

July 10, 2020

To,

Hon'ble The Election Commission of India

Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi 110001

through the

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Shri Sunil Arora

cec@eci.gov.in

With Copies to

Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad

Union Minister of Law and Justice

ravis[a@sansad.nic.in

&

Dr. G Narayana Raju

Secretary- Legislative Department

Gn.raju@nic.in

[All State Governments of the Indian Union are also being copied this Memorandum that is of Vital Significance for Voter Inclusion in the Electoral Process]

Sub: *Inclusion of migrant labourers, particularly circular migrant workers, as a special class of workers entitled to vote in the Lok Sabha and state legislative elections by way of postal ballot.*

Hon'ble Sir,

We are civil rights groups working in the area of access to rights and justice. The Citizens for Justice & Peace, Bangla Sanskriti Mancha, Lok Shakti Abhiyan and other signatories to this memorandum have also been extremely active in the area of the

alleviation of hunger during the peculiar and painful circumstances caused by the Covid 19 Pandemic Lockdown. We are writing this letter on behalf of ‘migrant laborers’ requesting their inclusion as ‘notified electors’ under Section 60(c) of the Representation of People Act, 1951 (hereinafter, “**the Act**”) read with Part IIIA of the Conduct of Election Rules 1961 (hereinafter, “**the Rules**”), thereby allowing such migrant laborers access to the postal ballot.

The very foundations of representative democracy is based on the will of *all the Indian people* getting reflected in policy and choices of parties of governance through the ballot. With all the attendant ills of hegemony, money power in politics, class, caste and community interests overshadowing a modern electoral process, the India of the 21st Century cannot look itself in the eye and explain how such a large section of its population—simply by virtue of its work definition which is being away from home – is excluded from this basic constitutional right.

Arguably, this failure of this “class of Indians’ being legitimately allowed to exercise their franchise has meant, that their interest, their security and dignity, their well being has been invisibilised from the entire political discourse of the country, be it of the ruling party or the opposition.

Ironically, the sheer scale of the human tragedy that the Covid-19 Pandemic driven lockdown unleashed on this population, victim of living under the insecurity of being paid only daily wages, with no security (leave alone insurance) in living conditions, in health, or against hunger, has brought their living conditions in the limelight.

India’s gaze has, for the first time been turned towards the “Guest Worker,” the “Migrant Labourer”, the “Pravasi Kamgar.” For Indian democracy to learn the right lessons from their plight that has been brought before the more settled and privileged sections, including politicians, one crucial element must surely be to secure them the right and facility to vote. To exercise their franchise to elect, in the State Assemblies and National Parliament, parties that they believe to be in their best interest, able and prepared to ensure transformative social change.

Sirs, we believe that by giving migrant labourers the right to cast their vote through the postal ballot, the Election Commission of India would be taking a step towards a more inclusive democracy, ensuring that every segment of the adult and eligible Indian population gets to cast their vote and is not excluded for reasons of exigencies of their profession.

I. Migrant Labourers are a class of special persons in need of access to the postal ballot.

1. The Indian Constitution guarantees a freedom of movement to every citizen and to reside in any part of the country.¹ This freedom has enabled the economy of India to promote internal migration inter-se the states in search for better work and opportunities. According to the latest census of 2011, the number of internal migrants stand at 450 million (45 crores), a 45% surge from the earlier census of 2001. Among these, 26% of the migration, i.e., 117 million (11.7 crores), occurs inter-district within the same state while 12% of the migration, i.e., 54 million (5.4 crores), occurs inter-state.²
2. Most experts, including surveys authorised by the government, estimate that this number is underestimated and the actual number, accounting for circular, seasonal migration, is much higher.³ Circular migration accounts for those migrants that have not permanently relocated to the host cities, and instead circulate between host and home cities. For instance, studies estimate that short term and circular migration could itself amount to 60-65 million migrants (6-6.5 crores), which accounting for family members could approach 100 million itself (10 crores), of which half are inter-state migrants.⁴ It is submitted that despite this being a

¹ Article 19(d) and (e) of the Constitution of India

² Available at <https://blogs.worldbank.org/peoplemove/internal-migration-india-grows-inter-state-movements-remain-low>

³ Available at <https://www.hindustantimes.com/analysis/despite-covid-19-why-did-migrant-workers-go-back/story-NPhLzTd4joLSovjMDxCtaM.html>; <https://www.indiabudget.gov.in/budget2017-2018/es2016-17/echap12.pdf>

⁴ Available at <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/no-relief-for-the-nowhere-people/article31495460.ece>

significant part of the Indian population, migrant labourers have been an ignored class in larger political and governance issues.

3. Survey data further shows that migrant labourers are mainly from rural areas in poor regions and belong to the poorest socio-economic classes, including SC/STs and OBCs, and Other Minorities, who are often uneducated, lacking in assets, lands and specialized skills.⁵ As of 2011, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar were the largest source of inter-state migrants, with 83 lakhs and 63 lakhs migrants respectively,⁶ while Maharashtra and Delhi were the largest receiver states. In their host cities, migrant labourers work primarily in the informal sectors such as construction, textiles and other small industries, often working and living in precarious conditions and facing discrimination.⁷
4. The Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act, 1979 (“ISMW”) was passed with the specific objective of identifying and abolishing exploitative systems of transportation of labour from one state to another for work in poor conditions and low wages.⁸ The ISMW provides for *inter alia* the compulsory registration with the Central/State government based on nature of establishment a “inter-state migrant workman” defined as “a person who is recruited by or through a contractor in one State under an agreement or any other arrangement for employment in an establishment in another State, whether with or without the knowledge of the principal employer in relation to such establishment”.⁹ However we submit that the relief in our letter is not limited to this definition.
5. The economic and social issues affecting migrant labourers both exacerbate political exclusion and leads to harsher consequences of the same. Owing to their

⁵ Srivastava Ravi and S. K. Sasikumar. 2003. *An Overview of Migration in India: Its Impacts and Key Issues*. Paper prepared for the Regional Conference on Migration, Development and Pro-Poor Policy Choices in Asia, June 22–24, 2003, Dhaka, Bangladesh; “Report on the Conditions of Work and Promotion of Livelihoods in the Unorganized Sector”, National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector (06.08.2007), pg 128.

⁶ Available at https://www.prsindia.org/theprsblog/migration-india-and-impact-lockdown-migrants#_edn1

⁷ P. Deshingkar and S. Akter, Migration and Human Development in India (January 2009); Available at <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/no-relief-for-the-nowhere-people/article31495460.ece>

⁸ Statement of Object and Reasons, Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act, 1979.

⁹ Section 2(e), Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act, 1979.

roots and residences at their home cities, most migrant voters have their voter cards for their home constituency. A 2012 study demonstrated that 78% of migrant labourers surveyed possessed voter ID cards and had their names present on voting lists of their home cities.¹⁰ However, a majority of migrant labourers are unable to exercise their franchise due to economic constraints and their inability to undertake the commute to their home states in the one day nation-wide holiday that is declared for Parliamentary elections (even if this is in several phases).¹¹ This entrenched systemic pattern of migration has meant the inability of migrant laborers to exercise their franchise in the parliamentary and state legislative elections. According to one survey, only 48% of those surveyed voted in the 2009 Lok Sabha elections as compared to the national average of 59.7%. When only long distance migration was considered, it was found that only 31% of those surveyed voted in the 2009 Lok Sabha elections.¹² These patterns have stayed consistent even for the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, where major sender states such as Bihar and Uttar Pradesh had some of the lowest voter turnout rate at 57.33% and 59.21% respectively as compared to the 67.4% national average.¹³

6. Additionally, given the nature of migration is circular and seasonal, the migrants are not permanent/long-term residents of the host cities and will not satisfy the requirements of being an “ordinary resident” under Section 20 of the Act, in the host state to obtain voter cards and are therefore unable to transfer their constituency. This is also evidenced in data where only 10% of migrant laborers surveyed possessed voter IDs in their host cities, more often due to targeted drives by political leaders aiming to increase their voter base.¹⁴

¹⁰ Available at

<http://www.aajeevika.org/assets/pdfs/Political%20Inclusion%20of%20Migrant%20Workers%20in%20India.pdf>

¹¹ Section 135B, of the Act.

¹² Available at

<http://www.aajeevika.org/assets/pdfs/Political%20Inclusion%20of%20Migrant%20Workers%20in%20India.pdf>

¹³ State-Wise Voter Turn-Out, 2019 Elections, Election Commission of India Information.

¹⁴ Available at

<http://www.aajeevika.org/assets/pdfs/Political%20Inclusion%20of%20Migrant%20Workers%20in%20India.pdf>

7. The result has been that a class of persons, who would immensely benefit from exercising the franchise are entirely excluded from the political calculus, their concerns are rarely represented and prioritized by candidates, and who as a class do not possess any bargaining power. Researchers have shown how issues such as poor implementation of the ISMW lack of registration, access to temporal entitlements such as the public distribution system, better housing and living conditions were barely raised by political candidates.¹⁵ Researchers and NGOs have been highlighting the negative impact of this political exclusion on migrant laborers for decades.¹⁶

8. These issues once again came to the national fore during the nationwide lockdown caused due to the COVID-19 pandemic, where the immense precarity of the migrant labourer in their host cities, caused a mass exodus to their home cities. The invisibility of this class of persons and their issues in political discourse contributed to the inability of legislators and policy makers to predict and prevent and mitigate the issue. Even as of writing this letter, there are daily reports of migrants being stranded, not being paid their dues, and even starving, with numerous reports of death.¹⁷

9. This mass exodus also highlights that fundamentally, migrant laborers do not sever their ties with their home cities. Researchers have also highlighted various home city concerns among migrant laborers, such as fear of being removed from voter lists, fear of not getting access to entitlements at home cities due to not voting,

¹⁵ Available at

<http://www.aajeevika.org/assets/pdfs/Political%20Inclusion%20of%20Migrant%20Workers%20in%20India.pdf>

¹⁶ Available at <https://www.countercurrents.org/ie-sainath150304.htm>; P. Deshingkar and S. Akter, Migration and Human Development in India (January 2009).

¹⁷ Available at <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/no-relief-for-the-nowhere-people/article31495460.ece>; Available at <http://archive.indianstatistics.org/sserwp/sserwp2003-rev.pdf>; Stranded Workers Action Network(2020), 32 Days and Counting: COVID- 19 Lockdown, Migrant Workers, and the Inadequacy of Welfare Measures in India, available at <https://bit.ly/2XIOT2a>.

etc.¹⁸ In light of this connection and given their inability to transfer their constituencies to host cities, we believe that granting postal ballot rights in their home cities is the most effective solution to the issues of political exclusion faced by migrant laborers.

10. In conclusion, migrant labourers are a special class of persons who are effectively being excluded from exercising their franchise, resulting from and in turn causing immense economic and social hardships, that we submit could be effectively addressed by allowing them access to the postal ballot.

II. The Election Commission has a constitutional mandate to effectuate effective voting abilities for the masses

“The Assembly has adopted the principle of adult franchise with an abundant faith in the common man and the ultimate success of democratic rule, and in the full belief that the introduction of democratic government on the basis of adult suffrage will bring enlightenment and promote the well-being, the standard of life, the comfort, and the decent living of the common man”

-Alladi Krishnaswamy Ayyar¹⁹

1. The Election Commission of India (hereinafter, “**Hon’ble Commission**”) is a constitutional authority under Article 324²⁰ of the Constitution of India (hereinafter, **the Constitution**) under which it has plenary powers²¹ in the form of “superintendence, direction and control of...the conduct of, all elections.” The Hon’ble Commission, under Section 60(c) of the Act, has the power to notify a certain class of persons to vote via postal ballot in accordance with the Rules. We submit that the Hon’ble Commission must exercise their plenary powers in order to

¹⁸ Available at

<http://www.aajeevika.org/assets/pdfs/Political%20Inclusion%20of%20Migrant%20Workers%20in%20India.pdf>

¹⁹ Constituent Assembly Debate, XI, page 835.

²⁰ The superintendence, direction and control of the preparation of the electoral rolls for, and the conduct of, all elections to Parliament and to the Legislature of every State and of elections to the offices of President and Vice President held under this Constitution shall be vested in a Commission (referred to in this Constitution as the Election Commission)

²¹ Kanhayia Lal Kumar v. R.K. Trivedi, 1986 AIR 111.

notify circular migrant workers as a special class of voters entitled to vote via postal ballot.

2. The right to vote has been acknowledged under Article 21 of the UDHR and Article 25 of ICCPR as a human right. This sentiment resonated among the framers of the Indian Constitution who staggeringly approved of universal adult suffrage to all Indians irrespective of class, caste, religion and gender. Article 326 of the Indian Constitution confers a constitutional right on every citizen to vote, subject to statutory qualifications.
3. While the Supreme Court has held that the right to vote is a constitutional right that can be limited by statute,²² this characterization is relevant only at the threshold level of conferring voter rights on an individual.²³ A voters' ability to exercise this right to vote has been held as an essential aspect of their fundamental right to freedom of expression.²⁴
4. The Supreme Court, in 2003 held that “a distinction has to be drawn between the conferment of the right to vote on fulfillment of requisite criteria and the culmination of that right in the final act of expressing choice towards a particular candidate by means of ballot. Though the initial right cannot be placed on the pedestal of a fundamental right, but, at the stage when the voter goes to the polling booth and casts his vote, his freedom to express arises. The casting of vote in favour of one or the other candidate is tantamount to expression of his opinion and preference and that final stage in the exercise of voting right marks the accomplishment of freedom of expression of the voter. That is where Article 19(1)(a) is attracted. Freedom of voting as distinct from right to vote is thus a species of freedom of expression and therefore carries with it the auxiliary and complementary rights such as right to secure information about the candidate which are conducive to the freedom.” This understanding was further re-iterated by the Supreme Court in the 2006 case of *Kuldip Nayar v. Union of India* (Kuldip

²² N.P. Ponnuswami vs Returning Officer, Nammakal Constituency and Ors., 1952 AIR 64.

²³ People's Union of Civil Liberties v. Union of India, Supreme Court, WP (civil) No. 490 of 2002.

²⁴ People's Union of Civil Liberties v. Union of India, Supreme Court, WP (civil) No. 490 of 2002; Kuldip Nayar v. Union of India, 2006 7 SCC 1.

Nayar v. Union of India 2006 7 SCC 1) where the court additionally observed, that “the right to vote is a concept which has to yield to a concept of the attainment of free and fair elections”.²⁵

5. The freedom of expression under Article 19(1)(a) is not a mere negative restraint on the state and its functionaries. It brings with it a positive obligation to ensure optimal conditions for the exercise of this freedom.²⁶ The Supreme Court, in *Indibility Creative Ltd. v. Government of West Bengal* (2019 SCC OnLine SC 564) in granting remedies against unfair practices inhibiting freedom of expression held that - “In the space reserved for the free exercise of speech and expression, the state cannot look askance when organized interests threaten the existence of freedom. The state is duty bound to ensure the prevalence of conditions in which those freedoms can be exercised.” Therefore, ensuring freedom to cast their vote in conditions specific to migrant workers as a socio-economic group is a constitutional obligation on the Hon’ble Commission.

6. A key part of the Hon’ble Commission’s initiative and mission is “no voters to be left behind.”²⁷ In furtherance of this goal the Hon’ble Commission has undertaken many efforts to implement a safe and secure system of postal ballots,²⁸ and awareness programmes to make the system more accessible.²⁹ Through these initiatives and measures the Hon’ble Commission has proven its capacity to maintain a robust system of postal ballots for voters in India. In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, a total of more than 28 Lakhs votes were received via postal ballots.³⁰ It is only incumbent to implement a similar system for migrant laborers.

²⁵ Kuldip Nayar v. Union of India, 2006 7 SCC 1, Para 450.

²⁶ *Indibility Creative Ltd. v. Government of West Bengal*, Writ Petition (Civil) No. 306 of 2019, Supreme Court ; Per Chandrachud J, in *K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India*, (2019) 1 SCC 1 at page 792.

²⁷ Available at <https://eci.gov.in/files/file/4618-commission-deploys-awareness-observers-to-ensure-that-no-voter-to-be-left-behind-in-forthcoming-assembly-elections-english-□□□□□/>

²⁸ Available at <https://eci.gov.in/files/file/10263-faqs-on-counting-of-postal-ballot-paper-and-evms/>; <https://eci.gov.in/files/file/11619-procedure-to-be-adopted-for-voting-through-postal-ballot-by-absentee-voters-on-essential-service-aves-reg/>

²⁹ Available at <http://servicevoter.nic.in>; <https://eci.gov.in/voter/service-overseas-voter/>; Available at <https://mea.gov.in/Images/pdf/service-voter-brochure.pdf>

³⁰ Voter Information, 2019 Elections, Election Commission of India Information.



III. Data on Migrant Workers

1. The law in existence governing the rights of Indian Migrant Workers is the Interstate migrant Workers Act of 1979³¹. The aims and objectives of this Law is intended to regulate the employment of inter-state migrant workmen and to provide for their conditions of service. It applies to every establishment, and the contractor, who employ five or more inter-state of Pass-Book to every inter-state migrant workmen with full details, payment of displacement allowance equivalent to 50% of monthly wages or Rs.75/- whichever is higher, payment of journey allowance including payment of wage during of the period of journey, suitable residential accommodation, medical facilities and protective clothing, payment of wages, equal pay for equal work irrespective of sex etc. The main responsibility for enforcement of the provision of the Act lies with the Central and the State Governments/Union Territories in the establishment falling in the Central and State Sphere respectively. The ISMW Act of 1979 has a provision for requirement for state governments to register all migrant workers who come to their states for temporal work.

2. The ISMW Act's Rules are detailed.³² **Rule 4(1)** of the Rules provides for a Registration Form (Certificate of Registration), the authority for which is the Government of India.
“A certificate of registration containing the following particulars is hereby granted under clause (a) of sub-section (2) of section 4 of the Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1979 and the rules made thereunder to _____”

3. Registers & Records Collection of Statistics (of Migrant Workers): In the Chapter VI of the ISMW Rules are provisions for maintenance of a

³¹ Available at <https://clc.gov.in/clc/acts-rules/inter-state-migrant-workmen>

³² Available below the Act at <https://clc.gov.in/clc/acts-rules/inter-state-migrant-workmen>

register of personal details of the migrant employees details by establishments. Clearly while the employer is required to maintain records, it is the Office of the Labour Commissioner under the Central Government that is required to monitor and ensure full compliance of this law.

Rule 49 states that “Every principal employer and contractor shall maintain in respect of each establishment where he employs migrant workmen a register in Form XIII.”

4. In the Chapter VI of the ISMW Rules are provisions for maintenance of a register of personal details of the migrant employees details by establishments. Rule 49 states that “Every principal employer and contractor shall maintain in respect of each establishment where he employs migrant workmen a register in Form XIII.”
5. **Rule 52. Muster roll, wages register, deductions register and overtime register.** - (1) In respect of establishments which are governed by the Payment of Wages Act, 1936 and the rules made thereunder or the Minimum Wages Act, 1948 and the rules made thereunder or Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970 and the rules made thereunder, the following registers and records required to be maintained by the contractor as employer under those Acts and the Rules shall be deemed to be registers and records to be maintained by the contractor under these rules: -
6. **Rule 53. Maintenance and preservation of registers.** -(1) All registers and other records required to be maintained under the Act and Rules, shall be maintained complete and up-to-date, and, unless otherwise provided for, shall be kept at an office of the nearest convenient building within the precincts of the work place or at a place, if any, specified by the Inspector on the specific request made by the contractor in this behalf.



(4) All the registers, records and notices maintained under the Act or Rules shall be produced on demand before the Inspector or Deputy Chief Labour Commissioner (Central) or any other authority under the Act or any person authorised in that behalf by the Central Government.

7. **Rule 56. Periodical returns.** -(1) Every contractor shall send half yearly return in Form **XXIII** (in duplicate) so as to reach the licensing officer concerned not later than thirty days from the close of the half-year.

8. **Rule 57.** (1) The Deputy Chief Labour Commissioner (Central) or the Inspector or any other authority under the Act shall have powers to call for any information or statistics in relation to migrant workmen from any contractor or principal employer at any time by an order in writing.

IV. Powers of the ECI to Update Electoral Rolls:

The ECI works tirelessly and persistently to update their electoral rolls under section 13B of the Representation of the People Act, 1950. Since the endeavour of the ECI is to include all eligible voters in electoral rolls, the Commission may seek such registers from establishments that employ migrant workers so their names may be included in electoral rolls and they are able to fulfill their right to exercise their vote. Surely, the ECI would want nothing less than a completely inclusive election and since there is already a law in place which requires maintenance of record of this moving population of migrant labourers, the ECI stands to benefit from the same.

1. **The Registration of Electors Rules, 1960³³ lays down these powers:**

Rule 9. Access to certain registers. —For the purpose of preparing any roll or deciding any claim or objection to a roll, any registration officer

³³ Available at

<http://legislative.gov.in/sites/default/files/%281%29THE%20REGISTRATION%20OF%20ELECTORS%20RULES%2C%201960.pdf>



and any person employed by him shall have access to any register of births and deaths and to the admission register of any educational institution, and it shall be the duty of every person incharge of any such register to give to the said officer or person such information and such extracts from the said register as he may require.

Rule 25. 1 [Revision of rolls]—(1) The roll for every constituency shall be revised under sub-section (2) of section 21 either intensively or summarily or partly intensively and partly summarily, as the Election Commission may direct.

(2) Where the roll or any part thereof is to be revised intensively in any year, it shall be prepared afresh and rules 4 to 23 shall apply in relation to such revision as they apply in relation to the first preparation of a roll.

(3) When the roll or any part thereof is to be revised summarily in any year, the registration officer shall cause to be prepared a list of amendments to the relevant parts of the roll on the basis of such information as may be readily available, and publish the roll together with the list of amendments in draft; and the provisions of rules 2 [8A] to 23 shall apply in relation to such revision as they apply in relation to the first preparation of a roll.

V. Concluding Remarks

1. The Hon'ble Commission has consistently innovated with ensuring that elections are accessible to all Indians, regardless of class, caste or economic status. It has enabled flexible forms of voting by introduction of postal ballots for persons unable to vote at their registered constituency, special voters, service voters, voters on special duty, which refers to *inter alia* persons serving in the army, other defence personnel including their spouses. The proposal for provisions of a postal ballot for over 30 lakh defence personnel and their families was made by the Standing Committee of



the Ministry of Defence in 2016. On the implementation of this policy, over 16 lakh defence personnel have registered as service voters.

2. In October 2019 the Hon'ble Commission recommended to the Union Government (Ministry of Law and Justice) to notify a new category of "absentee voters" which included essential workers, voters above the age of 80 and persons with disabilities who could access postal ballot facilities and the Central Government amended the Rules accordingly. The Hon'ble Commission on January 10, 2020 further notified, as 'essential workers', persons working with the Railways and the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation and media persons authorized to be covering the elections. Therefore, there is an established system in place to notify new classes of voters who can access postal ballot facilities in accordance with Part III and IIIA of the Rules.

3. Additionally, in 2015, the Hon'ble Commission had recommended the use of electronic ballots to enable over 31 million (3.1 crores) Non-Resident Indians (hereinafter, "NRI") to vote, in response to a similar long standing demand of political inclusion of NRIs, "with the aim of enabling their participation in the democratic process of elections in their motherland and boost their participation in nation-building." Presently, NRIs are allowed to register themselves as overseas voters and thereafter, a system of proxy voting for NRIs has been introduced by the Lok Sabha, alongside deliberations by the Hon'ble Commission.

4. It is submitted that given the substantial number of migrant laborers that are excluded from exercising their franchise, the concern at hand is not just about the political exclusion of migrants but about democracy itself. The Supreme Court has held that democracy with its accompanying tenets of free and fair elections is part of the basic structure doctrine of the constitution, of which "fair denotes equal opportunity to all people." The very basis and notion of a representative parliamentary democracy is premised on the understanding that every section of the population, female, male or transgender, of means or otherwise, unlettered or qualified, exercises their

say in government formation and policy making through the exercise of the ballot. The consistent denial of these rights to this not insignificant section of the population has invisibilised their economic, social, political and cultural rights.

For all of the reasons detailed above we request the Hon'ble Commission to extend the postal ballot to migrant labourers. The process of data collection is on with state and central governments and hence relevant data on such migrant workers can be sourced by the Commission. Given the processes involved in the exercise, this Memorandum if being copied to the Ministry of Law & Justice (Central) and all State Governments of the Indian Union.

As Citizens Civil Rights Groups and Organisations committed to the deepening of Indian democracy we urge not just a positive response from the Hon'ble Commission but also the immediate start of a process to make the Indian electoral process truly inclusive.

Yours Sincerely,

Anil Dharker, President, Citizens for Justice & Peace

Teesta Setalvad, Secretary, Citizens for Justice & Peace,

Prafulla Samantara, President, Lok Shakti Abhiyan, Orissa

Samirul Islam, President of Bangla Sanskriti Mancha, West Bengal

Roma, General Secretary, All India Union of Forest Working People (AIUFWP)

Zamser Ali, President, Bhartiya Nagarik Adhikar Suraksha Manch,
Assam