

**Unite and fight back the retrograde policies to
Protect the Industry and the rights
Make the Strike on 23rd & 24th February-2022 a success**

Dear brothers,

The Taxi drivers are facing serious problems. Expenses like prices of Diesel, essential Commodities, Insurance Premium, etc have gone up so high and the income has not increased proportionately. At the same time, hard earned money is being looted by illegal challans. Harassment by Police and other officials has become the order of the day. To put an end to all these we have to unite and fight back. The Central Trade Unions like CITU, AITUC, INTUC, HMS, AICCTU, AIUTUC etc and many independent All India Federations have called for a general strike against the anti-people, anti-worker, anti-national policies of the Central Government. Participate in the All-India general strike on 23rd & 24th February 2022. Demonstrate strength and make it a historical one.

Worsening Situation: With the entry of UBER/OLA services, the traditional taxi drivers have become the worst victims. Many local Taxi companies have disappeared. Individual Taxi Owner cum drivers are not able to sustain on their own. Majority of the Taxi drivers were compelled to attach their vehicles to those companies. At the initial stage, the companies have offered incentives to encourage the drivers to attach their vehicle to the companies. Gradually all such incentives were withdrawn. Even though they work for 16 hours a day, they are not in a position to meet the EMIs of the vehicle loan. The Government has no control over this App based cab companies. Virtually the companies are squeezing the blood of the drivers. The taxis offering services to the Software company employees, have lost that opportunity due "Work from home" system in the backdrop of Covid Pandemic. Even today that system is continuing. A good number of taxi drivers are thrown on to the roads. Neither the UBER/OLA companies nor the Governments did not extend minimum support to these taxi drivers.

Harassment: It is the responsibility of the Municipal administration to provide sufficient parking places. But miserably failed to do so. For the fault of the Municipal administration Taxi Drivers are subjected to challans imposing hundreds of rupees penalties on the pretext that the Taxi is stopped at an unauthorized place.

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Suicide deaths: Strikes took place in different parts of the country demanding to settle the issues. But in vain. The Covid Pandemic has further aggravated the crisis. Even today a good number of Taxi Rickshaw drivers are in search of other labour works as there is no sufficient demand. The harassment of the Private finance companies for the payment of EMI is on high side. With all these together, some drivers in different places have committed suicides.

Social Security: The Taxi drivers are serving the people at their door step. This is a Public Transport Service. Ironically, they do not have the Social Security. After a prolonged and sustained struggle by AIRTWF, V.V.Giri National Labour Institute was entrusted by the Government to study the problems and to make suggestions. The V.V.Giri Institute has submitted its report with some recommendations. But even after a long period of almost 13 years, the Governments did not pay any attention to that report.

What is the solution? As long as we are divided and keep silence, nobody will come to our risk. We have voted the Government to power. After coming to power, they are serving the Corporates at the cost of our lives. We should not tolerate this crime. It is our right to catch hold off the elected Governments. The victory of the farmers united and sustained struggle is before us. By making the strike on 23rd & 24th February-2022 a success, we should send a warning signal to the Government that whether our demands are addressed or to face more vigorous struggles in future.

DEMANDS

1. Supply Food grains @10 kgs per person till March 2022 without insisting Ration Card.
2. Payment of Rs.7,500/ per month to all the unorganised Transport workers till March 2022.
3. Withdraw enhanced excise duty in the year 2020 on Diesel/Petrol and roll back the revised prices by the Oil Companies since 07th June 2020.
4. Bring Petrol & Diesel under the purview of GST duly compensating the loss of revenue to the states.
5. State Governments should make arrangements for loan through Nationalised Banks for purchase of new vehicles to the self-employed.

6. Steps shall be taken to control the harassment by the Private Finance Companies.
7. Insurance premiums are enhanced irrationally by the IRDA. It should be controlled and Trade Union representatives also shall be included in the Committee. Transparency shall be maintained.
8. Enact Social Security Act for the unorganised Transport Workers duly implementing the recommendations of V.V.Giri National Labour Institute for the appointment letters, applicability of Acts.
9. Withdraw the Amended M.V. Act 2019 and discuss with all the stakeholders for a better and proper alternative policy.
10. Withdraw anti Working-Class Labour Codes.
11. All the unorganised Road Transport Workers including self-employed shall be recorded in the registers of labour Department.
12. All the unorganised Road Transport Workers including self-employed shall be covered under all the labour laws. Suitable amendments shall be carried out accordingly.
13. Harassment of Police and other Officials should be stopped forthwith.
14. Drivers attached to App based companies like Uber/Ola shall be considered as their workers. Suitable amendments are to be made in the M.V.Act/M.T.W.Act

ALL INDIA ROAD TRANSPORT WORKERS' FEDERATION (AIRTWF)