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# Panel asks labour ministry to implement welfare schemes for gig workers

In March this year, the Standing Committee said that appropriate welfare schemes for unorganised sector workers and gig and platform workers need to be put in place by the government.

Written by [Aanchal Magazine](#)

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 NewsGuard



The Code on Social Security, 2020 has proposed social security schemes for gig workers and platform workers on matters relating to life and disability cover, accident insurance, health and maternity benefits, old age protection, etc. (PTI)

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Taking note of absence of any specific welfare scheme by the government for gig and platform workers and unorganised sector workers despite its earlier recommendation, a parliamentary panel has asked the Ministry of Labour and Employment to formulate and implement welfare schemes for such workers at the earliest.

“The reply of the Ministry is silent on the specific measures contemplated for framing a Scheme exclusively for Gig and Platform Workers as well as workers of the unorganised sector in connection with which, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed by EPFO with National Law School of India University(NLSIU), Bangalore. The Committee, therefore, reiterate their earlier recommendation and stress that appropriate Scheme(s) be formulated and operationalised for the benefit of Gig and Platform Workers at the earliest,” the Standing Committee on Labour, Textiles, Skill Development has said in its latest report presented in the Parliament on July 21.

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In March this year, the Standing Committee had noted that since gig and platform workers do not come under the purview of Employees' Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, appropriate welfare schemes for unorganised sector workers and gig and platform workers need to be put in place by the government.

The Ministry in its reply to the Committee had then said that a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed in January this year with The Centre for Labour Studies, National Law School of India University, Bangalore for assistance in framing of a new scheme for the gig and platform workers as well as workers in the unorganised sector. "As most of the work in this connection had been completed, the Committee exhorted the Ministry to expedite the process so that a Scheme exclusively for Gig and Platform Workers is made operational and put in place as recommended by the Committee and as envisaged in the Code on Social Security, 2020," the Committee had said in its report in March this year.

The Code on Social Security, 2020 has proposed social security schemes for gig workers and platform workers on matters relating to life and disability cover, accident insurance, health and maternity benefits, old age protection, etc. However, the Code is yet to come into force.

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### **EPFO pension joint option**

The Standing Committee has also asked the Ministry/EPFO to work out the financial implications and ensure funds for higher pension. "In the context of submission of the Ministry that the quantum of monthly pension pay out for pensioners will depend upon the number of eligible members exercising the option for pension at higher salary, the Committee trust that the Ministry/EPFO would expeditiously work out the financial implications and ensure availability of requisite funds for the purpose during 2023-24," it said.

The Committee also pointed out that the eligible pensioners/members may have faced difficulties in undertaking the joint option for higher pension such as updation of KYC/submitting applications on-line or other related issues. It has now asked the Ministry to examine such cases/grievances/ representations/ requests

“sympathetically” from legal/administrative view-points and resolve them in line with the Supreme Court judgement.

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The EPFO had extended the deadline to apply for higher pensions till July 11, the second such extension within two months. Employers got additional time of three months till September 30. Applicants had been facing recurring issues, with many raising concerns about the lack of clarity on the amount to be deposited to avail the higher pension. For the higher pension option, 16.06 lakh applications were estimated to have been received, an EPFO statement dated June 26 had said.

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