

Editorial of the Day – 28.11.2025

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1. Enabling a modern and future-ready labour ecosystem – (TH)

General Studies 3 – Economy

Topic – Indian Economy and issues relating to

planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development and employment.

Introduction – A Historic Milestone

On November 21, 2025, India operationalized the long-awaited Four Labour Codes, marking a transformative shift in the country's regulatory framework. This implementation is viewed as a significant stride towards Viksit Bharat (Developed India) and Aatmanirbhar Bharat (Self-reliant India).

The reforms consolidate archaic laws into four streamlined codes –

1. Code on Wages (2019)
2. Industrial Relations Code (2020)
3. Social Security Code (2020)
4. Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSH) Code (2020)

1. Evolution and Rationale for Reform

Consolidation – The reforms are based on the recommendations of the Second National Commission on Labour. They replace numerous fragmented laws enacted over decades with functional, streamlined codes.

Consultative Process – The codes are the result of extensive stakeholder consultations held between 2015 and 2019 involving industry, trade unions, and State governments.

Demographic Dividend – India possesses a workforce of over 643 million. The World Economic Forum projects India will contribute nearly two-thirds of new global workforce entrants soon.

Labour Market Momentum – 16.83 crore jobs were created between 2017-18 and 2023-24. The unemployment rate declined from 6% to 3.2%. There is an urgent need to formalize the large informal sector to extend productivity and protection.

2. Key Pillars of the Reforms

A. Worker Protection & Wages (Code on Wages)

Universal Coverage – Introduction of universal minimum wages and a National Floor Wage to reduce regional disparities.

Rights – Mandatory issuance of appointment letters to formalize employment.

Timeliness – Statutory provisions for the timely payment of wages.

Working Hours – Establishment of clear norms, including a capped 48-hour work week.

B. Occupational Safety and Health (OSH Code)

Institutional Safety – Mandates the formation of Safety Committees in establishments.

Health Benefits – Provision for free preventive health check-ups for workers.

Workplace Standards – Enhanced standards to improve overall well-being and output productivity.

C. Social Security (Social Security Code)

Universal Reach – Extension of ESIC (Employees' State Insurance Corporation) coverage to all workers.

Process Simplification – Smoother EPF (Employees' Provident Fund) processes.

Unorganized Sector – Inclusion of the unorganized sector in safety nets and a simplified construction cess payment mechanism.

Dedicated Fund – Creation of a National Social Security Fund to support diverse worker groups.

3. Ease of Doing Business & Governance

Compliance Reduction – Implementation of Single Registration, Single License, and Single Return. Significantly reduces the compliance burden, specifically benefiting MSMEs.

Uniformity – A uniform definition of wages aims to cut litigation and increase predictability for employers.

Decriminalization – Minor technical offenses are decriminalized to foster a trust-based compliance culture.

Digital Transparency – Introduction of algorithm-based inspections to eliminate human discretion and harassment.

4. Future of Work and Inclusivity

A. The Gig and Platform Economy

Recognition – The Social Security Code explicitly includes gig and platform workers, acknowledging the shift toward flexible job models.

Projected Growth – This workforce is expected to grow from 1 crore (2024–25) to 2.35 crore (2029–30).

Safety Nets – Creating a social protection framework for this segment is cited as a vital, forward-looking step.

B. Women in the Workforce

Current Status – The ILO's *India Employment Report 2024* pegs Female Labour Force Participation (FLFP) at **32.8%**, indicating untapped potential.

Equal Pay – Strong provisions for equal remuneration.

Night Shifts – The OSH Code permits women to work night shifts, provided there is consent and adequate safety measures.

Benefits – Enhanced maternity benefits and broader social protection coverage.

5. Industrial Relations & Economic Impact

Balancing Act – The framework seeks to balance worker rights with business competitiveness.

Dispute Resolution – Clearer industrial relations norms and faster dispute resolution mechanisms to ensure stability.

Formalization – Transparent procedures and uniform rules encourage enterprises to join the formal economy.

Global Value Chains – By promoting stability and investment, the codes aim to strengthen India's position in global supply chains.

Conclusion

The operationalization of the Four Labour Codes is comparable in scale and structural importance to the GST reforms.

Immediate Challenge – Ensuring State governments align with minimum thresholds to maintain nationwide uniformity.

Long-term Goal – Sustaining this reform momentum is critical to attracting foreign investment and boosting employment generation across India.

Source – <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/enabling-a-modern-and-future-ready-labour-ecosystem/article70331162.ece>

2. Children cannot raise themselves. Society, parents and teachers must jointly bear the responsibility – (IE)

General Studies 1 – Society

Topic – Social empowerment, effects of globalization

on Indian society, and role of women and social organizations.

Introduction – The Crisis of Transition

Building Bureaucrats Since 2006

Recent trends, highlighted by tragic incidents of student suicides, point to a deep systemic imbalance in India's education and child-rearing ecosystem. As of November 28, 2025, the discourse has shifted toward the widening gap between children's emotional needs and the support provided by homes and schools. Traditional value systems are eroding while new influences—digital exposure and changing family dynamics—are reshaping young minds, necessitating a coordinated response from all stakeholders.

I. Key Issues Driving the Crisis

A. Shifting Value Systems

Erosion of Norms – Traditional values of discipline, respect, and empathy are weakening.

Instability – New values driven by digital media and hyper-individualism have not yet stabilized, creating a vacuum.

Conflict – This transition creates a "value conflict" between the environment at home and the environment at school, severely affecting children's emotional stability.

B. The Parent-Teacher Disconnect

Adversarial Relations – Parent-teacher meetings often turn confrontational rather than cooperative.

Blind Trust – Parents increasingly accept their children's narratives without question, leading to mistrust of educators.

Casualty – The child becomes the ultimate victim of this lack of coordination and trust between the two primary caregivers.

C. Commercialization of School Culture

Service Provider Model – Particularly in elite private schools, the institution is viewed as a "service provider" and parents as "clients."

Erosion of Authority – Teachers are treated merely as employees, stripping them of authority and autonomy.

Diluted Discipline – This dynamic creates an environment where academic and behavioral boundaries are difficult to enforce.

D. Rise in Behavioral & Mental Health Challenges

Early Aggression – Manifestations of egotism, anger, and aggression are appearing at much younger ages.

Impulsivity – Incidents of self-harm, peer conflict, and impulsive behavior are on the rise.

External Influence – Exposure to violence and social media echo chambers significantly shapes these behaviors.

E. Misinterpretation of Rights

Rights vs. Duty – While awareness of children's rights is positive, it is occasionally misused to justify misconduct as "self-expression."

Over-protection – Parental over-protection often shields children from accountability, worsening unruly behavior.

F. The Digital Dilemma

Ineffective Bans – While schools restrict mobile phones, unrestricted exposure often continues at home.

Validation Seeking – Children increasingly seek visibility and validation on social media, which dictates their self-worth and mental health.

Lack of Oversight – Parents often fail to effectively monitor or guide online behavior and consumption.

G. The Socio-Economic Divide

Fragmented Childhood – Childhood experiences are starkly divided by class.

Elite Struggles – Urban elite children face identity issues, digital overload, and intense academic pressure.

Disadvantaged Struggles – Children from lower socio-economic backgrounds face basic insecurity, poverty, and a lack of opportunity.

2. Consequences for the Child

Emotional Volatility – A marked rise in anxiety, loneliness, and emotional instability.

Aggression – Increased frequency of bullying, aggression, and self-harm.

Skill Deficit – Weakened social skills and lowered resilience to setbacks.

Virtual Dependence – A shift from real-life relationships to a dependence on online validation.

3. Way Forward – Rebuilding the Support System

A. Rebuilding Collaboration

Shared Responsibility – Establish regular communication channels based on trust.

Joint Strategies – Parents and teachers must develop joint strategies to address behavioral issues, avoiding "blame games."

B. Strengthening School Ecosystems

Teacher Empowerment – Restore teacher autonomy and provide training in emotional handling.

Counselling – Introduce structured counselling systems in all schools.

Paradigm Shift – Move the focus from "client satisfaction" to genuine "child well-being."

C. Responsible Digital Parenting

Active Supervision – Parents must actively supervise online activity and set clear boundaries for screen time.

Reflective Thinking – Encourage critical thinking over the "constant display culture" of social media.

D. Value Reinforcement

Core Values – Both home and school must proactively cultivate empathy, discipline, patience, and respect.

Alignment – Behavioral expectations must be consistent across both spaces to reduce confusion.

E. Policy-Level Interventions

Mandates – Mandatory appointment of counsellors and child-psychology training in schools.

Guidelines – Clear government guidelines on parent-school engagement.

Literacy – Awareness campaigns focusing on digital literacy and mental health.

F. Societal Role

Media Responsibility – Platforms must take responsibility to reduce exposure to harmful content.

De-stigmatization – Encourage open conversations about mental health to remove stigma.

Community Support – Build support structures for vulnerable children outside of just the school and home.

Conclusion

Childhood in India is currently being shaped by rapid technological and cultural shifts that schools cannot manage alone. The protection of the emotional and psychological well-being of India's children requires a shift from confrontation to collective responsibility. Parents, educators, and society must collaborate to build safe, empathetic, and balanced environments for the next generation.

Source – <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/delhi-school-children-suicide-delhi-kid-metro-suicide-parents-children-10386754/>