

## Examrace

# Labour Welfare Bills, Use of Child Labour and Trade Restrictions Thereupon, Editorials from the Hindu

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## Labour Welfare Bills

- August 9, 2010: The Union Cabinet today approved the implementation of the Swavalamban Scheme to cover workers in the unorganised sector and to provide old age security to all sections of society, particularly the vulnerable sections.
- A majority of India's 30 crore informal sector workers are highly vulnerable to old age poverty because they have traditionally been excluded from formal pension provisions and are unable to access regulated retirement savings products at an affordable transaction cost. The old age income security system in the country covers only the organized sector comprising the public sector (including the civil service) and the establishments covered under the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) or other statutory Funds.

## National Level Social Security Fund for Unorganized Sector

- Proposed scheme
- Will have an initial corpus of Rs 1000 crore and will benefit 43.3 crore workers in the unorganised sector

## Use of Child Labour and Trade Restrictions Thereupon

August 9, 2010

- The United States, Department of Labour maintains a list of products produced using child labour and forced child labour under the Trafficking Victims Protection Re-authorisation Act (TVPRA) and Executive Order 13126. In July, 2010 United States, Department of Labour has published final determination of the list of products, under Executive Order 13126, which the Department believes might have been mined, produced or manufactured by forced or indentured child labour.
- US Government contractors who supply products that appear on this list are required to certify that forced or indentured child labour was not used to make the product. Following products from India have been included in the EO list – Bricks, Cottonseed (hybrid), Embroidered Textiles (zari), Garments, Rice and Stones. The Government of India's stand is that, labour standards should not be linked with Trade as it becomes non tariff barrier.
- During the adoption of ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization in the 97<sup>th</sup> Session of International Labour Conference of ILO in June, 2008, the Government of

India took a stand on the issue of Labour Standards and consequently a provision was inserted in the Declaration which states " that the violation of fundamental principles and rights at work cannot be invoked or otherwise used as a legitimate comparative advantage and that labour standards should not be used for protectionist trade purposes". Further, Government alerted all Boards/Export Promotion Councils/Apex Trade Organisations about the action of the USA requesting them to effectively respond to the list. The matter was also taken up with the US side under the India-US Trade Policy Forum.

- Besides, consistent with our Constitutional provisions, the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986 has already been enacted which seeks to prohibit employment of children below 14 years in hazardous occupations and processes. It has strict penal provisions for those employing child labour in these areas. Our National Child Labour Policy addresses the complex issue of child labour in a comprehensive, holistic and integrated manner. The action plan under this policy is multi-pronged and mainly consists of:
  - A legislative action plan.
  - Focus on general convergence of developmental programmes for the benefit of the families of the children in the areas of high Child Labour concentration.
  - Project-based action plan in areas of high concentration of Child Labour for example National Child Labour Project.

## **Editorials from the Hindu**

June 9

- In 2004, National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector (NCEUS) chaired by Arjun Sengupta was setup to review the status of unorganized sector in India where more than 93% of our workforce is engaged. The commission in its reports considers lack of adequate employment at a fair wage as the major problem looming in the informal sector.
- The plight of the informal sector can be summed as: lack of job security, income security and social security.
- The commission had identified that 77 percent of the population lives below Rs 20 a day. Though the official poverty line is Rs 12 a day, the commission said that it was too low and needs to be revised.
- The informal sector workers have largely not benefitted from the economic reforms.
- It recommends that prime objective should be that work provided will not be compromised by less than decent employment standards. A basic needs approach could be adopted for few years. Reliance on market forces to maximize economic growth will lead to divergent dynamics and deprivation for the segments lower down the economic ladder.