

15 crore workers will be on strike: unions

- Special Correspondent

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Ten central trade unions said here on Wednesday that over 15 crore workers in several States would take part in the strike called by them for Friday demanding higher minimum wages and provision of social security to unorganised workers.

The unions said a bandh-like situation would prevail in 10 States and a "chakka jam" in others.

"All government scheme workers will take to the streets. It will be bigger than last year's strike and we expect over 15 crore workers to participate. It will be a befitting reply to the government," Amarjeet Kaur, national secretary, All India Trade Union Congress, said at a press conference jointly organised by the 10 unions.

The Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh has opted out of the strike, but the striking unions said it would have no impact on the strike. "The strike will be complete in industrial sectors such as transport, finance, power, coal, textile, automobile, port and dock, steel, oil, defence production, scheme and education," a joint statement said.

"BMS leaders may not be supporting us because of political compulsions, but their workers will still join the strike," Tapan Sen, general secretary, Centre of Indian Trade Unions, said. He said the strike would not affect emergency services of hospitals and clinics. Banking transactions may be affected as bank unions have also issued strike notices.

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