

ANSWERS

CHAPTER 10 – LAW AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

1. Choose the correct option:

- (a) (ii) employers
- (b) (iii) an industrial catastrophe that occurred due to unsafe working conditions
- (c) (iii) Both a and b
- (d) (i) Legal
- (e) (i) Sugar

2. Fill in the blanks.

- (a) at least once in 5 years
- (b) against exploitation
- (c) CNG, diesel
- (d) adulteration
- (e) below 14

3. Put a (✓) mark if the statement is correct and (x) if incorrect.

- (a) (X)
- (b) (✓)
- (c) (✓)
- (d) (X)
- (e) (✓)

6. Short Answer Questions

- (a) The minimum wages act was introduced in the year 1948 for legislative protection of workers and requires the central and state governments to fix the minimum wage for employment of workers in various types of scheduled employments.
- (b) Since each state government is given the power to independently fix the minimum wage of workers, chances of disparities cannot be ignored. To curb such disparities, regional committees have been appointed by the central government to harmonize the wages and ensure that they do not fall below the specified minimum.
- (c) In simple words a faulty tank containing a poisonous gas leaked from a factory is the major cause of the Bhopal Gas tragedy. Union Carbide had not installed computerized monitoring systems to detect gas leaks and the main culprit was Warren Anderson.

- (d) The first and foremost step that needs to be taken to prevent a disaster of such a magnitude in the future is that during the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Company and the Government, it should be made clear to the company concerned that incase any mishap occurs then the responsibility will be bared by the company concerned if there is any security lapse on their part and it should also be made clear that incase an incident does occur then the company should pay at least half of the compensation to the aggrieved people and the govt. with which they signed the memorandum of understanding.
- (e) In order to protect the interests of children, the government has formulated “The Child Labour Prevention Act” that bans employment of children below 14 years of age. Child labour is a punishable offence and individuals violating this law may be fined up to Rs. 20,000 and sentenced up to a term of 3 months imprisonment. The central government has directed the states to develop initiatives to rescue victims of child labour and also rehabilitate them.

7. Long Answer Questions.

- (a) The textile production distribution chain - The farmers produce cotton which is used by the weavers to develop the cloth material. These are sent to the factories where workers and laborers are employed to further process it and convert it to a finished garment. The exporters and distributors supply the finished product to the marketplace. The buyer of the garment is the consumer of this finished product. Investors, businessmen and private companies involved in this chain aim to make huge profits and in the bargain, the workers and consumers in the chain may be affected.
For example The factory workers need to be given minimum wages to lead a comfortable living and be employed in safe working conditions that are not detrimental to their health or to their life and the buyer should not be unreasonably charged for the product.

Similarly, the interests of other people involved in this chain needs to be protected. The scenario holds good for other marketing chains and all types of businesses too. Hence, in order to protect the people involved in this complex economy network, the government has made laws to prevent unfair practices and also curb exploitation of people at the workplace. Laws to promote social justice are derived out of fundamental rights - Right to Life and Right against Exploitation.

- (b) The following are the reasons why companies find it beneficial to set up industrial plants in India.
 - (i) Cheap labour - The wages that are required to be paid to the Indian workers were far cheaper compared to wages of the workers of their countries.
 - (ii) Longer hours of work: Companies can employ workers for longer hours for lesser pay.
 - (iii) Curbing additional expenses: Housing expenses and other allowances were fewer compared to their countries.
 - (iv) Higher profits: Cost-cutting measures secured higher profits for the company.

The affects of this are the workers were employed under hazardous working conditions. Adequate safety precautions were not taken. Many of the installed devices were of low quality and were either malfunctioning or faulty.

- (c) Before the Bhopal Gas tragedy stringent laws were not enforced for the protection of the environment. Industries released the waste in water bodies and also polluted the atmosphere. However, the later part of 1980s saw the government taking serious efforts to frame laws to protect the environment, natural resources and the health of people. These laws were derived out of the fundamental Right to Life as laid down by the Indian Constitution.

These laws recognize the need for the people to enjoy pollution-free atmosphere and water facilities. Large water bodies were cleaned and heavy fines were imposed on industries that created

environmental pollution. Cleaner technologies and processes were gradually introduced in factories.

Few years ago, the Delhi government ordered public transport vehicles to switch to Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) as fuel instead of diesel. Though the pollution considerably came down, the levels of toxic substances in the atmosphere were still high due to the large water bodies were cleaned and heavy fines were imposed on industries that created environmental pollution. Cleaner technologies and processes were gradually introduced in factories.

- (d) Even today, many children are employed in shops, *dhabas*, construction sites, factories and homes as domestic servants and labourers. In order to protect the interests of children, the government has formulated “The Child Labour Prevention Act” that bans employment of children below 14 years of age. Child labour is a punishable offence and individuals violating this law may be fined up to Rs. 20,000 and sentenced up to a term of 3 months imprisonment. The central government has directed the states to develop initiatives to rescue victims of child labour and also rehabilitate them.
- (e) Though various laws have been formulated by the government, the enforcement of these laws is not strict and hence, they are overlooked. For example, in order to enforce minimum wages act for workers, timely inspections need to be conducted at the sites and employers who violate this law should be severely punished. Similarly, occupational safety laws can be enforced only if surprise inspections are conducted in various plants and industries to ensure that safety precautions are in place and the equipments used are in good condition. Child labour can be abolished only if employers who hire children for cheap labour are punished. With local and foreign companies expanding their businesses in India with such rapidity, the issue of stronger workers’ protection rights and enforcement of these laws needs serious attention.