

CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

President :
 B. T. RANADIVE
 General Secretary :
 P. RAMAMURTI

172, Lenin Sarani
 Calcutta-700013

PRESS RELEASE

18th December 1974

CITU'S NOTE ON BI-PARTITE AGREEMENT
IN COAL INDUSTRY

The following letter, addressed by Com. M. K. Pandhe, Secretary CITU to Shri O. Maheepathi, Member-Secretary, Joint Committee for the Coal Industry, regarding the Bi-partite agreement signed in New Delhi on 11th December 1974, is released to the Press:

"I have gone through the bipartite agreement signed in New Delhi on 11th November 1974. Since I did not get a copy earlier, I could not express my views on it.

However, as a member of the Bi-partite Committee, I would like to place my views on record.

It has been reported in the Press that I was present in the meeting though I could not attend the meeting. Com. Niren Ghosh who attended on behalf of CITU has already expressed his opposition to some of the proposals of the agreement.

After going through the agreement, I would like to clarify the position of my organisation.

1. The CITU agrees with the minimum wage of Rs.325/- at 246 price index with 1960 as the base year.
2. The CITU also agrees that the dearness allowance of Rs.1.30 per point rise in Consumer Price Index number.
3. I am surprised to note that even the agreement arrived at with the authorities by the INTUC and AITUC representatives is not being adhered to. This has created a very bad precedent for all future industry-wise wage negotiations. The present agreement provides even less than what was earlier agreed by the management.
4. We do not agree with the proposal for the scrapping of the house rent allowance though earlier it was agreed that Rs. 15.00 per month would be paid as house rent allowance. Similarly the payment of gratuity was to be 10% of Rs.325.00. The percentage also has been brought down to 7 with a provision to pay 10% after 3 years only. Moreover, now it would be on basic of 260% and workers would lose a minimum amount of Rs.14.00 on that account.
5. The CITU does not agree with the scales of pay adopted for the higher categories of workers. The wages of these categories have been kept just nominally above the minimum wages and there will be deep resentment among these sections of employees. This aspect is extremely important in view of the fact that only about 10 per cent of the employees are unskilled in coal mines.
6. The CITU does not agree to the increase in the workload of the employees. In view of the prevalent shocking working conditions in mines the existing workload itself is excessive in some categories. Under these circumstances increase

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in the workload will add to the fatigue of the workers. Moreover, it has also been our experience that increase in the workload has always been accompanied by reduction on job potential or the industry.

7. The CITU also would like to express its concern at the mechanisation and modernisation plans of the Government which ~~may~~ are likely to cause retrenchment of above 1 lakh workers in coal mines. When the unemployment problem is assuming serious proportions in the country, such steps will have serious social consequences. We consider that it is possible to increase the production by resorting to labour intensive methods".

The News Editor

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For Secretary