

# अखिल भारतीय ट्रेड यूनियन कांग्रेस All India Trade Union Congress

**President :** Ramendra Kumar, Ex. M.P.

**Working President :** H.Mahadevan

**General Secretary :** Amarjeet Kaur

27<sup>th</sup> August 2022

## Press Release

*The following statement was issued to the press by AITUC National Secretariat on 27.08.2022 reacting to the virtual address by the Prime Minister to the Labour Ministers and Labour Secretaries on 25.08.2022*

As usual, Shri Narendra Modi, the Prime Minister has indulged in another flight of fancy when he addressed the meeting of labour ministers and the labour secretaries held in Tirupathi on 25th August 2022. In his virtual address to the so-termed 'National Labour Conference', the Prime Minister, in his ostentatious rhetoric said that the labour codes empower the workers. This is an absolute falsehood. AITUC takes a very strong objection to such falsification of facts. We condemn the statements made by the Prime Minister without any remorse when more than 25 crore workers had gone on strike action on 28-29 March 2022 protesting against the labour codes as being pernicious on more than 80% of the worker force. This act of the Prime Minister, to say the least, is nothing less than making a mockery of the crores of protesting workers and rubbing salt on the wounds.

Mr Modi says that his government has taken initiatives to abolish the laws from "the period of slavery". But the fact is that these codes, in their real content will impose a new system of slavery on the workers, particularly the unorganized, contract & outsourced workers who constitute more than 90% of the workforce. Workers and the Central Trade Unions have been consistently demanding to repeal the codes but Mr Modi does not see, nor hear.

The ancient legal nostrum says, "Ignorance of law is no excuse". It is dismally surprising that the Prime Minister has claimed in his address that the codes will ensure empowerment through minimum wages, job security, social security and health security. The ground reality is that the majority workforce are blatantly denied of all these fundamental rights in the labour codes. Is this the 'toxic' ignorance of the Prime Minister?

Mr Narendra Modi has spoken about "making the right use of women power" for the country to achieve its goals. In contrast the labour codes, through the coverage and contentious definitions throw women workers out of the purview of the legislations. The Prime Minister should be honest to admit the persisting and widening gender gap in the labour force of the country which is worse than the global average both in the formal and informal sector.

The government does not have any worthwhile policies that aim to improve women's work participation. This not the time to correct the terminological inexactitudes of the Prime Minister. He has been doing it and will continue to do it. He did the same while enacting the farm laws. He said that the farm laws would empower the farmers but succumbed to the historic protests of farmers and had to accept to repeal them. If the government was genuine in its intentions to empower the farmers through the laws then why could they not succeed in convincing the farmers?

India's working class has been demanding repeal of the four labour codes that were enacted in all violation to the legal and parliamentary process. The Prime Minister, through his address to the "National Labour Conference" has tried to hoodwink and mislead the people.

All India Trade Union Congress deplores this act and reiterates its resolve to fight alongwith all the other Central Trade Unions, sectoral Federations and Associations for the repeal of the labour codes with more vigour and determination.

Amarjeet Kaur,  
General Secretary  
Mob: 9810144958