COMMISSION PAPER : : REACH THE UNREACHED

Transport is the most important and key sector in the country. If transport is paralysed throughout the country, all the raw material, finished goods and the agricultural products including milk supply will be badly affected. The movement of the people from their residence to the work places will be affected. This will automatically lead to the closure of the industrial establishments and the Offices. If AIRTWF grows to the commanding height to paralyse the entire transport in the country, then we need not beg the Governments either at state level or at the centre, they themselves will come to us for a settlement. That will create a very good impact in the political arena.

The Transport sector in the country is in serious crisis and the workers/operators are in deep distress. This is proved with the success of the last 3 National strikes. These 3 national strikes and the recent transport bundhs in Bihar and Assam also proved that if we take the initiative, then all will participate irrespective of the affiliations.

The RTS Bill 2014 was uploaded in the website of Road Transport Ministry in the month of September 2014. From then onwards, we started our campaign how it is detrimental to the industry, workers, operators and the people at large. At our initiative 3 National strikes took place(30.04.2015, 02.09.2015 & 02.09.2016). All these strikes are successful and the participation in all these strikes is more than 4-5 times to the membership of all the unions. This proves the anger of the workers on the retrograde Bill. Even then, it is to be noted that a large number is still out of the strike action.

During this period the RTS.Bill was revised 4 times. After that a committee has been constituted with 5 states Transport Ministers and some States Transport Commissioners under the Chairman ship of Rajastan State Transport Minister. This committee has met 3 times in various parts of the country and submitted a report. That was also set aside and the M.V.Act Amendment Bill was brought out by the Ministry. When it was placed in the Loksabha in August 2016, serious objections were raised and ultimately that was referred to the scrutiny of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport.

AIRTWF is only the Federation from trade unions appeared before the Standing Committee and submitted our objections. We have organised a National Seminar on 19th & 20th September 2016 in New Delhi. Professors and experts from different sections of transport have attended the Seminar and made their presentations. After six months of the scrutiny, the standing committee has submitted its report to the ministry in February 2017.

Thus the Bill could not come in to effect all this 2 and ½ years. In that way we have succeeded to some extent. Even then the impact the Bill could not reach more than 15% of the affected persons particularly, the drivers of all types of vehicles. This is the biggest weakness in the trade union movement. We should find out the reasons for this and the solution to overcome also.

It is mainly because, the campaign confined to our periphery. Unless and until we go beyond our periphery and create awareness among the affected persons, we could not bring them in to struggles. Hence it is imperative to expand our organisational network. We should reach the unreached. That means, we should go to every nook and corner where transport workers are located without thinking whether our organisation is there or not. This needs the commitment and dedication that we should mobilize the entire work force and the Bill should be defeated. Then only we will go to all corners of the country. Secondly, sufficient cadre is also required.