

**Code on Social Security:**

**An Exercise of  
Deception & Fraud**

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# **Code on Social Security: An Exercise of Deception & Fraud**

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The government of India is aggressive in overhauling the existing labour laws aimed at substantially eliminating their protective components for workers and pushing out major section of the organised sector out of the coverage of most of the labour laws. The union cabinet has already cleared the Labour code on Wages and the Labour Code on Industrial Relations, which are now awaiting introduction in Parliament. The draft of the third Labour Code, on Social Security, has now been placed in public domain by the Ministry of Labour. It reflects the innovativeness of the government in terms of deception and fraud.

## **Universal Coverage?**

The Code is packaged with a declaration of intention that social security under the code is going to be universal to cover the entire workforce including in the unorganised sector like the rickshaw pullers and domestic workers. The deception starts right here.

The Code envisages that establishments with an employment level on or above the threshold decided by the government can only register under the Social Security Code to avail the social security schemes which are yet to be formulated. Now what is the government's idea about the threshold for coverage? The government has raised the threshold level of employment for coverage under the Factories Act to 40. This means that more than 72% of the factory workers will be outside the coverage under the Act. As per the proposed Small Factories Bill, no social security legislation will apply for factories employing less than the threshold level of 40 workers.

The present Code on Social Security amalgamates 15 existing social security legislations. This means that if the Bills and Codes proposed by the government on wages, industrial relations and social security are passed by the Parliament, a big section of workers in the organised sector would be deprived of even their existing social security benefits.

It is important to note that the government will not contribute a single paise for providing social security. The benefits themselves are still imaginary. So far as the unorganised sector is concerned, the workers have to contribute at the rate of 12.5% of their wages for the social security benefits. That is, they have to contribute at the same rate as the organised sector workers despite the fact that overwhelming majority of them do not get regular employment, nor the statutory minimum wages. For majority of the unorganised sector workers, employers are not identifiable. In such cases, they are categorised as self employed and have to contribute 20% of their earnings.

What does this imply for the overwhelming majority of workers? As per the report of the fifth Annual Employment Unemployment Survey (2015-16) sponsored by the Union Labour Ministry **'57.2%, i.e., more than half of regular wage/salaried workers had monthly average earnings up to Rs 10000....38.5% of the contract workers and 59.3% of the casual workers had monthly earnings of up to Rs 5000.'** *The same report says that 'only 17% of the employed persons are wage/salary earners'*. The rest are casual, contract or self-employed. The report also states that **46.6% of the workers are self employed and 67.5% of them had monthly earnings up to Rs 7500.** It is in this situation of pathetic levels of income of the workers in India that the government offers the yet to be specified social security benefits under the draft Code on Social Security, knowing too well that most of the workers cannot afford to accept it. The government can then wash off its hands nonchalantly.

In fact, making the unorganised sector workers pay at the same rate as organised sector workers is itself a mechanism for their exclusion in large numbers. *The government knows only too well that, given the fragility and frequent breaks in employment, it is next to impossible to ensure full and continuous payment of their contribution. The above Employment Unemployment Survey report clearly mentions that '436 persons out of 1000 persons are employed in either seasonal or ad-hoc type enterprises at the overall level'*. This indicates the extent of under-employment (not having any work/earning in substantial part of the year) to the tune of 43.6 per cent among the total employed. This exposes the fraud of the claims of universalisation.

At the same time the government has also empowered itself with the open-ended authority to exempt any section of workers and establishment. Practically in the draft specifies no parameter for such exemption. The very exercise with the signboard of universalisation, actually works diligently for exclusion. It is nothing but deceit committed on the mass of the workers.

### **What is in Store for the Workers?**

The Draft Code on social security amalgamates 15 central labour laws relating to social security. These include the Employees State Insurance Act, the Employees Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, the Employees Compensation Act, the Maternity Benefits Act, the Payment of Gratuity Act, the Unorganised Workers Social Security Act, the Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Cess Act, the Beedi Workers Welfare Cess Act, the Beedi Workers Welfare Fund Act, the Iron Ore Mines, Manganese Ore Mines and Chrome Ore Mines Labour Welfare Cess Act, the Iron Ore Mines, Manganese Ore Mines and Chrome Ore Mines Welfare Fund Act, the Mica Mines Labour Welfare Cess Act, the Limestone and Dolomite Mines Labour Welfare Fund Act, the Cine Workers Welfare Cess Act and the Cine Workers Welfare Fund Act.

The Code envisages the establishment of several new bodies for the implementation of its provisions. These include a National Social Security Council headed by the Prime Minister of India, a Central Board of Social Security, and State Boards of Social Security. Apart from these bodies, licensed intermediary agencies would be involved in the processes of registration of workers, receipt of contributions, management of funds and payment of benefits.

But what is not there in the entire 178 page draft Code on Social Security is exactly what kind of social security will be made available to the workers. Will all the workers get any payment called provident fund after they superannuate as in EPF Scheme? Will they get pension as per EPS 1995? Will they get medical care for themselves and their family members as in the ESI Scheme? Will they get assistance for their children's education as per the Construction Workers Welfare Scheme? Will they get any assistance for construction of houses as in the existing Acts for the Beedi and Mines workers? All these benefits under the 15 existing social security schemes would stand scrapped once this Code on Social Security is legislated. Whether the benefits available under those 15 statutory schemes will be integrated entirely in the new Code on Social Security remains a big but the most pertinent question. But the Code document gives no answer to these basic questions. However, the same Code does not miss to mention that the welfare schemes and welfare funds set up for workers in the informal economy in various states and at the central level would cease to be in operation once the new scheme funds are established. The existing organisations administering these schemes would also be phased out consequent upon the establishment of the new funds.

The government is totally silent on these. Unless these basic questions are answered, accepting this Code on Social Security is tantamount to jumping blindly in the sea of uncertainty without knowing the consequences. It would mean letting off the 'birds in hand' in quest of those flying in the sky.

Workers cannot venture on such a gamble, which the government of the day wants them to play. They cannot accept such arrogant deception lying down.

### **State Boards to Deliver Benefits?**

The Code envisages social security benefits to be delivered to the workers through state boards. The funds will be at the disposal of central social security boards or council. The experience of state level agencies administering various welfare schemes is very bad. Even in the cases where welfare funds collected through cess go straight to state government's coffer, experiences of the beneficiaries are simply horrible. In Building and Construction Workers' Cess Fund Rs 32480 crores, which has been collected as on 31-3-2017, is lying with the state governments. Till now, after 21 years of the operation of the Construction Workers Welfare Scheme, only Rs 7286.52 crore has been spent.

The failure is on many fronts. First, the cess collected over last two decades *is* very low compared with the construction projects undertaken in the country during the same period the cost/value of which has been escalating every year. This means, a sizable section of the construction companies evaded or are allowed to evade cess payment by respective state governments, which are more concerned about ease of doing business than workers' welfare.

Second, only 2.56 crore construction workers have been registered with all the state welfare boards together, while the total construction workers in the country are 5 crores as per official estimates, but not less than 10 crores in reality. This means hardly one fourth of the eligible and entitled workers are covered by the scheme and three fourth are left out—the same game of exclusion.

If we look at state level data of both enrolment of workers and collection, the picture turns more horrible. For example, in Maharashtra, known to be an industrialised state with lot

of construction projects, the enrolment of construction workers with the welfare board is only 5.93 lakh. The expenditure is only Rs 255.5 crore in last twenty years although the collection is above Rs 5000 crore. In Gujarat, another industrialised state buzzing with construction activities, enrolment of workers is only 4.54 lakh and expenditure only Rs 35 crore while the cess fund at the disposal of state is more than Rs 4000 crore. The picture is clear. It is not merely a failure on the part of the state to implement. Non-implementation is being promoted both in respect of cess collection, enrolment and delivery of benefits. In almost all the states, majority of the lawfully entitled workers are being kept excluded.

Same is the case of other welfare schemes meant for the unorganised sector workers run by most of the state governments where the number of beneficiaries is an insignificant fraction of those who are actually legally entitled. The reason is clear. Most of the state governments are bound by the compulsion to make the burden of compliance as low as possible. Further they do not have the infrastructure with requisite trained manpower to run those schemes effectively to cover the entire entitled population.

The implementation of the schemes run by the central government is no good either. Take the case Rastriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY), and a host of welfare schemes announced by the Prime Minister, although it was mostly renaming old functional schemes. The number of persons registered under those schemes is a small fraction of the total number of entitled beneficiaries. (RSBY—4.13 crore; Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana—93,317; and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana—82.4 lakh)

It is in such a situation that the Code on Social Security seeks to dismantle the already functional infrastructure and network of the major Social Security Schemes in the country like Employees Provident Fund Scheme, Employees State Insurance Scheme, Coal Mines Provident Fund Scheme, which were all products of legislation by Parliament with

defined contribution as well as multi-pronged benefits. These three schemes have been successfully functioning since several decades and with the help of technology and functional network, have been able deliver benefits more or less satisfactorily to most of their subscribers. Can anybody imagine, how a EPF subscriber will get his or her benefit of either temporary withdrawal or final settlement followed by pension under EPS 1995 on a defined benefit basis, from the boards run by the state government! Is it all practical or possible? How long will the state take to set up appropriate infrastructure with requisite number of trained manpower and widespread delivery network to ensure multi-dimensional benefits being given by EPF, ESI and CMPF?

The EPF scheme besides setting the mechanism to collect contributions from both employers and workers, provides for facility of temporary withdrawal, permanent withdrawal, final payment on superannuation, and monthly pension. CMPF (Coal Mines Provident Fund) is giving even better benefits than EPF. ESI scheme provides for primary, secondary and tertiary health care including super-speciality treatment through its hospitals and dispensary net work throughout the country, besides tie-up arrangement with other hospitals. ESI also provides seven types of cash benefits to the registered workers. The funds for these schemes have been generated by the concerned workers and these belong to the concerned subscriber workers only. The Code on Social Security is totally silent whether same benefits under EPF, ESI and CMPF will continue even after their amalgamation. Definitely there will be dilution. Moreover the scheme of delivery of benefits through state board cannot just work to cater those scheme specific benefits to specific category of workforce in entirety.

The Code on Social Security also envisages payment of gratuity to those entitled for the same as per the 'Scheme'. What is that 'Scheme' and whether it will be as per the present Payment of Gratuity Act, has not been clarified. Curiously enough, the Code stipulates a contribution at the rate of 2%

by the employers for the same to be paid to state Social Security Board by all establishments covered by the Gratuity Act. The provision made for payment of contribution towards gratuity for the contract workers to be made by the Principal Employer is a welcome provision, provided it is properly enforced. But the Gratuity Payment formulation as per existing Act requires at least a funding of 4.5% of the workers' wage. Whether payment of gratuity to the entitled workers will be reduced by half, has not been clarified, thereby leaving a grey area.

### **Murder of Tripartism—Stifling of Workers' Voice**

The National Social Security Council which will be the highest decision making forum under the Code will be chaired by the Prime Minister. But the composition of the National Council as stipulated by the Code is in gross violation of and departure from the basic principle of tripartism. The whole body will be nominated by the central government, including those from employees'/workers' organisations. Also, the basic principle of tripartism - that there will be equal representation of all stakeholders, viz., employees, employers and governments in the tripartite council governing the social security benefit of the workers/employees, has been given a go by.

So far as employees' representation is concerned, there will be only two representatives from the employees' organisations (instead of the present practice of allowing six central trade unions to represent in Central Board of Trustees of EPFO or the governing body of ESIC), that too as per choice of the central government. Although, the Code mentions about consultation with the recognised employees' organisations, it has severely restricted the exercise of opinion and choice of the employees' organisations/trade unions by stipulating that one of the two representatives must be representing the unorganised sector workers. This is the window of accommodating Sangh sponsored NGOs. Now, all the recognised Central Trade Unions in the country represent workers in both the organised sector and

unorganised sectors. Workers from the unorganised sector comprise the overwhelming majority of membership of all the recognised central trade unions. It is beyond the jurisdiction and right of the central government to dictate trade unions on whom to nominate in the National Council. At the same time the government has no right to dictate that a particular trade union nominee should be allowed to continue only for two terms. Nominating their representatives, whether for two terms or even one term or for any number of terms, is the prerogative of the *trade unions*. (The NDA government during its previous tenure tried to impose such conditions on employees' representation in EPF and ESI but in the face of opposition by all the trade unions finally relented.)

Similarly, employees' representatives in the Central Social Security Board and State level Boards will be only 5, to be nominated by the respective governments. In all cases, the number of employees' representatives in all those forums, will be an insignificant minority compared to the rest of the members nominated (more appropriately appointed) by the central government, (or state government) be it their own representatives, representatives of state governments, or so called experts numbering not less than five, MPs or Social Security Regulator. The entire affair of the National Social Security Council is going to be an act of unilateralism by the government appointees. Workers will have no voice in the forums governing the funds, mostly contributed by the workers and meant for workers' social security benefits. These will be governed by boards, comprising mostly yes-persons of the government. This is nothing but a sheer betrayal of the principle of tripartism including the concerned ILO Convention, besides being brazenly undemocratic.

### **Registering the Beneficiaries - Another Mode of Exclusion**

As per provisions of the Code, workers are required to be registered with Social Security Board for availing social security benefits. AADHAR card is **mandatory** for such

registration. The narratives given in the Code does not clearly clarify whether a worker can get individually registered without the endorsement of the establishment employing him. Such doubt gets substantiated, if the provisions made in the matter of cessation or deactivation of registration is looked into. In that event, it becomes doubtful as to how the mass of the unorganised sector workers who work under multiple numbers of employers even within a year's span, would get registered under the code. Thus, the tall claim of coverage of domestic workers (who simultaneously work in multiple numbers of households) or rickshaw-pullers under the Code on Social Security appears to be hollow. Similarly, in case of construction workers who work under various projects involving frequent change of site of work but have got registered in their existing welfare schemes through the present system under Building & Other Construction Workers Welfare Act, a serious apprehension arises, as to whether, they would be able to defend their registration under the new dispensation of Code on Social Security.

Secondly, the chapter on cessation of registration clearly says that a registered worker, ceasing to work, either voluntarily (or forcibly through retrenchment or dismissal) will also cease to be registered under the social security schemes. Even in case of temporary discontinuity of work, whether his registration will continue or not will depend on his return to work within a stipulated period (stipulation to be made by the government, which has not yet been done).

This situation creates a grave uncertainty for both organised sector and unorganised sector workers. In the midst of economic crisis, retrenchment, dismissal and more respectably (?), downsizing of workforce has become a regularly practiced phenomenon in almost all the workplaces, particularly in the private sector. For even in the organised sector, the number of regular workers is an insignificant minority. Majority of the workforce is either casual/temporary or on contract. Their work is subjected to frequent change and has many intermittent breaks. Once they are registered

under the Code schemes and start contributing as per the stipulation, what will be the fate of their contribution as well as social security benefits, on their deregistration owing to loss of jobs (however temporary that may be) or change of employment with a break in between, has not been answered. For unorganised sector workers where such job-loss or break in employment are more frequent, and in case of those who do not get jobs for all the days in a year, the Code on Social Security does not have anything reassuring despite all the noise about universalisation meant for public consumption. Can this at all be relied upon?

### **Dismantling of the Existing Functional Machineries of Social Security**

A close scrutiny of the 178 pages long Code on Social Security makes it clear that none of the claims stand the test. All basic questions relating to the continuity of the functional social security schemes for the organised sector and some for unorganised sector workers like Construction, Beedi, Mines, etc are unanswered and unclarified. Whatever has been put in black and white is more focused on exclusion than on inclusion. The tall claim of universalisation falls flat.

But even if we assume that all the benefit under EPF and ESI and other schemes will continue under new dispensation, who would deliver these benefits? As per Code, the benefits will be delivered through State Boards functioning under State governments. Just assume a situation. Both EPF and ESI are having their respective networks of regional offices armed with the requisite staff and infrastructure (including hospital and dispensary network in case of ESI) to deliver the benefits. Once the responsibility of delivering benefits under these schemes is vested with the state social security boards under state governments, the entire infrastructure, more particularly the trained employees under the roll of central government will become a non-entity so far as the operation of these schemes are concerned. Even the funds will not remain with them and will be channelised to National Social

Security Council. Then, how is it possible that the state boards will be able to deliver the benefits as per the scheme? Inevitably the changeover of the delivery mechanism will create a mess. The concerned workers, particularly those on the verge of retirement or those seriously ailing, requiring prompt medical attendance will stand to suffer, despite the fact they all have paid their dues on time and without default. One may note that the hospital network of ESIC is presently of two types; one directly run by ESIC and other run by the state governments with ESIC providing funds. The state-run ESI hospitals are much inferior compared to ESIC-run hospitals in most of the states. Such situation will aggravate many times, once the Code is operationalised.

### **Why Such Misadventure?**

But still one question arises. Why is such an exercise, no doubt innovative but adventurous, attempted? Most of the 15 social security legislations, that are sought to be scrapped, have a dedicated funding mechanism. Many have a huge corpus at their disposal. All of them are products of legislation by Parliament which also defined categorically the manner in which the huge corpus of fund can be managed and handled and also deployed for investment. EPFO has around 17 crore accountholders and around 4 crore plus live subscribers every month. It has a corpus of more than Rs 9 lakh crore at its disposal. ESIC has around 3 crore live subscribers and has a reserve fund of Rs 48000 crore. Its total corpus will be Rs 57000 crore by the end current financial year. CMPF has a corpus of not less than Rs 75000 crore. All these funds are being governed by their respective tripartite committees which have been opposing deployment of these huge funds, entirely generated by contribution of workers and by employers on workers' account, in to the stock market. Despite their opposition, the Finance Ministry, in exercise of its limited powers, managed to divert 15% of the EPF fund for speculative purposes. But there have still been hurdles to do whatever one likes with this huge corpus in EPFO, ESIC and CMPF.

Similarly, a corpus of Rs 32480 crore (as on 31-3-2017) under the Building and Other Construction Workers' Welfare Fund is lying with various state governments. The concerned legislation under which this welfare scheme has been framed clearly defined the heads on which this huge corpus can be spent. Similarly other cess funded welfare schemes are there like in Beedi, Mines etc which are also having a fund at their disposal.

The Code on Social Security has yet kept the types of social security schemes undefined and uncertain. But *it* has made one thing certain. The huge corpus under EPFO, ESIC, CMPF and other cess funded schemes amounting to not less than Rs 11 lakh crore with a provision of recurring inflows will be vested with the National Social Security Council, which is liberated from the scrutiny of the Tripartite Statutory Boards. The representation of employees' organisations in this National Council armed with such huge corpus mostly generated by workers' contribution, will be an insignificant minority. Hence, there will be not that strong an opposition to speculative deployment of this huge fund. That is the main purpose of this exercise. **By** repealing all the 15 social security legislations and silencing workers' voice in a dubious manner, the government wants to empower itself to freely speculate with the social security funds generated by the workers, *to maintain the temperature of the stock market for the benefit of their corporate bosses*. At the same time, the statutory binding force of the benefits under EPF, ESIC, CMPF and other social security benefits will be snatched. A part of those benefits may, of course, come back through schemes formulated by Social Security Boards at central and state level.

Another atrocious aspect of the draft Code on Social Security is that while it clearly specifies the contributions to be made by the workers, including the unorganised sector workers, self employed etc, it is totally silent on the contribution of either the central government or the state governments. At the same time, who will bear the administrative expense of

the entire management of the social security project both at centre and the states has been nowhere specified. Administrative expense should not be met from the social security funds generated out of contribution of workers. It should be entirely borne by the Govts.

Such retrograde design of loot and plunder must not pass. Working Class must resist this through united struggle.

## **Conclusion**

### **What Should be the Alternative to this Design of Loot and Plunder?**

The main intent of putting in place a single social security project for workers in both the organised and unorganised sectors, having widely divergent working conditions and earning levels, is only to ensure much speedier transfer of resources from millions of working people to handful corporate blood-suckers. If the government is really sincere in providing social security to all workers, to make it really universal, it should frame two sets of strategies.

### **Strengthen and Widen the Coverage of EPF and ESI**

The scope of the existing functional schemes like EPF and ESI should be widened further, doing away with the threshold level of employment from existing 20 and 10. It should ensure that whoever is employed in lieu of wages, irrespective of level of employment should be brought under EPF and ESI schemes. Even at present level of stipulated threshold of 20, the EPF subscribership of around 4 crore can just be doubled in the least. The enforcement machinery is at present forced into inaction to severely water down inspection on the plea of portal based randomised inspection. This is nothing but a biggest fraud on the very concept of inspection.

If threshold restriction is done away with, EPF coverage can be widened at least five times from the present level.

Similarly, in respect of ESI scheme also, the fraudulent inspection and enforcement process has kept the number of ESI subscribers even below the EPF despite the fact that the threshold level of employment for coverage of ESI is 10. If enforcement machinery is liberated from the shackles of employer-government nexus, the ESI subscribership will straightway increase to at least three times the present level of 3 crore. If threshold level restriction is done away with, ESI beneficiaries will also increase by at least five times. EPF and ESI basically cater to almost the same constituency of workforce.

Organised sector employment is featured by widespread contractorisation, casualisation of workforce and rampant outsourcing of even core operational activities. Through appropriate legislative changes, principal employers must be made responsible for ensuring coverage of all contract and casual workers including the workers of the outsourcing agents under EPF and ESI and similar social security measures including Maternity Benefit Act. Every off-loading of jobs to contractors must be made through licensed contractors only. Licensing should be made compulsory for all contractor agencies irrespective of their level of employment. The Licensing Authority should also be empowered to have the wherewithal to force implementation of all labour laws including social security legislation while awarding license along with a provision of filing compulsory annual returns on such implementation. The Rajasthan state government's amendment of the Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act to allow contractors employing up to 50 to go without license and similar legislations at the state level must be scrapped.

### **For A Comprehensive Social Security for the Unorganised Sector Workers**

In order to devise an effective all embracing social security scheme for the unorganised sector workers, the extremely fragile character of their employment relations must be taken

into consideration. Often, the employers in the unorganised sector cannot be clearly recognised; identity of the workers many times overlaps with that of the self employed. While around 46.6% of workforce is self-employed, more than ninety-five per cent of them are actually workers in proxy, serving the medium and large scale industries and establishments. Occupation specific mechanism should be evolved for them in order to get them enrolled in the social security schemes.

For example, the welfare scheme for the building and other construction workers permits the involvement of trade unions to identify the construction workers for enrolment in the scheme.

Secondly, infrastructure for enforcement and implementation of the already existing social security schemes for Beedi Workers, Mines workers, and construction workers etc—all with dedicated funding arrangement must be widened and strengthened. It is clear from the existing data that the collection of cess as per the Building and Other Construction Workers' Welfare Fund Act has lot of loopholes including corrupt practices allowing large number of construction projects to evade cess payment. On the other hand, most of the state governments have been neglecting enrolment of all the entitled construction workers under the scheme. Around 75% of the construction workers have not yet been enrolled in the state level welfare boards. Again the Labour Ministry's recent decision to discontinue enrolling the MNREGA workers in the Construction Workers' Welfare Scheme is a most retrograde move which must be revoked. The government should also make appropriate contribution to the fund on account of the MNREGA workers to be covered under the Construction Workers Welfare Scheme. Plugging all the deficits and loopholes in the existing occupation specific welfare cum social security schemes, which have been achieved through long struggle, **is possible** provided there is political will on the part of the central and state governments.

Thirdly, social security for unorganised sector workers cannot be managed only with workers' contribution. It cannot even take off without government funding for the simple reason that in majority of cases it will difficult, rather impossible, to identify the employers. Government funding can come either directly or through imposition of cess on the big corporate/business entities. It is justified since there are big business establishments in the country, which are no less benefited both directly and indirectly by the contribution of unorganised sector workers in the national economy. If only one per cent cess on the construction projects can provide for multi-benefit social security to the construction workers, a general cess on all business establishments can be a good source of funds for funding the social security requirement of the unorganised sector workers. The benefits should include pension, gratuity, medical care, housing-assistance and education-assistance for workers children etc. For making the enrolment effective, a nominal contribution can also be collected from the unorganised sector workers. Such nominal contribution can also generate substantial fund, if the governments, both at the centre and in the states, make serious efforts to enforce at least the statutory minimum wage including variable DA for the unorganised sector workers in all the states. This scheme including funding arrangement should be enforced and implemented through a centrally monitored Authority with its dedicated infrastructure network both for enforcement of coverage, funding and also delivery of benefits with its offices and wings spread in all the states at least up to district level.

### **United Struggle to Resist as well as to Achieve the Alternative**

The working class movement must unitedly expose the hollowness and the deceptive character of the proposed Code on Social Security and its disastrous impact on the working people. The united movement should also expose the nasty conspiracy of the government at the centre to hijack the huge funds of the existing functional social security schemes, belonging to the workers from the existing supervision by the

respective tripartite committees for serving the speculative trade in the stock market. We should also project the alternative enumerated above in our campaign. We have to drive home the fact that it is possible to establish comprehensive social security net for the unorganised sector workers with widest coverage; it is possible to widen and strengthen the existing social security schemes for the organised sector workers by completely enrolling the contract, temporary workers and workers of the outsource-agencies within their coverage; and it is also possible to improve and enhance the benefits substantially. These are all possible provided the government has the political will. Fund and resources can never be a problem at all.

What is necessary to compel the government to take such measures is united struggle against the neoliberal policy regime and the politics that support these policies. That is the need of the hour. Because, the proposed Code on Social Security is the expression, in its worst form, of the neoliberal policies. To ensure a decisive retreat of this neoliberalism, resistance must be built up at the doorstep of all organised sector establishments with simultaneous militant mobilisations of workers of both the sectors throughout the country.

That is how we can overcome. And we will overcome.

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