

CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

For Favour of publication

Camp: 4 Ashoke Road
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Press Release

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Statement by Shri Manoranjan Roay, M.P. Secretary of CITU, and Shri Robin Chatterjee, General Secy., Colliery Mazdoor Sabha of India regarding the tripartite meeting held on 4 July. 1972 on the issue of the coal-workers demands, at the Committee Hall, Shram Shakthi Bhavan, under the Chairmanship of Shri Khadilkar, Union Labour Minister.

TEXT:

The Colliery Mazdoor Sabha of India and the Centre of Indian Trade Unions participated in today's meeting with the expectation that the Central Government's Labour Minister would take certain stern views and measures to compel the employers to concede the 13 points vital demands of the coal miners of West Bengal, such as introduction of Payment of variable Dearness Allowances at Rs. 2.13 and payment of Rs. 7 crores in the item of non-payment of earlier increased V.D.A.s; 8.3% profit-sharing bonus; payments of annual increments with arrears; restarting of closed mines with workers who worked prior to the closure; house rent at 10% of basic salary; rehabilitation of 2,436 ejected miners in their quarters and employment in their respective collieries; introduction of gratuity; retrenchment compensation to the workers medically unfit; new wage committee; payments of accrued sick leave, leave and train fare; and above all Nationalisation of all coal mines.

In fact, the meeting could not bring any more result than the last meeting held in Calcutta on 1 July 1972 regarding the strike notice, where the employers of coal miners conceded to the demand of arrears payment of V.D.A.s from 19.10.71 to 31.3.72 and introduction of payment of V.D.A. at Rs. 2.13 from 1st April, 1972. The question of unpaid V.D.A.'s from 1st August 1967 to 18.7.71 remained unresolved.

Other burning issues were not even discussed properly and thoroughly. Shri Kumaramangalam, Minister for Steel and Mines who was present at the meeting could only give an assurance that steps would be taken to see that there were no further closures and that closed mines would be re-opened immediately. Shri Khadilkar could only state that his department would see that unpaid wages and other legal dues are paid ~~the~~ to the workers at the earliest. The Employers representatives repeated their vague assurances that they would take steps to ensure that their affiliates cleared the workers' dues and that workers payments etc, would be regular.

We are of the firm opinion that the result of such a committee meeting will cause great disappointment amongst the coal-miners of West Bengal."

Sd. Robin Chatterjee
