

WORLD MAY HAVE LOST 11.2 CRORE JOBS, SAYS ILO

Relevant for: Indian Economy | Topic: Issues Related to Poverty, Inclusion, Employment & Sustainable Development

The report added that a “great and growing divergence between richer and poorer economies” continues to characterise the recovery. “While high-income countries experienced a recovery in hours worked, low- and lower-middle-income economies suffered setbacks in the first quarter of the year with a 3.6 and 5.7 per cent gap respectively when compared to the pre-crisis benchmark,” the report said.

Commenting on the report, trade unions urged the Centre to address the issue of unemployment. “Women employment in India has come down, particularly in sectors such as healthcare as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The ILO report suggests that the purchasing capacity of the workers should be improved. ILO has been proposing decent jobs and decent wages. We do not have decent employment here in India. Most people are on contract without any social security. If there are no decent wages, purchasing power will also come down. The Code on Wages was passed in 2019 but is not yet implemented. The Wage Committee in 1948 asked the government to implement minimum wage, living wage and decent wage. We have not implemented even minimum wage yet under pressure from industrialists,” Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS) general secretary Binoy Kumar Sinha said.

All India Trade Union Congress general secretary Amarjeet Kaur said the ILO’s projections have underestimated the real picture in India.

“According to our calculation, 30%-60% of workers — five crore people — who lost jobs during the lockdown have not joined any work. One-third of MSMEs (micro, small and medium enterprises) can never be revived according to a survey by the associations of MSMEs. Hawkers and vendors are facing problems due to high prices of fruits and vegetables. The Centre had accepted that 50% of the women workforce returned back to cities after the first lockdown. Overall women participation has also gone down. We need more jobs. The governments have to do a lot. They must ensure that there are no retrenchments,” Ms. Kaur said.

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