

Evolution of the Labour Movement in India

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Abstract:

Labour unions are, of course, the most important organisations in this process, but given the heterogeneity of the labour force and its vast number, these organizations have been able to mobilise only a small section. There are other means, such as political parties, non-government organisations, and other types of grassroots organisations, involved in this endeavour. The earnings of the workers in the two sectors differed considerably. Though the organised sector employed only 8 per cent of the total labour force, the workers collectively earned around 33 per cent of the country's total wages and incomes. The All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC), formed on October 31, 1920, was the first national federation of trade unions. The unorganised sector comprises two types of workers, namely, self-employed and casual wage earners. The self-employed are those who earn paltry incomes through their own assets. The most striking trend in the trade union movement before and after Independence is that in the earlier period, there was a tendency towards unity, while in the latter period, splits became the order of the day. The formation of the INTUC marked the first step of the state in controlling the labour movement. The movement became too dependent on the state for protective legislation, its implementation, and even for solving industrial disputes. Moreover, in the case of India, there is enough evidence to show that in the case of major industrial disputes, the state rarely sided with the workers. In 1952, the Bharatiya Jan Sangh, a political party having a Hindu fundamentalist background, was formed, and in 1955, it initiated another trade union centre known as Bharatiya Mazdur Sangh. Apart from the working class being divided on lines of political parties at the national level, regional parties too started forming their own trade union centres since the late 1960s. The Registrar of Trade Unions is expected to maintain records of union membership based on the returns submitted by the registered unions. Every major trade union in the country has stressed this; yet, there seems to be no signs of its emergence.

KEY WORDS

Organizations - Labour market – Employment - Trade union - All India Trade Union Congress – Communists - Executive Committee – Government - Industrial disputes - Praja Socialist Party - Hind Mazdur Sabha - Bharatiya Mazdur Sangh.

Introduction:

Labour unions are obviously the most significant unions in this procedure; be that as it may, given the heterogeneity of the labour power and its tremendous number and these unions have had

the option to activate only a small segment. There are different methods, for example, ideological groups, non-government unions, and different sorts of grassroots unions engaged with this endeavour. The sorted out division and the disorderly area of the labour power in India can be recognized from one another based on the labour showcase and legitimate privileges of the laborers. The labour market in the unorganised division is, to a great extent, unstructured and unregulated for the laborers. In legal terms to the unorganised area scarcely offers any assurance to its laborers. The labour market in the sorted-out sector, in contrast with the unorganised sector, is progressively organized and controlled. Moreover, laborers in this sector have better abilities. The laborers are progressively ensured because of the activity of laws governing their labour and business conditions.

Labour Power:

The majority of the labour power is occupied with the chaotic area. The 1991 Census noted that the entire working population in the nation was 317 million, of which 290.2 million (92 percent) were in the unorganized segment, while just 26.8 million (8 percent) were in the sorted out area. The profit of the laborers in the two divisions varied significantly. In spite of the fact that the sorted out division utilized just 8 percent of the total labour force, the laborers by and large earned around 33 percent of the nation's total wages and earnings. The organised sector includes fundamentally laborers who get normal wages or pay rates and have more noteworthy security of work. Their services can't be fired at the whim of their employers. Their working time is directed, and they get the advantages of social security. It is huge that a significant group of employers in this sector is in the public sector and the government. Around 70 percent of the labour power in the organised sector is utilized in these agencies. The disorderly segment contains two sorts of laborers, to be specific, independently employed and casual workers. The independently employed are the individuals who win irrelevant livelihoods through their own efforts. In the urban sector, these would include petty vendors, rag-pickers, artisans, domestic servants, and so on. In the rustic segment, small and minor ranchers would be incorporated. The whole labour in the farming sector, 75 percent of the labour in the manufacturing sector, 36 percent of the labour in the construction sector, and 50 percent of the labour in the vehicle division are in the unorganised sector.

Working Class Unity:

The most striking pattern in the worker's guild movement when Independence is that in the previous period there was an inclination towards solidarity, while in the last time frame sectors turned into the thing to take care of. The All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC), formed on October 31st, 1920, was the primary national league of workers' organizations. Till the night before Independence, it stayed as the agent of the common laborers with all shades of political powers, running from the communists to the nonconformists, under its umbrella. The organization experienced two significant sectors over ideological issues during this period. The main split happened in 1929 when dissidents, for example, V.V. Giri, N.M. Joshi and others split away to shape a different organization. The issue was over portrayal in the Royal Commission on Labor in India. The communists and the supporters of the Indian National Congress in the AITUC boycotted the Commission; however, the dissidents (known as the Rightists) needed to help it. At the point when the dominant sector in the Executive Committee of the AITUC chose to support the transition to

boycott the Commission, the Rightists split away and formed the Indian Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU). In the next year, the communists split away to shape the Red Flag Trade Union Congress. Be that as it may, they rejoined the AITUC within two years, and the IFTU chose to converge with the parent body in 1939. The communists figured out how to oversee the AITUC during the most recent couple of decades of colonial rule. Not long after Home Rule was proclaimed, the pioneers of the Congress concluded that, since the average workers would need to assume an essential role in the new era of arranged turn of events, it couldn't permit the workers' guild movement to be driven by those who did not fully support its strategies. The Congress chose to begin another workers' organization place which would equal the socialist controlled AITUC's hold over the common laborers. In this manner, the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC) was formed in May 1947, a quarter of a year before Independence.

Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC):

The arrangement of the INTUC denoted the initial step of the state in controlling the labour movement. Some industrial relations experts, like C.K. Johri, tried to justify this by arguing that industrial peace was necessary during the period of national reconstruction, especially when there was a consensus that 'economic development must take place under the aegis of the government'. This, in actuality, implies that the government should assume the work of an employer in this system. Thus, workers' organizations would need to extensively mobilize their work as a resistance group. Johri (1967) stated that in such a circumstance, the government of a newly free nation could accomplish its approach goals simpler easily if the workers' organization movement, or a significant part of it, was ideologically adjusted and politically near the ruling group in power. It is, be that as it may, important to consider the long-term impacts of the arrangement of state mediation. Typically, it was discovered that although the state affected the labour movement with every single honest goal in the underlying stages, its subsequent contribution didn't help the common labourers' movement. The movement turned out to be excessively subject to the state for defensive enactment, its execution, and even in fathoming technical debates. In addition, on account of India, there is sufficient proof to show that in the event of major modern questions, the state infrequently agreed with the laborers. The split in the AITUC in 1947 made ready for additional sectors dependent on the slender sector, a division in the outcome, which nearly required each ideological group to have its own workers' organization front. At the point when an ideological group sectors its workers' organization front additionally sectors, along these lines dividing the average workers' movement further. Correspondingly, another ideological group constantly glides its own workers' organization. At the time of the movement of the INTUC, the genius communist group inside the Congress didn't bolster the league, and their workers' organizations stayed with the AITUC. After a year, in 1948, this group split away to shape another ideological group called the Praja Socialist Party (PSP) and chose to have its own workers' organization front, which would pull in the non-socialist and non-Congress Trade unions together. Therefore, the Hind Mazdur Panchayat (HMP) was formed in that year. The group's goal was halfway acknowledged as the Indian Federation of Labor, which was propelled by M. N. Roy, a former socialist who later turned out to be seriously hostile to socialism, converged with the HMP to form another organization called Hind Mazdur Sabha (HMS). In 1949, the unions, bolstered by the Revolutionary Socialist Party (RSP), a Marxist group having an impact chiefly in West

Bengal and Kerala, which had prior joined the HMS, chose to form their own organization, the United Trade Union Congress (UTUC).

Bharatiya Jan Sangh:

In 1952, the Bharatiya Jan Sangh, an ideological group having a Hindu fundamentalist foundation, was formed, and in 1955, it established another workers' organization known as Bharatiya Mazdur Sangh. Then the communists continued sectoring and rejoining to shape new parties. In 1965, another group involving breakaway parties from the PSP and Socialist Party was formed, known as the Samyukta Socialist Party. Its most significant workers' organization head, George Fernandes, split away from the HMS to frame another Hind Mazdur Panchayat. In any case, till the mid-1970s, the most significant workers' organizations in the nation were the INTUC, AITUC, and HMS. The split in the socialist movement, in the wake of the Chinese hostility in 1962, prompted the formation of another socialist group - Communist Party of India (Marxist) in 1964. Although at first the unions faithful to both socialist parties stayed with the AITUC, in 1970 the CPI(M) chose to set up another workers' guild place known as the Center for Indian Trade Unions (CITU), which removed a huge area of unions from the AITUC, particularly the ones in West Bengal and Kerala. The other pro-communist federation of trade unions, the UTUC, was likewise a sector when a splinter group inside the RSP (which later turned into a different ideological group, the Socialist Unity Center), shaped its own UTUC. The two organizations are distinguished from one another by the areas of their headquarters in Calcutta.

Working Class Movement and Political Parties:

Aside from the common laborers being isolated on lines of ideological groups at the national level, territorial parties also began framing their own workers' organization habitats since the late 1960s. This procedure was begun by the Dravida Munetra Kazhagham (DMK) when it formed the state government in 1967 in Tamil Nadu. The DMK started its own trade union community in the state. Later, when the All India Anna Dravida Munetra Kazhagham (AIADMK) was formed in 1977, it excessively set up its opponent community. The year 1967 saw the introduction of the Shiv Sena in Mumbai. In its beginning stage, the Shiv Sena professed to speak to the interests of Maharashtrians, all the more especially the Marathi-speaking individuals in Mumbai. It was avowedly hostile to South Indian and against socialism. It shaped its own labour wing, the Bharatiya Kamgar Sena. It was broadly accepted that the Shiv Sena and its labour wing had the support of the modern houses (the greater sector of which were non-Maharashtrians) in the Mumbai-Pune mechanical belt to battle the socialist unions, which were strong at that time. It figured out how to partition the common laborers in Mumbai on provincial lines, and it improved in quality. By the mid-1970s, its workers' organization turned out to be genuinely solid. The introduction of the Shiv Sena was connected, to an enormous degree, with the breaking down financial downturn in the nation. In 1966-67, the nation reeled under a downturn which prompted a decrease in employment and this manner to labour misfortunes. Mumbai, being the monetary and modern capital of India, endured the most. The current trade unions, including the communists, couldn't adapt to this marvel as their customary methods for seeking redress, to be specific, labour stoppage, mass conventions, etc, were insufficient. The enactments allowing security to laborers in the composed area gave little comfort to saved

specialists. The Shiv Sena was framed as of now. It forcefully attested that activity misfortunes were because of the deluge of South Indians into the city, as these individuals were removing accessible employment from the neighborhood population. The Shiv Sena's impact over the composed regular workers dependent on this thinking couldn't be stemmed by the customary trade unions. It was uniquely in the mid-1970s that Datta Samant, a clinical specialist turned trade unionist, could put a compelling eye on the Shiv Sena. The techniques utilized by Dr. Samant were like those utilized by the Shiv Sena unions to remove the restriction, to be specific, terrorizing and brutality. Along these lines, the basic component of the worker's organization situation is: multiplication of ideological groups brings about expansion of trade unions. Close by, there is a developing propensity towards unions dependent on territorial, common, and rank lines. There are likewise various unions that are made by people so as to get political mileage or other individual-focused advantages. These unions are autonomous, as they are not affiliated with the federations. These are called enterprise unions, and they have their own strengths and weaknesses.

Inter-Union Rivalries:

Regularly, inter-union rivalries are more grounded than the contentions between man and labour. Additionally, the mushrooming of unions makes it hard for labour to get an appropriate portrayal in the national decision-making bodies, for example, the Indian Labor Conference (ILC) and the Planning Commission. The government, in meeting with the ILC, has set down three conditions for the acknowledgment of national workers' organization places. To start with, the middle must have an all-out enrollment of 5,00,000. Second, its participation must be spread over at any rate four states, and third, the enrollment must be in at least four businesses. Seven such focuses are perceived as national alliances. The unions by and large speak to the lion's share of the unionized labour power, yet given the degree of unionization of the all-out power, the absolute enrollment is a negligible drop in the sea.

Trade Union Membership:

Aside from the issue of discontinuity of unions, the quantity of unionized specialists is also low. It is hard to express the genuine number of individuals from Trade unions as there is no bona fide information on this. The Registrar of Trade Unions is required to keep a record of organization enrollment dependent on the profits collected by the enlisted unions. Be that as it may, these figures are not absolutely dependable as there are instances of underestimation, when unions don't send their profits routinely, and overestimation of participation. The enrollment of unions is confined for the most sectors to the 8 percent in the sorted out area. The pace of unionization in the open segment, which utilizes 70 percent of the sorted out division, is estimated to be associated with 80 percent. Unionization in the private sector is a lot of lower.

Considering these realities, the absolute level of unionized laborers in the organized sector ought to be associated with 50 percent. Enrollment in unions in the unorganised division is low, with the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA), the biggest association, having a participation of around 2,00,000. The all-out level of unionized specialists ought to be associated with 5 percent of the total labour force. The quantity of representatives secured by aggregate compensation understandings amounts to a negligible one percent of the labour force. Simultaneously, the

unionized area of laborers in the sorted out segment is increasingly vocal and can wrest more advantages from their employers, just as the government.

State's Role in Fragmenting the Labour Movement:

After Independence, the government attempted to amend the parity by passing a series of defensive enactments. Subsequently, in 1947, the Industrial Disputes Act (ID Act) was passed, which endeavoured to ensure laborers by controlling some privileges of the businesses, for example, the right of workers to factories arbitrarily, etc. It additionally perceived workers' organizations as a fundamental component of industrial relations. Likewise, various enactments covering minimum wages, rewards, reward-related methods, enrollment strategies, etc, which award security to the laborers, were passed so as to guarantee that the laborers, whose quality was more fragile compared to the aggregate quality of the businesses, could get security and equity. Simultaneously, government mediation, particularly through the labour office, expanded significantly. For instance, the ID Act of 1947 was given to appease the government in debates between labour and management. If this fizzled, the parties were constrained to present their disparities to arbitration. This arrangement was planned to keep laborers from striking and had been taken from the Defense of India Rules passed by the provincial government during the Second World War.

It tends to be contended with equivalent emphasis that the state's approaches were, indeed, planned for blunting the laborers' drives in organizing themselves against the might of capital, as the state, through its organization, anticipated itself as the defender of the laborers. This, truth be told, has made specialists and their workers' organizations progressively subject to the government rather than on their own capacities for sifting through issues with their bosses. To counter this reliance, the state has specifically passed laws which, while conceding security to the labourers, have subverted the workers' organizations.

Issues before the Labour Movement:

An enormous segment of the working population in India is employed in the informal sector. This division has a heterogeneous structure of laborers, and it has been expanding. The issues of laborers in this division are complex and are additionally aggravated because of the near nonexistence of workers' organizations. This has diminished the 'perceivability' of laborers in this segment as they can't eloquent their issues as a system. The greater sector of the bigger worker organizations doesn't necessarily account for being keen on unionizing laborers in the chaotic area. Davala's examination demonstrated that laborers in the disorderly segment established short of what one percent of the total enrollment of the majority of the national workers' organization communities. Accordingly, delegates of labour in the unorganised sector are seldom called to the national arrangement-making bodies, for example, the Planning Commission, ILC, etc, and their inclinations are not considered. To conquer this issue, a portion of the bigger unions in the disorderly segment, for example, SEWA, Indian Federation of Construction Labor, National Forum of Fish workers, Sarva Shramik Sangha, and a portion of the unions of woodland and farming specialists got together to frame another national organization.

In this way, the National Center for Labor was established on May 1st, 1995. Be that as it may, however, the middle's aggregate enrollment is higher than a portion of the perceived national

alliances; it is yet to be welcomed part in the ILC. Simultaneously, labour in the unorganised sector has been developing while that in the organized segment has been on the decrease because of some of the systems received by the large firms. Initially, labour is being supplanted by innovations. Second, the vast majority of these organizations utilize the 'putting out' framework to save expenses. Maybe the most significant explanation behind the movement of this framework is that it gives the huge scope segment more control over the labour process. Rather than assembling the whole item in their own plants, these organizations like to subcontract the assembly of their items to smaller production units in the unorganized sector.

Issues of Marginalized Sections:

In spite of the fact that Trade unions are the best unions for the average worker, they also should be sensitive to the issues of the socially underestimated segments. The two fundamental issues that Trade unions in the composed area have disregarded are the issues of women laborers and of laborers having a place with the socially persecuted groups, for example, the scheduled castes and other marginalized groups, for example, the scheduled tribes(STs). From the 1940s to the 1970s, the number of workers employed in the sector has definitely declined. This has occurred in enterprises which have had elevated levels of unionization, for example, cotton materials in Mumbai, jute in Calcutta, and mines in focal India. In 1948, women comprised 12 percent of the workforce in the cotton material factories in Mumbai, eight percent in the jute plants in Calcutta, and 15 percent in the mines. By 1975, the extent of women laborers had fallen to 2.5 percent in cotton materials, 2 percent in jute, and 5 percent in mines. It was accepted that the legal assurance given to women labourers, for example, maternity leave, arrangement of creches at the working environment, limitation on working on the night shifts, and, on account of mines, working underground made the working long periods of women laborers less adaptable and increased expenses for the management.

Conclusion:

The progressions occurring in the economy through the arrangements of advancement represent the best test to the labour movement in India, as these are prompting labour misfortunes in the sorted out segment while extending the base of the unorganized sector. The fundamental issue for the common laborers in the current circumstance is one of discontinuity. The divisions among the average workers have brought about their vulnerability in checking the antagonistic impacts of globalization and the subsequent advancement of the economy. The worker's organization movement could have balanced the counter labour arrangements yet it has not had the option to do so in light of the fact that it is separated. A unified workers' organization movement is maybe the most pressing need in the current circumstance. Each significant workers' guild in the nation has focused on this; yet, there are, by all accounts, no indications of its rise.

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