

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3328

ANSWERED ON:18.03.2013

STRIKES BY TRADE UNIONS

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Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether all the major trade unions in the country went on a strike recently;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor along with the impact of the strikes;
- (c) whether the Government has held any consultations with the traders of these trade unions;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the remedial measures initiated by the Government in view of the demands of the trade unions?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH)

(a) & (b): Yes, Madam. There was an All India strike by the Central Trade Unions on 20th and 21st February, 2013 to press the following demands:

- i) Concrete measures to contain price-rise;
- ii) Concrete measures for employment generation;
- iii) Strict enforcement of labour laws;
- iv) Universal social security cover for organized and unorganized workers and creation of National Social Security Fund;
- v) Stoppage of disinvestment in Central and State PSUs/Undertakings;
- vi) No contractisation of work of permanent/perennial nature and payment of wages and benefits to the contract workers at the same rate as available to the regular workers of the industry/establishment;
- vii) Amendment of Minimum Wages Act to ensure universal coverage irrespective of the schedules and fixation of statutory minimum wages at not less than Rs.10,000/- linked with cost price index;
- viii) Remove all ceilings on payment and eligibility Bonus, Provident Fund; increase the quantum of gratuity;
- ix) Assured pension for all; and
- x) Compulsory registration of trade unions within a period of 45 days and immediate ratification of the ILO Conventions Nos.87 and 98.

The impact of the two days General Strikes by Trade Unions was felt across the major sectors of the economy, where Banking Industry, Insurance, Coal, Non-Coal mines and Defence were the most affected sectors. Sectors like Steel, Tele-communication, Post and Telegraph, Oil and Gas, Power etc. were partially affected. Food Corporation, BHEL, Air transport and cement industry were the least affected sectors.

(c) & (d): A meeting was convened by Union Minister of Labour & Employment with the representatives of Central Trade Unions (CTUs) on 13th February, 2013 to discuss the charter of demands. The representatives of all the major CTUs attended the meeting. The demands of CTUs were discussed at length. It was clarified to the Union representatives that their demands would be looked into by the Government and appealed to withdraw the strike. Subsequently, a Group of Ministers (GoM) held a meeting with the representatives of the major CTUs on 18th February, 2013. It was assured that Government is serious on the demands related to working class and taking all possible measures to redress them.

(e): Government has taken various measures to address the concerns raised by the trade unions. Particular attention is drawn to the huge amount of food subsidy incurred by the Government to ensure availability of food grains to the poor at very concessional rate

through the Public Distribution System. The Government's efforts to pass the Food Security Bill in the Parliament will further increase the availability of subsidized food grains to the larger segments of the population. Ministry of Labour & Employment has prepared a National Employment Policy to ensure that the growth process is inclusive and equitable. The policy has been drafted with a view to mainstreaming employment into policy making for socio-economic development of the country. It will provide a proper framework towards achieving the goal of remunerative and decent employment for all women and men in the labour force. So far enforcement of labour laws in Central Sphere is concerned, there exists a well-defined and effective machinery.

Similar arrangements are also available in the States. The Government has enacted Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act, 2008. The Government of India has also set up National Social Security Fund (NSSF) with a corpus of Rs.1000 crore. National Social Security Board (NSSB) has also been constituted which is advising the Government from time to time on Social Security Schemes. Action is being taken to amend the Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, 1970 wherein it is, inter-alia, proposed that in case where the contract labour perform the same or similar kind of work as the workmen directly appointed by the principal employer, the wage rates, holidays, social security provisions of contract labour shall be the same as are available to the directly appointed workmen on the roll of principal employer. Further, a Bill is being brought before the Parliament to amend the Minimum Wages Act, 1948 to provide a National Floor Level Minimum Wage.