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Workers convene to voice concerns

Dhamini D

Bengaluru : Following the rally held on January 30, the Yazaki workers, under the aegis of the All India Central Council of Trade Union (AICCTU), held a press conference at the Press Club of Bengaluru on Saturday and reiterated their demand to reinstate the terminated employees.

The workers have protested in front of the factory's gates since December 26, 2022. They were unable to punch out after their shift on the night of December 13, 2022, and received a termination notice.

Most of these employees are intra-state migrants from the Karnataka districts of Chikkamagaluru, Belgaum, and Gulbarga.

One of the members of the Karnataka General Labour Union (Yazaki unit) expressed, "These workers have all been working continuously for various periods extending to three years. They are also denied other benefits extended to the permanent workmen, including production incentives, leave facilities, bonuses, shoes/uniforms, etc."

He recounted offering solidarity with the 53 terminated workers. An additional 100 employees were fired. The press release stated, "Due to the pressure built by the movement, management was forced to propose a conciliation with the Deputy Labour Commissioner (DLC) that all the workers will be taken back." Currently, their demand is reinstating of all the workers immediately, as assured.

Budget 2023 : Investing in skills of tomorrow

Kannika

Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman, with her focus on seven key areas, earmarked a budget, that is poised to make India self-reliant and inclusive. The Union Budget 2023, tabled on February 1, aims at constructing modern and effective infrastructure that includes the physical and financial infrastructure to support the development of the nation. To promote business and generate jobs, the government has allocated Rs 5.54 lakh crore for infrastructure development. In addition, the government has made plans to improve existing infrastructure and build new ones, such as roads, ports, and airports.

Development with inclusion for aspirational India, being the emphasis of the FM, she prioritised rural development to lower poverty and raise living



The Budget document

Business league

standards. The government has allotted Rs 14.7 lakh crore for agriculture and rural development to improve rural education and healthcare, build infrastructure, and improve farmers' livelihoods. The government has also made plans to advance gender equality and increase the number of women in the workforce.

A budget titled Reinvigorating Human Capital is devoted to enhancing human capital through expenditures on

healthcare and education. To ensure that all citizens have access to high-quality education and healthcare, the government has set aside Rs 93,000 crore for education and Rs 35,000 crore for healthcare. It has also proposed to build new medical schools and renovate existing ones.

The budget line item "innovation and R&D" is focused on encouraging innovation and research and development to create new products and services that can

stimulate economic growth. To encourage innovation and entrepreneurship, the government has set aside Rs 50,000 crores for research and development. The government has plans to upgrade existing innovation hubs and create new ones.

The principle of 'Minimum Government and Maximum Governance' aims to cut bureaucratic hassles and boost productivity. The government has announced plans to streamline regulations and processes to lessen the burden

on businesses and citizens. In addition, the government has allocated Rs 2,000 crores for digital projects to improve governmental operations and curtail corruption. This includes reducing bureaucracy, streamlining government procedures, and fostering accountability and transparency.

With an increase in the exemption limits and higher tax rebates, the Budgets seeks to boost consumer demand as well as increase tax compliance. To improve the effectiveness of the tax system, the government has also set aside Rs 4,000 crore for tax administration.

The allocation of Rs 14.7 lakh crore for agriculture and rural development strives to raise the standard of living of farmers and rural residents by improvising rural education and healthcare and building infrastructure.

ODOP to snowball local to the global scene

Ishika Bhattacharjee

Union Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman in her Budget 2023 speech, encouraged the state governments to set up a 'Unity Mall' to promote the development of a state's own 'One District, One Product' (ODOP) and its handicrafts.

The Uttar Pradesh government first launched the 'ODOP' scheme in 2018, inspired by PM Modi's 'Vocal for Local' vision, to enhance the commodities borne of Indian tradition. The Central government later adopted it. The scheme attempts to increase access to local goods

while providing capital at low interest to the producers. In the 2023 budget speech, the Centre said it would now promote the scheme actively.

With the launch of the Unity Malls, the goal was to increase the popularity and accessibility of local goods

while raising the income of local craftsmen. Under this scheme, each state must determine each district's primary product and assist with its production, storage, and marketing.

Addressing the Parliament, Sitharaman said,



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"States will be encouraged to set a 'Unity Mall' in the state capital or the most popular tourist destination in the state for the promotion and sale of 'One District, One product' and GI products and other handicrafts."

Speaking about the opportunities that this scheme will provide, she further said, "The country offers an immense attraction for domestic as well as foreign tourists. There is a large potential to be tapped into tourism. The sector holds huge opportunities for jobs and entrepreneurship for youth in particular."

'Must preserve NE languages right away'

Yachi Jebisow

Northeast India is one of the most linguistically diverse places on earth. Unfortunately, at least 150 out of 200 of these languages are endangered. There is an urgent need to study them and describe them scientifically. This is needed to create teaching materials and writing systems for endangered languages," said linguist Dr Vijay D'Souza.

A three-day international conference was held at Gauhati University in Assam from February 3 to 5, organised by the North East Indian Linguistic Society (NEILS), started by a group of Indian and foreign researchers in 2006. The NEILS conference, now in its 12th edition, is conducted every two years.

"It would be ideal if people from the Northeast did their research on their languages, ideally in collaboration with national and international scholars. Therefore, the purpose of this conference is to bring linguists from all over the world together to share ideas so that senior researchers may mentor younger ones," said Dr D'Souza.

Tuskers revered yet victimised

Jeba Janet

Allowing animals to live without being tortured or imprisoned is just as important as refusing to murder them, stated Alok Hirswala Gupta, a lawyer, researcher, and activist at a forum while discussing the potential for developing a secular, constitutional case for animal rights that aims to preserve both human and nonhuman animal dignity.

The Alternative Law Forum organised a discussion, "A secular constitutional argument for animal



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rights in India" on February 3. Hirswala spoke about his work on a captive elephant research project with the wildlife rescue and rehabilitation centre.

Even though elephants

are a protected species, India had one of the highest populations of captive elephants in the world in 2022, with just under 2200. "Right is not just (not) to be killed, but to live," Hirswala said, describing how the temple elephants were imprisoned in rooms with no windows, isolated from everyone except the pandit, and unable to walk more than a few inches. However, the elephants are revered in the temple as gods, he said.

Sarla: A home turned art gallery

Angeline Cluadia

A home transformed into an art space, providing a room for art exhibitions, studio practice and workshops for children, has opened at Sompura gate, Sarjapur road.

Sarla is a home-turned-art space filled with painting exhibitions of fields and livestock by a local farmer and artist Subramani J. It is an initiative taken by artists Nancy Popp, Seema Jain, and Advithi Emmi along with Suresh Kumar G, who also runs Sarjapur Curries farm.

Emmi said that Sarla is a community centre where individual artists and their work will be displayed in the exhibition area.

"It was very difficult for us to reach the urban art community, as it is very far and the timings do not match, but from the time we've started this, we see people coming from the Bangalore art community regularly and watching the shows; so there is a chance for us to do the artwork here itself," explained Subramani J, an artist and farmer working at Sarla.