

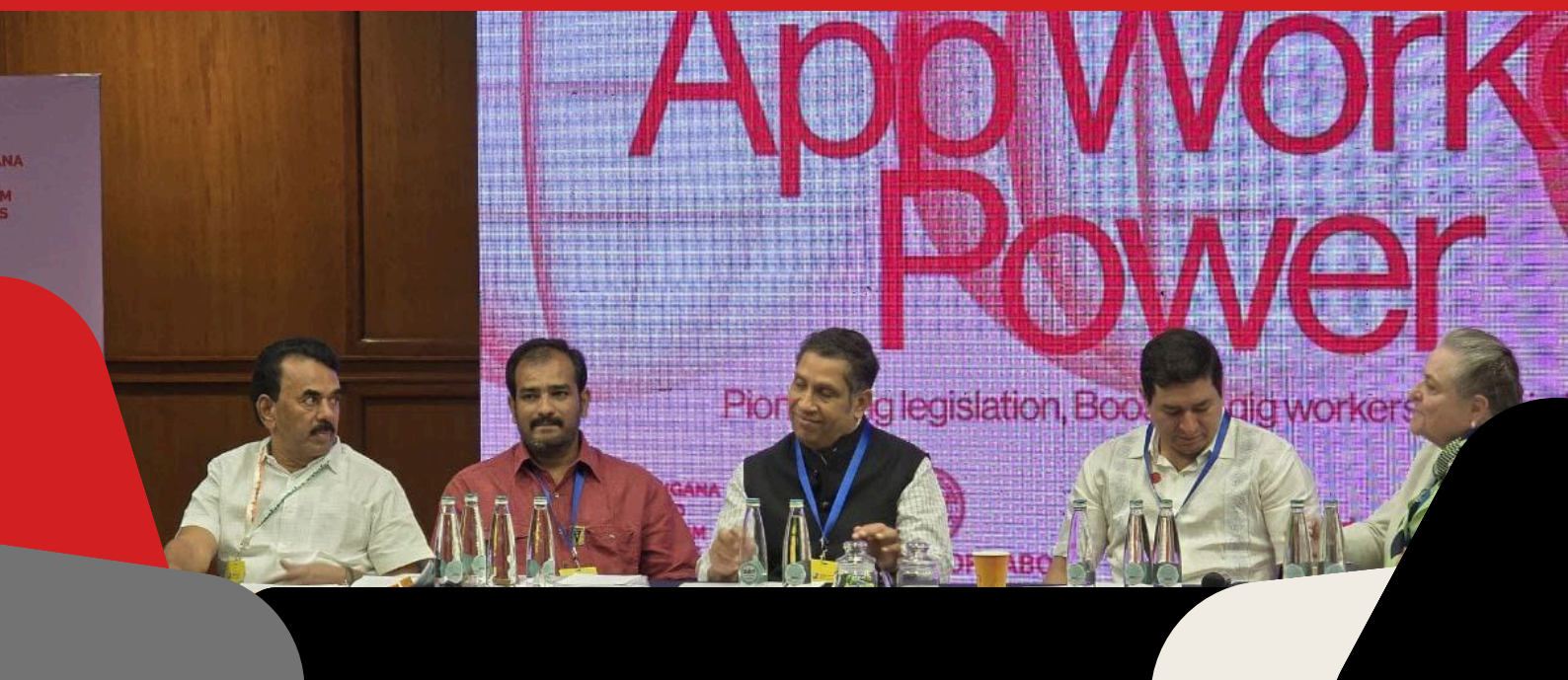


TELANGANA  
GIG AND  
PLATFORM  
WORKERS  
UNION

# IMPACT EVALUATION REPORT

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## 2024



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# ABOUT US



**Shaik Salauddin**  
Founder, President

The Telangana Gig and Platform Workers Union (TGPWU) is an independent, worker-led union established in 2021 and registered under the Trade Unions Act of 1926. Formed during the COVID-19 pandemic, TGPWU advocates for fair wages, dignified working conditions, and comprehensive social protections for gig and platform workers across Telangana.

The union's core mission is to advance the rights of gig and platform workers in Telangana by pushing for the implementation of the *Code on Social Security (2020)* and securing key benefits such as health insurance and maternity care, old-age support, workplace safety, and protection from unfair platform practices.

With a 10-year vision, TGPWU aims to build collective bargaining power, address unfair platform practices, and expand worker protections in areas like dispute resolution and data transparency. The union represents a wide range of workers, including ride-hailing drivers, delivery agents, and service providers on platforms such as Uber, Ola, Rapido, Swiggy, Zomato, Flipkart, and Urban Company.

TGPWU has been at the forefront of legal advocacy for gig and platform workers' social security rights, extending its efforts beyond Telangana to states like Rajasthan and Karnataka.

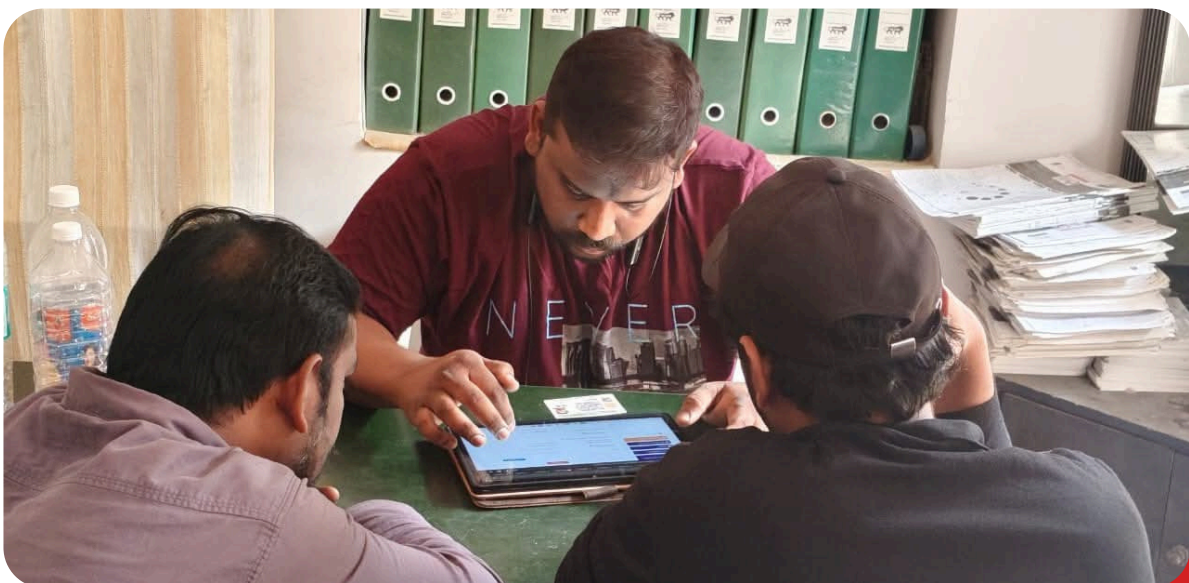
# MEMBERSHIP

Our membership is open to all gig and platform workers, including:

- App-based drivers on **Ola, Uber, and Rapido**
- Workers on logistics platforms such as **Dunzo, Delhivery, ShadowFax, Porter, Amazon, and Flipkart**
- Delivery workers on food and grocery delivery platforms like **Swiggy, Zomato, Zepto** and **Blinkit**
- Home-service workers on apps like **Urban Company** and **Yes Madam**

# PARTNERS

- Indian Federation of App-based Transport Workers (**IFAT**)
- International Alliance of App-Based Transport Workers (**IAATW**)





**MEMBERS REGISTERED  
SINCE INCEPTION  
10,000**



**ACTIVE MEMBERS  
1,467**

**JOIN US TO BUILD WORKER POWER**  
**TOGETHER WE STAND,**  
**TOGETHER WE FIGHT**

Increasing the active membership base remains a key challenge for TGPWU. Insights from recent surveys reveal that this decrease is primarily due to fear among gig workers. Many workers reported that aggregator companies have allegedly threatened to deactivate their IDs or remove them from job allocations if they associate with the union. Given that a majority of these workers are the sole earners in their households, the fear of losing access to work has discouraged them from formally affiliating with the union. This highlights the precarious nature of their employment and the need for stronger protections to ensure their right to collective representation.



# TGPWU'S KEY DEMANDS FROM DIGITAL LABOUR PLATFORMS

## DIGNIFIED AND SAFE WORKING CONDITIONS

Immediate action must be taken to eliminate the deplorable working conditions that gig and platform workers face daily. This includes ending inhumane working hours and unrealistic delivery expectations that compromise both health and safety. Workers are regularly subjected to harassment and abuse by customers and third parties, often without any support or accountability from the platforms. The lack of basic facilities—such as safe and accessible restrooms, drinking water, and resting spaces—at partner restaurants and hubs further degrades working conditions. In addition, unresolved parking and traffic-related challenges frequently result in fines and loss of income. Platforms must guarantee minimum working conditions aligned with labour standards for occupational health and safety.

## FAIR AND FAST ACCIDENT COMPENSATION

There is an urgent need for transparent, responsive, and humane accident compensation mechanisms. The current system is riddled with bureaucratic delays that make the claims process arduous and demeaning. Compensation for major accidents must be increased to at least INR 10 lakhs, with assured support for medical expenses and income loss. This coverage should extend to all active workers without any preconditions or exclusions.

## TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN ALGORITHMIC MANAGEMENT

This is critical to ensuring fairness for gig and platform workers. Platforms must end opaque and arbitrary changes in pay rates, incentives, penalties, and order allocation. They should be mandated to disclose how algorithmic decisions are made, including the specific data points used in determining performance ratings, task distribution, and account deactivations. Workers must have full access to all data collected about them, along with the right to download or transfer that data. Most importantly, gig and platform workers' data rights must be legally recognized—this includes the right to explanation, correction, and deletion of their personal data.

## GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL AND DUE PROCESS

Automated and unexplained suspensions, bans, and deactivations must be prohibited. Workers deserve prior notice, a clear explanation, and a fair opportunity to appeal any disciplinary actions. Platforms must establish independent, time-bound grievance redressal mechanisms that are accessible in workers' local languages and operate transparently.

# TGPWU'S KEY DEMANDS FROM DIGITAL LABOUR PLATFORMS

## **SOCIAL SECURITY AND RECOGNITION AS WORKERS**

Gig and platform workers must be recognized as employees or workers, not independent contractors. This legal recognition should ensure inclusion under all relevant labour laws, including provisions for minimum wage, Employee State Insurance (ESI), Provident Fund (PF), maternity benefits, and paid leave. Immediate and universal enrolment in government-backed social security schemes—such as the e-SHRAM portal—must be guaranteed, alongside the creation of platform-funded welfare boards to support workers' well-being.

## **FAIR PAY AND SUSTAINABLE EARNINGS**

Gig and platform workers must be guaranteed fair pay and sustainable earnings. A minimum per-hour or per-task earning benchmark should be established, one that reflects inflation and the real cost of living. Platforms must provide transparent earnings' breakdown for every order, with clear visibility into commissions, fees, and deductions. In addition, workers must be paid for waiting time, order cancellations not caused by them, and deliveries made outside their designated zones.

## **FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING**

The right to unionize is fundamental. Platforms must formally recognize unions and collectives of gig and platform workers and engage with them in regular consultations on matters such as working conditions, pricing, and policy changes. Retaliatory actions—such as deactivations or shadow bans—against workers who organize or speak out must end. The law should mandate the formation of grievance redressal councils with equal representation from workers and platform management.

## **WORKER SAFETY AND PROTECTION FROM ABUSE**

With the rising incidents of discrimination, harassment, and abuse, worker safety must become a non-negotiable priority. Platforms should implement real-time escalation and redressal systems to protect workers from customer and third-party misconduct. Strict disciplinary measures must be enforced against offenders, including customers. Moreover, platforms must immediately implement the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. This includes setting up internal complaints committees with representation from workers themselves.

# TGPWU'S KEY DEMANDS FROM THE GOVERNMENT

ENACTMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE LEGISLATION	ESTABLISHMENT OF A DEDICATED WELFARE BOARD
TGPWU has urged the Telangana government to draft robust legislation for gig and platform workers, drawing insights from similar initiatives in Rajasthan, Karnataka, and Jharkhand. The proposed law should recognize gig workers' rights, ensure social security, and establish a regulatory framework for platform companies to register workers.	The union advocates for the creation of a dedicated welfare board to oversee the registration of gig and platform workers and manage the administration of social security schemes. This board should include representatives from workers' unions and engage in regular tripartite consultations with the government and platform companies.
IMPLEMENTATION OF FAIR WAGES AND TRANSPARENT ALGORITHMS	STRENGTHENING SOCIAL SECURITY MEASURES
TGPWU demands the constitution of a wage board to set minimum wages for gig and platform workers across sectors. This process should be tripartite, involving unions, aggregators, and the state government, ensuring fair pay, overtime compensation, and protection against unfair practices like arbitrary ID deactivations.	The union further emphasizes the need for universal accessibility to social security benefits, such as life and disability cover; accident insurance; health and maternity benefits; old age protection; crèche; among others.



# TGPWU'S KEY DEMANDS FROM THE GOVERNMENT

DEVELOPMENT OF A GOVERNMENT-RUN RIDE-HAILING APP	MANDATING TRANSPARENT CONTRACTS AND GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL MECHANISMS
To offer an alternative to private ride-hailing apps, TGPWU has called for the establishment of a government-run app. It is our belief that a government-run app will be able to offer social security benefits, fair earnings and transparent algorithms for gig and platform workers.	The union insists on the provision of fair contracts in regional languages and the establishment of human points of contact in aggregator companies for grievance redressal. Additionally, TGPWU calls for the banning of automated or unexplained suspensions, ensuring that workers are given prior notice, clear reasons, and a fair opportunity to appeal all disciplinary decisions.
REGULATION OF WORKING HOURS AND ENSURING OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY	PROVISION OF INCOME SECURITY AND ADDITIONAL BENEFITS
TGPWU highlights the need to address inhumane working hours and unrealistic delivery expectations. The union calls for regulations that guarantee minimum working conditions aligned with labor standards for occupational health and safety.	The union advocates for income security through a minimum earnings guarantee and the provision of additional benefits such as contributory old-age pensions, wage compensation schemes, scholarships for workers' children, and maternity benefits.

# WORKERS' PERSPECTIVES ON TGPWU'S ACTIVITIES

This section analyzes the perspectives of worker-members on the activities of the Telangana Gig and Platform Workers Union (TGPWU). The analysis is based on a phone survey of 200 gig/platform workers across major platforms.

We evaluated TGPWU's impact across various factors such as income and earnings stability, resolution of wage theft and unfair deactivations, awareness and use of grievance redressal mechanisms, perception of workplace safety, participation in union activities, and collective action.

## **Worker participation in TGPWU's activities**

53% of the surveyed workers reported participating in protests and campaigns organized by the Telangana Gig and Platform Workers Union (TGPWU). Among them, 14% stated they had received direct threats from aggregators, including warnings of police complaints or the risk of ID deactivation if they associated with the union. Several others expressed fear of potential retaliation, indicating a climate of intimidation and uncertainty.

# KEY ISSUES REPORTED BY GIG AND PLATFORM WORKERS

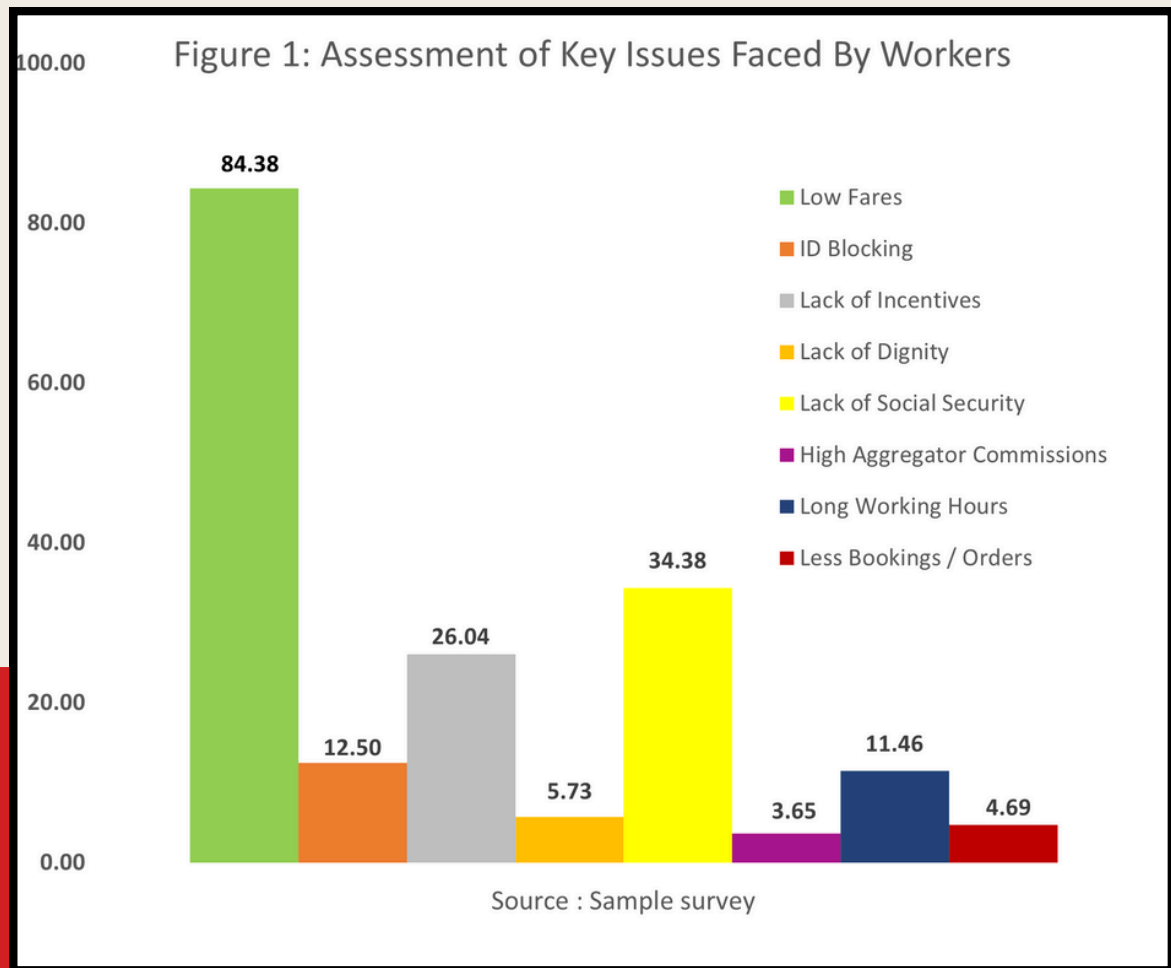
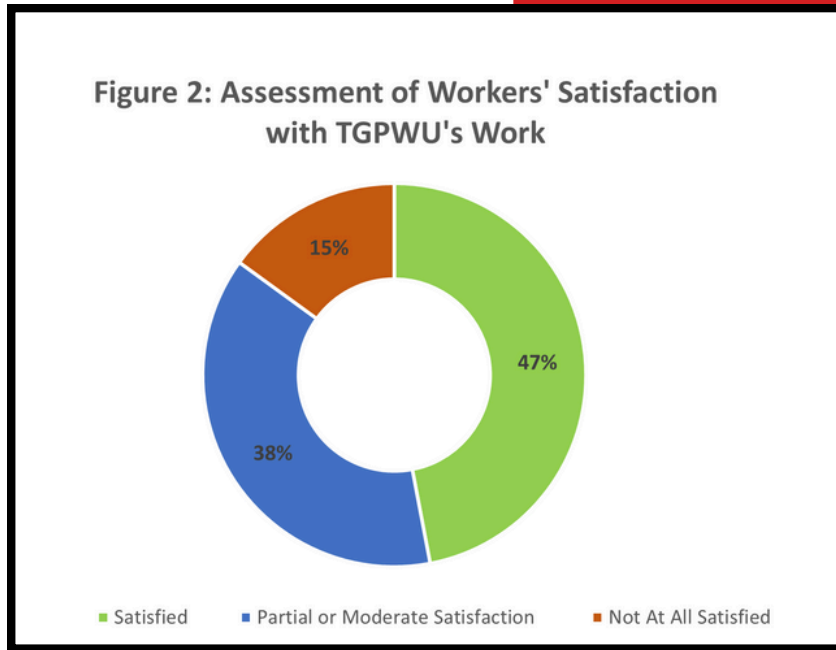


Figure 1. The figure shows the percentage breakdown of key challenges faced by gig and platform workers.

- **Low Fares** were by far the most widespread issue, with **84.38%** of respondents highlighting them as a primary concern. This suggests significant dissatisfaction with the base compensation models used by aggregators.
- **Lack of Incentives** was the second most reported issue, affecting **34.38%** of workers. Many workers reported that the incentives that they received from platforms earlier had been substantially reduced or completely withdrawn, resulting in decreased earnings.

- **26.04%** of the surveyed workers were affected by **ID blocks**. These blocks are often issued without prior notice, typically linked to customer ratings or unclear platform policies, and have a direct impact on workers' income security.
- **Lack of Social Security benefits** was flagged by **12.50%** of workers. Despite many aggregators classifying gig workers as independent contractors, the demand for access to social security benefits like Employees' State Insurance, Provident Funds, or accident insurance remains strong.
- **Lack of Dignity** at work was reported by **5.73%**, indicating workers feel disrespected or disregarded in their interactions with platforms and customers. Workers, especially those who had been working on the apps for a few years now, felt that there was no respect for their work by the platforms who could easily replace them anyday by onboarding new people.
- **11.46%** of surveyed workers reported that they were paying huge commissions to platform companies, resulting in platforms retaining a significant share of workers' earnings.
- **3.65%** reported working long hours, typically 10-12 hours a day; while **4.69%** reported not receiving enough bookings/orders to make ends meet, highlighting non-transparent distribution of tasks.

# ASSESSMENT OF WORKERS' SATISFACTION WITH TGPWU



Source: Sample Survey

**Figure 2.** The figure portrays the percentage of workers' satisfaction with TGPWU's work.

- **38%** of workers expressed **partial or moderate satisfaction**, appreciating TGPWU's efforts but feeling that tangible outcomes were limited, often due to a lack of unity among workers, which hinders collectivity.
- **15%** of workers reported **not being satisfied at all**, and argued that the union's efforts remained more aspirational than actionable. Such dissatisfaction emerged from not being able to see concrete results.
- However, the remaining **47 %** of respondents reported being **satisfied** with the union's support. Many emphasized that **TGPWU has provided a much-needed platform for voicing workers' grievances**, especially in a digital work environment where aggregator platforms rarely acknowledge or address worker concerns. Several workers also expressed frustration with aggregators' customer-centric policies that overlook worker well-being and result in arbitrary penalties or job insecurity.



We have strengthened our worker participation and awareness-building efforts over the years. We are committed to focusing our efforts on building effective channels and activities to support workers, particularly on:

- i) addressing and resolving problems faced by members more effectively
- ii) support in arranging insurance and other protections for workers
- iii) strategising concrete steps towards overall member satisfaction and improvement in working conditions

**62%** of workers reported receiving support from TGPWU in various forms. This included **scholarships for children's education, ration kits, accident-related insurance support** (even when not covered by platform contracts), as well as assistance with **e-Shram registration** and **income tax return (ITR) filing**.

Additionally, **55%** of workers were aware of TGPWU's **ongoing policy advocacy efforts** aimed at improving the legal and welfare framework for gig and platform workers. The findings of this evaluation strongly validate TGPWU's core policy demands for fair wages, transparent incentive structures, and protection against arbitrary deactivation or ID blocking. The widespread absence of social security measures among gig and platform workers further reinforces the relevance of the proposed legislation, which seeks to ensure access to accident insurance and other essential protections.

The recurring reports of mental distress, lack of dignity at work, and the absence of grievance redressal mechanisms highlight an urgent need to institutionalize worker protections and accountability systems within platform governance. Additionally, concerns over excessive aggregator commissions and declining earnings highlight the structural exploitation embedded in current aggregator-worker arrangements, underscoring the need to regulate aggregator margins.

**Only 49 women workers are registered with the union, which highlights a larger phenomenon: the underrepresentation of women in gig and platform work.** Social taboos, safety concerns, and the dual burden of unpaid domestic responsibilities alongside unstable gig work continue to push women out of these opportunities. This highlights an urgent need for **gender-sensitive policies, safer work environments, and structural support** to make the gig economy truly inclusive and empowering for women.

## **TGPWU'S ACTIVITIES AND THEIR IMPACT**

### **Driving Policy Change for Gig and Platform Workers Strategic Advocacy and Government Engagement**

TGPWU has led sustained consultations and strategic engagements with both state and central government bodies to champion the rights of gig and platform workers. We have actively participated in dialogues with the Ministry of Labour and Employment, NITI Aayog, and the G20's Labour 20 (L20) forum. Through these efforts, we have successfully secured key benefits and policy support for workers, demonstrating the impact of consistent advocacy and collective action.

## **KEY WINS**

### **Accidental Death Insurance Coverage**

The Telangana government issued a Government Order providing ₹5 lakh accidental death insurance for gig and platform workers. This initiative was a direct response to TGPWU's persistent advocacy.

### **EV Road Tax Exemption**

Recognizing the financial challenges faced by gig workers, the state government exempted road tax and registration fees for EVs purchased and registered in Telangana until December 31, 2026. TGPWU welcomed this move, viewing it as a step towards sustainable and cost-effective transportation for workers.

### **Airport Driver Facilities**

TGPWU successfully negotiated for better amenities for drivers at the Hyderabad airport, resulting in free parking, canteen access, and washroom facilities for over 5,000 drivers.

### **Improved Ride-Hailing Transparency**

Through persistent efforts, the union ensured that cab aggregators like Ola and Uber began sharing drop locations with drivers upon ride acceptance and committed to settling driver payments within 24 hours.

# PARTIALLY FULFILLED DEMANDS

## **COMPREHENSIVE GIG AND PLATFORM WORKERS' LEGISLATION**

The Telangana government has released a draft bill aimed at providing job security, insurance coverage, and basic rights for gig and platform workers. While TGPWU acknowledges this as a positive development, we have called for further amendments to address concerns like algorithmic transparency and minimum income guarantees.

## **SPECIAL SUBSIDY ON COMMERCIAL ELECTRIC VEHICLES**

While the government has provided tax exemptions for EVs, TGPWU's demand for a 50% subsidy on commercial EVs, including two-wheelers, three-wheelers, and four-wheelers used by gig and platform workers, is still under consideration.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF A GOVERNMENT-BACKED RIDE-HAILING APP**

The Chief Minister promised the creation of a government-supported ride-hailing app to reduce dependency on private aggregators. As of now, the app is under development, with consultations ongoing.

# SUPPORT ACTIVITIES TO HELP WORKERS & THEIR FAMILIES

In 2024, the Telangana Gig and Platform Workers Union (TGPWU) launched a range of initiatives to support its members and their families—providing legal aid, financial assistance, skill-building opportunities, and strong advocacy for safer and fairer working conditions.



**Facilitated Scholarship Programmes for workers' children, covering education from Class 1 through to Post-Graduation.**



**Organized free e-SHRAM registration camps, assisting workers in securing their registration**



**Conducted social media training for workers on how to effectively use digital platforms to highlight unfair working conditions**



**Provided essential ration kits to around 500 individuals**



**Conducted blood donation drives, awarding certificates of appreciation endorsed by the Governor.**







**Facilitated free health check-up plans and insurance coverage for 400 families**



**ITR camps were organized to support workers in the accurate and timely filing of their Income Tax Returns**

# CAMPAIGNS AND EVENTS CONDUCTED BY TGPWU

	<b># BOYCOTT AIRPORT TRIPS</b>	<b># NO AC</b>	
<p>The aim of the campaign was to boycott trips to airport until fares are revised to reflect fair and sustainable levels. The campaign was successful in raising awareness among passengers about the challenges faced by gig and platform workers. The demand was for immediate government intervention to regulate and standardize aggregator pricing policies.</p>		<p>In April 2024, TGPWU launched the 'No AC' campaign, where Ola and Uber drivers across Hyderabad refrained from switching on the air conditioning in their cars as a move to highlight rising fuel costs. This campaign aimed to highlight the lack of fair compensation for drivers, especially considering the additional fuel costs associated with using air conditioning.</p>	
 <p>No Unfair Deactivation</p>	<b>Opposed Unfair Deactivation of Worker IDs</b>	<b>Condemned Harassment Of Workers</b>	
<p>TGPWU members resolved to combat the arbitrary deactivation of workers' IDs and other unfair practices by platform companies. This resolution was passed at a memorial meeting held in memory of Chandrika, an Urban Company worker who passed away in November 2024.</p>		<p>The union expressed deep concern over an incident in Indore, where a Zomato delivery worker was harassed and forced to remove his Santa Claus costume by an individual who questioned its cultural and religious significance. TGPWU condemned this act and highlighted the need for respectful treatment of delivery personnel.</p>	



# CAMPAIGNS AND EVENTS CONDUCTED BY TGPWU

 <p>Law For Workers</p>	<b>Advocacy for Comprehensive Gig Worker Legislation</b>	<b>Submission of GST Applicability Review to Govt Authorities</b>	
	<p>TGPWU reiterated its demand for robust legislation recognizing and protecting gig and platform workers. The union emphasized the need for a dedicated welfare board and tripartite consultations involving workers, aggregators, and the government.</p>	<p>TGPWU submitted a formal letter addressing concerns surrounding the applicability of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) to platforms and services mediating mobility, ride-hailing, and personal services. This action was in light of recent legislative developments, including the enactment of social welfare provisions for gig and platform workers.</p>	
	<b>Survey on Impact of Extreme Heat on Gig Workers</b>	<b>Survey on Gig and Platform Workers' Perspectives on Worker Collectives</b>	
	<p>In collaboration with HeatWatch, TGPWU conducted a survey to assess the impact of extreme heat on gig workers. The findings highlighted the need for protective measures and policies to safeguard workers from heat-related illnesses and deaths.</p>	<p>TGPWU conducted surveys with gig and platform workers operating on digital labour platforms such as Ola, Uber, Swiggy, and Flipkart. The aim was to understand their perspectives on diverse types of worker collectives, including gig and platform worker unions and platform cooperative societies.</p>	



**TELANGANA  
GIG AND  
PLATFORM  
WORKERS  
UNION**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TGPWU extends heartfelt thanks to all our members and saathis who continue to sustain and inspire our collective efforts to build worker power.

## ○ Report Production

### **Report Conceptualization**

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## ○ Social Media

## ○ Website

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**Read work from press releases and our research partnerships**



**Impact of extreme heat  
on gig workers**



**Social security schemes**



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# THANK YOU

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## BHARAT SUMMIT