



Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya Calls for Collective Efforts to Advance Social Justice for a Sustainable Future

Economic Growth and Social Progress Must Move Together: Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya at the Global Coalition for Social Justice Annual Forum 2026

Union Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya Sets Out Three Priorities for the Global Coalition for Social Justice

Global Coalition for Social Justice Annual Forum 2026 Brings Together Global Partners to Advance Social Justice and Decent Work; India Takes Over Co-Chairmanship

Posted On: 17 SEP 2026 1:59PM by PIB Delhi

The Global Coalition for Social Justice Annual Forum 2026 is being held virtually on 16–17 September 2026, bringing together governments, employers' and workers' organisations, international and regional organisations, development institutions, the private sector, academia and civil society to strengthen cooperation and accelerate collective action for social justice and decent work. The Official Opening of the Forum was graced by Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister for Labour & Employment and Youth Affairs & Sports, Mr. Gilbert F. Hounbo, Director-General, International Labour Organization (ILO), Ms Jacqueline Mugo, President, International Organisation of Employers; Mr Luc Triangle, General Secretary, International Trade Union Confederation and Mr Luiz Marinho, Minister of Labour and Employment, Brazil.

Addressing the gathering, Union Minister, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, called for collective efforts to place social justice at the heart of endeavours, in order to build a more inclusive, resilient and sustainable future. The shared objective of the global community, the Minister said, should be to translate cooperation into opportunities, growth into shared prosperity and commitments to social justice into tangible change. He said India brings to the Forum its experience of delivering transformation at scale and its commitment to building a more inclusive world of work. Emphasising the need for economic growth and social progress to move together, the Minister said that growth must create decent jobs, technology must promote inclusion and innovation must contribute to improving people's lives.

Dr. Mandaviya said that India is preparing for the future of work through technology, skills and international cooperation. He underlined that the changing world of work requires renewed focus on skills, employability and labour mobility. In this context, he highlighted India's partnership with the ILO to pilot an International Reference Classification of Occupations across India, Brazil and Germany to support

smoother international mobility. He also referred to the New Delhi Declaration 2026 adopted under India's BRICS Presidency and the BRICS CONNECT initiative, as well as the consensus on an International Digital Platform for Remote Employment to create new virtual employment opportunities for youth across the Global South.

Highlighting India's reform-led approach, the Minister said that the country continues to focus on transformative reforms, targeted welfare and digital innovation, ensuring that the benefits of economic growth reach the last mile. He drew attention to the consolidation of 29 central labour laws into four modern Labour Codes, stating that the reforms strengthen workers' protection while creating an enabling environment for enterprises. He also noted that India has become one of the leading countries to provide legal recognition to gig and platform workers. Dr. Mandaviya further emphasised the role of sustained reforms and digital delivery in expanding social protection, noting that India's social protection coverage has increased from 19 per cent in 2015 to 68.4 per cent in 2026, bringing more than one billion people within the social protection framework.

The Minister highlighted the role of Digital Public Infrastructure in strengthening social protection delivery. He said that the e-Shram portal, with nearly 320 million registered unorganised workers, is the world's largest digital database of its kind and connects workers with welfare schemes across national and State Governments. Referring to the National Career Service (NCS), he said that the platform connects jobseekers with domestic and international opportunities, with India also sharing the NCS framework with Mauritius.

Dr. Mandaviya said that India stands ready to deepen partnerships across the Global South in areas including digital public infrastructure, social protection, skills and employment services. He said that sharing successful experiences can help translate national achievements into shared progress and reiterated India's commitment to strengthening the voice of South-South Cooperation in shaping the future of work and advancing social justice. He also noted that as India assumes the Co-Chairmanship of the Coalition's Coordinating Group, it would build on the leadership provided by Brazil during the important phase of the Coalition.

As Co-Chair, Dr. Mandaviya outlined three priorities for the Coalition. First, he called for translating collective commitments into action at the country level, in line with national priorities and circumstances. Second, he emphasised the need to strengthen knowledge and experience sharing, intensify cooperation and bring more enterprises into the social justice agenda. Third, he stressed that social justice should inform the choices that shape development beyond 2030. He said that with more than 400 partners, the Coalition has unique collective strength, while its objective should not be to prescribe one pathway for all, but to ensure that social justice remains an integral part of the choices countries make about their future.

Dr. Mandaviya reaffirmed India's commitment to working with all members to make the Global Coalition for Social Justice a strong platform for international cooperation, shared learning and practical action.

Background

The Global Coalition for Social Justice, established by ILO in 2023, is a global platform aimed at strengthening multistakeholder cooperation and accelerating collective action for decent work and social justice. With more than 400 partners comprising governments, employers' and workers' organisations, international and regional organisations, development banks, the private sector, academia and civil society, the Coalition seeks to promote coherent and integrated approaches to advance social justice, expand opportunities, foster shared prosperity and contribute to resilient societies.

The Global Coalition for Social Justice Annual Forum 2026 is being held virtually on 16–17 September 2026, ahead of the High-Level General Debate of the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly. The Forum provides a platform for partners to share experiences and lessons learned, review

progress, identify opportunities for collaboration and shape future collective action.

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(Release ID: 2311292) Visitor Counter : 334

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