

FMRAI News

Organ of Federation of Medical and Sales Representatives' Associations of India

60-A Charu Avenue ■ Kolkata 700 033 ■ www.fmrai.org ■ E-mail: fmrainews@gmail.com



FMRAI

extends revolutionary greetings to its members and news readers on International Workers' Day. We call upon to make the General Strike of 20th May a historic success.

Scrap four Labour Codes.



In one of the biggest ever gathering of the working class on 20th April, the rally in the Brigade Parade Ground in Kolkata called by CITU, AIKS, AIAWU and West Bengal Slum Development Association, called for united action against regressive and anti worker policies of the government. The rally gave clarion call for scrapping the labour codes and total success of 20th May General Strike.

Big battle 2.0 launched against Sun Pharma

The numero uno pharma company in India, is also the frontrunner when it comes to unfair labour practices and various unlawful operational activities. Sun Pharmaceuticals had an infamous history of trampling rights of employees of the company they acquire. This company rose to the charts of turnover in the pharma industry through various mergers and acquisitions of hitherto existing companies of India. While it savoured the fruits of labour of

the workers in these companies, the Sun management also immediately snapped the SPEs working in these companies from their legal, trade union and bargaining rights. In 2014, after acquiring Ranbaxy, management refused to continue the existing service conditions, declining to implement the order of the Punjab & Haryana High Court on maintaining status-quo with regard to service condition at the time of transfer of employment.

► Turn P 2



■ Demonstration against SUN in Kolkata

Prolonged fight in ICPA paved way for gains

FMRAI placed Charter of Demands dated 06.09.2011 to the ICPA management on behalf of the Sales Promotion Employees working for ICPA for the period 2011 to 2013, but the management refused to negotiate on the said COD. On failure of conciliation proceedings, Additional Commissioner of Labour, Mumbai referred the industrial dispute for adjudication by the Industrial Tribunal, at Mumbai IT No. 11 of 2013. Hon'ble Industrial Tribunal was pleased to pass the award on 20th October, 2023, in favour of the Sales Promotion Employees. Most of the demands raised by FMRAI were revised with effect from 1st April 2011, with new Pay Scale, Variable Dearness Allowance, Fixed Dearness Allowance, Special Dearness Allowance, HRA and other allowances. ICPA management challenged the award before the



■ Settlement signed between FMRAI and ICPA management in Mumbai High Court.

High court of Bombay, on preliminary issues and with a plea that the management cannot bear the huge cost arising out of arrears from 2011 onwards. However, later management initiated discussions with our union to settle the issue amicably, in the interlocutory phase. Finally, on 25th April 2025 consent terms were

signed by FMRAI and the management of ICPA, with 43 SPEs including those who retired in between got the benefits. Hon'ble High court was pleased to dispose off the Writ Petition on submission of the consent terms on 30th April 2025. We extend revolutionary greetings to all those field workers who withstood the prolonged battle of 14

years to achieve the right of collective bargaining without succumbing to the trap of performance-based increments, allurements, threats. ICPA field workers ultimately gained recognition of their union FMRAI, collective bargaining right and quite a fair rise in their wages for the period 2011 to 2013.

EDITORIAL

Oppose labour codes: make 20th May strike historic

The country will be the witness to another historic strike of the working class on 20th of May. The Labour Codes have been finalized and is now waiting to be promulgated any day. The Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM) as well as the Joint Platform of Agricultural Workers' Unions (JPAWU) have decided to support the General Strike and mobilise the farmers and agricultural workers on their demands in actions on the strike day. Along with all other sectoral federation of workers, the Sales Promotion Employees under the banner of FMRAI will be participating in the strike and will be working towards the success of the strike as if it is their own strike. The four labour codes, The Wage Code 2019 notified on 8th August 2019, The Social Security Code 2020, The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code 2020 and The Industrial relation Code 2020, all notified on 29th September 2020, have not only purportedly subsumed the existing 29 labour laws but have fundamentally deprived the workers of their rights to facilitate oppression and exploitation by the employers. The right to form trade unions, right to strike, abilities for workers and unions to raise and resolve disputes through official mechanisms, permanency of jobs, have all been either substantially altered or simply removed from the codes rendering the workers in helpless conditions in front of the juggernaut of the corporates. The Fixed Terms of Employment (FTE) system will not only cause the workers to lose their jobs, it will also reduce the propensity of joining or forming unions in a significant way. One major tactic that the government seems to have adopted is that the class conflict between the labour and capital which forms the basis of the trade union movement worldwide has been downplayed and in fact made to appear as a regressive element in the entire employer employee relation. This is apparent from the statement by none other than the Prime Minister of the country- "Until there are family sentiments among workers and employers, the feeling of belongingness does not arise. If the employer thinks that he feeds someone and if the Labour thinks his sweat is running in employers' world, then I do not think that the business will work smoothly. However, if family sentiments exist, if the sorrow of a worker ruins nights of the employer and a worker does not sleep in the night, or some loss for the factory, with the arising of such family sentiments, the journey of development cannot be stopped by anyone." It seems that either the PM is not aware of the realities of exploitation or he is simply

taking another diversionary tactic to justify the codes masking off the real pro corporate agenda. Another lie that is said is, "These reforms are very pro-worker. They are now entitled to all benefits and social security even if hired for fixed term." When the employment scenario is bleak and the real wages of the workers in the country is in a free down fall, the PM is himself promoting FTE. What can be more atrocious that this? Temporary Term Employment has been cunningly christened as Fixed term Employment.

The National Convention of Workers held at New Delhi on 18th March called for, nationwide general strike on 20th May 2025 and to burn the copies of codes from the day after the implementation is notified through protests at work places and residential areas across the nation. FMRAI has given a call of wholehearted participation of its members and all the Sales Promotion Employees of the country to totally paralyse all promotional activities of all companies on 20th May. In addition to the 17-point demands of the JPTU, FMRAI has put forward 11-point demands in favour of the SPEs of India. For us the Modi government need to answer some basic questions. The Sales Promotion Employees (Conditions of Service) Act, 1976 have been repealed. It is not clear how a Medical and Sales Representative having perennial job nature will work under fixed term and on what basis will he be eligible for social security benefits like gratuity. The reason why retrenchments in the pharma industry are taking place rampantly and the government is a silent onlooker is something that the government needs to answer. Further, in spite of government notification, the statutory working rule is not framed yet. Taking advantage of that, blatant and unilateral changes in the working and service conditions of the SPEs are initiated by the companies. The chamber of the doctor has become the laboratory of digital experimentation of the companies through gadgets. These and many others are burning issues that FMRAI members will ask the government to address on 20th May in the field. The party to which the PM belongs is slush with money extracted from the electoral bonds and the pharma companies are major contributors. Today when the employers of the pharma industry are dictating the government, it is now the responsibility of the SPEs to expose the truth and launch combative movements to defeat the nexus. The strike of 20th May will be launchpad of that decisive battle.

Condolence

heartfelt condolence.

Obituary



Bhalchandra Ranadive, associated with FMRAI at the Mumbai office since long passed away on 16th April, 2025 at Dombivli, Maharashtra. He was

involved with FMRAI and spent his days at the Mumbai office assisting the members of FMRAI in many ways. He used to be always present in all the demonstration programmes held at Mumbai carrying the banner and hand mike. FMRAI deeply mourns the sad demise of Bhalchandra Ranadive and sends heartfelt condolence to the bereaved family.



TMSRU state workshop

TMSRU organised Subunit Council, Other Industries, FMRAI News, Legal, State Related, Small Scale Sector, Membership and Prajaarogya Parirakshana (Medicines & Public Health Related) Sub Committee Convenors

Workshop on 20th April, 2025 at Hyderabad. After the workshop meetings of these sub committees were organised on the same day. 24 out of 30 members attended this programme. Functioning of the Sub Committees were reviewed and tasks were taken to strengthen

the organisation and advance the movements. Respective State Sub Committee Convenors placed note and explained the functions and role of Sub Committees. Workshop was attended by 59 out of 142 Functionaries from 11 out of 16 Subunits of TMSRU.

... launched against Sun Pharma

Turn from P 1

Even the management had launched serious attacks on the PSRs, by transferring them to distant places. Equal to the task, FMRAI had announced various industrial actions including campaign to doctors to expose the tyrant face masqueraded by corporate image. Facing the heat of the movement, and ire from medical fraternity, management approached the consultative committee for a logical conclusion of the issues and subsequently signed two pending CODs in the year 2017. As old habits die hard, the notorious management, once again, in an attempt to capsulize the unionized section of fieldworkers, abruptly changed the service condition of a section of Sales Promotion Employees (SPEs). There has been abrupt change in service condition by shifting a section of SPEs to totally new generic entity. Out of 25 such shifts, 14 SPEs have been transferred to different headquarters including two in different states. This change in service condition has been initiated by the management in gross violation of the legal provisions and spirit of bilateral discussion. FMRAI has responded immediately through a letter addressed to AVP



■ Demonstration at Patna

of HR, citing unilateral change of service condition during the pendency of chartered of demand. The letter also warned of possible industrial actions if the decision is not revoked forthwith. Unmoved and obdurate stance of management compelled FMRAI to initiate industrial action to protest the atrocities. As an initial action, all India field workers of Sun pharmaceuticals, irrespective of their entities (SPIL, SPLL) went for a mass casual leave on 30th April'25 with 10 points of demand that includes stopping of various unilateral work imposition and implementation of various provisions in SPE act.

The news of successful implementation of the mass C.L. has been pouring in from across the country. The complete paralysation of field work proves the

spontaneous response from the Sun Pharma employees. Massive demonstrations have taken place in the state capitals of West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Tamilnadu, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh. A complaint of unfair labour practice has already been lodged to Labour Commissioner, Maharashtra.

FMRAI, through council subcommittee, initiated to mobilize Sun field workers, across all sub units, into a unified platform of Sun Pharma Council, to galvanise them for more intensive battle in days to come. The initiation of Sun Platform opens a new chapter of trade union movement in this company. The successful implementation of mass Casual Leave proved that no corporation is impregnable when it is challenged by the unified and collective fight of all the workers.

Mass movement for affordability and quality of medicine

Reports are pouring in of several crores worth of spurious and fake drugs being seized from different parts of the country in recent past. Prior to the last parliament election, the news of different pharmaceutical companies donating to the coffers of the political parties through electoral bonds were published in the print and electronic media. Simultaneously the CDSCO tested different drugs manufactured and marketed by the same pharmaceutical companies which failed the quality tests but the authorities remained non-responsive in taking any measures. Reports appeared in different media heavily as the country witnessed an alarming surge in counterfeit medicines flooding retail markets, a spike of nearly 50 per cent over and above the estimated figures from the COVID-19 years. This rise in counterfeit medicines can be attributed to a combination of factors.

The entry of organized capital in the pharma retail sector through retail chains first unveiled the advertisement of discount on Maximum Retail Price (M.R.P.). Consumers annoyed and burdened due to ever increasing price of medicines started preferring these retail chain stores offering discounts and the standalone stores losing on customers desperately started looking out for distributors offering more discount to retailers. At this juncture several players bypassing the established channel of distribution entered in to the market offering high discount rates and the standalone retailers were compelled to move beyond the established channel of distribution for surviving the murky war of discounts on life saving medicines.

The infrastructure and the urge on the part of Union Government to provide life saving medicines at affordable prices to the common people are not visible. Rather the donations received through electoral bonds indicates



■ FMRAI leadership greeting leadership of AIOCD

an unholy connivance developing steadily over the years. The Indian pharmaceutical market with a turnover of more than Four lakhs crores with an expected compounded annual growth of 11% for 2025-2026, is flooded with regular influx of adulterated medicines. The Central

FMRAI has been advocating for long to put stringent control on prices by capping the MRP on ex-factory cost of medicine.

Drug Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) is testing limited quantity samples procured from the huge market only. But the quality checking at the manufacturer's level and prohibiting entry of spurious and fake medicine in the market is absent due to severe policy defect and lack of will. The inadequate government machinery and absence of legal provisions to punish the erring manufacturers has put the common people of the country under serious threat of health.

FMRAI has been advocating for long to put stringent control on prices by capping the MRP on ex-factory cost of medicine. But

on the contrary, the Union Government is making a mockery of its own Drug Price Control Order (DPCO) by linking the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) with the MRP and allowing regular increase every year. Simultaneously, the notion of generic drugs being cheaper than branded formulations has opened floodgate for manufacturers to sale their medicines manufactured at different parts of country by offering huge discounts to the retailers. CDSCO recently published list of generic medicines available and sold across the country which failed the test of quality. Almost during the same period spurious and fake drugs worth of several crores of rupees were seized from the wholesale markets. Incidences of death by consuming adulterated saline might have left a scar in the mind of people, but possibly for the administration at the centre the death is nothing but of statistical importance.

In such a situation, the 27th conference of FMRAI decided to broaden and heighten the movement for ensuring accessibility of quality medicine at affordable cost by involving all section of people and in particular the organization of chemists and druggists, doctor's organization and other organizations working in the mass front.

Recently a delegation

led by Shailendra Sharma, Secretary, FMRAI met with Mr. Rajive Singhal General Secretary, AIOCD At Indore On 2nd April, 2025. He gave a warm welcome to the FMRAI delegation and discussed about various issues of the pharmaceutical industry. He assured FMRAI to cooperate in its movement and suggested contacting the IMA national leadership to seek their support on issues of public interest. In some states like West Bengal the leadership is already in touch with the leaders and important activists of the Doctor's associations.

Already the medicine related demands of FMRAI such as zero GST on medicine and medical devices, revival of Pharma PSUs, ensuring effective price control mechanism etc. have been able to garner massive support. WBMSRU has organised a special campaign in April, 2025 to doctors across the state with leaflets highlighting the medicine related demands and the campaign received appreciation and overwhelming support from the doctor's fraternity. Building a mass campaign involving much wider section of people on ensuring access to affordable medicine with quality is the need of the hour. FMRAI and its affiliated state units are committed towards that direction.

Demonstration against Johnson & Johnson

The long standing bilateral relation between FMRAI and Johnson & Johnson came to a halt with a pre-planned attack by the management on the unionised section of fieldworkers by floating Voluntary Retirement Scheme during the pendency of charter of demands. Being apprehensive from certain past activities of the Johnson & Johnson management, FMRAI as a union cautioned the management not to adopt any sort of illegal and unfair means for victimisation of the council members. But, this management ultimately went on to implement their plan of floating the voluntary retirement scheme in an attempt to finish the unionised section of fieldworkers working in the company across the country. Almost all the fieldworkers including the entire council leadership working across the country in the Jansen division belonging to the category of MSR except their Jt. All India Convener, N.P. Krishnanand accepted the offer of VRS in writing. The management illegally terminated N.P. Krishnanand, the then General Secretary, KMSRA for not accepting the VRS.

Despite settling several charter of demands with the FMRAI's committee the management's intention was to get rid of the

bargainable category of SPE's only. The company has not withdrawn marketing operations of the divisions, rather they are continuing to operate through the non-bargainable category of fieldworkers. FMRAI urged the management through various communications to reinstate the service of N. P. Krishnanand in Thiruvananthapuram but of no avail. In the above background FMRAI decided to protest the illegal termination by staging demonstrations in front of company's establishments across the country in the month of April. FMRAI is also contemplating exploring legal avenues to settle the victimization issue. In absence of inner council strength, demonstrations before company's offices and depots were done successfully involving the members of council subcommittee and general unity. Strong protest demonstrations including memorandum submission to company's officials were implemented in various state units including WBMSRU where more than sixty members were present. Subhamoy Roy, Working Committee Member of FMRAI addressed the gathering and deliberated the development in Johnson & Johnson as well as the future tasks in the days to come.

Training and workshop by APMSRU

APMSRU regularly conducts training classes for State, subunit and council leadership two times in a year. As per the Road Map of APMSRU for the year 2025, one day training class was conducted for all the State Working Committee Members, subunit office bearers and council leaderships at Guntur on 13th April. The first session lasted for two hours, V Ram Bhupal, state leader from CITU has dealt on the topic "Leadership qualities & how to develop cadre".

Later in second Session U.V. Krishnaiah, Vice President & Training Subcommittee Convener of APMSRU gave presentation on "Our professional struggles, the impact of labour codes & how to face the challenges". Dumpala Prasad and G. Manohar coordinated in both the sessions. All the doubts of the participants were also clarified. 64 members attended this Training Classes. The next phase of Training classes will be continued either in July or August.

Special General Body meetings

The 27th Conference of FMRAI at Mumbai took note of all the serious issues being faced by the Sales Promotion Employees of the country. It was observed that the attacks on the field workers in the last couple of years are intensified rapidly. In fact, in the absence of Statutory working Rules for the SPEs, the employers are to out rightly barbarous in changing the existing service conditions and bringing newer forms of digital activities and pouncing upon any form of opposition to the unilateral imposition by gagging the workers through all sorts of victimization. After Pandemic situation, BJP led NDA Government have actually initiated the attacks by strategically changing 29 Labour Laws. The Central Government has straight way opened the flood gates of atrocities and newer forms of oppressions on the workers of the country and this profession is no exception.

On the other hand, the digital world has opened the unexplored areas of violating existing norms of the employers. Employers are transferring, illegally stopping work, illegally tracking through



■ Partha Rakshit, General Secretary, addressing in the GB meeting in East Bardhaman.

e-gadgets and unlawfully terminating the SPEs. Noncompliance to such arbitrary and unilateral instructions are swiftly retaliated with wage stoppages and other punitive measures. 27th Conference of FMRAI gave direction to launch all-out offensive movement against the ruling dispensation at the center on the basis of our demands on medicine related issues.

The Current Government is actively promoting Generic drugs to be prescribed by doctors and to be sold by dedicated outlets among the public. The Medical Representatives are targeted because they are associated with brand promotion. Our contention is to crystalize the pricing

policy of medicines and medicine devices.

So the well planned attacks on the SPEs by the employers are very much backed by the Government itself. In this situation strong resistance is the only alternative. The most important matter in current trade union movement is to acknowledge, internalize and reorient our plan of action. The task is to increase the awareness of field workers about the rights enshrined in the Constitution of India. The above tasks cannot be completed without building a strong organization.

This is possible when we build the structure of general unity from sub units to local committees at the grassroots. At the

same time the Company wise unity to be spread down to sub unit councils of selected 12 councils.

So, It was decided that, Special GB meetings will be organized by each subunits within April 2025 to apprise the members about the outcome of FMRAI Conference, Mumbai and explain the significance of 20th may 2025 'General Strike'. Throughout the month of April more than 230 subunits organised these special GB meetings where WCMs and GCMs addressed the members. More than 20000 members could be mobilised pan India on the above issues. These meetings would continue in all other parts with an unflinching resolve to make the 20th May Strike huge success.

Settlement signed in Stadmed

12th successive wage settlement was signed in Stadmed between the negotiating committee of FMRAI and the management of Stadmed on 30th April, 2025. This settlement shall be effective for the period of 1st April, 2023 to 31st March, 2026. The settlement fetched benefit starting from Rs. 2320/- as minimum benefit to maximum of Rs. 16460/- averaging to Rs. 6500/- covering 280 confirmed Sales Promotion Employees. Daily allowances were upwardly revised for head quarter, ex-station and outstation respectively at Rs. 350/-, Rs. 375/- and Rs. 500/-.

Partha Rakshit, General Secretary, FMRAI, signed on behalf

of FMRAI along with J S NARUKA, Aniruddha Mahapatra, A. J. Bhattacharya, Jayanta Chatterjee, Partho Sinha, Veeresh Pandey, Suvankar Chakraborty as negotiating committee members. On behalf of the management Asheesh Roy, Director, Amit Roy, Director, Alok Kumar Bose, Senior Manager- Legal Personnel & Admin and Amit Goswami Manager (Personnel & Admin) signed the settlement. A separate agreement was signed on day to day work norms. The settlement was signed in cordial atmosphere with an objective of continuing the harmonious industrial relation for mutual interest in future.



52nd Foundation Day of CRU (NER)

Foundation Day of the Center of Medical and Sales Representatives' Union (North East Region) was celebrated enthusiastically in all the seventeen sub units on 1st April, 2025. On that day large number of members participated in several programs. After flag hoisting at morning hall meetings were arranged, some of the districts organized blood donation camps also. A good number of members participated in both programmes. During the hall meetings, the historic journey of formation of CRU (NER) in 1973, was recollected which turned out to be nostalgic for elders and thrilling for younger ones. Multiple and significant struggles laid the strong foundation of CRU(NER). It is the only affiliated state unit of FMRAI where seven political states are included and this state unit is truly a symbol of 'unity in

diversity'. Initially Central Travelers' Association (CTA) was formed as the precursor of present CRU (NER). Subsequently several organizations were formed like the Assam Medical Representative Association in 1967, North East Field Sales and Medical Representative Association in 1970 and finally, after long struggle all these organizations emerged together and formed CRU(NEC). Amitava Guha played an important role at that time and D.P. Dubey was the first General Secretary of the CRU(NEC). This organization affiliated with FMRAI in 1974. In 1995 the name of the organization was changed from CRU(NEC) to CRU(NER). Observing the foundation day by organizing various programmes the members paid fitting tribute to the rich history of struggle of CRU(NER) and concurred to carry forward the movement.

Fight in Albert David continues

Albert David Limited management has been violating all agreed understandings including memorandum of understanding (MOU) to implement the unilaterally imposed newer work systems. Several unfair labour practices are being adopted violating the laws but remained unsuccessful in breaking the spirit of the SPEs and the resistance they faced from SPEs has frustrated

the management. All SPEs in Sunrise division are consolidated, remain rock solid against allurements, coercions and refused unilateral financial offer bypassing union and collecting bargaining rights. Failing to break the consolidation ADL management has adopted newer tactics, threatening the SPEs to transfer on sales ground after withdrawing major brands from the division

unilaterally, creating unjust pressure to match the earlier sales volume.

In this above juncture organisation has intensified the industrial action against atrocious ADL management. A huge number of doctors campaigning against ADL are done alongside medicine related issues designed by FMRAI. Demonstrations are held in different state capitals in front of CFAs. Strong Protest Demonstrations

were held in good numbers across the country in all three divisions during joint field works. Massive demonstration was held on 23rd April in front of the head office, Gilandar House in Kolkata. Nearly 200 WBMSRU members participated in the demonstration which was addressed by WCMs, State Committee Members of WBMSRU and from FMRAI Secretariat.

Agitation programmes in RPG Life Sciences

RPG Life Sciences, management unleashed serious attacks on its SPEs by carrying out all sorts of oppressive measures. In recent development management has transferred services of All India Convener Niraj Srivastava from

Jaunpur to Robertsganj, Rajnish Upadhyay from Varanasi to Jaunpur and Snehasish Chap from Tarakeswar to Darjeeling. Management is putting entire responsibility of sales on the field workers and threatening them for punitive actions on failure to achieve sales targets.

SPEs have been under constant threat of PIP, deduction in salaries and expenses, denial of annual increments, virtual meetings at odd hours, pressure to be involved in unethical tradings and unilateral imposition of digital works. FMRAI organised demonstrations

before CFAs across India. Memoranda were submitted during Cycle Meetings by RPG Council members. During the Cycle Meetings the state units also submitted memoranda in Goa, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala and West Bengal