

# Worker safety code Bill gets Cabinet approval

## It seeks to merge 13 labour laws

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**

**NEW DELHI**

A Bill that seeks to merge 13 labour laws into one code on occupational safety, health and working conditions that would apply to all establishments with 10 or more workers was approved by the Union Cabinet on Wednesday, paving the way for its introduction in Parliament.

The Code on Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Bill, 2019, which would impact “40 crore unorganised workers”, was approved at a Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra

Modi, Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar said.

The Bill was the second of four proposed codes that aim to merge 44 labour laws, with the Code on Wages Bill, 2019 that was approved on July 3 being the first, Labour and Employment Minister of State (independent charge) Santosh Kumar Gangwar said. He added that the Wages Bill, which covers minimum wages and other wage issues, would be introduced in Parliament in “two or three days.”

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The occupational safety Bill will be introduced "in the ongoing session."

"The decision will enhance the coverage of the safety, health and working conditions provisions manifold," a government statement said.

While the code will be applicable to all trades, including IT establishments and service sector, where more than 10 workers are employed, it will be applicable to mines and docks that em-

ploy even one worker. The code also framed rules for women workers working night shifts.

"Women permitted to work beyond 7 p.m. and before 6 a.m. subject to the safety, holidays, working hours or any other condition as prescribed by appropriate government in respect of prescribed establishments. However, only after taking their consent for night work (sic)," the statement said.