**Statement of Demands for Securing the Best Deal for the Platform Workers in the Platform Economy**

Recognizing the precarious condition of the platform-based workers and the home-based online workers, we demand a central legislation for securing the long-term social security of the platform workers and share the following pointers that should be built in the legislation for platform workers as their numbers are going to increase in the coming years since as some say gigification of the tasks is happening at a fast pace and this is very much evident in the functioning of the platform economy. Ordering for services and commodities is in vogue and this is going to remain so in the near and distant future. This becomes evident in the slogan of some of app based platforms that promise to deliver at each PIN code:

**Central Legislation from the perspective of entitlements for platform-based Gig workers**

1. **Perspective of workers entitlements instead of being recipients of welfare schemes**: Gig workers and application-based platform workers need to receive their rights as entitlements. Being from among the youths, all male and female workers need to earn family wage that enables a decent livelihood with food, nutrition, water, health, education, and energy security.
2. **Central Legislation for regulation and growth of the platform-based economy**: While state government legislations are showing the way forward, there is a need to enact a central legislation. The enactment of a law in this regard subject to framing of the rules has taken place in Rajasthan which has caught the imagination of the researchers, unions (registered and non-registered) ,  gig workers and application-based platform workers.
3. **Recognition of the platform-based workers as workers**: It has been reported that gig and platform workers worldwide are struggling to be considered “workers” and not “independent contractors”, so as to gain the protection of labor laws and social safety nets. Gig workers have been recognized by the courts in the UK, Canada, Spain, Netherlands, France, Denmark, some U.S. states, and an expanding number of countries. At this stage gig workers and application-based platform workers in India are neither treated as employees nor have the freedom of contract workers. Thus, there is a need to secure their recognition as workers since more than 85 per cent of gig workers and application-based platform workers are working full time, according to the Janpahal survey. This could be determined by securing log in and log out time patterns from the aggregators/employers.

**HR Practices**

1. **End of the exploitative HR practices of the aggregators and their usurpation of the earnings through multiple means**:  Aggregators take a major chunk of earnings through credits, commissions, subscriptions, loans, penalties & fees- whereas the workers bear the cost of products, maintenance, travel, paperwork. Considering this, we demand development of best practices protocol for the entire sector of application-based service providers and their employees. Fair business standards or ethical business standards need to be developed and application-based platforms needs to be regulated. Commissions deducted by the application-based platforms should not exceed more than 20 percent. Workers are subjected to below minimum wage level take-home earning since platforms are deducting high commissions ranging from 20-40%.
2. **Emotionally Intelligent HR Practices** are required to secure adoption of best ethical standards and best deal for all parties in the gig economy.  This requires adoption of compassion while being upfront in securing performance standards. Identity blocks by the aggregators create a turmoil in the life of a platform worker since his/her earnings per day is vital for feeding the family. Needless to mention, the platform workers are there putting in their hard work for earning a livelihood. So, when the identity is blocked, this removes daily bread for him/her and his/her family.

**Profit Sharing Standards**

1. Recognizing the cost to the aggregators, fair profit sharing with the workers through building social security payments need to be formulated, regulated and audited. Accountability of the application-based platforms needs to be ensured through third part audit by VVGNLI or its empaneled agencies. Annual audit of the credits, commissions, subscriptions, loans, penalties & fees needs to be ensured and linked to the continuation of the license and due permissions and approvals. Fair practices at all levels needs to be ensured in the auditing processes. Fair cost to company audit and fair compensation audit for workers needs to be performed with the provision for strict adherence to the same. Punitive measures need to be defined as well to ensure best performance by app-based platforms.
2. **Guarantee fair wages and financial transparency**: At this stage there exists absence of transparency in payment and there is no minimum guaranteed income. Thus, there is a need to guarantee fair wages and ensure minimum guaranteed income for all app-based platform workers. This can be ensured through central legislation only. At this stage, platform workers are not even recognized as workers.

**Compensation for the logged in hours**

1. **Demand for fair wages, minimum wages for the log in hours**: We demand minimum wages for the log in hours to secure survival equations of the families. All adult workers need to be treated as family heads with children. Thus, minimum income guarantee needs to be ensured with timely update for the minimum income which is adjusted to inflation.  Fair working hour wage needs to be ensured. Long and irregular working hours, often exceeding 12 hours a day has a negative implication for health. Thus, working hours need to be regulated with a minimum living wage guarantee. This is required in the case of platform workers who are not making enough per day for meeting the living costs.
2. **Transparency in payment system:** At this stage, there is no clarity on the payments and aggregators are charged to be not transparent. Data sharing on the payments needs to be mandated for all the aggregators. This can be sorted out through creation of a centralized registry for all the app-based platform workers for monitoring and evaluation of the functioning of the app-based platforms in such a way that these are not a deterrent to the platform owners since these app-based platform owners are generating employment as well. Establishing a best deal for the platform workers is the call of the unions.

**Consultative Processes for the Major Financial Changes by the Platform Owners**

1. Workers needs to be consulted on major financial changes: The aggregators should be bound to adopt fair practices and work with the unions on the major financial decisions. Alternatively, workers need to be consulted through platforms for all the major financial changes which have implications for the income to the workers.  These consultations are easy through app-based platforms itself. However, offline consultations will remain the best to ensure real time interaction in person.

**Algorithmic Transparency through Algorithm Audit and Understanding the Artificial Intelligence in Platform management**

1. **Algorithmic Management**: There is no information to the workers on how rides are fixed, earnings and deductions are decided leading to often stress, anxiety, discrimination, and exploitation. Therefore, Algorithm Audit is urgently needed for securing best deal for the workers.
2. **Algorithmic Transparency and Accountability needs be ensured**- This calls for sharing of all employment decisions and changes including transactions and these needs to be explained to workers & notified to the workers. The central legislation built on the new labor code would be a huge leap in delivering social security in India that is Bharat which is championing the cause of being *Vishwaguru*(World leader)  in all domains. G-20 leadership with the enunciation of the ideal of ***vasudhaiv kutumbkum*** (All creation is one family) unity creates a duty for all citizens of India in general and government of India in particular to ensure best standards in short term and long terms social security delivery for the millions of the app-based platform workers in the G-20 nations which virtually bring together all leading countries from across the continents.
3. **Understanding the employment of Artificial Intelligence for HR decisions of the aggregators** needs to be understood to eradicate the unfair practices which include the practice of unilateral and discriminatory terms of employment. This article shows the instances of how there in many decisions humans are not involved but algorithms of AI take the decision. Exposing algorithms <https://www.workersunity.com/india/gig-workers-regulating-work-platforms-exposing-algorithms/> . These results in arbitrary and unilateral terminations- stop unilateral blocking of gig workers’ IDs.  As a result, there is absence of Grievance redress mechanisms that work in a humane way and NOT in the mechanical way. To ensure this, human access for grievance redress is required across the cities where app-based platforms are delivering services and products.

**Ownership of Data by Governments for Securing Compliance and Best Standards in Social Security and Employeer-Employee Relationships**

1. **Data Access**: Access to data of employees is to be guaranteed like- jobs completed, payments made, insurances claimed and paid etc. This access to data will ensure multiple benefits to all parties. Employers, employees and regulators with access to data will ensure optimal functioning of the economy with joy and happiness for all. There is absence of control of workers over the huge data/info aggregators have pertaining to the workers identity, location, preferences, and behaviour which are used by the aggregators for profiling, advertising, analytics.  Government of India through a central registry should have ownership of all data of the workers which is given to workers and others for the appropriate purposes.

**Employee Benefits**

1. While recognising the critique to the Social Security Code by the Unions, we also recognise the provision of the Social Security Code ,2020 and demand that Social Security Boards needs to set up at the central and state level with representatives from the unions of app-based platform workers and gig workers, platform employers as well as govt functionaries is urgently needed to secure the best interests of the workers and aggregators. These tripartite Social Security Boards for Platform Workers boards need to be accompanied with the creation of Social Security Funds.
2. **Recognising the immense role ESIC and EPF benefits along with pension to all app-based workers and c**onsidering the growth projections of the gig and app-based platform economy as envisaged by NITI Ayog, there is a need to secure coverage under ESIC and EPF for all app-based platform workers who have been logging in for work for more than 8 hours.

**Gender Just and Childcare Friendly Workplace for Women Platform Workers**

**17. Maternity Benefits with Crèche facilities for Lactating mothers at Warehouses of the app-based platforms such as Amazon and Flipkart**: In order to ensure child protection, women workers need be too attended with special care in order to eradicate gender inclusion deficits in platform work force associated with the aggregators. According to Janpahal survey of the platform workers, only 2.3 per of the workers are from among women.

**Occupational Health and Safety**

1. **Health and Accident Insurance**: Platform workers are exposed to various health and safety risks like road accidents, occupational hazards, harassments, etc.  Accidental insurance benefits should be ensured and its terms and conditions should be made platform worker friendly. This will be possible through a central legislation that will ensure access to accidental insurance and create transparent grievance redressal mechanism.
2. **Mental Health Assistance to app-based workers in distress**:  Considering the incidence of suicides among the platform-based workers through in insignificant numbers, there is need to save lives and secure joyful work. This will be possible through mandating app-based platform owners to provide mental assistance window and reduce targets when there are distress signals received. Artificial Intelligence generated bots should be programmed for sending Clinical Psychologists having expertise in distress assistance. Ministry of Labour and Employment could consider creating an app based mental health support system to enable access to mental health support. GigWA has come across cases of app-based platform workers of Urban Company thinking of committing suicide post blockade of their identity as they are single mothers with no other work. Having the sole responsibility for earning bread and butter for the household, platform-based workers especially single mother find themselves in precarious situation when their identities are blocked due to various reasons by the aggregators/App based platform employers. .

**Financing for the Schemes for the App-based platform workers, warehouse worker**s, **home based online workers:**

1. Cess-based model for the financing the social security of platform-based gig workers needs to be boosted from the revenue of public exchequer. Alternatively, aggregators need to build in social security payments for Social Security Fund which is envisaged in the Social Security Code.

**Resolve the Policy Vacuum in reference to Financing for the Social Security of the Platform Workers**

1. Recognizing the policy and legal vacuum in nations in reference to the platform based gig workers, there is need to have urgent clarity on all aspects of the gig work which is full time employment for 85 per cent of the platform workers according to the survey report of Janpahal , there is an urgent need to eliminate this state of inertia. The policy vacuum or absence of the implementation of the intent needs to give way for a clear decision. India at this stage is witnessing campaigning for formation of tripartite board on the one hand and one the other Ministry of Labour and Employment officials are found expressing the plan of collecting a percentage of the turnover for the Social Security Fund that is envisaged in the New Labor Code.

The above pointers for the central legislation, schemes and associated financial memorandum are indicative subject to more detailing. In India, the call of **SHRESHT BHARAT** will clearly have indicators in reference to the delivery of entitlements for the app-based platform workers who are log in to work. Similarly, other counterparts will be demanding attaining best standards for social society of the platform-based workers in their nations. For example, Safety and Rights Society in Bangladesh along with the organisations will be campaigning for the platform sectors in particular in particular while raising the demands for the informal sector workers in general. US having 20 per cent of workforce in gig work needs to act as well.

Meeting ILO basic minimum standards with additional benefits for the app-based platform workers in India will make India have a luminous reckoning in the comity of nations and this is applicable for all nations where appropriate legislations are not in place. The national aspirations and slogans will have to be demonstrated in practice for the app-based workers and workers in the informal sector in general like Indonesia where all unorganized sector workers are entitled to basic social security benefits.

Looking forward to receive kindest attention of all in the government, development support, law, labour research, policy building and implementation for the app-based platform workers who while contributing to the national GDP need urgent assistance, Gig Workers Association (GigWA) and the organizers seek comprehensive central legislations within and across the nations that bind all the app-based platform owners to deliver the best social security deal for the platform workers.

**Signatories:**

1. Gig Workers Association, Dr.Muhammad Mukhtar Alam , National Coordinator
2. ACORN, India, Mr. Vinod Shetty, Executive Director,
3. Amazon India Workers Association ,Mr.Dharmendra Kumar, Covenor
4. Janpahal ,Mr.Nitesh Kumar Das, Programme Coordinator
5. Safety and Rights Society, Bangladesh, Sikandar Ali Mina

**Endorsements and comments are requested**

Organizations and Individuals with their affiliation and contact details interested in endorsing the statement may please add their details through this link <https://forms.gle/e1iSA6yi6dRv281G9>