



# ALL INDIA BANK EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION

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## WHY THIS STRIKE ON 12<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2026 WHY WE SHOULD MAKE IT A TOTAL SUCCESS

### Who has given the call for Strike on 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2026?

Central Trade Unions have given the call for All India General Strike on the 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2026. AIBEA has welcomed this call and has given the call for all our members to join this strike.

### Is it true that only some central trade unions have given this call?

No. There are 11 Central Trade Unions in our country. Out of these 11 CTUs, 10 Central Trade Unions belonging to all political hues and views have given this call for strike. Only one Central Trade Union, namely, BMS – Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh has not given the call. Everyone knows that BMS is the trade union wing of BJP. Obviously, we cannot expect BMS to join the strike against their own Party's Government. Except BMS, all other Central Trade Unions have given the call.

### Which are the 10 Central Trade Unions that have given the call for strike?

The following 10 Central Trade Unions have given the strike call.

INTUC, AITUC, HMS, CITU, AIUTUC, TUCC, SEWA, AICCTU, LPF, UTUC.

In addition to these Central Trade Unions, various independent, non-affiliated sectoral Trade Unions Federations have also given the strike call.

### It is said that farmers are joining this strike. Is it true?

Yes, Samyuktha Kisan Morcha which represents so many organisations of farmers, peasants, agriculturists and agricultural workers are joining this strike.

### How many are likely to join this strike on 12<sup>th</sup> February?

It is estimated, as per the experience of the previous Strike on 9<sup>th</sup> July, 2025, that about 25 to 30 crores ( 250 to 300 million) of workers and farmers will join the strike.

### Strike is the last resort of the trade unions. Why the issues are not discussed with the Government and sorted out?

Yes, true. Dialogue, discussions and negotiations should be tried and only as a last resort, we should go on strike. But, unfortunately Government is not consulting or discussing with the central trade unions on any issue. Indian Labour Conference has not been held for the past 10 years. When Government is not willing to talk to the Unions, how to discuss with them. Hence strike is the only way.

### **It is alleged that this strike is a political strike. Is it so?**

If changing the labour laws is a political decision, then the strike against that political decision is also a political action. Government is run by a political party. The Government and the Party feel that for India to grow, there should be Ease of Doing Business. So they are bringing labour reforms and new Labour Codes to help the employers, Corporates and capitalists. Hence the new Labour Code is a political decision. When you oppose, it is equally political.

When the working class will be affected by political decision of the Government, it is the political task of the trade unions to defend the class interest of the workers. Government is supporting the employer class. Trade Unions are supporting the working class. We cannot escape this class politics.

But it is not a political strike because it is not decided or directed by any political party. It is a united strike by all the trade unions.

If joining the strike is politics, then, not joining the strike is also another type of politics – to support the government.

### **Trade unions and politics cannot be separated?**

Trade union is a class organisation, representing the working class and against the ruling class. Trade union is meant to prevent exploitation of the workers and to fight for their betterment. So, fighting against the policy of the Government or the ruling party becomes unavoidable.

But what is important is that workers and employees should not be divided on the lines of political parties. This will weaken the bargaining capacity of the unions. Employees can be in any political party but when it comes to trade unions, all should remain united under one banner so that our struggle will be effective.

### **Why AIBEA is against this present Modi Government?**

This is a wrong perception. We are not against this Government. It is a democratically elected Government. As Bank employees, all have the free choice to belong to any political party. But, when it comes to trade union, they are united under the banner of AIBEA.

AIBEA has fought against all the Governments when they attacked bank employees – from Jawaharlal Nehru Government to Indira Gandhi, Morarji Desai, V P Singh, A B Vajpayee, Rajiv Gandhi, Narasimha Rao and Manmohan Singh Government. Now, Modi Government is attacking the labour rights of working class and so we are opposing it.

Vajpayee Government brought the bank privatization bill. We fought against it. Manmohan Singh Government also wanted to privatise the Banks and AIBEA fought against it. Now Modi Government is talking of bank privatization and we are opposing it. If tomorrow Modi Government will announce that they will not privatise the Banks, we will welcome it and appreciate. If Modi government will agree for 5 days banking, we will applaud them.

So, it is wrong to say that AIBEA is against Modi Government only. This is a deliberate false propaganda. Bank employees know the truth.

## **In Banks, there are other Unions. Whether all are joining the strike?**

In the UFBU, there are 9 unions of bank employees and officers. Out of these 9 unions, except 2 unions i.e. NOBW and NOBO, who are affiliated to BMS, all the other 7 Unions viz. AIBEA, AIBOC, NCBE, AIBOA, BEFI, INBEF and INBOC have welcomed the decision of the Central Trade Unions. They have issued a joint statement and given solidarity demonstration programme also.

In addition, AIBEA, AIBOA and BEFI have given call to join the strike. So members of these three unions in the public sector banks, private sector banks, foreign banks and Regional Rural Banks will go on strike.

We are also happy that employees in Insurance sector will also join the strike.

## **It is observed that AIBEA is joining all the calls of the Central Trade Unions. Why ?**

All the Unions believe in unity and struggle. But in our country, unfortunately, working class has been divided. AITUC was the first Central Trade Union that was formed in 1920. Some people say that AITUC was formed by Communist Party of India. In fact Communist Party of India was started only in 1926. AITUC was started six years before that. After independence, trade union movement has been divided and various Central Trade unions have come up.

They were not moving together. But in the last three decades, it is a welcome development that CTUs are moving together and organizing united struggles. Till BJP came to power in 2014, even BMS was part of all the joint struggles and strikes.

When CTUs are moving together and organizing struggles on demands of the working class, AIBEA is part of all these strikes. Because, as a basic policy, AIBEA feels that it has to be part of the mainstream of trade union movement in our country.

That is why when Central Trade Unions jointly give any call for strike, AIBEA is always participating in these strikes. From 1991, in the post-liberalisation period, AIBEA has participated in all the 25 General Strikes, because the demands pertained to the cause of working class.

In AIBEA, we are proud about this and we shall continue to be so in future also. We strongly believe that only when the general trade union movement advances, bank employees trade union movement also can progress.

## **Whether AIBEA is affiliated to any Central Trade Union ?**

No. AIBEA is an independent trade union Federation, not affiliated to any Central Trade Union. We are closer to AITUC, because right from 1946, AITUC has been supporting and helping AIBEA. But if major CTUs come forward and merge together to consolidate the trade union movement, AIBEA may also consider to affiliate itself with such merged CTU. United working class is the need of the day.

### **But, in the banking sector also, you have different trade Unions; Why they are not united ?**

Everyone knows, AIBEA is the first national trade union federation in the banking industry, formed as early as 1946, 80 years ago. But later, many unions have come up. Today we should be happy that we have the United Forum of Bank Unions which consists of 9 bank unions – 5 workmen unions and 4 officers associations. This itself is a positive development.

Notably, Officers and Workmen Unions are moving together. It is a significant development. UFBU has become role model for unity and united actions of bank employees irrespective of cadre.

One union for one industry is our objective. We shall work for the same. But in the present circumstances, the significance of UFBU should not be underestimated.

### **What are your objections in the new Labour Codes? How it will affect bank employees ?**

First of all, the main question is whether the new labour codes are beneficial for the general working class. What is not good for the working class, cannot be good for the bank employees. 10 Central Trade Unions feel that the new labour codes are retrograde. Even BMS has said that some of the provisions of the labour codes are to be changed. So, it is clear that new labour codes are anti-workers. When workers are affected, bank employees will also be affected. Labour rights are common to all unions.

### **What are the changes that affect the workers and trade unions?**

In India, working class is very huge. About 60 crores/600 million workers are there. Hence trade union is most needed in India. Due to the struggles of the working class, Indian Trade Unions Act 1926 was achieved and till today this law is helping workers to form trade unions. Under the new labour code, forming trade unions will be rendered difficult.

While in-house leadership is preferable, in every union, particularly, in the unorganized sector, we need to have outside leaders to lead the union. But now restrictions are brought in this regard. At a time when unorganized workers have to be organized to fight against their exploitation, these restrictions will create problems.

Then, the main purpose of the trade union is to achieve collective bargaining to improve the conditions of the workers and for that strike is an important tool. In the new labour code, going on strike is made difficult. Thus the purpose of an effective trade union will be defeated if the new labour codes are accepted.

### **What are the other negative provisions ?**

We can easily observe how this new labour code is anti-worker and in favour of employers. For Unions the right to strike is made stringent. Unions have to give 60 days notice for a strike.

But, for the employer, he can declare a Lock Out or Lay off or retrenchment in his factory without permission of the Government.

Then, employer will be given freedom to increase working hours. When the demand is to ensure worklife balance, this new code will allow management to increase working hours. Thus, the new labour code is totally one-sided and in favour of the employers.

**Are there any other adverse provisions? What about Fixed Term Jobs ?**

Yes, there is one more important issue. All of us know that India has large number of young people. So, providing jobs for them is a very important issue. Already unemployment is very huge in our country. Already, contract jobs, outsourcing of jobs, etc, have affected permanent jobs. Now, in this labour code, Government wants to allow Fixed Term Employment. FTE will kill the regular jobs. This will seriously affect the future of our unemployed youth. How can any country progress by destroying the future of youth.

**But, Government claims that new labour code will ensure that Gratuity will be paid even after one year service. Is it not good ?**

Gratuity is a superannuation benefit to be paid at the time of retirement. Trade Unions are demanding increase in the ceiling on gratuity. This has not been done by the government. But they say that under the new code, gratuity will be paid after one year service. This clearly means that jobs in future will be for shorter periods. This is thoroughly anti-youth.

**What about pension scheme, especially the UPS ?**

NPS and UPS, both are contributory schemes. Employees have to contribute every month. But what we are demanding is extension of non-contributory and defined pension scheme (OPS) for bank employees who joined after April, 2010. We are pursuing our demand.

**It is claimed by government that the new labour code is beneficial to all workers, is it so?**

Government will claim such things because they have brought the new labour codes. No trade union demanded it. Only the employers and capitalists wanted liberal and flexible labour rules. Government wants to help the factory owners.

Earlier, labour laws were applicable to any factory or company where 100 workers are employed. Now, this has been increased to 300. This means that in factories, companies, shops or any establishment, if the number of workers are less than 300, no labour law will apply.

By this, in more than 75% of the factories will be out of the purview of labour laws. Will it not result in further exploitation of workers?

**What about minimum wages? Any rule is prescribed under the new Code?**

Indian Labour Conference in 1951 recommended Minimum Wage, Fair Wage and Living Wage. In India no worker is paid Living Wage. We can say that some sections of workers, like bank employees are being better wages which is somewhat like Fair wage. That is why, everywhere the cry of the unions is that atleast the minimum wage should be paid. Central Trade Unions have been demanding minimum wage of atleast Rs. 26,000.

But Government has not accepted this demand. Now in the Labour Code, they are talking of Floor-level Minimum Wage, which is now **Rs. 178 per day**, that is around Rs. 5400 per month. How can any worker survive with this income?

**Government says that under the new Code, all workers have to be given appointment orders. Is it not a welcome step?**

Even under the existing rules, all employers have to keep the records of all the workers. But this is being violated by employers. Instead of inspecting the records and taking action against the erring employers, in the new Code, all inspections have been removed.

Further, for the gig workers, where the employer is invisible, who will give the appointment order. Hence, the claims are tall but reality is different.

**There is a claim that women workers will be treated equally, what is this?**

Today, while male workers can be employed in night shifts, women workers cannot be compelled to work in night shifts. Under the new Code, women workers also can be asked to work in the night shifts. Is it going to be equality or a penalty, any one can imagine.

**In addition to new labour Codes, the Government has also published its draft Labour Policy – Shram Sakthi Niti. What is this?**

Yes, last year, in November, 2025, suddenly, Government published in its website their draft of new Labour and Employment Policy. Even Central Trade Unions were not consulted or informed! This new draft Policy says that labour is beyond economic consideration as per ancient Manu Smriti, etc. It says that labour is the duty and dharma of the worker. This only means slavery of worker that you have to give your labour without expecting anything in return.

Why there is no dharma for the factory owner to produce goods without expecting any profit?

**What could be the agenda of the Government to propose all these things?**

The agenda is very simple. Employers want liberal rules. So, government has promised them Ease of Doing Business. The result is the new labour codes.

Government should be common and neutral to workers and employers. In fact, government is expected to be little more sympathetic to the working class. But unfortunately, the new labour codes are one-sided and favouring the employer class.

**That is why we have to oppose the new Labour Codes. Let us make the General Strike 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2026 a total success to register our protest. Let us join the 250 million workers and farmers and make the strike a success.**

**C.H. VENKATACHALAM  
GENERAL SECRETARY**