

The Delhi University Publication, No. 8.

THE
STATE IN RELATION TO LABOUR
IN INDIA

Sir Kikabhai Premchand Readership Lectures Delivered
in January 1938, in the University of Delhi.

BY

V. SHIVA RAM, M.A., Ph.D.

Professor and Head of the Department of Political Science, Lucknow University
Sometime Member League of Nations Secretariat, Geneva.



UNIVERSITY OF DELHI,
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**DEDICATED TO
THE PIONEERS OF LABOUR MOVEMENT IN INDIA
WHO STROVE FOR SECURING SOCIAL JUSTICE
FOR THEIR COUNTRYMEN.**

PREFACE

I am very grateful to the University of Delhi for the honour it has done me in inviting me to deliver the Sir Kikabhai Premchand Readership Lectures this year. I am the more sensible of the honour, as this is the first time a political scientist has been called upon to deal with a sociological subject like the "*State in Relation to Labour in India*". This problem of Industrial Peace and Social Justice is one of the burning questions of the day and a proper solution of this question will not only lead to better citizenship, but pave the way for world peace in an indirect way. These problems are no more of mere academic interest, but have become practical politics, which justifies a teacher of Political Science to accept this invitation.

The labour troubles at Cawnpore, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Ahmedabad, Sholapur, and elsewhere in the country for the last six years or more have brought the labour problems very much to the fore, and the Congress Ministries have to tackle this question. The labour conditions in India can by no means be said to be satisfactory. They are perhaps the worst in the world, with the increased cost of living and reduction in wages. Most of them live in ill-ventilated and overcrowded mud-houses and the diet of an average labourer is totally inadequate both in quality and quantity (and is said to be worse than jail diet by one writer). Contrast these conditions with the West, where the 40 hours' week is established as in France, and the U.S.A. with Whitley Councils, minimum wage, old age pensions, sickness insurance, compulsory arbitration of disputes, etc. A decent standard of living, hours of work and conditions of labour in conformity, as far as the conditions of the country permit, with international standards, suitable machinery for the settlement of disputes between employer and workers, protection against the economic consequences of old age, sickness and unemployment and the right of the workers to form unions are some of the demands of the labour in India. This problem has now acquired a certain topical interest, since most of our workers and peasants constituting the majority of the population became voters at the last elections and lost their sense of pathetic contentment and expect the Congress Ministries and other Provincial Governments to fulfil their pre-election pledges. A new social order based upon the principles of social justice is what they demand. The example of the I.L.O. in Geneva has fired their imagination and determination still further.

The plan of this series of lectures is as follows:—

The first lecture deals with the State and economic structure of modern society, stating the problems followed by a discussion of the scope and methods of State Activities in the second lecture. The third and fourth lectures discuss the labour problems in the Totalitarian or Authoritarian States of Italy, Germany and Russia. While the fifth deals with Labour Legislation, Trade Unionism, Syndicalism, and Guild Socialism in England. The remaining five lectures deal with India and Indian problems such as the evolution of labour legislation in India, Trade Unionism, Factory legislation and inspection, India and the I.L.O. ratifications, etc. The last and concluding lecture is a summary of some aspects of State in relation to labour welfare in India. The lectures have not been revised for publication and are presented here in their original form. I am grateful to numerous friends who have given me aid and suggestions in preparing the lectures for publication. My deputation for over a year to the Secretariat of the League of Nations in Geneva has enabled me to appreciate the splendid work that is being done by the International Labour Office, which has been the chief cause of our recent progress in Labour Legislation.

THE UNIVERSITY,
LUCKNOW,
9th August, 1939.

}

V. SHIVA RAM.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

I am indebted to my friend and colleague Dr. B. M. Sharma, M.A., LL.B., PH.D., D.LITT., for kindly seeing this book through the press and for various suggestions from time to time.

NALANDA, LUCKNOW,
14th August, 1939.

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V. SHIVA RAM.

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