

End 10-minute delivery, it jeopardises safety: Devina Mehra backs gig workers' demand

'We cannot rely on capitalism alone to provide adequate working conditions for the workers,' says Devina Mehra

December 31, 2025



Devina Mehra urges for better working conditions for gig workers

Devina Mehra, founder and CMD of First Global, on Wednesday expressed strong support for gig workers who are demanding the end of ultra-fast, 10-minute deliveries. Mehra argued that such services jeopardise not only the safety of delivery workers but also the safety of other road users.

"I am a supporter of gig workers demanding doing away with 10-minute delivery as it clearly jeopardises their safety, as well as the safety of others on the road," Mehra said. "It is a classic case of negative externalities where the

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Devina Mehra

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Similarly there is a concept of **tragedy of the commons** where a business or individual disproportionately uses or degrades common resources without compensating the society for it

(Text book definition of both given below)

And no we cannot reply on capitalism alone to provide adequate working conditions for the workers.

Mehra highlighted the issue of negative externalities, a concept where an individual or company imposes costs on others without bearing the responsibility for those costs. She illustrated this with the example of a factory polluting a river, or companies benefiting from unsafe working conditions while putting public health or safety at risk without accountability.

Additionally, she pointed to the tragedy of the commons, where shared resources are overused or degraded. In this context, the commons are the public roads and the delivery workers who are forced to work under unsafe conditions for the benefit of companies.

"We cannot rely on capitalism alone to provide adequate working conditions for the workers," she stressed. "If that were the case we would never have to legislate on things like minimum wages or safety in factories. In all such cases the laws had to be made to force business owners to meet certain minimum conditions for the workers."

Mehra noted that while she is a frequent online shopper, she "has never used 10-minute delivery." She stated that there is almost nothing in the world "where you cannot plan 30 or 60 minutes in advance", except for emergencies such as medicines.

The veteran fund manager expressed concern about how Indian vehicle owners refuse to stop at zebra crossings, noting that, as a pedestrian, she has witnessed an increase in distracted two-wheeler riders speeding while using navigation apps, which is "making road crossing more dangerous than before".

The Gig and Platform Service Workers Union announced a nationwide strike on New Year's Eve to collectively raise demands concerning the rights, welfare, and dignity of gig and platform workers across India.

The union's demands include the removal of 10-minute delivery options, which they argue cause unsafe speeds and accidents. They are also calling for the restoration of previous payout structures, legally mandated minimum earnings, and an end to arbitrary ID blocking, and excessive deductions.