Jobs Without Decent Work

One issue. 4 GS papers. 3 dimensions. 1 job quality test.

08 NOVEMBER 2026

CURRENT AFFAIRS → MULTIDIMENSIONAL THINKING

⚡THE ISSUE IN 30 SECONDS

FACT	WHY IT MATTERS
Unemployment fell from 6.1% to 3.2%	PLFS data compared 2017-18 with 2023-24
Decent Work Index rose 0.247 to 0.302	The authors say overall job quality remains alarmingly low
Nearly 90% of workers are informal	India Employment Report 2024 shows the share has risen since 2019
Progress was uneven across groups	Women from ST and OBC groups saw decent work decline

CORE IDEA: Falling unemployment shows more people are working, but decent work needs written contracts, social security and safe conditions, so policy must shift from counting jobs to measuring job quality across sectors, regions, gender and caste groups.

🌍THINK BEYOND

Unemployment falls → **Informal work stays high** → **Job quality remains low** → **Social security gaps persist** → **Growth and tax capacity suffer** → **Job-quality policy builds resilience**

If more people are working, why is the work still not decent?

📎UPSC CONNECT

🌍 GS1 · SOCIETY
Women, caste groups and labour market inequality

Use in: Women • Inequality

🏛 GS2 · GOVERNANCE
Labour Codes, social protection and welfare delivery

Use in: Labour Codes • Welfare

⚡ GS3 · ECONOMY
Employment quality, informality and inclusive growth

Use in: Employment • Growth

⚖ GS4 · ETHICS
Dignity of work, fairness and worker protection

Use in: Dignity • Fairness

🎯OPTIONAL CONNECT

PUB ADMIN	LAW	SOCIOLOGY	ECONOMICS
Labour policy and **welfare** delivery	Labour Codes and **worker** protections	Informal work, **caste** and gender	Informality and **productivity**

✏HOW CAN I USE THIS IN MAINS?

ESSAY *"Work is not enough; it must also dignify."*

GS3 *Use this to discuss employment quality, informality and inclusive growth.*

GS2 *Use it to discuss Labour Codes, social protection and welfare delivery.*

GS4 *Use it to discuss dignity of work, fairness and worker protection.*

👤THINK LIKE AN OFFICER

★ KEY SECTION

CASE: You are a State Labour Secretary. Employment is rising in your State, but many workers lack written contracts and social security, and you must improve job quality.

YOU HAVE 60 SECONDS: WHAT DO YOU DO?

☐ Celebrate the job numbers ☐ Leave it to employers

☐ Link incentives to worker protections ☐ Count registrations only

MODEL ADMINISTRATIVE APPROACH

1 · MEASURE JOB QUALITY
Track contracts, leave and social security cover

2 · EXTEND PROTECTION
Make social security portable for gig and informal workers

3 · LINK INCENTIVES
Tie subsidies to written contracts and paid leave

4 · TARGET GAPS
Back women workers with childcare and safe transport

🔑3 THINGS TO REMEMBER

01 · CONNECT
Count job quality, not just jobs

02 · THINK
Protection makes work decent

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