

Workers connect...

Why are our Labour Laws Changing?

With the intention of simplification of 44 existing labour laws, the Government of India is trying to legislate four codes on labour – on wages, industrial relations, social security and safety, and on health and working conditions. Simultaneously the government is proposing amendments to the Contract Labour Act, the Factories Act, the Industrial Disputes Act, both at the state level and at the centre. But this is not happening just in our country. Elsewhere across the globe, Emmanuel Macron, the newly elected president of France, amidst continuing protests by trade unions, passed executive orders in August to provide greater freedom to employers to hire and fire and put a simultaneous cap on termination dues and also drastically change the collective bargaining structure in the country. The Brazilian Senate too recently approved a labour reform bill that aims to reduce costs for businesses and allow firms to negotiate contracts freely with employees.

Who is the simplification being done for? Why is it being done?

Governments across the world are claiming that stringent labour laws are harming the economy and is the greatest impediment for job creation and thus an overhaul of the legislative framework is long overdue. The proposed changes are aimed to create jobs and boost the economies. But this is far from the truth. Let us take two steps back and try to understand this.

Reorganisation of Production and the Need for Flexibility

Mass production, perfected by the Fordist mode of production in the 20th century, institutionalised the division of labour, both vertically and horizontally, under one roof. Fordism led to standardisation of the end product. This meant making identical products in large quantities for mass consumption.

Russian Revolution: On the other hand, the Russian Revolution in 1917, exactly a hundred years from now, inspired socialists and trade unionists across the world and number of strikes

and protests spiked. In 1916, in Britain alone, 276 thousand workers were involved in strikes which increased to 2,591 thousand workers in 1919.

Workers, under the same roof from the start to the end of the production process, were able to come together and unite against a common adversary, their single monolithic employer. They may have been in different factories, departments, divisions, locations but all workers working for Ford Motors or GE, for example, identified themselves as workers of Ford or GE. This gave rise to powerful militant unions across the industrialised world.

With the consolidation of the Soviet Union, intensified union resistance on one hand and the economic crisis of the 1930s on the other, the economic and political dominance of the US came under threat. The threat worsened with the rise of Japan in Asia as a military power.

Rise of Japan: The great devastation of the Japanese economy during the World War II and the need to rebuild it from scratch led in many cases to the introduction of new technology and new management techniques, to recreate these companies. Much of the militarized industry converted to peacetime activity. The top 3 automobile companies, Toyota, Nissan, and Isuzu, moved from producing military trucks to passenger cars.

The restructuring of these industries was met with a friendly international environment of trade, cheap technology and cheap raw materials in the first world, to counter the Soviet bloc. During the Cold War years, Japanese markets were allowed to be closed while the US market was opened to Japanese goods. This gave a competitive edge to Japanese industries. The Toyota model of production changed the way corporations looked at shopfloor management and workplace control, at organisation of production processes, at use of advanced technology and communication. They also found a new way to look at unions.

Introduction of management practices such as

Kaizen, 5S, TPM etc. reorganised the shopfloor and reduced 'waste' by increasing work intensity of workers on the shopfloor. Identification of 'core' and 'non-core' activities in a production process created a possibility of outsourcing the non-core activities to other agencies to increase profit.

Companies began to break down the entire production process into different activities or cost centres and perform complex calculations to determine the cost of performing these activities within its own structure and outside it. Companies outsource the cost centres they see as non-core to cut costs and squeeze in the cost of production. These are standalone firms which provide services only for the ancillary activities. What is identified as core activities in reality are those that generate maximum value or revenue. Those functions or activities that are seen as costs to maintain the core function are then outsourced. For example, maintenance of machinery, canteens for workers, janitorial staff etc. are all seen as non-core and hence outsourced. This created a system of production process that has both vertical connections and horizontal connections that link up to produce the final product but not produce the product in its entirety any more.

From Flexibility to Mobility

The reorganisation of the production process using innovations in technology and communication allowed employers the flexibility to outsource non-core activities to other companies to push costs down. This led to new forms of specialisation.

For example, Sodexo, a French food services and facilities management company, runs the canteen in Tata Motors plants. Sodexo, then hires contractors to supply workers to them. Thus, Tata Motors only produces the trucks, Sodexo feeds the workers at the truck plant. But the workers who finally work in the canteen of Tata Motors are never sure whether they work for Tata Motors, or Sodexo (whose uniform they wear), or the labour contractor (who disburses their wage). Each tier is created for the sole purpose of camouflaging the employer-employee relation with the principle employer, Tata Motors, in this case, and cutting cost. So as you go down the tiers, less the cost, and hence lower the wages and cost of social security, higher the job insecurity and higher the hazards at work.

Similarly the security services, janitorial staff are also outsourced to different companies in order to cut costs. This process of pushing wages downward continuously has led to a 'race to the bottom' across the world with a concurrent demand for labour law reform to ensure a legal framework that allow corporations access to an unprotected and vulnerable workforce.

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the opening up of the economies in the global south in the late 1980s and 1990s led to a boost in this predatory expansion of multinational corporations. They soon started shifting their production centres from the global north to the global south in search of cheaper destinations of productions. This search continues – from one country to another (e.g. from France to India, from India to Bangladesh) from one region to another (from Europe or N America to Asia), from industrial centres to non-industrial centres within a country (from Mumbai, Chennai to Baddi in Himachal Pradesh or Pantnagar in Uttarakhand).

Differentiation of Workers within Factories: Workers within even core activities are divided into different categories such as permanent workers, direct contract workers, contract workers through contractors, trainees, associates, apprentices, etc. Permanent workers with a higher wage and social security than the others form a miniscule portion of the workforce.

Contractors supplying workers of different categories usually bid for this work contract. The company gives the contract to the lowest bidder. The lowest bidder will also pay its workers the lowest wages and other benefits compared to the other bidders. Thus in the same factory two workers performing the same function, can be paid differently and most importantly, can be divided on the shopfloor along these lines.

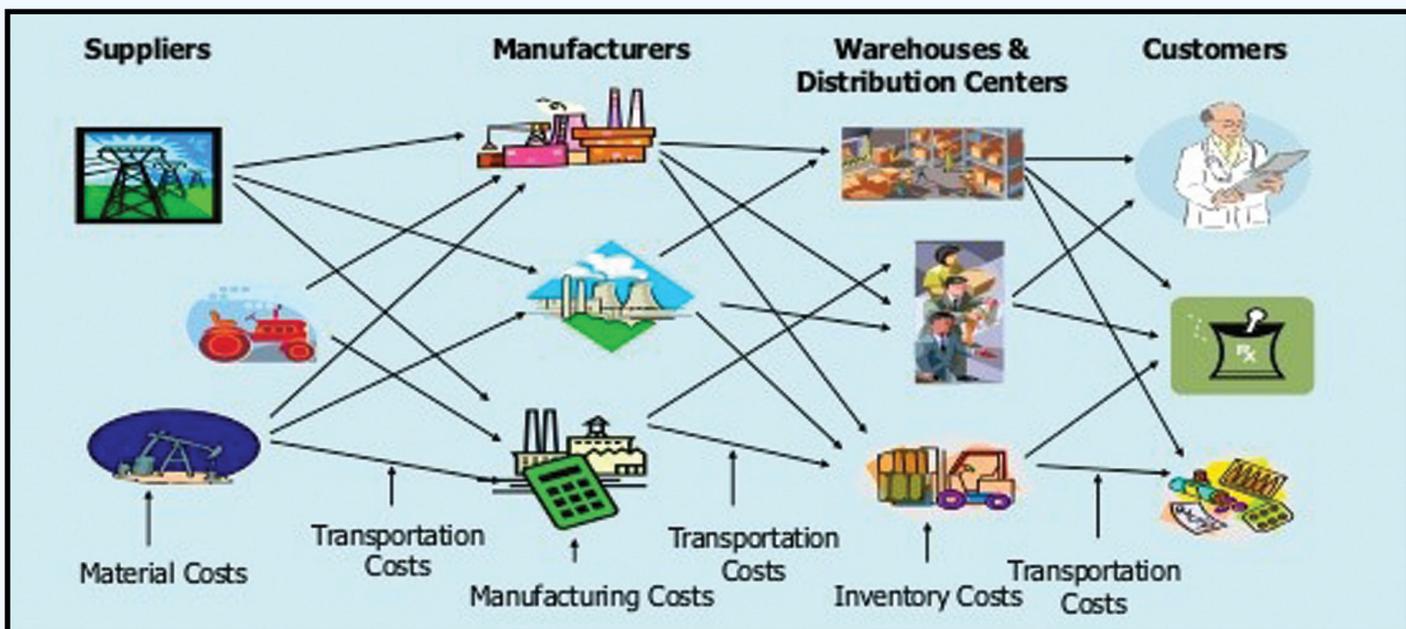
What is the Global Supply Chain?

A global supply chain refers to the network created among different companies producing, handling, and distributing specific products. The buying/sourcing practices determine the conditions of work in the entire supply chain, be it for pharmaceuticals, garments or cars or the even the chocolates that our children eat.

The final seller who buys the products they sell from across the world controls the entire chain. In many sectors today the final seller

no longer produces the product. They only buy it from different manufacturers and sell it to the consumers. Thereby the product sold has increasingly got alienated from the manufacturers. The final seller, who buys from the manufacturers, constantly tries to lower the buying price to both lower the cost of the commodity in many cases, especially garments, electronics, and also to increase their profit margin, by squeezing the different layers in the chain. This squeezing ultimately affects the workers at every level in the chain. Thus the global supply chain constantly pushes for irregularisation to lower buying prices.

has a responsibility to respect labour rights in their operations and governments have the duty to implement and enforce national laws and regulations”; the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development also includes Decent Work across global supply chain as its goal. The ILO resolution on decent work in the global supply chains also urges governments to strengthen the tripartite process through collective agreements, international framework agreements; to ensure stricter measures in the labour monitoring system; and calls for strengthening the rights of all workers to organise and form unions across the supply chain.



This push for low costs has created a demand for low cost workers – women, migrant workers, and other vulnerable workers are being hired to replace unionised protected workers, creating a condition of unfair competition between suppliers who end up violating basic labour regulations and international labour standards. The need for survival and competition between workers pushes vulnerable workers to accept this race to the bottom. The existing legislative protections won by through trade union struggles and legal battles over the last century today stand as barriers to this competitive race for insecure and low paid jobs, but jobs nonetheless. Employers across the world therefore are using this vulnerability of workers in the face of rising unemployment and pushing for removal of these barriers.

But these principles are narrow in their scope and can be reduced to paper promises if we change the very structure of labour protection within national legislative framework. In a classic instance of bypassing international convention, India recently ratified the Child Labour convention of the ILO after changing the definition of child labour that allowed for child labour in family enterprises, however hazardous it may be.

Miwa Sado, a 31-year-old journalist at Japan's public broadcasting company, NHK, died of heart failure in July 2013. Labour inspectors finally ruled that the death had been caused by overwork. She had worked 159 hours of overtime and had taken only two days off in the month leading up to her death. According to the government, more than 2,000 workers killed themselves due to work-related stress while several others have died of heart attacks, strokes and other conditions brought on by overworking in the year ending March 2016. This is so common in Japan that they even have a name for it – Karoshi (death from overwork)!

International Guiding Principles: The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UN Guiding Principles) acknowledges this increasing push by corporations for flexibility and right to mobility and has stated that “business

The divisions among workers are not real. They have been created to break unity among workers. They have been created to lower standards at work. They have been created to lower wages, make workers work longer hours, make them sick, burnout before their time. Thus the struggle against labour law reform has to go simultaneously with the effort to build strong unions of all workers along the supply chain.

Policy News

Panel set up to revise minimum wages for tea workers in Assam

18 October 2017: The labour welfare department of Assam set up a minimum wages advisory board in a bid to fix the minimum wages of tea plantation workers. The minimum daily wage for unskilled labourers in Assam is Rs. 250, while that of tea plantation workers is only Rs. 137 in the Brahmaputra Valley and Rs. 95 in the Barak Valley.

This is a departure from the earlier practice, where minimum wages were fixed through bilateral negotiation between tea plantation owners' associations represented by the Consultative Committee of Planters Association (CCPA) owners and the Assam Chah Majdoor Sangha, affiliated to the INTUC.

The CCPA is strongly resisting this move. The BJP government has included the BMS in the trade union representation in the tripartite body but excluded the left unions.

Amendment to Plantations Labour Act discussed

13 October 2017 : Following the second tripartite meeting to discuss the amendment bill to the Plantation Labour Act with various stakeholders from Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, the Union Minister of State for Labour & Employment, Santosh Kumar Gangwar, noted that some of the plantations were making losses and therefore have not been able to provide workers with adequate facilities. He added that the Central Government as well as the Tea Board, Coffee Board and the Rubber Board have several schemes aimed at benefiting plantation workers. The Plantation Labour Act (PLA) left very little room for other government agencies to intervene, thereby proposing a dilution of the PLA to reduce the responsibility of the plantation owners and move the legal rights of the plantation workers to a framework of non-

justiciable dole given out through government schemes.

The minister clearly stated that the objective of the meeting was to balance the interests of the workers with those of the plantation owners.

Labour Ministry invites views on Domestic worker policy

10 October 2017: The Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India has invited views of all stakeholders and general comments on the National Policy for Domestic Workers by 10 November 2017. The comment must be sent to the DGLW, Jaisalmer House, 26 Mansingh Road, New Delhi – 110011 or email to Mr. Rajit Punhani, DGLW at punhanir@nic.in

Broadly the policy will aim:

- To clearly define the various categories of domestic work, employers and placement agencies;
- To expand the scope of existing legislation, policies and schemes to grant domestic workers rights that are enshrined in laws for other category of workers including minimum wage, equal remuneration etc.;
- To set up institutional mechanisms for social security, fair terms of employment, for grievance redressal and dispute resolution;
- To facilitate recognition of domestic workers as workers and registering them as workers with the labour department;
- To promote the right to freedom of association of domestic workers
- To develop a model employment contract with well-defined period of work and rest;
- To regulate recruitment and placement agencies through a defined policy
- To form tripartite implementation committees as central, state and district levels.

Rs 3000 Crore Action Plan to Stop Sewer Deaths in Delhi

5 October 2017: In a bid to stop sewer deaths in Delhi, the civic authorities have proposed a Rs 3,000 crore plan of mechanisation to the Lieutenant Governor of Delhi.

The budget is for the equipment required for mechanised cleaning of the sewer. The civic

agencies have proposed to get 90 super-suction machines, 20 suction-cum-jetting machines and 20 suction machines and other equipment.

However, the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis have demanded that the Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board model be adopted. This model provides loans and subsidies to manual scavengers to buy these machines so that they can become 'dalit entrepreneurs'.

Ministry of Labour and Employment invites Comments on proposed Amendment to the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970

27 September 2017: Ministry of Labour and Employment invited comments, suggestions, inputs on their proposed Amendment to the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970. The comments had to reach the Ministry on or before 27 October 2017.

The proposed amendments attempt to exempt principle employers from all responsibility of contract workers employed in their establishment. According to the proposed amendment the contract workers will be now considered the responsibility of the contracting company. Further, contractors can now get temporary work contracts even if they do not meet the minimum requirements. They would be required to fulfill those requirements within a given period. This would mean short term contracts which do not conform to minimum requirements will now be allowed in law to work. This will make workplaces more unsafe.

Collective Bargaining

Coal India signs New Wage Agreement

10 October 2017: Ending months of negotiations, Coal India Ltd. signed the 10th wage agreement for its non-executive staff increasing gross wage by 20%. The payment of arrears will be made in three stages — 40%, 30%, and 30%. An amount of Rs. 40,000 will be paid to the employees before Diwali as a one-time advance.

The 5 year agreement will be effective retroactively from July 2016 and will apply to its 298,000 workers.

Tamil Nadu Plantation workers get revised wages

8 October 2017: A new 4 year wage agreement was signed between the Planters' Association of

Tamil Nadu and trade unions increasing the daily wage from Rs. 238 to Rs. 294.03 effective from July 2017. About 35,000 tea plantation workers in the Nilgiris, Nilgiris-Wayanad, and Anaimalai regions will benefit from this.

Maharashtra Anganwadi workers win

5 October 2017: After intervention by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, around two lakh Anganwadi workers in Maharashtra decided to call off their indefinite month-long strike. The state government agreed to increase their monthly wages as per their service seniority.

The honorarium has been increased from Rs 5,000 to Rs. 6,500. Those with an experience of 10-20 years will get Rs. 6,695, those in experience bracket of 20-30 years will be paid Rs. 6,760 and those having more than 30 years of experience will be now be paid Rs. 6,825 per month.

Anganwadi workers were on an indefinite strike since 11 September.

Legal News

Hyderabad High Court Admits Second Writ Petition by IT workers

26 October 2017: The High Court of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh has admitted a second writ petition for reinstatement moved by retrenched workers of TechMahindra. The writ petition, has been filed against the Labour Department and TechMahindra.

More than 2000 IT workers had approached the labour commissioner and the SEZ Development Commissioner seeking redressal against their illegal termination. With no action from these offices, the IT workers have moved the High Court.

Government of Haryana amends the Contract Labour Act

17 October 2017: Government of Haryana passed amendments to the Contract labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, 1970 increasing the applicability of the Act to establishments employing 50 or more workmen from 20.

This will clearly take out a large number of contractors from the ambit of regulation and therefore make the working conditions of workers employed by them more irregular and hazardous.

Discrimination

Bangalore safai workers protest against sexual harassment by contractors

25 October 2017: Safai workers of Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) went on a massive protest against sexual harassment of women workers by the contractors. Women workers were sexually abused by the contractors when they demanded their pending wages.

The BBMP Guttige Pourakarmika Sangha, representing the workers demanded action against the contractors, immediate payment of pending wages and BBMP follow the government order and end contract system in waste management.

Minimum wages denied to pourakarmikas employed by Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Ltd

21 October 2017: 750 contractual housekeeping workers of the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Ltd. (BMRCL), supplied by three private agencies, have not been paid minimum wages for several months. The workers are being paid only Rs.7000 a month as against the statutory minimum wage of Rs.14040. The workers have also not been paid PF, ESI and have not been provided with safety equipment.

Health and Safety

New Report on Global Climate Change warns India

31 October 2017: A new Lancet report on global climate change and its impact on health, warns India on the number of pollution related deaths, labour capacity, heat waves, infectious diseases like dengue and food security.

For 2015, the report shows that, China and India have the highest number of premature deaths attributable to air pollution with India at 524,680 deaths and China at 966,794.

According to the report, climate change has caused disruptions in labour capacity and productivity, where India's capacity has decreased by 2.85% between 2000 and 2016, compared with 1986 to 2008. The most significant decrease in capacity has been recent, since 2015, when labour capacity decreased by an average of 8.25%.

Increased heat, according to the report, will create health risks for workers from exhaustion,

heat stroke, kidney disease due of dehydration and pollution related disease. With large parts of the Indian workforce engaged in rural labour, countries like India will be particularly affected. Globally there has been a 5.3% average fall in labour productivity of agricultural workers since 2000.

24 organisations jointly researched and authored this report, including the World Bank, the World Health Organization, University College London and Tsinghua University.

Delhi HC: ESIC Hospitals to remain independent, transfer to Government illegal

15 October 2017: Holding that the rules laid in the Employees State Insurance (ESI) Act do not allow the transfer of any of its assets to any person, including the state government, the Delhi High Court has stopped the transfer of hospitals and medical colleges under the Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) by terming it "legally impermissible" and "contrary to the law.

The court also clearly stated that the ESI Act contained nothing to indicate that funding by the State Government would entail, as necessary and inexorable sequitur, throwing open the hospitals to the general public.

Workplace Safety Watch

2 workers killed in a stone quarry in Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu: 2 workers, M. Thangaraja (50) and M. Durai (42), were killed and 3 others injured as a pile of rocks fell on them when they were working in a stone quarry at Karunkulam in Tirunelveli district on 5 October.

3 migrant workers killed in road accident in Kochi: 3 workers, Bablu Masis (42), Suryakanth (32) and Umesh Kumar (28) of Sonbhadra district, Uttar Pradesh, were killed and 1 other Indradev, also from Sonebhadra, suffered injuries, working at the Kochi Metro construction site for L&T were run over by a speeding lorry at Muttom Thaikkavu on 13 October.

Aluva traffic police has registered a case under IPC Sections 304 (culpable homicide not amounting to murder) and Section 308 (attempt to commit culpable homicide).

3 workers fall to death in building slab support crash in Pune: 3 workers were killed and one injured when a wooden shuttering support which they were installing for an 11th

floor slab caved in at an under-construction housing project on Sinhagad road, Pune around 10 am on 18 October. The 3 workers were all from Hazaribag, Jharkhand and used to live in the basement of the project building. The three workers fell nearly 100 feet down.

Police has registered a case of culpable homicide not amounting to murder against Pate Developers, the site engineer, the site contractor and the site supervisor. The police have also applied sections 337 (causing hurt by act endangering life or personal safety of others) and 34 (common intention) of the IPC.

8 workers of Tamil Nadu Transport Corporation crushed to death in a roof collapse in Nagapattinam: 8 workers of the Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation (Kumbakonam) Ltd. were killed and 3 were injured, when the roof of the resting room collapsed at the Porayar bus depot where the workers were sleeping on the first floor of the 75 year old building in Nagapattinam district on 20 October. The incident took place at around 3.30 a.m.

2 killed, several injured in Kanpur and 8 killed, 20 injured in Orissa in firework factory blast: 2 workers were killed while several others suffered injuries in a powerful explosion at an illegal firecracker unit on 4 October in Sarsaul area in Kanpur district. In another explosion at an illegal firecracker factory in Balasore, Orissa killed 8 workers and injured 20 others hours before Diwali on 19 October. The explosion completely destroyed the makeshift structure.

In and Around

India ranks 100 on World Bank's Doing Business Report, 2018 and 100 on the Global Hunger Index

31 October 2017: India ranks 100 among 190 countries assessed by the Doing Business Team of the World Bank, as released in their Doing Business Report, 2018. India was at 130th rank last year.

In another report, on the Global Hunger Index (GHI), released on 12 October, India slipped to 100th rank in the hunger index out of 119 countries, down 45 positions since 2014 (Bangladesh is ranked 88). At 31.4, India's 2017 GHI score is at the high end of the 'serious' category, and is one of the main factors pushing

South Asia to the category of worst performing region on the GHI this year.

News from around the world

Indonesian fireworks factory blaze kills 48 workers, may face five years' jail

Jakarta, 28 October 2017: A ferocious fire, in a six week old fireworks factory, Panca Buana Cahaya Sukses, outside Jakarta on 26 October, 48 workers have been killed and over 45 seriously injured. The fire was caused by sparks from the welding equipment. Factory owner Indra Liyono has been named as key suspect by police along with the company's operational director Andri Hartanto and welding equipment operator Subarna Ega.

The trio could face a maximum of five years in prison and a Rp 500 million (\$37,000) fine for workplace negligence resulting in death.

Brazil government to rework controversial slavery decree

21 October 2017: Brazil will issue a new decree changing the country's definition of slavery. Forced labour, in the country, has been defined as a form of modern-day slavery which includes debt bondage, degrading work conditions, and long work hours that pose a risk to a worker's health or life, and violate their dignity. The new definition limits the scope to a victim's freedom of movement, disregarding other abuses.

The new decree, sought by Brazil's powerful farm lobby, would derail enforcement efforts that have freed 50,000 workers from slavery-like conditions since 1995.

Bangladeshi Unions call to end human rights violations against Rohingyas in Myanmar

17 October 2017 : IndustriALL Bangladesh Council called upon the international community to put pressure on the Myanmar government to end the genocide on Rohingyas, and take immediate steps to repatriate all Rohingyas with full dignity and safety.

The unions recognised the bold decision of the Bangladesh government to provide shelter to Rohingya refugees. They urged workers, employers and citizens to come forward to help the Rohingya refugees. The National Garment Workers Federation (NGWF) has already launched an emergency solidarity fund

to support the refugees.

Industrial manslaughter bill passed by Queensland Parliament

13 October 2017: Industrial manslaughter will become an offence attracting lengthy jail sentence and significant fines in Queensland, Australia after legislation was passed by the state Parliament.

This bill was triggered by the death of 4 persons at the Dreamworld's Thunder Rapids Ride last October, which came three weeks after 2 workers were crushed at a building site at Eagle Farm racecourse. Under the law, the maximum penalty for industrial manslaughter will be 20 years imprisonment for an individual, with a maximum fine of \$10 million for a corporate offender.

Macron launches second round of labour reforms

12 October 2017: French President Emmanuel Macron launched the second round of his labour reform programme with an overhaul of the existing unemployment benefits. The government now wants to extend unemployment benefits to independent entrepreneurs and merchants who go bankrupt. Employees who voluntarily quit would now be entitled to unemployment benefits under strict conditions.

In the meanwhile all 9 trade unions in France have joined forces on 10 October to protest the government's plan to cut 120,000 jobs and reduce sick leave compensation for public workers.

Over 25,000 protestors turned up in Paris on 19 October against the proposed cuts in unemployment benefits.

Government increases minimum wages for garment workers in Cambodia

5 October 2017: Cambodia has decided to increase the minimum wage of garment workers from \$153 to \$170. This will come into effect from 1 January 2018. The garment industry employs about 700,000 workers.

Corporate Watch

Food Corporates to decide Nutrition Strategy for India

The newly constituted 22 member Working Group on Nutrition of the Niti Aayog, chaired by Dr Vinod Paul, formerly at the Department

of Pediatrics, AIIMS, have significant conflicts of interest. Of the 22 members, those from the government include, Alok Kumar, adviser on nutrition in the Aayog, Dr. Rajesh Kumar, joint secretary from the women and child development ministry, Dr. Soumya Swaminathan of ICMR (recently appointed deputy director general in the World Health Organisation), Pawan Agarwal of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India and Dr. T Longwah, director of the National Institute of Nutrition. Dr. MK Bhan, former secretary, Department of Biotechnology, Gol is also a member of this group.

The NGO representatives include Dr Prema Ramachandran of Nutrition Foundation of India and Amod Kanth of Prayas.

The members with definite conflict of interest include Dr. B Sesikera, former director of National Institute of Nutrition, and now on the board of trustees of the International Life Sciences Institute and a member of Nestle's Nutrition Council. The ILSI founded by Coca Cola, Pepsi, General Foods and Procter and Gamble, is globally a lobby arm of the food industry. ILSI's member trustees include Nestle, Hindustan Lever, Abbott Healthcare, Mars and Mondelez Foods. Other members include Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Children's Investment Fund Foundation and Tata Trust which have been in the news for their efforts to promote the use of Ready-to-Use-packaged fortified food. Other members of the working group include Luke Coutinho, founder of Herbs Nutrition Pvt Ltd, Sameer Maheshwari, founder of Healthkart which sells nutritional supplements and Nilesh Jain, Director, Picostone Technologies, a company that use integrated sensors and systems to track health variations.

The government of India has repeatedly clarified that packaged energy dense food is against India's policy on malnutrition redressal.

The working group does not include members from leading government institutions which have done extensive work on nutrition policy including the Central Food Technological Research Institute in Mysore, AIIMS Delhi, Indian Academy of Pediatrician, and MS University of Baroda.