

Press Release

Bengaluru, August 20, 2026

AICCTU protests demanding abolition of the contract labour/outsourcing system, implementation of direct wage payment, and strict enforcement of the revised minimum wage

The All India Central Council of Trade Unions (AICCTU) held a state-level protest in Bengaluru, demanding that the state government prevent the exploitation of workers employed across Karnataka through contract, outsourcing, daily-wage, temporary, and other precarious employment arrangements, and ensure job security, social security, and strict enforcement of labour laws for them.

AICCTU National Vice-President Clifton D'Rozario said that continuous and essential work relating to Group 'C' and Group 'D' posts across various sectors — including the state's factories, government offices, hospitals, and public sector undertakings — is being carried out through contract and outsourced workers.

He pointed out that many workers, despite serving the same institution for 10, 20, 25, and even 30 years, are denied permanent employment, job security, and adequate social security. He demanded an end to this exploitative system, which denies these workers — who perform the same or equivalent work as regular employees — equal pay and other statutory benefits.

AICCTU State General Secretary Maitreyi Krishnan said the revised minimum wage notified by the government on 22.05.2026 must not be withheld or delayed under any circumstances.

She demanded that the Labour Department immediately inspect employers who pay less than the notified minimum wage, recover the wages due, and take legal action, including prosecution where necessary, against employers violating workers' rights.

Considering the continuously rising cost of living, AICCTU demanded that the minimum wage be revised to at least Rs. 42,000 per month.

Demand for revision of the ESI wage ceiling

AICCTU also demanded immediate revision of the wage ceiling for ESI coverage. The ESI wage ceiling, raised from Rs. 15,000 to Rs. 21,000 in 2016, has not been revised in years. Since the notified minimum wage in some scheduled employments now exceeds Rs. 21,000, an anomaly has arisen where workers legally entitled to the minimum wage are excluded from ESI benefits.

In light of the order dated 04.08.2026 in W.P. No. 18258 of 2026 (L-ESI) before the Karnataka High Court, AICCTU demanded that the state government immediately write to the central government urging that the ESI wage ceiling be suitably revised in line with current wage levels and the cost of living.

Memorandum received on behalf of the government

P. Raghu, Chairperson of the Karnataka Safai Karmachari Commission, and Labour Commissioner Ragapriya, who arrived at the protest site, received the memorandum submitted by AICCTU on behalf of the government and spoke with the protesters.

Various issues faced by contract and outsourced workers — including minimum wages, direct wage payment, job security, ESI, and social security — were brought to the officials' attention.

P. Raghu and Ragapriya stated that they would bring the workers' memorandum to the attention of the Chief Minister and the Labour Minister, and would inform the government of the need for necessary action to resolve the workers' problems.

Several labour leaders spoke on the occasion, including Appanna (State President), Nirmala, Nagaraja Pujar, Mohan, and Ramanna Vitla.

Thousands of workers from various districts across the state participated in the protest, including K. Nagalingaswamy, Aziz Jagirdar, Keshava Nayak, Ashokagowda, Mayamma, Parashurama, Uma, Bhanuprakash, Basavaraj M., Gowri, and Chandrashekhar Shirugupp.

Key AICCTU demands

1. Abolish the contract, outsourcing, daily-wage, temporary, and other precarious labour systems used for essential and continuous work, and regularise workers who have served long-term.
2. Implement a direct wage payment system for contract and outsourced workers across Karnataka.
3. Strictly enforce the revised minimum wage notified on 22.05.2026 in all scheduled employments.
4. Take immediate legal action against employers paying below the minimum wage and recover unpaid wages for workers.
5. Ensure ESI benefits for all eligible contract and outsourced workers, and have the state government press the central government to suitably revise the ESI wage ceiling.
6. Ensure job security and all statutory rights for every worker from the date of joining.
7. Extend comprehensive social security benefits — including health, maternity, and pension — to all workers.
8. Ensure a safe, dignified, and harassment-free working environment for women workers.
9. Protect workers' rights to organise, collectively raise demands, and engage in lawful struggle.
10. Considering the continuously rising cost of living, revise the minimum wage to Rs. 42,000 per month.

The state government must urgently consider these key demands, which directly concern workers' lives, job security, and social security. It must issue clear directions to the concerned department and take necessary action on each demand within a fixed timeframe.

AICCTU warned the state government that if these just demands of the workers are ignored, the struggle will be further intensified.