

EFI - CII Daily News

Tuesday | May 29, 2018



Robots not a threat to human labour, says Microsoft chief Satya Nadella

Microsoft's Indian-origin chief, Satya Nadella, does not believe in the "fallacy" that robots will overtake human labour and is confident that artificial intelligence (AI) will solve more problems than cause them. The 50-year-old chief of the tech major expressed optimism in the impact of technology on human lives if applied ethically, Nadella said in an interview with The Sunday Telegraph. "I don't believe in that lump of labour fallacy, we don't know all the jobs that are going to be there," he said in reference to robots versus human labour. If robots do replace humans, he says mechanisms such as universal basic income may be needed, drawing comparisons with the labour movement, but that humans will always need jobs. "There is a certain amount of dignity to what is work so we need to have an incentive system," he said. "What I think needs to be done in 2018 is more dialogue around the ethics, the principles that we can use for the engineers and companies that are building AI, so that the choices we make do not cause us to create systems with bias that's the tangible thing we should be working on," he added.

Goregaon fire: Four die; labour contractors among three arrested

A day after the fire broke out on the seventh floor of Techniplex Complex of SV Road in Goregaon (west), Goregaon police arrested three men including two labour contractors in connection with the blaze that claimed four lives and injured several others. The zonal Deputy Commissioner of Police Vikram Deshmane confirmed the development and said, "The case has been registered under sections 304A and 34 of Indian Penal Code. Three men have been arrested." The workers were removing the movable properties of a telecom company that was facing huge financial crunch following the order of Bombay High Court, said a senior police officer. Pune-based company Pranam Enterprises had hired labourers to remove the movable properties of the telecom company. On Sunday, when the labourers were removing the electric wire, the fire broke out due to short circuit. The police said three labourers including Naimuddin Shah, Ramavtar, Ramkirat died due to suffocation on Sunday late night. In the wee hours of Monday, the rescuers recovered fourth body of Shamshad Ali Shah.

Hyderabad software employees demand implementation of labour laws in IT companies

At the first State Convention of Forum for IT Professionals (ForIT), software professionals came up with a host of issues plaguing their work-life balance whilst working at the multinational companies. The convention saw demands including implement Labour Laws in the IT companies, retrenchments, issues related to variable pay, performance appraisal system, and paternity leaves. The issues would later be submitted to the labour department and the State government, to bring about systematic changes in the functioning of MNCs. The appraisal system has employers categorize employees and rate them broadly into the top, average, and non-performers. But many observed that a specific percentage is allocated to each categorization and the raters cannot go beyond the limit.

Bank strike stands on May 30-31 as talks fail: UFBU

The proposed nationwide bank strike on May 30 and May 31 stands as the conciliatory

talks convened by the Chief Labour Commissioner here on Monday failed, the UFBU has said. "Although the Chief Labour Commissioner tried his best to sort out the strike issue, there is no positive development. The strike stands," C.H.Venkatachalam, General Secretary, All India Bank Employees Association told *BusinessLine* after the conciliatory meeting here on Monday. It may be recalled that the strike call was given by the United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU), a representative body of nine bank unions, in the wake of the Government's casual approach to wage revision for bank employees/officers; IBA's meagre offer of 2 per cent hike in wage bill towards wage increase and IBA's delay in resolving charter of demands.

Spirit of tripartism, compromise, consensus needed for success of ILC and ILO

The Director-General of the International Labour Organization, Guy Ryder, urged delegates to show "the spirit of tripartism, compromise, and consensus," which, he said, is a "precondition of success for the Conference and of the ILO." He warned of 'heightened tension in the world' as he addressed the opening of the 107th session of the International Labour Conference (ILC). Ryder spoke of the growing challenge to international cooperation through multilateralism. Referring to "a new brutalism" in the world, he expressed his firm belief "that our Organization and our Conference must be a bulwark against such contagion, by its own conduct and by the results it achieves." In this environment, he said, the Conference discussion on social dialogue is timely and an opportunity to sharpen it as an instrument for dealing with the transformations taking place in the world of work.

Karnataka Garment Workers to Intensify Protests Demanding Wage Revision

More than 4 lakh garment workers from Karnataka are planning to launch an agitation demanding the revision of minimum wages that the previous Siddharamaiah-led Congress government had proposed. Ahead of the state assembly elections, in February 2018, the then government had issued a draft notification on wage revision. However, in March, the notification was withdrawn. The draft notification issued on February 22, 2018 proposed a double minimum wages in the tailoring industry. As per the draft, the unskilled workers in the tailoring industry in Bengaluru were entitled to get Rs 445 per day which was more than the existing salary of Rs 220 a day. The high-skilled workers in Bengaluru were about to receive the highest salary. For them, the proposed wages were Rs 593 a day and the unskilled workers in Taluks and Panchayats were entitled to the minimum salary of Rs 385 a day. However, the hope of the workers regarding the implementation of the revised wages did not fructify. On March 24, the Labour Department withdrew the draft notification saying the industry management objected to the move as the minimum wages in Karnataka were higher than in other states. However, Prathibha from Garment and Textile Workers' Union (GATWU) called it a false argument.

Centre plans to spend 4,000 crore this year on job creation

The Government plans to spend 4,000 crore this year to create new jobs in the country and it has already employed 40 lakh new job seekers through Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana, a senior Government official said here on Monday. "As per latest EPFO data, six lakh employees get added every month in the form of new jobs resulting in formal workforce. Through Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana, we have employed 40 lakh new job seekers and 725 crore has been given to those corporates providing jobs to them. In this year, we expect to spend 4,000 crore for the new jobs to be created," said Heeralal Samariya, Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment. "With a GDP growth of 7.4 per cent, coupled with the recent investments in the infrastructure sector, we are hopeful of creating more formal jobs and dignity of jobs simultaneously," he said speaking at Indian Staffing Federation (ISF) event here.

Contract workers allege misconduct by contractor

Around 60 Class IV contract workers of the Government Medical College and Hospital (GMCH) staged an agitation on Monday before the medical superintendent's office demanding regularisation of their wage payment. The workers have been hired on a contract basis by the GMCH through a Padegaon-based private agency for doing odd jobs. Though the workers are entitled to a minimum wage of Rs 8,627 a month as set by the labour department, the workers alleged their hiring agency pays them Rs 5,000. They have not received their salaries for the last two months. In a written complaint to the GMCH dean, the workers stated their wages are being paid in cash instead of being deposited in their bank accounts as directed by the government.

