
A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON WORKING CONDITIONS IN PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE SECTOR MINES

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ABSTRACT

This study presents a comparative analysis of public sector working conditions compared to private sector mines. This focuses on assessing the differences in relation to professional safety, employee wells, regulatory compliance, and overall work standards of work. A job that is inherently dangerous, mining requires strict workplace standards to ensure employee safety and wells. In government type, resource allocation, and management responsibilities often differ between public and private mining companies. This study examines how these structural differences affect the working conditions and satisfaction of employees in both areas. With a mixed approach, this study includes field observations, structured interviews with mining workers, superiors and union representatives, and analysis of secondary data from state reports, labor and industry audits. The results show that public sector mines generally provide a greater presence of unions that together support more stable employment, better access to healthcare, regular wages, and better working conditions. In contrast, private sector mines may offer higher wages, but tend to have less supervision, weaker security standards enforcement, more dependent on contract workers, higher risk of exploitation and uncertain practices. The study also examines issues such as availability of protective equipment, sanitation facilities, complaints mechanisms, and training programs in both sectors. While the public sector faces challenges, it concludes that the public sector is relatively good in compliance with labor laws and welfare provisions. Recommendations are provided to promote the rights of employees in both areas to improve surveillance systems, ensure uniform safety standards and create safer and fairer mining. This study contributes to political debates on job reform and highlights the need for balanced regulations that bridge the public-private gaps in mining operations.

INTRODUCTION

The mining industry is one of the most hazardous and hardworking spots worldwide, and in India, it plays a vital part in driving artificial process and icing dynamism stability. People working out in argosies face numerous pitfalls, similar as physical detriment, breathing cases, unsafe workplaces, and long hours. India has strong ordinances regulating mining, substantially the Mines Act, 1952 and the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020. But the expressway these regulations are followed differs between government- run and private mining companies. Government- possessed units like Neyveli Lignite Corporation and Coal India Limited generally get further concentration and control from the government, while private argosies frequently work else, which can conduct to differences in how safe they are, how well they follow the regulations, and how they treat their employees. This exploration looks at and compares the working conditions in public and private argosies, fastening on crucial areas similar as pay envelope, health and security, job screen, access to gregarious advantages.¹

The mining sector in India occupies a critical position in the national economy, which contributes significantly to industrial growth, the development of infrastructures and the generation of employment. It provides essential raw materials for core industries as generation of energy, steel, cement and production. From recent estimates, the sector has more than one million employees directly and indirectly, with a considerable number involved in dangerous, intensive and physically demanding tasks. Within this domain, both public companies (PSU) such as Coal India Limited, Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC) India Ltd. and Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL), as well as private mining companies, perform vital roles. However, there is a significant inequality between working conditions in the mines in the public sector and their counterparts in the private sector. These differences obtain relevant concerns regarding equity, professional security, labor rights and compliance with regulations.

Despite these framework, the implementation and application of the health and safety standards of work and the safety of public and private mines vary considerably. Mining mines of the public sector are often subject to a higher study due to their state property, the presence of strong unions and relatively transparent hiring processes. The mines in the private sector, on

¹ Ministry of Labour and Employment, *Annual Report 2022–23* (Government of India 2023) <https://labour.gov.in> accessed 25 July 2025.

the other hand, those managed according to the contract or subcontractor models - are often found in the face of criticisms of a weaker supervision, informal work practices and insufficient safety provisions. The working conditions include a wide range of interconnected dimensions: wage structures, social security benefits, medical structures, protective equipment, work safety, mechanisms for repairing complaints, training and union representation.²

Public sector mines generally offer better access to permanent employment, pensions, determination of contributions and benefits of funds for health care due to the practices and consolidated political guidelines. On the contrary, mineral workers in the private sector are often involved in temporary or contractual conditions, with a minimum social security coverage, irregular wage payments and precarious working conditions. In addition, contractization and informalization in private mines contribute to the reduction of negotiation forces and the increase in work operations.

The differences are not only economic, but also legally and procedural. Mines in the public sector are generally better regulated, with frequent inspections and compliance with mine rules, while many private mines are active in distant or poorly monitored regions in which the application is lax. Children's work cases, forecasting sub-accidents and non-compliance with safety standards have also been reported in several private operations. These problems become even more serious in small mining companies and informal mining activities that operate on the verge of legality. In union activity - centrally for the support of better working conditions - is considerably more active due to the inheritance of working movements organized in the PSU and is organized in the public sector. On the other hand, the private sector union is often abolished or discouraged, which reduces the scope of collective negotiation. This divergence further increases the weak points of mining workers in the private sector.³

In this comparative study, attempts are made to examine the existing differences between working conditions in the mines of the public and private sector in India, according to which the emphasis is placed on legal compliance, professional safety, health and safety at work, as well as the effectiveness of complaint mechanisms. Thanks to the analysis of primary laws, conditions of the institutional framework, case studies and field reports, the study aims to identify both structural gaps and successful models. In addition, he tries to understand how

² Ministry of Mines, Indian Minerals Yearbook 2022 (IBM, Government of India 2023).

³ The Mines Act 1952, Factories Act 1948, and Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code 2020 (India).

privatization, business liberalization and regulatory reforms have influenced the protection of the employee in the mining sector over the years.

II. HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF MINING LABOUR REGULATIONS IN INDIA

The history of mining regulation in India is deeply intertwined with the colonial past of the country, the development of industrial work legislation and understanding in evolution of health and professional safety. The regulation of mining works began during the British colonial period, mainly guided by the need to guarantee a stable and controlled workforce for the extraction of precious natural resources. The first important legislation in this direction was the Indian mines act, 1901, which marked the beginning of the state intervention in the working conditions of mining workers. This law mainly concerned the regulation of the employment of women and children in underground mines and introduced rudimentary security measures, such as ventilation and reporting of accidents. The mechanisms of flow and application were limited and most of the work remained vulnerable to exploitation, bad working conditions and health risks. According to India's independence in 1947, the need for complete and comfortable labor legislation obtained urgency, in particular in important sectors such as mining, which were an essential element for industrial development and economic self-employment.⁴

In response to these challenges, the 1952 mines law was published, which replaced the 1901 law. This legislation is still the cornerstone of mining labor regulations. He ensured the well-being, the health and safety of employees who are employed in the mines and considerably increased the framework of accident prevention, medical examinations, employment restrictions and hours of work. The law also founded authorities such as the chief inspector of mines and regional inspectors, the implementation of security regulations, monitoring compliance and the launch of law implementation measures in the event of violations. The 1952 law was integrated with the rules of the Mines, 1955, which recorded detailed rules on safety management, first auxiliary structures, medical supervision and provisions for drinking water and healthcare structures.

Over the decades, countless changes and rules were introduced to adapt the picture to technological progress and evolution of the work environments. The regulations of the coal mines, 1957, the regulations of the mines, 1961 and the regulations of the oil lines, 1984 are

⁴ Coal Mines Regulations 1957; Metalliferous Mines Regulations 1961; Oil Mines Regulations 1984.

important specific rules of the sector that refer to various mining and operating dangers. In the seventies and eighties, the rise of the workers' movement, combined with greater awareness of occupational diseases and industrial security, encouraged the government to further strengthen legal protection. The establishment of mineral giants such as Coal India Limited and Neyveli Lignite Corporation has also influenced the process of work regulations by establishing the standards for organized employment and the provisions on structured welfare.⁵

These companies have adopted formal hiring practices, have implemented collective employment contracts and established wellness patterns that have gone beyond the legal minimum, which have established reference parameters in the public sector. The era of liberalization after 1991, on the other hand, saw an influx of private actors in the mining sector. Although this has designed economic efficiency and investments, he has also exposed various legal gaps, in particular with regard to contractual work, informalization and application. The proliferation of subcontractors led to the circumvention of basic work protection for thousands of informal employees in private mines.⁶

Although various laws such as the employment contract (regulation and abolition), 1970 and the provisions and the various provisions of the employee law, 1952 applied to mining activities, the application remained fragmentary, especially in small scale and illegal mines. The Indian government has recognized the need for consolidation and modernization and introduced the conditions of professional safety, health and labor 2020 (OSH code), which subsumed the Mines Act from 1952 and other allied labor laws. The OSH code aims to simplify, rationalize and modernize the legal framework, by which certain security and well-being chapters of employees devote them. It prescribes the security committees, medical examinations, accident reports and the appointment of security agents and allows inspectors at the same time with a broader authority of application. The implementation depends on the framework of the rules at the level of the State and the regulatory capacity.⁷

⁵ Ruma Ghosh, 'Contract Labour in India: Issues and Concerns' (2020) 55(1) Economic and Political Weekly 35.

⁶ PRS Legislative Research, 'The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020' (PRS, 2020) <https://prsindia.org> accessed 27 July 2025.

⁷ ILO, 'India's New Labour Codes and Implementation Challenges' (ILO Briefing Note, 2021) <https://ilo.org> accessed 27 July 2025.

TIMELINE HISTORY FOR ON WORKING CONDITIONS IN PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE SECTOR MINES

1901- Indian Mines Act, 1901

- First major law which regulates the work of mines in colonial India. Concentrated on the limitation of children's and women work in underground mines; Rudimentary security measures introduced.

1947 - Indian Independence

- Marked the start of a change of well-being in labor regulations.

1952 - Mines Act, 1952

- Complete legislation for the replacement of the 1901 law. Introduced provisions for health, safety, well-being, working hours and accident prevention in mines. Creation of regulatory authorities such as the main inspector of the mines.

1955 - Rules Of Mines

- Detailed rules framed pursuant to Mines Act, 1952. Adequate healthcare facilities, medical care, protective equipment and first aid in the mines.

1957 - Instructions For Fresh Mines

- Specific safety rules for mining activities. Compulsory security practices and ventilation requirements.

1961 - Regulation On Metal Mines

- Safety targeted in mines that does not extract coal minerals such as iron ore, bauxite, etc., etc.

1970 - Contracting Labor Act (Regulation And Abolition)

- The objective of regulating the use of contractual work and improving your working conditions. Approached for public and private mining operations.

1984 - Petroleum Mines Regulation

- Specialized safety rules for oil and production locations. Treaty of explosion risks, dangers of gas and protective measures.

1991 - The Era of Economic Liberalization Begins

Has led to greater participation in the private sector in mining. It has led to the growth of informal and contractual work practices, in particular in small mines.

2007 - Report of The National Commission for Companies in The Non-Organized Sector (NCEUS)

- Emphasized bad conditions of work and public social security for informal mineral workers.

2012 - TISS - Research on Labor Issues in the Mining Sector

- Attract attention to health problems and the lack of regulations in private mines.

2020 - Code For The Safety of Professional Security, Health and Working Conditions, 2020 (OSH Code)

- Consolidated 13 Central Labor Laws, including the Mines Act, 1952. Introduces modern security standards, safety committees and increased powers of the inspector. Applied to all mining companies with increased clarity on health and well-being standards.

2022-23 - Annual Reports of The Ministry of Labor on The Will of SST Codes

- The reports highlighted the delays in implementation due to the rules of the current state.

2025 (Current Context)

- Persistent challenges in the effective implementation of the SST code in mining. Persistent gaps in contractual work protection and compliance with the private sector.

The discussions will continue to strengthen the additional strengthening of digital inspection mechanisms and authority in mining labor regulations.

III. CURRENT STATUS OF WORKING CONDITIONS IN PUBLIC SECTOR MINES

These companies not only constitute an important part of mineral production, but have also established the reference for working practices in the mining sector. Working conditions in public sector mines generally become structured, regulated and adult laws of work and safety compared to their colleagues in the private sector. One of the decisive characteristics of the mining company in the public sector is their compliance with legal standards in terms of employment, labor security and well-being. The Mines Act from 1952 and the recently introduced code for safety, health and 2020 working conditions serve as fundamental legal framework for working conditions in these mines.⁸

Mines in the public sector are regularly verified and monitored by supervision authorities such as the Directorate of Mines Security (DGM), which guarantees compliance with safety protocols, accident reports and medical standards. Employees receive protective equipment, medical checks, safety for safety and often fall into group insurance schemes. For example, in the CIL subsidiary companies, large safety management plans (SMP) are mandatory and periodically evaluated in accordance with the DGMS advice. Work safety remains a crucial advantage for employees who work in the mines of the public sector. Most of the employment is formal, permanent and governed by industrial state assignments and collective agreements. Employees receive Equi wages between wage stairs granted by the government, with regular and beneficial steps such as loved ones, bonuses, advice and pension schemes.

In the social security is guaranteed by Employers Provident Fund (EPF), Medical Insurance (such as CGHS or specific health services), residential structures and educational help for children. In SCCL, for example, the "Welfare Council \" active supervision of the implementation of welfare patterns, including the benefits of pregnancy, training for the development of skills and subsidized canteens. Another important dimension is the role of the unions, which are strong and active in most mines in the public sector. The recognized unions are involved in collective negotiations and play a crucial role to ensure that employees are

⁸ Ministry of Coal, Digital Initiatives in Mining (Govt of India 2023) <https://coal.nic.in> accessed 28 July 2025.

maintained.⁹

Periodic negotiations on wages, working hours, mechanisms for repairing complaints and safety standards have led to institutionalized mechanisms for the management of employment. In addition, internal complaints are committees (CICs) for sexual harassment and health and safety committees in accordance with responsible laws and are generally functional in PSUs. The mines in the public sector are not without challenges. Despite their formal structure, there are still problems such as obsolete technology, medical remuneration delays, poor conditions in underground mines and bureaucratic delays in the withdrawal of complaints. In some regions, it has been reported that even operations by the public sector outsource the auxiliary functions for contractual work, which leads to a distinction in the fields of services and working conditions for basic and non-essential employees.¹⁰

Contractual workers often lack the entire range of services that are available for constant employees and create a two-story work structure within the same company. In with increasing mechanization and digitization, mining companies in the public sector are under pressure to reduce their workforce, which leads to considering the change and recycling of jobs. The transition to more sustainable and low carbon mineral practices in the context of the climate obligations of India also requires important changes in the way the work is managed in the mines in the public sector. In while the mines offer relatively better working conditions in the public sector in India due to formal employment, legal conformity and welfare schemes, challenges regarding the rationalization of work, contractual work and modernization remain. The need for the hour is to integrate these companies in the broader agenda of a decent job and a sustainable mining construction through updates of security protocols, guarantee equality between permanent employees and contracts and to strengthen responsibility through stronger supervisory mechanisms and digital transparency.¹¹

IV. CURRENT STATUS OF WORKING CONDITIONS IN PRIVATE SECTOR MINES

Reports indicate that many private mines do not constantly follow the security protocols that have been recorded by the general management of mines (DGMS). Underground collapse

⁹ NITI Aayog, Towards a Sustainable Mining Policy: Vision 2047 (NITI Aayog Discussion Paper, 2023).

¹⁰ Dunu Roy and others, Contract Labour in India's Mining Sector (Hazards Centre 2019).

¹¹ Comptroller and Auditor General of India, Performance Audit on Safety in Coal Mines (CAG Report 2021)

accidents, toxic gas exposure and the lack of protective equipment are more common in private activities compared to state-owned companies. In addition, the inspections of DGM in private mining areas have revealed repeated violations of safety standards, ranging from bad ventilation systems in underground mines to non-compliance with mandatory safety exercises. The lack of adequate medical infrastructure near my locations further aggravates the vulnerability of employees in case of professional cases.¹²

In addition to physical security, even the social circumstances with which employees confront each other deserve attention. Many mining areas are located in remote areas dominated by the trunk, in which basic equipment such as living space, drinking water and sanitary facilities are missing. Although some companies invest in social responsibility initiatives (corporate social responsibility), they often do not reach contractual workforce. In addition, there are many relationships of operating working practices, including child labor and linked workforce, especially in smaller and unregulated mines that operate on illegal extraction.

The authorities of the application of the laws of the work are still low in the private mining zone, often due to the link between the owners Min and the local political actors. The dilution of inspection mechanisms in labor reforms - such as the introduction of professional security, health and working conditions, 2020 - has aroused concerns about the additional weakening of regulatory monitoring, in particular in the private mining area. Critics argue that in some cases the consolidation of laws has led to ambiguities in employers' obligations and to the marginalization of employee votes in complaints.¹³

Despite these challenges, there are certain cases of progressive change. Large private mining companies such as Vedanta and Adani Enterprises have taken measures to organize their business on international security standards and environmental, social and governance standards (ESG). The introduction of automation and digital surveillance in mining processes gradually reduces humans exposure to dangerous environments. This progress is mainly limited to mechanized high capitalization mines, so that a large part of the unorganized private mining industry is not affected by modern professional security and security practices. In

¹² Directorate General of Mines Safety (DGMS)

Directorate General of Mines Safety, Ministry of Labour and Employment. Available at: <https://www.dgms.gov.in>

¹³ Ministry of Labour and Employment – Annual Report (2022-23)

Ministry of Labour and Employment, 'Annual Report 2022-23' (Government of India). Available at: <https://labour.gov.in/annual-report>

conclusion, the current state of working conditions in the private mining sector of India reflects a gloomy inequality between legal rights and reality on the field.¹⁴

V. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH STANDARDS

The United States worked as part of the Health Security and Health Act from 1970 managed by professional security and administration health (OSHA). The OSHA determines the enforceable standards which include authorized exposure limits (PEL), equipment safety protocols, compulsory training and protection of denunciators. It is crucial that the OSHA offers detailed directives specific to industry and perform regular inspections. Employers are legally obliged to maintain recognized danger employment, and violations lead to considerable sanctions. The data controlled approach and the Robust compliance infrastructure of the OSHA found it as one of the most strict regulatory sites in the world in the world.

On the other hand, Indian inspections are often more reactive than proactive, and the application mechanisms are lower due to the lowest confession, limited funds and low compliance with employers in the informal sectors. The European Union for Occupational Safety and Health (EU-OSHA) promotes a holistic and preventive strategy. The EU Executive Directive 89/391 / EEC obliges employers to assess risks, implement security measures, provide training and provide advice to SST employees. Member States adapt these directives to national legislation, but are linked to basic principles.

A remarkable force of the EU model is the integration of SST into public health and environmental strategies, which combines employee safety with sustainability. In addition, the EU-OSA actively emphasizes psychosocial risks, ergonomic design and gender-sensitive policy, which are relatively underdeveloped in Indian standards. Unlike the compliance based on the conformity of India, the preventive philosophy of the EU is, which focuses more on conformity than on the development of risk management of risks and the development of safety culture.¹⁵

¹⁴ Human Rights Watch, 'Out of Control: Mining, Regulatory Failure, and Human Rights in India' (2012). Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2012/06/14/out-control/mining-regulatory-failure-and-human-rights-india>

¹⁵ PRS Legislative Research, 'The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020' (Bill tracking). Available at: <https://prsindia.org/billtrack/the-occupational-safety-health-and-working-conditions-code-2020> [Accessed 29 July 2025]

On the international level, the International Labor Organization (ILO) has implemented several conventions and recommendations which form the global normative framework of the SST. Conventions such as the ILO Convention No. 155 (Professional Safety and Health, 1981) and Convention No. 187 (Advertising for the Safety and Health of Workers, 2006) give the Member States in -depth directives for the development of national SST directives and action plans. Although India is a member of the ILO, it has not ratified the Convention No. 155, which underlines the gap in the commitment to organize national laws with international practices. The ILO is also engaged in the admission of workers in the informal sector - who constitute a large part of the Indian employment population - in the regulation of security regulations, an area in which India remains despite the latest political reforms.

In the comparison shows different differences in employee participation mechanisms. In the EU and the United States, the representation of employees of health and safety committees is compulsory and encouraged by legislation, which improves responsibility and comments in real time. Although the SST code in India prescribes the training of security committees in certain categories of installations, the implementation remains incoherent, in particular in the private and informal sectors.

In the availability and accessibility of SST data in the United States and the EU are much higher than employers must maintain digital protocols from accidents, diseases and safety training. The acquisition of data from India, which improves by platforms such as the SHRAM SUVVIHA portal, is lacking in a uniform and in real time towards public access. After all, training and awareness forming an cornerstone of effective SST systems. The OSHA and the EU-OSHA offer digital and complete personal training modules, certification programs and online tool kits adapted to small businesses. The new India code provides for efforts to implement capacities by training institutes and a national database with professional accidents, but the implementation of the implementation and resources on the site and the allocation of resources remains obstacles.¹⁶

With the advent of industry 4.0 and increased automation, developed countries integrate such as risk assessments based on portable security devices and predictive analysis in SSH protocols have been progressive legal consolidated through code 2020, it remains wide. Fill this gap not

¹⁶ Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 (India). Ministry of Labour & Employment, Government of India. Available at: <https://labour.gov.in/whatsnew/occupational-safety-health-and-working-conditions-code-2020-no-37-2020>

only requires a legal ratification of the conventions of the ILO, but also an improvement in funding, training infrastructures and institutional capacity. A transition to a culture of continuous prevention and improvement, with the emphasis on the inclusion of the informal sector, is essential for India to guarantee a safe and worthy job for everyone.

VI. WAGES, SOCIAL SECURITY, AND EMPLOYEE BENEFITS: PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE SECTORS

The difference between work in the public and private sector in the field of wages, social security and employees' benefits remains a prominent topic of the socio-legal and economic discussion. Both sectors perform crucial roles in national development and in the generation of work, but the general terms and conditions for their staff reflect conflicting philosophies and administrative paintings. The public sector, characterized by its coordination with constitutional obligations and wellness mandates, generally guarantees more standardized wage structures, robust measures for social safety and large performance of employees.

On the contrary, the private sector, fueled by the competition of the market and the reasons for profit, often offers performance -based compensation, with variations in social protection and benefits.¹⁷ In the public sector, wages are generally determined by wage committees in countries such as India or collective work contracts in Western democracies. They are uniformly structured in different categories of employees, regular revisions take into account inflation and life costs. For example, the employees of the Indian members receive the Ada (DA) allowance, the preparation of the rental of houses (HRA) and other statutory stages within the framework of a uniform salary matrix.

The employment safety accessible to the public is higher due to the strict provisions against arbitrary termination, as indicated in article 311 of the Indian Constitution. Social security provisions such as General Providence Fund (GPF), retirement programs and state health services within the framework of systems such as the central government health regime (CGHS) increase a safety net that extends after acceptance. On the other hand, the private sector works with a flexible salary scheme which is influenced by the type of industry, profitability and demand for skills. Although first -class companies often offer higher initial remuneration

¹⁷ Wage differentials in mining sector (India)

S Mohanty, Public-Private Wage Gap in the Indian Mining and Quarrying Industry (SPIESR, Ahmedabad, 2018) <https://www.spiesr.ac.in/Document/content-docs/f683bdcc-c1dd-4591-a002-be43bebf4456.pdf> [Accessed 29 July 2025]

compared to public sector colleagues, this is not uniform for all private companies, especially in informal and not organized segments.

A major restriction in the employment of the private sector is the lack of universal relationships on social security. Although contributions to the provident fund (EPF) and the national employee insurance (ESI) according to Indian labor laws are compulsory for future institutions, the application of the law remains inconsistent. Many small businesses avoid compliance or offer average advantages due to cost reduction strategies. The difference in employee services is also significant. Public sector employees often benefit from advantages such as paid vacation (deserved holidays, leisure holidays, medical holidays), travel allowances, subsidized living space and educational services for loved ones. In you have access to gratuity, pension and family pension plans without interruption.

On the other hand, private sector employees can receive advantages such as performance bonuses, stock purchase options and flexible work agreements, especially in technological and funded areas. However, these advantages are not uniform and are often equipped with strings, such as: B. Test time, power measures and employment obligations. Another critical divergence lies in the advantages of retirement and follow -up. The employment in the public sector continues to ensure that they are pensions for fixed benefits, although the reforms have introduced contributions in some countries (for example, the national pension system in India after 2004 for new arrivals).¹⁸

The employees of the private sector, on the other hand, must rely on self -control programs such as the Provident fund and the NP of employees, in which the contribution of the employer can vary or be minimal in informal configurations. Medical insurance and health care after retirement are further stress factors for private employees due to limited coverage. However, the private sector is often praised for a growth based on merit, better salaries for high interpreters and innovative practices of human resources. It offers opportunities for a faster career development than public systems guided by the hierarchy. these benefits are often overshadowed by employment, frequent layoffs and the absence of institutional repair mechanisms.

¹⁸ World Bank, Public-Private Wage Gap in India (World Bank 2019)
<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/b2df1c57-06f7-5951-860a-7edc8861ba0d>
[Accessed 29 July 2025]

In recent years, the reforms of labor law - such as the code on social security, 2020 in India - have been to fill this gap, expanding universal social protection to GIG and Platform employees. However, effective application and implementation mechanisms are essential to ensure that private sector employees receive fair treatment. As economies move on to privatization and liberalization, the need to ensure that equality in being employees becomes even more critical. Although the public sector offers stability, institutional guarantees and wide benefits, the private sector thrives on flexibility, innovation and performance -based stimuli. The challenge is to ensure that labor rights and social protection do not become further damage to economic growth and competitiveness, especially in the private sector.¹⁹

VII. CONCLUSION

The comparative examination of working conditions in the mines of the public and private sector shows significant differences in working practices, professional safety standards and the well-being mechanisms of employees. While the Public Sector Company (PSU) such as Coal India Limited (CIL) and Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC) operate under state supervision and compliance of the State, the private mining sector often reflects compliance different from these standards, influenced by profit reasons, contractual instructions and inconsistent regulatory lawyers.

In the public sector, employees generally benefit from permanent employment status, structured wage systems, access to unions and a number of statutory social security programs, including pension funds, advice, health insurance and pension. Safety measures are monitored more regularly by institutional mechanisms such as security agents, regulatory inspections for the security of the general management (DGM) and compliance with the Mines Act from 1952 and its rules. In employees are social protection programs - such as subsidized living space, educational services and medical facilities - more institutionalized and accessible in PSU.

On the other hand, the private sector is often based on contractual work, which leads to greater uncertainty of work, contract differences and limited access to social security services. Many private miners externalize their work requirements for third -party contractors, who have shaken the responsibility of the employer and weakens the application of labor rights. Although

¹⁹ India Wage Report – casual vs regular workers
International Labour Organization (ILO), India Wage Report: Wage Policies for Decent Work and Inclusive Growth (ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, 2018) https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@asia/@.../documents/publication/wcms_638305.pdf

legal protection such as the Provident Funds and the various ACT provisions of employees, 1952 and the State Insurance Act of employees, 1948, technically applicable, in practice, compliance is often partially or absent.

This is exacerbated by the lack of a strong presence of unions and the fear of jobs losses to contract employees, with consequent reference crimes. Professional health and safety standards in private mines also show a significant variation. Although large private companies can follow the policy of social responsibility (CSR) and security protocols that are comparable to PSU, small and medium -sized companies (SMEs) often negligible security investments. There are problems such as inadequate protective equipment, poor ventilation, lack of training and non -functional safety equipment. Mortal accidents and chronic health states such as silicosis and pneumoconiosis are more frequent in unregulated or semi-regulated private mining operations. This study highlights the urgent need for harmonization of standards and the improvement of application mechanisms in both sectors. Treatment in treatment between constant public employees and contractual private workers highlights the need for a legal approach for professional regulations, in particular in high-risk industries, such as mining.

Legislative interventions must ensure that all miners' workers - the self -employed or sector type - have uniform access to decent working conditions, social security and protection against professional dangers. In addition, the role of digital surveillance instruments, compatible AI security warnings and blockchain can be examined in employment contracts in order to improve transparency and compliance. The structure of the capacities of workers' inspectors and the institutional strengthening of SGMIs are also of crucial importance.

The strengthening of the mechanisms of symptoms, promoting dialogue in three parts between representatives of government, industry and work as well as the promotion of public-private partnerships for safety training can fill the systemic differences between the sectors. While mines in the public sector offer a relatively secure and more regulated working environment, the private mining sector requires solid political reforms, improvements and ethical business practices to increase working conditions to acceptable national and international standards. The fight against these gaps is not only a legal, but a moral to guarantee that the extractive richness of the nation is not built at the expense of human dignity and security.