

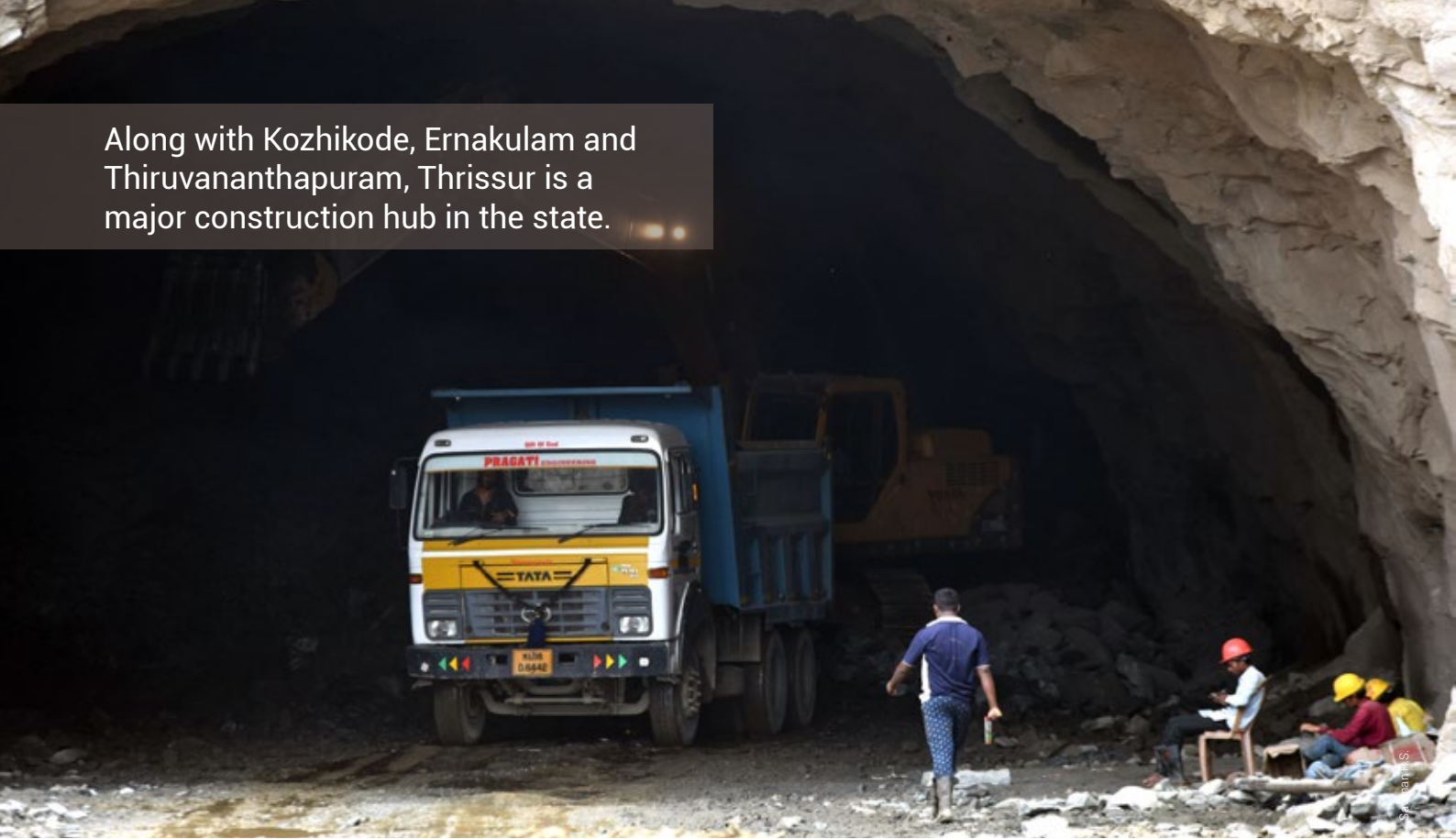
Thrissur

Benoy Peter and Vishnu Narendran

Labour Migration to Kerala



Along with Kozhikode, Ernakulam and Thiruvananthapuram, Thrissur is a major construction hub in the state.



Construction, clay tile manufacturing, jewellery making, fishing and plantations constitute the major sectors that contribute to the economy of Thrissur. The district depends heavily on migrant labourers for its growth and development. Malakkappara, Chalakkudy, Kodakara, Chevoor, Pudukkad, Ollur, Puzhakkal, Adat, Tirur, Wadakkanchery, Kunnankulam, Guruvayur, Chavakkad, Azhikode and Kuttanellur were the major migrant hot spots identified in the district. Migrant labourers from Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Assam, Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra and Gujarat work in Thrissur. There are numerous small scale industries also in the district. Athani, Ollur and Chalakkudy have some of the major industrial clusters. There are also small scale polymers, scraps and distillery units spread across the district and they depend on migrant labourers. The hotels and restaurants in the district too depend heavily on migrant labourers. Chavakkad, suburbs of Thrissur city like Puzhakkal and Adat, Mammiyoor near Guruvayur and Malakkappara are some of the major residential pockets of migrant workers in the district.

Construction

Along with Kozhikode, Ernakulam and Thiruvananthapuram, Thrissur is a major construction hub in the state. Thrissur city and its peripheries are the major areas where construction activities are bustling. Puzhakkal and Adat are two such places. The major sources for workers in the construction sector include Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Odisha, Assam and Uttar Pradesh. Murshidabad, Jalpaiguri and Nadia districts in West Bengal; Dindigul, Theni, Thoothukkudi, Thanjavur, Salem and Madurai in Tamil Nadu and Nagaon, Dhemaji and Lakhimpur in Assam are some of the districts from where a majority of these workers come.

Jewellery Making

Thrissur is one of the centres of gold business in India, and jewellery making is a major industry in the district. The sector engages migrant workers heavily. Perinchery, Venginissery, Cheruvathery and Vallachira are some of the major centres of gold jewellery making. Most of the workers in the sector are traditional artisans from West Bengal, Maharashtra and Gujarat. Hooghly, Purba Medinipur and Paschim Medinipur are the major source districts in West Bengal.

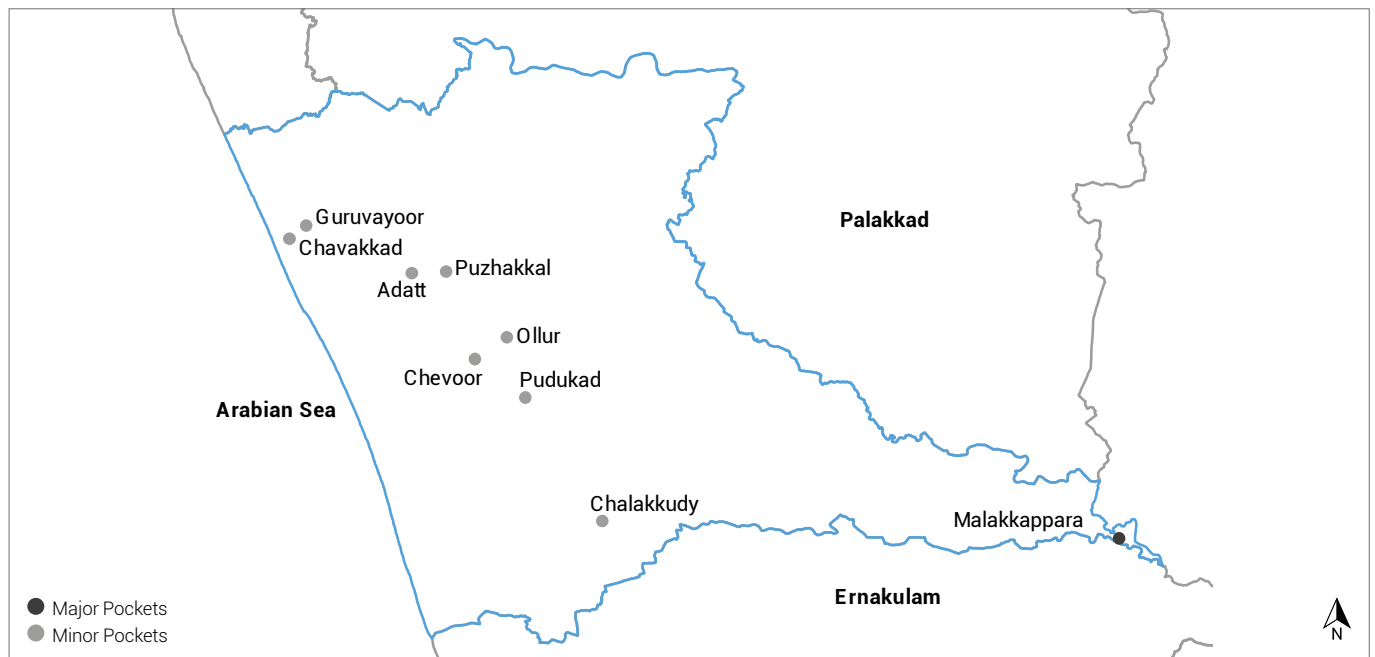
Clay Tile

Clay roofing tile manufacturing is another major economic sector in Thrissur. The tile industry in the district is more than 100 years old. Locals used to be the main labour force in the tile industry till recently. However, at present the industry depends on migrant labourers. Nenmanikkara, Ollur, Amballur, Pudukkad and Chalakkudy are some of the areas where tile factories are located. Most of the factories now remain closed or production has been cut short due to the shortage of clay and the restriction on clay mining. The labourers working in the tile industries are from West Bengal, Odisha, Assam, Bihar and Jharkhand.

Plantations

Malakkappara, Palappally and Vaniyambara have some of the major plantations in the district. While Tamil labourers took care of the plantation labour earlier, now workers from eastern Indian states occupy a central place in these plantations. There are now estates in Malakkappara with more than 200 workers from Jharkhand, Assam, Chhattisgarh and Odisha in addition to Tamil and Malayali labourers. Gumla and Lohardaga are the major source districts of migrant workers from Jharkhand and most of them belong to the Oraon tribe.

Migrant Pockets in Thrissur District, 2016-17



Indicative map, not to scale

Marine Fishing

Marine fishing is a major component of Thrissur's economy. Like in other districts, fishing in Thrissur engages migrant workers. Chavakkad, Azhikode and Chettuva are the fishing hot spots in the district. In addition to fishers from Kanyakumari district in Tamil Nadu, there are migrants from West Bengal, Assam and Uttar Pradesh working in the fish landing centres.

Labour Nakas

The major *naka* in the district is adjacent to the District Hospital at Thrissur Swaraj Round. Workers from Tamil Nadu are in a majority here. There are also Tamil women. Kuttanellur bypass junction, Kodakara, Chalakkudy, Athani, Ollur, Wadakkanchery, Kunnamkulam, Chavakkad and Guruvayur also have labour *nakas*.

Residential pockets

Chavakkad is a major residential pocket of migrant workers in the district. Thiruvathra and Puthiyara under Chavakkad municipal limits are the major hot spots identified. Puzhakkal, Adat, Chalakkudy, Ollur, Pudukkad, Chevoor and Malakkappara also have significant presence of migrant labourers. A labour supply group in Guruvayur has accommodated nearly 300 workers at Mammiyoor. In most of the other towns, workers live in scattered rented facilities. Plantations have facilities to accommodate migrant families within the estate.



The jewellery making industry in Thrissur employs migrant workers heavily. Most of the workers in the sector are traditional artisans from West Bengal, Maharashtra and Gujarat.



Savarnan P.S.

There are now estates in Malakkappara with more than 200 workers from Jharkhand, Assam, Chhattisgarh and Odisha.

October 2017

Centre for Migration and Inclusive Development

CMID is an independent non-profit think tank devoted to migration and inclusive development, advocating for and promoting the social inclusion of migrants. CMID provides evidence informed solutions for mainstreaming inter-state migrant workers in India. This district brief was prepared based on a qualitative research undertaken by the authors across the 14 districts in Kerala during November 2016–May 2017. The study was funded by Thummarukudy Foundation. CMID also acknowledges the fellowship provided to the authors by Aajeevika Bureau during the period January to June 2017.



Centre for Migration and
Inclusive Development.

