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Q8(c)

What is 'social security'? Examine recent security measures adopted by the Government in India

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2019 · Sociology GS 2 · 10 marks · Tribal communities in India

Tribal communities in India: Definitional problems; Geographical spread; Colonial policies and tribes; Issues of integration and autonomy.

Core demand of the question

- What is 'social security'? Examine recent security measures adopted by the Government in India
- Keep the note to a 10-mark length

Revision summary

Social security is public cover for life risks of income and care.

India's recent measures include work, food, health and thin pensions.

Informal workers are the test of every scheme.

Women's unpaid and casual work often misses the record.

Family still does most security that the state names.

Introduction

Social security is public protection against life risks of income, illness, old age, maternity, and injury. In India it is a patchwork for a mostly informal workforce.

Body

Meaning

- It is not only a factory PF. It is the social wage that markets do not give mazdoors and unpaid carers.
- A. R. Desai would ask whether measures reach class structure or only the organised few.

Recent measures

- **Rights-based work and food:** MGNREGA and the National Food Security Act as rural floors.
- Health insurance and accident covers for informal workers, uneven in portability.
- Pensions for the elderly, widows, and persons with disabilities, still thin relative to care needs of active ageing.
- Maternity benefit expansion on paper; informal women still miss it.
- **E-Shram**-type databases try to name the unorganised worker as a citizen of welfare.

Limit

- Underemployment and gender discrimination mean many women never enter the record.

- Implementation meets the same capture as other rural programmes.

Flow diagram

Social security -> Food work health pension
Informal majority -> Gap
Worker databases -> Food work health pension

Conclusion

Social security is organised protection against want. Recent Indian measures widened floors in food, work, health, and pensions, yet the informal and gendered majority still lives on family security more than on the state.

Facts & figures

National Food Security Act (NFSA)

Legal food security as a social floor.

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)

Rural employment as a security against distress wages.

E-Shram

National attempt to register unorganised workers.

Informal majority

The structural limit of workplace-based classic social security.