



## India in BRICS Ministers' Meeting

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### Why in News

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Recently, the **BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers' Virtual Meeting** was held under the **Russian Presidency**.

It aimed to discuss various **issues including approaches to creating a safe work culture in BRICS countries**.

### Key Points

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- **Emphasis on Health of Workers:**
  - It was highlighted that **health, welfare and improved working conditions** are essential for the well-being of the workers. A healthy workforce in the country would be more productive and contribute to economic growth.
  - The **aspects of occupational safety and health measures** to mitigate the impact of **Covid-19** have also acquired significance.

- **India's Stand:**

- India **called for suitable global action** especially by BRICS towards effecting a **balance between labour and employer** which will generate growth and create more jobs and greater labour welfare.
- India also **highlighted the importance of digitisation and technological advancements** like **artificial intelligence** (AI) and **robotics** in reshaping lives and work, with a direct or indirect effect on the labour market.

Digitisation also **offers the opportunity** for governments, individuals and businesses **to cope with the changing scenarios after the pandemic.**

- India underscored that the **digital economy** is changing the world of work, hence **regular studies by the BRICS Network Research Institutes** will facilitate a **better understanding** of the aspects of future of work and supplement policymaking.
- India is committed to **eradicate poverty** and **promote prosperity** in a changing world and hence adopted a multi-dimensional strategy to eliminate poverty by covering most of the basic services and fulfil the **Sustainable Development Goals of No Poverty** (SDG-1).

## Initiatives Highlighted by India

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- **Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code Bill, 2020:**

- Provides a dynamic and effective framework of occupational safety and health at the workplace and covers legal provisions of all sectors.
- Envisages safety standards for different sectors, focusing on the health and working condition of workers, hours of work, leaves, etc.

- **Social Security Code Bill, 2020:**

- **Universalises social security coverage** to those working in the unorganised sector, such as migrant workers, gig workers and platform workers.
- **Recognises emerging forms of work** by defining terms like an aggregator, gig worker and platform worker, and extends social protection to such workers through a **separate Social Security Fund** wherein the contribution from aggregators would be deposited.
- Provisions of social security will also be **extended to agricultural workers.**

- **Industrial Relations Code Bill, 2020:**

- Sets up **Grievance Redressal Committees** for resolution of disputes arising out of employees' grievances.
- Also sets up a reskilling fund to help skill retrenched workers.

- **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi:**
  - Provides direct income support to farmers for easing their liquidity needs to facilitate timely access to inputs.
  - Aiding modernisation and makes farmers competitive.
- **Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan:**
  - Protects the economy from the **adverse impact of the Covid-19 crisis.**
  - Measures include opening a credit line for micro, small and medium enterprises to meet their operational expenses, subsidising the social security contributions of workers, extending unemployment benefit to workers, financial assistance to construction workers, collateral-free working capital loan to approximately 5 million street vendors, etc.
- **Other Related Schemes:**
  - **National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.**
  - **National Livelihood Mission.**

## **Way Forward**

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All countries need to work together in finding feasible and sustainable solutions to the issues and challenges faced by the future of the labour force in the digital economy so that everyone can get the flexible employment opportunities without compromising the fundamental rights.

**Source: PIB**