



Confederation of Indian Industry

NATIONAL ROUNDTABLE ON MIGRANT WORKFORCE

Conversations on Critical Priorities for Migrant Workforce Enablement

23 JANUARY 2026 | COIMBATORE

RETROSPECT



Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya

Minister of Labour & Employment and Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports,
Government of India



Mr. Kumar Jayant

IAS, Chairman & Managing
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Ms. Anuja Bapat

Deputy Director General,
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Mr. Shankar Vanavarayar

Chairman, CII National Task Force
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NATIONAL ROUNDTABLE ON MIGRANT WORKFORCE

OVERVIEW

CII organized a National Roundtable on Migrant Workforce on 23 January 2026 in Coimbatore bringing together key stakeholders such as policymakers, industry leaders, academia and civil society to deliberate on strengthening systems, policies and partnerships for migrant workers.

The objective was to:

- Facilitate multi-stakeholder dialogue on bridging skill gaps through customized training and sector-specific modules.
- Develop strategies for formalizing recruitment and onboarding processes, incorporating safe migration best practices.
- Foster social inclusion by addressing language, legal, and welfare integration challenges; showcase successful intervention models (e.g., Migrant Facilitation Centres).
- Strengthen advocacy for improved living and working conditions, leveraging rural development schemes (NABARD/RIDF, Micro Irrigation, Crop Insurance), and AI-driven local governance platforms.

Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Minister of Labour & Employment and Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India virtually addressed the gathering. He elaborated on the steps taken by the Government to empower migrant workers such as the recent Labour Reforms and the 'one nation, one ration card' policy and appreciated that this Roundtable was bringing together different stakeholders including Ministries such as the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises to find collaborative solutions to the multi-dimensional challenges migrant workers face.

As part of the programme, a Compendium on industry best practices in Rural Development was released, capturing case studies from on-ground experiences. The compendium aims to serve as a knowledge resource for policymakers, industry leaders and practitioners working to build a more inclusive, fair and resilient ecosystem.

"Migrant workers are the silent backbone of India's growth story,"

Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya

Minister of Labour & Employment and Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports,
Government of India



KEY HIGHLIGHTS

SKILLS–MIGRATION LINKAGES: INDUSTRY MIGRATION MAPPING

The discussion highlighted that migration in India is increasingly driven by skill mismatches rather than mere labour shortages, with industries relying heavily on migrant workers who often arrive with limited formal skills, low education levels, and minimal awareness of workplace expectations.

Existing skill development and labour governance systems operate in silos, with weak linkages between district-level skill planning, industry demand signals, and migration patterns. While government programmes exist for skill mapping, reverse migration training, and social security, their impact is constrained by poor coordination, limited worker awareness, and weak last-mile registration.



SOCIAL SECURITY PORTABILITY AND DIGITAL LABOUR GOVERNANCE



The discussion examined how digital public infrastructure has created a significant opportunity to make social security portable, rights-based, and inclusive for migrant and unorganised workers, through platforms such as e-Shram, Aadhaar-linked welfare systems, and unified labour databases. A central concern was the disconnect between centralised digital systems and decentralised delivery mechanisms. The discussion also emphasised the need to balance ease of compliance with depth of protection, particularly for MSMEs and digital labour platforms.

WORKER HOUSING, HEALTH & LIVING DIGNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

The discussion underscored that migrant worker welfare cannot be addressed through workplace interventions alone, and that living conditions, housing quality, and access to healthcare are central to worker productivity, dignity, and retention. Panelists highlighted that poor housing conditions such as overcrowding, lack of ventilation, unsafe water, and informal rental arrangements contribute to illness, absenteeism, and income loss.

The panel emphasised that housing insecurity creates a cascading exclusion, where informal rentals without documentation prevent migrants from accessing healthcare, welfare schemes, and grievance redressal. Women migrant workers face compounded vulnerabilities related to childcare, safety, unpaid care work, and lack of crèche facilities, affecting labour force participation and continuity of employment.



“This CII Roundtable marks a critical step toward coordinated action across government, industry, and civil society to create fair, resilient, and future-ready systems for migrant workers.”

Mr. Shankar Vanavarayar

Chairman, CII National Task Force on Rural Development & Migrant Workforce and President, Kumaraguru Institutions



KEY OUTCOMES

1. Released a Compendium of Best Practices on Rural Development.
2. Improved cross-sector linkages for skills, welfare, and infrastructure delivery.
3. Recommended actionable ideas for enhancing migrant workers' employability, rights, and living standards.
4. Strengthened social development frameworks to enable equitable regional progress, benefiting migrant and native populations alike.

GLIMPSES

