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**New Delhi, May 4 (IANS)** Despite contributing a lion's share to the country's gross domestic product (GDP), there is no social security for a whopping 93 percent of the workforce in India, says a report by a group of NGOs.

Concluding that "social security is not a priority for the government", the report has been prepared by the People's Collective for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (PCESCR), an umbrella organisation of 150 NGOs. The report is in response to the government's report to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) in 2006.

The report notes that despite the unorganised sector contributing over 62.3 percent of the GDP, there is no social security for them.

The unorganised sector, such as agriculture, rural industry, service industry and the self-employed, comprises 370 million workers or 93 percent of the workforce of the country.

"Only 0.4 percent of the unorganised sector workers receive social security benefits like the Provident Fund," the report stated.

"The Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923, doesn't provide any benefits to contract workers, self employed, migrants and agricultural/rural workers. Its implementation is ineffective.

"The 10th Five Year Plan (2002-2007) emphasized the need for social security coverage for the unorganised sector. Approximately 14 bills have been floated since then, but social security remains a dream for them," the report added.

It also said that most of the government's social assistance programmes are inadequate - the national floor level minimum wage in India is just Rs.50 per day, the National Old Age Pension Scheme ensures a monthly pension of just Rs.75 and the National Maternity Benefit Scheme gives a sum of Rs.500 to pregnant women of households living below the poverty line.

Sunila Singh, one of the members of PCESCR, said: "The aim of this report is for positive development to take place. The Indian government submitted its report to the international treaty body of CESCR in 2006 and it is set to be reviewed May 7 and 8."

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"Our report attempts to question the government on various factors and hold it accountable to the promises it made under the CESC. Moreover, after ratifying this international covenant in 1979, this is the second time that India is submitting a report - when it is actually supposed to do so every five years," said Singh.

The report also has a list of recommendations for the government.

"India should develop a comprehensive legislation for social security for all, including the unorganised sector and ensure non-contributory, non insurance based universal coverage of basic rights.

"Five percent of the GDP should be earmarked for social security to the unorganised sector," the report said.

On the basis of the National Sample Survey (NSS 1999-2000), which says that women account for one-third, about 118 million, of unorganised sector workers, the report recommends that women should be entitled to all benefits including social security as independent citizens and not as dependants of the male members of the family.

Also, migrant women workers need to be protected from violence and exploitation, the report said.

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