

# Social Science

(Social and Political Life) (Chapter – 8) (Law and Social Justice)  
(Class – 8)

## Question 1:

Talk to two workers (For example, construction workers, farm workers, factory workers, workers at any shop) to find out if they are receiving the minimum wages laid down by law.

### Answer 1:

- Farm workers are not getting minimum wages in villages.
- Women workers are not getting equal wages as that of the men which is not permitted by law.

## Question 2:

What are the advantages to foreign companies in setting up production in India?

### Answer 2:

The advantages of foreign companies in setting up production in India are:

- (i) Foreign companies get cheap labour. Wages that the companies pay to workers in the USA are far higher than what they have to pay to workers in India.
- (ii) Additional expenses such as for housing facilities for workers are also cheaper.
- (iii) Lower working conditions including lower safety measures are used as ways of cutting costs. Thus, companies can save costs and earn high profits.

## Question 3:

Do you think the victims of the Bhopal gas tragedy got justice? Discuss.

### Answer 3:

The victims of the Bhopal gas tragedy got justice, but this statement is debatable. Some victims were adequately compensated, while others are still struggling for a fair judgment to be taken on a violation of their rights. 8,000 people died, while another 50,000 were rendered handicapped and hence unable to earn a livelihood. The company which owned the pesticide factory- Union Carbide, did not accept responsibility for the deaths and left in a hurry, leaving behind harmful toxic chemicals that are contaminating water in Bhopal even today. UC was fined a measly \$470 million from a \$3 billion civil case, for this catastrophe. Financial compensation for the victims' families was adequate but survivors of this disaster are still fighting for safe drinking water, health-care facilities and jobs.

## Question 4:

What do we mean when we speak of law enforcement? Who is responsible for enforcement? Why is enforcement so important?

### Answer 4:

Law enforcement implies the government's responsibility as lawmaker and enforcer, to ensure obedience to its laws by everyone within the State that it governs. It is the responsibility of the government to ascertain that laws are not violated by anyone. Enforcement is important to maintain the democratic status of India; if foreign companies are allowed to maintain low working conditions, then this interferes with the Fundamental Right of the Right to Life, of a worker. Hence, enforcement is necessary to protect the people.

## Question 5:

How can laws ensure that markets work in a manner that is fair? Give two examples to support your answer.

### Answer 5:

Most of the time markets exploit the consumers. To protect people from such exploitation, the government make certain laws. These laws try to ensure that the unfair practices are kept at a minimum in the markets. For example, private companies, contractors in the drive for profits might deny workers their rights and not pay them proper wages. To ensure that workers are not underpaid, or are paid fairly, there is a law on minimum wages. Laws have also been made to check adulteration, black-marketing etc.



**Question 6:**

Imagine yourself to be a worker working in a chemical factory, which has received orders from the government to move to a different site 100 km away from the present location. Write about how your life would change? Read out your responses in the classroom.

**Answer 6:**

I will have to adjust in the new environment. I will get admission in a new school where new friends and new teachers will come in contact with me. It may take much time to me to adjust in the new school because I am a little but introvert. I don't like changes or shifting. This will definitely adversely affect my studies. But as there will be no alternatives, I will have to face the situation.

**Question 7:**

Write a paragraph on the various roles of the government that you have read about in this unit.

**Answer 7:**

The government plays a large number of roles in any state. In Unit five, the government's role in the economic sector is explained. This includes providing public facilities like water supply, healthcare and sanitation and ensuring that these amenities are not overtaken by private enterprises; the government also plays a pivotal role in law enforcement, which is of utmost importance in the economic sector. The government makes laws to protect workers in production factories- laws on minimum wages, controlling working conditions and safety measures. It also makes laws for markets that protect consumers against over-pricing and sub-standard products. The government has a law against child labour and it also punishes organizations that do not follow policies put in place to protect the environment against pollution.

**Question 8:**

What are the sources of environmental pollution in your area? Discuss with respect to (a) air, (b) water and (c) soil. What are the steps being taken to reduce the pollution?

Can you suggest some other measures?

**Answer 8:**

Smoke comes out from the chimneys of the factories. Foul smell comes from open drains, heaps of rubbish and dirt lying here and there. Smoke of petrol and diesel vehicles is also polluting the air. Water is polluted by chemical fertilizers used by the farmers. Water is also polluted by the effluents thrown or discharged into the rivers. Dirt and human wastage's as well as wastes thrown by different factories in different fields or farms on open ground pollute the soil. Companies and contractors are responsible to violate environment laws. Hence, they should be given strict warning. Clean surrounding is the need of the hour. So, we should try our best to keep it healthy. We should not throw garbage here and there on the road.

**Question 9:**

How was environment treated earlier? What has been the change in perception? Discuss.

**Answer 9:**

Earlier there were very few laws protecting the environment in India. There was hardly any enforcement of these laws. The environment was treated as a 'free' entity and any industry could pollute the air and water without any restrictions. Now there has been a change in perception. Government has introduced laws on the environment. The courts have given a number of judgments upholding the right to a healthy environment as intrinsic to the fundamental right to life. The government has set up laws and procedures that can check pollution, clean rivers. The government can also fine to those who pollute our precious environment.



### Question 10:

What do you think the famous cartoonist R.K. Laxman is trying to convey in this cartoon?

How does it relate to the 2006 law that you read about on page 125?

### Answer 10:

The famous cartoonist R.K. Laxman, in this cartoon, is trying to convey an ironical perception of the double standards and hypocrisy some of us follow. A mother is complaining about the heavy bags that children are made to carry to school, but she hires another “child” servant to do the same without a wee bit of sympathy for the less fortunate child who has to work and earn a living.

This relates to the 2006 Child Labour Prevention Act that banned children under the age of 14 years from work, making it a punishable offence for those who employed these children. Unfortunately, 74% of child domestic labour today is under the age of 16. R.K. Laxman, in his cartoon, is pointing towards this very glitch and how the government has not taken adequate action to enforce this law.



It's really cruel burdening kids like this. I had to hire that boy to help my son!



## ❖ Intext Question Pg-101

### Question 1:

Why do we need a law on minimum wages? Find out:

- (a) What is the minimum wage for a construction worker in your state?
- (b) Do you think the minimum wage for a construction worker is adequate, low or high?
- (c) Who sets the minimum wages?

### Answer:

We need a law on minimum wages because of the following reasons:

- (i) To protect the interest of the workers.
  - (ii) To ensure fairness and social justice.
- (a) The minimum wage for a construction worker in my state is 400 rupees per day.
  - (b) The minimum wage for these workers is still low. There wage should be increased a little more as in 400 rupees they cannot fulfill the needs of their families.
  - (c) There is an Indian labour law that sets the minimum wages that must be paid to skilled and unskilled labours.

## ❖ Intext Question Pg-127

### Question 1:

Why do you think enforcement of safety laws is important in any factory?

**Answer:**

Enforcement of safety laws is important in any factor because of the following reasons:

(a) Factory work includes use of several machines and it is important that proper care is taken of these machines so that the workers security is guaranteed.

(b) Factories are the areas where there are chances of worker exploitation. So for this factory safety laws are important.

**Question 2:**

Can you point to a few other situations where laws (or rules) exist but people do not follow them because of poor enforcement? (For example, over-speeding by motorists). What are the problems in enforcement?

**Answer:**

There are various rules in our country which just because of the poor enforcement aren't followed by the citizens. Some of these rules are as follows:

(a) Driving with license is compulsory but people hardly do so.

(b) Driving while drinking is not allowed but no one follows.

(c) Driving with helmet is compulsory but people barely does that.

**Question 2:**

Can you suggest some ways in which enforcement can be improved?

**Answer:**

Some ways in which enforcement can be improved are:

- (a) If the nature of policies and policy makers become strict and loyal.
- (b) If the information becomes basic and the flow of information becomes transparent.
- (c) If the communication gaps diminish.

**❖ Intext Question Pg-108****Question 1:**

A 'clean environment is a public facility.' Can you explain this statement?

**Answer:**

From the above statement we understand that the environment should be healthy and clean. This can be done creating more and more awareness among the people. Those who pollute the environment a fine should be imposed on them. Also workers of the factories should be safeguard to maintain their interest.

**Question 2:**

Why do we need new laws?

**Answer:**

We need new laws because of the following reasons:

- (a) To prevent chaos in the society.
- (b) To prevent minority groups from any kind of exploitation by the majority.
- (c) To protect the interest of community at large.
- (d) To ensure peace and harmony in the society.

**Question 3:**

Why are companies and contractors able to violate environmental laws?

**Answer:**

Private companies and contractors in order to earn to more profit do unfair practices such as paying low wages to workers, employing children to work, ignoring the working conditions etc. They violate the environmental laws as for them profit is more important than the lives of workers.

**❖ Intext Question Pg-109****Question 1:**

Do you think everyone got justice in the case cited above?

**Answer:**

In my opinion everyone did not get justice in the case because though the court solved one problem of saving the environment it gave rise to several other issues like workers working there lost their jobs and the places where the factories got relocated started getting polluted in the same way.

**Question 2:**

Can you think of other ways in which the environment can be protected? Discuss in class.

**Answer:**

The environment can be protected in following ways:

- (a) We must use low watt light bulbs as they not only last longer but also save energy.
- (b) Driving is one of the biggest cause of pollution, hence use cycle or walk for shorter distance and prefer public transport.
- (c) We must follow the recommended amount of detergent for washing.
- (d) Find ways of recovering the rain water.