

Webinar on “Pandemic; Changing Nature of Work and Labour Law Reforms”

MATS law School has organized a webinar on the topic i.e. “Pandemic; Changing Nature of Work and Labour Law Reforms”. Dr. Shuchi Bharti, Executive Director, Forum for Democracy was the guest speaker for this webinar. She is heading multiple social development projects. A very important topic at this time for all the citizens of the country to understand how the laborers are getting affected in various sectors of society and due to changes made in it because of covid-19. According to the speaker we all need to emphasize the rationale that employment of each and every person irrespective of their gender is necessary and they all should be treated and paid on an equal and fair basis and women should be also given fair and equal treatment when it comes to employment. According to the 2018-19 data, 52% of the labour force is self-employed. 24% were casual workers without any financial security and the remaining 24% were regular waged workers. The shock of the pandemic affected the labour force unequally. COVID-19 has taken the world by storm, the virus along with the lockdown had a disastrous effect on the economy and human lives especially the marginalized sector.

According to Dr Bharati, the unorganized sector has suffered most and the regular formal employed are the least affected. They can enjoy the privilege of working from home. The situation is more or less similar in the case of regular informal employment. The self-employed are also adversely affected, but depending on the industry, they receive enough remuneration to sustain themselves. The less-educated casual workers who engage in low-paying work are the most affected. They work in unstable conditions and are susceptible to layoffs. Physical distancing, safety measures, along the fear of contracting the disease itself, the casual workers are left to face the brunt of the pandemic. Most of the migrants are casual workers or daily wage workers. With the lockdown in effect, many were jobless. Proper implementation of MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) by the states will benefit the returned migrants in rural areas to find employment. Distribution of 5 kg food grain and 1kg of pulse for each person for two months, through the states, would be partially helpful for the workers. The non-beneficiaries under the National Food Security Act can also avail of this. Implementation of the One Nation One ration card will allow the migrant workers to access food in the working states. The migrants can rent affordable houses in the cities through the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana. According to the speaker, the pandemic has caused a significant impact on the unorganized sector. The government was quick to respond, but the scale of the damage was large. Radical changes and inclusive legislation with stringent enforcement could help remedy the situation.

Apart from law students of Mats law school, students from commerce and management the department participated in this webinar.

