



# THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

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## Forward To The Third Conference Of CITU

**T**HE THIRD CONFERENCE OF THE CITU TO BE HELD in Bombay on 21—25 will be an important landmark in the successful application of the line of "Unity and Struggle" evolved in the foundation Conference of the organisation 5 years ago.

During the short period of its existance the CITU has made considerable advance in building united actions all over India. By its championing of the cause of all sections of the working class the CITU has emerged as the foremost fighter for working class unity. The AITUC leadership, which accused the CITU leadership as splitters in the Trade Union movement, is now thoroughly exposed before the mass of workers as a vociferous disruptive force and an appendage of the ruling party.

The growth of the United Council of Trade Unions and the emergence of the National Campaign Committee Against Wage Freeze represent the growing urge of unity among all sections of the working class. As against this, the National Council of Trade Unions founded by the INTUC, AITUC and HMS with official patronage stands discredited among the workers. This anti-working class alliance failed to make any headway and it could not mobilise the working class on a single issue despite 3 years of its existence. The constituents of the National Council have now openly admitted that it has become defunct and moribund.

With deepening economic crisis the ruling party is resorting to attacks on the workers and the people more and more to protect the interest of the capitalists and the landlords. Seeing its miserable failure to disrupt the movement the Government is trying to make full use of repressive measure to suppress the struggles. The use of DIR, MISA and other preventive measures has become a matter of common occurrence. Despite all these measures the

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**APRIL 6 : NATIONAL PROTEST AGAINST  
 EMERGENCY, DIR & MISA**

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working class and the democratic movement in the country is marching ahead with firmness and determination.

The Government of India did its best to crush the CITU by resorting to brutal repression and terror in West Bengal and Kerala but failed to stop its growth. More and more sections of the working class are coming closer to the CITU which has given a telling rebuff to the machinations of the ruling party.

Under these circumstances the Third Conference of the CITU is being held in Bombay. The Maharashtra State Committee of CITU which has trebled the membership during the last 5 years, has started making preparations in right earnest. A Reception Committee has already been constituted with S. Y. Kolhatkar as Chairman and P. K. Kurane as the Secretary. The Conference will be held in Shanmukhanand Hall which has a capacity to accommodate about 3000 delegates.

The announcement of the decision to hold the CITU Conference in Bombay has created a new wave of enthusiasm among the CITU ranks in Maharashtra. Many unions have appealed to their members to donate one day's wages to the Reception Committee. Even friendly unions not affiliated to CITU have agreed to collect funds to make the Conference a grand success. The Maharashtra State Kisan Sabha has agreed to collect from the peasants all the rice required for the Conference.

The Reception Committee has been able to obtain residential accommodation at a walking distance from the Conference Hall. Workers are enthusiastically

enrolling their names as volunteers and over 1000 volunteers are expected to work during the Conference. Preparations for a colourful procession on 25th May culminating in a big rally are also being made. The comrades from Maharashtra are very much eager to receive the delegates from all corners of the country who have fought several struggles in defence of the working class braving police repression and gangster attacks in the recent past.

With only seven weeks left the affiliated unions have already started raising funds to meet the expenses of delegates. Rajasthan State Committee and Delhi Regional Committee have decided to undertake the journey by special chartered buses with CITU bunting and flags and popularise the slogans of CITU among the people in the towns and villages on the way. The excessive rise in rail fares and high cost of food expenses have added to the financial difficulties of the delegates, yet comrades are making their best efforts to raise necessary funds to meet the expenses.

P. Ramamurti, General Secretary CITU has issued notices to the affiliated unions giving detailed instructions regarding the Conference.

The Third Conference of the CITU will have a galvanising effect on the activities of the CITU. It will also be a Conference to consolidate the organisation so that working class struggles are better guided and led.

Let no effort be spared to make the Conference a mighty success.

[See last page for information useful to delegates to the conference. Ed.]

## CITU Secretariat Meets

The CITU Secretariat met at Calcutta on 3rd March, 1975 under the presidentship of B. T. Ranadive, President CITU.

The Secretariat reviewed the preparations for the Third Conference of the CITU to be held at Bombay from 21 to 25th May next, and took some organisational decisions on the same.

The Secretariat also decided to hold a Seminar on Population Problems in Calcutta in the first week of July, in co-operation with the ILO. Decision was also taken to hold another Seminar on Problems of Working Women some time in the middle of 1975.

The Secretariat decided to nominate Com. Biren Roy, member Working Committee of CITU, to participate in the meeting of the Central Council of Health and Family Planning to be held in Delhi in the middle of April, and nominated Com. Nrisingha Chakravarty, member General Council to represent the CITU at the meeting of the Tripartite Committee on Family Planning to be held in Delhi after the meeting of the Central Council.

## UCTU Secretariat to Meet

The Secretariat of the United Council of Trade Unions will meet in New Delhi on 10th April, 1975 to review the activities of the UCTU since its last meeting and to chalk out programme of united action of the working class.

# Arithmetic of Agricultural Worker's Life

**T**HE National Labour Institute has recently started publishing a monthly Bulletin. In its February issue the Bulletin has published an article which gives a picture of the harrowing conditions of the Agricultural workers in West Bengal. We are quoting below some extracts from the article for information of our readers.

"If these terms don't suit you, I don't need you." That is what the landlords of Pancha (the jurisdiction of a police station of the District of Purulia) are telling the agricultural labourers categorically. I had been to a village named Mudidi of Pancha in the harvest this year. Mudidi is a small village inhabited by 30 to 40 families of two castes named Mudis and Sardars. I met some villagers under the tree that was the usual rendezvous for social get-together of the village. I asked them point blank about their daily wages. The queer question puzzled them. They exchanged glances at one another and said, women get Rs. 1.50 and men get Rs. 2/-. We get nothing in kind. And to earn these paltry wages one had to work from dawn to dusk. In spite of such low wages it is difficult to find an employer. And in the unlikely event of getting an employer one hears the stock sentence, 'I can't give anything more than this. If you find the terms unacceptable, go away.'

"Let us ascertain the wages

of an agricultural labourer in areas which are claimed to be free from such grisly exploitation. Let us discuss Burdwan. There is no divergence of opinion regarding the agricultural "progress" achieved by this District. Three crops are grown in Jamalpur or Memari of this District. The percentage of rich peasants is also high. What do the agricultural labourers get there? Two meals a day and Rs 2/- in cash.

"Immediately after the harvest rice is cheap and so one meal costs one rupee and twenty five paise. So the total wages work out at Rs. 4.50 per day.

"Near Arambagh of the District of Hooghly, I met a few agricultural labourers, who were carrying ploughs and were wearing loin-cloths and had their bodies daubed with clay. "What do you get as wages"?, I asked. "Rs. 1-50 in cash and one Kg. of rice in kind" was the reply. At that time rice was selling at Rs. 1-80 or Rs. 1-90 a kg. Wages were therefore less than Rs. 3-50. It is certainly true that a bad crop of rising prices may make the small peasants to offer reasonable terms to his labourers. But what about the richer peasants? Do the labourers get legitimate wages from them? Everybody says no. This fact appears to be more upsetting when one remembers the tremendously large number of

agricultural labourers that our villages have. The census records show that there were in West Bengal 1.772 million agricultural labourers in 1961; in 1971 the number increased to 3.272 million. Three years have elapsed since 1971. The number has presumably declined as compared to that of 1961, which means that eviction is rampant.

"Now let us glance over the matter of the minimum wages specified by the Government. The minimum remuneration for agricultural labourers was fixed in 1968. The whole State was divided into three regions and one rate was laid down for each region. That was the first State intervention in respect of agricultural wages. But even the Government did not try to conceal that the legislation was nominal. And during the following years it did not remain a secret that the entire attempt was meant to be an exercise in futility. No body was interested in abiding by or implementing the law. But as a first attempt, it is worth mentioning. To revert to our point, this inequality, this exploitation and this hypocrisy were visible from the beginning. Two surveys sponsored by the Government of West Bengal in 1972 reveal the pathetic plight of the agricultural labourers of Bankura. The following comments of the surveyors about the labourers of two villages tell a tale:

"It is amazing that the agriculturists are alive".

"The department of Labour of the State of West Bengal conducted a survey in five more

districts. And the same picture of misery emerges. In the first place there is no employment throughout the year. In Nadia one gets work for the maximum number of days which is 116; in Birbhum one gets work for 80 days a year on an average. The survey conducted in Bankura shows that what an agricultural labourer gets there when agricultural operations are in full swing is much less than the "subsistence level" rate laid down in 1968; in other seasons of the year wages are half the specified minimum. In the Sadar sub-division of Bankura the minimum rate laid down is Rs. 3/- per day. The surveyors saw that on an average only Rs. 2 12 were being given in practice. I am quoting a part of the survey report:

"Many families of agricultural labourers appease their hunger by eating only wheat and salt once a day. They are over head and ears in debt".

"It is not an abstruse statement that you cannot make a hungry man work. It is, how

ever, true that legislation cannot be effective unless agricultural labourers become organised and conscious. I shall describe an experience that I had a few days back to show how true this statement is:

The harvest had been over. The migrants' were coming back from Arambagh, Mayapur and neighbouring regions; to their native villages in the district of Bankura. Thus the bus was as crowded as a bee-hive. I asked the men about the wages they had received; the reply was plain. They had got work for 27 days. They had got Rs. 2-50 per day, last year—but got only 2/- this year. They were also given a place for getting rice boiled.

"What else can they give, Sir?", they guffawed. I asked them, "wouldn't they catch a cold"? An old Santhal snickered. I asked "why are you laughing Sir?" "What you say is funny", he said. He recited a rhyme in Santhali and said in Bengali "The poor die of hunger and the Babu is scared of winter".

## FCI Workers' Struggle For Demands

Defying brutal Police repression, the workers of the Food Corporation of India continued a grim struggle for 43 days in support of their demands. Led by the INTUC-led Workers' Union, FCI workers all over India went on indefinite strike from January 27 last on their demands for reinstatement of retrenched workers, withdrawal of suspension orders and democratic right to organise unions, among others. The strike brought the rationing system in Calcutta and other major cities almost on the verge of collapse. Instead of settling their demands through negotiations, the Government deployed NVF personnel and launched massive repression to break the strike. Hundreds of workers were arrested, many of them under MISA. On February 3 and 4, Police mounted repeated attacks on peaceful demonstrators before FCI godowns in Calcutta and seriously injured more than 30 workers, including some women. The strike was ultimately withdrawn unconditionally on March 10 after receiving some assurance from the Government.

## Inhuman Exploitation of Book Binding Workers

About ten to fifteen thousand Book Binding workers of Calcutta have for long been facing inhuman exploitation which has been further aggravated by the anti people policies of the Govt. Although some workers, who get regular work for 8 hours, are termed monthly-rated workers, the majority of the workers are temporary and work on piece-rate. The monthly-rated workers get Rs. 80 to 100 for working 8

hours a day for 26 days in a month, whereas the piece-rated workers get Rs. 120 to 150 for working 12 hours a day for 26 days in a month. The wages of women and child workers are even lower, a child worker getting a meagre Rs. 30 per month for day-long hard labour, day in and day out. The owners refuse all demands for wage rise on the plea that the Book Publishers are unable to increase their rate due to rise in cost.

There is no service security for the workers. The piece-rated workers do not get work throughout the year and do not enjoy leave, P. F. or E. S. I. benefits. Above all, they can be retrenched by the employers at their sweet will.

Led by the Calcutta Book Binding Workers' Union, the workers have demanded permanency for those working for 160 days, paid leave and holidays, P.F. and E.S.I. facilities, Bonus, revision of wages, security of service and settlement of disputes through negotiations with the Unions.

# Hospitals And Industrial Law

Going back upon its previous decision in State of Bombay Vs. The Hospital Mazdoor Sabha (1), the Supreme Court held in the later case of Management of Safdar Jung Hospital v. Kuldip Singh (2) that Hospital was not an industry and, therefore, dispute between the Management of an Hospital and its employees could not be an industrial dispute. In the earlier case, the test employed was that if a Hospital is run by citizens for profit it would be an undertaking very much like trade or business in their conventional sense and it would make no difference if such an Hospital was run by the Government. In the Safdar Jung Hospital case it was, however, held that the first and second parts of the definition of 'Industry' in the Industrial Disputes Act were to be read together and, therefore, it was emphasised that activity in order to be 'Industry' must be productive of goods or their distribution or for producing material services to the community at large or a part of it. In the absence of evidence that it was more than a place where person could get treated and in view of the fact that it was run as a department of Government, the Safdar Jung Hospital was held not to be an industry.

This case gave rise to a controversy and conflict whether hospitals as such could be taken out of the definition of industry. The question arose in this con-

text whether charitable institutions as such were, or not, industry. In a subsequent case, namely, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and their workman (3), the Supreme Court cautioned against the application of charitable object as a test. It referred to its decision in regard to Tuberculosis hospital and Kurji Holy Family Hospital and said it was "not that because their respective objects were charitable, that alone was considered to be the criteria for considering it as an industry". The Court went on to observe "In our view the Linch-pin of the definition of the industry is to ascertain the systematic activity which the organisation is discharging namely whether it partakes the nature of a business or trade or is an undertaking or manufacture or calling of employers. If it is that and there is cooperation of the employer and the employee resulting in the production of material services, it is an industry notwithstanding that its objects are charitable or that it does not make profit or even where profits are made, they are not distributed among the members."

It is quite clear from the above decision that the Supreme Court is coming out of the position it had put itself in by the Safdar Jung Hospital case. It is true that the Indian Chambers of Commerce case was given in respect of an organisa-

tion which was obviously not an hospital. But the principles of the decision are of use for the workers and trade unionists and may be utilized in reversing the trend which was set by the Supreme Court in the group, namely, Secretary, Madras Gymkhana Club Employees' Union vs. Management of the Zimkhana Club (4), Cricket Club of India v. Bombay Labour Union and another (5) and The Safdar Jung Hospital Case (Supra).

In a very recent case decided by the Punjab and Haryana High Court in Dr. S. Herbert. vs. Punjab Synod Board of Medical Works (6), this latest decision of the Supreme Court was used in holding that the employer in this case carried on an industry. The Division Bench said, "In view of the above authoritative pronouncement (of the Supreme Court) it cannot be said that a hospital could not be regarded as an industry solely because it is being run on charitable ground. What is to be seen is whether a particular hospital is being run on business lines or not. Further it has to be seen whether an activity is casual or for the benefit of the founders alone".

In the facts of this case, it was found that the hospital sold medicine at a profit of 50% and offered free treatment only to about 5% of the patients. If during any year the expenditure exceeds the income the losses were not made up by receiving donations, but the deficit was made up from the earnings of the following year. The Court

held that these were the attributes of normal business activity and, therefore, the Christian Hospital, Jagadhri was an industry as defined by section 2 (j) of the Act.

We have yet to see whether the principles of the Indian Chambers of Commerce case be applied in future to big clubs which are run on business lines. Perhaps the decisions in the Gymkhana Club case and the Cricket Club case have to be reviewed. It is not understood why such big clubs cannot be called a business or trade or undertaking in the sense that they are run on business lines to produce material services.

#### CITU Publications

### 1. World Capitalist Crisis

by B. T. Ranadive,  
President CITU

Price ; Re. 1

### 2. Akaramon Ke Pratirodh Ke Liye Ekbaddha Ho

( Opening speech of B. T. Ranadive, President CITU at the Working Committee meeting held at the Sibpur, Howrah. )

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The whole difficulty may arise as to what is the meaning of material services. because the Supreme Court held that in order that a trade or undertaking or calling may be included within industry it must produce material services. But material services were too narrowly defined in the second hospital case as an activity to provide the community with the use of something which must be commercially valuable.

In my opinion material services should not be confined within the narrow bounds of what is commercially valuable. All services on an organised basis contributed by employed labour must necessarily be included within industrial activity. It does not matter whether that activity has any relation to the public at large.

Service in a club cannot be equated with such service as service of a cook to an individual as held by Hidayatullah, J. in the Madras Zymkhan Club Case (Supra), on the ground that the activity of an individual is neither business nor trade nor an undertaking. The learned judge failed to notice that quantitative change leads to qualitative change, and the service of a cook for an individual is essentially different from the service of a cook or cooks for a number of persons organised in Clubs or Associations. There the cook renders material service to a part of the community and must be engaged in an industry.

#### Arun Prakash Chatterjee

(1) AIR 1960 SC 610

(2) AIR 1970 SC 1467 = (1970) 20  
FLR 399

## Port & Dock Workers And Seamen Observe Demands Day All Over India

At the call of the Water Transport Workers' Federation of India, the Port and Dock Workers and Seamen observed 'Demands Day' on March 18 last in all the major and minor ports of the country.

In Calcutta, Calcutta Port and Shore Mazdoor Union, Dock Shramik Accociation and Forward Seamen's Union of India jointly observed the Day by organising g a t e meetings, group meetings and other forms of campaign to focus their basic demands, viz. need-based minimum wage, 100 per cent neutralisation in D. A., enhanced bonus, unemployment benefits to seamen etc. A massive demonstration of workers and seamen was led to the offices of the Calcutta Port Trust, Dock Labour Board and Calcutta Liners' Conference. A deputation led by Indradeo Mali, Nilmony Ghosh, N. K. Roy Ganguly, Ashutosh Banerjee, Hemlal Chatterjee and M. A. Sayeed handed over the Memoranda to the respective authorities.

The Demands Day was also observed successfully in other major and minor ports including Marmagoa, Cochin, Bombay, Madras and Vishakhapatnam.

(3) (1972) 24 FLR 103 = 1971 (2)

LLJ 630

(4) (1967) 15 FLR 911 = 1968 (1)

SCR 742

(5) (1969) 18 FLR 10 = (1969) 1

SCR 600

(6) (1975) 30 FLR 80

## United Struggle-Key Slogan

252 delegates from all over the country who assembled at Secunderabad in a special Convention at the call of Railway Employees Confederation, decided unanimously that the NCCRS should continue its functioning in order to fight out effect of victimisation and to win the just demands of railwaymen. They also expressed satisfaction on hearing reports that the National Convention would be held in April and desired that full scale preparation should be undertaken to make it a success.

In the meanwhile, the extended meeting of the Action Committee scheduled to be held on March 15, was postponed as some of the zonal Convenors found the date not suitable to them.

### **Compromise On D. A. debunked.**

In another resolution the Confederation rejected the compromise settlement made by some of the leaders of Central Government employees (Madhusudan., O. P. Gupta. S. M. Banerjee) and demanded that the due increase in D. A. (all the five instalments) should be paid in cash with retrospective effect from the dates they were due. It is understood that both Parvati Krishnan and Ramavtar Shastri took pains to explain the stand but to no effect.

### **Demonstrations, Meetings, Conventions.**

At the joint call of the AIRF and Central Govt. Employees

Confederation, March 13 was observed as a "Day against Wage Freeze" all over the country by Central Govt. Employees including railwaymen. At Calcutta, all the Constituents of Eastern Railway NCCRS except AITUC union participated in the rally. Members of AIRF Union in S. E. Rly., though affiliated to AITUC, also participated.

On February 28, "Dhitkar Divas" was observed at the call of the Railway Employees Confederation. The Police imposed section 144 to prevent a demonstration at Howrah (ER).

Meetings of Traction workers were held at Bilaspur and Chakradharpur (SER) preparatory to an all India Convention. Convenor, M. L. Banerjee, would visit Central Railway in the first week of April for the purpose.

On February 21, demonstrations were held by the Loco Running Staff of N.E. Rly throughout the railway.

On March 14, the railway workers of Adra Division (SER) staged a demonstration before the Divisional Superintendent's office, under the leadership of Divisional Railwaymen's Action Committee.

On March 23, a Convention of Workshop workers of N. F. Railway was held at Dibrugarh. Samar Mukherjee and Nurul Huda, both M. P. s, attended the convention.

The AIRF has decided to

hold a demonstration before Parliament on April 16.

The Railway Employees Confederation has decided to hold Dharna before the Parliament on March 17 & 18.

### **Judgements against the Government**

A Division Bench of Andhra High Court consisting of Justices Chinnappa Reddy and P. Madhusudan Rao, disallowed the appeal of the Government against the decision of Justice Kappuswamy invalidating the termination of services of Casual Labourers in connection with the strike of May 1974.

It is understood that after this judgement delivered on February 12, 326 workers of Guntakal Division (SR) were reinstated with back wages. This Judgement also refers to writ Appeal Nos. 888, 889 and 890 of South Central Railway who are also equally benefitted.

The Division Bench of Gujrat High Court, has upheld the decision of the single bench judgement on removal from service under Rule 14 (ii) of the D. A. Rules, when the Government went into appeal against this.

### **Authorities Continue Penal measures**

While the different High Courts of the Country are giving verdict against the action of the Government for victimising railwaymen, the authorities have now resorted to punishments like reduction in rank while reinstatement. In Calcutta area of SER, the authorities reinstated 4 employees with punishment of

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# Industrial Accidents And Role Of Trade Unions

*Extracts from a paper read by Comrade R. Umanath, Secretary Tamilnadu State Committee of CITU at a Seminar on Industrial Safety.*

“At present the domain of prevention of accidents is maintained as their exclusive preserve by the employers, with the role of the victims viz. the workers or their trade unions, being not only refused to be recognised, but also deliberately suppressed. If any worker dares to insist on the compliance of any neglected statutory provision regarding safety which the employer has purposely disregarded, it is not uncommon that such worker earns the displeasure of the management leading to the victimisation of the worker.

“The Statute regarding safety regulations stand as the living monument of the attitude of the Governments as well, which also is one of non-recognition of the role of the workers or their trade unions in prevention of accidents.

“The resultant situation is seen in the scandalous state of accidents prevailing in the textile industry...If one is to go by the official statistics, of the total injuries in the factories by important industries viz. 2,88,173 for the year 1970, 1,45,838, i.e. more than 50 per cent occurred in Textile Industry alone. In terms of frequency rates of injuries in 1970, the textile industry accounts for the highest rate, viz. 129.15 per thousand workers employed. The frequency

rate is on the ascendency. While it was 16.51 per one lakh mandays in 1961, it rose to a high of 43.33 on 1970. Based on these figures, it is found that one out of 25 workers was injured in 1961, whereas it worked out to one in ten in 1970... Between 1969 and 1970, in one year alone, the frequency rate jumped from 109.77 to 129.15 per one thous and workers employed.

“The major causes of these accidents can be traced to: 1) Introduction of modern and speedy machines without the necessary protective devices. 2) Constant and continuous increase in workloads and speed, resulting in inadequate concentration, which is what is distorted by the employers as ‘negligence by the workers’. 3) The present Factories Act itself is highly inadequate. Even these inadequate statutory provisions are not strictly enforced by the Enforcement machinery, primarily because, by and large, the enforcement machinery in the country, if you would not object to truth and frankness, is in the pay of employing class.

## Role of the workers and Trade Unions

“Industrial safety and ensuring safe working conditions is the major responsibility of the employers. But workers are the victims of unsafe working conditions. That being so, the trade unions are

vitaly concerned in the compliance of safety rules and formulating further safety rules. The question of safety, far from being one of making workers or trade unions realise its need and importance, is one of compelling the employers to give up their traditional attitude of brushing aside the suggestions of the workers or their trade unions or victimising the workers for insisting on compliance with safety rules...Where the employers think that compliance of safety rules would mean additional expenditure or would deprive them of that amount of additional production which they would have otherwise secured by non-observance of the safety rules, they have developed a vested interest in the non-observance, which they seek to protect by resort to the extreme penalty of dismissal of workers.

“I wish to submit that the question of the effective role of the workers and their trade unions in prevention of accidents is directly linked with the struggle to break the vested interests developed by the employers in the non-observance of the safety rules.

“I suggest that: 1) Safety committees fully manned by workers’ elected representatives should be constituted. 2) One full-time elected and paid representative of the workers should be put in charge of inspecting implementation of the safety rules inside the factory. 3) The recommendations of the safety committee should be binding on the managements.

On Page Fifteen

# Assam PF Scheme—A Fraud on 5 Lakh Tea Garden Workers

**T**HE Assam Tea Plantation Provident Fund and Pension Fund (ATPPF) Scheme, which is supposed to provide social security to 5 lakh tea garden workers in Assam is, in reality, a huge fraud on them. The scheme had been in operation since 1955. Of the 800 odd tea gardens in the State, about 700 have been brought under the scheme covering about 5 lakh workers and clerical staff. Under the scheme, 8% of the wages of the workers are deducted at source by the tea garden owners who are required to contribute an equal amount. The rules provide that the total amount, i. e. the workers' and employers' contribution, are to be deposited to the Fund within a week from the date of collection of workers' share to the Fund. But in reality, the owners never deposit the same in time and it is understood that they invest the amount collected from the workers in their business.

The Board of Trustees, which looks after the administration of the scheme, hardly takes any effective step against the defaulting tea garden owners. Some cases are filed against chronic defaulters as a face saving measure, while the majority of the defaulting owners are allowed to go scot free. Thus the Fund loses lakhs of rupees in interest on the amounts not deposited in time. All these are done with the connivance of the Board of Trustees.

## Board serves only the interest of owners

From the Annual Report for 1972-73 it is seen that, during the year under report 114 tea estates defaulted in respect of deposit of P. F. dues in time, and the total arrears payable by these defaulting gardens stood at Rs. 30,22,724. The Board launched penal actions and levied damages against 105 defaulting gardens for realisation of the arrear dues. But these legal actions resulted in the realisation of only Rs. 15,80,443 from the defaulters, i. e. only half the dues. Why were the rest of the dues not realised and whose interest was the Board serving thereby?

The Board of Trustees is composed of high Government officials and representatives of the ruling class who are in cahoots with the tea garden owners. The Board grants undue privileges to the owners, like allowing them long time for depositing PF contributions of workers. Only a few cases of default are taken to the Courts and damages, if charged at all, are waived partly or wholly. There is every reason to believe that the members of the Board are in league with the owners in perpetrating this fraud and are acting as their stooges.

## Misuse and Misappropriation of Workers' Money

Whereas the actual annual collections of PF contributions

should be about Rs. 5½ crores, in reality only about Rs. 4 crores are collected. Thus every year, on an average, Rs. 1½ crores are either in arrears or are unaccounted for. This means that during the last 20 years, Rs. 30 crores of hard earned money of the workers are either misappropriated or kept unaccounted for through some machinations.

Refundable and non-refundable advances are granted to the workers from their PF accumulations for meeting emergent expenses. But misuse of the money remitted by the Board for disbursement as PF advances to workers has become a regular feature. The real nature of the remittances is kept concealed and the workers are given to understand that the disbursements are on account of relief granted by the Government. By not disbursing the advances wholly and paying paltry sums to the workers, the Board officials in collusion with the garden management and some unscrupulous T. U. leaders take advantage of the ignorance of the workers and misappropriate the bulk of the advances meant for them. The workers are cheated in this and various other ways.

The Primary Committee, which is responsible for recommending final settlement, is composed of two representatives each of the employers and employees, with the manager or owner of the garden as the chairman. In reality the chairman dominates the show and the committee is used as an instrument of exploitation of the workers. Through this committee the

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# Condition of Indian Women In The INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR

—by Vimal Ranadive

The year 1975 has been declared by the UNO as the "International Women's Year", with the objective of promoting the cause of the working women everywhere. The first session of the UN Commission on Status of Women was held in 1947 in New York, and the UN General Assembly adopted a declaration on elimination of discrimination against women. On December 15, 1970, the General Assembly in a resolution decided to have minimum targets to be achieved in this respect and later proclaimed the year 1975 as International Women's Year. The ILO, at its 57th session in 1972, adopted a resolution concerning women workers and their conditions. It also decided in 1973 to place the particular question of equality of opportunity and treatment to women on the agenda of the conference to be held in Geneva in 1975.

The ILO has repeatedly stressed in their documents that in spite of the ratification of Convention No. 100, regarding equal wages for men and women, by a number of countries and legislations made in this regard, the unequal wages continue in many industries. They repeatedly noted in their documents the existence of unequal wage in all capitalist countries including USA and Great Britain.

After two decades of independence, the year 1975 is marked by flagrant discrimination against working women in a number of industries in India. The directive principles of the Indian Constitution includes the right of job, equal pay for equal work

and equal opportunity for men and women. But in practice it is never implemented and unequal wages for women continue in almost all industries, both in public and private sectors. Wages of women workers are appallingly low in industries employing majority of women viz. Cashew, Beedi, Tobacco, Plantation, Construction, Agriculture etc. The managements and owners of these industries make high profits by using cheap women labour.

The year 1975 is also marked by rising unemployment of working women in every sphere. Working women in organised industries like Jute, Textile, Coal mines, plantations etc., where traditionally women are employed in large numbers, are the worst affected.

The percentage of literacy among women is only 18 in India, while there is no illiteracy in socialist countries like China, Soviet Russia and Cuba. The extreme poverty of the urban and rural parents does not allow them to send their children to schools, which are any way scarce, and the girls are the worst sufferers in this respect.

A working mother in India, even in this Women's Year, has to bear the burden of double responsibility. She has to work for 8 hours or more in the factory, office or field and at

home she has to look after the children and the kitchen. The protective legislations made by Central and State Governments are seldom implemented properly and the mother continues to work till she gives birth to a child at her place of work. It is a well known fact that India has one of the highest mortality rates among mothers and children. In the socialist countries, protection of mothers and children is a responsibility of the Government. In Czechoslovakia and Poland, Maternity Leave is granted to working women for 36 weeks, one of the longest anywhere. But in India, not only are such benefits poor in comparison, even the flouting of such meagre provisions by the managements go unpunished.

In the question of social status for women, India does not come anywhere near the socialist countries, where women play a significant role in the society including participation in Parliament and Assemblies. In India, women from all classes participated in thousands in the struggle for national independence and the then Congress leaders promised them a place of honour in society. But all the promises have been forgotten and Indian women's lot continue to be one of slavery and humiliation, of unequal wage and inferior status in society, to this day.

The Prime Minister of India, herself a woman, is the Chairman of the All India Committee set up for the observance of the International Women's Year. A number of promises are made daily to improve the lot of women. But has her Government really done anything to implement these promises? A Committee on 'Status of Women' was appointed by the Central Government a few years back. A considerable amount was spent and ultimately a thousand-page document was produced on 1st January, 1975 which is supposed to be the gift for the International Women's Year. One does not know what are the recommendations of the committee, nor how far they will go to improve the lot of the working women. But from the adverse reports in the Press regarding the functioning of the Committee, including adverse comments made by some Committee members themselves, the outcome of the report can very well be guessed. The attitude of some of the Committee members can very well be surmised from the fact that, when a question regarding increasing atrocities on Harijan women was raised by the CITU representative while giving evidence, some members got enraged and denied it until this was proved by facts and figures.

In this International

Women's Year, working women in India, while expressing solidarity with women in other capitalist countries in their fight against all forms of discrimination, must raise the demands for end of all discrimination in wages and employment opportunities, for inclusion in the Constitution, as a fundamental right, the right to earn one's livelihood, and for enactment of legislations for the protection of motherhood and for making it a social responsibility.

Under the present bourgeois-landlord Government, the condi-

tions of Indian working women will not change much, since the Govt. itself continues to hold a feudal outlook regarding the status of women. Nor will passing of legislations on equal pay for equal work, of itself, help to improve the condition of working women. The working women themselves have to decide and take the pledge, in the International Women's Year, to fight their own battle to change the condition, to make the democratic opinion conscious of their demands and of the need for change. And above all to fight relentlessly for Socialism, under which system alone will the working women be guaranteed equal remuneration, equal status, equal opportunity and honourable motherhood.

## First Conference of CITU-Calcutta District

THE first Conference of the Calcutta District Committee of CITU was held at Garden Reach, Calcutta from 12th to 14th March. 474 delegates representing 1, 22, 635 workers along with 177 observers and 37 invitees attended the conference. A presidium of seven was elected to conduct the proceedings.

B. T. Ranadive, President CITU inaugurated the conference. The conference was also greeted by Harisadhan Mitra (Howrah Dist. CITU), Archana Bhattacharya (Ganatantrik Mahila Samity), Kamal Sarkar (BCMU), Santi Ghatak (Engineering Workers Federation), Promode Sengupta (Mercantile Federation), Abdulla

Rasool (Kisan Sabha) and Jyoti Basu (CITU).

While inaugurating the conference, Ranadive explained the significance of the growing strength of the CITU in different States and also the growing attacks, repression and victimisation by the ruling Congress and its Govt. on CITU affiliates and activists. He called upon the workers to unite irrespective of their affiliation and to organise united struggles to defeat the anti-worker, anti-people policies of the Government.

The General Secretary's report dealt with the activities of the Calcutta Dist. Committee of CITU during the past one year, as well as the organisational

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# Tamilnadu Committee Of CITU Meets

**T**HE Tamilnadu Committee of CITU met on February 15-16 last at Nellikkupam with K. Ramani, President of the State CITU in the Chair. Later, in his absence, V. P. Chintan, Vice-President presided. The meeting was attended by 32 out of 41 members.

P. Ramamurti, General Secretary CITU spoke in detail on the present situation and the tasks before the CITU.

R. Umanath, Secretary State CITU then submitted his report reviewing the General Strike by Coimbatore Textile workers,— General Strike by workers of 16 sugar factories, the Anti-Wage Freeze movement in the State and other Strike struggles of the workers. His report also dealt with the issues facing the movement of workers in Electricity, Transport, Cement, Plantation, Port and Dock, Beedi and other industries. The report also dealt with the proposals for future campaigns and tasks before the CITU.

18 members took part in the discussions which was summed up by Umanath.

Regarding programme of movement on different issues, the Committee took the following decisions :

1. Anti-Wage Freeze Conventions to be held immediately in 4 districts, and talks to be held for a State-wide Convention by end of March/early April to decide upon State-wide action.

2. CITU Unions in four drought-affected districts—Madurai, Ramnad, Pudukkottai and Coimbatore—to open gruel centres by contributions from each unit in turn. CITU unions in other districts to collect funds from workers for financing the gruel centres. March 3 to be observed in all Industrial centres as “Day of Working Class Solidarity with suffering peasantry”.

3. One-day Mass Hunger Strike on March 16 in important centres in cities and towns to be organised by CITU Unions all over the State demanding Statutory Rationing throughout the State and against Price Rise etc.

4. 24-hours Dharna in Madras by Electricity Workers on March 18-19 supported by solidarity demonstrations in mofussil centres:

5. Observance of ‘Demands

Day’ by Transport workers on February 26 at the call of the All-India Federation. State Co-ordination Committee to meet on February 28 to plan future action.

6. A meeting of representatives of CITU Unions in Cement industry to be convened by K. Ramani in April next to review and strengthen industry-wise Co-ordination.

7. A meeting of representatives of CITU Unions in Plantation industry to be convened by March end at Gudalur (Nilgiri District) to review the anti-worker agreement signed by other unions on the demand for Wages and D. A. at Kerala rates, and to plan future action.

8. Beedi and Cigar workers to observe March 17 as ‘Demand Day’ as per the decision of the All-India Beedi Workers Conference, by organising demonstrations before Central and State Government offices and Employers offices.

## First Conference of CITU—Calcutta District

(From Centre Page)

strength and weaknesses. 35 delegates took part in the discussion on the report after which it was unanimously adopted. The conference also discussed an Industrial report and a report on terror was also circulated.

The conference adopted a number of resolutions on Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Chile, demanding withdrawal of Emergency, MISA and DIR, withdrawal of the wage freeze Act, food and essential articles

at reasonable prices, release of political prisoners, etc.

A sum of Rs. 787 was collected during the conference and it was decided to remit Rs. 500 to Kota for the defence of the comrades sentenced to life imprisonment and to utilise the balance for sentenced comrades in West Bengal.

The conference elected a 55-member Executive Committee with Shyam Sundar Mishra as President and Bimal Chatterjee as Secretary.

# Newsletter

## GOA

Led by the Chowgule Employees' Union (CITU), mining, engineering and allied workers are successfully resisting the attacks and harrassments by the management. On February 11, 200 workers of South Goa Mines of Chowgule's at Koshti, Maina, Shelvona etc. stopped work for 24 hours demanding fresh drinking water etc. On February 24, 500 workers of Pale Mines and Pelletization plant downed tools to protest against harrassment by the management. Meanwhile, the Employees' Union has won strike cases against 18 leading workers in the Quepem and Bicholim Courts.

Led by the Goa Mine Workers' Union (CITU), mining and allied warkers of Agrawal Company successfully boycotted 8.33 per cent Bonus offered by the company for 1973-74 as against their demand for higher Bonus. Police intervned on behalf of the management and arrested 7 workers and started criminal cases against them. The workers are determined to carry forward the struggle. Recently, the management was forced to sign an agreement with the Union on increased wages and D.A.

Mining workers of Bandodkar and Orient Mines (Goa) stopped work for 4 days (14th to 17th February) protesting against non-payment of wages and transfers to distant mines. Seven workers have been suspended. Workers' are continuing their

agitation under the leadership of Goa Mine Workers' Union (CITU). Recently a huge rally was organised which was also joined by Chowgule, Salgaocar and Fomento workers.

Under the leadership of the Goa Mine Workers' Union, workers of Bandekar Mine won their demand for 20 per cent Bonus, food and tiffin at 50% etc.

In a general body meeting held on February 28, the workers of Fomento and Maina Ore Transport decided to boycott 12% bonous and to demand 20% bonus, liquidation of contract system and permanency for all temporary, casual and daily-rated workers.

Following the winning of demands like double wages for Sunday work, increased leave facilities etc., workers of Dempo mining Corporation and Dempo Co. are now fighting against discriminations between workers and for more than 12% bonus etc.

The CIBA management, which dismissed 6 leading workers before the affiliation of the Employees' Union with CITU, still refuses to negotiate with the Union. The workers in a recent meeting decided to strengthen unity and resist the attacks.

Led by the Goa Engineering Workers' Union (CITU), 50 workers of Tolani Shipping Co., Vasco da Gama, are on strike since February 25 protesting against the illegal retrenchment of 2 workers.

The workers of Chowgule

Textile Mills at Xeldem, Quepem, led by the Mill Mazdoor Union, Goa (CITU), are successfully fighting the attacks of hired gangsters of INTUC, and of Voice of Goa, while at the same time resisting the attacks of the management.

## GUJARAT

### CITU March to Raj Bhavan in Ahmedabad

On 24th February, a Morcha of 500 workers led by the Maha Gujarat Mill Mazdoor Union, and General Engineering Mazdoor Union and General Press Kamdar Union (all affiliated to CITU) was takea out from the front of the CITU office and after parading the main streets ended at the Rsj Bhavan. Although composed mainly of workers of printing presses and small factories, some textile workers and small batch of women workers of Janta Kendra also joined the Morcha which was led by Abdulrazak Shaikh General Secretary and G.K. Parmar, Secretary of the CITU Gujarat Committee, among others. A 12-member delegation led by Com. Razak handed over a memorandum to the Governor's Secretary demanding, among other things, secret ballot to decide representative union, compelling textile mills to open third shift to absorb over 10,000 'budli' workers, implementation of Engineering Wage Board recommendations, implementation of minimum wage for Press workers, withdrawal of wage

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Freeze, supply of essential goods at fair prices through ration shops etc. The morcha created great enthusiasm among CITU supporters and workers in general.

On the same day, college and university teachers under the Gujarat University also organised a morcha to the Raj Bhavan to serve notice of 'Examination Boycott' movement in support of their demand for immediate implementation of the revised scales of pay recommended by the UGC.

### **Baroda Municipal authorities forced to recognize CITU Union**

Foiling the game of the authorities and a stooge union run by reformist leaders, the Baroda Municipal Corporation Kamdar Karmachari Union (CITU) has been reorganised on militant lines under the leadership of Vasant Mahendale, President CITU Gujarat Committee and General Secretary of the union. During the last 2 years it has made rapid progress and has forced the authorities to recognize the union.

### **Employees of Baroda Heavy Water Project join CITU**

The employees of the Heavy Water Project at Baroda have formed a union, with Vasant Mahendale as General Secretary and have unanimously decided to affiliate the union with CITU.

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reduction in rank which will reduce their emoluments by about Rs. 300/- p. m. per employee.

### **Demonstrations and Conventions in Dhanbad Division (E. Rly.)**

At the call of the C & W Staff Council a mass meeting was held at Barkakana (E. Rly.) on February 18 last. The meeting was addressed by P. C. Moitra, Convener, NCCRS (Barkakana unit), R. P. Gowala and others. The Dhanbad Divisional Convention of C & W Staff Council was held at Patratu on March 1. More than 100 delegates from all over the Division attended. A demonstration was also staged. A programme of postering, token protest, demonstrations was organised between 8th and 17th March.

### **Anti-Wage Freezes Convention at Baroda**

The unity line followed by the Gujarat CITU has succeeded in bringing together all Central T. U. organisations CITU, AITUC, HMS, Railway and other Government employees' unions for holding an Anti-Wage Freeze Convention at Baroda. The date of the Convention, earlier fixed for 16th March, has been shifted to 13th April. Serious preparations are being made by the CITU to make it the biggest working class gathering after the railway strike.

### **Locomen's Convention, Meetings at Barakakana**

At the call of the LRSA, Barkakana Branch, a local Convention was held at Barkakana on March 2. A large number of delegates from Patratu, Asansol, Sitarampur, Barwadih etc. attended. The open session was largely attended and addressed by the leaders of AILRSA, Zonal and Divisional LRSA.

### **Programmes of other constituents of NCCRS**

The Executive Body meeting of Loco Mech. Staff Association was held at Barkakana on February 20. Divisional meetings were held at Sahibganj, Dhanbad and Dinapur during February/March. A gate meeting before Dhanbad D. S. office was held on February 24 at the call of the Divisional Rly. Employees Co-ordination Committee. The Barkakana NCCRS unit organised programmes of mass meetings at Tori, Latehar and Ray during February/March. The Annual General Meeting of the All India Station Masters' Association (Central Body) will be held at Dhanbad from 2nd May.

In Marathi

### **WARG YUDDHA**

(Monthly Journal of Maharashtra State Committee of CITU)

Single Copy 25 paise

Available at :

Janashakti, Globe Mill Passage,  
Worli, Bombay 13

## Industrial Accidents

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4) Stringent punishment involving rigorous imprisonment must be stipulated for non-compliance or violations of the decisions of the safety committee.

5) The right of the workers for refusal to work in absence of conditions of safety, should be recognised. These suggestions must be brought on the statute book so as to give it the authority of law.

“Secondly, the Factories Act must be suitably ammended so as to do away with the present inadequacies. In doing so, provision should be made to associate elected workers’ representatives with the inspection by the officials of the Factory Inspectorate. Statutory provision must also be made for associating workers representatives in all investigations into the accidents, carried on under the present law. Provision for visit of union leaders from outside the factory to inspect the unsafe conditions inside, must be made in the present Act. Punishment for the violations of the provisions of the Act must be made so drastic as to act as a deterrent.

“In the absence of such serious measures, the government safety propaganda awards and observance of safety weeks etc. get reduced to formal functions where pious speeches are made. They are more of a propaganda for ensuring the safety of the governments of the day, rather than the real safety of the labourers at work.”

## Consumer Price Index Numbers

(Industrial Workers/1960 = 100)

State/Centre	1974-75			State/Centre	1974-75		
	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.		Nov.	Dec.	Jan.
<b>Andhra Pradesh</b>				<b>Orissa</b>			
Gudur	347	348	362	Barbil	308	301	310
Guntur	340	348	341	Sambalpur	343	340	342
Hyderabad	316	321	325	<b>Punjab</b>			
<b>Assam</b>				Amritsar	336	336	333
Digboi	335	328	318	<b>Rajasthan</b>			
Doom Dooma	303	289	289	Ajmer	337	336	334
Labac	359	315	282	Jaipur	349	344	340
Mariani	309	315	285	<b>Tamilnadu</b>			
Rangapara	294	288	278	Coimbatore	326	329	341
<b>Bihar</b>				Coonoor	353	315	320
Jamshedpur	323	307	304	Madras	319	323	327
Jharia	348	330	320	Madurai	356	348	371
Kodarma	416	378	361	<b>U. P.</b>			
Monghyr	366	345	357	Kanpur	347	339	332
Noamundi	320	324	339	Saharanpur	350	359	356
<b>Gujarat</b>				Varanasi	400	395	390
Ahmedabad	321	317	311	<b>West Bengal</b>			
Bhavnagar	344	342	345	Asansol	329	319	320
<b>Haryana</b>				Calcutta	308	297	289
Yamunanagar	339	341	338	Darjeeling	281	263	259
<b>J &amp; K</b>				Howrah	317	307	300
Srinagar	257	252	250	Jalpaiguri	269	251	254
<b>Karnataka</b>				Raniganj	338	324	326
Ammathi	326	324	324	<b>Delhi</b>	344	342	342
Bangalore	328	330	335	<b>Other Centres*</b>			
Chikmagalur	321	333	339	Berhampur ('49)	453	450	472
Kolar G. F.	330	335	347	Cuttack (1949)	394	376	403
<b>Kerala</b>				Jabalpur (1949)	447	436	431
Alleppey	378	390	308	Beawar ('51-'52)	378	379	378
Alwaye	354	369	368	Tripura (1961)	265	258	263
Mundakayam	347	348	353	H. P. (1965)	244	244	243
<b>M. P.</b>				Goa (1966)	209	207	210
Balaghat	358	360	368	Bhilai (1966)	216	209	206
Bhopal	329	330	325	Kothagudam('66)	211	215	211
Gwalior	367	350	350	<b>All India</b> ('49)	402	396	396
Indore	364	360	358	do ('60)	331	326	326
<b>Maharashtra</b>				* Figures in bracket indicate base year.			
Bombay	301	298	298	(Labour Bureau, Simla)			
Nagpur	327	321	322				
Sholapur	336	335	346				

## 8000 Workers Of Hesalong Colliery Thrown Out

Despite nationalisation of coal mines, private managements of many non-nationalised mines are still being allowed to ruthlessly exploit their workers violating all laws of the land. One such mine is the Hesalong Colliery situated in the vicinity of a nationalised mine, Gidi C Colliery under CMA, in the Hazaribagh district of Bihar.

The colliery has been leased out to one Shri Banerjee by the Govt. of Bihar and employs 8000 workers. Although the

colliery is fairly big, despatching 2500 tons of coal per day, the private management continue its inhuman exploitation of workers with impunity. The workers are paid meagre wages and there are no provision for accommodation, sanitation and even minimum first-aid arrangements. Non-observance of even the minimum Safety Rules led to frequent serious accidents, one such occurring on February 28 when six workers were buried alive.

For more than a year, the workers have been carrying on agitations and representations to the Union Minister of Mines, and the authorities of NCD C and Coal Mines Authority Ltd, but without any result. They demanded nationalisation of the mine to put a stop to the illegal activities of the private management.

Following the serious accident in February, the authorities were forced to take notice and the Govt. of Bihar stopped operation of the mine under the advice of CMA, throwing 8000 workers of the mine out of employment. Thus after ignoring the illegal operations in the mine for years and instead of accepting the legitimate demands of the workers for nationalisation, the Government has now callously stopped operation without caring for the plight of these 8000 workers. This, it is reported, has not been done for any human consideration for the workers' safety, but in connivance with some discredited INTUC and AITUC leaders to enable them to get rehabilitated among the workers.

The CITU has demanded immediate steps for the re-open-

## Tata-Birla "Socialism"

According to official figures, the assets of Tatas during 1951-71 period have grown up eight times while those of Birlas increased 13 times. The details of the growth of their assets during this period are as follows :

	Growth of Assets (in crores)	
	Tatas	Birlas
1951	95	51
1958	280	113
1963-64	418	293
1970-71	711	687

The income of the House of Tatas, which stood at one-sixth of one per cent of Total National Income in 1951, rose to one-third of one per cent in 1970-71. The corresponding share of Birlas during the same period rose from one-twelfth of one per cent to one-third of one per cent.

The value added per worker per year in all the industries was Rs.3122 in 1960 which rose up to Rs. 7599 in 1970. However, during the same decade, the share of the workers to the total value added declined from 38.5 to 33.7 per cent.

ing of the mine so that the workers can get their livelihood, pending nationalisation of the mine by absorbing all the existing workers. Md. Ismail, M P., Vice-President CITU has already written to the Union Minister of Energy, Shri K. C. Pant, for his immediate intervention, and making the above demands.

## National Campaign Committee Against Wage Freeze To Meet On April 9

The All India Convention of the Working People Against Wage Freeze, held in New Delhi on August 28, 1974 decided to constitute a National Campaign Committee Against Wage Freeze to co-ordinate and guide working people's movement all over India against the wage freeze offensive launched by the Government.

As per the decision of the All India Convention, over 200 local, regional and State level Conventions have been held in almost all the States and reports are coming in every day of more such conventions being held or under preparation. This has created a good atmosphere of unity throughout the country.

The first meeting of the National Campaign Committee will be held on April 9, 1975 at the Constitution Club, New Delhi to review the progress of the anti wage freeze campaign and to consider steps for further consolidating and strengthening the anti-wage freeze movement.

## Successful Strike By State Govt. Employees & Teachers Tripura Bundh On March 25 Complete

**D**EFLYING the veritable CRP-Raj created by the Government and massive repression launched by it, 30,000 State Govt. Employees and teachers in Tripura went on indefinite strike from March 19, in support of their demands.

The State Government mobilised its entire repressive machinery including CRP and goondas to break the strike and even trying to impose DIR and other preventive measures for the purpose. On the side of the employees, energetic preparations were made during the weeks preceding the strike. Protest demonstrations and meetings were held by employees in all parts of the State including Agartala, Dharmanagar Kailasahar, Kamalpur, Udaipur, Belonia, Teliamura and Sabroom. People's Committees were formed in support of the strike. Fraternal support for the strike was received from all sections of the people.

The strike has proved completely successful. All Govt. offices throughout Tripura, including the Secretariat, Assembly office, Electricity Board, Courts, Hospitals etc., and educational institutions remained completely paralysed.

The Police have so far arrested more than a hundred employees, including six opposition M.L.A.'s under MISA. The massive repression, instead of damping the morale of the employees, has

resulted in the strengthening of the employees' determination and spread of the strike to newer areas. The State Transport employees and Press workers, who did not join earlier, joined the strike from 25th March. More and more sections of employees are joining in as the Strike gathers momentum.

The 6th February Committee

called for a Tripura Bundh on March 25 in support of the State Govt. employees strike and in protest against the massive repression launched by the Government. The Bundh proved a complete success and reports received so far indicate that life was completely paralysed throughout the State on that day with shops, markets, schools and transport totally closed. Some big processions were taken out by workers and employees on the day.

## Central Government Employees & Railmen Observe 'Protest Day' On March 13

**A**t the joint call of the Confederation of Central Govt. Employees and Workers Organisations and the All India Railwaymen's Federation. Central Govt. employees all over India observed March 13 as 'Protest Day' against D. A. Freeze policy of the Government. They demanded the withdrawal of the Wage and D. A. Freeze Act, and full payment in cash of all the five instalments of D. A. payable to employees according to Pay Commission recommendation.

In Calcutta, thousands of Central Govt. employees and Railwaymen came in processions to assemble at a mass rally held before the Raj Bhawan in observance of the Day. All the constituents of Eastern Railway NCCRS except the AITUC union participated in the rally. However, members of the AIRF union in S. E. Railway, though affiliated to AITUC, participated in the rally.

Presided over by Bimal De

(NCCRS), the rally was addressed by many leaders of Central Govt. employees and railwaymen, including S. K. Vyas, Secretary General of the Confederation, Dipen Ghosh, General Secretary of the State Co-ordination Committee and Shanti Chakravarty, leader of railwaymen.

The speakers condemned the conspiracy hatched by the Government, in collusion with some reformist leaders like S. M. Banerjee, Madhusudan and Gupta, to defraud the Central employees of the legitimate D. A. as per the Pay Commission recommendations. By signing the agreement with the Government behind the back of the employees, they said, these reformist leaders have betrayed the interest of lakhs of Central Govt. employees and Railwaymen. A resolution adopted at the rally demanded withdrawal of the Wage and D. A. Freeze Act, refund of

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## Fifth Conference of Co-ordination Committee of State Govt. Employees

The fifth Conference of the Co-ordination Committee of State Govt. Employees Unions and Associations was held at Thyagaraja Hall, Calcutta from 22nd to 24th March. 550 delegates representing 27 organisations in 15 districts of the State and six areas of Calcutta participated in the Conference. A presidium of three conducted the proceedings.

Greeting the conference, P. Ramamurti, General Secretary CITU called upon all to break down the artificial barrier created by the ruling classes between employees of Government and public sector undertakings, Banks LIC, mercantile offices, teachers of schools and colleges on the one hand, and the working class

### *From Page Seventeen*

D. A. already deducted, full payment of the D. A. due in cash etc. and warned the Govt. of bigger struggles if these demands are not conceded.

In Bhatinda (Punjab), thousands of Central Government employees observed the Day by wearing black badges and by holding a protest rally at the call of the Co-ordination Committee of Central, State and Semi-Government Employees. The speakers at the rally demanded withdrawal of the Wage Freeze Act, payment of the five instalments of D. A. in cash and vacation of all victimisation measures against Railwaymen and State Electricity Board, G.N.T.P. and M.E.S. employees.

and peasants on the other. For this purpose a mighty struggle will have to be built up by forging unity between workers, employees, teachers and peasants. He explained the significance of the Delhi Convention of August 28, 1974 in this context and said that, the Convention called for not only a struggle against the Wage Freeze policy of the Government but also for building up a united struggle against all forms of offensive launched by the ruling classes.

The Conference was held in the background of the massive attack launched by the State Govt. on its employees since 1970. During the last four years, all forms of attacks from dismissal, suspension, charge sheet and break in service on leaders of the employees, to arrests and even attempts at assassination of the leaders through hired goondas, have been tried by the Government. That all these repressive measures have not been able to cow down the employees, was evident from the militant mood of the employees reflected in the Conference

On the second day of the Conference, a resolution on 'Struggle Programme' was moved by Ajoy Mukherjee, Joint Secretary and was adopted unanimously. The Conference expressed its determination to build up a long-drawn programme of struggle, including indefinite strike, for the realisation of their demands while continuing negotiations with the Govern-

ment. It called upon the State Government employees, irrespective of affiliation, to associate themselves actively with the rising tempo of struggles to be built up

The Conference also adopted resolutions on Need-based minimum wage, regularisation of services of temporary employees, against attacks on T. U. rights and functioning of Trade Unions, against automation and victimisation of State Govt. employees etc.

The Conference elected a 54-member Central Committee with Shyamsundar Bhattacharya as President and Arabinda Ghosh as Secretary.

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### **Office of CITU Union burnt down by hired gangsters**

The office of the North Bengal State Transport Employees Association (CITU) at Raigunge (West Bengal) was burnt down by hired gangsters of the ruling Party on February 14 last. All the furniture and many valuable papers and documents were completely destroyed by the fire.

Sujit Das, President of the Association has, in a statement, condemned this incident and demanded immediate arrest and punishment of the culprits and an end to such attacks on T. U. rights and activities.

Immediately after the incident, on February 15, workers, and employees of the State Transport depots at Raigunge, Malda, Balurghat and Berhampur held protest meetings and met the Dy. General Manager and respective Depot-in charges in deputation.

# Conventions Against Wage Freeze, Price Rise

## Tamilnadu

As per the decision of the New Delhi Convention, a District level Convention of North Arcot district against Wage Freeze and Price Rise was held at Vellore on January 19 last. 360 delegates representing 52 unions, along with 42 observers and 5 fraternal delegates, from various industries in the different towns of the district participated. The convention was presided over by C. S. Panchapakesan (NFPTE) and was addressed by V. P.

Chintan (CITU), Saroj Choudhuri (AIIEA), G. Ramchandran (NCCRS) and other leaders. Resolutions were passed in the convention demanding withdrawal of Wage Freeze Acts, reinstatement of victimised railway employees, on price rise, black Acts and unemployment etc. After the convention a 1000-strong procession including women paraded the streets.

## Orissa

As per the decision of the State Convention held earlier, a

District Convention of Working People against Wage Freeze was held at Bolangir on January 12 last. Delegates from various unions including Banks, Insurance, Electricity Board, Teachers, Central and State Government employees etc. attended. The open session was addressed by Manmohan Mishra (CITU), S. N. Sircar and other leaders. Afterwards a mass rally and procession was held. Resolutions on Price Rise, Wage Freeze and Black Acts etc. were passed.

## Assam

As per the decision of the North-East Regional Convention held earlier at Shillong, a Convention of working people against Wage Freeze was held at Silchar on February 15 last. Delegates from different unions, viz. LIC, P & T, State Electricity Board, Municipal Board etc. attended. The convention discussed the issues facing the people, like price rise, unemployment etc. and demanded immediate withdrawal of the Wage Freeze Acts.

## Assam P. F. Scheme

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workers are pressurised for voluntary resignation from service after which their PF accounts are settled arbitrarily. The tea barons then appoint casual workers in their place who are also subjected to periodic retrenchments, thus depriving them of the benefit of Provident Fund.

The Board offers only 2 to 3 per cent interest on the PF deposits, against 5 and half per cent earned by it on the same. In no other establishment in the country workers are paid such low rate of interest on their PF deposits. This is another way of defrauding the workers.

A Pension Scheme with nominal benefits was introduced in October, 1976 which was slightly revised in 1972-73. The Pension Fund was created mainly out of accumulated undisbursed PF interests. Here again, a huge deception is being practised on the workers. In the name of add-

tional benefit through Pension scheme, the workers are actually being paid out of their own money which had been denied to them through payment of abnormally low rate of interest on PF deposits.

Strangely enough, the audit of the PF accounts are not being done by the Audit department of the State or Central Govt. but by a private firm. No doubt this highly irregular practice is being followed so that the frauds and misappropriations perpetrated by the garden owners may be effectively concealed and for which the private auditors, there is every reason to suspect, have a profitable understanding with the garden managements.

The workers have all along been demanding an impartial enquiry into the whole affairs of the Scheme. Will the Govt. have the courage to institute such an enquiry to protect the interests of lakhs of tea garden workers?

### CITU (Delhi) Publications

#### 1. Mulyabarhotarika Zimmedar Kaon ?

(Decisions of the All India Anti Wage Freeze Convention held in Delhi on August 28, 1974)  
(In Hindi)

Price : 25 Paise

#### 2. Index Fraud

By G. S. Sinha

Price ; 50 Paise  
(Discount 25 p. c.)

Centre of Indian Trade  
Unions

Regional Committee, Delhi  
14, Vithalhai Patel House  
New Delhi-110001

## UNION REPORTS

### Convention of Chemical & Pharmaceutical Employees

A convention of Pharmaceutical workers and employees of Assam was held in Gauhati on March 3 last. Presided over by Loken Deka, the convention was addressed by S. Ganguly, Vice-President of the A. I. Federation of Chemical & Pharmaceutical Employees and leaders of CITU, P&T, LIC unions, among others.

At the Convention, J.S. Majumdar, General Secretary of the AICAPEF inaugurated the Eastern Regional Branch of the A. I. Federation. Resolutions were also adopted at the Convention on Wage Freeze, high price, Police interference in T. U. rights of workers etc.

Earlier, in a meeting of the representatives of various pharmaceutical unions, a Working Committee of the Regional Branch was elected with Loken Deka as President and Amrita Bhattacharya as General Secretary.

### Calcutta State Transport Employees Demonstrate

Led by the Calcutta State Transport Employees Union (C.I.T.U.), employees of Calcutta State Transport Corporation staged a mass rally and big demonstration on March 18 last, before the head office of the Corporation. A deputation met the authorities who assured them of early negotiations on their demands. This is the first time since 1972, when massive terror was launched on the Union, that such a big demonstration could be held by the workers.

### 3500 Workers Laid-off in Bengal Paper Mill

The management of Bengal Paper Mill, Ranigunge, which started laying off workers in batches from March 7 last, have so far illegally laid off 3500 workers. Out of this total, 2000 are permanent workers. This is part of the conspiracy hatched by the management to deny the legitimate demands of the workers. The Bengal Paper Mill Mazdoor Union (CITU) has sent telegrams to the Union and State Labour Ministers and the Union

Minister for Industrial Development, protesting against this illegal lay-off and demanding their immediate intervention.

### Bihar Colliery Workers Strike Against Repression

In response to a call given by Bihar Colliery Kamgar Union, Dhanbad, all Coal Mine workers in Nirsra Area struck work on 10th March in protest against police atrocities, illegal recruitment of anti-social elements in mines, illegal transfer of office bearers of the unions. The strike was a complete success.

## FOR DELEGATES TO THIRD CITU CONFERENCE

★ **Date of Conference**—21st to 25th May, 1975

★ **Venue** — SHANMUKHANAND HALL  
Kings Circle, Matunga  
Bombay-400022

(N. B. Delegates should get down at DADAR station.)

★ **Delegate Fee** Rs. 5.00. No observers permitted.

★ **Food charges** Rs. 50 for five days.

★ **For return Reservations**, send full particulars of reservation with full amount of fare and charges to Reception Committee at the following address, on or before 15th April, 1975 :

**Com. P. K. Kurane**

General Secretary, Reception Committee

III All India CITU Conference

'Janashakti', Globe Mill Passage

Worli, Bombay-400013 (Phone : 37-6851)

★ Unions requested to clear up all arrears up to 1974 well ahead of the Conference. Delegate cards to be collected from Reception Committee office on 19th May, 1975 after clearing all dues.

★ Draft resolutions to be moved at the Conference to be sent to CITU Centre by 30th April, 1975.

★ Applications for new affiliation should reach CITU Centre latest by 30th April, 1975.

★ Central Office will start functioning at Bombay from 11th May, 1975.