

NATIONAL CONVENTION OF WORKERS, 26.5.2015, DELHI

DECLARATION

This National Convention of Workers being held under the banner of joint platform of all the Central Trade Unions of the country along with independent national federations of all sectors and service establishments expresses deep concern over anti worker, anti-people and pro-corporate actions of the present Govt. at the Centre in pursuance of the policy of globalisation. During this period the Govt. has been over-busy in amending all labour laws to empower the employers with unfettered rights to “hire and fire” and stripping the workers and trade unions of all their rights and benefits besides aggressively pushing through almost unlimited FDI in strategic sectors like Railways, Defence and Financial Sector. Also, through sweeping changes in the existing Land Acquisition Act, farmers’ right to land and agri-workers’ right to livelihood are being sought to be drastically curbed and curtailed.

The Govts’ aim in aggressively pushing through sweeping changes in labour-laws is nothing but to push out overwhelming majority of workers out of the coverage of all labour laws and to drastically curb the trade union rights. The CTUs had besides other issues raised the issue of strict enforcement of labour laws and universal social security but this Govt. is doing away with all rights-components in all the labour laws aiming at creating conditions of bonded labour in all the workplaces. EPF and ESI schemes are proposed to be made optional which is also aimed at demolishing the PF and ESI schemes dismantling the basic social security structures available to the organized sector. And for the vast unorganized sector workers, old schemes are being repackaged and renamed, without providing for funds and implementation-machinery/network with a view to befool the people. The Govt. has not taken any step to curb price rise of essential commodities and to generate employment except making tall claims of containing inflation in the media. On universalising public distribution system, the Govt. is trying to scuttle it through Direct Benefit Transfer resulting further squeeze on the common people.

During the year with the support of the present Govt, various state governments have brought about drastic anti-workers changes in basic labour laws viz., Industrial Disputes Act, Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, Factories Act and Apprenticeship Act, Trade Unions Act etc introducing “hire & fire”, throwing more than 71% of factories out of coverage of Factories Act and making all contractors employing up to 50 workers free from any obligation towards workers. The Central Govt. on its part has introduced amendments to Factories Act raising doubly the limit of workers for registration of factories, put in public domain the proposals for new Small Factories (Regulations of Service conditions) Bill which prescribes that major 14 labour laws will not apply to factories employing upto 40 workers. Labour Code on Wages Bill and Labour Code on Industrial Relations Bill which under the cover of amalgamation seek to make registration of unions almost impossible, making retrenchment and closure almost free for the employers class. These bills have been put in public domain without consulting the trade unions thereby violating the provisions of ILO Convention 144 on Tripartite Consultation. Amendments have also been brought in EPF & MP Act and ESI Act to make it optional with a sinister design to finally demolish the two time-tested statutory schemes for the workers. The Prime Minister’s office has written to the Chief Secretaries of States to follow Rajasthan Model in labour laws. All these amendments are meant to exclude 90% of the workforce from application of labour laws thereby allowing the employers to further squeeze and exploit the workers.

The Convention also expresses dismay over the Govt’s total inaction in implementing the consensus recommendations of 43rd, 44th and 45th Indian Labour Conferences on formulation of minimum wages, same wage and benefits as regular workers for the contract workers and granting status of workers with attendant benefits to those employed in various central govt schemes like anganwadi, mid-day-meal, ASHA, para-teachers etc. On the contrary, the Govt drastically curtailed budget allocations to all those centrally sponsored schemes meant for poor peoples’ welfare. It is also noted with utter dismay that the present government is also continuing to ignore the twelve point demands of entire trade union movement pertaining to

concrete action to be taken for containing price-rise and aggravating unemployment situation, for strict implementation of labour laws, halting mass scale unlawful contractorisation, ensuring minimum wages for all of not less than Rs 15000 per month with indexation and universal social security benefits and pension for all including the unorganized sector workers, etc. The demands also include compulsory registration of Trade Unions within 45 days and ratification of ILO Conventions 87 and 98. Even the legislations passed by Parliament on the issue of Street Vendors is not being implemented appropriately.

The National Convention also denounced the retrograde move of the Govt. in hiking/allowing FDI in Defence, Insurance, Railways and other sectors and also its aggressive move for disinvestment in PSUs including Oil and financial sector aiming at total privatisation which will be detrimental to the interests of the national economy, national security as well as mass of the common people. The National Convention also condemned the sweeping change sought to be brought in Land Acquisition Act permitting forcible acquisition of land from the farmers and putting in jeopardy the livelihood of agricultural workers. It is disgusting to note that 147 workers of Maruti-Suzuki at Manesar are being forced to languish in Jail for more than two years on false and fabricated charges. It is unfortunate that even after the assurance of Prime Minister to revive the closed NOKIA Sriperumbudur unit, the recent decision to sell it out demonstrates Government approach to deny protection to workers. The coal sector has already been opened for commercial operations by private sector.

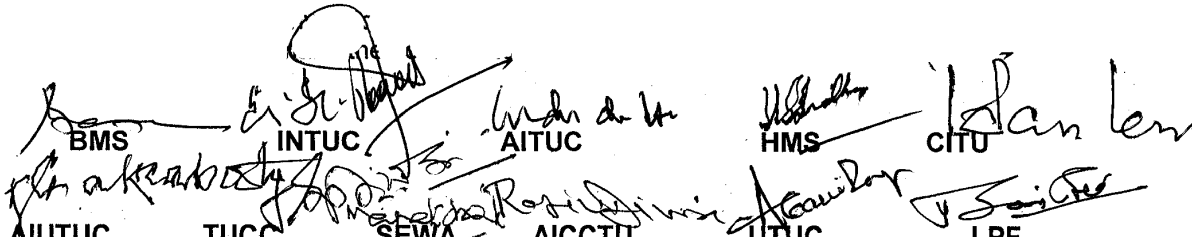
The Convention supports the decision of the constituents of JCM of Central Govt. employees to go for indefinite strike from 23rd November, 2015 and will decide at appropriate stage the form of solidarity action to be taken. The Convention also congratulates coal, postal, transport and telecom workers for their strike against policies of the Govt.

The Convention demands upon the Central Govt. to stop forthwith the process of making retrograde amendments to the labour laws. The Convention also demands immediate steps to implement the consensus recommendations of successive Indian Labour Conferences and also positive response to long pending demands of the entire trade union movement of the country. The Convention urges the Central Govt. to desist from mindless drive for disinvestment in CPSUs and liberalising FDI in defence, insurance, Railways etc. and the convention also condemns the Govt. move of corporatization of major ports and postal services etc. The Convention urges the Govt. to reverse the direction of the ongoing economic policy regime which has landed the entire national economy in distress and decline affecting the working people most.

The Convention calls upon all the trade unions, federations across the sectors to widen and consolidate the unity at the grass-root level and prepare for countrywide united movement to halt and resist the brazen anti-worker and anti-people policies of the Govt and in preparation to the same undertakes unanimously the following programme:

- 1) **Joint conventions and campaigns during June-July in state, district and industry level wherever possible and taking initiative to involve common people in support of workers struggle**
- 2) **ALL INDIA GENERAL STRIKE ON 2ND SEPTEMBER 2015**

The National Convention calls upon the trade unions and working people irrespective of affiliations to unite and make the countrywide General Strike a massive success.



BMS **INTUC** **AITUC** **HMS** **CITU**

AIUTUC **TUC** **SEWA** **AICCTU** **UTUC** **LPF**

and All India Federations of Banks, Insurance, Defence, Railways, Central/State Govt. Employees and other Service Establishments