

DIGITAL WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT: CATALYST FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW LABOUR CODES

Abstract

Recent labour codes introduced by the Government of India is a much-needed step in order to revolutionise numerous existing laws. It aligns with the policy framework shift from expenditure-intensive enforcement to digitally driven labour administration. It has also sensed the latest announcement of the Union Budget 2026–27 which underlines the Government's commitment to fiscal consolidation and structural reforms supporting the ease of doing business. It aims to cover fiscal deficit of GDP. As a matter of fact, consolidation of 29 central labour laws into four Labour Codes marks a transformative step in order to simplify, uniform and make transparent regulations by introducing a single registration, single licence and single return. These reforms are further reinforced through digital platforms which collectively forms the backbone of a Digital Workforce Management Platform.

Unified digital workforce platform plays a crucial role to strengthen labour governance, improve social security coverage, reduce compliance costs and augment employment outcomes with key emphasis on informal, gig and platform workers. Due emphasis is required on phased integration of labour systems, AI-enabled inspections and creation of unique identifiers for workers to ensure effective nationwide implementation of the Labour Codes in alignment with fiscal and developmental priorities. A segmented roadmap is proposed to align labour governance with fiscal prudence, transparency, efficacy and sustainable economic growth.



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Labour Law Reforms and Ease of Doing Business

A key highlight of the Union Budget 2026–27 is its emphasis on improving ease of doing

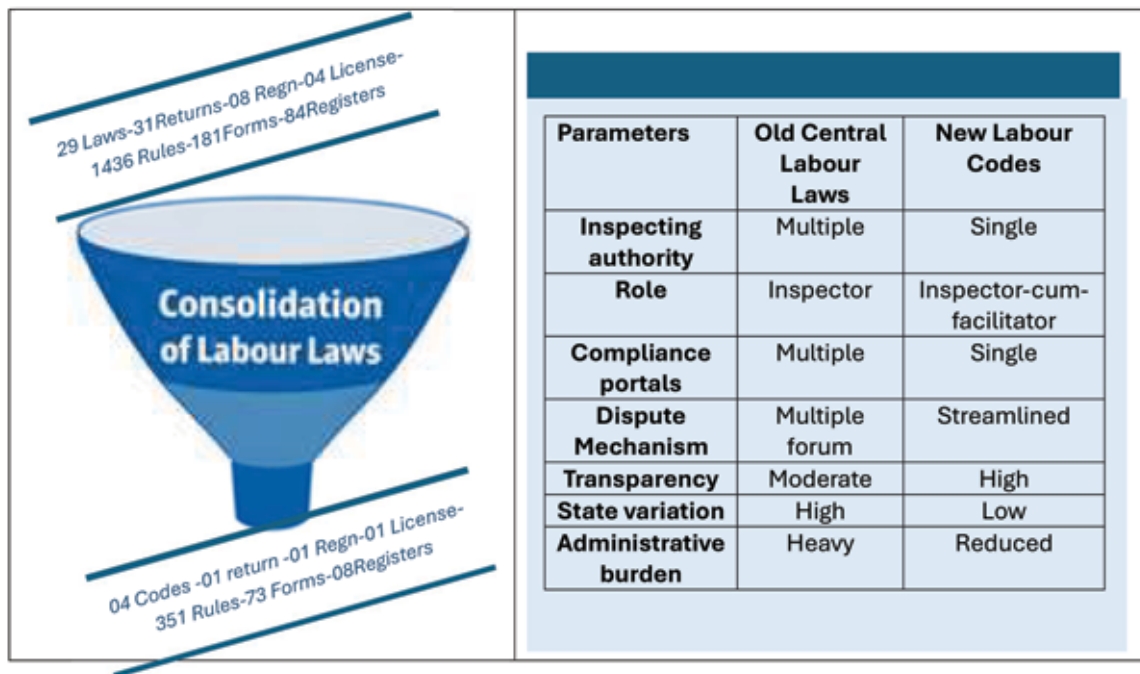
business by empowering government agencies to function through a single, integrated digital platform. Notably, in the realm of labour laws, the Government had already undertaken similar initiatives well in advance, which reflects its forward-looking approach towards simplification of existing regulations. 21st November 2025 marks a significant milestone in the history of labour legislation in India, when on the day, the government introduced four labour codes replacing 29 central labour laws. The recent initiative is taken with manifold objectives which intend to

- ⊙ simplify compliance procedures,
- ⊙ streamline enforcement mechanisms,
- ⊙ modernize colonial era outdated multiple laws and

⊙ introduce concept of single license, single return, single registration.

Code on Wages, 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Payment of Wages Act, 1936 2) Minimum Wages Act, 1948 3) Payment of Bonus Act, 1965 4) Equal Remuneration Act, 1976
Industrial Relations Code, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5) Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 6) Trade Unions Act, 1926 7) Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946
Code on Social Security, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8) Employees’ Provident Funds Act, 1952 9) Employees’ State Insurance Act, 1948 10) Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972 11) Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 12) Employees’ Compensation Act, 1923 13) Employees’ Exchange (Compulsory Notification of Vacancies) Act, 1959 14) Cine Workers Welfare Fund Act, 1981 15) Building and Other Construction Workers Cess Act, 1996 16) Unorganised Workers’ Social Security Act, 2008
Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17) Factories Act, 1948 18) Mines Act, 1952 19) Dock Workers (Safety, Health & Welfare) Act, 1986 20) Building and Other Construction Workers Act, 1996 21) Plantations Labour Act, 1951 22) Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, 1970 23) Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act, 1979 24) Working Journalists Act, 1955 25) Motor Transport Workers Act, 1961 26) Beedi and Cigar Workers Act, 1966 27) Sales Promotion Employees Act, 1976 28) Working Journalists (Fixation of Rates of Wages) Act, 1958 29) Cine Workers and Cinema Theatre Workers Act, 1981

Subsuming existing labour laws, new labour codes are yet to be implemented in its full sense. The state laws are yet to be aligned with Central codes. It is still facing oppositions from trade unions perhaps due to unclear picture and dissonance on certain issues. The gradual implementation necessitates to update the change in full in digital portals. One of the most significant issues is administrative preparedness, which obviously is an ongoing process. The green signal lights rely on ongoing Government initiatives being carried out through various government agencies, public as well as the private sector. Numerous awareness programmes are continually being organized for various stakeholders like government agencies, employers & workers to enable them to understand their rights and provisions, which act as significant step prior to its full implementation. However, the new labour codes have assumed their present shape following comprehensive analysis and meticulous groundwork from all perspectives.



Striking features of Labour Codes

All of the four labour codes have been framed by consolidating all the previous concerned laws which has been subsumed by taking into consideration the simplicity of procedures and universalisation. It aims to provide a common digital platform to deal in transparent and effective manner. Regulatory mechanism for new Labour Codes is based on ‘Inspector-cum-Facilitators’, with extended role to provide guidance and counselling support beyond merely conducting inspections.

All four Labour Codes are framed on shared guiding principles to streamline concerned laws and

“Shramev Jayate! Today, our Government has given effect to the Four Labour Codes. It is one of the most comprehensive and progressive labour oriented reforms since Independence. It greatly empowers our workers, simplifies compliance, and promotes ease of doing business.”
- Hon’ble Prime Minister
Narendra Modiji

to strengthen governance. It includes providing uniform definition of ‘wages’ to minimize ambiguity and disputes. One of the striking features is that it has shifted the inspection mechanism from punitive to facilitative enabling the system to provide backing support and guidance. The new labour codes are presumed to enhance transparency in implementation and compliance. It has been introduced to integrate the digital platforms to establish a single-window mechanism for registrations, licences, returns and inspections, which tends to achieve the objectives of ease of doing business, a grey area being looked after by the Government. Overall, it aims to revolutionise the existing legislation on many areas in order to provide a transparent, user-friendly, simplified,

digitally equipped system. However, the new labour codes are facing oppositions specially from trade unions on certain issues which comprise protection of workers’ interests, rules for making strikes, new retrenchment and lay-off policies, rights of trade unions and clarity on some aspects of the codes. It may be perhaps due to perplexed picture on certain areas which expects to be sorted out with the pace of time.

Digital Platforms Supporting Labour Governance

Digital India is rapidly progressing through technological innovation, with government agencies increasingly leveraging digitization to augment efficiency, transparency and governance. Workforce

is considered as the most vital asset not only for government organizations but also for the various establishments under their regulation. At such, effective use of digital technologies to plan, organize, monitor and manage employees in a modern workplace can directly be correlated with efficiency and productivity of the Nation.

Ministry of Labour & Employment	Attached offices	Directorate General of Employment Chief Labour Commissioner Directorate General Factory Advice Service & Labour Institute Labour Bureau Directorate General of Employment	DGE CLC DGFASLI LB DGE
	Subordinate offices	Directorate General of Mines Safety Labour Welfare Organisations	DGMS LWO
	Statutory Organisations	Employees State Insurance Corporation Employees Provident Fund Organisation	ESIC EPFO
	Autonomous bodies	V. V. Giri National Labour Institute Dattopant Thengadi National Board for Workers Education and Development	VVGNLI DTNBWED

In today’s digital landscape, digital measures to promote secure workforce in order into a digitally empowered the Ministry have taken fecund the legalities as well as ease millions of stakeholders major transformation with the labour codes have unbolted simplification of compliance effective dispute mechanism the administrative burden to to attain these objectives, digital workforce management platform or introducing such platform at the core level is quite significantly required.

"The Labour Codes modernize the social security landscape. They promote digitization of records, allowing all registers and documents to be maintained electronically. This aligns with the digital-first approach reducing paperwork and administrative burden." — PIB Factsheet, Dec 5, 2025

the Ministry of Labour and Employment has undertaken progressive a healthy, productive and to ensure transformation workforce. Striving efforts of silhouette in order to simply of doing business to benefit countrywide through this aid of digital means. The new many avenues, which comprise mechanism, approachable and due emphasis on lowering the possible extent. In order strengthening an updated

It can’t be underestimated that the Ministry had already initiated measures to promote ease of doing business, much earlier through its schemes and missions like PENCIL, PMVBRY, SSP & SAMADHAN. The steps are taken much prior to the introduction of the new labour codes and each of the following denotes a remarkable effort:

(i) Platform for Effective Enforcement for No Child Labour

The Online Platform for Effective Enforcement for No Child Labour called as PENCIL is launched by the Ministry on 26.09.2017 to enforce CALPR Act, 1986 (amended in 2016) and connects with NCLP.

To rehabilitate rescued children & to create a child labour free society is few of its noble objectives. It goes in alignment with the Samagra Siksha Abhiyan (SSA). The PENCIL identified 1,98,437 children since its inception. It has an effective real-time CTS (Child Tracking System) to track rescued child to rehabilitation, online complaint system, linkage to various welfare schemes, integrated digital system and paperless governance.

(ii) Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana

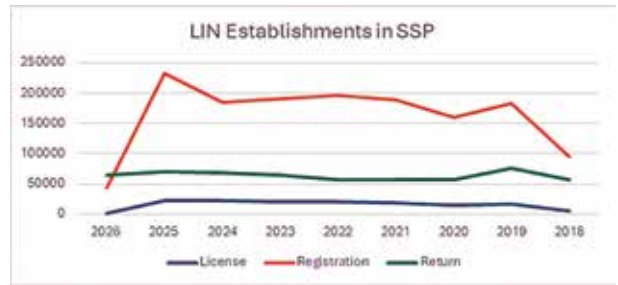
Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana i.e.

PMVBRY is an employment promotion scheme launched on 15.08.2025 by the Government and is being implemented through EPFO. It aims to stimulate formal job creation and enhance new employment in the organized sector. The scheme has an outlay of ₹99,446 crore to incentivize job creation and it aims to create more than 3.5 crore new jobs in India over two years.

Monitoring, verification and tracking are done through EPFO’s digital database. In fact PMVBRY operates mainly through an online EPFO-based digital system, with limited offline support only for assistance and grievance handling.

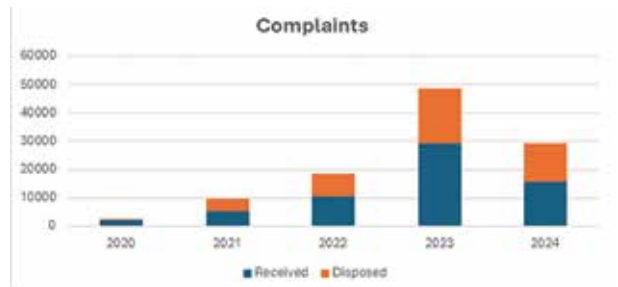
(iii) Shram Suvidha Portal

Launched on 16.10.2014, Shram Suvidha Portal (SSP) is a digital single-window platform for labour law compliance, registration, inspections and filing returns. Each establishment gets a unique 16-digit LIN, acting like a “single labour ID” to establishments, which helps to track labour law compliance digitally. It covers major labour laws related to EPFO, ESIC, CLRA, ISMW, BOCW, etc., on one platform and creates a nationwide database.



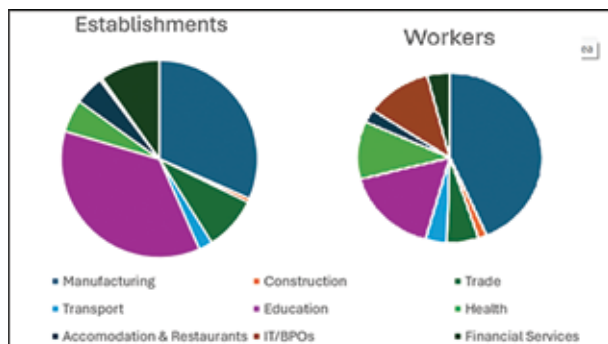
(iv) Software Application for Monitoring And Disposal, Handling of Industrial Disputes/ Claims/General Complaints

Soft-launched on 06.02.2019, Software Application for Monitoring and Disposal, Handling of Industrial Disputes/Claims/General Complaints (SAMADHAN) is officially launched on 29.07.2024 to facilitate online filing and resolution of industrial disputes. It maintains a national database of labour disputes across states and industries which helps the ministry to analyse trends in labour disputes. Users can track status online and through UMANG integration.



Strengthening Labour Governance Through Digital Workforce Integration

The Labour Governance has taken significant steps to digitize the labour workforce realizing its number of benefits. However, there is a need to adopt a unified approach to cover all the workforce in digital platform. The digital capture of complete picture of workforce will surely yield significant results from various perspectives. If we consider the figures provided by the RBI, it says that the number of employed people in



India increased to about 643 million in 2023–24. The estimated labour force in India (including presently employed & those seeking work) is at around 607 million in 2024 as determined in a survey. According to the Indian Economic Survey, only the gig and platform workforce in India is anticipated to touch about 235 million by 2029–30. The latest QES report from the Labour Bureau (2022-23) estimated around 3.21 crore workers employed across approximately 4.62 lakh establishments where 10 or more workers are employed covering nine selected sectors.

These data collectively can help to conduct comprehensive and insightful analysis and a complete picture of such complex data is vital when transformed into interpretable representations. It is not that the traditional labour data sources such as surveys and censuses fail to serve the purpose but considering the need of the day in order to provide individual digital identifiers and to support continuous real-time updates, digital platform can prove to be a better mechanism for the Government in order to carry out ongoing analysis and programme planning effectively. Unified digital platform at central level can systematically capture all labour-oriented data and serves a number of purposes for the Government.

Considering the official estimates, total employed workforce in India aged 15 years and above is approximately 560 million people. Out of these, around 306.8 million workers are registered on the e-Shram portal. This means that around 55% of India's total workforce is digitally covered through the e-Shram system so far, which indicates substantial progress. But on the other, it points out that nearly half of the workforce is still digitally unregistered. However, it has been a very challenging tasks mainly due to predominance of the informal sector and it exists as a critical policy concern also. Studies show that approximately 80–90% of India's workforce is engaged in informal employment and around 75% of these informal workers are either self-employed or employed as casual wage labourers.

Updated unified digital platform further tunes with the vision of the Ministry, which aims to provide decent working conditions and improved standard of living for workers. It further intends to ensure the country be free from child labour and also to enhance employability on a sustainable basis. It also reveals the need for comprehensive manpower data across multiple levels, components, establishments and sectors. In today's complex conditions, it is almost unmanageable to generate, integrate and analyse such data without robust digital labour platforms. All these needs points out towards necessitates to have such digital labour

platform which enable organizations to serve their objectives more effectively.

The Ministries and Government organizations require to build and extend such digital platform not only for their own workforce but also for the establishments under their jurisdiction. Government organisations have achieved a high degree of internal digitisation through the adoption of platforms such as e-HRMS 2.0, GIFMIS (PFMS) and e-Office, which rationalise human resource management, financial management, operations and administrative practices. Recent adoption of these systems ensures enhanced efficiency, transparency and accountability in government functioning. The Government expects to provide similar level of platform for the labour market-facing systems. It also entails to widen the areas for digital integration of workforce in various establishments and sectors. It expedites to provide more effective policy formulation, monitoring and service delivery in order to strengthen the overall labour administration framework.

As such, online portals such as eShram, Shram Suvidha Portal (SSP), PENCIL, SAMADHAN, PMVBRY, National Career Service (NCS), UMANG, Skill India Digital Hub, DigiLocker, myScheme, Open Government Data Platform and various state-level labour portals can build the backbone of unified Digital Workforce Management Platform. These platforms collectively support workforce management and ensure implementation of labour reforms. Through DWMP framework, policymakers are expected to review compliances, effectively resolve grievances and outspread welfare schemes to formal as well as unorganised workers.

The eShram portal alone has registered over 31.38 crore unorganised workers as of November 20, 2025, providing each worker with a Universal Account Number (UAN) to access social security benefits under the Code on Social Security. Simultaneously, the NCS portal had over 6.02 crore registered jobseekers and 54.27 lakh employers facilitating employment opportunities and other services. These portals shall be integrated with the Data Workforce Management Platform

in order to enable real-time tracking of workforce social security reporting. It needs to align with the strategic objectives of the Labour Codes.

Roadmap to One Nation, One Workforce: Strategic Conclusion and Future Direction

The Government is already on its way to take creditable initiatives towards this direction; all it requires is to have implement it through a premeditated clearly defined roadmap. Recent ground work by the Government may be extended by setting up a unified centralized digital workforce system which should update all requisites along with consolidation of all existing labour-related platforms into a single multipurpose portal. The portal expects to be capable of generating comprehensive employment statistics across multiple dimensions which include various categories of workforce including skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled, formal-informal, permanent-contractual as well as gig and platform workers. It shall able to provide a robust foundation for policymaking, effective implementation of labour codes and social security involvements through digitization.

It will also enable reinforcement of various grievance redressal and compliance monitoring portals like SAMADHAN, PENCIL, SSP etc in more effective manner. The Shram Suvidha Portal SSP shall obviously generate inspections for various establishments and analyse the compliances observed through the inspection reports submitted in the online portal. The system may be strengthened to make use of AI generative tools to analyse the efficacy of inspections and analysis of violations and compliance pointed out. The system shall be intensified to interact with the inspector-cum-facilitator and management personnel of establishments through digital

modes for any kind of probes, collations, serious nature of violations, compliances, safety alerts etc. In case of danger alerts, it shall be capable of automatically assigning the check inspections of the establishments. The Inspector-cum-facilitators working under the Government are required to carry out various kinds of inspections and inquiries of various establishments within their jurisdiction. However, the jurisdiction normally covers wide geographical area; certainly, carrying out physical inspection attracts a considerable cost. It can be minimized by substituting these inspections and routine inquiries with AI-enabled online inspections and inquiries, wherever possible. In addition, the compliance of violations pointed out during inspections, may also be assessed through online follow-up to ensure corrective action.

The digital platform may play significant role in tackling critical issues like employment generation by integrating employment and skill development programmes. It also enables to identify the training and development needs, skill requirements vis-à-vis apprising employment opportunities to the job-seekers and to take necessary action in this regard. Various social security schemes, their coverages, enrolments, benefits, claim status etc. can be improved by integrating the existing systems through digital workforce management platform. In fact, AI-driven insights into such digital platform facilitates to monitor employment trends, skill gaps, compliance levels and social security coverage.

The roadmap expects to be carried out in phased manner and gradually shall integrate key portals and to create unique worker ids for state and national level. Gradually, the various schemes and compliances may be integrated with the system and the same many implemented nationwide at real time environment with the use of AI driven insights.

The implementation of such Digital Workforce Management Platform should follow a phased and systematic approach. In the initial on integration of various portals include establishment of unique state levels. Subsequently, the

"Labour is a key driver of economic growth and development." - PIB

phase, the system may concentrate including those of states. It shall IDs for workers at national and various social security schemes,

compliance modules, grievance redressal systems and welfare programs can be gradually integrated. The platform can be expanded for nationwide implementation in order to operate in real-time atmosphere. It can also make use of AI-driven environment to identify compliance gaps and to analyse workforce trends and ultimately to optimize delivery of services.

In 2026–27, the Union Government aims to reduce the fiscal deficit to 4.3% of GDP and bring outstanding liabilities down to about 50% of GDP by March 2031. In terms of labour reforms, this fiscal approach reassures reduction in expenditure on physical inspections, greater reliability on digital labour platforms and more focused investments in skill development and labour welfare programmes.

With a Digital Workforce Management Platform, the vision of One Nation, One Workforce Framework will foster transparency, strengthen efficiency and broaden opportunities which in turn, drives sustainable economic growth and progress for entire Nation. **MA**

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9th March, 2026

NOTIFICATION

In pursuance of Regulation 146 of the Cost and Works Accountants Regulations, 1959, the Council of the Institute at its 364th Council Meeting held on 8th & 17th December, 2025 by virtue of power conferred therein has constituted the following Chapter of The Institute of Cost Accountants of India covering the area of Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh State.

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