

Course Name: Labour Welfare and Industrial Relations

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Lec 23: Issues in Labour Welfare and Social Security, Review of welfare amenities

Hello learners, welcome back to the course on Labour Welfare and Industrial Relations. If you observe that we have been going through the thick of what labor welfare is specifically, we are dealing it with in two parts, especially the previous module and this module. Today, we specifically focus on the issues in labor welfare and social security and will look in detail about some of the welfare amenities. So it will be sort of a review of the welfare amenities that are existing in our country.

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So when you look into the issues concerned with welfare and social security, we have to first understand that though there has been a certain planning associated with different measures, we also find it difficult. critically as an issue that we also find it as a upcoming issue that there has been poor fund utilization. And this has been not only with respect to any particular scheme. Across the schemes, we have understood this as a lacunae.

Another major issue is lack of adequate budgetary allocation. You know, the allocate a specific funds maybe because of the lack of funds or maybe the lack of proper need recognition or the gap analysis there are circumstances or situations of corruption and leakage that have been found out there are also inadequate coverage and benefits aspect budgetary cuts are there and even in a society as a whole there are technological and digital divides so we'll look into these issues on a deeper level very quickly So when you look into the issues in labor, welfare and society, as I've already mentioned, the first

important aspect would be the poor fund utilization and management. So what specifically happens with respect to the fund which has been given or allocated to a particular program?

That is quite a question. For example, the previous CAG audits revealed that almost 1927, almost to the tune of 2000 crores, accumulated in the National Social Security Fund since its inception and had been not utilized at all. So similarly, if you look into other aspects, the cess collected for the provision of social security to construction workers in Delhi, says collected was poorly utilized with almost I think approximately 94% of the money remaining unspent. So these examples certainly indicate that there are gaps in the fund management and monitoring systems which technically results in the wastage and I should say the underutilization of public money. Please understand when you are allocating fund, it goes from the public money, but if it is not used, definitely is a case of underutilization. When you look deeper into the lack of budgetary, adequate budgetary allocation, the National Social Security Fund was set up for unorganized sector workers with an initial allocation of 1000 crore, which was far below the estimated requirement of, I think, around 22,841.

So this is the required amount, And this was the budgetary allocation. So this shows that the government has not typically prioritized Social Security as a key component. Maybe there are different reasons, justifications, not denying that. of its development agenda and has not allocated sufficient resources to meet the needs of the vulnerable sections of the society. Maybe it is not that the allocation itself, maybe the utilization, poor utilization, as we discussed in the previous point, could also have been a leading factor when you are looking into the inadequacy of budgetary allocation.

So there could be several reasons associated with that. But the fact remains that there is a big shortfall when it comes to the budgetary allocation. If you look into the third important aspect, we cannot neglect the corruption and leakage, which stays as a big challenge. Even now, in the case of Haryana, where the CAG noted that the direct benefit scheme of the states. Social justice and empowerment department had seen the transfer of 98.96 crore to the accounts of deceased beneficiaries.

So this suggests that there are loopholes in the identification and verification of beneficiaries as well as in the delivery mechanism of these social security benefits underscoring these aspects of corruption and leakage. Also, there are instances of bribery, fraud, nepotism and even political interference to a certain extent in the allocation and distribution of these social security funds. When you look into another important aspect, it is inadequate coverage and benefits. This is a persistent pertinent issue of inadequate coverage because for instance let's say the contribution by the center when it comes to the welfare schemes like old age pension schemes has stagnated at rupees 200 a month since 2006 which is below the minimum wage per day if you look into that from that angle. Moreover, the eligibility criteria for some of the schemes are very restrictive and they exclude typically many deserving beneficiaries.

For example, let's say the National Social Assistance Program focuses on old age poor individuals with no able bodied earners in their household. So are eligible to earn a monthly pension of rupees 75. So this leaves out many poor elderly people who may have some earning members in their household but still face economic insecurity and hardship. Another typical aspect we should consider is the budgetary cuts, the reduction in budgetary allocation, especially if you look into the schemes like the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. It suggests a lack of prioritization for social welfare and rural employment generation.

And finally, I would go with this as one of the most significant issue in labor welfare and social security, which is nothing but the technology and digital divide. When you look into many social security schemes specifically, they are transitioning to digital platforms. So when you look into this transition to digital platforms for registration or disbursement of benefits, a significant portion of the population, particularly in rural areas. Urban areas, people generally get attached to or start using this technology and they are more adept in using it. But especially in rural areas, a significant portion may lack access to technology and Internet and all the facilities that come with that, creating a digital divide that hampers their participation in these programs. And if you clinically look into the informal labor sector, approximately 91% or around 475 million or so India's workforce which works in the informal sector often lacks job security it lacks all the social benefits

it lacks access to the formal social security program so these are typically some of the critical issues that we see in labor welfare and Social Security now having understood that we have to go deeper into some of the welfare amenities we have looked into some of the acts and some of the policies, some of the outlays or some of the schemes. Now we are looking into some of the welfare amenities typically in this class, specifically the rural areas and something related to agriculture labor.

We have a list of it. We'll go deeper into that. But to understand what all are the span or what all are the range of activities that the government of the day is involved in, we have the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi PM Kisan Yojana. We have the Soil Health Card Scheme. We have the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bhima Yojana PMFBY.

We have the National Agriculture Market, ENAM. We have the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana PMFBY. PMKSY, Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana PKVY. We have the National Food Security Mission, which is one of the flagship program of the authorities these days, which is NFSM. So please note, these are again big list, but these are not the exhaustive items that are there in this list.

So basically, we look into the key factors. We look into the keys or the kingpin factors of kingpin welfare amenity schemes and we'll review them quickly. Let's start with the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana, which is also known as the PM Kisan. It was launched in 2019. 2019, one of the flagship government programs, especially in the agriculture initiative.

So when you are reviewing the welfare amenities, specifically in rural areas with respect to the agriculture labor, we have to understand that agriculture serves as the backbone of India's economy. There is no doubt about it because agriculture It employs over half of its workforce and it certainly makes a substantial contribution to the GDP. However, though it is diminishing. So despite all of its pivotal role that the agriculture of the sector is playing, the sector unfortunately grapples with different challenges.

It could be something like low productivity. Climate uncertainties are there, fragmented markets. Land holdings are there, limited access to modern markets and technologies are there. So these are some of the issues that the rural areas certainly faces to address all

these aspects, these challenges specifically and to bring up or uplift. The agriculture community, the government of India has launched several policies over the period.

So these initiatives aims to boost the productivity, the farm productivity, typically enhance the agricultural infrastructure, promote sustainable farming practices. So a document specifically by the Planning Commission of India, which had delineated the strategy and action plan for agriculture, doubling farmers income outlining key areas where government agriculture schemes is pivotal in achieving the role so basically when you look into these schemes they cover a diverse area such as it could be anything from financial support we have financial support specifically we have aspects of crop insurance We have aspects related to irrigation. We have typical aspects related to soil health.

So all these aspects I'll be covering with respect to the schemes. We have aspects associated with market access, which I've already talked about. We have also issues concerning the market linkages also when you look into the market access. But moreover, we have the importance of technology dissemination. also coming into picture.

So these are some of the factors which we need to acknowledge and appreciate when we review these schemes specifically. So in India, let me tell this very explicitly, several farmer welfare schemes have been implemented by the government to support the agriculture community. and address their various challenges. Some of the key farmer welfare schemes in India, the PM Kisan or the Soil Health Card schemes, etc., catering to all these aspects specifically. So let's go into detail with respect to Pradhan Mandirik Kisan Sammanidhi Yojana.

The primary aim is to offer direct income support to small marginal farmers, recognizing the imperative of ensuring financial stability for farmers and Amidst various challenges. So if you look into the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana specifically, what we see is that though it has a certain indication towards the financial support. The attempt is to alleviate agrarian distress and contribute to the rural prosperity. When you specifically look into the PM Kisan scheme, it is eligible for farmers who receive almost.

When you look into the PM Kisan scheme, the eligible farmers certainly receive rupees 6000 per year. disbursed in three equal installments of rupees 2000 each so it goes directly into the bank account and that's the beauty of the scheme the scheme's objective is to categorically supplement farmers income cater to the investment requirements and also to facilitate the adoption of modern agriculture practices devoid of financial burden so by furnishing a very stable income source PM Kisan or the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi endeavors to alleviate agrarian distress, as I've already mentioned, and contribute to the rural prosperity. So when you look into the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Yojana, these are some of the key objectives. Another important aspect or important scheme would be the Soil Health Card.

The Soil Health Card Scheme, yet another pivotal governmental scheme, was launched in 2015 and it aims to advocate sustainable and productive farming practices. So this scheme categorically endeavors to evaluate the nutrient status of agriculture soils and and certainly offer personalized recommendations to farmers, specifically empowering them to make well-informed decisions regarding fertilizer applications or even soil selection or soil amendments, etc. Even crop selection also is a part of this soil health card scheme. So, this is what makes the soil health card scheme more robust because it offers recommendations

tailor-made recommendations to farmers empowering them and empowering them to make the well-informed decision so what happens under the soil health card scheme the soil samples are collected from farmers fields and they are meticulously analyzed for vital nutrients it could be nitrogen potassium phosphorus the npk and micronutrients so subsequently Farmers receive a soil health card that typically furnishes detailed information about the soil's nutrient content. And it is also attached with tailored recommendations, as I've already mentioned, for suitable fertilizers and even some soil amendments that are required or that are vital or necessary to be carried out. So this specifically facilitates farmers in optimizing fertilizer usage, curbing input costs and enhancing crop yields while concurrently preserving soil health. So the soil health cut scheme has inevitably played a vital role in championing sustainable agriculture and fostering the typical utilization of resources.

So that said, There are challenges, there are issues notably concerning the timely contribution or timely distribution I will say. Timely distribution of these cars have been a critical challenge specifically when you are dealing with the rural large population and also there is unfortunately limited awareness. limited awareness among the farmers specifically about this scheme which makes it another big challenge. So continuous evaluation and refinement of the scheme are imperative to address these issues and typically bolster its efficacy in supporting soil conservation and augmenting the productivity or the agriculture productivity general.

So these are some of the positive aspects and the negative aspects of the soil health card scheme. Another critical aspect is our critical yojana would be the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bhima Yojana PMFBY. Launched in 2016, it is a significant agricultural insurance scheme. Please note, it's a significant agricultural insurance scheme. Specifically, its objective is to provide crop insurance coverage.

to farmers against yield losses. And the yield losses could be due to various reasons. You can see the Indian agriculture industry and say that there could be possibilities. There are possibilities of natural calamities. There are, you know, pest problems.

There are diseases affected due to pests. So, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bhima Yojana endeavors to alleviate problems the financial burden on farmers during crop failures and furnish them with a safety net, typically to manage risk and uncertainty in agriculture specifically. So under this Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bhima Yojana PMFBY, farmers contribute a nominal premium, a nominal premium with the remaining premium equally shared by the central and the state government.

So the contribution is from the part of the government is significant both the state and as well as the central government the scheme offers comprehensive coverage spanning from please note pre-sowing to post harvest risks and enables farmers to ensure the multiple crops so claims are settled based on the crop loss assessments are conducted by the government appointed agencies ensuring transparency and prompt compensation specifically. So this is what the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bhima Yojana PM FBY is all about.

When you look into ENAM, ENAM is nothing but the National Agricultural Market. This is another important scheme of the government.

It was launched in the year 2016. ENAM again aims at establishing a unified national electronic trading system for agriculture commodities. Now this increases the use of the technological platforms and also connects more and more people into the sector or into the network.

So this platform typically endeavors to promote transparent price discovery. Please note, that is the most critical aspect. The moment the human interface is taken out and there is more of technological adaptation, we see that The transparent pricing is happening and this particularly promotes a transparent price discovery. So this diminishes the role of intermediaries via medias and enhances the market access for farmers.

So under this national agriculture market, farmers can register on the platform and list their procedure along with details regarding both the quantity and the quality. Now this is both important because both the quantity and the quality is taken care of by such an aspect or such a scheme. So, traders, processors, buyers, all the segments of people or all the important stakeholders can access this information and participate in bidding for agriculture commodities. So, the platform facilitates a real-time online auction process, ensuring a critical equitable price and efficiency.

It typically, no doubt, augments the farmer's income. So this is something which is the underlying benefit of the national agriculture market or what we understand as ENAM. Another important scheme of the government would be the PMKSY Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana. It was launched in 2015. Again, aims to enhance water use efficiency and extend irrigation coverage within the agriculture sector.

So, when you look into this particular scheme, its primary objective certainly is Though it looks into the convergence in investments through irrigation infrastructure and ensuring integrated development of water resources, it is certainly implemented through various components. And those components include AIBP. AIBP is nothing but Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Program. I repeat, Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Program.

Then there is Harket ko pani HK Program. Then there is a PDMC scheme. per drop more crop per drop more crop scheme and then there is there are watershed developments so pmksy the pradhan mantri krishi sinchai yojana is designed to increase the irrigated land area promote the precision in irrigation techniques that have been employed and obviously augment water productivity through efficient water management practices so when you look into The entire Pradhan Mantri Krishi Singh Jaya Yojana augmenting the water productivity through efficient water management practices happens to be one of the key objectives of PMKSY. Another important scheme of the government of the day is the Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana, which is also known as the PKVY.

Launched in India in 2015, the Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana is a government agricultural scheme aimed at promoting organic farming. Please note. Not only farming but organic farming practices among the farmers while enhancing soil fertility, biodiversity and environmental sustainability. So all the factors of ESG as well as the organic farming is coming into picture. The PKVY or the Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana advocates this.

For the adoption of traditional and indigenous farming methods. So this would certainly reduce. Reliance on synthetic fertilizers and pesticides. That is one of the key aspects of the PKVY. Or the Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana.

So under this PKVY. Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana farmers. Typically receive the financial assistance. Over a three year period. Over a three year period.

Specifically. To adopt to organic farming practices. So this is in a way a mechanism to facilitate more of organic farming practices. So the scheme also encourages the formation of farmer clusters. farmer clusters specifically or groups to collectively implement organic farming methods, share knowledge about them and to increase the access towards training and technical support.

So that is ladies and gentlemen the Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana PKVY for you. Now you have one of the most important and critical and I will say the flagship program and which has created certainly an impact in the welfare scheme of the entire industrial relations. And that is nothing but the National Food Security Mission, or it is also known

as the NFSM. Launched in India in 2007, the National Food Security Mission stands as a pivotal government endeavor aimed at certainly bolstering the production of rice, wheat and pulses. So thereby giving a boost to food security and even the price stabilization.

So when you look into the objectives of the National Food Security Mission, it revolves around enhancing agricultural productivity, And augmenting the availability of essential food grains. So when you look into the population, the needs of the population, this is quite a relevant and critical objective. So operationalize through distinct missions for rice, pulses, wheat. This NFS, the National Food Security Mission, categorically channels targeted interventions to tackle this specific challenges encountered in cultivating these crops.

So when you look into the scheme, the scheme certainly extends support to farmers through the provision of high yielding seeds. This happens to be the key change factor, adoption of improved technology. Again, another critical change factor and promotion of the best agriculture practices. throughout the entire scheme.

So it places significant emphasis on water management and soil health. So we have seen how the soil health and water management is already done, striving for sustainable and inclusive growth in the food grain production. So we should also understand that when we talk a lot about the National Food Security Mission, Despite its success, there are different challenges that persist in NFSM's implementation, including the imperative for better beneficiary targeting and certainly efficient input distribution. So if you undertake a continuous evaluation and refinement process,

Then NFSM can be more beneficial to reach the intended recipients and contribute effectively to the nation's overarching food security benefits. National food security mission has emerged as undoubtedly a crucial tool in propelling food grain production and ensuring sustenance for India's populace. So by furnishing the certain support to farmers and advocating sustainable agriculture practices, the National Food Security Mission plays a vital role in boosting the food self-sufficiency and advancing the welfare of millions of citizens. So when you look into the general schemes or the most popular schemes, these are some of the schemes that are critical and that are becoming popular.

that have become relevant throughout its execution now let's conclude it with a certain look into the challenges in the implementation of welfare amenities we have looked into the issues we have gone through the different schemes in detail now let's quickly look into the challenges the first and the foremost thing is targeting and inclusivity we have already talked about this so i'll just you know bring in that perspective

The moment you have an outlay, how effectively every single individual who should otherwise come within the ambit of the scheme are getting benefited or are made inclusive. This is critical and this happens to be one of the biggest challenges. There can be issues of, you know, technical or technological or digital divide. There are issues of access towards this the schemes or there are even problems of education, literacy, etc. where people are not aware.

There are lack of awareness, you know, emerging as a big challenge. So targeting and inclusivity has different elements and these elements are making it difficult. making all the critical schemes difficult aspect to get to, you know, or penetrate towards the actual needy ones. Second important aspect could be the implementation bottlenecks. These schemes specifically are targeted for rural population to a certain extent.

So, when you are targeting rural population, there are certain bottlenecks, there are supply chain issues, there are problems with respect to the infrastructure, there are problems with respect to, again, awareness or education or literacy, there are problems with respect to, you know, certain social stigma associated with this, there are problems associated with whether, you know, somebody is being exploited, etc. By taking this and you know others are who are the needy ones they are not actually getting it. So there are a lot of implementation bottlenecks also existing which again emerges as an important challenge in the implementation of welfare amenity. The third important aspect is limited coverage. Though the attempt is to spread across the span towards the entire public, towards the entire rural sector, maybe because of the sheer population or maybe because of the lesser outlay or the budgetary allocation.

Many a time it is difficult to, you know, it is it is difficult to actually cover the entire set of issues. destined people or targeted population. So this makes the entire, you know, the

schemes literally redundant at times because of this limited coverage specifically. We have insufficient coverage of risk because there might be certain risks that are, you know, sudden, that are coming on an urgent basis, maybe because of some natural calamities or maybe such issues which were not foreseen, something like COVID-19. which was not foreseen or which had never happened.

So those issues, there are certain insufficient coverage. There are certain issues where certain sector of population or certain segment of people are not covered. You know, again, it talks about or it links to the implementation bottlenecks and the problems, including, problems relating to targeting and inclusivity. So insufficient coverage of risk also becomes or comes out as an inherent challenge in proper implementation of these welfare amenities.

Price distortion is again another factor. Many a time, the domestic market is always outweighed by the international market there could be fluctuations within the economy outside the economy which creates a turbulence this turbulence could actually create price distortion many a time there is lack of transparency there are issues of holding there are unfair agriculture practices there are there are there are problems of you know unfair subsidizing in other parts of the globe so all these aspects the poor farmer the poor person who should otherwise get benefited from the welfare scheme is actually getting affected and finally there are lack of extension services there are certain services but how well this can penetrate and give an extension service or maybe you know extension of one service to another or maybe something like you have inherent subsidiary scheme which can also be taken for the benefit of the larger population these things are also absent so please note Though the intention is good, though there are a lot of critical factors, critical schemes that are there and they are trying to cater to the needs and wants of people.

But still, trust me when I say that there are certain impending challenges, there are certain systemic challenges, there are certain systematic challenges that are coming as barriers or roadblocks. within the implementation of these welfare schemes. So that's all from today's class. We have looked into the different schemes. We have tried to review especially the key important schemes associated with the welfare amenities.

It has notation. It has its importance in the agriculture field. It has its relevance with respect to the welfare of the entire agriculture sector, because lion's share of people are still working or associated with the agriculture sector, though there are cases of disguised unemployment, not unemployment. Not denying the fact, but still a lot of people are still in that particular sector. So all these schemes are relevant.

All these schemes are important, but they have to be understood. They have to be studied in the background of the challenges of in the background of the bottlenecks. So this is what I would like to emphasize here. We'll see more about the welfare and we'll try to conclude the module in the next class. Till then, take care. Bye. Namaste. Thank you.