

Labour File:

Pathetic Conditions of Workers in India

India is supposed to be a 'democratic' country with a constitution that endowed people with more rights. It is also supposed the 'independent' judiciary renders equal justice alike. India is supposed to be under rule of democratic system run by the majority of people. But in India where workers and toiling masses who comprises the majority neither enjoy any freedom or right nor equal justice has ever been dispensed to them, nor do the wealthy classes ever treat them with human dignity but with the despicable feudal brutality. Justice and equality remain a far cry for workers which are being denied by the exploiting ruling classes.

The following incidents during last six months, in various parts of India discloses the true pathetic state of workers, either belongs to 'organised' sector or 'unorganised' sector, being treated as second rate citizens.

Bullets as Bonus for Assam Tea Garden Workers

The workers of the Bogidhola tea estate in eastern Golaghat district have been agitating demanding 14 per cent of bonus, while the management was willing to pay 8.33 per cent. This bonus is related to Durga puja. The agitating workers were being supported by Krishak MuktiSangram Samiti (a farmers group). As a part of their agitation, protesting measly bonus offered by the management, the plantation workers ghaored the owner, Sudhir Roy and his brother Sumit Roy on 13-12-2017. Instead of meeting out workers demand, the owner and his brother opened fire using the licensed gun and pistol on the workers injuring five workers. Several other workers were also injured while trying to escape from firing range. The police who entered the scene have detained the owner and his brother only to rescue them from the 'mob' (agitating workers), but they were not arrested. Such is the true nature of the law and order maintenance where the rich culprits are rescued and victims are arrested.

Justice – A Mirage

The management of Pricol in Tamil Nadu had booked a false case implicating some workers in the criminal case of vandalism and violence against management officials. The Madras High Court had held that the case was fabricated and that the charge sheet in the case was flawed. It acquitted six workers and one worker was acquitted by the High Court.

But on the same day, 13 November 2017, the management of Pricol filed a special leave petition in the Supreme Court against the acquittal. The petition was admitted by the Supreme Court and it even issued notices to the workers.

At the same time, the Supreme Court had not admitted and dismissed the Special leave petition of two workers of Pricol, Manivannan and Ramamurthy, against conviction and life sentence awarded by the lower court, not even attempting to examine the case of these workers basing on the merit of facts on the record, as appreciated by the Madras High Court.

This is how our independent and unbiased judiciary that is supposed to discharge equal justice, has in reality took up the cause of boosting the neo-liberal agenda of the monopoly capital.

Previously the very same nature of justice was dispensed to the workers of Maruti-Suzuki and Geaziano workers.

Jharkhand Government Bans A Long-standing Trade Union

Mazdoor Sanghata Samiti (MSS) was a registered trade union from 1989 having around 22,000 members. From its inception in 1985 it has been engaged in organizing workers in various industries in Giridhi, Bokaro and dhanbad areas in Jharkhand. It is working among the workers of coal mines, thermal power plants, unorganized sector and agricultural labour and organizing them to realize their legitimate demands. It has also been spear-heading protests against fake encounter of an alleged naxalite by the government. The union is also organizing adivasis against "Momentum Jharkhand" which licenses and permits industrialists to plunder and loot natural resources – the common property of the people of Jharkhand.

The activity of MSS awakening political consciousness among workers and people, particularly adivasis, opposing the anti-people policies of government was not only unpalatable but also irked the state government which invoked section-16 of Indian criminal law amendment Act-1908 – a colonial law of British era to suppress Indians who resisted exploitation and suppression – and declared the MSS as unlawful and banned it.

That is how the 'political freedoms' and legitimate rights of workers to organize and protect their rights and pursue their justified aspirations are being treated by the state of the exploiting ruling classes.

Workers forced to clean the shoes of HR managers

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Yet another incident of heinous punishment of feudal middle aged imposed on workers in these 'ultra-modern' civilized globalized world has been reported from Andhra Pradesh – a shame on the humanity and unmitigated insult perpetuated against the human dignity of working class.

In the Heera Electro Smelters Company situated at Bobbili Growth Centre in Vizianagaram district, the supervisors and management representatives started behaving indecently and sexually harassing women workers. Unable to bear the harassment, the women workers with the help of male workers have resisted and asked for explanation of the management over this misbehavior and harassment of women workers.

Taking this as an affront the management made a false complaint with the police that the workers made an attack on them. However after hearing both the versions the police made a compromise and asked both sides to go back to work and advised to be cordial with each other and behave properly.

When male workers, who were implicated in the false case with police, came to report to duties, the management had stopped them from joining the duty and asked them to clean the shoes of the management representatives and get excused to join the duty.

Ironically these workers are the elected as the Panchayat members of their village. When these workers have appealed the management to leave them away since they are to be respected as elected panchayat members, the management had not heeded their request and asked them to clean the shoes. Thus they were forced and made to clean the shoes of management representatives as an atonement for resisting and questioning the management. When the workers were cleaning the shoes, the HR staff video graphed them in their cell phones and sent them to the head office at Raipur.

All this barbarity has occurred on 5th February 2018. Recently much talk and propaganda is being done on work place sexual harassment of women employees and the laws enacted supposed to protect them.

But the actual experience of the workers exposes the futility of such talk and laws in a semi-feudal social system where managements appear with make-up of a modern HR management policies devised by the US imperialist management system of inhuman and ruthless exploitation.

While the above incidents delineates the real pathetic state of condition of workers in India without justice and human dignity, they also inversely reflect the pitiable condition of the workers' movement in India which is incapable of delivering goods and which immediately needs to prepare to meet the situation.
