

Ch 10 Law and Social Justice

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Exercises

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

Answer

Advantages to foreign companies in setting up production in India are:

→ Cheap labour: - Wages that the companies pay to workers say in the U.S.A. are far higher than what they have to pay workers in India. → For lower pay: - Companies can get longer hours of work.

→ Additional expenses such as housing facilities for workers are also fewer. Thus, companies can save costs and earn higher profits. → Cost cutting can also be done by other more dangerous means.

→ Lower working conditions including lower safety measures are used as ways of cutting costs.

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

Answer

No, the victims of Bhopal gas tragedy are still fighting for justice.

At first, the company which owned the pesticide factory- Union Carbide (UC) refused to accept responsibility despite the wide-open, so many evidences of the tragedy. The UC got away after paying a bare minimum compensation to the survivors of this tragedy. Even after 24 years the survivors are still fighting for justice, for safe drinking water, for health-care facilities and jobs for the poisoned by UC. Their cases are still pending in numerous courts.

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

Answer

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.

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

Answer

Laws can ensure that markets work in a fair manner. The frequently upgraded Minimum Wages Law ensures that workers are not exploited and over-worked by companies that hire them. Also, a law keeping checks on the quality of production makes sure that sub-standard goods do not enter the market.

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

Answer

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 substandard 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.

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

There are many sources of environmental pollution in our area.

→ Air Pollution: By vehicles, industrial gases disposed through chimneys, smokes from red brick Bhattas.

→ Water Pollution: Various chemical discharges and other liquid effluents from some industries like tanneries, aluminium etc. Because of dry latrines and inefficient discharge of house wastes and sewerage into the river.

→ Soil Pollution: Due to the throwing of plastic bags here and there, lack of proper arrangement of disposing household wastes, industrial effluents and ashes etc.

In the recent years there has been a consistent increase in awareness of the need for a clean environment. The courts in our country have come out with a number of strong orders on the environmental issues and accordingly steps are also being taken to reduce pollutions. But still many more things have to be done in this direction:

→ Appropriate measures need to be taken by countries and local authorities of the world to stop the misuse or overuse of resources.

→ Environmental degradation can be checked by conserving land, air and water resources. For this we have to control the pollutants at the source.

→ By proper enforcement of laws and norms related to environmental issues such as - use of plastic bags, disposal of all type of wastes, harmful emissions from different industries, etc.

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

Answer

Earlier the environment was treated as a 'free' entity and any industry or even an individual could pollute the air and water without any restrictions. Whether it was our rivers, air, and groundwater - the environment was being polluted since there were no laws in this regard.

In the recent years and particularly the Bhopal gas tragedy has brought the issue of environment to the forefront. Now the perception has completely changed and the people have understood that the environment is something which the people over generations will share. There has been an increasing awareness among all that a clean environment is a public facility that cannot be destroyed merely for industrial development. The courts also gave a number of judgments upholding the right to a healthy environment as intrinsic to the Fundamental Right to life.