THINK B · THINK BEYOND

Boards for Informal Workers

One issue. 4 GS papers. 3 dimensions. 1 federal welfare question.

02 NOVEMBER 2026

CURRENT AFFAIRS → MULTIDIMENSIONAL THINKING

⚡THE ISSUE IN 30 SECONDS

FACT	WHY IT MATTERS
Two national boards are now constituted	One board for unorganised, one for gig workers
Coverage rose from 19% to 64.3%	The Union cites 2015 to 2025, about 94 crore people
Informal workers exceed 92% of workforce	The editorial says they lack real social security
Labour is on the Concurrent List	The Centre and States both shape worker welfare

CORE IDEA: The new boards are a welcome step, but a Centre-led design with limited State and trade union voice may hinder outcomes, so social security for informal and gig workers needs cooperative federal design, wider representation and coverage that meets the ILO standard.

🌍THINK BEYOND

Social Security Code takes effect → **Boards formed after a delay** → **Centre nominates and chairs** → **States and unions have limited voice** → **Coverage gaps persist** → **Wider consultation improves delivery**

Can social security for informal workers work without States and unions at the table?

🗂UPSC CONNECT

🌍 GS1 · SOCIETY
Informal workers, gig economy and urban labour

Use in: Labour • Urbanisation

🏛 GS2 · GOVERNANCE
Concurrent List, cooperative federalism and welfare boards

Use in: Federalism • Welfare

⚡ GS3 · ECONOMY
Informal sector, gig platforms and labour codes

Use in: Labour • Gig economy

⚖ GS4 · ETHICS
Dignity of labour, social justice and inclusion

Use in: Dignity • Justice

🎯OPTIONAL CONNECT

PUB ADMIN	SOCIOLOGY	ECONOMICS	LAW
Board design and **representation**	Informal work and **social security**	Informal sector and **social protection**	Labour codes and **Concurrent List**

✏HOW CAN I USE THIS IN MAINS?

ESSAY *"A labour code is judged by who it actually protects."*

GS3 *Use this to discuss the informal sector, gig work and labour codes.*

GS2 *Use it to discuss the Concurrent List, cooperative federalism and welfare boards.*

GS4 *Use it to discuss dignity of labour, social justice and inclusion.*

👤THINK LIKE AN OFFICER

★ KEY SECTION

CASE: You are a State Labour Commissioner. A national board has been set up for gig and platform workers, and you must help workers register and give State concerns a voice.

YOU HAVE 60 SECONDS: WHAT DO YOU DO?

☐ Wait for the Centre to act ☐ Ignore gig workers

☐ Register workers and share State inputs ☐ Block the board

MODEL ADMINISTRATIVE APPROACH

1 · MAP WORKERS
Identify gig and unorganised workers in the State

2 · REGISTER THEM
Help workers enrol on the national portal

3 · SHARE STATE INPUTS
Send State schemes and data to the national board

4 · ENGAGE UNIONS
Consult workers, unions and aggregators regularly

🔑3 THINGS TO REMEMBER

01 · CONNECT
Boards need wide representation

02 · THINK
Coverage must reach informal work

03 · APPLY
Apply this across GS1-4, Essay and optionals