

Trade Union Movement in India.

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I. Introduction

Trade Union Movement in India is not a new idea. From the Marxian to the Gandhian, move violently to non violence, howlingness to achievement Trade Union Movement has been gradually developed till date. It is mentionable that, in industrially developed countries, there are every Trade Unionism in the fields of Agriculture, Industry, Bus and Lorry, Handy Workers and Labours, and Edu-Professionals etc. Their Trade Unionism had made a great impact on the social, political and economic life, while in India; Trade Unionism can be seen only in the field of Industrial area. As long as history of human society various conflicts between workers group and employers group have been lasting in the form of strike, gherao, lock out, pen down etc against exploitation. To make people strengthen in a democratic way to asset their demands over their contribution to an organization, people associate themselves in a group and constitute a Union for common welfare. Thus Trade Union is an instrument of defence formed by employees against exploitations to protect themselves from economic as well as social interests. This is a complex institution with a numerous facts like social, economic, political and psychological. Trade Union provides services as an agent of workers and working classes at large. In this epistle thought on Trade Union Movement in India, a brief discussion is made on stipulations in relation to Trade Unionism.

Trade Union: An organized association of **workers** in a trade, group of trades, profession or industrial groups formed to protect and further their rights and interest. The flow chart of workers strength as
Workers → Trade Union → Federation → National Conference → ILO.

Trade Association: An association or an organization founded and funded by industrially trade group, businessmen that operate in some specific industry. Their main focus is to collaborate between companies, or standardization, associations producing services, such as producing conferences, networking or charitable events or associations of non-profit organizations governed by bylaws. The flow chart of workers strength as
Traders → Trade Association → Chamber of Commerce → FICC → ILO.

Craft Union: When workers engaged in a single occupation and form a union is called Craft Union. For example, all the workers working in cotton textile industry or its allied possess similar characteristics together form a Craft Union.

Industrial Labour Union: This is the grassroots level of Trade Unionism.

Staff Union: A combination of both Craft Union and Industrial Labour Union is called Staff Union.

General Union: It is the form of union that comprises workers of various industries and assembles of different skill-groups and different occupations. Whatever the forms of Unions, it is Trade Union, an association of employees for the primary purpose to strengthen their bargaining position and raise their claims for better working conditions.

The need for Trade Unionism:

The need for Trade Unionism since the human set up has been felt necessary in the following ways-

- To provide job security to the workers group working in different industries.
- To safe guard workers common interest.
- To bring the situation in participation of decision making.
- To communicate better industrial relation among workers, employers and system groups.
- To bring an industrial relation with win-win- situation through collective bargaining with the union leaders' representiveness.

Gandhiji comments, Trade Union movement as a reformist and economic organization and considers capital and labour are equally parts and parcels of an organization.(Known as Sorvodya)

History of Trade Union Movement in India:

In India, Trade Union movement has been considered as the product of industrial development since the First World War 1914-18. Before the time Indian workers were poor and did not have strong union to effort legal fight against any exploiters. At that time they used to follow the guidelines of Government of India's Factory Act 1881 which was not perfect to protect the interests of employees. The system of collective bargaining was totally absent. In several industries, the workers went on strikes every now and then to secure wage increase. In that mean time, Labour leader Narayan Meghaji Lokkande led a labour movement and formed "Bombay Mill Hands Association" and succeeded a weekly holiday system for Bombay Mill Owners Association. In 1918 Trade Union Movement in India became more organized and formed varieties of unions e.g. Indian Collie or Employees Association, Indian Seamen's Union, Railway Men's Union, Port Trust Employees Union etc. Meanwhile Gandhiji formed The Textile Labour Association in 1920 for fulfilling the demands of spinners and weavers society. More over the different labour unions and their representatives from all over India met in Bombay in 1920 and established the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) led by Lala Lajpat Rai. With the days passed, Trade Union Movement in India gradually strengthened and became national figure in leading of periodic strikes, Gherao, picketing and boycotts etc in contrary of different work fields for prevention and settlement of industrial disorders.

The historic background of Bombay Mill Case of 1920 over which Madras High Court witnessed Madras Labour Union forbidding by an interim injunction against The Laborers' strike which was pondered about some necessary legislation for protecting the sustained Trade Union in India. As a result Mr. N.M. Joshi, the then General Secretary of All India Trade Union Congress moved a resolution in the Central Legislative Assembly in 1921 recommending the Government to introduce legislation for the registration and protection of Trade Union's existence in India. The resolution was strongly protested by Bombay Mills Owners and it took a long bed rest on the table of the Central Legislative Assembly. While in the year of 1924, many communist leaders were arrested and prosecuted against aggressive and lengthy strikes. From the period numbers of Indian working classes including Peasants Party united and demanded Indian government through the AITUC to pass an act to protect the interest of all India workers group which results **The Trade Union Act 1926** in India. More over different situations in different times formed many Unions and Federations, which of some as listed below.

- All India Trade Union Congress 1920
- Red Trade Union Congress 1931,
- National Federation of Labour 1933,
- Red Trade Union Congress merged with AITUC in 1935,
- Indian Federation of Labour 1941 etc.

The Eighteenth Session of the All-India Trade Union Congress led by Suresh Chandra Banerjee, President of the Congress, was held at Bombay on 28 and 29 September 1940; The session constituted a landmark in the history of the Indian Trade Union Movement is that it witnessed the restoration of complete unity in Indian Trade Union from the merging of the National Trades Union Federation in the All-India Trade Union Congress. A Tripartite Labour Conference was convened in 1942 to provide common platform for discussion between employees and employers. Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC) was formed in 1947 to settle the industrial disputes in democratic and peaceful methods.

Moreover, the Indian Federation of Labour formed in 1949, Hind Mazdoor Sabha in 1948 and United Trade Union Congress formed in 1949 in the national level and recognized by the government of India as to serve national and International conference.

Trade Union Movement does not delimit its operation within Bombay vicinity nor Delhi only. With the passage of time the movement spreads all across the country and convenient groups welcome the organism of Trade Union Movement from different parts of India. In state of Assam, the garden men's forum, Assam Chah Mazdoor Sangha, claims for their minimum wages from their employers according to the rules of The Plantation Labour Act, 1951, which regulates the wages of tea-garden workers, their duty hours and the amenities, states that the management is supposed to provide housing, drinking water, education, health care, child care facilities, accident cover and protective equipment. The government of Assam has fixed Rs.169 as the minimum daily wage for tea plantation workers and asked the commissioner and secretary of labour and employment to execute the same in other fields of industry also. But all the tea garden owners have not equally implemented the rules accordingly as the statement claims. For their negligence a huge agitation has been sustained at present.

On the other hand the apex body National Council of Central Trade Union is formed in 1971 by unitized of AITUC, INTUC and HMS (Hind Mazdoor Sabha).

At present there are 14 Central Trade Unions and various registered Federations like All India Bank Employees Association, All India Mine Workers Federation etc functioning in various fields of industries. Thus Trade Union Movement in India has been developed and changed the scenario over time coping up the situations and conflicts.

II. Conclusion:

In a democratic country like India, workers unionism is immensely required to execute their rational demands. A well organized labour unionism may change our country's economic as well as political scenario. For instance, Kejriwal led AAP in Delhi State and Akhil Gogoi led KMSS in Assam State are right examples for these days. It is seen that some young personnel may take great opportunity during the crisis of union leadership. The multi party systems of our country also for the reason that leads union movement against sustained government and employers exercising the juvenile energy of Trade Union where democracy of India becomes paralyze. The conclusion ends with the right democracy and right violence in a right way against right demands and does not advocate vice-versa.

A man's contribution to an industry can never be less than the contribution of an industry to a man