

Labour Bureau's surveys on domestic workers and migration

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In news

Labour Bureau to start field work for two of its survey on domestic workers and migration

Key highlights

- In order to map the employment situation in the wake of the Covid pandemic, the Labour Bureau, under the Labour and Employment Ministry, plans to begin field work for two of its intended labour surveys domestic workers and migration by February
- The results for these survey are targeted to be finalised by October next year
- According to the Ministry, Field work for two more employment surveys – professionals (such as chartered accountants, lawyers and doctors) and transport workers – will also be rolled out once the work for other two surveys hits the ground

The migration survey

- It is to be undertaken by the Labour Bureau
- The survey **will provide estimates of the number of migrant workers in the country** along with an assessment of the **issues being faced by them**.
- The sample size for the survey on migration will be fixed based on the flow of migrant workers.
- Say, migrants are coming from West Bengal, Odisha and Bihar, so their sample size will be bigger than North-east

First-of-its-kind survey on domestic workers

The panel has been asked to collect data on domestic workers, who constitute roughly 3 per cent of the workers in the country, **making it a first-of-its-kind survey on domestic workers to be carried out** by the Labour Bureau.

Expert group to provide technical guidance to the Labour Bureau

- It is chaired by SP Mukherjee, Emeritus Professor, University of Kolkata, and consists of economists, statisticians and government functionaries
- It has been constituted by the government for a period of three years to provide technical guidance to the Labour Bureau with respect to surveys on migration, professional bodies, domestic workers and other surveys and to expand available sources of data on employment and unemployment.

A brief note on Labour Bureau

History of Labour Bureau

- The **foundations of the Labour Bureau can be traced to the The Royal Commission on Labour in 1931** which emphasised the need for systematic collection of labour statistics relating to living, working and socio-economic conditions of industrial labour.
 - The rise in prices post world war II also necessitated the need for setting up of a machinery for measuring change in prices for compensation of wages of workers.
 - The Rau Court of Enquiry was set up in 1940 to recommend a statistical machinery for measuring change in prices.
- Accordingly the Directorate of Cost of Living was set up at Shimla in 1941 for conducting Family Budget Enquiries and compiling index numbers. Later in 1946 the directorate was renamed as Labour Bureau.

Current status

- **The Labour Bureau, an attached office under Ministry of Labour and Employment,** was set up on 1st October 1946.
- **It is entrusted with the work of compilation, collection, analysis and dissemination of statistics on different aspects of labour.**
 - The Labour Bureau has two main wings stationed in Shimla and Chandigarh.
- It has four regional offices at Ahmedabad, Chennai, Kolkata and Kanpur with a sub regional office at Mumbai.
- Labour Bureau collects and publishes statistics and related information on wages, earnings, productivity, absenteeism, labour turn-over, industrial relations, working and living conditions and evaluation of working of various labour enactments etc.
 - Besides important economic indicators like Consumer Price Index Numbers for Industrial, Agricultural and Rural Labourers; wage rate indices and data on industrial relations, socio-economic conditions in the organised and unorganised sector of industry etc are also released by the office.

The functions/activities of Labour Bureau can be classified under the following major heads:

- **Labour Intelligence:** This consists of compilation and maintenance of Consumer Price Index Numbers for Industrial Workers, Agricultural/Rural Labourers, Retail Price Index of Selected Essential Commodities in Urban Areas, Wage Rate Indices, Productivity Indices.
- **Labour Research:** Labour research consist of conducting research studies and surveys on labour related matters in organized and unorganized sector covering inter-alia SC/ST Workers, Women Labour, Contract Workers etc. Quick Employment Survey and Employment-Unemployment survey are also being conducted by Labour Bureau.
- **Monitoring and evaluation studies:** This entails collection, compilation and dissemination of statistical information on various aspects of labour such as employment, wages and earnings, absenteeism, labour turnover, social security, welfare amenities, industrial relations, etc. based on statutory and voluntary returns under different Labour Acts and surveys conducted.