

Industrial Relations at Visakhapatnam Steel Plant

Dr. B. Ravi Kumar

Assistant Professor Sree Vidyanikethan Engineering College A.Rangampet Tirupati - 517102

Abstract: *This paper attempts to portray the nature and quality of industrial relations in Visakhapatnam Steel Plant. The type of labour relations issues and the conflict of interest that generate between management and labour become the main focus of the paper. The policies, approaches and attitude of the parties to the common problem affect their interest in the mechanism or arrangement evolved by the parties to promote orderly and systematic relation between them. To this end the industrial conflicts leading to strikes or lockouts or other forms direct action like demonstration, dharna, gherao and the various methods of disputes settlement are highlighted.*

Key Words: *Dharna, Disputes, Gherao, Industrial Relations, Labour Issues, Settlement, Strikes.*

I. Introduction

It is commonly held that the field of industrial relations deals with the people at work or that the industrial relations are concerned with the many problems which the employer-employee relation entails. These problems represent some of the basic difficulties that an economically developing society encounters. They are considered paramount as the healthy growth of the country's economy depends to a large extent on the successful resolution of these problems. In industries, collaboration of men having diverse interest often leads to tensions and conflicts. Each interest group tries to maximize its share from the enterprises. Their orientation towards work is also bound to be different from another.

Establishment and maintenance of harmonious relations between labour and management is a pre-requisite for the stability and progress of industry. When good understanding prevailing between them, each party tries to serve the other to the best of their ability. Workmen try to give their best and improve productive efficiency, and the management acknowledges its satisfaction and gratitude in terms of increased welfare activities and attractive working conditions. In such a state of relations marked by amity, there is little scope for grievances and disputes. But the maintenance of good labour management relation is, very often, a difficult job.

In a realistic sense, complete harmony, peace or co-operation can be elusive. The goals of are so different that only 'Antagonistic Co-operation' is possible in Labour Management Relations. Wage earners form trade unions to safe guard their interests, and to register protest in an organized way. Unions assume the form of defence or combative mechanism aimed at meeting the exploitative tactics of employer. This evokes a reaction in employer who wants to serve his interest well by taking recourse to counter-defensive measures such as employer's association, economic pressures, hiring strike-breakers or invoking the help of police in the interest of law and order. These relations exist and grow out of employment and involve relationship between the employers and employee as well as their organisations².

In the absence of sound industrial relations in an organization, it is reasonable to expect employees shall face many serious disputes and they are likely to be of an increasing difficult nature. Absence of strike in an industry or enterprise does not necessarily mean that is industrial peace. Industrial peace is not proportionate to the absence of strike in any given time interval. Management and trade union who have maintained a relationship of peaceful collective bargaining over a long period might as well explain their relationship by statement such as "we have been able to adequately manage our conflicting interest and expectations" rather by saying "Our relationship is harmonious" or something to that effect.

Employment conditions in industry are not regulated merely by employees and employers, though both have a major role in it. State intervention in the regulation of labour management relations has been on the increase and therefore, the role-played by the State and its interaction with employers and employees legitimately forms part of Industrial Relations. "An Industrial Relations system at any one time in its development is comprised of certain actors, certain contexts, an ideology which binds the Industrial Relations system together, and a body of rules created to govern the actors at the work place and work community". Keeping in view the purpose of this paper, such sophisticated interpretation as found in the above definition is not necessary. What is intended in the present Paper is the study of the pattern of labour management relation in VSP. It would identify the kind of problems that arise and the Plant administration and trade unions resolve that problem in order to maintain industrial peace and harmony among themselves.

II. Results And Discussion

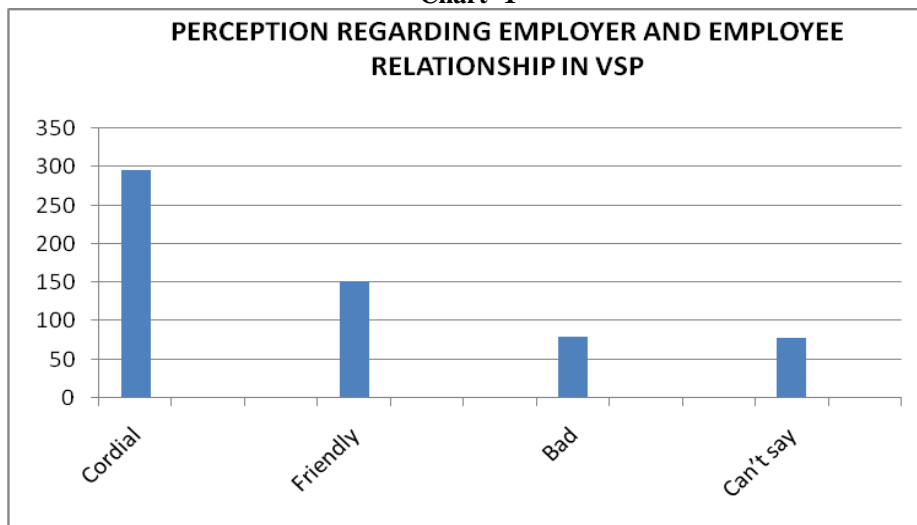
To understand the Employer and Employee relationship that persist in the organization following perceptions were taken from the employees. As per that the following were the details given by them, which were presented in the following tables:

Table: 1 Opinion Of The Employees Regarding Employer And Employee Relationship In Vsp

S.No	Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Cordial	296	49
2	Friendly	151	25
3	Bad	79	13
4	Can't say	78	13
	Total	604	100

From the above table it is clear that 49% of the respondents opined that the relationship between employer and employees in VSP is cordial, and 25% of the respondents said that it is friendly. Where as 13% of the respondents felt that the relationship is bad and the remaining 13% respondents are unable to express their opinions specifically towards the relationship between employer and employee that persist in VSP. Since some noted proportion of employees sensing IR in the organization are deteriorating gradually. In this regard proper care is to be taken to keep up sound industrial relations in the organization. This helps the management to maintain healthy environment in the organization.

Chart- 1



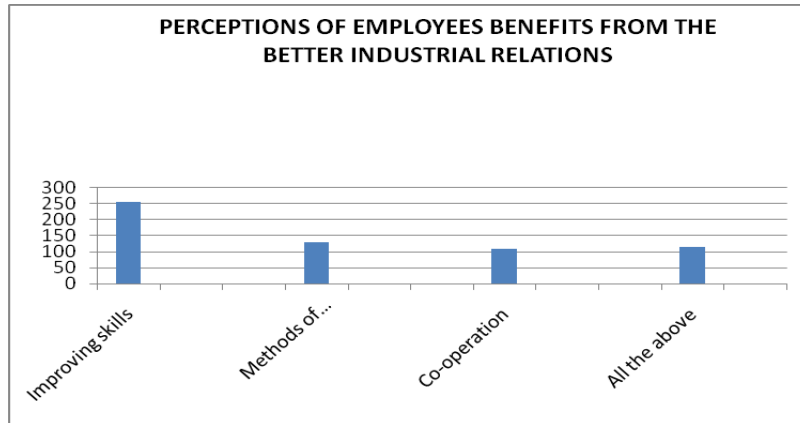
After knowing the IR status in the organization, further opinion regarding to IR benefits were gathered from the respondents. In this regard following perceptions were gathered which are presented in the following table:

TABLE: 2 PERCEPTIONS OF EMPLOYEES BENEFITS FROM THE BETTER INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

S.No	Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Improving skills	254	42
2	Methods of Adjusting	127	21
3	Co-operation	108	18
4	All the above	115	19
	Total	604	100

From the above data we can say that industrial relations are helping the employees in different ways. 254 members said that industrial relations are helping them to improve their skills, 127 members said that industrial relations are helping them for methods of adjusting, 108 members opined that they are helping for co-operation between employees, where as the remaining 115 members said that industrial relations are helping them in different ways that are shown in the above table. To summarize the above information it can be understood that by maintaining proper healthy IR in the organization, cordial relationships can be formed between the employees and employers, this will avoids unrest and fatigueness and helps in improving the productivity and progress of the organization.

Chart - 2



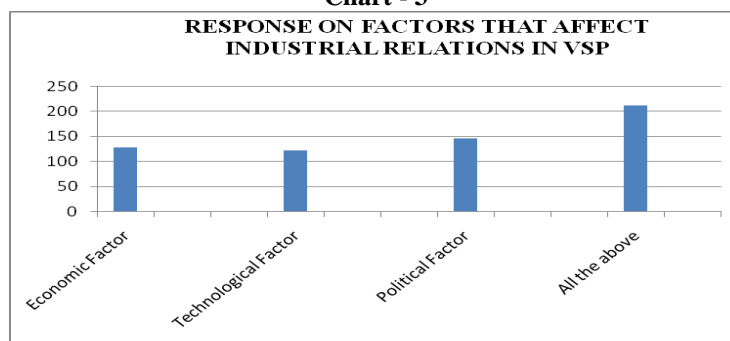
In indentifying the effect and impact of IR in the organization, opinions of the respondents were collected; its information is presented in the following table .3

TABLE: 3 RESPONSES ON FACTORS THAT AFFECT INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS IN VSP

S.No	Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Economic Factor	127	21
2	Technological Factor	121	20
3	Political Factor	145	24
4	All the above	211	35
	Total	604	100

From the above table it is evident that 21% of the respondents opined that economic factor affects industrial relations in VSP, 20% said that technological factor affects industrial relations, whereas 24% of the respondents said that political factor is affecting industrial relations, but 35% of the respondents opined that all the above said factors are affecting industrial relations in VSP. By considering the above reasons it can be anticipated that more political interferences are involved in the organizational activities, this will create a lot of ambiguity in the minds of the employees. This should be eradicated, which will help the management to maintain healthy atmosphere in the organization.

Chart - 3



To understand the relations between the superiors, peers and employees opinions were gathered and incorporated in the following table:

TABLE: 4 REPOSE ON RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SUPERIORS AND PEERS

S.No	Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Congenial	97	16
2	Harmonious	163	27
3	Friendly	235	39
4	Can't say	109	18
	Total	604	100

TABLE – 5 WEIGHTED AVERAGE ANALYSIS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SUPERIORS AND PEERS

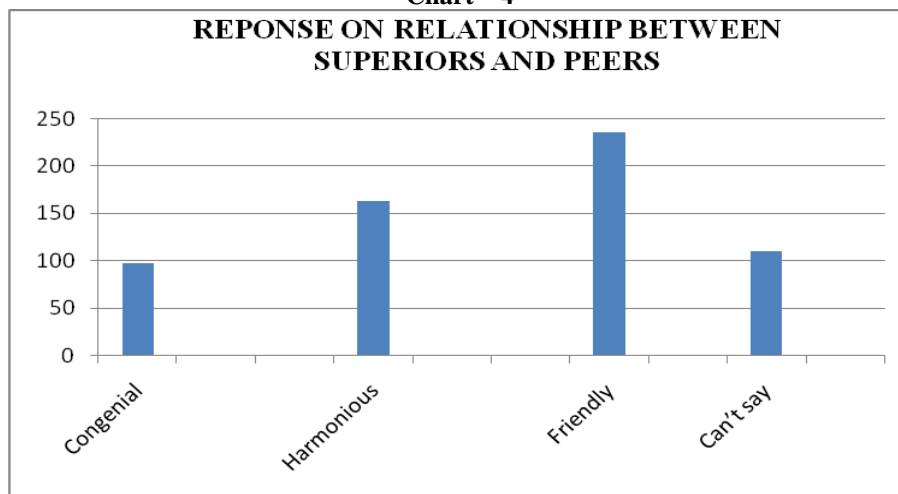
Attributes	Weights	No. of Respondents	Weightage
Congenial	4	97	388
Harmonious	3	163	489
Friendly	2	235	470
Can't say	1	109	109
TOTAL		604	1456

$$\text{Weighted Average} = \frac{(4*97) + (3*163) + (2*235) + (1*109)}{604}$$

$$\bar{X} = \frac{1456}{604} = 2.41$$

On an average 16 % of the respondents said that the relationship between their superiors and peers is congenial 27% of the respondents opined that the relationship is harmonious, where as 39% of the respondents said that they are maintaining friendly relationship with their superiors and peers and the remaining 18% of the respondents expressed that they do not have any relations with their superiors and peers. Majority of the respondents opined that they had better relations with their superiors, peers and colleagues but a little proportion of employees felt that their superiors are disturbing their relations and causing problems in day to day working. Hence management should impose serious actions on those employees who cause troubles in the day to day management.

Chart – 4



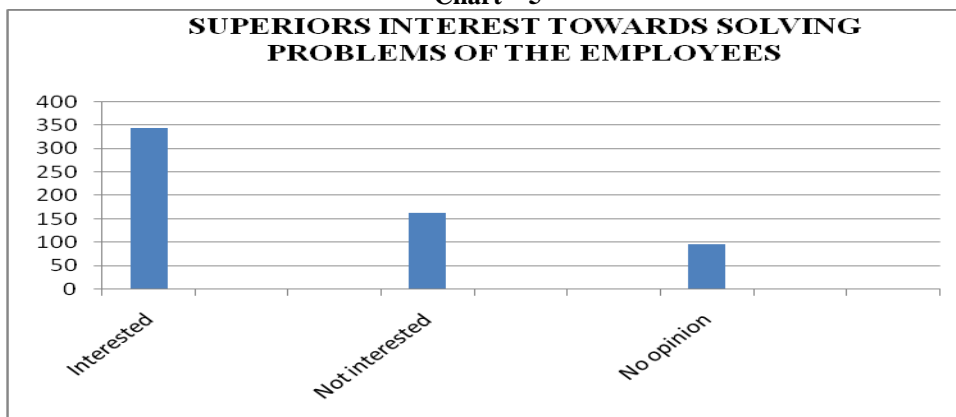
As part of the research process even the researcher gathered the information regarding superior's capacity to solve the problem at the work place. In regarding to this following were the opinions expressed by the respondents. Which were presented in the following table No:6

TABLE: 6 SUPERIORS INTEREST TOWARDS SOLVING PROBLEMS OF THE EMPLOYEES

S.No	Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Interested	344	57
2	Not interested	163	27
3	No opinion	97	16
	Total	604	100

From the above analysis it is clear that 57% of the respondents opined that the supervisor is interested to know their problems, 27% said that they were not interested and where as the remaining 16% respondents have no opinion on supervisor’s interest shown by them on the problems of their subordinates. To conclude majority of supervisors are totally attentive to their responsibilities but where a negligible proportion of superiors are least bothered about the problems that their subordinates confronting in the organization. Hence it is an advice to the management that the uniform code of conduct should be followed for the supervisors in the job this will avoid negligence in the job and proper attentiveness and responsiveness can be developed, this will avoid accidents and damage to the organization and helps to improve productivity.

Chart – 5



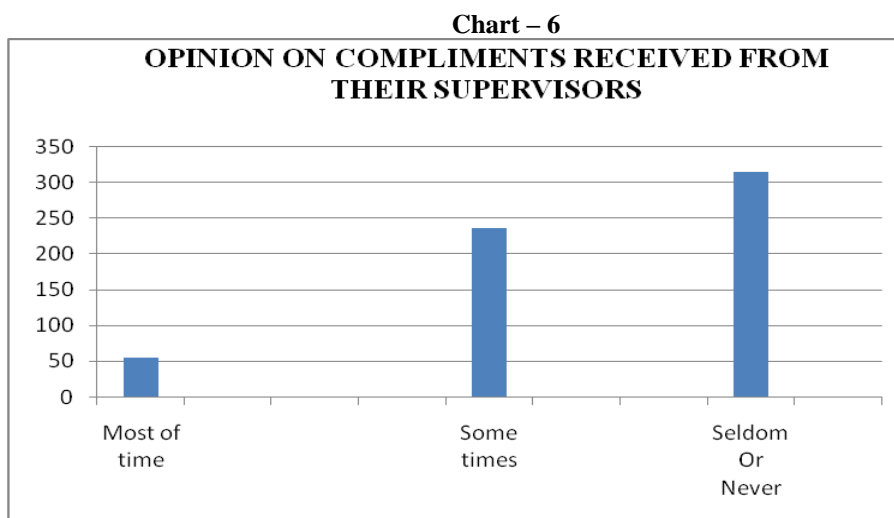
In the process of the research, the researcher has gathered the opinions on superiors appreciation to their subordinates for their achievement and success. The following information was gathered and presented in the table No: 7

TABLE: 7 OPINIONS ON COMPLIMENTS RECEIVED FROM THEIR SUPERVISORS

S.No	Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Most of time	54	9
2	Some times	236	39
3	Seldom Or Never	314	52
	Total	604	100

From the above data we can say that only 9 % of the respondents received compliments from their supervisors for most of time, and 39% of the respondents received sometimes, where as 52% of the respondents

never received any compliments from their supervisors. By analyzing the above table one can understand that superior's behaviours and attitude towards the subordinates are totally adverse. This will deteriorate the inter-personnel in the organization and causes damage to the organization. Hence proper stand to be maintain to correct the relations in the organization.



To understand the misunderstandings, mis-attitude, misbehaviour and various types of disputes and conflicts that exist in the organization a brief explanation was given in the following paragraphs.

III. Conflicts

Conflicts may be related to group and/or organized and individual and / or unorganized. Under the former category the forms of dissent expressions by the employees are non-cooperation with the management, arguments, hostility, stresses and tensions, unwillingness to negotiations, resentment, absenteeism, work-to-rule, demonstration, morcha, gherao and strike. Management may also express its disagreement for the demands of union(s) and they include unwilling to negotiate with employee union(s), termination of employees, demotion of certain employees, lay-offs and lockouts.

Types of Industrial Conflicts

Industrial conflicts are basically divided into two type's viz., strikes and lockouts.

i) Strikes

Strikes are the result of more fundamental adjustments, injustices and economic disturbances. According to Peterson, "strike is a temporary cessation of work by a group of employees in order to express grievances or to enforce a demand concerning changes in work conditions."

Section 2(q) of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 strike is "a cessation of work by a body of persons employed in any industry, acting in combination or a concerted refusal under a common understanding, of a number of persons who are or have been so employed to continue to work or to accept employment."

According to Section 2(1) of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 lockout means "the closing of a place of business of employment or the suspension of work, or the refusal by an employer to continue to employ any number of persons employed by him."

However, prohibition an individual employee, termination of employment or retrenchment, termination of service of more than one person is not lockouts.

Strikes are alienated into two categories: primary and secondary strikes. Strikes are generally against the employer with whom the disputes exist are called primary strikes. They take the forms of stay away strike, pen-down, tools-down, or mouth-shut strikes, sit-in, sit-down, go-slow, token or protest strike, lightening or wildcat strike, picketing or boycott, work-to-rule and so on.

ii) Primary Strikes

Token or Protest Strike: It is a very short duration and is in the nature of signal for the danger ahead. In this strike the workers do not work for an hour or a day.

Picketing: It is an act of posting pockets and implies machinery or patrolling or the workmen in from of the premises of the employer.

Boycott: It aims at disrupting the normal functioning of the enterprise.

Gherao: It is a physical blockade of a target either by encirclement, intended to block the regress from and to a particular office, workshop etc.

Secondary Strike: Secondary strikes are against a third party. These strikes are sympathetic strikes.

Other Strikes: These strikes are in the form of general, particular, political and bandhs.

Manifestation of conflicts at individual level and unorganized forms from the side of employees may unorganized work withholding effort, intentional waste and work with inefficiency, high rate of labour turnover consequent to separation of employees, absenteeism, complaints to higher levels of management, deliberate efforts to break the rules and strikes. From the side of management the unorganized forms of conflict manifestation would be autocratic style of management, implementation and observation of rules strictly, imposing penalties on any sort of violations, removal of employees without a logical cause (unnecessary firing), demoting people on personal grounds, lay-offs and declaration of lock-outs.

Depending on the magnitude of the issue Plant management will adopt the suitable redressal mechanism. Choice of statutory mechanism to resolve the dispute would be the last stage. Most of the disputes are resolved through non-statutory mechanism. Negotiations with recognized trade unions help in resolving majority cases. There are incidences; some disputes have been referred to conciliator for redressal.

The Asst. Labour Commissioner (central), Visakhapatnam will hold conciliation proceedings under Sec. 12 of industrial dispute Act. 1947 on the dispute raised before him by a trade union/employee of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant.

On receipt of remarks from the management the ALC (c) will hold conciliation proceedings with both the parties. If both parties are not reached bay settlement the ALC (c) will send the replant of conciliation to the secretary to the Government of India. Ministry of labour. The ministry of labour will take further action to judge whether to submit I.D. is a fit case or not for reference to the industrial tribunal for adjudication. The Award given by the industrial tribunal is binding on both the parties.

The issues contained in various strike notices issued by various unions are also being examined in the personnel department and conducting bilateral discussions on all the issues and certain demands are agreed to in the discussions and an agreement is reached before the Asst. labour commissioner (central / Regional labour commissioner (central) on the agreed items.

Apart from the above, there is a Grievance procedure existing. If any employee has any grievance, he has to initially represent the matte to the section officer and if he is not satisfied with the decision of the officer or fails to receive any answer within the stipulated period, he shall either in person or accompanied by a co-employee, present his grievance to the Head of Department, during the fixed time prescribed for presentation of grievances. The Head of the Department shall give his answer with in 6 days of the presentation of the grievance. If action cannot be taken with in the period, the reason for delay should be recorded. If the decision of the Head of the Department is not acceptable, the aggrieved employee can submit his representation to the Dy. General Manager through the personnel officer. At this stage, the employee can take the assistance of the union for representation before the personnel officer. The personnel officer will process the matter and put up the case to the Dy. General Manager with in one week. The employee will be duly informed of the decision of the Dy. General Manager in the matter with in a fortnight. Director (personnel) as in charge of personnel and industrial relations of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant, maintain harmonious relations.

Major IR events taken in the organization for various years is noted below:

IV. Major Ir Evetns For The Year 2007-11

SL.NO	DATE	INCIDENT	DEMAND
01	04/04/07	Ghereao of GM (Projects) by Contract labour affiliated to CITU, AITUC, HMS &INTUC	Full and final settlement in respect of contract works of M/s NCC Pvt. Ltd.
02	05/04/07	Demo by CITU, AITUC, AICTU, VSEU &HMS from 8.30 am to 9.00 am	a) Wage revision for 5 years b) 4% increment on Basic c) Abolish tax on perquisites
03	07/04/07	Ukkunirvasita Nirudhyoga Samkshema Sangham & CITU organized a dharna in front of Project Office.	Employment of opportunities for displaced persons
04.	13/04/07	Work stoppage by contract labour of M/s Franco India, in RMHP area	Full and final settlement for the previous period.
05	12/05/07	Demo by contract labour union affiliated to AITUC at C0&CCP, BF, S/P from 1.30 pm to 2.00 pm	Demand for special wages for contract labour.
06	16/05/07	Demo by Republic Steel Contract Labour Union (JMS) at Admn Bldg Junction from 8.00 am to 9.00 am	To resolve issues of contract labour.
07	07/06/07	Dharna by Contract labour union (CITU) at Area Shop Offices of C0&CCP, RMHP, SP, BF, SMS, TPP, WRM , LMMM from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm	Immediate Constitution of wage committee, ESI Hospital, Employment for DPs in contract workers.
08	13/06/07	Relay hunger strike by CITU, AITUC, HMS &TNTUC near T&DC from 8.00 am to 6.00 pm on	5 year wage period , 4% increment on basic pay.

		13.06.07	
09	15/06/07	Contract workers of M/s PSR Enterprises engaged in SMS struck work led by CITU contract workers union.	Payment of wages to two contract workers who were sustained burn injuries on 15.05.07.
10	18.06.07	AITUC held a demo near BC Gate from 8.00 am to 9.00 am	4% of basic as increment, HBA , Satellite township etc.
11	19.06.07	AITUC held a demonstration near T&DC from 8.00 am to 9.00 am	-do-
12	19.06.07	SPEU (CITU) and CITU Contract labour union held a demo at Admn bldg junction from 8j.00 am to 9.00 am	Lifting of ceiling on Bonus, Payment of Bonus to all, amendment in Bonus act etc.
13	03.07.07	Dharna by CITU at the Area Shop Office of Sinter Plant during lunch time.	Incentive at par with BF
14	06.07.07	Work stoppage by FMD workers in "A" Shift	Appropriate Designation & career growth etc.
15	07.07.07	Dharna by USE supporters near T&DC from 8.30 AM to 9.00 AM	Comprehensive Promotion Policy for Non-Executives
16	10.07.07	Demonstration by USE supporters near T&DC from 8.30 to 9.00 AM	- do -
17	12.07.07	Dharna by INTUC supporters at BF Area Shop Office from 9.00 AM to 10.00 AM	Incentive at par with SMS
18	13.07.07	A large group of technicians of works division squatting in front of ED(W) Building.	Promotion to Chageman in `C` cluster.
19	13.07.07	Work stoppage by contract workers belonging to AITUC from 9.00 am to 11.30 AM in CO&CCP area	Tea allowance of Rs.2.50 per day
20	18.07.07	Work stoppage by 21 contract workers of M/s VK Industries in CO&CCP under Structural Engg. Dept.	Payment of wages for 5 days without working due to heavy rains.
21	18.07.07	Work stoppage by contract workers of M/s PR Enterprises & and M/s Kalathil Brothers of SMS area.	Payment of wages on revised rate.
22	19.07.07	Continuation of work stoppage by the contract workers of M/s VK industries in SED.	Payment of wages for 5 days without working due to heavy rains in CO&CCP area.
23	21.07.07	Slow down by employees in SP and abstaining for duty by the supporters of CITU & AITUC	Incentive issue
24	25.07.07	Relay hunger strike by VSP SC/ST Employees Welfare Assn. from 8.00 AM onwards near T&DC	To consider SC/ST Employees who have completed 5 years in JO grade for the post of AE.
25	25.07.07	Dharna by DITU near T&DC from 8.30 AM to 9.00 AM	5 years wage period, 4% increment, comprehensive promotion policy for NE employees.
26	25.07.07	Relay hunger strike commences by VSP SC/ST Assn. near T&DC	To consider SC/ST employees who have put in 5 years in JO grade for AE post
27	27.07.07	Demonstration by Khalasis at Central Stores Junction from 8.30 AM to 9.00 AM	S-6 incentive for S-4 Khalasis
28	30.07.07	Demonstration by CITU, AITUC, TNTUC near Admn. Buldg. Jn. From 8.30 AM to 9.00 AM	To protest against the police firing at Mudigonda in Khammam Dist. on 29.07.07.
29	30.07.07	Protest by TNTUC at Kurmanapalem Junction from 7.00 to 9.00 AM	For sanction of captive mines for VSP, change of design. For Khalasis, 4% increment etc.
30	31.07.07	Unruly behaviour of some of the union leaders over a fatal accident involving on Sri A Appala Raju, contract worker who succumbed to injuries as he was hit by a truck belong to M/s Pratyusha Associates.	Compensation and action against the responsible persons for accident.
31	01.08.07	Dharna by Steel Plant Contract Labour Union (CITU) at ED(W) Buildg. From 10.30 AM TO 1.30 pm in supplant of the issues of the working on painting works	Revised wages.
32	01.08.07	Taxi drivers resorted to work stoppage with the supplant of AITUC	Bonus and Minimum Wages.
33	02.08.07	Dharna by painting workers near Admn. Buldg. Jn. From 8.30 to 9.00 AM supplanted by CITU	Min. Wages, rectification of discrepancies in PF etc.
34	03.08.07	Demonstration by Khalasis at Central Stores Junction	Promotions with cluster change.
35	06.08.07	Gate Meeting by SPCLU (CITU) at BC Gate	To gather with the support of the contract workers for their agitation programmes and strike on 8 th

			August'07.
36	07.08.07	About 50 Khalasis gathered at Central Stores Jn. From 8.45 to 9.00 AM.	Promotion to Khalasis with cluster change.
37	07.08.07	Human chain by contract workers supplanted by CITU at Central Stores Junction at 5.30 PM	Revised wages, special wages etc.
38	07.08.07	Contract workers of M/s Shri Charan in SMS led by CITU resorted to agitation.	Condemning the delay in commencement of work order.
39	16.08.07	Dharna by TNTUC at BC Gate from 8.40 am to 9.00 am	Supplant to the demands of khalasis
40	20.08.07	AITUC-BF Committee organized a dharna in front of BF Area Shop office at 1.30 pm	For improvements in technical parameters in BF incentive.
41	22.08.07	Gate Meeting by CITU at BC Gate from 8.40 am to 9.00 am attended by 100 of its cadre	In supplant of the second phase of land agitation (Bhoomi Poratam) not linked to VSP.
42	22.8.07	Gate Meeting by CITU at BC Gate from 8.40 am to 9j.00 am attended by around 100 of its cadre	In supplant of the second phase of land agitation (Bohemia Poratam) not linked to VSP.
43	23.08.07	Contract workers of M/s PSR Enterprises engaged shroud fixing struck work from 7.30 led by CITU work resumed only on 124.08.07 at 12.00 noon	Enhanced wages for supervisors.
44	23.08.07	Demonstration by Kulavivaksha Vyatireka Poratam Sangham from 8.40 to 9.00 am	Demanding dismissal of greyhound Police and against mass rape of tribal-issue not linked to VSP.
45	26.08.07	44 Contract workers of M/s Multi tech construction under M/s HSCL in DSCO&CCD area in CO&CCP area led by AITUC.	Higher wages for unskilled workers in refractory work.
46	27.08.07	Agitation over a minor blast in Converter -II of SMS due to technical failure while lifting the conveyor	To fix responsibility for the technical mishap
47	27.08.07	Demonstration by TNTUC with the support of around 40 contract workers from 8.30 to 9.00 am near T&DC	Condemning the terrorist attack in Hyderabad - Issue not linked to VSP.
48	27.08.07	Fatal accident involving late Sri Y.Ammoru, khalasis, Traffic dept. All unions agitated over the incident at VSGH and stopped the busses carrying employees for 'C' shift. Normalcy restored at 12.30.	Demanding compensation from the contract agency M/s Sri Krishna Engg.
49	28.08.07	Demo by CITU, AITUC & TNTUC from 8.30 am to 9.00 am at Admn bldg Junction	Condemning the bomb blast in Hyderabad- Issue not linked to VSP.
50	30.08.07	Protest by Brigade-II employees of MMSM from 11.00 am but no production loss was shown.	Demanding equal manpower of 11 for their brigade instead of 9.
51	11.09.07	Work stoppage by contract workers of M/s Multi Tech construction working under M/s HSCL led by AITUC.	Semi skilled wages for unskilled workers.
52	12.09.07	Technicians S6/S7 grade wore black badges.	Chargeman promotion in Cluster " C "
53	13.09.07	Demonstration by USE, BMS & TNTUC near T&D Centre from 8.30 Am to 9.00 am.	Chargeman promotions in Cluster-C for all S6/S7 technicians.
54	17.09.07	The employees of QA&TD Lab located in Sinter Plant area struck work.	To introduce Automatic Sample Collection system instead of manual sample collection system from moving conveyor terming it as unsafe.
55	18.09.07	Demonstration by Khalasis at Central Stores Junction between 8.45 am and 9.00 am.	S-6 Technicians incentive for S-4 Khalasis.
56	19.09.07	Public meeting by Political leaders near T&D Centre stopping the employees going for " G " shift duty.	Employment for displaced persons.
57	19.09.07	Work stoppage by about 100 contract workers of M/s Real Fab in RMHP area supplanted by unions.	Issues pertaining to wages.
58	21.09.07	Human Chain by S6/S7 grade technicians at Central Stores Junction between 2.00 PM and 2.30 PM.	Chargeman promotion to all S6/S7 technicians in Cluster-C.
59	24.09.07	Work stoppage by the contract workers of M/s Sunil Tech and also instigating workers of other agencies also led by contract workers unions of AITUC, INTUC,CITU and HMS.	Demand for declaration of 18 th Sept, Viswakarma Puja Day as paid holiday and also demanding Rs.300/- as allowance and condemning the non-compliance of some statutory payments.
60	26.09.07	The three major unions staged a demonstration before Admn. Building of MDM from 10.30 am to 12.00 noon.	To resolve the issues of Civil maintenance in plant and township area.
61	27.09.07	The three major unions staged a demonstration	To resolve the issues of Civil

		before Admn. Building of MDM from 11.00 Am to 11.30 am.	maintenance in plant and township area.
62	28.09.07	The three major unions staged a demonstration before Admn. Building of MDM from 10.30 Am to 11.15 am.	To resolve the issues of Civil maintenance in plant and township area.
63	01.10.07	Demonstration by S6/S7 Porata Committee in front of Area Shop Office from 1.30 PM to 2.00 PM.	Chargeman promotion to all S6/S7 technicians in Cluster-C.
64	01.10.07	Employees of FMD struck work and met DGM(FMD) from 2.30 PM.	Suitable designation for senior operators and Chargeman promotion for S/6 & S/7 operators.
65	01.10.07	About 20 contract workers struck work and agitated in front of Area Shop Office of Sinter Plant at 2.45 PM.	Demanding passes for three of their workmen which was withdrawn by the contractor.
66	03.10.07	Demonstration by CITU & AITUC at the entrance of JLM Admn. Building obstructing the employees from 8.40 Am to 8.50 am.	Demanding modification of A- type quarter into B- type, appointment of a lady doctor, improvement of civic amenities in township.
67	05.10.07	Demonstration by CITU at the entrance of JLM Admn. Building obstructing the employees from 8.50 am to 9.00 am.	Demanding modification of A- type quarter into B- type, appointment of a lady doctor, improvement of civic amenities in township.
68	06.10.07	Dharna by DPs led by the leaders of DPs Association, trade unions of VSP and local MLA Sri T Gurumurthy Reddy at Admn. Building Junction from 8.30 am to 9.00 Am obstructing the employees attending G shift.	Employment for displaced persons, compensation for unemployed displace persons etc.
69	08.10.07	Wearing badges by CITU	Captive Mines to VSP
70	09.10.07	DPs Association along with union met D (P)	Employment to DPs
71	10.10.07	Dharna by DPs Association, Vadlapudi Committee at Kurmannapalem Jn. From 5.30 pm to 6.00pm	Cancellation of notification issued on 09.09.07
72	11.10.07	CITU, AITUC, BMS & TNTUC obstructed traffic between PP Gate and Dedication Park in 'G' shift	Cancel the work Order. Cancel the license of Jeep Driver. Action against the Home Guard etc.
73	12.10.07	DPs Association organized dharna from 8.30 to 9.00 am in Pedagantyada RH Colony	Employment to DPs
74	12.10.07	INTUC met ED (W)	Incentive Scheme, Promotion Policy etc.
75	12.10.07	Employees of CO&CCP resorted to picketing in the office of GM (Co&CCP & RMHP)	Chargemen Promotion in Cluster 'C'
76	13.10.07	Chargemen aspiring JO met D (P)	JO Promotion
77	13.10.07	S6/S7 Porata Committee met the DGMs of Pers. Dept at 9.30 am	Chargemen Promotion in Cluster 'C'
78	15.10.07	Relay hunger Strike by DPs Agitation Committee led by the leaders of DPs Assn. Unions, Political parties near T&DC from 8.30 am to 6.00 am	Cancellation of notification
79	15.10.07	Contract workers of Fabrication Yard of expansion area staged a dharna at 11.00 am in front of the office of DGM (P)- Project led by INTUC & AITUC	Payment of site allowance
80	17.10.07	Relay hunger strike by Local Corporators of GVMC from Political parties, Congress, TDP, CPI and CPM participated for 3 rd day.	DPs employment issue
81	25.10.07	Demand Badges by CITU contract labour union members.	Government to give up its partiality attitude in allocating Iron Ore Mines to VSP and to ban explanting of Iron Ore.
82	25.10.07	AITUC stopped the work at M/s APEX at M/s Harjee Engg. Work	On retrenchment of 40 workers in order to induct DPs Rs.1500/- as recoverable advance as given in M/s Sunil Hi-Tech.
83	27.10.07	Relay hunger strike mostly participants with leaders on 26.10.07 MLAs and leaders of DPs Assn met D (P) and CMD twice and several rounds of discussions held.	DPs employment issue
84	29.10.07	Relay hunger strike continue. Seethanagaram & Aganampudi RH Colony DPs participated.	DPs employment issue
85	30.10.07	DPS of Chepalapalem in Appikonda village participated in relay hunger strike. The villagers issued a pamphlet.	To treat them as DPs as their village is being polluted due to inflow of effluents of VSP contaminating the drinking water sources in the village. Demanded VSP Management to provide drinking water.

86	06.11.07	Contract workers of INTUC participated in relay hunger strike. They raised slogans from 8.40 to 9.00 AM.	Employment to DPs.
87	06.11.07	Contract labour of SPCLU(CITU) organized a dharna near HOD of CED	Full & Final settlements, gate passes, employment to one of the family of the deceased contract worker etc.
88	07.11.07	Contract workers of TNTUC participated in relay hunger strike. The traffic blockaded from 8.45 to 9.00 AM. The leaders addressed and raised slogans.	Employment to DPs.
89	07.11.07	AT around 10.30 Am the paramedical staff, nursing staff, pharmacists, lab. Technicians gathered in the chamber of GM (M&HS). They resumed work at around 12.45 PM.	Release of promotion orders.
90	08.11.07	Relay hunger strike. T.G. Reddy MLA along with DPs Committee met the Collector.	Employment to DPs.
91	08.11.07	Dharna by CITU contract labour union at HOD of SP demanding of 3 contract labour who were terminated for allegedly beating up a khalasis of SP	Reinstatement of contract workers.
92	10.11.07	Relay hunger strike continues.	Employment to DPs.
93	12.11.07	Relay hunger strike continues.	Employment to DPs.
94	12.11.07	S-6/S7 Technicians met ED (W) and DGM (P)-PP I/c and submitted a copy of the memorandum.	Chargeman in Cluster 'C'.
95	13.11.07	Relay hunger strike continues.	Employment to DPs.
96	14.11.07	Relay hunger strike continues.	Employment to DPs.
97	15.11.07	3 contract labourers succumbed to injuries at Shiridi Saibaba Temple. ED (P&IR) held a meeting with union leaders who were present at temple.	Settled their demand on the lines of the settlement in the Gana Sabha case.
98	16.11.07	Relay hunger strike continues.	Employment to DPs.
99	16.11.07	CMD, D (P), ED (P&IR) visited VSGH & inspected the Accident spot at Saibaba Temple.	
100	16.11.07	Contract labourers belong to M/s M Ganga Raju struck work at CCD/SMS.	Payment of heat allowance and certain disputes over weekly off and working in shifts.
Date	Union	No. of Strike Days	Issue/Demand
20.08.2008	Visakha Steel Workers Union (Recognized) and its allies (HMS, TNTUC & AICTU)	One day Strike	Wage revision, oppose privatization of PSUs, Allotment of Captive Mines to VSP, 50% DA merger with Basic w.e.f.01.04.2004, minimum basic of the permanent employee to be given as wages to the contract worker etc
20.08.2008	Contract Labour Unions (CITU, AITUC, HMS & TNTUC)	One Day strike	a) Stop disinvestment in VSP b) Implementation of DA & HRA c) Minimum basic of regular employees should be fixed as the wage/salary of the contract labour.
19.12.2008	Contract Labour Unions(CITU, AITUC, HMS, TNTUC & INTUC)	One day strike	Payment of Rs.1000/- as miscellaneous Allowance as announced by Hon'ble Minister for Steel
24.03.2009	Contract Labour Unions (CITU, AITUC, INTUC, HMS & TNTUC)	One Day Strike	Payment of Rs.1000/- as announced by Hon'ble Minister for Steel
04.11.2009	CITU, AITUC, INTUC, HMS, TNTUC, DITU, BMS, JMS, AICTU, VSEU, VSMS, USE, VSPEU & CVSW	One day strike	Merger at the existing rate of 78.2% DA with Basic Pay in line with other PSUs, to retain existing rates of increments, sanction of Minimum Guaranteed Benefit of 28% and 5 years wage period.
07.09.2010	Contract Labour Unions (CITU, AITUC, INTUC, HMS & TNTUC)	One day strike	Opposing disinvestment/privatization, price hike, issues relating to Unorganized Sector etc.
21.01.11	CONTRACT LABOUR STRUCK WORK IN BF ZONE		
	<p>Today, at around 10.30 AM, a group of 25 workers of M/s JS Engineering engaged in Track Maintenance work in BF Zone struck work for not issuing muster card to one of the workers. AGM (Traffic) and Zonal Personnel Executives discussed with the TNTUC representatives for resumption of work. The Contractor later explained that these workers were to carry on the work on piece rate but later demanded for time rate engagement. The contractor was advised to resolve the issue amicably as the work was suffering. It is learnt that the workers are likely to resume work by tomorrow.</p> <p>02. CONTRACT LABOUR RESUMED TRACK MAINTENANCE WORK IN BF ZONE</p> <p>The contract workers of M/s JS Engineering engaged in Track Maintenance work in BF Zone who struck work the morning of 21.01.2011 for not issuing muster card to one of the workers, resumed their duties after discussion by the contractor with the representatives of TNTUC Contract Labour Union.</p>		
10.03.11	WORK STOPPAGE BY CONTRACT LABOUR AT SMS:		
	<p>The Contract labour numbering 33 engaged in "Collection and disposal of sludge and scale in GCM of SMS" under M/s. MGM Enterprises led by CITU & INTUC struck work demanding payment of heat allowance today. AGM (P)-SMS held a meeting with the representatives of CITU, INTUC and the Contractor and made an appeal to restore normalcy immediately. At the time of preparation of this report, work stoppage continues. Police were deployed as a precautionary measure.</p>		

It is understood from the above table that there is no major stoppage of work in the organization on account of strikes. The specific reason for launching of short duration or one-day token strike is that majority issues are settled at the time of wage settlement between concerned government department and Federation of Trade Unions of the organization. In case of minor problems they will be negotiated between unions and the management locally (Plant level).

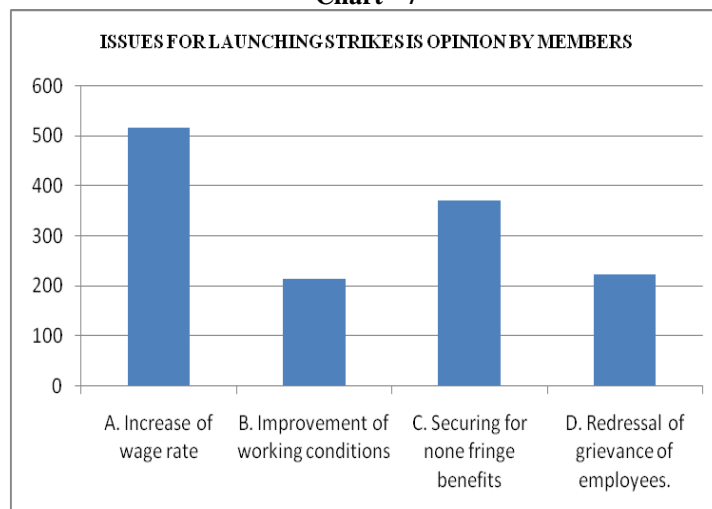
Various issues involved for launching strikes by the workers in the organization are discussed in the following table 8

TABLE: 8 ISSUES FOR LAUNCHING STRIKES BY MEMBERS

Issues of demand	No. of respondents	Percentage
A. Increase of wage rate	517	87.56
B. Improvement of working conditions	215	36.50
C. Securing for none fringe benefits	372	63.00
D. Redressal of grievance of employees.	224	38.00

In response to the issues to resorting to strikes, 87.56% per cent revealed that strikes were launched in increased wage rate followed by improvement in fringe benefits (63%) (Table no. 7). Securing for good working conditions, redressal of grievance of employees have also accounted for 36.5 per cent respectively as reasons for strikes.

Chart - 7



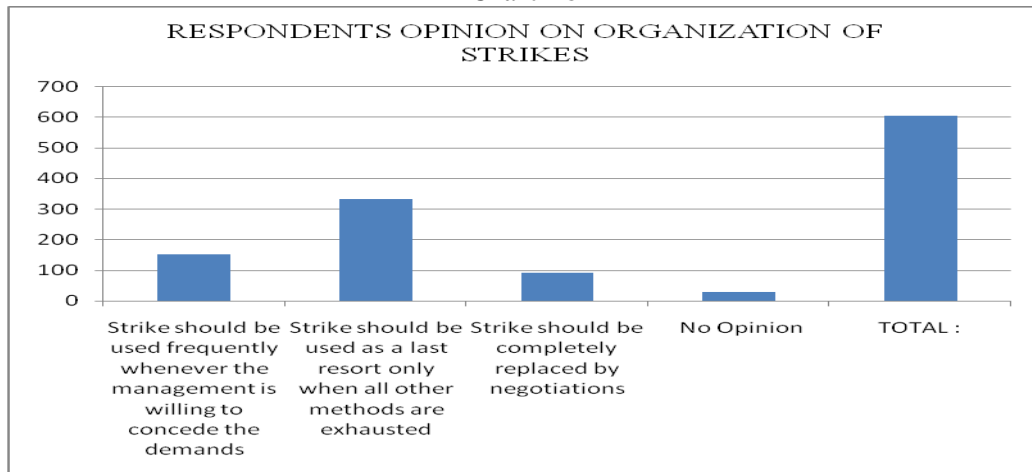
The respondents are also asked to express their opinions on the organization of strikes – The responses are tabulated and presented in Table 9.

TABLE: 9 RESPONDENTS OPINION ON ORGANIZATION OF STRIKES

S.No	Opinion of Employees/Workers	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Strike should be used frequently whenever the management is willing to concede the demands	151	25
2.	Strike should be used as a last resort only when all other methods are exhausted	332	55
3.	Strike should be completely replaced by negotiations	91	15
4.	No Opinion	30	5
TOTAL :		604	100

It indicates that 55 per cent of the respondents expressed that the strike should be used as a last resort only when all other methods are exhausted. 15 per cent opined that the strike should be completely replaced by negotiations and consultation between the parties. The respondents who felt that the strike should be used frequently whenever management is unwilling to concede their demands forms only 25 per cent. It is significant to note that a majority of the respondents felt that strikes should be used as a last resort of dispute settlement or should be replaced by collaborative practice between the parties.

Chart – 8



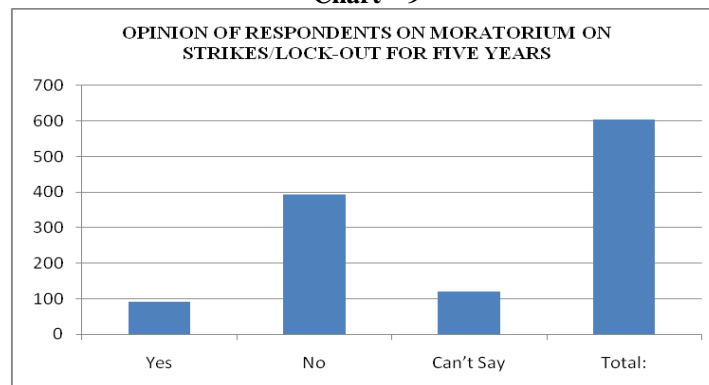
The workers were further asked about their views on moratorium on strike/lockouts. The views are presented in Table 10.

TABLE: 10 OPINIONS OF RESPONDENTS ON MORATORIUM ON STRIKES/LOCK-OUT FOR FIVE YEARS

S.NO.	Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Yes	91	15
2.	No	392	65
3.	Can't Say	121	20
	Total:	604	100

It is evident that large numbers of respondents are in favour of moratorium on strikes/lockout should not be imposed. They felt that strike is an important step to protect their rights and interests in order to improve their working conditions at VSP. 15 per cent are in favour of imposing restriction on strike/lock-out for a period of five years. It is pertinent to note that the employees are sparingly using strike to get their demands satisfied. It is clear that the employees of the organization in general are not in favour of direct action as a means of resolving their conflicts. Perhaps this phenomenon explains the objective of strikes in the organization. This is an evidence of cordial and orderly relations between management and employees of the VSP.

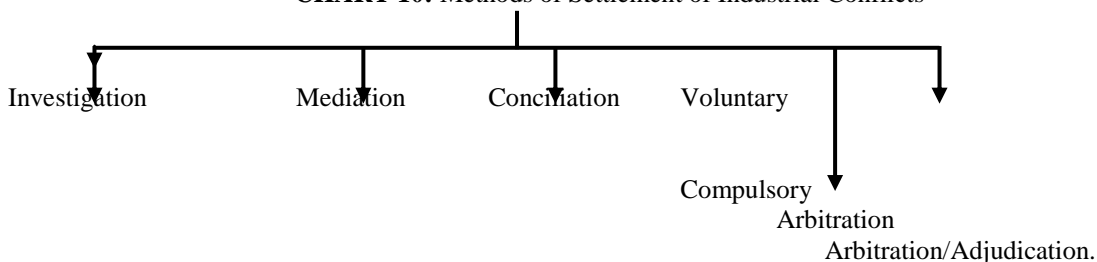
Chart – 9



SETTLEMENT OF CONFLICTS

The methods of the settlement of conflicts generally include the following

CHART 10: Methods of Settlement of Industrial Conflicts



Among the above settlements only two methods namely (i) Conciliation, (ii) Compulsory Arbitration / Adjudication are being normally adopted to resolve the conflicts in the VSP. They are explained in the following paragraphs.

V. Conciliation

The main objective of conciliation is to reunite the two conflicting groups in industry in order to avoid interruption of production, distrust etc. It is a process by which representatives of both employers and workers are brought together before a third party with a view to persuade them to arrive at some sort of settlement. Conciliation is an extension of collective bargaining with third party assistance. It is the practice by which the services of a neutral third party are used in a dispute settlement as a means of helping the disputing parties to reduce the extent of their differences and to arrive at an amicable settlement or an agreed solution. It is a process of rational and orderly discussions of differences between the parties of a dispute under the guidance of a conciliator. Conciliation machinery consists of a conciliation officer and board of conciliators. The conciliator induces the parties to a course of action. He plays the roles of an innovator, protector, discussion leader, stimulator, advisor, and face-saver. He acts as safety valve and a communication link.

The task of conciliation is to offer advice and make suggestions to the parties to the dispute on controversial issues.

a) Compulsory Arbitration/Adjudication

Where trade unions are weak the method of Compulsory Arbitration is used. Compulsory Arbitration is utilized generally when the parties fail to arrive at a settlement through the voluntary methods. In India, Compulsory Arbitration is enforced because collective bargaining has achieved limited success in regulating wages and other conditions of employment.

It may be said that compulsory arbitration may be at times and under certain circumstances, necessary and desirable. The nature, scale and timing of State intervention should be suited to the needs of different occasions. The objective of state intervention in the field of industrial relations should be to do social justice and make the weaker party equally strong to enable it ultimately to stand on its own legs and settle its difference through negotiations and collective bargaining. Compulsory arbitration is one where the parties are required to arbitrate without any willingness on their part. Any one of the parties may apply to the appropriate governments to refer the dispute to adjudication machinery.

VI. Conclusion

IR in the organization is maintained in congenial and cordial manner, expect few notable points. They are explained in the following points:

1. Superiors and Subordinates relationship in some departments are not maintained in a healthy manner. This must be immediately sorted out.
2. Proper training is to be imparted to superiors regarding to forming of better relations with colleagues.
3. Process and procedure adopted for dispute and grievance settlement is to be followed unbiasedly in the organization.
4. After gathering the perception from the respondents in regard to trade union activity in the organization, majority of the respondents felt that union activity in the organization is gradually discouraged by the management by taking serious actions on the participants in the strike or related activities.
5. Since organization is excelling in the production and productivity and also in the profitability, Management should oblige fair demands that are put forwarded by the unions and also it must give equal freedom and opportunity for the unions in representing the matters to the management.

Acknowledgements

The author gratefully acknowledges the Department of IR and Employees of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant for providing the primary and secondary information.

References:

- [1]. Akhilesh, K.B. and Pandey, S. "A comparative study of organisation climate in the Banks", Indian Journal of Industrial Relation, Vol. 21, No.4, April, 1986.
- [2]. Arthur Konhouser (edited), Industrial Conflicts, New York, Mc. Graw Hill Book Company, 1954.
- [3]. Bain, G.S. (ed.), Industrial Relations in Britain, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983.
- [4]. Bean, R., Comparative Industrial Relations, London: Croovs Helly, 1985.
- [5]. Craig, A.W.J., The system of Industrial Relations in Canada Scarborough, out: prentice – Hall, 1983.
- [6]. Davar, R.S., Personnel Management and Industrial Relations Vikas publishing House Private Limited, 1993.

- [7]. Doeringer, P.B. and Other (eds.), *Industrial Relations in Inter-vocational Perspective: Essays on Research and policy*, London: Mac Mildeen, 1981.
- [8]. Dunlop John T., *Industrial Relation System*, New York, Henry Holt and coupan, 1958.
- [9]. Dyer, L. Lipsky, D.B. and Kochan, T.A., "Union Attitudes to learn Management Cooperation", *Industrial Relation*, 1977, 16 (2).
- [10]. Ghoshm P. and Santhosh Ghosh, *Labour Relations in India*, Sudha Publication (P) Ltd. 1983.
- [11]. Jales Backman quoted in K.C. Seal, "A Critical 'Review of Research and Literature on wages in India'" *Indian Journal of Industrial Relations*, July 1965, p.1.
- [12]. Kochan, T.A., *Collective Bargaining and Industrial Relations*, Home wood: Irwin, 1980.
- [13]. Lal Das, D.K. "Change in Interpersonal Relations of Industrial Employees – An Analysis", *Indian Journal of Industrial Relations* Vol. 20, No.3, January, 1985.
- [14]. Lal Das, D.K. *Personnel Management Industrial Relations and Labour Welfare*. Y.K. Publishers, Agra, 1991.
- [15]. Mason Hoire, Edwin E. Chiselle and Iymen W. Porter "Psychological Research on Pay: An Overview" *Industrial Relations*, Vol. 3, No.1, October, p.3.
- [16]. Mathur, A.S., *Labour Policy and Industrial Relations in India*, Ram Prasad & Sons, 1968.
- [17]. S.D. Pune Kar and Manorama G. Savur, *Management – White-Collar relations*, Bombay, Popular Prakasam, 1969 p – 244.
- [18]. Sydney and Beatrice Vebb, *Industrial Democracy*, 1962, p- 185.