CHAPTER- 1
INTRODUCTION

1. THE PROBLEM

1.1. RATIONALE OF THE PROBLEM

In the recent years migration and labour in developing countries have received considerable attention from social scientists. Migration associated to the growth of urban centres in India during their developmental process is considered by scholars as a normal and healthy byproduct as well as a need of industrial expansion and as a response by the rural population to the prospect of bettering themselves. As such the present trends of global economy are breaking the isolation of nations and bring not only co-operation but also competition and conflict in their relationships (Paini, 1994: 18). N. Raghunath Reddy (1996) states that the new economic policy effect the poor adversely and thereby register a rise in poverty and unemployment among rural labourers. J.K. Singh (1996) states that the labourers are exploited more in organized sector of the nation. Increase in the process of development has also increased the exploitation of labour. U. Tataji (1986) takes up the issue of the absorption of the migrant labour force in the formal and informal
sectors of the urban economy and the pattern of work organization. His major point of criticism stems from the way the migrants get themselves recruited to certain lower level jobs, and the nature of the work organization which does not permit an easy entry into them.

In the light of these various apprehensions about migration of labour, sociologists are suggesting that the present economic trends will effect all social categories on which its implication are likely, require empirical documentation of facts. Thus it becomes important to explore the impact of current situations on migrant labour in Indian society, particularly in rural to urban migration. Select literature on the subject also suggests that impact of recent economic change on rural migrants need to be empirically examined. Particularly those who get occasional wage employment in nearby city and live in the villages need consideration because as such they also act as agents of communication and change. Thus there is a need to analyse empirical evidence on the understanding of the process of daily migration from rural area and also its impact specially of this migrant labour and the rural community. In this background thus the present work is proposed to study rural wage labourers coming daily to the urban area for earning wages from their nearby villages.
1.2. The Statement of the Problem:

In the light of the above background the present study focuses on the following specific questions/Objectives:

(1) What is the social background of daily migrant wage labourers?
(2) What are the causes of their migration from village to town?
(3) How far they are aware about labour law and their rights?
(4) What are the consequences of the migration for the rural area?
(5) What are the changes that have taken place in the nature of employment of the daily migrant wage labourers?

- The first issue focuses on the social background of migrant wage labourers which includes, age, religion, caste education, distance (from place of living), nature of job, size of family, type of family, daily income and working days (in a month).

- The second issue focuses on the causes e.g. non-availability of work in the village, less wages, seasonal work, conflict in family, any other reason like hesitation, ego problem and others which might push the daily migrant wage labourers to come out from the village.
The third issue focuses on the awareness of labour law among the labourers and awareness about their duties and rights.

The fourth issue aims to find out the consequences of migration on rural society of living and urban society of working.

The fifth issue takes into account the change if any on daily migrant wage labourers which means change in availability of work, wages etc., change in recent years has been noted.

1.3. AREA OF STUDY

The present study has been conducted in Meerut City. Meerut district is one of the most important districts of North Western region of the state of Uttar Pradesh which lies between the holy river Ganga and Jamuna and it is very close to the national capital Delhi. Meerut district has been a centre of varied activities throughout the course of history. Meerut leapt into international prominence during the revolt of 1857, known as the 1857 Sepoy Mutiny, also known as First War of Independence against East India Company's efforts of building up the British Empire in India.

According to the 2001 census, the total population of Meerut district was 29,97,361. The rural and urban population were 18,35,645
and 11,61,716 respectively. Urban population is divided into two parts – Meerut Mahapalika and Cantonment Board. There are many nodal points in the Meerut City namely: L-Block Shastri Nagar, Jail Chungi, Kaseru Buxer Mawana Road Chopla, Begum Bridge, Shah Ghasa, Old Baghpat Stand, Kanker Khera, where daily migrant labourers reach from nearby villages (total identified nodal points/places are seven). Five areas of Meerut City: L-Block Shastri Nagar, Jail Chungi, Begum Bridge, Shah Ghasa, Old Baghpat Stand have been selected as the area for study.

1.4. UNIVERSE/SAMPLE/RESPONDENTS

We have found seven major nodal places where daily migrant labourers reach from nearby villages in Meerut City. These places are L-Block Shastri Nagar, Jail Chungi, Kaseru Buxer Mawana Road Chopla, Begum Bridge, Shah Ghasa, Old Baghpat Stand, Kanker Khera. On the basis of exploratory observations approximately 500 daily migrant labourers are reaching daily at these five nodal places in Meerut urban area. Out of these total daily migrant labourers, two hundred labourers have been selected randomly from these 5 places. 40 daily migrant labourers from each place have been selected from these five areas for the purpose of the present study.
1.5. METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Observation and case study methods have been specifically used for collecting first hand data at the first stage. Primary data from approximately 200 respondents would be collected by using personal interview and if required by preparing an interview guide/schedule.

1.6. METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS

The facts collected initially through case studies and observations about social and economic condition of daily migrant wage labourers have been analysed qualitatively. Data collected with the techniques of interview and interview schedule from 200 respondents have been analysed quantitatively.