

Govt wants minimum laws, maximum governance : Labour Secretary H L Samariya

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Agencies



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The government intends to bring in maximum governance with minimum laws by amalgamating all labour laws into four broad Codes, according to a senior official.

The labour ministry wants to introduce four Codes -- on wages, industrial relation, social security and industrial safety -- which would subsume all labour laws in more simplified and rationalised form.

"We intend to have minimum law, minimum government and maximum governance so that every individual should govern," Labour Secretary H L Samariya said at an event here.

"With all these (4 labour) Codes, what we are intending for employers, is that there should be minimum hurdle, hassles for employers. It should be self governance. (We want) one registration, one licence, one form and one compliance. But there should not be any cheating from both sides. It has to be a win-win situation for both sides," he added.

The secretary noted that initially India had 45 central labour Acts (laws) and as on date there are only 32 central labour Acts.

"We are simplifying, rationalising and subsuming these Acts into four Codes. It will be affecting all workers," Samariya said addressing an event by All India Organisation of Employers.

Of the four Codes, Code on Wages Bill has been passed by the Lok Sabha on Tuesday and is expected to be passed by the Rajya Sabha during the ongoing Budget session of the Parliament.

Besides, the government has introduced Code on Industrial Safety, Health and Working Conditions Bill in the Lok Sabha, which would subsume as many as 13 labour laws. The other two Codes on industrial safety and social security are at pre-legislative stage.

"We have a 50-crore workforce. In the unorganised sector, there are about 42 crore workers. Earlier, even for the Wages Code, 1,075 employments were in the schedule which were under the Minimum Wages Act.

"Around 60 per cent of the workers are not even covered under the Minimum Wages Act. They do not have the right to have minimum wages. Now, we will be covering all the 50-crore workforce and they would have the right to get minimum wage. This would include domestic help and agriculture workers also," Samariya said.

He informed that under the industrial relation code, the trade unions would be defined properly and only the elected ones would be recognised.

"Industrial relation (Code)...let there be election. We must define a union and then self proclaimed union would disappear...start negotiating with only elected unions. We have made such provisions with the industrial code. The elected unions take responsibility," he added.

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The government had announced the scheme in the February 2019 interim budget, promising to provide pension of ₹3,000 per month. **(Reuters)**

Govt aims to enrol 150 million workers under PM pension scheme

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- Individuals need to make a monthly contribution till the age of 60 to get an assured pension of ₹3,000 every month
- Out of the total enrolment, 50-60 million workers will be from the construction sector

NEW DELHI: The Union government will enrol around 150 million workers over the next three years under its flagship [pension scheme](#) Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-dhan (PM-SYM), bringing more informal sector workers under the social security net.

Labour secretary Hiralal Samariya on Wednesday said the pension scheme will benefit a large pool of people who earn less, but form a large part of the labour market. The secretary said a sizable portion of beneficiaries will be construction workers.

The National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government is targeting the bottom of the pyramid through various policy interventions, realising that they are a significant political constituency.

Speaking at a function organized by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Ficci), Samariya said the “scheme is doing well” since its announcement six months ago. The government is likely to achieve the 150 million number over the next two to three years. The labour secretary said out of the total enrolment, 50-60 million workers will be from the construction sector, reiterating that even agriculture workers and self-employed retailers can be a part of this [pension scheme](#).

The government had announced the scheme in the February 2019 interim budget, promising to provide pension of ₹3,000 per month. Individuals subscribing to the [PM-SYM](#) require to

make a monthly contribution till the age of 60 years, to get an assured pension of ₹3,000 every month.

The monthly contributions varies according to age: An 18-year-old starts out by paying ₹55 per month, which moves up to ₹80 at the age of 25, and ₹105, ₹150 and ₹200 for those aged 30, 35 and 40, respectively. A matching amount will be paid by the government into the pension fund.

As per the scheme, if the pensioner dies, the spouse shall be entitled to receive 50% of the pension amount as family pension. Besides, if a regular contributor dies before the age of 60, the spouse will be entitled to join and continue the scheme subsequently by payment of regular contribution or exit the scheme as per provisions of exit and withdrawal.

Around 8% of the labour market are formal sector employees and social security benefits, including provident funds, pensions, etc., are only available to them. Samariya said this makes PM-SYM important as it aims to bring a chunk of informal sector workers under social security provisions.

The secretary's statement comes a day after the Lok Sabha passed the wage code bill, which seeks to provide minimum wages to all workers. According to official data, at least 3.5 million workers have already enrolled under the scheme till the beginning of July. Both labour ministry and the Life Insurance Corp. of India are key stake holders in rolling out the plan.

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