

CITU seeks minimum wages in cashew units

- Special Correspondent

Visakha Zilla Jeedi Pikkalu Factory Karmika Sangham has alleged denial of minimum wages and statutory benefits like provident fund, gratuity and ESI facility to workers engaged by the cashew industry in the district.

CITU State president Ch. Narsinga Rao and district general secretary S. Ramesh told reporters here on Tuesday that in most of the cashew factories, the government recommended minimum wages were not being implemented.

According to them, an estimated 50,000 workers are engaged in cashew industry for cutting, peeling, packing and grading works in North Andhra – 30,000 in Srikakulam, 2,000 in Vizianagaram and the remaining in Visakhapatnam district.

Mr. Rao said the workers of Olam Group, which has 10 units in Visakhapatnam mainly at Narsipatnam, Chodavaram, Rajam, Janakirampuram, Amalapauram, Gumpa, Jeedituru and adjoining areas were on strike demanding minimum wage of Rs.298 per day. He alleged that they were paid just Rs.170 without any benefits as recommended by the government. A complaint to this effect has been made to the district Collector and other officials. He said the revised DA for an increase of 25 paise, which was notified in 2010, was not being implemented yet as the government had not moved a petition for vacating a stay issued on a plea by cashew factory managements.

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