

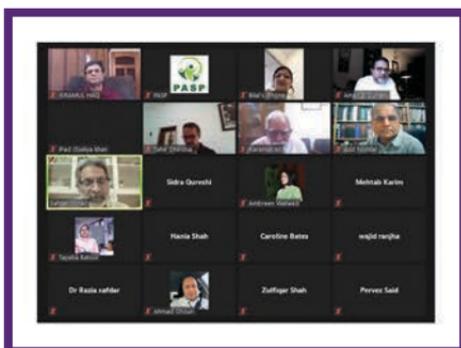
EXPERTS LAUD SINDH COVID 19 RELIEF ORD. 2020 FOR RECOGNIZING RIGHT OF UNEMPLOYMENT ALLOWANCE FOR LABOUR

ISLAMABAD: THE SINDH COVID 19 EMERGENCY RELIEF ORDINANCE 2020

has for the first time in Pakistan has recognizes all types of workers, regardless of their mode of employment, and accepts the principle of unemployment allowance as a right in a dire situation such as COVID19, said Karamat Ali from Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research (PILER).

He was addressing a webinar on 'The Sindh COVID19 Emergency Relief

Ordinance 2020' organized by Pakistan Alliance for Social Protection (PASP) moderated by Dr Safdar Sohail, Convenor of PASP. Dr Ikramul Haq (Huzaima & Ikram, Lahore) and others spoke on the occasion and leading academics and representatives of civil society organizations, international organizations, think tanks and law practitioners attended the webinar.



Explaining the salient features of the Ordinance, Karamat appreciated the Sindh Government for bringing out the ordinance that recognises the workers right to unemployment allowance as a social protection measure. He hoped that in future, this thinking will reflect, when a formal law will be made in this regard. He called upon other provinces to follow the suit and promulgate such Ordinances, at least during this pandemic, which later may be translated into a formal legislation on the subject. He proposed that PASP, being flagship public initiative for social protection, should take this up as an example and work with other provinces to similarly improve their Social Protection Systems.

Dr Ikram ul Haq was of the view that there are so many laws that have not been implemented. This situation calls upon legal fraternity, labour rights activists and PASP that they should not let this ordinance lapse without being passed into the law of social protection of workers. They have to keep a watch on its implementation too. He also emphasized that Pakistan needs such systems which could implement the already existing laws relating to Labour rights. He suggested that PASP can publish a White Paper on the efficacy and adequacy of the existing laws, clearly identifying the factors which hindered the implementation of these laws.

Ms Atifa Rifat, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource DEVELOPMENT (OP&HRD) shared details of the efforts of her Ministry ON COVID19 response. Regarding the Sindh Ordinance, she said, it was a good attempt to identify the vulnerable people but a lot would depend on the quality of Rules, which would be made to operationalise this Ordinance. She also emphasized that it will be challenging for the existing machinery of the Sindh government to fully execute this Ordinance as much more human resource and governance capacity will be required at provincial level to administer this law. She welcomed the establishment of Pakistan Alliance for Social Protection by 19 leading Organizations of Pakistan and independent professionals and hoped that the Alliance would be able to complement the joint efforts of the Ministries of Poverty Alleviation & Social Security and OP & HRD to improve the condition of Labour in Pakistan through 'Mazdoor ka Ihsaas' initiative.

The participants agreed that the promulgation of this Ordinance by the Sindh Government was a positive step but much more remained to be done to make this Ordinance and the other social security laws to enable the State to deliver minimum social protection to all as a Right. It was pointed out that the proper implementation of the laws was very important and this Ordinance should not meet the same fate as the previous labour laws like Industrial Relations and Home-based Workers law of the Sindh Government, which failed to make much significant contribution. It was pointed out that one of the major weaknesses of the COVID19 Relief Ordinance was that it did not clarify as to who would bear the burden of the enhanced social protection?.