



## EDITORIAL: INDIAN EXPRESS

**GENERAL STUDIES 2: GOVERNANCE**

**DATE: 06.01.2025**

**TOPIC: UNORGANIZED WORKERS & MIGRANT WORKERS**

### A JOURNEY TO VISIBILITY

#### The e-Shram Portal and One-Stop Solution: Addressing Social Security for Unorganised and Migrant Workers

India's unorganised workforce, including migrant workers, has historically struggled with a lack of social security and institutional support. The e-Shram portal and One-Stop Solution (OSS) platform represent significant steps towards addressing these challenges. However, their effectiveness depends on overcoming implementation barriers and ensuring universal access.

#### A Comprehensive Database for Unorganised Workers

The Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoL&E) launched the e-Shram portal to create a comprehensive database of unorganised workers.

- **Global Recognition:** With over 300 million registered workers, it is the world's largest database for unorganised labour.
- **COVID-19 Origins:** The initiative followed the Supreme Court's directive during the pandemic to establish a national database addressing the precarious conditions of migrant workers.
- **Key Features:** Workers can register themselves on a self-declaration basis across 400 occupations in 30 sectors. The registration is Aadhaar-verified and Aadhaar-seeded.

#### Historical Context: Addressing a Longstanding Need

The need for a database on unorganised workers has been recognised for decades.

- **Interstate Migrant Workmen Act, 1979:** Mandated reporting of interstate workers by labour contractors but was poorly implemented.
- **Policy Recommendations:** The National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector (2007) and the Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act (2008) proposed universal registration systems and identity cards. However, these initiatives failed to materialise effectively.

#### Persistent Challenges for Migrant Workers

Migrant workers face unique vulnerabilities, including limited access to services, stigma, and exploitation.



- **Registration vs. Benefits:** While the e-Shram portal has successfully registered millions, extending tangible social security benefits remains a challenge.
- **Exclusion from Schemes:** Many workers are still unable to access critical programmes such as ration cards and food security initiatives

## Building a system that sees the migrant worker

### The One-Stop Solution (OSS): Integrating Welfare

The One-Stop Solution (OSS) platform, launched in October, aims to bridge gaps in social security access.

- **Integrated Approach:** OSS links schemes like One Nation One Ration Card, MGNREGA, and PM Shram Yogi Maandhan with the e-Shram portal, enabling seamless access to welfare initiatives.
- **Future Plans:** The government intends to integrate additional programmes, enhancing the platform's utility for unorganised workers.

### Barriers to Universal Access

Despite its potential, the e-Shram portal faces several challenges in achieving universal coverage:

- **Documentation Gaps:** Many workers lack essential documents such as Aadhaar cards, ration cards, or mobile numbers.
- **Technology Accessibility:** Limited digital literacy and access to technology hinder effective registration and usage of the portal.

### Gender Dimensions and Portability of Benefits

Women constitute a significant proportion of registered workers, highlighting progress but also exposing gaps in gender-sensitive policy design.

- **Promising Trend:** Women account for 53.59% of all registered workers, reflecting efforts to address labour market inequalities.
- **Portability Concerns:** Inter-state migrants, a significant segment of unorganised workers, require seamless transferability of benefits across states. The OSS must prioritise this aspect to ensure inclusivity.

### Need for Disaggregated Data

A nuanced understanding of worker profiles is critical for designing targeted policies.

- **Diverse Profiles:** Unorganised workers vary significantly in socio-cultural, regional, and economic characteristics.



- **Policy Gaps:** The absence of detailed, disaggregated data limits the ability to create equitable and inclusive interventions.

## Migrants as Economic Assets

Unorganised and migrant workers should be viewed not just as beneficiaries but as critical drivers of the economy.

- **Human Development Focus:** Policies must aim to enhance the human capital of these workers, aligning with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- **Vision of a Developed India:** Effective social protection systems are essential for realising the goal of "Viksit Bharat" (Developed India).

## Welfare Schemes for e-Shram Workers

The e-Shram portal integrates multiple welfare schemes to support unorganised workers, including:

1. **Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan Yojana (PM-SYM):** Pension for unorganised workers.
2. **National Pension Scheme for Traders and Self-employed Persons (NPS):** Financial security for small traders.
3. **Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Yojana (PMJJBY):** Life insurance coverage.
4. **Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY):** Accidental insurance.
5. **Atal Pension Yojana:** Pension for workers in the informal sector.
6. **Public Distribution System (PDS):** Ensures food security.
7. **Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Gramin (PMAY-G):** Housing support.
8. **National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP):** Old-age protection.
9. **Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY):** Health insurance.
10. **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Maandhan Yojana:** Pension for small and marginal farmers.
11. **Health Insurance Scheme for Weavers (HIS):** Healthcare support for traditional artisans.

## Conclusion: A Holistic Approach Forward

The e-Shram portal and OSS are transformative initiatives but require focused efforts to address documentation barriers, improve data accuracy, and ensure gender-sensitive and portable benefits. By addressing these challenges and integrating innovative approaches, India can create an inclusive social security framework that not only protects its unorganised workforce but also maximises its developmental potential.



# PL RAJ IAS & IPS ACADEMY

MAKING YOU SERVE THE NATION

Source: <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/building-a-system-that-sees-the-migrant-worker-9761563/>



**P.L. RAJ IAS & IPS ACADEMY | 1447/C, 3rd floor, 15th Main Road,  
Anna Nagar West, Chennai-40. Ph.No.044-42323192, 9445032221  
Email: plrajmemorial@gmail.com Website: www.plrajasacademy.com  
Telegram link: <https://t.me/plrajas2006> YouTube: P L RAJ IAS & IPS ACADEMY**