

Trade Unions to Go Ahead with Strike on Friday

Our Bureau

New Delhi: Central trade unions on Wednesday decided to go ahead with nationwide general strike on September 2 despite the government announcing a substantial hike in minimum wages and release of pending bonus for two years to appease them on Tuesday.

Like last year, RSS-affiliate Bharatiya Mazdoor Singh (BMS) will not support the 10 central trade unions for the strike. Last year, all trade unions including BMS had initially called for a strike on September 2 but BMS had pulled out just two days before. This year, BMS did not call for the strike because the inter-ministerial committee on labour led by finance minister Arun Jaitley had met the union twice this month while completely ignoring the strike call by other trade unions.

"It is unfortunate that during the past one year the group of ministers appointed for discussion on 12-point charter of demands has not convened even a single meeting and has instead only been talking to BMS. We denounce such undemocratic bias of the government," the central trade unions said in a joint statement issued on Wednesday.

15 crore workers will be on strike: unions

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: Ten central trade unions said here on Wednesday that over 15 crore workers in several States would take part in the strike called by them for Friday demanding higher minimum wages and provision of social security to unorganised workers.

The unions said a bandh-like situation would prevail in 10 States and a "chakka jam" in others.

"All government scheme workers will take to the streets. It will be bigger than last year's strike and we expect over 15 crore workers to participate. It will be a befitting reply to the government," Amarjeet Kaur, national secretary, All India Trade Union Congress, said at a press conference jointly organised by the 10 unions.

The Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh has opted out of the strike, but the striking unions said it would have no impact on the strike. "The strike will be complete in industrial



Amarjeet Kaur

sectors such as transport, finance, power, coal, textile, automobile, port and dock, steel, oil, defence production, scheme and education," a joint statement said.

"BMS leaders may not be supporting us because of political compulsions, but their workers will still join the strike," Tapan Sen, general secretary, Centre of Indian Trade Unions, said. He said the strike would not affect emergency services of hospitals and clinics. Banking transactions may be affected as bank unions have also issued strike notices.