

## THE OSH CODE UNIQUE ANGLE 2020

**AUTHOR** – SHIVA SHANKAR Y\* & THANUSH TRIVIKRAM\*\*

STUDENTS AT SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE IN LAW, TAMIL NADU DR. AMBEDKAR LAW UNIVERSITY

**BEST CITATION** – SHIVA SHANKAR Y & THANUSH TRIVIKRAM, THE OSH CODE UNIQUE ANGLE 2020, *INDIAN JOURNAL OF LEGAL REVIEW (IJLR)*, 6 (5) OF 2026, PG. 01-05, APIS – 3920 – 0001 & ISSN – 2583-2344. DOI – <https://doi.org/10.65393/V6I576>

### ABSTRACT:

India's labour law system has long been criticized for being fragmented, outdated, and difficult to enforce, particularly in the area of occupational safety and health<sup>880</sup>. Multiple legislations operated simultaneously, often leading to overlapping provisions, regulatory confusion, and inconsistent implementation. In response to these challenges, the government introduced the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 as part of a broader labour law reform initiative aimed at consolidation and simplification<sup>881</sup>. By subsuming several existing laws into a single framework, the Code seeks to create uniform standards, improve compliance, and ensure better working conditions across sectors. At a structural level, the Code represents a shift toward administrative efficiency. It introduces mechanisms such as single registration, standardized safety norms, and digitized compliance systems, which are intended to reduce the burden on employers and promote ease of doing business<sup>882</sup>. On paper, these changes signal a move toward modernization and rationalization of India's labour regulatory framework. The Code also incorporates provisions relating to health, safety, welfare facilities, and working conditions, thereby attempting to create a comprehensive legal regime governing workplaces. However, the significance of the OSH Code cannot be understood solely in terms of consolidation. A deeper analysis reveals that the reform reflects a broader policy shift in India's labour law approach—one that increasingly prioritizes flexibility and economic growth alongside, and sometimes over, worker protection<sup>883</sup>. This shift becomes evident in the design and implementation of key provisions within the Code. For instance, the application of the law is often dependent on statutory thresholds, which determine whether an establishment falls within its scope. While such thresholds may be justified from a regulatory standpoint, they have the effect of excluding a substantial portion of the workforce, particularly those employed in small establishments and the informal sector. This exclusion is not a minor technical issue but a fundamental limitation in the Indian context, where a significant majority of workers operate outside the formal economy. As a result, the promise of universal workplace safety becomes conditional rather than absolute. Further, the transformation of the traditional inspection system into an "Inspector-cum-Facilitator" model indicates a move away from strict enforcement toward a more advisory and compliance-based approach<sup>884</sup>. While this may reduce bureaucratic hurdles, it also raises concerns about the weakening of regulatory oversight in a system where violations often go unchecked. In addition, the Code does not adequately address emerging forms of employment, such as fixed-term and gig work, where employment relationships are often fragmented and

<sup>880</sup> Bibek Debroy Committee, Report of the Committee for Rationalisation of Labour Laws (2015).

<sup>881</sup> The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 (Act No. 37 of 2020).

<sup>882</sup> PRS Legislative Research, OSH Code, 2020: Analysis (2020).

<sup>883</sup> Kamala Sankaran, "Labour Law Reforms in India: Towards Consolidation or Dilution?" (2021).

<sup>884</sup> The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020, § 34 (Inspector-cum-Facilitator).

responsibilities for safety are unclear. This creates gaps in accountability and leaves certain categories of workers vulnerable.

### INTRODUCTION:

India's labour law system has long been criticized for being fragmented, outdated, and difficult to enforce, particularly in the area of occupational safety and health<sup>885</sup>. Multiple legislations operated simultaneously, often leading to overlapping provisions, regulatory confusion, and inconsistent implementation. In response to these challenges, the government introduced the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 as part of a broader labour law reform initiative aimed at consolidation and simplification<sup>886</sup>. By subsuming several existing laws into a single framework, the Code seeks to create uniform standards, improve compliance, and ensure better working conditions across sectors. At a structural level, the Code represents a shift toward administrative efficiency. It introduces mechanisms such as single registration, standardized safety norms, and digitized compliance systems, which are intended to reduce the burden on employers and promote ease of doing business<sup>887</sup>. On paper, these changes signal a move toward modernization and rationalization of India's labour regulatory framework. The Code also incorporates provisions relating to health, safety, welfare facilities, and working conditions, thereby attempting to create a comprehensive legal regime governing workplaces.

However, the significance of the OSH Code cannot be understood solely in terms of consolidation. A deeper analysis reveals that the reform reflects a broader policy shift in India's labour law approach—one that increasingly prioritizes flexibility and economic growth alongside, and sometimes over, worker

protection<sup>888</sup>. This shift becomes evident in the design and implementation of key provisions within the Code. For instance, the application of the law is often dependent on statutory thresholds, which determine whether an establishment falls within its scope. While such thresholds may be justified from a regulatory standpoint, they have the effect of excluding a substantial portion of the workforce, particularly those employed in small establishments and the informal sector. This exclusion is not a minor technical issue but a fundamental limitation in the Indian context, where a significant majority of workers operate outside the formal economy. As a result, the promise of universal workplace safety becomes conditional rather than absolute. Further, the transformation of the traditional inspection system into an "Inspector-cum-Facilitator" model indicates a move away from strict enforcement toward a more advisory and compliance-based approach<sup>889</sup>. While this may reduce bureaucratic hurdles, it also raises concerns about the weakening of regulatory oversight in a system where violations often go unchecked. In addition, the Code does not adequately address emerging forms of employment, such as fixed-term and gig work, where employment relationships are often fragmented and responsibilities for safety are unclear. This creates gaps in accountability and leaves certain categories of workers vulnerable.

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This study adopts a doctrinal and analytical research methodology to examine the legal framework and practical implications of the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020. The doctrinal approach primarily involves a detailed analysis of statutory provisions, including the text of the Code, relevant rules, and associated legal frameworks governing occupational safety and

<sup>885</sup> Bibek Debroy Committee, Report of the Committee for Rationalisation of Labour Laws (2015).

<sup>886</sup> The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 (Act No. 37 of 2020).

<sup>887</sup> PRS Legislative Research, Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020: Analysis (2020).

<sup>888</sup> Kamala Sankaran, "Labour Law Reforms in India: Towards Consolidation or Dilution?" (2021) Indian Journal of Labour Economics.

<sup>889</sup> The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020, § 34.

health in India. It also considers secondary sources such as academic literature, journal articles, government reports, and expert commentaries to understand the broader context and interpretation of the law. In addition to doctrinal analysis, the study incorporates a critical and evaluative approach to assess the effectiveness of the Code in achieving its stated objectives. Rather than merely describing the provisions, the research engages with underlying structural aspects such as coverage limitations, statutory thresholds, and enforcement mechanisms. Particular attention is given to the transition from a traditional inspection regime to the “Inspector-cum-Facilitator” model and its implications for regulatory oversight. The research further situates the Code within the socio-economic realities of India’s labour market, especially the dominance of informal employment. This contextual analysis helps in identifying gaps between the legislative framework and its practical applicability. The study also briefly refers to comparative standards, including international labour norms, to highlight deviations and areas for improvement. It is important to note that this research is non-empirical in nature and does not involve fieldwork, surveys, or statistical data analysis. The findings are therefore based on legal interpretation, logical reasoning, and secondary sources. Through this combined doctrinal and analytical method, the study aims to critically examine whether the OSH Code, 2020 effectively advances worker safety or merely restructures existing regulations without addressing deeper systemic issues.

#### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- The primary objective of this study is to examine the effectiveness of the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 in ensuring the safety and welfare of workers in India. The study aims to move beyond a simple explanation of the law and instead evaluate whether the Code

actually achieves its intended purpose in practice.

- Another important objective is to analyze the key provisions of the Code and understand how they operate within the broader labour law framework. In doing so, the study focuses on identifying structural issues such as limited coverage, the role of statutory thresholds, and the nature of enforcement mechanisms.
- The study also seeks to assess the relevance of the Code in the context of India’s labour market, particularly the dominance of informal employment. It aims to determine whether the law adequately addresses the needs and vulnerabilities of workers in such sectors.
- Finally, the study attempts to highlight the gap, if any, between the objectives of the legislation and its practical impact, and to suggest possible improvements for strengthening occupational safety regulation in India.

#### SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

This study is primarily focused on a legal and analytical examination of the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020. It covers key aspects such as workplace safety standards, health provisions, welfare measures, and regulatory mechanisms introduced under the Code. The scope of the study extends to evaluating how these provisions function in the Indian context, particularly in relation to small establishments, informal workers, and emerging forms of employment. It also considers the broader implications of the Code in terms of enforcement and practical implementation.

However, the study is limited in certain respects. It is based on a doctrinal and analytical approach and does not include empirical research such as field studies, surveys, or interviews with workers or employers. As a result, the findings are based on legal

interpretation and secondary sources rather than firsthand data.

Additionally, while the study briefly refers to broader labour conditions, it does not provide an in-depth statistical analysis of workplace safety across sectors. These limitations should be considered while interpreting the conclusions of the study.

### LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK OF THE OSH CODE, 2020

The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 was introduced to simplify India's complex labour law system by consolidating multiple legislations into a single framework<sup>890</sup>. The objective behind this reform was to make labour laws easier to understand and implement, while ensuring that workers are provided with safe and healthy working conditions. At the same time, the Code reflects an attempt to balance worker protection with the need to reduce compliance burdens on employers, thereby aligning with the broader goal of improving ease of doing business the applicability of the Code extends to various establishments such as factories, mines, and other workplaces. However, its coverage is not universal, as it depends on statutory thresholds based on the number of workers employed. This threshold-based approach is intended to simplify regulation, but it also plays a crucial role in determining which establishments fall within the legal framework and which remain outside its scope. Consequently, a significant portion of smaller establishments may not be covered, raising concerns about the inclusiveness of the Code. A key structural reform introduced by the Code is the system of single registration and licensing. Employers are no longer required to navigate multiple registration processes under different laws, as the Code provides for a unified registration mechanism<sup>891</sup>. In addition, licensing provisions apply in specific contexts, such as for contract

labour and inter-state migrant workers. These changes are designed to streamline administrative procedures, reduce duplication, and make compliance more efficient. The Code also lays down comprehensive provisions relating to occupational safety and health. It places a duty on employers to ensure a safe working environment by preventing workplace hazards, providing necessary protective equipment, and maintaining basic health standards. These provisions seek to establish a minimum level of safety across industries. However, their actual impact depends largely on effective implementation and enforcement mechanisms.

In addition to safety measures, the Code incorporates several welfare provisions aimed at improving the overall well-being of workers. Employers are required to provide essential facilities such as clean drinking water, sanitation, restrooms, canteens, and first-aid. Alongside these, the Code regulates working conditions by prescribing rules relating to working hours, leave, and other employment standards. It also permits women to work in all types of establishments, subject to adequate safety safeguards, thereby promoting a more inclusive work environment. Another significant feature of the Code is the introduction of the "Inspector-cum-Facilitator" system, which replaces the traditional inspection model. Under this approach, authorities are expected not only to inspect establishments for compliance but also to guide and assist employers in meeting legal requirements. While this model aims to reduce adversarial enforcement and encourage voluntary compliance, it also raises concerns about the potential dilution of strict regulatory oversight. Finally, the Code provides for enforcement and compliance through designated authorities, along with penalties for violations. However, the effectiveness of these provisions ultimately depends on their practical implementation. Without consistent monitoring and accountability, the existence of legal standards alone may not be sufficient to ensure safer and healthier workplaces.

<sup>890</sup> The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 (Act No. 37 of 2020), Statement of Objects and Reasons.

<sup>891</sup> Ibid., §§ 7–9.

### CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE OSH CODE, 2020

The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 presents itself as a comprehensive framework aimed at ensuring workplace safety across sectors. However, the idea of universal protection under the Code is somewhat misleading. Its applicability is determined by statutory thresholds, meaning that only establishments employing a minimum number of workers fall within its scope<sup>892</sup>. In the Indian context, where a substantial portion of the workforce is engaged in small-scale and informal establishments, this creates a significant gap. Workers who are equally exposed to unsafe conditions remain excluded simply because their workplaces do not meet the prescribed threshold. As a result, the Code creates an appearance of broad protection while, in reality, limiting its reach. This limitation becomes more evident when viewed against the dominance of the informal sector in India. A large majority of workers are employed without formal contracts, social security, or adequate regulatory oversight. Despite this, the Code largely operates within a formal legal framework and does not effectively extend its protections to informal workers<sup>893</sup>. This disconnect between the law and labour market realities significantly reduces the practical relevance of the legislation. A safety regime that fails to cover the majority of workers cannot fully achieve its intended purpose.

Another area of concern is the shift in enforcement mechanisms brought about by the introduction of the “Inspector-cum-Facilitator” system. This model moves away from strict inspection and penal action toward a more advisory and compliance-based approach<sup>894</sup>. While this may reduce bureaucratic hurdles and encourage cooperation, it also raises questions about the weakening of enforcement. In a system where

violations are already underreported and poorly monitored, a softer regulatory approach may reduce accountability and allow non-compliance to persist. The Code also reflects a broader policy shift in labour regulation that attempts to balance worker protection with economic growth and ease of doing business. However, this balance does not always appear equitable. In several instances, the emphasis on flexibility for employers seems to outweigh the need for robust worker protection. This is particularly problematic in sectors characterized by temporary, contractual, or uncertain employment relationships, where accountability for worker safety becomes unclear<sup>895</sup>. The law, therefore, risks prioritizing economic efficiency over the long-term welfare of workers.

A recurring challenge in labour law enforcement is the gap between legal provisions and ground-level realities. Although the OSH Code lays down detailed standards for safety and welfare, its effectiveness depends largely on implementation. Factors such as lack of awareness among workers, limited enforcement capacity, and weak monitoring systems continue to hinder the realization of these standards<sup>896</sup>. Consequently, the existence of legal protections does not automatically translate into safer workplaces, highlighting a persistent implementation deficit. The Code also fails to adequately address emerging forms of employment, particularly gig and platform-based work. Workers engaged through digital platforms often do not fit into traditional employer-employee relationships, making it difficult to assign responsibility for their safety. This creates a regulatory grey area where a growing segment of the workforce remains outside effective legal protection. As the gig economy continues to expand, this omission becomes an increasingly serious limitation. Further, the Code does not place sufficient emphasis on worker awareness and

<sup>892</sup> The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020, § 1(4).

<sup>893</sup> International Labour Organization, India Labour Market Update (informal sector analysis).

<sup>894</sup> The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020, § 34.

<sup>895</sup> Kamala Sankaran, “Labour Law Reforms in India: Towards Consolidation or Dilution?” (2021) Indian Journal of Labour Economics.

<sup>896</sup> PRS Legislative Research, Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020: Analysis (2020).

education. In many sectors, especially within the informal economy, workers lack basic knowledge of their rights and safety standards. Without adequate awareness mechanisms, even well-designed legal provisions may fail to achieve their intended impact. Workers may continue to operate in unsafe environments simply because they are unaware of the protections available to them. Another issue arises from ambiguity in responsibility and accountability, particularly in workplaces involving contractors and subcontractors. In such arrangements, multiple parties may be involved, making it unclear who bears the primary responsibility for ensuring safety. This lack of clarity creates loopholes that can be exploited, weakening enforcement and leaving workers vulnerable.

The Code's reliance on self-compliance further complicates this issue. By encouraging employers to adhere to safety standards with limited external intervention, the law assumes a level of voluntary compliance that may not always exist in practice. In cost-sensitive industries, safety measures are often neglected unless backed by strict enforcement. Over-reliance on self-regulation can therefore undermine the effectiveness of the legal framework. Finally, while the Code addresses immediate workplace hazards, it pays comparatively less attention to long-term occupational health concerns. Workers exposed to hazardous substances, repetitive tasks, or unhealthy environments may develop chronic health conditions over time. The absence of strong provisions for regular health monitoring and preventive care limits the scope of protection offered by the law. A comprehensive safety regime must address not only immediate risks but also the long-term health and well-being of workers.

#### **CASE ANALYSIS IN CONTEXT OF OSH CODE2020:**

#### **1. Consumer Education and Research Centre v. Union of India<sup>897</sup>**

In this case, the Supreme Court held that the right to health and safety of workers is part of the right to life under Article 21. The Court emphasized that employers and the State have a duty to ensure safe working conditions and protect workers from occupational hazards.

When viewed in the context of the OSH Code, 2020, this principle raises an important concern. Although the Code aims to ensure workplace safety, its limited applicability due to statutory thresholds excludes many workers, particularly in informal sectors. This creates a situation where a fundamental right recognized by the Court is not fully protected under the statutory framework. Thus, the Code appears to fall short of the constitutional standard laid down in this case.

#### **2. M.C. Mehta v. Union of India<sup>898</sup>**

The Supreme Court in this case introduced the doctrine of absolute liability, holding that industries engaged in hazardous activities must ensure complete safety and cannot escape liability for any harm caused. In relation to the OSH Code, this principle highlights the need for strict enforcement of safety standards. However, the Code's shift toward an "Inspector-cum-Facilitator" model raises concerns about whether such strict liability can be effectively enforced. If inspections become less stringent, the practical application of absolute liability may be weakened, especially in hazardous industries.

#### **3. People's Union for Democratic Rights v. Union of India<sup>899</sup>**

In this case, the Court held that failure to implement labour laws amounts to a violation of fundamental rights. It emphasized that the mere existence of laws is not sufficient; effective enforcement is essential. This principle is

<sup>897</sup> Consumer Education and Research Centre v. Union of India, (1995) 3 SCC 42.

<sup>898</sup> M.C. Mehta v. Union of India, (1987) 1 SCC 395.

<sup>899</sup> People's Union for Democratic Rights v. Union of India, (1982) 3 SCC 235.

directly relevant to the OSH Code, 2020. While the Code provides a comprehensive framework on paper, its success depends on actual implementation. Weak enforcement mechanisms and limited inspection powers may lead to a situation where legal protections exist but are not realized in practice.

#### 4. *Bandhua Mukti Morcha v. Union of India*<sup>900</sup>

The Supreme Court in this case stressed the importance of protecting vulnerable workers and ensuring humane working conditions. It also highlighted the active role of the State in enforcing labour welfare laws. In the context of the OSH Code, this judgment raises concerns about the exclusion of informal workers and the reduced role of strict enforcement. If vulnerable workers remain outside the scope of the Code, the objective of ensuring humane working conditions cannot be fully achieved.

#### COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS (INDIA VS INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS)

At the international level, occupational safety and health are primarily governed by standards developed by the International Labour Organization (ILO), which emphasize that every worker has the right to a safe and healthy working environment, irrespective of the nature or size of employment<sup>901</sup>. These standards are grounded in principles of universal coverage, strict enforcement, and clear employer accountability. Unlike many domestic frameworks, the international approach is largely worker-centric and does not depend heavily on thresholds linked to the size of establishments. When compared to these international standards, the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 demonstrates both strengths and limitations. On one hand, it consolidates multiple laws into a single framework, simplifies compliance, and introduces structured safety and welfare provisions that align with global

norms in principle<sup>902</sup>. However, in practice, significant gaps remain. The reliance on statutory thresholds restricts the scope of the Code, excluding a large number of workers in small and informal establishments. In contrast, international frameworks emphasize broader and more inclusive coverage without such restrictive conditions.

A key point of divergence lies in the approach to enforcement. International standards strongly advocate for robust inspection systems and strict regulatory oversight to ensure compliance<sup>903</sup>. In contrast, the OSH Code adopts the “Inspector-cum-Facilitator” model, which focuses more on guidance and assistance than strict enforcement. While this may ease compliance for employers, it raises concerns about the effectiveness of enforcement, particularly in sectors where violations are frequent. This shift creates a noticeable gap between India’s approach and global best practices. Another important area of comparison is the treatment of informal and emerging forms of employment. International frameworks increasingly recognize the need to extend occupational safety protections to informal workers and those engaged in non-traditional employment, such as gig and platform-based work<sup>904</sup>. However, the OSH Code does not adequately address these categories, limiting its effectiveness in a country like India where such forms of employment constitute a significant portion of the labour force. This highlights a clear disconnect between international expectations and domestic implementation.

Overall, while the OSH Code represents a step toward aligning India’s labour laws with global standards in terms of structure and intent, it falls short in achieving substantive alignment in practice. Issues such as fragmented protection across labour codes, over-reliance on state-

<sup>900</sup> *Bandhua Mukti Morcha v. Union of India*, (1984) 3 SCC 161.

<sup>901</sup> International Labour Organization, Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155).

<sup>902</sup> The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 (Act No. 37 of 2020).

<sup>903</sup> International Labour Organization, Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81).

<sup>904</sup> International Labour Organization, World Employment and Social Outlook: The Role of Digital Labour Platforms (2021).

level implementation, weak deterrence due to limited enforcement, and ambiguity in assigning responsibility in complex employment arrangements continue to undermine its effectiveness<sup>905</sup>. Bridging this gap requires stronger enforcement mechanisms, broader coverage, and a more worker-centric approach that reflects both international standards and India's labour market realities.

#### **FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:**

The analysis of the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code 2020 shows that while the law is well-intentioned, its actual impact is more limited than it appears at first glance.

To begin with, although the Code is designed to provide a comprehensive framework for workplace safety, its reliance on statutory thresholds significantly reduces its reach. In practice, this means that many workers—especially those in small and informal establishments—do not fall within its scope. As a result, protection under the law is not as universal as it claims to be.

Another important observation is that the Code does not fully reflect the realities of India's labour market. A large portion of the workforce operates in informal conditions, yet the law primarily focuses on formal establishments. This creates a clear gap between what the law intends to achieve and what workers actually experience on the ground.

The shift from a strict inspection system to the "Inspector-cum-Facilitator" model also raises concerns. While the idea is to make compliance easier, it may reduce the seriousness of enforcement. In sectors where violations are already common, a less strict approach may weaken accountability rather than improve compliance.

Further, the study finds that in modern employment structures—such as contract labour and gig work—it is often unclear who is

responsible for ensuring worker safety. This lack of clarity makes enforcement difficult and leaves workers vulnerable.

Finally, the effectiveness of the Code largely depends on how it is implemented at the State level. Differences in administrative capacity and enforcement practices can lead to uneven protection across regions.

Overall, the findings suggest that while the Code is a step forward in terms of structure and intent, it still faces practical challenges that limit its effectiveness in ensuring real workplace safety.

#### **SUGGESTIONS:**

The issues identified in the analysis show that while the OSH Code, 2020 has a strong structure, it needs certain improvements to become effective in practice.

To begin with, the coverage of the Code needs to be expanded. Workplace safety should not depend on the number of workers in an establishment. Reducing or revising statutory thresholds would ensure that workers in small and informal setups are also protected.

There is also a need to strengthen enforcement mechanisms. While the "Inspector-cum-Facilitator" model promotes ease of compliance, it should be supported by stricter monitoring and regular inspections. Without effective enforcement, even well-drafted laws fail to achieve their purpose.

Another important step would be to clearly include informal, gig, and contract workers within the scope of the Code. As employment patterns are changing, the law must adapt to ensure that all categories of workers receive adequate protection.

Further, the Code should clearly define responsibility in cases involving multiple employers, contractors, or agencies. Fixing accountability on a specific entity would prevent confusion and ensure that safety standards are properly maintained.

<sup>905</sup> PRS Legislative Research, Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020: Analysis (2020).

Improving awareness among workers is equally important. Many workers are unaware of their rights and safety standards. Conducting awareness programs and training sessions can help workers identify unsafe conditions and seek remedies.

Finally, better coordination between the central and state authorities is necessary to ensure uniform implementation. Strengthening administrative capacity and monitoring systems can help bridge the gap between law and practice.

### CONCLUSION:

The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 represents an important effort to simplify and modernize India's labour law system. By bringing multiple laws under a single framework, it attempts to create clarity and improve compliance. However, a closer look shows that the effectiveness of the Code is limited by certain structural and practical issues. The exclusion of a large number of workers due to thresholds, the challenges in enforcement, and the lack of clarity in modern employment structures all raise questions about its real impact. The Code, therefore, reflects a situation where the intention is progressive, but the implementation may fall short. While it succeeds in creating a structured legal framework, it does not fully address the realities of India's labour market. In conclusion, the OSH Code, 2020 can be seen as a step in the right direction, but not a complete solution. For it to truly ensure safe and healthy working conditions, greater emphasis must be placed on inclusivity, accountability, and effective enforcement. Without these improvements, the gap between legal provisions and actual workplace conditions is likely to continue.

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