

tially more lucrative jobs, going ahead. Staffing company TeamLease thinks delivery boys can move into retail, sales, and customer-support jobs. Second, Singh's employment as a delivery boy was a lateral movement, from a different industry. So a fresh delivery job was not created in this case. However, he has transitioned from an informal job where he received no pension or insurance benefits to a formal job. This ensures minimum wages and proper documentation of benefits by the employer.

Importantly, formal jobs are required to ensure dignity of labour. "We need formal jobs simply because it changes the future of our youth like no amount of subsidy or an informal job can," Rituparna Chakraborty, Senior Vice President at TeamLease, says. "It assures them dignity of labour, guarantees social security benefits, a minimum wage, enables them to improve their productivity with access to formal training and skill development opportunities."

Sudeep Kumar Sen, Assistant Vice President of South & East at TeamLease, says that most of the delivery jobs are in the formal sector and are largely employed through professional staffing companies. "The folks will be hired by either of us, i.e., the logistics company or TeamLease Services. They are put on our payroll; we take care of the HR administration activity like onboarding, release offer letters, process payrolls, their statutory compliances, and insurance management," he explains.

That is one model of employment. Some companies, such as Ecom Express, prefer formal employment but on the company's rolls. "We have seen the advantage of having our own staff in comparison to outsourced staff. The benefits include assured career path. In turn, this brings in commitment towards the organisation," says Sanjeev Saxena, a director in the company. The third model is the 'gig economy' model where companies treat riders as freelance contractors and are paid per job done. It could be contractual employment, but with an attractive pay scheme. Roadrunner is one company that believes

in variable pay.

"The idea behind variable salaries for delivery boys was driven by our mission to breed microentrepreneurship and offer thousands of people flexible working hours, either of which would not be possible by having people on a fixed salary," says Mohit Kumar, co-founder & CEO of Roadrunner. "Also, the variable component gives them complete control of their earnings, which can be increased significantly by working more consistently." On an average, most of the full-time riders make ₹18,000-25,000 a month and the part-timers make ₹10,000-14,000, the company says.

The potential to earn higher wages have increased



**PAWAN KUMAR:** At his house in Gurgaon. He knows driving and had an offer from Ola. Didn't have money to buy a car. He now works as a field executive at Delhivery and makes ₹10,500 a month

because of the growing use of technology by delivery companies. Quickli, for instance, uses predictive analytics to deploy riders to an area where they can forecast demand before it originates. If the pick-up time is minimised, it allows riders to execute more orders, earning more.

According to TeamLease, the average pay of a delivery boy has jumped from ₹12,000 per month to almost ₹20,000 in one year. That is a 67 per cent jump in salaries – a figure many companies dispute. Delivery companies say it is more in the range of 15-30 per cent. And