



General secretary CYRIL RAMAPHOSA: Progress has been made, but the Provident Fund has gone to an arbitrator

MINEWORKER BRIEFS

NUM workers win overtime case

NUM members won an important industrial court judgement which rejected an application by De Beers Premier Mine to force 1034 NUM members to work overtime.

The mine bosses wanted the industrial court to judge the refusal to work overtime as an unfair labour practise. But the court said the work was not urgent and that individual mineworkers were not committing an unfair labour practise.

NUM general secretary Cyril Ramaphosa said "with the continuing loss of jobs and the high rate of unemployment, a ban on overtime could increase the possibility of job creation".

Union members were already working very hard and producing adequately, he said. Comrade Ramaphosa said "workers should not have to work hard as it only serves to heighten exploitation".

Working overtime caused the disruption of home life and placed strain on family relations, he said.

Polyurethane ban underground

OUR struggle to ban the killer foam polyurethane - cause of the Kinross disaster - took several steps forward when the Government Mining Engineer said he would ban the use of polyurethane underground from January next year.

The NUM called on the GME to issue regulations at once and to monitor the removal of the killer foam and not leave this to the mine bosses.

In South Africa two hundred and eight workers have died in polyurethane fires since 1977. The NUM said it was "saddened by the fact it took two years of vigorous campaigning and the loss of 7 more lives at Western Deep Levels to convince the GME to make this important decision".

The NUM has campaigned strongly for the banning of polyurethane. It is now up to workers to pressure management and make sure that they stand by the new regulations.

May 1, and rises, at General Mining

THE union has signed an across the board minimum increase of 17% for workers on the A-level at General Mining Union Corporation.

Union members will get May Day off as long as they do not take PW Botha's holiday on the first Monday in May.

New minimum wages will be R690 for A1, R748 for A2 and R889 for A3. The new maternity agreement provides for two months paid maternity leave and two months unpaid leave with a job guarantee after the four months.

Ergo party celebrates victory

ERGO workers had a celebration party - for which they each paid R10 - at Happy Valley, Tsakane on 17 December.

The happy workers were celebrating the decision of the Industrial Court to award R500,000 to the over one thousands workers re-employed by management after the August 1987 strike. Management had tried to withhold wage rises from the strikers.

Union negotiates Provident Fund

THE National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) has negotiated a Provident Fund for all mineworkers with the Chamber.

A Provident Fund is a way of saving for times of need - workers and management both pay money into it. The Chamber and our union have been negotiating the Provident Fund since August 1988 up till now.

All workers in job categories 1 - 8 underground and surface as well as monthly paid staff will be able to participate in the Provident Fund from 1 March 1989.

A lot of progress has been made in the negotiations. But the union has problems on a number of issues where the Chamber refuses to agree to our proposals.

The Chamber and our union have agreed that the issues in dispute should be taken to an arbitrator to give a final decision. The decision of the arbitrator will be in February 1989.

The union expects the Provident Fund to start working on 1 March 1989.

How the Fund works

It is a benefit for Workers. The Provident Fund is aimed at making sure that workers get

money when they:-

- go on pension;
- die (this will go to their families);
- are retrenched;
- are dismissed;
- resign from the mines;
- are disabled as a result of accidents;
- have to pay for funeral expenses for themselves, or families; and
- workers will also get the interest the money they have in the Provident Fund.

Management pays

In order that workers should get the above benefits the mines will pay: From 1 March 1989 to 30 June 1989 -

The mines will pay R1,50 for every R100,00 a worker earns, that is if you earn R300,00 per month the mine will pay R4,50 every month for you and it will be saved under your name by the Provident Fund.

From 1 July 1989 to 30 June 1990 -The mines will pay R3,00 per month for every R100,00 a worker earns, that is if you earn R300,00 per month the mine will pay R9,00 per month for you.

Workers will pay:

From 1 March 1889 to 30 July

1989 - Workers will have to pay R1,50 for every R100,00 they earn. That is if you earn R300,00 you will pay R4,50 per month.

From 1 July 1989 to 30 June 1990-

Money will be taken off

Workers will pay R3,00 for every R100,00 they earn, that is if you earn R300,00 per month you will have to pay R9,00 per month.

Money will be taken off your salary and be put under your account in the Provident Fund. The money paid by the mine for each worker will be added to the money deducted from each workers' salary.

It will be put in the worker's account in the Provident Fund.

The money put in every workers' account in the provident fund will be his money.

Committee controls Fund

A committee with representatives from the Chamber of Mines and the union will control the Provident Fund.

Workers are asked to attend union meetings and ask shaft stewards to explain the Provident Fund to them. Further information about the Provident Fund will be given after the arbitration.

All must sign new membership forms

THE union appeals to all mineworkers to sign the new union membership forms (stop order authorisation forms).

The new membership forms have been introduced at the insistence of the Chamber. The reason that everyone must sign new membership forms - whether you be an old member or joining for the first time - is because subscription fees have been raised from R1 a month to R2 a month.

This decision was taken by worker delegates at the last

NUM National Congress.

This is the union's first increase in its membership subscription fees since 1983.

NUM members pay the lowest fees out of all the unions in South Africa.

The fee to join the union is only 50c. Old members will not have to pay this money as they have already joined the union. They must just sign the new membership forms.

The minebosses will try different ways to persuade workers not to join the union,

Workers should be warned of this and ask whose interests the minebosses have at heart when they condemn the union.

NUM's National Organiser, Gweda Mantashe said the union would be launching a massive recruitment drive in the new year to get workers to either join the union for the first time or to sign the new membership forms.

Mineworkers, NUM is your organisation.

Sign, or join for the first time without delay.

Forward to NUM Congress

WORKERS should start discussing now what they would like to happen at NUM's National Congress in April next year.

It will start on 13 April and continue over that weekend.

The delegate system has changed from past congresses. In the past there were 50 voting delegates per region.

The new system is that there will be 25 voting delegates per region, and one delegate for every 1000 members. So, for example, the OFS has 73 000 members or 25 and 73 = 98.



A happy scene from a previous congress