

MAZDOOR ADHIKAR SANGHARSH ABHIYAN

(MASA)

Contact: C-141, Sainik Nagar, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi – 110059
Email: masa.struggle@gmail.com

Ref. No.

Date: 18th October 2020

RESOLUTION

In support of our demands to:

- Rollback the Labour Codes and anti-worker provisions in the labour laws!
- Rollback the pro-corporate and anti-farmer new Farm Bills!
- Rollback the ongoing attempt to sell-off the Public Sector Enterprises!
- Reject the practice of Contract Labour!
- Reject the creation of hardships and a crisis for workers during the pandemic!

Make the Online Convention of MASA a grand success!

18th October 2020, 5 pm



"MASA-Mazdoor Adhikar Sangharsh Abhiyan"

Against - Labour Codes, Farm Bills, privatization, retrenchment-unemployment, crisis of unorganized sector and migrant workers, worsening healthcare and social security, rising prices, casteist violence and communal hatred, attacks on democratic rights!

Beyond symbolic protests, transform workers movement into militant and decisive struggle of working class!

Dear Friends,

As we commence this convention, our beloved country witnesses an unprecedented attack on her farmers and workers by the central government. As a matter of fact, the government started the attacks on the workers even before the pandemic came onto us. In August of 2019, the government set into motion the Wage Code bill completely ignoring the voice of the working class. They followed it up with sweeping changes to the Labour laws by surreptitiously passing the remaining 3 Labour Codes in both houses of the Parliament during the pandemic, to avoid pushback from the masses. The primary driving factor for such changes was to allow the capitalists to increase their profit accumulation by getting rid of those regulatory safeguards in the laws that constrained them and offered some protection to workers and to completely jeopardize their ability to bargain collectively.

It is universally accepted that good labour Laws are necessary to offer regulatory safeguards and protection for the workers from extreme exploitation by the capitalists viz. the owners and managers of the factories, mills and corporations. The capitalists enjoy significant money and power advantage over the workers, and their interests are not at all aligned to that of the working class. Therefore, to protect himself from extreme exploitation, the ordinary worker needs the protection of favourable legislation. Let us not forget that worker

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friendly legislations were the fruits of protracted and sustained struggle over the past several decades. In contrast, the government of the day took away these protections in a jiffy. In these sweeping changes to the labour laws and introduction of Labour Codes, it is the workers who have lost significantly—from their ability to demand jobs that are permanent in nature, to their right to unionize and to organize, protest and strike against exploitation by the capitalists and the right to be treated fairly and equitably under law. Such revisions in labour laws seem to benefit only the capitalist class, harms the workers as a whole and exposes the class interest of the current ruling party, whose politicians are lackeys of their corporate masters. Therefore, this convention unequivocally condemns such action by the central government and demands the immediate reinstatement of the legal protections in the labour laws that have been rolled back.

We witness that the farmers and agriculturists are currently on the streets protesting the new Farm Bill. The central government, in its reform attempt, has disintermediated the farm-to-fork supply chain and severely disrupted the agrarian marketplace. It is clear as daylight that the new regulation attempts to shut out the rural middlemen from the market place, yet brings in the large corporations in its place. The government will no longer offer minimum support prices to farmers, neither work to keep the prices of essential commodities in check to protect the consumer. Thus, the government has completely washed its hands off from the responsibility to protect the interests of both the farmer and the consumer and left it to market forces to meet demand and supply and determine pricing. Such action disproportionately benefits the large corporations over the common man. Apart from a handful of rich peasants who might benefit from such new regulations, the majority of the peasants of the country will likely be relegated to slavish wage earners. The farmers, in general, will now be subservient to the interest of the “big capital”, in a throwback to the times of the British Raj. This convention demands that the central government take immediate measures to offer regulatory protection to India’s farmers.

The central government has also been in a frenzy to privatize the Public Sector Undertakings and government sponsored enterprises. While this government walks the path of its predecessors in such attempts, it does so at a much faster pace. It seems determined to sell everything away as quickly as it can—be it the Railways, Defence, Telecom, Insurance, Banks, Iron Ore and Coal, Oil and Natural Gas --- you name it. While the overall economy has significantly slowed down owing to the Covid19 pandemic, this government has accelerated its sell-off spree. Such divestiture will lead to an explosion in the number of contract workers in the economy, people who have negligible rights and protections under the revised labour laws. Migrant labourers will hereby form a large section of this new generation of contract workers, and would likely have to endure inhuman and insufferable work-life conditions, without the cover of legal safeguards. This convention voices its dissent against the deplorable work-life conditions of the contract workers of our country. We demand that such workers get adequate relief and protection to lead a life of dignity.

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As the nature of employment steadily shifts from permanent to contractual, we also witness the fast and steady increase in unemployment and layoffs in the nation. A large section of workers has not been paid by their employers during the pandemic, and many of them have been laid off, and the unemployment numbers are at its peak. In such dire conditions, these workers have to dip into their Provident Fund savings for retirement. This convention strongly opposes the policies of the government that leads to such massive unemployment and urges the government to reconsider the path it has chosen. This convention also urges the workers of the nation to unite in opposition and resistance to these policies.

Taking advantage of the Covid19 pandemic, the capitalists and their lackey politicians in the central government have forced our working class into an uncertain and dark future. It is high time for workers and farmers across the nation, to rise in unison to resist this onslaught on the common man. Ten Central Trade Unions have come together and called for a nation-wide general strike on the 26th of November 2020 to protest the Labour Codes and anti-worker provisions of the labour laws and the anti-farmer provisions of new Farm Bill, along with other anti-people policies of the Government. This convention calls to support this strike and MASA will do its utmost possible to make this strike a grand success! Having said that we do believe a token strike in itself is not nearly enough. To effectively resist such anti-people policies, we do need a broad unity of the common masses and a sustained struggle across the nation. With this view, MASA is organizing a nationwide campaign inclusive of grassroots, digital and signature campaigns etc. among the toiling and common masses of the country titled ‘Mazdoor Sangharsh Abhiyan’ from 18th October to 18th December. Let us make this convention our first step towards advancing this struggle!

**With our warm wishes of solidarity in resistance,
Mazdoor Adhikar Sangharsh Abhiyan (MASA)**

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Constituent Federations and Organizations

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 (IMK) / Inqlabi Mazdoor Kendra, Punjab / Jan Sangharsh Manch Haryana / Karnataka Shramika Shakti / 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)