

B.A. Part II (Economics Honours)
Paper - IIIrd
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Industrial Labour

"Labour" is a subject in the "Concurrent List" under the Constitution of India where both the Central and State Governments are competent to enact legislations subject, however, to reservation of certain matters for the Central Government. The constitutional status of labour jurisdiction has been explained in the following table:

Union List (Central Government)	Concurrent List (Central as well as State Government)
Regulation of labour and safety in mines and oil fields	Trade unions, industrial and labour disputes
Industrial disputes concerning Union employees	Social security and insurance, employment and unemployment
Union agencies and institutions for "... vocational ... training ..."	Welfare of labour including conditions of work, provident funds, employers' invalidity and old-age pension and maternity benefits

The Ministry of Labour and Employment seeks to protect and safeguard the interests of workers in general and those who constitute the poor, deprived and

disadvantaged sections of the society, in particular, with due regard to creating a healthy work environment for higher production and productivity, and developing and coordinating vocational skill training and employment services. Government's attention is also focused on promotion of welfare activities and providing social security to the labour force both in the organised and unorganised sectors, in tandem with the process of liberalisation. These objectives are sought to be achieved through enactment and implementation of various labour laws, which regulate the terms and conditions of service and employment of workers.

The following are the thrust areas of the Government concerning labour laws:

- Labour policy and legislation;
- Safety, health and welfare of labour;
- Social security of labour;
- Policy relating to special target groups such as women and child labour;
- Industrial relations and enforcement of labour laws in the central sphere;
- Adjudication of industrial disputes through Central Government Industrial Tribunals-cum-Labour Courts and National Industrial Tribunals;
- Workers' education;
- Labour and employment statistics;
- Emigration of labour for employment abroad;
- Employment services and vocational training;
- Administration of central labour and employment services; and
- International cooperation in labour and employment matters.

India has a number of labour laws that govern almost all the aspects of employment such as payment of wages, minimum wages, payment of bonus, payment of gratuity, contributions to provident fund and pension fund, working conditions, accident compensations, etc. The Government has enacted certain central legislations, viz, the Employees Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, Employees State Insurance Act, Payment of Wages Act, Minimum Wages Act, Equal Remuneration Act, Maternity Benefits Act, etc.

In addition, at the State level, the State Governments usually have a separate Labour Ministry, which seeks to ensure compliance with State labour laws (viz, State Shops and Establishments Act, Labour Welfare Fund Act, etc) through its Labour Department, which is generally operational at the district level.