

**FES/Ambekar National Seminar on “Trade unions in IT/BPO Sectors-  
Issues & Prospects” April 20 to 21 2006, Mumbai.**

Please find enclosed brief proceedings of the seminar:

**Thursday, April 20, 2006**

Welcome to the participants by Brother Gawde Director, Ambekar Institute of Labour. Brother Pravin Sinha gave initial inputs & details about the seminar. This was followed by a self-introduction of participant & ice breaking session.

**About Call Center by Mrs. Vijay Srinivasan**

What can be done about organizing, what could be done to protect employees, what is call center with in? Lot of security from out side, inside it looks like a fortress, it looks very good. Looks life is cooling swanky, health insurance is paid by the employer. It is like a patient wearing beautiful suit, if the jobs have come to us simply because we work for lesser money. In my company the two collection center one in America & India, there is always a difference in collection between us & US center, there are handicap of getting into alien culture. We are competing with and beaten the collection US center, all this b'coz of our patience, there is no differentiation in getting abuse. But the collector withstood the abusive & still collects the money is appreciated. These inputs are brought about b'coz it is employees take sick leave; the management tries to appreciate 100% attendance.

**Q & A**

**Dr. Pravin What is union?**

Gave an in-depth capsule of trade union history, starting from the need, how it was in the pre independence & the form that it took after the independence, ILO's roll & what FES is doing globally in general & India in particular.

**CNBC Movie (including need for unionism poll)**

This was an opener for heated deliberation & set the ball rolling for Group Discussion & Role Play. Here the whole GD's need & what & how it should be done was set. The Role-play was done so that participants get into the mood & take stances in the GD.

## Minutes of Ambekar Programme

Group Discussion was started & the groups worked in their respective rooms to present the paper next day

### **Key Note Speech by Karthik Shekhar**

Here I spoke about how Unites was formed, the help we got from Unidoc, Uni-Apro. The guidance that we had got from ILO & FES. Exposure to INTUC through Mr. N.M. Adynthaiah. About the Call Center research that had been conducted & the results were discussed. This gave an insight into Call Center & BPO's.

### **Friday 21 April, 2006**

#### **Group discussion on unionization.**

Following question was put to two groups. Idea was to bridge the gap, it was intended to bring in more numbers into the organization.

1. What form of organization do we need in IT/BPO Sectors ?

#### **Group 1**

#### **How would the call center organization?**

Paucity of time is main reason, resistance employers

Website online propagation & registration

One to one campaign/contact

Organizing meeting near the gate

Audio Video measure

Cabs to carry messages

Placements cell to

Training to employee

Occupational stress to be taken care

Create welfare fund

Awareness program

Formation housing co-operative movement

Consumer co-operative

Help line for distress

Future pension, insurance for members

Bring affiliates to organize

We should come forward for AIDS, Gender Discrimination, Child Labour,

Women's forum

Workers get insurance, transport

Organisation to control itration

Financial responsibility

**Group 2**

**How do the call center employees be organized?**

- ⇒ Identify geographical locations, potential, like-minded people.
- ⇒ Collecting database through sources such as:
- ⇒ Placement agencies
- ⇒ Campus interviews
- ⇒ Word of mouth
- ⇒ Cyberspace
- ⇒ Circulating newsletters
- ⇒ Networking

After which create awareness among the employees and remove misconception about the union.

After awareness we need to do membership campaign. Benefits the members will get.

- ⇒ Be a grievance cell to position us in the right manner.
  - ⇒ Role of the member.
  - ⇒ Identify leaders
  - ⇒ Start networking and start a support sys to the members helping them to network big time.
1. Get the union registered.
  2. Support group meets – seminars, monthly meeting.
  3. Create good website – keep a open forum and blogs where people can voice their opinions and pull out like minded people to be members.

Take up real cases and represent the employees of a organization.

To be financially sustainable and independent device tools and mechanisms to collect affordable membership fees.

To develop good relationship amongst other trade union nationally and internationally, Ngo's, community organizations and employers.[ILO] and media.

Org should function democratically by way of conducting free and fair elections to find enterprising leaders.

Good women representation, women comities.

Image building activities like adoption of villages, blood donation

Set yourself short term, mid-term and long term goals, the ideologies.

Identify hidden talents and give them responsibilities where their interest lies.

## Minutes of Ambekar Programme

Maintain financial discipline.

Aims and objectives... goals.

Objective of a TU is to safeguard the employees and work against the exploitation from the employers.

### **Membership campaign**

1. Use existing resources
2. Get Activist in state, companies
3. Get them trained & it should be ongoing
4. We should have rapport with HR department
5. Good Image to be made
6. Management association should be reached.
7. Job mela's we should participate
8. Meeting of office bearers is a must
9. Proper reporting from other chapters

The Group Discussion & presentation was observed by eminent panel which consisted of Dr. Pravin Sinha, Dr. Topo from Tata Foundation, Dr. Samanth also from Tata Foundation & Mr. Balasubramanyam from GTL Software.

### **Closing Remarks & observation**

Workers did nothing but followed managers, nature of union also change, union means collective, how do you make independent collect. They would like customization, everything upfront cash, benefits of group insurance. Cyber Unionism is it the need, new innovative method & uses it to mechanism; this will attract & ensure maximum retention. A goal of the union is remain the same. Focus differ from SME to MNC, it is sufficiently diverse situation. Capacity to get employer to work on safety. Unless this is proved. Annually submitted for the submission, lack of justice to be highlighted in a non confrontation, nuclear family needs support. Counseling with help of phsyctriac help. Sexual harassment to be taken up. Save money & learn wile the earn. Measure for work study, balance the pay & work. Objectives & goals will be based on membership expectation. Ask what the members want & bring their expectation. It should be demand driven.