

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2348
TO BE ANSWERED ON 12.03.2026**

WORKERS RIGHTS IN LABOUR CODES

2348. SHRI SANJAY RAUT:

Will the Minister of Labour and Employment be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Labour Codes, allow layoffs of up to 300 workers without prior approval, restrict strike rights with mandatory 14-day notice and mandate 51 per cent union membership for sole bargaining, thereby diluting job security, collective bargaining and post-independence worker protections;**
- (b) if so, the steps taken to address nationwide protests including the February 12, 2026 Bharat Bandh demanding rollback and concerns over gig/contract workers' inadequate social security; and**
- (c) the measures to resolve ambiguities in wage definitions, State-level enforcement variations, SME compliance burdens and stagnant Ministry's budget allocation amid rising unemployment and inequality?**

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT
(SUSHRI SHOBHA KARANDLAJE)**

(a): Under the Industrial Relations Code, 2020, establishments with 300 or more workers are required to obtain prior permission of the appropriate Government for lay-off, retrenchment or closure. However, statutory safeguards in the form of mandatory notice period, retrenchment compensation and provision for retrenched workers to be given preference in re-employment are applicable for all retrenched workers irrespective of threshold. The Code also introduces Workers Re-skilling fund for retrenched workers for the first time with a view to providing financial support to help workers transition to new employment.

The IR Code, 2020 mandates requirement of 14 days' prior notice before going on strike to facilitate conciliation and promote amicable settlement of disputes.

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The Code also provides for recognition of a Negotiating Union with 51% membership for collective bargaining. Where no union meets this threshold, a Negotiating Council consisting of representatives of registered trade unions is to be constituted. Overall, the provisions aim to balance the interests of workers and employers while promoting stable industrial relations.

(b): All the strike notices received from various trade unions functioning in different establishments across India were seized into conciliation by the Central Industrial Relations Machinery (CIRM).

(c): The Ministry has taken various steps including Regional Conferences with States, Stakeholders' consultations, etc. to ensure smooth implementation of Labour Codes. Budgetary allocations to the Ministry of Labour and Employment are made as per overall fiscal priorities and programme requirements.
