

Germany Faces Possibility of Nationwide Strike by Train Drivers



Berlin, November 4 (RHC)-- The prospect of a nationwide strike by train drivers looms over Germany after the collapse of closed-door negotiations between the train drivers' union and German rail operator, Deutsche Bahn. On Monday, Deutsche Bahn said talks with the German Train Drivers' Union (GDL) ended in failure, raising concerns about the prospect of a major industrial action that could significantly harm Europe's biggest economy.

The union is now reportedly considering the launch of a 91-hour industrial action across the country. The head of personnel at Deutsche Bahn, Ulrich Weber, called GDL an "unreliable negotiating partner" after the union ended talks on Sunday just when a deal seemed to be within reach.

GDL seeks a five-percent pay rise for 20,000 drivers and two-hour reduction of working hours per week. The union has also demanded wage deals for nearly 17,000 train guards and other personnel. Deutsche Bahn has made several pay offers which GDL has rejected.

In mid-October, GDL called for a 50-hour strike, halting two thirds of long-distance trains and leaving millions stranded at the beginning of weekend holidays.

Following GDL's industrial action in October, pilots at German airline Lufthansa staged a two-day strike, causing flight disruptions for hundreds of thousands of travelers.

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