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INTRODUCTION

Uncertainties on account of unemployment, illness, disability, death and old age are experienced by all the people across the world. These inevitable facets of life are said to be threats to one's economic security.

In a society, the livelihood of an individual is made up of very diverse elements which together constitute the physical, social, cultural and political universe where he lives. Whenever an individual who lives in a society and faces the uncertainties threatening the bare necessity to sustain a minimum livelihood, he needs some help from the society, may it be the family, or any government or private institutions.

The term "social security" refers to any programme that aims to help individuals faced with such situations. Such people include the poor, the elderly, anybody who is physically disabled, and the mentally challenged.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) defines Social Security as "the security that society provides through appropriate organisation against certain risks to which its members are perennially exposed". These risks are essentially contingencies against which an individual cannot effectively provide by his own ability or foresight alone or even in a private combination with his fellows.