

## **Agricultural Labourers Social Security and Welfare Scheme in Tamil Nadu**

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*The government of Tamil Nadu constituted a Committee on Agricultural Labourers in 1997 to analyse the nature and extent of socio-economic problems faced by the agricultural labourers in Tamil Nadu and to suggest the ways and means of improving their levels of living. The Committee was assisted by the representatives of the trade union of agricultural labourers, members of the farmers' association and academicians. The report was submitted to the government of Tamil Nadu in 1998. The Committee has made several recommendations for the overall development of the agricultural labourers. The report was well received by the agricultural labourers' trade union and NGOs and they demanded that the government should accept the recommendations of the committee's report. They also conducted several struggles for implementation of the committee's report. The government of Tamil Nadu issued an order in 2001 for the establishment of the "Tamil Nadu agricultural labourers social security and welfare scheme". The immediate cause for the establishment of this welfare board is due to the fact that the agricultural labourers trade unions and NGOs were fighting for the implementation of the recommendations of the Kolappan Committee report on agricultural labourers. The objectives of the paper are: 1) to examine the report on the committee on agricultural labourers and 2) to analyse the nature and the functions of the agricultural labourers social security and welfare scheme.*

Labour is an important productive asset in India. About sixty per cent of our population directly depends on agriculture for their livelihood. Agricultural labourers constitute the single largest workforce in India being 33 per cent of the total work force. An agricultural labourer is defined as 'a person who works on another person's land for wages in money, kind or share in order to eke out his livelihood. The landless labourers, marginal and small farmers, who work on another person's land for wages constitute the total agricultural work-force in the country'.

After 53 years of independence, the government of Tamil Nadu issued an order on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2001, for the establishment of the Tamil Nadu Agricultural Labourers Social Security and Welfare Scheme. This is an outcome of the continuous struggles conducted by the Agricultural Labourers Trade Unions and several NGOs in Tamil Nadu. The immediate cause for the establishment of the social security and welfare scheme is due to the fact that the agricultural labourers, trade unions and NGOs were fighting for the implementation of the recommendations of the Kolappan Committee Report on Agricultural Labourers. The report was well received by all working class people. Hence, it is worthwhile to study the salient features of the Kolappan Committee Report on

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