

## **INDIA : Ten unions on strike on Sep 2; essential services may be hit**

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**New Delhi:** Essential services are likely to be impacted tomorrow with 10 central trade unions going ahead with one-day nationwide strike to protest against changes in labour laws even as BJP-backed BMS and National Front of Indian Trade Unions have pulled out.

These ten unions claim a combined membership of 15 crore workers in public as well as private sector enterprises including banks and insurance companies and they have decided to go ahead with the strike after their talks with a group of senior ministers earlier this month failed to yield desired results.

Union leaders said the strike will affect the functioning of essential services like transport and supply of power, gas and oil, even as Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS) claimed that power, oil and gas supplies will not be affected as a large number of public sector workers in these areas would not participate in the industrial action.

As many as 12 central trade unions had given this strike call over a 12-points charter of demands, including withdrawal of the proposed anti-worker amendments in labour laws and stopping the disinvestment and privatisation of PSUs.

BMS later pulled out saying the government needed to be given time to fulfil its promises on the basic demands. The National Front of Indian Trade Unions will also stay out.

Speaking on behalf of other unions, All India Trade Union Secretary D L Sachdev said that all ten central trade unions recognised by government will go on strike tomorrow.

He claimed that "many state units of BMS will also join the strike".

Earlier in the day, BMS General Secretary Virjesh Upadhyay told reporters that "a large number of public sector undertakings who are members of central trade unions are not going on strike tomorrow.

"Thus, the services like power, oil and gas supply will not be affected. Big PSUs like NTPC, NHPC and PowerGrid will not observe strike tomorrow. Therefore, the power supply will not be affected".

Upadhyay said the National Front of Indian Trade Unions has also decided not to go on strike and wants to give some time to government, at least till the Winter Session of the Parliament, for fulfilling its assurances like uniform minimum wages across the board and enhancing wage ceiling for bonus.

- PTI