

Union Labour Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya inaugurates 15th BRICS Trade Union Forum Summit in Hyderabad

Calls for a human-centric future of work driven by social justice, responsible innovation and universal social protection

Says India's social protection coverage has expanded from 19% in 2015 to over one billion people in 2026

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Union Minister for Labour & Employment Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya today inaugurated the 15th BRICS Trade Union Forum (TUF) Summit 2026 in Hyderabad and called for building a worker-centric global order where technological advancement is guided by social justice, responsible innovation and human dignity.

Addressing delegates from BRICS countries at the inaugural session, the Minister said India's BRICS Presidency theme, "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability," reflects the country's commitment to ensuring that the future of work remains inclusive, equitable and centred on the welfare of workers.



Welcoming delegates from across the BRICS family, Dr. Mandaviya said trade unions have played an important role in safeguarding workers' rights, strengthening industrial harmony and ensuring that economic progress is accompanied by social justice. He said India remains committed to the vision of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, where economic growth and workers' welfare are complementary pillars of sustainable development. Highlighting the Government's labour reforms, the Minister said the Four Labour Codes have consolidated 29 labour laws into a simplified framework while strengthening workers' rights. The reforms provide for universal minimum wages, appointment letters, improved occupational safety and health, digital compliance systems and, for the first time, formal recognition of gig and platform workers.

Dr. Mandaviya said India has leveraged digital public infrastructure to transform labour governance. He informed that the e-Shram portal has registered more than 317 million unorganised workers, enabling them to access various welfare schemes, while the National Career Service Portal connects job seekers, employers, career centres and training providers through a nationwide digital employment platform. Referring to India's social security architecture, the Minister said the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), with over 80 million active members and 8 million pensioners, is among the world's largest social security organisations. The Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) provides healthcare and social security benefits to over 150 million insured persons and their dependants. He added that continuous reforms in EPFO and ESIC have expanded coverage, simplified procedures and improved service delivery.



The Minister said India's social protection coverage has increased from 19 per cent in 2015 to 64.3 per cent in 2025, covering nearly 940 million people, while preliminary estimates for 2026 indicate that coverage has crossed one billion citizens. On employment generation, Dr. Mandaviya said nearly 170 million employment opportunities have been created in the last decade. He said the Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana aims to create 35 million formal sector jobs over the next two years through employment-linked incentives.

Dr. Mandaviya said India's labour governance framework is founded on tripartite dialogue among the Government, employers and trade unions. Institutions such as EPFO, ESIC and statutory bodies under the Labour Codes function through tripartite mechanisms, reflecting the Government's commitment to participative labour governance.

The Minister noted that the BRICS countries together represent nearly half of humanity and one of the world's largest labour forces. He said there is considerable scope for enhanced cooperation in areas such as social security, labour mobility, skill development, AI governance and decent work, and expressed confidence that the recommendations emerging from the forum would contribute to the forthcoming BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers' Meeting.

Earlier, BRICS Trade Union Forum Summit 2026 Chairman and Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS) National President Shri Sunkari Malleshram said the summit seeks to promote cooperation among BRICS countries for strengthening workers' welfare and advancing inclusive development. Shri B. Surendran, Organising Secretary, BMS, and Chief Coordinator of the BRICS Trade Union Forum, welcomed the delegates and expressed confidence that the deliberations would lead to meaningful outcomes.



Representatives from BRICS countries, including Shri Carlos Augusto Muller (Brazil), Shri Sergei Chernogaev, Chairman, Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia (FNPR), Shri Huxiang Zhu (China), Shri Masale Godfrey Selematsela (South Africa), Ms. Yuki Otsuji, Workers' Specialist, ILO-New Delhi, and Justice (Retd.) N. Nagaresh, participated in the inaugural session. Organised by the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), the three-day summit has brought together more than 50 international delegates and around 70 representatives of Indian trade unions, labour experts and academicians. Deliberations over the next two days will focus on four thematic areas: universal social security and portability of benefits, human-centric technology and responsible AI, skill development for the future of work, and women in the changing world of work.

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