

Indian tripartite delegation at the 112th session of International Labour Conference (ILC)

Posted On: 10 JUN 2024 6:57PM by PIB Delhi

Indian tripartite delegation comprising of representatives from workers, employers and the Government is participating in the ongoing 112th session of International Labour Conference (ILC) of ILO. The opportunity was used by India in the first week to highlight Government of India's labour reforms, social security provisions and other new initiatives on the anvil. Bilateral meetings were held on focus areas such as global skills' gap mapping, international migration of workers, future of work etc. India made interventions in the Plenary session and other Committees of ILC on various agenda items.

The **Indian tripartite delegation** led by Secretary (Labour & Employment), Ms. Sumita Dawra, participated in the **112th session of the International Labour Conference (ILC)** of International Labour Organisation (ILO) being held in Geneva, Switzerland.

Head of the Delegation, Ms. Sumita Dawra, **Secretary (L&E) addressed the ILC during the Plenary session on "Towards a renewed social contract"**, and **highlighted the major initiatives of the Government of India** towards implementing labour reforms, enhancing social security coverage, providing social security to all, particularly, informal sector workers, promoting female labour force participation and efforts made towards identifying and promoting new employment opportunities.

Secretary (L&E) also held **bilateral meetings** with Director General (DG), ILO, Mr. Gilbert F. Houngbo, and with Deputy Director General (DDG), ILO, Ms. Celeste Drake, to discuss the issues of further collaboration with ILO. The focus areas of global skills gap mapping, including feasibility study by ILO and OECD on international reference classification of occupations based on skills and qualifications, universal social security, future of work including green jobs, orderly international migration of skilled workers, opportunities for employment generation etc. were discussed. India will continue to strengthen its work with ILO in view of emerging technologies and digitalization in the future of work.

The Indian delegation is **actively participating** in the ongoing deliberations in the Committees of the ILC on key issues of discussions such as social justice, care economy, biological hazards, fundamental principles and rights at work among others. During the **session on 'Decent work and the care economy'**, the delegation highlighted that India has a huge youth population with average age of the population around 29 years; and as the youth enter the labour market, the demand for care, especially for children and elderly, is expected to increase significantly. The number of India's elderly is also expected to rise significantly in times to come.

Recognizing the importance of the care sector, which is highly labor-intensive in nature, the Indian **delegation highlighted the Government's initiatives taken in the care sector**, in the form of access to clean cooking fuel under 'Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY)' to reduce the daily care burden of women, maternity benefits, health care including geriatric care, skilling programs and initiatives in care-work, social security benefits etc. The importance of care sector and its potential to boost the gross domestic product (GDP) was also highlighted.

During the discussion in the **session on 'Fundamental principles and Rights at work'**, the Indian delegation highlighted the path-breaking labour reforms and the **initiatives of Government** to promote fundamental principles and rights at work in terms of elimination of discrimination at workplace, elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour, effective abolition of child labour, adequate safety and health protection to all workers, enhanced social security coverage etc. India's commitment towards ensuring social well-being of its citizens and providing them with **essential safety nets** through diverse range of in-kind social protection measures such as free housing, food security, subsidized cooking gas, cash transfers through 'Jan Dhan

Yojana', agricultural crop insurance scheme etc. were also highlighted.

The delegation also highlighted the launch of fourth **Decent Work Country Program (DWCP)** by ILO and its constituents for the period 2023-27, which identified a set of decent work priorities and outcomes for implementation in the country with focus on promotion of fundamental principles and rights at work, **strengthening of labour market information system for gender inclusive job creation**, sustainable and **resilient skills** and **lifelong learning system**, development of inclusive framework for achieving **social protection for all**.

Ministry of Labour and Employment and Permanent Mission of India (PMI) at Geneva **showcased the success of 'e-shram' portal** as a one-stop solution for all the needs of the informal workers, to an international audience, in an event on 4th June, 2024 hosted at the sidelines of ILC. The event was attended by the Heads of the Delegations of the 112th ILC and the Permanent Representatives and other delegates from ILO Member States apart from the Members of Tripartite Delegation comprising of Workers and Employers representatives.

The *e-shram* portal was show-cased as an **international best practice** to create database of unorganized sector labour, for their access to various social security programmes. The **portal's link** with the 'National Career Service (NCS)' portal, providing job-matching and other employment related services; to the Skill-India portal providing skill development programs; to the national portal of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and other such portals, so as to provide one-stop solution to the youth, job-seekers and workers in the country, was also highlighted. The well-attended event generated significant interest on the initiative of Government of India.

Secretary (L&E) also addressed the Asia and Pacific group (ASPAG) Ministerial meeting held at ILO on 5th June, 2024 and highlighted India's commitment to continued support to ASPAG to play a **pivotal role** in representing the interests of the region's vast workforce in the ILO and towards promoting inclusive growth and social justice. India acknowledged that ASPAG provides a **valuable platform** for its member States to exchange ideas, best practices and innovative solutions, and **called for enhanced cooperation among the ASPAG member States** to shape a future of work that is equitable, sustainable and inclusive.

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(Release ID: 2023805)