

Government of India must recognise the right to social security for migrant and informal workers in order to prevent impending crisis. Discuss (200 words)

Right to social security is a right recognised internationally as well as domestically. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant on Economic and Social Rights recognise the importance of social security. The Directive Principles of State Policy in Part IV of the Constitution lay down principles for the State to implement.

Need

In light of impending third wave of COVID 19 cases, high inflation in food fuel, increased unemployment in urban areas and reverse migration of workers to villages, it is crucial for governments to address the social security of migrant and informal workers.

Challenges to social security

Existing laws — Labour codes still not in effect. Numerical thresholds in laws and policies leave out large number of workers from social security net.

Increase in unemployment — The no. of unemployed workers has increased due to lockdown and decrease in demand of goods

Shift in govt focus — Shift in approach of govt towards healthcare & boosting economic revival over ensuring social security and welfare

Measures taken by Govt

One nation one ration card — On being directed by Supreme Court, Govt is implementing this scheme to allow access to benefits across India

Portal for unorganized workers — Online Portal for registration of informal sector and migrant workers set up by ministry of social justice

Extension of PM JAY — Foodgrains have been provided to migrant workers additionally

Provision of cooked food — Centre and states have provided cooked food centres for migrant workers & informal workers

Ayushman Bharat — Universal health insurance for all

Way forward

Enactment of new Labour Codes with appropriate threshold limits to cover all workers' categories.

Increase employment in public sector works (states and centre) to boost social security. Increased coverage under ESI and EPFO benefits for migrant and informal workers will also be helpful.