote?**

Yes.

**Do you know who the Prime Minister of India is?**

Manmohan Singh. You thought I won't know?

**What do you think is the biggest problem in our country?**

Population and unemployment. They are related in a way, aren't they?

**Do you know about AIDS?**

Yes. ■

# MINUTE-OLD MIGRANT

**Jati Ram, 36 years old, from  
Zila Tikamgarh, Jhansi.  
Interviewed at Nizamuddin  
Railway Station**

**I**'m waiting for the evening train at 7 pm to head back; I will reach Jhansi next morning and then it's another three-four hours to my village.

I've been in Delhi for about 17 days now, but now I am going back. I got wet in the rains and can feel a fever coming on and there's no one here to look after me. I came here alone, leaving behind my parents, my two daughters and son and wife in the village.

I've been working as a rickshaw puller in Mukherjee Nagar, 'Camp' like all the college *bachche* call it. I rented it on a daily basis, Rs. 30 a day; there are days when I'd earn enough to save and on some days I wouldn't even break even. But it's still better than back home; it's hasn't rained and we can't farm. *Thodi kheti hai, gehun, jowar, makka hai. Dilli badhiya lagi, magar mehengi lagi.*

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Standing inside a tiny, cemented cubicle, he's busy scrubbing white towels to 'jagmagati safedi'. The brush in his hand working vigorously on the PVR Saket Gold Class merchandise (as he duly informs us), the only thing that slows the rhythm is the dictaphone, leading him to speculations like "Is this a radio? Walkman?" FIRST CITY catches up with Ifikaar urf Munna, as he takes a 10-minute break from his work at the dhobhi ghat in Lodi Colony, "jaldi, jaldi poochho, yahaan toh ek minute ki chhutti bhi mushkil hai".

**Where are you from?**

Chapra, in Gorakhpur.

**When did you come to Delhi?**

1990. The year *Ram Jaane* was released. Remember, the one that had Shahrukh Khan?

**Where do you stay?**

In Lodi Colony. Right here at the dhobhi ghat.

**Do you like Delhi?**

I like Delhi. There's plenty to do here, for the young, at least. I don't mean in terms of jobs (laughs) but ghoomne-firne ke liye. I like going to Saket and Connaught Place with my friends from the ghat. I have also been to the Red Fort. *Achcha hai*.

**Tell us about your family.**

I have my mother and five sisters. They live in the village. Three of my sisters are married, but the other two have to be married very soon.

**Are you married?**

No. *Abhi toh chhutta bail hain* (I am like an untied bull, right now)!

**When did you start this work?**

I have been working here ever since I came to Delhi.

This is the only work, you could say, that I know. *Khandani jise kehte hain* (this is an ancestral profession). This is what my father did and what his father did. This is what I was doing back home, but it wasn't paying very well, so I moved to the city.

**Do you like your work?**

I don't know how to answer that. Well, I am doing it, and I try to do it well. So, I must like it, right?

**If you could do something else for a living, what would you choose?**

I have always wanted to have my own business. Like a laundry service. To

expand the scope of the work we've been doing through generations.

**What's your day like?**

I get up at seven in the morning, then eat and bathe. I begin work from 8 am and go on till nine at night. After which, I just go back to my room, cook, eat and sleep.

**How much do you earn?**

I make around Rs. 3,000 a month.

**What do you do in your free time?**

I watch films. Go out with friends.

**Which was the last movie you saw?**

The latest film I saw was actually quite old. Have you seen *Bada?* It had Bobby Deol and Rani Mukherjee.

**Any favourite actors/actresses?**

I like Shahrukh Khan.

**Are you interested in politics?**

No. Not at all.

I like Delhi. There's plenty to do here, for the young, at least. I don't mean in terms of jobs (laughs) but ghoomne-firne ke liye

**Do you vote?**

No.

**Do you know who is the Prime Minister of India?**

Sheila Dixit.

**What do you think is the biggest problem of our country?**

If I just look around me right now, I would have to say that the biggest problem is poverty. It'll be good, if all of us could get more money for what we're doing.

**Do you believe in god?**

I believe in my Allah. I am a Muslim, but yes, I believe in your bhagwan, too. ■

# MINUTE-OLD MIGRANT

**Manish (20 years old), Shibu (14 years old) and Changa (5 years old). Interviewed at Hazrat Nizamuddin Railway Station**

**S**HIBU: We're brothers; we've all come from Nainital. I've been staying there for the last seven to eight years with my mother. We haven't come to Delhi, we're just passing through. We've to go to Jaipur, to a hospital near the station, which the doctors in Nainital have referred us to and said treatment is free. Hopefully, someone can heal Manish's legs and hands. We both pull cycle rickshaws for a living; you won't believe the number of people who come holidaying there and to eat *bhutta*, *kaphal* and cherry. It's hardly any work, actually; it's just a three-kilometre stretch on the mall, because people don't want to walk. It's boring. *Haan*, we watch movies, I like the songs and dream sequences. I like Akshay Kumar. There are lots of schools there, but we don't attend them. I'd like to, *mann toh kar raha hai*, but how to go to school now? *Jab gharwaale nahi padhate toh hum kya karein?*

**MANISH:** I don't know what's wrong and no one has been able to diagnose it so far. From time to time, suddenly my hands and legs start aching, and I just can't walk or move. I don't really have a home in Nainital, *bas jhuggi daal rakhi hai*. My home is in Jhansi. I've been in Nainital for the last three years. Shibu also stays there with his mother and that's how we met and became brothers. Shibu is from Lucknow. Delhi is such a big city, I don't know where we'll go for treatment. So I'm going to Jaipur, since they say *ilaj free mein hota hai*. It's the 7 pm Mewar Express, which leaves from platform number 7.

I like Hrithik Roshan. I like the weather in Nainital, and just love it in the winter when there's snowfall, *ekdum tagda padega* in December and February.

**CHANGA:** We travelled by train. This is the first time I've travelled out of Nainital. No, I am not scared. I have come to look after my brothers.

# Interview

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**FIRST CITY** with Guddu Kumar, 21, one we drove past and had to turn around for, as he sat perched on his *thela*, framed by sachets of *tambaku*, right in front of an imposing under-construction building in Gurgaon. He lives in a slum nearby, and seems to see clearly, albeit shyly, through all that dust. There's a customer-a-minute, most in orange helmets, sometimes for *beedi*, sometimes for a cigarette.

**Where are you from?**

I'm from Bihar.

**How long have you been here?**

I came here around two years ago.

**Why did you come to Delhi?**

I came here to make a living. I came

here as soon as I finished my studies.

**How far did you study?**

I've passed class X.

**When did you set up this paan shop?**

It's been about six months since I've set this up.

**Who do you live with in Delhi?**

Well, there's me and my brother-in-law. Just the two of us. I'm not married, yet.

**Where do you live?**

Around the corner.

**Do you like Delhi?**

Delhi, yes, I like it.

**What do you like about it?**

What's not to like? You have to make a living, and I make a living here. What else is there?

**Don't you like anything else?**

Well, yes. There's the Red Fort. I like the way of life, the society is good.

**Do you miss home?**

Of course.

**What is there Bihar that you can't find in Delhi?**

*Bihar mein hariyali hai. Khula aasmaan hai, paani hai.* (There's greenery, an open sky, there's water). *Yahan bandh mahaul hai.*

**Do you watch television?**

Yes, I mostly watch the news. Sometimes I watch whatever films are playing.

**What kind of films do you enjoy? Any favourite actors or actresses?**

I like family dramas. And I like Sunny Deol and Ameesha Patel.

**Do you go back to your village?**

Yes, I do. I make it a point to go back at least thrice a year.

**Do you know who the Prime Minister of our country is?**

*Pradhan mantri?* Um, the *pradhan mantri* is... it's... uh, I don't remember.

**Do you vote?**

Yes, I vote. Not here, I've voted in Bihar.

**In your opinion, what is the country's greatest problem?**

Unemployment, *aur kya*. That's the biggest problem...

**And what do you think can be done about it?**

Without population control, it'll be difficult to do anything.

**Do you watch cricket?**

Yes, of course.

**Who's your favourite player?**

Sachin.

**Do you believe in god?**

Absolutely. I believe in Durga mata.

**How much money do you make in a day?**

Altogether, I make about Rs. 200 a day; in a month, I make around Rs. 4,000.

Bihar mein hariyali hai. Khula aasmaan hai, paani hai. (There's greenery, an open sky, there's water). Yahan bandh mahaul hai

**If you had a choice, what kind of work would you most like to do?**

I'd like to be an electrician. There are no set earnings with this paan shop. You can't be sure how much money you'll be making today or tomorrow. And there's the heat and dust.

**And where do you eat?**

Well, I make my own food and eat at home. I make *rotis*. Everyone likes *rotis*, you can eat them with anything. I like simple food.

**What do you know about AIDS?**

I know that's an incurable disease and that it passes through sexual contact. ■

# MINUTE-OLD MIGRANT

Rambai, age unknown, and Billoo, from Bilaspur, Chhatisgarh, interviewed at Nizamuddin Railway Station

I've just reached Delhi, I came in the Subah Kranti Express. I'm waiting for my husband to pick me up. But I don't know whether he's reaching, or if he's stuck at Sarai Kale Khan. I'll wait till 3 pm, and if he still doesn't show up, I'll go there myself. I've come here out of *majboori*, because now my son and daughter are all grown up and I've to get them married. For that, we need money. Of course, we have *khaana-peena* in Bilaspur, we have our fields. But it's not enough. So, we are going to go to Gurgaon to work in a company. We'll do *chunai ka kaam* in all those big, big buildings. And it's so hard to work with a young child, so the company has organised a teacher to come and teach the kids on the site itself. That's where Billoo will study.

# Interview

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**FIRST CITY** with 45-year-old Kanku, who sits midst a colourful explosion, busy making miniature-sized pink and silver-foil wrapped gadads, at her house in Kishanganj Pushta, when we pass by one morning. **FIRST CITY** stops to chat with this arms-dealer of sorts.

## Where are you from?

From Ratanpur, zila Banashgata, Gujarat. We have our own house there, which we lock up when we come to Delhi. We return home once or twice every year to meet our family there.

## How long have you been in Delhi? Do you like it here?

I've been in Delhi for the last 20 years. I like it here, because there are so many means of earning. Everyone will like a place where there is work, *kaam-dhanda ho*; tell me, who likes to sit around?

## Tell us about your work.

This work I do, it's called *gada-talwar* (club and sword making). I've been making these for 10 years now. I like it, because it brings in some extra money, while I'm just sitting at home. But I don't like it when people try and buy it off at bargains, rate *kam kar ke*. But I only do this work in the two months between Janmashtami and Dussehra; for the rest of the year, I exchange old clothes with new steel utensils.

I get the raw material - the *baans* (straw) - from Farooqui Mandi and the local market here. We buy big pieces and then cut them up at home. If some stock is left over, I don't stress. I pack it up in plastic and store it away in *boras*, to be re-used next year.

## Who are your customers?

Generally, kids ask for these toys. I don't go to do direct sale, except on the day of Dussehra. Wholesale sellers pick these toys up from me to sell at Sadar Bazaar, or other *chhote-mote* sellers buy it from me to sell it in different parts of the city.

## How much do you earn in a day?

I can earn up to about Rs. 300 a day. I sell these at a rate of Rs. 25 per dozen pieces.

## Tell us about your family.

I have three sons, three daughters-in-law, my one husband, and grandchildren.

## Do you watch films? Television? What do you do in your free time?

Watch television. (Laughs) That is, whenever I can find the time, I watch whatever's on. I get up by 4 am. I leave home by 8 am and return only by 5 pm. Then there's the house to look after,

the kids, no time.

## Have you studied?

Me? Haven't studied at all... but (laughs) I can count money! *Paise ki padhai aati hai... bachche bhi gin jaate hain!*

## Do you know the name of our Prime Minister?

Hehehe, what do I know who the *pradhan* is? They keep changing.

## Do you vote?

Yes, I vote. Here, in Delhi.

## What do you think is the main problem in the country?

Our country's biggest problem, I think, is water, and then, this issue of voting. See, when you live in small villages like

If our land was fine, do you think we'd have come to Delhi, so far away, to live like this in *jhugghis* and with no proper road to speak of?

I live in, people come during the elections and promise they'll take away the problem, say they'll make arrangements to desilt the water. And then, when the voting is over, we still have the same problems. If our land was fine, do you think we'd have come to Delhi, so far away, to live like this in *jhugghis* and with no proper road to speak of?

But I am doing what I can do to support my family, earn a little money.

## Do you believe in God?

I believe in all gods. God is god, and you can take his name anytime.

## Do you know about AIDS?

*Kisko yeh bimari? Nahi, nahi, nahi pata* (Who has this? No, no, I don't know what this is). ■



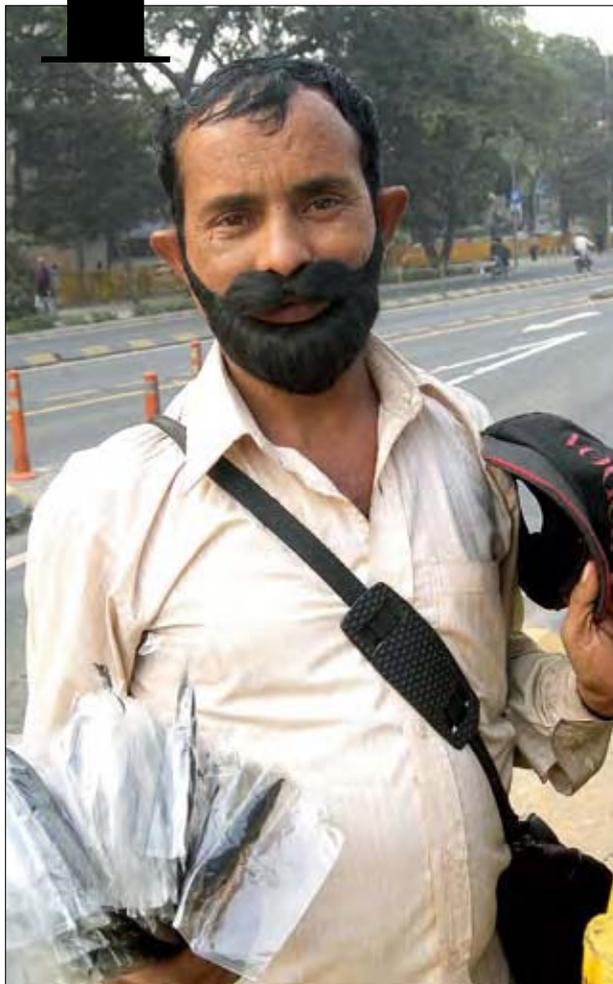
**Ateela, 32, and Chhotu, three, from Mahoba, Uttar Pradesh interviewed at Nizamuddin Railway Station**

I reached Delhi two or three hours ago, by the Mahakaushal Express. I'm waiting for another train to take me to Mumbai, where my brother-in-law has promised me a job. The Punjab Mail is supposed to go through this station at 5 pm, so I'll be here till then. Where can I go? I have this boy with me. I came here alone, three weeks ago, trying to find some kind of work. Delhi is still closer to home than Mumbai. But there's nothing here for a woman with responsibilities. At least, over there, I can put him in some school, because my sister will help support us. My husband is still in Mahoba, working in the tourism industry as a peon. Money is scarce, because we live in a big family. I also have to contribute here and there.

# MINUTE-OLD MIGRANT

# Interview

An insight into the minds of Delhi's silent majority



**FIRST CITY** interacts with Amarjeet Singh, 35, who sells fake facial hair (beard and moustache), under the Chirag Delhi flyover, from early morning till late evening. This is his fashion statement for the younger generation.

**Where are you from?**

I'm from Bihar.

**How long have you been here?**

I've been here for nearly 10 years.

**How long have you been doing this work for?**

It's been one year now.

**Did you study?**

I've completed my high school.

**Do you like what you do?**

I like it very much.

**Where do you live in Delhi?**

I live in Lajpat Nagar.

**Are you married?**

Yes, I've been married for a while.

**Do you have any kids?**

I have two kids.

**Do you like Delhi?**

Yes, I like it here very much. There is employment available, which isn't the case in my village.

**How old were you when you started working?**

Right after high school, I landed in Delhi and started working.

**Do you still have a house, back in your village?**

Yes, I have my old house back in the village, which is not in use at the moment.

**What about your friends on the street where you sell your things?**

My friend here (standing next to us) sells clothes.

**Do you watch television?**

No, I don't have a television in my room.

**Do you have a favourite actor?**

No; if I don't watch television, then how would I care?

**Would you go back to your village if there was a good job waiting?**

Yes, if I get work I'd love to go back. It'll be comfortable there. I can work in the

fields and make money.

**What is your daily schedule?**

I get up at 7.30 in the morning and then work here on the street till eight in the evening. And by the time it's 10 pm, I go off to bed. There is no time to do anything else.

**You get up that late?**

Yeah, it's my business, and I don't work under anybody.

**Do you know who the Prime Minister of our country is?**

Dr. Manmohan Singh.

**In your opinion, what is the country's greatest problem?**

Poverty is the biggest issue we are dealing with.

**And what do you think can be done about it?**

If they (the government) wish, they can give us work and cut down on poverty.

**Do you like sports?**

No, I have no interest in sports.

If I don't watch television, then how would I care (about a 'favourite actor')?

**Where do you eat everyday?**

Sardarji ka dhaba, on the next street. My friend and I go and eat there every day.

**How much money do you make in a day?**

About Rs. 100-150 a day.

**Do you know about AIDS?**

35 years.

**Not your age, do you know about AIDS?**

No, I do not. ■

# MINUTE-OLD MIGRANT

**Parvin Kashyap, 32,  
from Muzaffarnagar,  
Uttar Pradesh,  
Interviewed at  
Nizamuddin Railway  
Station**

I reached Delhi 15 minutes ago, and I'm waiting for my train to Madhya Pradesh. I've been called to repair tractors, since there are not many mechanics available in that area. I know quite a lot about spare parts. I'll be gone for two to three days, and then head back home. I cross Delhi every six months to get to Madhya Pradesh.

# I Interview

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**FIRST CITY** watched Naresh, 30, sew and patch a hot pink umbrella (for Rs. 20), torn and jammed because of being kept away for a year, and taken out as a precautionary measure to avoid getting drenched in the untimely showers that we've been experiencing. We sweated and laughed together under the shade of a neem tree in RK Puram, Sector-1, with pirated, tenth grade, maths books being sold to our right and the cracked sound of tere karan, tere karan, mere saajan, tere karan to our left. Needless to say, curious onlookers stopped and sat next to our cheerful Umbrella Man.

**Where are you from?**

I'm from Uttar Pradesh.

**What work were you doing there?**

I was a farmer back home. I used to grow tobacco and potatoes.

**What made you come to Delhi?**

I came here because I was looking for work.

**Did you go to school?**

Yes, but I haven't studied enough. I passed eighth grade, quit school and started working.

**Where do you live in Delhi?**

I live close to Punjabi Bagh, on Rohtak road.

**Are you married?**

Yes, I'm married.

**Do you have any kids?**

Yes, I have two kids (smiles), Himanshu and Yash. Himanshu is three years old and Yash is a year old.

**Who all are there in your family, back home?**

I have two brothers in the village.

**Do you like Delhi?**

Yeah, it's an incredible city. I get enough work here and can feed myself and my family. What more can I ask for?

**When did you start this work?**

I started this work recently, though I didn't take any professional training or diploma to learn this work.

**How much do you earn a day?**

Same old - Rs. 200 to 300.

**Do you like your work?**

Yes, I do.

**What's your day like?**

I wake up at 5.30 in the morning, go for my morning walk, get milk for the family, bathe, eat breakfast and leave

for work at 7.15 am. Then, I reach this stand at eight in the morning and fix umbrellas all day till eight in the evening. Finally, I reach home at nine, eat my dinner and sleep.

**What do you do in your free time?**

There is hardly any free time. Sunday is the only holiday I have and I stitch curtains that day to make extra money.

**Do you watch television?**

I watch films, especially English films. Last night, I watched *US Marshals*, though my favourite films are James Bond.

**Which actors do you like?**

I really like Akshay Kumar.

**Are you interested in politics?**

*Nahin, bahut bekar cheez hai (wipes his forehead).*

I watch films, especially English films. Last night, I watched *US Marshals*, though my favourite films are James Bond

**Do you like sports?**

I really like cricket. *Waise*, I used to play *gilli danda* when I was growing up.

**Do you know who the Prime Minister of our country is?**

Mohan... Manmohan Singh.

**In your opinion, what is the country's greatest problem?**

Population explosion and unemployment.

**Do you believe in god?**

Yes, I believe in *Bajrang Bali*.

**Do you know about AIDS?**

I've heard about it. ■

# MINUTE-OLD MIGRANT

**Arun, 18, from Bihar,  
Interviewed at New  
Delhi Railway Station**

I've just landed in Delhi with five other companions. I travelled by Amrapali Express. I am a labourer back home and I've come here to do the same work. I'm a *mistri* and I make buildings. At the moment, I'm waiting for my contractor to come and fetch me. Later, I will go to the construction site and get settled. I'm planning to stay in Delhi for a year in Nangloi village. I like Delhi (*laughs and shies away*). I came to Delhi last about a year ago and did the same work. I haven't travelled around in Delhi much, but I hope to do so this time around.

# Interview

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**FIRST CITY catches up with Sheru, all of 18, as he rushes to complete his rounds of the many houses of Sarvodaya Enclave. Residents are just stirring out of sleep and waking up to a chilly morning while Sheru is already up and at 'em, at their doorsteps with his piercing cry for 'kooda'. He is the garbage collector who does a daily round of about 200 - 250 houses here. Young and shy, Sheru smiles coyly throughout our little tête-à-tête with him.**

**Where are you from?**

I'm from Kanpur.

**What work do you do here?**

I collect waste from the houses in Sarvodaya Enclave and send it to the dump here.

**What made you come to Delhi?**

My brother said that if I come to Delhi, he will fix me up with a job (*smiles wryly*). I didn't get any job, so I started this (waste collection).

**Did you go to school?**

Yes, in Kanpur. I have studied till class VI.

**Where do you live in Delhi?**

I live in Khidki village with my brother and his family.

**Are you married?**

No.

**Do you have any kids?**

No.

**Who all are there in your family, back home?**

Papa and four brothers. My mother is no more.

**Do you like Delhi?**

Yes, I like it here now (*big smile*). I don't like it back home.

**When did you start this work?**

I have been in Delhi for some six or seven years now. I was eight or nine when I started working.

**How much do you earn a day?**

I make about Rs. 100-150.

**Do you like your work?**

Yes, I don't mind it (*shrugs nonchalantly*). But, if I like anything else, I will do it.

**What's your day like?**

I wake up at 4 in the morning, reach Sarvodaya by rickshaw, by 6. I finish my rounds by 2 pm and then take the garbage home to sort it. I separate plastic and paper by 6 pm. Then I bathe and go out with friends, if I feel

like it. Otherwise, I eat and sleep. I sleep early as I have to get up at 4 am, you see.

**What do you do in your free time?**

Sleep, watch films on television and if friends come home, I go out with them.

**What are your favourite places in Delhi?**

Malviya Nagar Main Market and the malls, especially Select Citywalk Mall.

**What do you watch on television?**

Films, cartoons and some serials.

**Which actors do you like?**

I really like Ajay Devgan especially in *Jaan* (*smiles shyly*). I also like Kajol and Salman Khan. I mostly watch Dharmendra and Mithun (Chakraborty) films.

**Are you interested in politics?**

No.

**Do you like sports?**

Yes, I play cricket and watch it on television also.

**Free time? Sleep, watch films on television and if friends come home, I go out with them**

**Do you know who the Prime Minister of our country is?**

No.

**In your opinion, what is the country's greatest problem?**

I don't know. (*Smiles*). *Shayad mehangai, atta-dal kitna mehang ho gaya hai.*

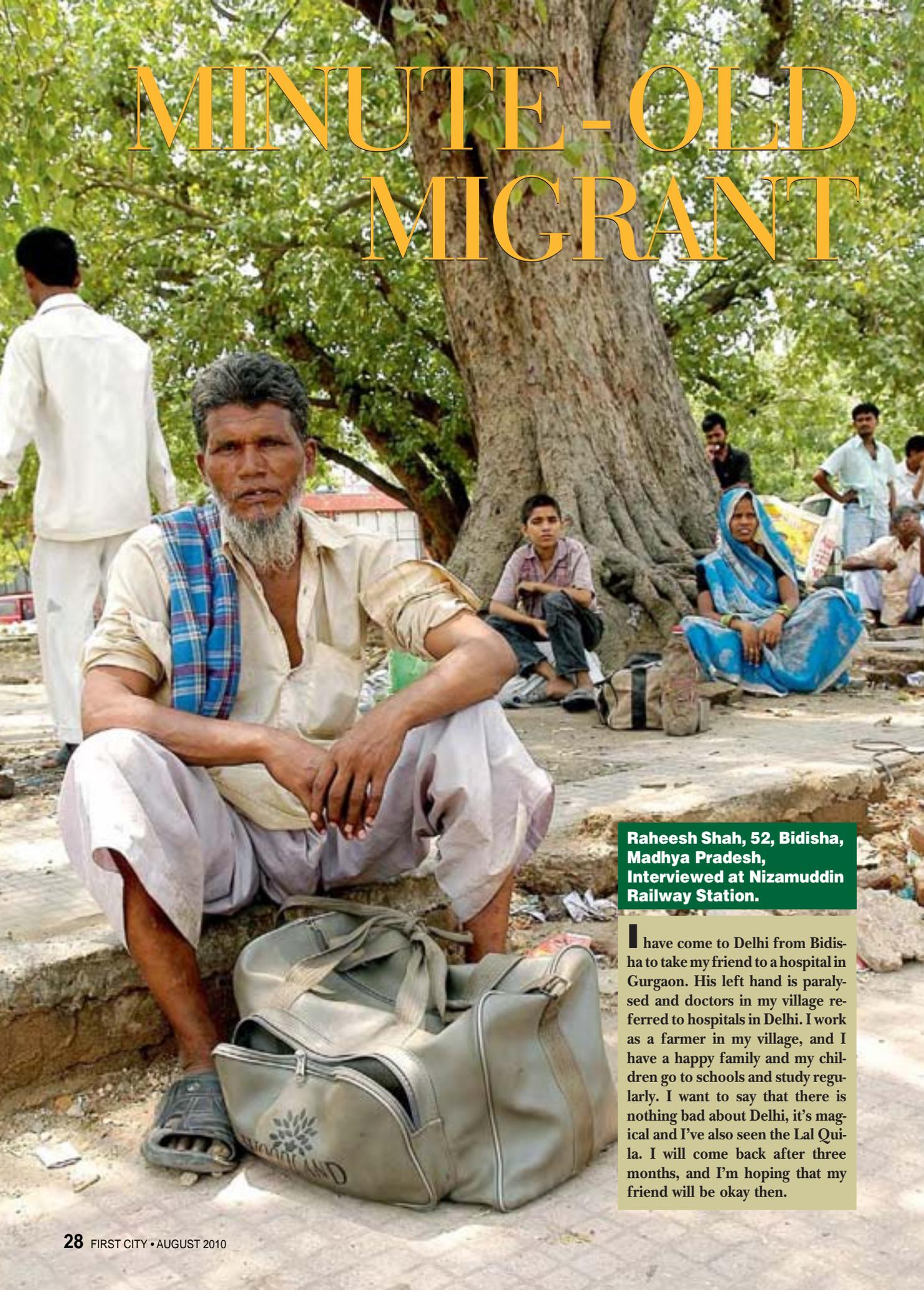
**Do you believe in god?**

Yes, Shankar *bhagvan*. I don't pray at home, but I go to Kalkaji *mandir*.

**Do you know about AIDS?**

Address? (*Our explanation is followed by a blank look*). I don't know what you're talking about. ■

# MINUTE-OLD MIGRANT



**Raheesh Shah, 52, Bidisha, Madhya Pradesh, Interviewed at Nizamuddin Railway Station.**

I have come to Delhi from Bidisha to take my friend to a hospital in Gurgaon. His left hand is paralyzed and doctors in my village referred to hospitals in Delhi. I work as a farmer in my village, and I have a happy family and my children go to schools and study regularly. I want to say that there is nothing bad about Delhi, it's magical and I've also seen the Lal Quila. I will come back after three months, and I'm hoping that my friend will be okay then.

# I Interview

An insight into the minds of Delhi's silent majority



**FIRST CITY** struggles with the volatile Delhi monsoon weather. Looking for a place to park ourselves for some rest, we find ourselves at a car parking lot in Laxmi Nagar and indulge in a long conversation with Mahesh, a 17-year-old boy finishing his breakfast and getting back to work as the parking attendant.

**Where are you from?**

I am from Bihar. I came to Delhi two years ago.

**What made you come to Delhi?**

I came to work here along with my father.

monthly salary.

**Do you like your job?**

Yes. The people usually treat me well and I enjoy working here.

**What work do you do?**

I have to enter numbers of cars that come. I also wash the cars since the parking system works on a monthly basis and I meet the same people everyday. *Pehle Shahdara mein halwai pe kaam karta tha* (before this I used to work at a sweet shop). I started working here seven months ago.

**What do you do in your free time?**

I hardly get any free time. I go home,

**Did you go to school?**

I studied till Class V. I know how to read and write.

**Where do you live in Delhi?**

*Dilli mein Jheel mein rehta hoon* (I live in Jheel with my father).

**Who all are there in your family?**

My father and I came to Delhi. My mother, sister and brother are back in my village in Bihar.

**Do you like Delhi?**

*Sahi hai*. I like Delhi. *Sahi hai kaafi* (it's quite good).

**How much do you earn in a day?**

I earn Rs. 135 a day. I'm on a fixed

cook, eat and then sleep. All my friends are back home in Bihar.

I love taking a bath in this small enclosure covering the underground sewer. I take off my clothes, cover myself up, and dive in to escape the Delhi heat. It's a liberating feeling.

**Do you watch television or films?**

I don't have a television at home, so I don't watch films. *Saat mahine se chhutti nahi mila hai* (I haven't had a holiday from work in seven months).

**Which actors and actresses do you like?**

*Mithun pasand aata hai. Govinda pasand aata hai*. I don't like any heroines. I don't know their names.

I love taking a bath in this small enclosure covering the underground sewer. I take off my clothes, cover myself up with something, and dive in to escape the Delhi heat. It's a liberating feeling

**Are you interested in politics?**

I don't know much about politics here in Delhi. *Bihar mein neta ke baare mein maalum ha* (I know about ministers back home in Bihar).

**Do you know the name of our Prime Minister?**

No.

**Do you believe in God?**

Yes. I love Bajrang Bali.

**Do you know about AIDS?**

No.

# MINUTE-OLD MIGRANT

**Ravi Ranjan Kumar, 20,  
Bihar, interviewed at  
Nizamuddin Railway  
Station**

I've come to Delhi to study. I've taken admission here, so I'll stay here for at least two years. I'm waiting for my friend, who drives a cab here. I'll stay with him. So far, Delhi seems alright, but I'll know more once I live here.

I'm from Bihar, and my family is back home. For money, I'll probably take up a part time job, tuition *vyooshun padha loonga bacchon ko*. Otherwise, I'll have to ask my family to send me money. Let's see.

# Interview

An insight into the minds of Delhi's silent majority



**FIRST CITY** dons its special spotting glasses outside the Nizamuddin Railway Station and catches a man walking hurriedly and purposefully, holding some flashy, colourful decorations, and a personality that's literally oozing class. After a great deal of arm twisting, we finally convince Abdur Rahman, 50, to sit down and talk to us. Five minutes later, he's on his way, with a matter-of-fact expression and a curt "Ab ijazat milegi? Mujhe dhanda karna hai." And off he walks into the horizon.

**Where are you from?**  
Shahidpur.

**What made you come to Delhi?**  
I came to Delhi two days ago to sell my decorations.

**Did you go to school?**  
No.

**Where do you live in Delhi?**  
I live near Ghaziabad.

**Who all are there in your family?**  
I have seven kids back home.

**Do you like Delhi?**  
What like? I'll go to Nizamuddin Auliya, sell these decorations and then head home and sleep.

**How much do you earn in a day?**  
Sab kismet ki baat hai. I've made ₹ 25 since morning.

**Do you like your job?**  
Yes.

**Tell us about your wares?**  
I sell these decorations. This one (points at one of the decorations) is called Four

Minaar; I even have *Taj Mahal*, *Hawa Mahal*. You name any item and I will have it. I have hundreds of names for these. I sell two for ₹ 10.

**What do you do in your free time?**  
I come to Delhi for a few days, conduct my business, and go back home. Now, I'm here for three more days; there's no question of free time.

**Do you watch television or films?**  
Nothing at all. My children at home love it though. *Bahut shaukeen hain*.

**Which actors and actresses do you like?**  
I have no idea.

**Are you interested in politics?**  
Absolutely no interest at all. *Na mein kisi ke khilaf kuch bolta hoon, na mein kisi se kuch bulvaata hoon* (I mind my own business; I don't bother criticising people, or instigating others).

No disease will ever come close to me. I eat up roses without even checking for thorns

**Do you know the name of our Prime Minister?**  
I have no clue. I am my own Prime Minister; no PM is bigger than me. (Bursts out laughing). I don't even recognise him.

**Do you believe in God?**  
Yes. You take away everything I own, and I'll still be content with just my faith.

**Do you know about AIDS?**  
What is that? A disease? No disease will ever come close to me. *Hum gulaab ke phool kacche hi khaa jaate hain, kaanta ho ya na ho. Sab maalik ke haath mein hai* (I eat up roses without even checking for thorns. It's all up to the lord).

# MINUTE-OLD MIGRANT

Beej Lal, 30 - 31, Jhansi,  
interviewed outside  
Nizamuddin Railway Station

I've come to Delhi for work, *mazdoori ke liye*. My family, 14 of us, are going to stay in Delhi for more than two months, depending on our work, and then we will return home, to Jhansi, where we will work as farmers.

We are waiting for the *thekedar*, who has given us this job. He's going to transport us to some place where all of us will get some work. *Koi mistri ka kaam karega, koi eetha uthayega...* We will be rebuilding some roads there.



# Interview

An insight into the minds of Delhi's silent majority



**FIRST CITY** strolls around in Janpath, and between shopping and bargains, meets with the beautiful and vibrant Puja, 21, selling wall hangings and carpets. She tells us about the makings of the handicraft and the difficulty of selling them on the streets while her sky-blue bangles jingle. Her effervescent smile is warming and her challenging beliefs unchallengeable.

**Where are you from?**

I am from Gujarat, Harvad.

**What made you come to Delhi?**

Business karne ke liye. There's no work

in our village. And also, it's too hot there.

**Did you go to school?**

Yes, I did; till Class VIII.

**Where do you live in Delhi?**

I live in Inderlok with my husband's family, *sasural mein*.

**Who all are there in your family?**

There is my husband, his mother and my daughter. She is one-and-a-half-years old.

**Do you like Delhi?**

*Haan, Dilli achcha hain* (Yes, Delhi is good). The business is good and so are the people.

**How much do you earn in a day?**

It varies. *Salary ka toh hisab nahin hain*. I earn roughly around ₹3,000 a day, but then that is without excluding the cost price.

**Where do you bring your wares from and who are your customers?**

I bring them from Gujarat. Some are also made by me. *Meri mummy bhi banati hain*. Today she is at home making some new ones. Indians too buy them, but most of the buyers are foreigners. They know the value of these things.

**Do you like your job?**

Yes, I like selling handicrafts. *Khud ka business karna achcha lagta hain*. It's better than doing a 'job', which gives you a meagre salary. But the police harass us a lot, especially the women. *Bahut atyachhar karte hain*.

**What do you do in your free time?**

Free time *nahin milta hai* (I don't get any free time). Before coming here at 10 am, I do all the housework and then after finishing here, there's more work at home.

**Do you watch television?**

Yes, I do. I like... Star Plus. *Saare serial achche lagta hain* (I like all the soaps). But I like *Bidaai* most.

**Which actors and actresses do you like?**

Rani Mukherjee. (Demurely) *Hero mein se koi nahin*. (I don't like any heroes.)

**Are you interested in politics?**

No. They decide everything among themselves. And for us, *haan karo toh bhi guna... naa karo toh bhi guna* (If we say yes, it's crime; if we say no, it's crime).

**How many names should I remember? In a year, there are three to four Prime Ministers**

**Do you know the name of our Prime Minister?**

No. *Kis kis ka naam yaad rakhe? Saal mein toh teen chaar badalte rehte hain*. (How many names should I remember? In a year, there are three to four Prime Ministers.)

**Do you believe in god?**

*Sabse jyaada* (More than anyone). I have always believed in god. I've taken his test often, but he gives as well. Among my relatives, most are women. *Door door tak*. So I asked for a girl child and he gave me my daughter.

**Do you know about AIDS?**

*Thoda bahaut* (A little bit.) *Shaairik sambandh se hota hain*. ■

***Migrants' Inclusion in Cities: Innovative Urban Policies and Practices – A Guide for City Professionals***, Marie Price and Elizabeth Chacko, UNESCO/UN-HABITAT, forthcoming 2011.

With the aim of creating a practical and enabling guide for migrant inclusion, and primarily addressing mayors, municipalities, city professionals and international NGO's which group together networks and associations of cities and city dwellers, this publication aims to strengthen the research-policy-practice nexus by providing an informative toolkit (including a brochure, guide, website and experts publication) which will contribute to the development of more inclusive cities and improve the quality of migrants' lives in these cities.

***How to Enhance Inclusiveness for International Migrants in Our Cities: Various Stakeholders' Views***, UNESCO/UN-HABITAT, 2010.

This publication is an incentive to open ways of rethinking the impacts of migration on urbanization and cities as a benefit for all natives and the newcomers, and to reflect on how to prevent urban conflicts.

***Urban Policies and the Right to the City in India: Rights, Responsibilities and Citizenship***, Marie-Helene Zerah; Veronique Dupont; Stephanie Tawa Lama-Rewal, (Scientific Editors); and Marina Faetanini (Publication Editor), UNESCO and Centre de Sciences Humaines, 2011.

The Right to the City in India takes the form of a compendium of 16 research policy-papers written by 14 eminent researchers covering several angles of the right to the city approach in India, such as: the legal and institutional framework; the role of gender, caste, religion and migration; forms of claims to urban space and urban land; housing and urban livelihoods; access to major urban services, such as water, transport and healthcare; and the human rights framework that could be used to take the Right to the City forward. The publication is intended as an advocacy tool to promote a rights-based approach to urbanization in India.

***Migration Without Borders, Essays on the Free Movement of People***, Edited by Antoine Pecoud and Paul de Guchteneire, UNESCO and Berghahn Books, 2007.

The Migration Without Borders scenario challenges conventional views on the need to control and restrict migration flows and brings a fresh perspective to contemporary debates. By introducing and discussing the possibility of a right to mobility, it calls for an opening, not only of national borders, but also of the eyes and minds of all those interested in the future of international migration in a globalized world.

***Urban Policies and the Right to the City: Rights, Responsibilities and Citizenship***, Alison Brown and Annali Kristiansen, UNESCO, 2009.

The purpose of the publication is to contribute to meeting the MDGs and reducing poverty by identifying good practices and initiatives that strengthen rights and responsibilities, inter-faith tolerance, and the participation of women, young people and migrants in urban management.

***Migration and Climate Change***, Edited by Etienne Piguet, Antoine Pecoud and Paul de Guchteneire, UNESCO and Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Providing the first authoritative overview of the relationship between climate change and migration, brings together the views of 26 leading experts from a range of disciplines such as demography, climatology, economics, geography, anthropology and law while presenting case studies from Bangladesh, Brazil, Nepal and the islands of the Pacific.

***Human Rights, Children and Migration database*** ([www.hrcam.org](http://www.hrcam.org))

This interactive tool aims to highlight the standards established by UN Human Rights Committees concerning the rights of children in the context of migration. This project has been developed by the Human Rights Center of the National University of Lanus and UNICEF Division of Policy and Practice.

***MigrantInfo Database*** (<http://pmde.polsci.uh.edu>)

MigrantInfo is an online database adapted from DevInfo containing data on indicators related to global migration. Developed by UNICEF in partnership with UN/DESA and the University of Houston, the database allows users to generate tables, graphs and maps using the latest available estimates of the international migrant stock, disaggregated by age and gender.

***Independent Child Migrants in Developing Countries: Unexplored links in migration and development***, Shahin Yaqub, Innocenti Working Papers 2009-01, UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, 2009.

This paper focuses on independent migrant children, defined as below 18 years old, who choose to move from home and live at destinations without a parent or adult guardian. It summarises quantitative and qualitative research, and uses this to reflect on research agendas and global debates towards linking migration and development.

***South Asia in Action: Preventing and responding to child trafficking. Child rights-based programme practices***, Innocenti Insight, UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, 2008.

This publication acknowledges the adoption of many international standards and the promotion of regional agreements. At the same time, legislation against trafficking is often considered within the broader context of criminalizing prostitution, addressing organized crime and controlling migration. Although these are important issues, a focus only on these perspectives fails to adequately address the full complexity and dynamics of human trafficking, and fails to give distinct consideration to child trafficking. Existing laws therefore need to be amended and new laws enacted to fully conform with international standards.

***Children's Work and Independent Child Migration: A Critical Review***, Eric Edmonds and Maheshwor Shreshta, Innocenti Working Papers 2009-19, UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, 2009.

This review considers the evidence from child labour research that is relevant to understanding independent child migration for work.

## UNESCO-UNICEF NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON INTERNAL MIGRATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

UNESCO and UNICEF are partnering to organize a National Workshop on Internal Migration and Human Development in India, to be held on 6 and 7 December 2011, hosted by the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), in New Delhi, and supported by Sir Dorabji Tata Trust.

While increasing visibility and recognition of internal migration in India, which has thus far remained a neglected government priority, in both policy and practice, the Workshop aims to:

- disseminate evidence-based research, experience and practices, as well as initiatives in law and urban planning that can strengthen migrants' rights and responsibilities;
- promote understanding of the vulnerabilities faced by children in the context of family migration and independent migration and identify policy gaps and strategies that can address these vulnerabilities;
- draw the attention of policy makers towards the urgency to protect and promote migrants' rights and ensure their social inclusion in the cities;
- and develop a roadmap for the coordination of strategic interventions for a protective policy framework for internal migrants in India.

The Workshop will cover under-explored issues relating to migrants such as: Internal Migration in India: Trends, Challenges and Prospects; Migration and Social Protection: The Missing Link; Gender and Migration; Migrants' (Denied) Right to the City; Migration and Human Development in India: New Challenges and Opportunities; Creative Practices and Policies for Better Inclusion of Migrants; Education of Migrant's Children; Children's Agency, Autonomy and

Migration; Access to Health Services; and Migration, Identity and Citizenship.

The UNESCO-UNICEF National Workshop will conclude with a Roadmap for a Better Inclusion of Migrants, summarizing the main policy recommendations emerging from the Workshop.



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## UNESCO AND MIGRATION

The aim of the Migration and Urbanization Programme is to promote urban policies and creative practices that respect human rights of migrants, contribute to peaceful integration of migrants in cities and improve the quality of their participation in the municipal management. UNESCO contributes with UN-HABITAT to the creation of more inclusive cities, as a follow-up to the Copenhagen World Summit for Social Development of 1995. Our strategy involves strengthening the link between research and policy making, contributing to advocacy and policy dialogue and stimulating innovative thinking to contribute to social cohesion and cultural diversity in urban settings.

[www.unesco.org/newdelhi](http://www.unesco.org/newdelhi)

## UNICEF AND MIGRATION

UNICEF's mission is to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and expand their opportunities to reach their full potential. Guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the belief that the survival, protection and development of children are universal development imperatives that are integral to human progress, UNICEF is committed to ensuring special protection for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable children, including migrant children and those affected indirectly by processes of migration. In this context, UNICEF advocates for the visibility of children in national (and international) migration policy agendas, situating this advocacy within a rights-based framework informed by the principles enshrined in the CRC (art. 19 and 27).

[www.unicef.in](http://www.unicef.in)

**As part of their ongoing advocacy efforts on migration,** UNICEF was chair of the Global Migration Group (GMG) between January-June 2011 and UNESCO is chairing the Group from July-December 2011. The aim of this United Nations inter-agency group is to adopt a coherent, comprehensive and coordinated approach to the issue of migration.



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
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