

# 1ST BRICS EMPLOYMENT WORKING GROUP (EWG) MEETING AMONGST BRICS COUNTRIES

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: BRICS, IBSA and India

Shri Apurva Chandra, Secretary, Labour and Employment chaired the 1st BRICS Employment Working Group (EWG) Meeting held on 11-12 May 2021 in Sushma Swaraj Bhawan, New Delhi in virtual format. India has assumed BRICS Presidency this year. The prime agenda for the discussions were Promoting Social Security Agreements amongst BRICS Nations, Formalization of labour markets, Participation of women in labour force and Gig and platform workers – Role in labour market.



Apart from representatives of member nations i.e Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, the representatives of International Labour Organization (ILO) and International Social Security Agency (ISSA) also made valuable interventions and suggestions on the agenda issues. The Indian delegations were represented by Mrs. Anuradha Prasad, Special Secretary, Shri R.K Gupta, Joint Secretary, Shri Ajay Tewari, JS & DGLW, Ms. Kalpana Rajsinghot, Joint Secretary and Shri Rupesh Kumar Thakur, Director from Ministry of Labour and Employment.

On the issue of Social Security Agreement (SSA), the Member Nations resolved to enter into dialogue and discussion with each other and take it forward towards signing of the agreements, while the ISSA and ILO on their part, expressed willingness to provide technical support in facilitating conclusion of such agreements. Member Nations also converged on devising multilateral framework for the same on a later stage. Social Security Agreement would help the international workers to port their benefit to their home countries thereby preventing loss of their hard earned money. Further they will be exempted from contributing both in home as well as host countries.

On the issue of formalization of labour market, Member Nations discussed various initiatives taken by them towards formalization of jobs and how Covid-19 has enhanced informalization risk.

On participation of women in the labour force, the member countries resolved to promote participation of women in remunerative, productive and decent work and to extend social security cover to the women workers engaged in informal sector. Impact of Covid-19 on participation of women in labour force was also discussed.

On the issue of Gig and Platform workers and their role in labour market, the member nations discussed how the proliferation of Digital Labour Platforms is transforming the labour processes in the world of work. Challenges faced by them and various measures being taken by member nations including extension of social protection system were also discussed.

The discussion took place in an extremely candid atmosphere and in seamless manner, where the Member Nations and International Organizations shared not only their initiatives and best practices, but also their concerns and challenges.

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