

MAZDOOR ADHIKAR SANGHARSH ABHIYAN (MASA)

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Ref. No.

Date: 22nd September 2020

JOIN THE ALL INDIA PROTEST ON 23rd SEPTEMBER 2020 **AGAINST ANTI-WORKER POLICIES OF THE BJP GOVERNMENT**

Comrades,

The Covid pandemic has been galloping all over the country with no respite. The people are suffering and the poor – the workers and the poor farmers are suffering the most. With almost 1 lakh new cases every day India is on track to become the worst affected country in the world by the beginning of October. Some studies have shown that one out of four Indians is affected.

The Government has also made a mess of the economy. India's GDP fell by almost 24% in the period of April to June 2020, the largest fall by any country in the world. The brunt of this fall in GDP is borne primarily by the poor. While Ambani's wealth has grown by 35% from April, 1.89 crores of jobs have been lost from April to the end of August. Already even before the lockdown the rate of unemployment was the highest in 45 years and the economy was in decline.

At this time, the Government is seeking to make further attacks on the workers. Even before the lockdown the Government had tried to attack the working class by making anti-worker changes in labour laws. During covid anti-worker measures including introduction of 12 hours working per day without overtime and suspending workers rights were taken by many states. This has been done mainly in those states ruled by the BJP. Now parliament has been convened and government is trying to push through the Industrial Relations Code and the Code on Social Security and the Code on Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions virtually without debate. These codes will strengthen and enhance the contract system. Employers will have the facility to hire and fire workers under the name of fixed term contracts. The right to unionise will be severely curtailed and many other rights of workers will come under fire. At the same time, the Government is also going to privatise the public sector. Oil companies like BPCL, HPCL and IOC are up for privatisation. Ordnance factories are to be privatised. Sections of Indian Railways and Air India is being privatised and public sector banks and insurance companies are being restructured through mergers preparing them for privatisation. This will not only affect the rights of the workers involved but will also put the security of the nation – including in an economic sense – into jeopardy. All this is happening as the peasantry is being attacked through the three ordinances that Lok Sabha has now passed. We salute the powerful peasant struggle against the anti-farmer, anti-national laws and join them in solidarity.

At the same time the Government is pushing its *Hindutva* agenda, further widening the rift between Hindus and Muslims and is also creating a toxic environment for exploitation of dalits, adivasis and other historically discriminated communities. The recently announced New Education policy reflects this. So also the laying of the foundation stone for the Ram Temple at Ayodhya by the Prime Minister in the beginning of August and the persisting attack against the peoples of Jammu and Kashmir.

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In this situation the Central Trade Unions have given a call for a day of protest on 23rd September 2020. While the Central Trade Unions have been protesting against the Government since the beginning of the lockdown, it is clear that the Government is deaf to these protests and much stronger actions, beyond symbolic protests and towards transforming the workers movement into a militant and decisive struggle of the working class, are necessary to pressure Government into listening to the voice of the working class. In this period, it is also necessary to make proper demands about workers' health. We call upon the working class of the country to organise huge protests with the following demands:

1. Withdraw the anti-worker labour codes from Parliament.
2. Ensure a fair minimum wage for all workers all over the country.
3. Make a cash transfer of Rs 10000 to all the needy workers who have been pushed out of work or are unable to attend to work as a result of the corona virus.
4. Pay all workers full wages without any cuts for the whole of the period of the lockdown.
5. Stop the contract labour system in all work of a permanent nature.
6. Stop anti-national and anti-people policies including privatisation and the New Education Policy.
7. Allot at least 5% of the GDP for public health.
8. Ensure Rs. 50 lakh as insurance for each worker who is attending duty during this period.
9. Pay the full PF to all workers.
10. Pay full DA to all workers and pensioners including government employees.
11. Stop pushing the burden of COVID upon the working class and toilers.

**ENSURE THAT THE 23 SEPTEMBER PROTEST AGAINST THE BJP GOVERNMENT'S ANTI-
WORKER POLICIES IS A SUCCESS**

MAKE SURE THE BJP GOVERNMENT LISTENS TO THE VOICE OF THE WORKING CLASS

MAZDOOR ADHIKAR SANGHARSH ABHIYAN (MASA)

MASA Constituents: All India Workers Council (AIWC) / Grameen Mazdoor Union, Bihar / Indian Council of Trade Unions (ICTU) / Indian Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU) / IFTU Sarwahara / Inqlabi Mazdoor Kendra / Inqlabi Mazdoor Kendra, Punjab / Jan Sangharsh Manch Haryana / Karnataka Shramika Shakthi / Mazdoor Sahyog Kendra, Gurgaon-Bawal / Mazdoor Sahyog Kendra, Uttarakhand / Mazdoor Samanvay Kendra / Socialist Workers Centre (SWC), Tamil Nadu / Struggling Workers Coordination Committee (SWCC), West Bengal / Trade Union Centre of India (TUCI)

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