

Include our demands in budget: trade unions

• [Ganesh Prabhu](#)



Members of the Joint Committee of Trade Unions staging a dharna in front of the Clock Tower in Udupi on Friday.

Members of the Joint Committee of Trade Unions (JCTU) staged a dharna in front of the Clock Tower here on Friday demanding inclusion of their 12 demands in the forthcoming Union Budget.

Addressing the protesters here, Admar Sripathi Acharya, convener of the JCTU, said it was a practice for the Union Finance Ministry to call labour unions to seek their suggestions before preparing the budget. But this practice was being done just for the sake of it all the years. None of the suggestions given by the labour unions was being implemented, he said.

However, the unions wanted their “important” 12 demands to be included in the Union Budget for 2016–17. The Union government should accept the recommendations of the 15th Indian Labour Council and provide a minimum wage of Rs. 18,000 to all classes of workers, Mr. Acharya said.

The JCTU wants the government to take immediate steps to curb inflation and strengthen the public distribution system. Instead of disinvesting, public sector undertakings should be strengthened, it said. Import of industrial products and spare parts should be banned and local industries should be protected. Foreign direct investment (FDI) should not be allowed in defence, railways, finance and retail sectors. The FDI in other sectors should be implemented in a transparent manner, the JCTU said.

The number of days of employment under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act should be increased to 200 days. The services of workers under the Integrated Child Development Scheme and midday meals scheme, guest lecturers and Accredited Social Health Activists, should be regularised and benefits of social security schemes extended to them, it said.

Social security should also be extended to migrant workers, contract workers and temporary workers. Adequate funds should be provided to national social security fund set up for the benefit of unorganised workers. The income tax limit should be increased to Rs. 5 lakh so as to benefit the working class and pensioners, Mr. Acharya said.