

General Studies – 2; Topic: Mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of the vulnerable sections.

Child Labour in India

1) Introduction

- “There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children.” – Nelson Mandela.
- Child labour typically means the employment of children in any manual work with or without payment.
- Child labour is a deep rooted problem in India.

2) Reasons

- **Poverty**
 - a. The main reason for child labour is poverty.
 - b. Poverty forces families to push their children to work for a living.
- **Lack of educational resources**
 - a. There are instances where children are deprived of their fundamental right to education.
 - b. There are areas with no proper facilities of education.
 - c. Lack of affordable school for poor children leaves them illiterate and helpless which push them into the trap of child labour.
- **Social and economic backwardness**
 - a. Due to illiteracy, many times parents are not aware of various information and schemes for child education.
 - b. Lack of education, illiteracy and lack of awareness of their rights have encouraged child labour.
 - c. Also, uneducated parents do not know about the impact of child labour on their children.
- **Disease or Disability**
 - a. In many families, due to disease or disability, there is no earning, and the child's wages are the sole means of family's sustenance.
- **Poor compliance of laws**
 - a. In the absence of proper compliance of the laws, child labour is continuing.
 - b. It can be prohibited only by strict adherence to the related laws.
- **Lure of cheap labour**
 - a. Some shopkeepers, companies and factory owners employ children so that they have to pay less to them.
 - b. With the development of globalization, privatization, and consumerist culture, the need for cheap labour and its linkage with economic needs of poor families have encouraged child labour.
- **Discrimination between boys and girls**
 - a. Even today some believe that girls are weaker and there is no equal comparison between boys and girls.
 - b. Considering girls weaker than boys deprives them of school and education.
 - c. In labourer families, girls are found to be engaged in labour along with their parents.

3) How to eradicate child labour?

- To prevent child labour, incidence of poverty needs to be reduced first.

- Spread awareness about child labour, so that people can understand that child labour is against the future of the country.
- **Report cases of child working**
 - a. Persuading owners to refrain from employing kids under 18 years.
 - b. Reporting such cases to the police so that necessary legal action can be taken.
- **Educate parents of child workers**
 - a. Parents must be educated about the importance of education in a child's life.
 - b. As well as the various government initiatives to help underprivileged kids study free of cost.
- **Work with NGOs**
 - a. A large number of NGOs actively work to rehabilitate and save children from being trafficked into child labour.
 - b. People can either join such an organisation or assist the NGO.
- **Not employing children as house help**
 - a. We must refrain from employing them and make efforts to help them get an education.
- **Awareness about the existing laws**
 - a. People who employ children must be informed about The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) of Children Act of 2015 which could land them in prison.
- **Fund a poor child's education**
 - a. People can fund a child's education.
 - b. Donate funds to organisations that help underprivileged kids.
- More robust and stricter laws for child labour, so that the people fear from employing any child labour.
- The common man should take up a resolve that he will not buy any items from the shops where a child is employed as labour.
- Say No to the use of something made of child labour. This can bring a big change in our society.

4) Facts for Prelims

- June 12 is observed worldwide as World Day Against Child Labour.
- The International Labour Organisation launched this day in 2002 to tackle the global issue of child labour.
- India ratified core ILO conventions 138 and 182 on Child Labour to fight against the menace and achieve the objective of child labour-free nation