

INDIA: Trade unions call for 'Bharat Bandh' on January 8: All you need to know

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Bharat Bandh on 8 January: Workers will protest against central government's "anti-labour" policies.

New Delhi: Ten central trade unions like INTUC, AITUC, HMS, CITU, AIUTUC, TUCC, SEWA, AICCTU, LPF, UTUC along with various sectoral independent federations and associations have called a nationwide strike on January 8, 2020.

Nearly 25 crore people are said to be taking part in this all-India strike to protest against the government's "anti-people" policies. Here's all you need to know:

* Banking, transport and other services across the country are likely to be hit on Wednesday due to the strike. Several banks have already informed stock exchanges about the Wednesday strike and its impact on banking services. Banking services like deposit and withdrawal, cheque clearing and instrument issuance are expected to be impacted,

* Other than banking, transport and other key services are also likely to be disrupted in many states due to the nationwide strike call.

* The central government has asked public sector undertakings to dissuade their employees from participating in the strike and advised them to prepare a contingency plan to ensure smooth functioning of the enterprises. "Any employee going on strike in any form, including protest, would face the consequences which, besides deduction of wages, may also include appropriate disciplinary action," said an office memorandum issued by the government.

* "We expect participation of not less than 25 crore of working people in the forthcoming National General Strike on January 8, 2020, to be followed by many more actions seeking reversal of the anti-worker, anti-people, anti-national policies of the Government. The Ministry of Labour has failed to assure on any of the demands of workers which called a meeting on January 2, 2020. The attitude of the government is that of contempt towards labour as we construe from its policies and actions," the 10 central trade unions (CTUs) said in a joint statement.

* About 60 organisations of students and elected office bearers of some universities have also decided to join the strike with an agenda to raise voice against increased fee structure and commercialization of education, it said.

* Joint platform of more than 175 farmers and agricultural workers unions will extend its support to workers' demands and observe January 8 as Gramin Bharat Bandh along with their charter of demands.

* In West Bengal, trade unions affiliated to Left and other parties had called for a bandh against the economic policies of the BJP-led government at the Centre. However, the state government said it will not support any bandh.

- TOI