

Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat addresses First G20 Employment Working Group Meeting in Jodhpur

Shri Shekhawat calls for making meaningful progress in creating more opportunities for decent work and inclusive growth for all people

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Extending warm welcome to all delegates and appreciating them for their dedication to the cause of the G20 Employment Working Group in Jodhpur today Union Minister for Jal Shakti Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat called upon members of the international community to strive together to make meaningful progress in creating more opportunities for decent work and inclusive growth for all people.



Shri Shekhawat said as a Minister in the government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and a Member of Parliament from Jodhpur, it gave him great pleasure to extend a warm welcome to each and every one of the delegates as they arrived to the magnificent and historically significant city of Jodhpur for the first meeting of the G20 Employment Working Group. The Minister also extended his gratitude to Shri Bhupender Yadav Union Minister for Labour and Employment, as well as the rest of the organizing team for bringing this event to Jodhpur. He said the city is honored to host such an important gathering of leaders and experts in the field of labour and employment, and was confident that the discussions and outcomes of this meeting will be instrumental in shaping the future of employment globally.

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Shri Shekhawat said he was grateful to the Co-Chairs of this meeting, our esteemed colleagues from Indonesia and Brazil, for their valuable contributions and supportive words. Their active participation and leadership are crucial in making this meeting a success.



Shri Shekhawat said as the host country for this important event, India is honoured to have the opportunity to lead the G20 in addressing the critical issue of employment that is so vital to the prosperity and well-being of our nations and our people. He said our active participation in the G20 since its inception is a testament to our commitment to global cooperation and our shared goal of creating a more prosperous world for all.

Shri Shekhawat said as the world's second most populous country, India believes that it has a vital role to play in shaping the future of employment and in driving inclusive growth. Our robust democracy and our diversity, gives us the unique perspective and strength to bring together a wide range of voices and ideas.

The Minister said the theme of India's G20 Presidency, "**Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam,**" or "**One Earth, One Family, One Future**" is particularly fitting as we come together to discuss the interconnectedness of our economies and our peoples. He said it serves as a powerful reminder of our shared humanity and the importance of working together to build a better future for all. It also underlines that, solutions to the labour and employment challenges we face today, must be inclusive, sustainable and equitable for all, he added.



Shri Shekhawat said the challenges facing the global labour market are complex and far-reaching, and it is only through cooperation and collaboration that we can hope to find meaningful solutions. He said the current situation of employment and social security around the world has been affected by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. He said many countries have seen significant increases in unemployment as a result of the economic downturn caused by the pandemic. Many small and medium-sized businesses have been particularly hard hit, leading to job losses across a wide range of sectors. Additionally, income inequality has risen, and the number of people living in poverty has increased. He said in many countries, governments had to spend more money fighting the pandemic, leaving less money for other programmes and services. This has put a strain on social security systems. Efforts have been made by many countries in terms of providing economic stimulus and support for workers, but the employment situation and social security are still facing challenges.

The Minister said to mitigate the economic blow of the pandemic, the Government of India took several measures to ensure immediate relief and a relatively faster V-shaped recovery that is also inclusive.


He said India through world's largest Public Distribution System, distributed food grains to 800 million people during the pandemic and continuing till date. Also, through World's largest government funded Health Assurance Scheme i.e. Ayushman Bharat- Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, India provides health coverage for over 500 million people.

Shri Shekhawat said Aatmanirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana with an outlay of Rs. 228 billion, incentivized employers for generation of employment, along with provision of social security benefits. As per this scheme, the Government has paid 12% employees' contribution and 12% employers' contribution i.e. 24% of wages, towards EPF in respect of new employees in establishments employing upto 1000 employees for two years. He said Government has paid employees' share of EPF contribution i.e. 12% of wages in respect of new employees in establishments employing more than 1000 employee for two years.

Shri Shekhawat said about 3.2 million street vendors were provided collateral free loans to help them resume their businesses. He said India has a comprehensive social security system, including the Employees' Provident Fund Organization (EPFO) and the Employee State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) which serve over 277 million and 131 million beneficiaries respectively.

The Minister said the Government launched the Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Man Dhan Yojana which provides for old age pension for unorganized workers with contribution from the Government. The e-Shram Portal was launched to create a national database of unorganized workers including the gig and platform economy workers among others. Till date more than 290 million workers have been registered in more than 400 occupations on.

Shri Shekhawat said the government has taken initiatives in the area of skilling like Standup India, Skill India and Make in India, and is implementing the National Career Service (NCS) project to provide employment services for job seekers and employers. He said we are proud to say that over 10 million vacancies have been mobilized under National Career Service to date. NCS portal also offers free of cost training programme by Microsoft and TCS for its registered job seekers.

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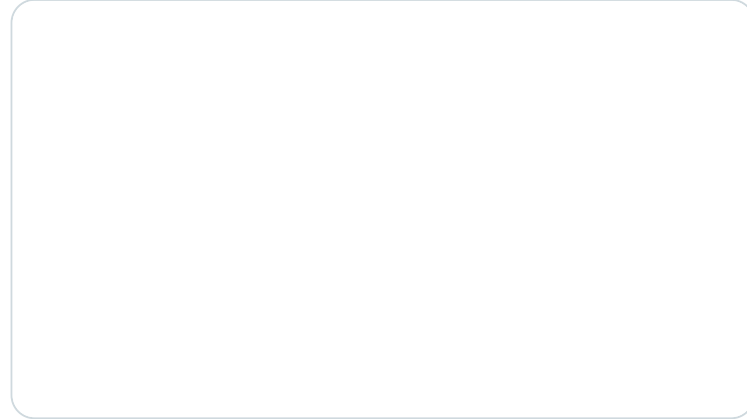
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18



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Shri Shekhawat said as we begin our discussions he would like to remind all that we are not only here to talk about problems, but to find solutions that will improve the lives of people around the world. He said we have gathered some of the most talented and knowledgeable experts on these matters, and he was confident that together we can make real progress in addressing the issues that are so important to the economic and social well-being of our nations.

Shri Shekhawat also briefed the media after the inaugural session regarding the first Employment Working group .



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