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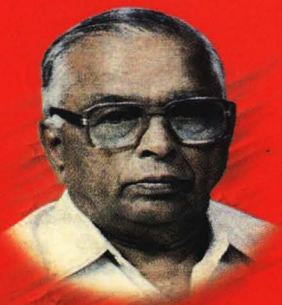
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CITU 12th ALL INDIA CONFERENCE Jan. 17-21, 2007



COM. SURYANARAYANA RAO NAGAR
PALACE GROUND, BANGALORE

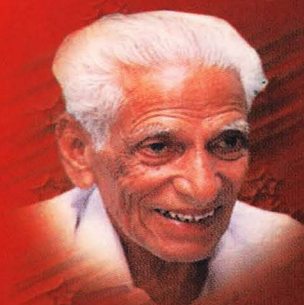
Conference Documents



K. Ramani



Amal Ghose Dastidar



C. Kannan



CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS TWELFTH CONFERENCE

“Com. Suryanarayana Rao Nagar”

January 17 – 21, 2007

BANGALORE, KARNATAKA

AGENDA

1. Condolence Resolution
2. Presidential Address
3. Report of the General Secretary
4. Statement of Accounts for the years 2003, 2004 & 2005
5. Commission discussion on six subjects and reports thereon
6. Declaration on the task before the CITU on the problems of working women
7. Resolutions
8. Election of Office bearers, General Council and Working Committee
9. Any other issue with the permission of Chair



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TIME-TABLE

17.1.2007:	10.00 AM	:	Reception to Conference Jathas
	10.30 AM	:	Flag hoisting – Homage to martyrs
	11.00 AM-1.30 PM	:	INAGURAL SESSION Welcome Address Presidential Address Greetings by Central Trade Unions Resolution on greetings to the working people of Karnataka
	3.30 PM-5.30 PM	:	DELEGATES' SESSION Condolence Resolution Introduction of General Secretary's Report Presentation of Treasurer's Report
	6.00 PM-8.00 PM	:	Delegates' Session Greeting the International Delegations Discussions on General Secretary's Report
18.1.2007:	9.30 AM-1.30 PM	:	Delegates' Session
	3.30 PM-8.00 PM	:	Delegates' Session Discussions on General Secretary's Report Greetings by Fraternal Organisations
19.1.2007:	9.30 AM-1.30 PM	:	Delegates' Session Discussions on General Secretary's Report
	3.30 PM-8.00 PM	:	Greetings by Fraternal Organisations Discussion of the Draft Declaration on tasks on Working Women's front
20.1.2007:	9.30 AM-1.30 PM	:	Discussion in the Commissions
	3.30 PM -5.30 PM	:	Discussion in the Commissions
	6.00 PM-8.00 PM	:	Meeting of the CITU Secretariat
21.1.2007:	9.00 AM-11.30 PM	:	Delegates' Session Presentation of reports on Discussion in the Commissions Adoption of Credential Committee Report

Reply by General Secretary
Adoption of Report & Statement of Accounts
Election of Office Bearers and General Council
11.30 AM-12.00 Noon : General Council Meeting
12.00 Noon- 1.00 PM : Election of Working Committee
Concluding speech of the President
Vote of thanks
3.00 PM : Mass Rally

Tea Break - 11.00 AM to 11.30 AM & 5.30 PM to 6.00 PM

Lunch Break - 1.30 PM to 3.30 PM



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DEBATE ON REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY TIME ALLOCATION FOR STATE-WISE DELEGATIONS

NAME OF THE STATE	Time allocated (Minutes)
Andaman & Nicobar	7
Andhra Pradesh	25
Arunachal Pradesh	5
Assam	10
Bihar	10
Chhattisgarh	10
Delhi	10
Goa	7
Gujarat	10
Jammu & Kashmir	10
Jharkhand	10
Haryana	10
Himachal Pradesh	10
Karnataka	12
Kerala	60
Madhya Pradesh	10
Maharashtra	10
Manipur	5
Orissa	12
Punjab	12
Rajasthan	10
Sikkim	5
Tamilnadu	30
Tripura	15
Uttar Pradesh	10
Uttaranchal	10
West Bengal	80
Industrial Federations*	55
CITU Centre	10

(Time allocation has been done keeping provision for translation time)

(*In Anganwadi, Beedi, Coal, Construction, Electricity, FCI, Oil, Plantation, Road Transport, Steel, Water Transport sectors)



CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS TWELFTH CONFERENCE

“Com. Suryanarayana Rao Nagar”

January 17 – 21, 2007

BANGALORE, KARNATAKA

WELCOME ADDRESS

Dear Comrades, Distinguished Guests, Fraternal Delegates, Delegates from International Fraternity, I extend a very warm and hearty welcome to you all, on behalf of the Reception Committee and the City of Bangalore, to this important All India CITU Conference that is being held in Bangalore.

Bangalore, from its days of being an important Cantonment in the colonial days has progressed to the present stage of becoming an important destination for Multinational Corporations, has witnessed varying phases in its development. In the feudal days the fortifications that developed in the period of Vijayanagar Empire, has changed hands. In the Sultanate period it exhibited the prowess of technology in using the rudimentary form of ‘missiles’ against the invading British from where it spread to the West. It developed from the Cantonment to a pensioner’s paradise and laid the foundations of being the Garden City. Later it developed as a the textile manufacturing centre famous for the Binny fabrics it produced, simultaneously developing the Sericulture, Silk, the agarbathis with its aroma. Being an airbase it started servicing the aircrafts during the Second World War, developing in the process as the most important City of the Central Public Sector Units. It became the most important electronic, aerospace industrial base, and later also earned the name of ‘Silicon Valley of India. Bangalore developed to the present day ‘Greater Bangalooru’ through this process.

In this process many great personalities were associated with this city. Kempe Gowda the Chieftain, who built Bangalore it and established the four towers, close to one of which - being the first known - we are meeting here. Shivaji once owned it. Hyder Ali & Tippoo developed it later the famous Lal Bag where the notable event of Flower Show, which incidentally is taking place starting on the last day of this Conference was developed by them. Among the British soldiers, who worked here, was Winston Churchill. M.Visweswaraiyah, C.V.Raman and very many engineers and scientists lived here and helped to develop it. The Tata Institute, presently known as Indian Institute of Science, was the centre of activity of great men like Homi Bhabha, Vikram Sara Bhai, D.D.Kosambi, Satish Dhawan and many others.

Simultaneously with these industrial developments and process of urbanisation it has attracted the working people from almost every corner of the country. From the period of Kalasipalayam, where the Sultans produced the ‘first missiles’, through the workers’ colonies of HAL/ITI/BEL/HMT etc, where the modern proletariat emerged, it simultaneously produced the HR Potential of the present day IT/BT professionals. Further it attracted the youth from all over India and even from many parts of the world contributed the real builders.

The development of working class in the process, the struggles they have waged, and the ruling class' response to them shaped the political shape of this Great City. The Textile workers were in the forefront of struggles for improving their own terms of employment and simultaneously engaged themselves in the Independence Movement. Many of them became the martyrs during the early forties. The Central Engineering Public Sector Workers' Struggles developed to the Historic Four Month-Strike in 1980-81 and it paved way for political changes in the State. The MICO & ITC Workers' Struggles of the same period, the later wave of struggles included those of Garment Workers, BPL Workers, the Hejjala Firing and Toyota Workers' Struggle, which was waged just last year.

These struggles brought about political polarisations in the early eighties developing an anti-authoritarian and pro-democracy movement in which working class played a very important role. The working class in the State has made steady advance in its organisational strength from the days of internal emergency in 1975-77, through the continued anti-authoritarian movement against the repressive regimes, developing and sustaining the Janata Regime to the present day opportunistic combination ruling the State. However, the Working Class is yet to develop as a significant political force capable of strong intervention in the State.

Bangalore remained at the head of these developments and rest of Karnataka did not lag behind. The series of struggles that were waged in the late seventies all over Karnataka led to the swift change from Karnataka being the safe heaven of collaborators in the trade union movement to being an advancing area of safeguarding the interests of working people. It witnessed very powerful struggles from late seventies to early eighties for recognition of unions through democratic process, which made distinct contributions to the process.

The organisation of working people on a wider scale and sweep became effective in the post liberalisation period. The so called 'voluntary labour' in the ICDS projects, local self-governments, mid-day meal schemes etc. have repeatedly marched from various corners of Karnataka to Bangalore and made its streets sparkle with red banners in the recent period.

These developing struggles enabled the CITU to develop as the most important trade union centre in Bangalore and Karnataka, emboldening us to extend invitation to hold this most important all India Conference for the first time in our State.

We are aware of the serious limitations we have in hosting such a large conference, our comrades with the active assistance of democratic segments of the people here have not only formed the State Level Reception Committee but also formed such reception committees in various areas. 33 such reception committees in Bangalore alone have functioned and gone to the people seeking their help to host this conference. Despite being one of the modern cities in the country, Bangalore has had no infrastructure to house these many delegates in a single permanent structure and we had to erect this Conference Hall and the whole area in the Place Grounds. All these would not have been possible without the unstinted support of the people in Bangalore and all over Karnataka.

We are very happy play host to the veteran leaders of the trade union movement in the country, who have led militant struggles, faced the goonda gangs, the police and all sorts of disruptive elements, while defending steadfast the class interests. You have come to Bangalore in such large numbers and we are proud of you. We would have loved to shower you with the best possible hospitality, but please put up with all the inconveniences caused by our limitations in a comradely spirit.

We are happy to welcome especially the delegates from our international fraternity, who have come in such large numbers, travelling long distances, to inspire us all. We pledge our support to the cause of Proletarian Internationalism.

We are happy that many fraternal delegates have accepted CITU's invitation and come to attend this Conference. This Conference is taking place immediately after the glorious countrywide general strike on December 14, 2006.

We extend a warm and hearty welcome to you all and assure that we will together leave no stone unturned to achieve unity of the class and make our own distinct contribution to social progress in our country and the world.

Long Live Working Class Unity!
Long Live Proletarian Internationalism!
CITU Zindabad!
Inquilab Zindabad!

V.J.K.Nair
Chairman,
Reception Committee
TWELFTH CONFERENCE



CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS TWELFTH CONFERENCE

“Com. Suryanarayana Rao Nagar”

January 17 – 21, 2007

BANGALORE, KARNATAKA

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Dear Comrades,

Since we met last time in the eleventh conference at Chennai in December 2003, the world witnessed several tumultuous developments having long-term impact on the future of our planet. In our country too vast changes in economic and political spheres have taken place affecting the livelihood of the people.

I propose to deal mainly with the international developments since the national issues are dealt at length by our General Secretary. Only the national issues, which have global significance, would be referred briefly in my address.

SLOW DOWN IN US ECONOMY

The short-term boom witnessed in the US economy for the last 3 years has now come to an end with the signs of slowdown being clearly visible. As noted by The Economist, “In the short term America’s economy is certainly slowing as the latest GDP figures are expected to show. But the more worrying data concern the longer term. America’s economic speed limit — the pace at which the economy can grow without fuelling inflation — is also dropping. It may soon be as low as 2.5% per cent a year, by some estimates the slowest pace in more than a century.” (The Economist, Oct-28-Nov 3, 2006)

The forecast of the GDP growth during 2007 is estimated at the following rate in major capitalist countries:

Japan	1.2%
Germany	1.4%
Britain	2.4%
France	2%
Italy	1.2%
Canada	2.5%
Spain	2.8%
Belgium	1.9%
Netherlands	2.2%

Taking the entire Euro area the average growth rate is estimated to be only 1.9%

Despite revolutionary changes that have taken place in production technology the economic growth in the developed capitalist countries shows the inability of the system itself. Capitalism is unable to utilise the technology to advance the productive capacity of the society. Due to lower purchasing capacity of the people at large the production does not find a market in their country. Hence, the thrust is given for exports to countries where purchasing power is available. Industrial production grew in China during 2006 by 14.1% till October, and the growth rate was sustained for more than 25 years because the purchasing power of the people also increased along with the rise in production. This fact itself underlines the superiority of the socialist system.

GLOBAL RISE IN INEQUALITY

According to a study recently conducted by World Institute for Development Economic Research of the United Nations, there has been a phenomenal growth in global inequality. The wealth distribution all over the world clearly indicates that the richest one per cent in the world owns 40 per cent of the planet's wealth.

The total wealth in the world is estimated to be \$125 trillion. The report found that the richest 10% of adults accounted for 85% of the global assets. It further noted that half of the world's adult population owned only 1 per cent of the global wealth. In the study, India comes near the bottom of the list with per capita wealth of only \$1,100 (Rs 49,500).

The report finds that those in the financial services and the internet sectors predominate among the super rich in the world. More than one third of them live in US. Japan accounts for 27% of the total while UK accounts for 6 per cent and France 5 per cent.

As compared to per capita wealth in India, the leading capitalist countries have extremely higher wealth. In the year 2000 per capita wealth in UK stood at \$1,27,000 while in Japan it was \$1,81,000 and USA \$1,44,000.

Though pontiffs of globalisation are justifying this huge accumulation of assets as a requirement of accelerating economic growth, it is totally unjustified when even according to UN report more than 800 million people in the world are suffering from acute hunger. The talk of elimination of poverty through globalisation is thus a mirage and will never be achieved if these policies continue.

Sixteen years of globalisation has inflicted severe miseries on the working class and the common people all over the world. Downsizing of manpower to cut down cost on the plea of becoming competitive in the global market has resulted in increasing workload on the working class. Increase in the hours of work and deterioration in working conditions have become the order of the day. Several lakhs of industrial units all over the world, which could not withstand the competitive environment, have been compelled to close down throwing large number of workers on the streets. While price rise of essential commodities has become a global phenomenon, the wages could not keep pace with the rising costs resulting in deterioration in the standard of living of the working class.

Social security benefits are under severe attack. Curtailment of pensionary benefits and welfare measures has become an essential part of what they call labour reform. In the name of labour market flexibility, right of hire and fire has been introduced in most of the countries in the world; women workers have become a special target of attack - they are the first to be terminated in the retrenchment drive.

In Export Processing Zones and Special Economic Zones all over the world, labour laws generally remained non-implemented. Trade union rights of the working class including right to strike are systematically undermined which prevailed upon ILO to use the term "marginalisation" of the trade union movement. The call of the Director General of ILO for decent work remained unimplemented, which compelled him to use the term 'deficit in decent work'!

POLITICS BEHIND EXPANSION OF NATO

Though the cold war is over US imperialists are indulging in expansion of NATO to strengthen their domination all over the globe. After including East European countries in NATO, attempts are being made to include Ukraine and Georgia in its domain. Moreover, talks of including countries like South Korea, New Zealand, Australia and Israel are going on openly. Pakistan army personnel are going to be trained in NATO military training academies. Thus NATO is going beyond the area earmarked for it. It has already established its presence in Afghanistan and its troop strength has already reached 17000.

Russian President Vladimir Putin had maintained good relations with US imperialists and his government allowed US to control some of the major public sector companies in Russia. Even US troops were stationed in some central Asian Republics.

However, Putin is now worried at US attempt to encircle Russia through NATO network. This has generated conflict between Russia and US. Consequently US imperialists could not control the rich energy resources in CIS countries. US is today extremely worried because Russia has become a major supplier of oil and gas to European countries. This growing dependence on Russian oil supplies is worrying the US administration.

It is also observed that of late Russian leadership has been making strenuous efforts to thwart the US efforts to increase its sphere of influence in the former Soviet Union republics. The steep rise in oil prices has enabled the Russian government to increase its influence in Eastern European countries.

SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANISATION

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation formed in 2001 at the summit of Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan was a significant event in which a strategic alliance was formed. Four Asian countries, namely, India, Pakistan, Iran and Mongolia had been invited as observers. This has given a big jolt to the very concept of expansion of NATO. The proposal from Iran and Pakistan to obtain full membership of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation has posed serious problem for India. In a recently held meeting on the occasion of fifth anniversary of the organisation of Shanghai Cooperation Pakistan and Iran sent heads of the state but India sent only its pro-US oil minister.

It is necessary that India should give more importance to this strategic alliance so that the US machinations can be checked in the Asian continent. India should not bow down to the pressure of US imperialists in the matter of deciding its approach towards this new strategic alliance.

FIASCO OF US POLICIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The US policies of controlling huge oil resources in the Middle East have completely failed during the last 3 years, though Middle East occupied the major thrust of Bush administration as a part of its desire to impose its hegemonic designs on the world. The US-led military intervention in Iraq, bypassing the United Nations, had misfired and it failed to subjugate the resistance of Iraqi people. In the case of Palestine, Lebanon, Syria and Iran, the US policies have come home to roost making West Asia a hotbed of anti-US struggles.

The US adventure in Iraq has misfired and President Bush's plan to control oil of Iraq is not likely to be achieved. Despite spending about 300 billion dollars in the war in Iraq, US could not control the oil resources of Iraq. Over 3000 US soldiers lost their lives in this imperialist war of aggression and despite destroying several historic sites in Iraq, the US army could not establish any puppet regime in the premier Middle Eastern state. Lakhs of innocent men, women, and children were killed by US and puppet troops but the resistance forces continue to grow with each passing day. Back home, the

failure in Iraq war led to the defeat of Bush's Republican Party losing control over the US Senate, where his opponents, the Democrats got majority in the recently held elections.

The newly appointed Pentagon Chief, Robert Gates had to admit on December 5 that US was not winning the war in Iraq. The inhuman torture of prisoners in Iraq jails and sadistic depredations of US soldiers have shocked the world humanity. The rape of thousands of Iraqi women by US and other soldiers has been condemned all over the world. The allies of US imperialists had to withdraw their armed forces from Iraq and the mass of the people in USA itself have held huge demonstrations demanding withdrawal of troops from Iraq. Even the puppet regime had come out against US occupation and imperialist machinations in that country.

The Baker Commission, appointed by US Congress on war in Iraq, has admitted, "The situation in Iraq is grave and deteriorating". It further noted that there is risk of a "slide towards chaos that could trigger the collapse of Iraq government and a humanitarian catastrophe." It recommended moving US combat troops out of Iraq.

The resistance forces in Palestine continue to fight for their homeland opposing Israeli atrocities backed by US imperialists. The Oslo accord failed to restore peace between Palestine and Israel due to refusal of the Israel to vacate the land of Palestine forcibly occupied by them. Despite vacation of Gaza Strip, Israeli soldiers continue to attack Palestine territory and even the headquarters of the PLO Chief late Yasser Arafat was not spared by them.

After the death of Arafat, Israel thought that the new leadership would be pliable to the imperialists manoeuvres. But the electoral victory of Hamas had angered Israeli Zionists who tried to throttle the economy of Palestine. However, the people of Palestine continued their resistance despite several military interventions by Israeli forces. The worldwide support continues to the genuine demand of the people of Palestine to have their homeland by vacating all illegally occupied territories in Gaza Strip and West Bank and making East Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine. But the Israeli game of talks without any concrete step to vacate the occupied territory is resulting in no settlement of this long pending dispute in which US is fully backing Israel.

The most cruel attack by the Israeli forces on Lebanon on the plea of punishing Hizbollah forces who captured two Israeli soldiers was condemned all over the world. The 34-day war against Lebanon led to colossal destruction of property of the people of Lebanon and killing of thousands of men, women and children. However, Hizbollah forces heroically resisted these attacks and did not surrender before the might of US backed Israeli forces. Continued bombing of residential areas in the name of destroying Hizbollah outfit was a matter of daily occurrence. Several Indian workers working in Lebanon were also affected by these inhuman attacks. Ultimately, the UN had to intervene to cease the hostilities and peace was restored in Lebanon. The war only strengthened the hands of Hizbollah forces. The killing of some Lebanese political leaders in Lebanon resulted in creating anti-US feelings among a section of the people.

Support given by the Syrian government to the people of Palestine and Hizbollah forces became a matter of concern to the Bush Administration which contemplated military action against Syria on the plea that it was harbouring terrorists. However, emerging anti-US and anti-imperialist waves developing in the region prevented US from indulging in such an adventure. Israel continues to occupy the Golan Heights since 1967 and refuses to vacate the illegal settlements there. The Syrian government is asserting its right to regain the lost territory but the US is fully backing Israel in its forcible occupation of the land, which legitimately belonged to Syria.

The US policy towards Iran has also come up for a strong criticism all over the world. As a signatory of Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty, Iran has a legitimate right to develop nuclear energy for peaceful

purposes. Iran's programme of enrichment of uranium was opposed by Bush administration, which was even considering striking at all nuclear facilities of Iran. Despite US blackmail, Iran expressed her determination to go ahead with its nuclear programme.

SITUATION IN NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

The comprehensive peace agreement signed on November 21, 2006 between the Government of Nepal and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) to end violence and set out a roadmap for the future - after a bitter struggle against autocracy - is a welcome step. The protracted talks between the seven party alliance and the Maoists resulted in the settlement which provided for an interim Parliament in which Maoist will have 73 members while the seven parties will have 209 members of the dissolved Parliament. Including some members who did not join the anti-king agitation the total number will be 330. The Maoist army will be kept under UN supervision and members of the Maoist army confined to seven cantonments and 21 sub-cantonments. The agreement provides elections in the constituent Assembly, which will be held in middle of June 2007 to be monitored by the UN. The decision about whether or not to retain monarchy should be taken at the first meeting of the constituent Assembly.

If the agreement is fully implemented it would ensure durable peace in Nepal which will be governed by a multi-party democracy. Though the emergence of Nepal as a secular state and not as a Hindu kingdom has annoyed BJP and other communal forces in India, the remarkable changes that are taking place in Nepal will have a long term impact on the development in South Asian region.

The relations between India and Pakistan continue to show ups and down but the people of India and Pakistan want friendly relations between them. Economic cooperation between the two countries will immensely benefit both the countries. The Kashmir issue however is creating bottlenecks in further improvement of relations while terrorist attacks in India continue to strain the relations.

Recently Pakistan President Musharaf has proposed 4 -point proposal, which India has welcomed. The proposals are (1) Kashmir retains its current borders, but people move freely back and forth (2) Region to have self-governance or autonomy but not independence (3) Troops be withdrawn in a staggered manner (4) Joint supervision mechanism with India Pakistan and Kashmir. The Prime Minister of India has already given a positive reaction to this proposal as a basis for further negotiations though adverse reaction have come from sections of public in India and Pakistan.

The dialogue between the two great neighbours should continue so that a reasonable settlement acceptable to both the sides could be arrived at without third party intervention. There appears to be a clear shift from the stand taken by Pakistan for an independent Kashmir, which should be welcomed by the people of India. It is possible to find out a workable solution to the problem if both sides are sincere in their approach. BJP is characterising progress in talks as a policy of appeasement since it does not want any solution to the dispute. Under these circumstances a big campaign among the people of India should be launched so that the long pending dispute is settled to the advantage of both India and Pakistan.

The situation in Sri Lanka continues to deteriorate resulting in loss of human life from the side of the government as well as LTTE forces. The peace accord signed with the Norwegian intervention has practically resulted in failure and fighting erupted in several areas. The LTTE is once again insisting for a Tamil statehood while the Sri Lankan government is resolutely opposing it. The hostilities have caused unbearable suffering for the common people with acute food shortage all over the country.

The Sri Lankan problem cannot be solved through armed conflict. A political solution has to be found out to the problem. However, due to hard stands taken by both sides no solution to the problem is emerging and the situation is becoming more and more complex causing serious anxiety among Indian people.

The situation in Bangladesh is becoming critical with the next elections for Jatiya Samsad approaching nearer. The reactionary ruling clique in violation of the constitution appointed their yes-man as the head of the caretaker government, which sparked countrywide protests. The 14 party alliance led by Awami League organised 3 day strike during which several clashes took place killing 28 and injuring over 2000 persons. The US Ambassador in Dhaka openly intervened in its internal affairs to help the reactionary clique. Now, doubts are openly expressed whether the elections would be free and fair since electoral rolls are also manipulated. Meanwhile there is a split in the ruling combine making opposition forces stronger. Since Bangladesh is heading the SAARC, the developments in that country will affect the functioning of SAARC itself.

RELATIONS WITH CHINA

The visit of Chinese President to India in November last year was an important occasion to strengthen India-China cooperation. During his stay, eleven agreements were signed including increasing bilateral trade from the present level of \$20 billion to \$40 billion by 2010. The border trade would also be strengthening while consensus could be achieved to settle the border dispute between the two countries at an early date.

Two years ago Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao visited India and had a fruitful discussion with the Indian government for strengthening economic cooperation between the two countries. The Chinese economy is advancing at the rate of 9-10 per cent during the last 25 years increasing the standard of living of the people radically. Today China produces more than 350 million tones of steel, which is more than 3 times of US steel production. It is also the largest coal producer in the world exceeding 1200 million tones. Today Chinese economy is fourth in the world next to USA, Japan and Germany. It will soon overtake Germany; US economists are worried that the higher rate of growth may result in China overtaking even USA.

US imperialists are therefore trying to use India as a bulwark against China. India should not fall a victim to this US machinations. As a matter of fact more cooperation between India and China will strengthen the struggle of the people in the developing countries against the dictate of the advanced capitalist countries.

ANTI-US UPSURGE IN LATIN AMERICA

In spite of decades of inhuman blockade by US imperialists, Cuba continues to march forward in socialist construction. International agencies has rated Cuba's educational and health protection system as one of the best in the world. Cuban doctors have done remarkably well in helping other Latin American countries. The GDP grew at the rate of 11.8 per cent during 2005, which showed the US blockade has been torn asunder by revolutionary Cuba. US imperialists however, are deluding themselves by harbouring fond hopes of Fidel Castro going out of the scene due to his intestinal operation but they would be only hunting for a mirage. On his 80th birthday celebrations the working class and the people of Cuba have firmly declared that they would carry forward the policy of building socialism. "Socialism or Death" was the slogan given by lakhs of people who assembled on the occasion. Let us hope for early recovery of Fidel Castro so that he can continue to guide the heroic people of Cuba in the struggle against imperialist globalisation and domination.

The victory of leftist economists Rafael Correa in the election to Ecuador presidency with 58 per cent majority support defeating banana magnate and yes-man of Bush administration, Alvaro Noboa, was a significant development in Latin America. Correa assured to remove US military base at Manta and not to join the so-called free trade agreement with US, which has generated new wave of enthusiasm among the 13 million people of Ecuador. Let us congratulate the people of Ecuador for giving a fitting rebuff to Bush for treating Latin America as backyard of US imperialism.

The resounding victory of Hugo Chavez in the Venezuelan election on December 3, last year in which he got over 61 per cent of the votes, exhibited the support he is enjoying in that oil rich state. The revolutionary changes which Chavez brought in Venezuela led to introduction of land reform, use of oil taxes to develop country's road, housing programme and subsidised ration to poor people, increase in literacy and health care for the people, etc. Chavez had taken steps to modernise the army with the help of modern defence equipments from Russia. He has become extremely popular in Latin America while his outspoken critique of Bush policies in United Nations calling him stupid, has endeared him all over the world. Venezuela has become a firm ally of Cuba in the struggle against US imperialism.

The second time success of Lula da Silva, the candidate of the workers Party in Brazil with 61% votes also shows the growing resentment against the policies of globalisation. Brazil, the highest indebted country in the world amounting to over \$250 billion, US products flooding the market and collapse of local economy, elected a left of the centre candidate to fight against the policies of globalisation. Lula assured that the rate of economic growth should be increased to make the country self-reliant from foreign domination. This success also amounts to a defeat of US policy in the Latin American continent.

In Bolivia, the people disgusted with the policies of globalisation, threw out of power, US stooge government in a democratically held election and voted overwhelmingly for Evo Morales who belonged to ingenious majority population. With this historic election the centuries of subjugation of Bolivia's indigenous population came to an end and their genuine representative came to power for the first time. As all of us know Che Guevara became martyr in Bolivia while leading an underground armed struggle to oust an autocratic government. Evo Morales, in order to pay tribute to the valiant memory of Che Guevara, announced in the place of his martyrdom that all oil and gas companies controlled by US multinationals would be nationalised. He also announced free distribution of 4 crores acres of land illegally occupied by landlords to several thousands of poor peasants. We salute the great victory achieved by the people of Bolivia.

The Sandinista victory in Nicaragua brought Daniel Ortega to power in spite of open financial and political support given to the reactionary forces by Bush administration. Daniel Ortega was ousted from power in an earlier election due to US imperialist open intervention in domestic affairs of Nicaragua. However, the people of Nicaragua revolted against imperialist domination and rejected the policy of globalisation and US attempt to dominate the politics in Latin America.

During the elections in Mexico in July 2006 the Leftist candidate Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador lost only by 0.5 per cent of votes that too due to large scale electoral fraud. The supreme federal electoral tribunal admitted extensive electoral fraud but declared right wing candidate as elected and did not allow recounting of votes. Massive demonstrations were held throughout the country against the fraud. US government openly supported the reactionary candidate and encouraged fraudulent practices. However, Mexican people's opposition is growing. Since Mexico is just having a border with USA the leftward turn in this country has a great significance in the North American continent.

The victory of the Left in Uruguay, the success of Michelle Bachelet, a moderate left in Chile, the victory of Rene Preval, a left candidate in Haiti, are worth noting successes in Latin America. In Peru the leftists were defeated by a narrow margin while Colombia is now the only major Latin American country, which is controlled by the hirelings of US imperialism. The dictatorial regime has murdered hundreds of trade unionists for their legitimate struggles for improving working and living conditions of the working class.

INTERNATIONAL T.U. MOVEMENT

The international T.U. movement is today at crossroads. The trade union membership in major capitalist countries is declining. It is due to the drastic reduction in manpower in most of the advanced capitalist countries and the refusal of the trade union leadership in these countries to resolutely fight against the policies of globalisation. The U.S. Government and the CIA are openly using certain trade unions as conduits to pass on the funds to dissuade the leadership of trade unions from launching any struggle against capitalist exploitation. The IMF and World Bank do not object if the leadership of trade unions resort to rhetoric against capitalism, provided they adopt class collaborationist policies in practice.

Attempts to de-ideologise the working class and blunt its class consciousness has been the chief weapon in the armoury of the capitalist class. It is but natural that at a global level the struggles of the working class are not assuming militant character to hit the crucial interests of the capitalist class.

Today, world capitalism is keenly interested to develop labour aristocracy in trade union movement in advanced capitalist countries. It is due to this that the trade union movement in developing countries does not get adequate solidarity support from the trade union movement of advanced capitalist countries. Despite a long history of over two and half centuries, the working class of U.K. is not prepared to fight for socialist transformation. In Britain, Prime Minister, Tony Blair has become a symbol of a conservative sheep in socialist clothing. Though he was elected twice he did not find time to withdraw anti-working class legislation brought out by Margaret Thatcher. The situation is more or less the same in other major developed capitalist countries.

Working class of the world today needs unity of the world trade union movement irrespective of ideological differences and it should be based on common issues facing the working class. Trade union as an organisation of the working class must strive to end all forms of exploitations. The international trade union movement should oppose all aggressions against any country, economic blockade, economic sanctions and foreign military bases. T.U. movement must oppose neo-colonialism and support all liberation struggles. World T.U. movement must oppose all forms of financial and imperialist globalisation while advocating social globalisation that would improve the conditions of the toiling masses. The united T.U. movement must fight for defending the T.U and democratic rights of the working class including right to strike. It should advocate ban on nuclear weapons and total destruction of all nuclear stockpile. The ultimate objective of the T.U. movement must be the abolition of exploitation of man by man, which can be achieved only through determined class struggles.

It is in this context that we should view the question of merger of ICFTU and WCL. These two organisations do not have any ideological differences and they together are in a position to control the ILO activities. They are also in a position to utilise the ILO resources to strengthen their T.U.s.

The CITU was invited by CGT (France) for an international meeting to discuss the problems of unity in the trade union movement. I had an occasion to attend the meeting in which I raised the above issues that are crucial for a real unity of the international T.U movement. The CITU did not agree to join the new world T.U centre but agreed to carry forward the dialogue for creating a basis for unification of the would T.U. movement. The CITU stressed upon the need for joint movements on common issues facing the working class irrespective of differences in ideology.

The CITU also emphasised the need for involving WFTU and also the All China Federation of Trade unions, the largest T.U organisation in the world with 16 crore membership.

The meeting held in Vienna, Austria, in the first week of November last year formed the new world federation, ITUC. But its policies remained the same as those of the ICFTU and WCL. The new

organisation did not express determination to fight against imperialist designs to control the world. It did not support to revolutionary struggles of the working class in the developing countries. Instead of opposing firmly the role of MNCs it sought to negotiate and reach agreements with them. The objective of the new organisation was only to participate in economic struggles that too within the confine of bourgeois frame work. All these indicate that the new organisation negates the class struggle and political action by the working class.

However, we must ponder why the fighting organisation like COSATU (South Africa), CUT (Brazil), GEFONT (Nepal), CGT (France), KCTU (South Korea) and some other left oriented trade unions are feeling the need to join the new organisation. Perhaps they might be thinking, though erroneously, for fighting for adoption of a militant policy from within the organisation. We have very close relations with them and that would be continued in future also, without compromising our stand on the issue.

The CITU has fraternal ties of friendship with several affiliates of ITUC. We would continue to strengthen those relationships. We participate in meetings when ICFTU affiliates invite us. The dialogue on differences of opinion is necessary to arrive at a correct understanding.

A section of the AFL-CIO (trade union centre of USA) has opposed the policy of the new organisation and they are maintaining fraternal ties with us. We fully co-operate with them and it is proving to be useful to us. Our relation with Australian Council of Trade Unions in Southern Initiative on Globalisation and T.U Rights (SIGTUR) is going on well. And we continue to strive to strengthen it.

After dismantling of socialism in Soviet Union and Eastern European countries the WFTU has been considerably weakened. It had earlier a staff of 650, but later WFTU gave up the polices of class struggle and social transformation. WFTU had several financial difficulties to run the centre itself. The general secretary of TUI Transport misappropriated the entire assets of the organisation.

However at the initiative Cuban trade unions, serious efforts to renew the foundation of WFTU began. The Havana Congress held in 2005 was a clear departure from other congresses. The newly elected General Secretary has taken positive steps to revitalise the organisation. The CITU was invited to attend Presidential Council meeting held at Brussels on 20 – 21 December last year. We explained our views on the question of challenges before the international T.U movement in the 21st century. As per invitation of WFTU General Secretary, the CITU will send a delegation to Athens, the new headquarters of the WFTU, and discuss further steps of co-operation.

The WFTU has no affiliated union in any major developed capitalist country. Lack of financial resources is still creating bottlenecks in its functioning; yet the new leadership is making attempts to revitalise the organisation.

The CITU believes that though no international unity is possible in the near future it is possible to develop united actions at the national or regional levels so that unity form below can be developed.

Due to our efforts, an international meeting of the miners' organisations will be held in Kolkata in February, in which unions of all international affiliations as well as unions having no affiliation will join together to workout commonly agreed policies. Such industry level unity will also pave the way for further broader unity at the global level.

Globalisation has brought together the capitalist class, but the working class is still divided and a clear-cut policy of struggle is yet to be evolved at a global level. The 12th Conference of the CITU may discuss these aspects so that we can play a more effective role in the international T.U. movement.

A large number of fraternal delegates from abroad are attending our conference. It is a great honour for us to welcome them. Let us assure all the delegates the CITU's sincere desire to strengthen the ties of friendship with them in the future. Without worldwide unity, working class cannot advance in their objective.

FORWARD TO BIGGER CLASS BATTLES

The performance of the UPA Government during the last two and a half years is a catalogue of blatant violations of most of the commitments given in its National Common Minimum Programme. The working and living conditions of the toiling masses have deteriorated considerably while the capitalists are enjoying the fruits of the concessions given by UPA Government. The bursting of sensex index above 14,000 and super profits achieved by several major private sector undertakings in just one year, is a vivid testimony of this harsh reality. The globalisation policies pursued by the Manmohan Singh Government has enhanced the rate of exploitation of the working class.

The condition of the peasantry and agricultural labourers has become worse; lakhs of peasants have committed suicide during the UPA regime. The prices of essential commodities have gone up sky high hitting hard below the belt the poorer strata of the Indian society.

The unemployment situation in the country has worsened both in urban and rural areas, despite passing of the Rural Employment Guarantee Act. Despair among the young generation entering the employment market is increasing rapidly. The utter collapse of public distribution system has made life miserable for the vast masses of the Indian society. Commercialisation of education system has made higher education a luxury for the ordinary people. Though the number of people below the poverty line is increasing official statistics are fudged through manipulation to show that poverty is declining. Mere growth in GDP does not automatically lead to reduction in poverty but this hard reality is purposefully ignored to bolster the so-called achievements of globalisation.

It is but natural that the discontent among the working class and the toiling masses is increasing rapidly. The massive success of the 14th December strike last year is a testimony of this emerging situation in the country. The urge for unity among the working class in the country has increased phenomenally which was visible when large sections of the workers belonging to the organisations opposing the nation-wide strike joined the strike with enthusiasm.

We must utilise the favourable atmosphere created all over the country. Though there have been grey areas which require more attention, our efforts to build unity from below must be strengthened so that we will march forward in the direction of building all in unity of the working class.

It is also necessary to develop common struggles of the working class and the peasantry so that our resistance becomes much more powerful and the ruling classes cannot ignore us. The objective conditions in the country are highly favourable for such an approach.

The present situation demands that the working class must champion the vital interests of all the toiling sections so that it can play a leading role in the struggles to oppose the policies of globalisation. It is from this point of view that we have to strengthen our relations with women's, students' and youth movements as well as with movements of cultural activists and scientists so that our struggles become all pervasive. The National Platform of Mass Organisations has to be strengthened to meet this requirement.

We must take note of the fact that majority of our working class is still under the influence of capitalist and feudal ideologies. A struggle against these ideologies is of paramount importance to draw the working class in political struggles to fight the exploiting classes.

When all over the world struggles against globalisation are coming to the forefront, the UPA Government is surrendering the national sovereignty to serve the global designs of US imperialism. The concessions given to FDI in various forms will only make our country dependent on foreign capital, which is coming to India not for our development but for making profits.

To meet the challenges of the present national and international situation we must build a powerful CITU organisation that would effectively lead the working class in their day-to-day struggles as well as in the struggle for social transformation.

I am sure this 12th conference will deal with all the aspects of the challenges faced by us and chalk out ways to effectively meet the situation.

The present stage of capitalist development in the form of neoliberal globalisation is not sustainable and working class and the toiling masses all over the world are bound to rise against all machinations of monopoly capital. We must pass on this confidence to the working class so that it can play its historic role with firm determination.

Capitalist system is bound to fail; we must prepare the gravediggers of capitalism to discharge their responsibility!

We shall overcome one day!

Long live the unity of the working class!

Down with capitalist globalisation!

Long live CITU!

Workers of the world unite!

M. K. PANDHE

President



CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

TWELFTH CONFERENCE

“Com. Suryanarayana Rao Nagar”
January 17 – 21, 2007
BANGALORE, KARNATAKA

REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Dear Comrades,

Since the 11th Conference of the CITU, held at Chennai in December 2003, several important developments have taken place in the international and national arena. These have a long-term impact on the working class and trade union movement in our country. Those developments have brought forth many opportunities as well as challenges. We have to review them dispassionately to evolve our approach to meet the new challenges facing the working class movement.

1.2 During the intervening period, many leading comrades in the working class and democratic movement have passed away. They had made immense contribution in developing the movement from its nascent stage in different parts of the country. Many comrades - both from the trade union and the democratic movements - have embraced martyrdom while carrying on the struggle against exploitation and braving the attack of the reactionary forces. We remember them with a heavy heart and pay our respectful homage to their memory.

2. INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

2.1 The Presidential address to this Conference has dealt in detail the developments in the international arena.

2.2 The international scenario during the intervening period witnessed aggressive hegemonic manoeuvres by the imperialist forces led by US Administration on the developing countries, simultaneously on political, economic and military fronts. This period also witnessed:

- People raising a louder voice against imperialist aggression by the US and its allies in the Middle East;
- Massive mobilisation in various parts of the world including those imperialist countries;
- Increasing spate of strike actions even in the European Union against the fallout of the neoliberal economic policies;
- Changes towards left of the centre in the political scenario of the Latin American subcontinent; and lastly
- The defeat of President Bush's party in the US Senate election.

3. NATIONAL SITUATION

3.1 The General Secretary's Report adopted by the 11th Conference of CITU underlined that, "while carrying on our untiring effort in organizing militant mass struggle against the policies of the Govt, we must also continue organized campaign from our independent platform against communalism and all kinds of divisive virus being spread by the ruling class to weaken the unity of the people and divert the attention of the people. This task is of crucial importance in view of the strategy of aggressive communalism being resorted to by the BJP bandwagon to retain themselves in political power in the face of their gradual isolation from the people owing to their disastrous anti-people policies... We must effectively combat such heinous ploy of the communal forces in power, if we are to successfully unite the working class and toiling masses in the struggle against the capitalist and imperialist offensive and bring about the change in the correlation of forces in the right direction." The direction of the 11th conference had, in essence, been to isolate and defeat the communal forces in power and to strengthen the assertive edge of the forces of struggle against imperialist neo-liberalism.

3.2 We can state with a sense of satisfaction that the post 11th Conference period witnessed the ouster of the NDA combine from power. The working class movement in the country played a big role in changing the correlation of political forces in the country. This made the UPA regime that assumed office at the Centre dependent on the Left forces, which took and pursued a consistently forthright stand against the policies of neoliberalism.

3.3 The Nasik meeting of the CITU General Council in July 2004, while underlining the task before the CITU in the post election scenario, stated: "The defeat of the NDA government has generated high expectations among the mass of the working people, who fought bitterly against onslaughts on their rights and livelihood during its rule. These expectations must be articulated loudly, through vigorous campaign and mobilisation, demanding pro-people orientation of the economic policies and expansion of democratic rights; otherwise demoralization is likely to creep in, much to the advantage of the communal forces waiting in the wings. The working class movement has to shoulder the task of mobilising people in that direction, as an integral part of its political task to further isolate the communal forces and at the same time facilitate and strengthen interventions by the Left, to make the government at the centre work for the people. It is the mobilisation by the working class at the ground level, which can make the intervention of the Left on the policy issues more effective; such intervention is crucial and essential to maintain the secular governance and isolate the communal forces."

3.4 We have to review the developments and the effectiveness of our intervention during the period since the 11th Conference, in the light of above understanding.

3.5 We have no illusions about the class character of UPA regime and the task to strengthen struggle against neoliberal policies through unity and struggle has been uppermost in our mind during this period.

3.6 The two and half year old Congress led UPA regime reflects the continuity of the pursuit of almost the same policy of the NDA regime, specially on the economic and foreign policy fronts.

3.7 The National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP) incorporated a commitment for pursuit of "an independent foreign policy, keeping in mind its past traditions" and to "seek to promote multipolarity in world relations and oppose all attempts at unilateralism". But, in violation thereof, the UPA Government only demonstrated a clear tilt in its foreign policy regime in favour of US imperialists' hegemonistic manoeuvres in the fast changing international political scenario. The Government of India supported the US imperialists against Iran on the nuclear related issues in the International

Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). It has been following in the footsteps of the NDA regime by continuing its 'strategic' cooperation with the USA through a ten-year military framework agreement and made unwarranted compromises in favour of USA in the Indo-US nuclear deal. Such an unwarranted tilt away from nonalignment and in favour of the imperialist block, if allowed to continue without opposition on the foreign policy front, is bound to have ominous portents for and reflections in the internal policies as well as both on economic and political fronts.

4. ROLE OF LEFT FRONT & LEFT DEMOCRATIC FRONT GOVERNMENTS

4.1 In this context we must note the distinct role of the Left Front and Left & Democratic Front governments in West Bengal, Tripura and Kerala. These governments, it must be remembered, have severe limitations and resultant difficulties in operating within the neoliberal capitalist framework, accompanied by the present pro-imperialist thrust on the economic and political fronts. They, as state governments within the present uni-federal structure, face several compulsions as the central government seeks to tie up its fund-flows to the States with neoliberal prescriptions in most of the cases. Yet, these Left led State governments could demarcate themselves both politically and on economic policy matters and assert in favour of the rights of the toiling people. The pro-imperialist tilt in foreign policy evoked the loudest protest by the mass of the toiling people from these States; the Left led governments minced no words in condemning such a deviation in the foreign policy. In the economic policy front as well, these Left led governments are making serious efforts to reach the benefits of development to the common people and defend their livelihood in the best possible manner. These governments also opposed the hectic drive by the Central government to curtail labour rights through changes in legislations. While the central government indulged in dilatory tactics on bringing the legislation on unorganised sector workers, the Left Front Government of West Bengal has introduced provident fund/social security scheme for unorganised sector and agricultural workers; it also provided some relief to the workers of closed factories in the state, when the central government and other Congress and BJP run governments chose to leave them in the lurch. Not only that, the very existence of these Left run Governments constitutes, in a way, a hurdle for the blind pursuit of the neoliberal policies by the central government.

4.2 We must correctly evaluate the impact of the existence of the Left run governments in the country on the working class and democratic movement. It may be recalled that for the first time in India, the West Bengal Left Front Government extended the right to strike to the state government employees. The Left led governments have also ensured that during industrial disputes police do not intervene on the side of employers. We must also take serious note of the calculated efforts by the media and the adversaries of the Left, not only in our country but also various agencies of abroad, to malign the Left and the Left Front Governments. The extreme rightist forces are engineering this malicious campaign, many a times with an apparent leftist camouflage. The Working class movement has to combat these offensive anti-left campaigns and close its ranks in defence of the Left and Left Democratic Front Governments in the country.

5. ECONOMIC POLICY ISSUES

5.1 The intervening period witnessed the UPA Government continuing the same neoliberal policies of the NDA period; in certain areas these even gained more vigour and momentum. Successive budgets and legislative initiatives during this period reflected the same retrograde trend. No doubt, owing to consistent pressure by the Left parties, in the background of mounting struggles by the working class and other mass organisations, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act has been enacted. It facilitates 100 days work in a year for one from every rural household; but it has been launched only

in 200 districts initially, with a roadmap to cover the entire country in the next five years. The other pro-people commitments laid down in the NCMP, however, remain unimplemented till now. But, the UPA regime has become overactive in its chosen areas of showering concessions to big capitalists, both domestic and foreign, in the name of pushing through reforms.

5.2 The continuation of the policy of liberalisation, which includes import liberalisation of agricultural products, including food grains, withdrawal of quantitative restrictions, rise in prices of agricultural inputs and adherence to the WTO dictates, has resulted in the agrarian distress getting aggravated. Domestic agricultural products are unable to compete in the market and food production is being reduced drastically, endangering food security for the entire population, resulting in large-scale poverty and unemployment in the agrarian sector. Recurring suicides of farmers - especially in Vidharbha in Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh - are the manifestation of the depth of such distress.

5.3 Private procurement of grains in the rural economy is allowed in a big way, paving the way for entry of various multinational companies and big domestic corporate houses into the field. Side by side, the role of the Food Corporation of India (FCI) is being undermined by the closure of its godowns throughout the country and delayed announcement of minimum support price. As a result of this planned and sequenced arrangement the private traders have an edge over FCI. This results in sharp decline in the procurement by the FCI. The ground is prepared for marginalising and dismantling the FCI and for giving a free hand to private traders to hoard. At the same time millions of tonnes of wheat is imported at a hefty price, much higher than what has been offered to peasants in domestic procurement process. This policy package of the Government is pursued under the camouflage of ensuring higher returns to peasants. But, it is destined to create a situation where both the peasant producers and consumers would fall victim to the traders' lust for profit, who would dictate terms in the food grain market.

5.4 The Special Economic Zones (SEZ) Act has been passed allowing virtually a no-tax regime with little accountability for both the private sector developers and the establishments operating in the proposed zones. The rules framed under the SEZ Act seek to deny/restrain basic labour rights to the workers within the SEZs; they also deprive the farmers of their agricultural land without proper compensation and rehabilitation. In this manner, the so-called development under the neoliberal framework is synonymous with displacement.

5.5 A vigorous drive is afoot to completely deregulate the financial sector, that too under the dubious plea of 'effective and efficient regulation'. Two Bills are already introduced in Parliament to allow greater control of foreign capital on private banks and dilute the role of the Reserve Bank of India in regulating the financial sector. These Bills, once passed, would have a dangerous impact on the country's financial autonomy. A vigorous drive is also afoot to weaken the role of public sector in defence production and allowing free entry of foreign and domestic corporate players in this strategically sensitive sector. The sensitive infrastructure areas like telecom, ports, airports etc are being targeted for greater doses of privatisation, even though enough technological and financial competence is available within the public sector framework to expand and strengthen these infrastructures.

5.6 Since Navaratna companies cannot be disinvested as per NCMP stipulations, the UPA Govt has been making a hectic bid to change the definition of Navaratna companies. It seeks to link this status with the performance of the respective company's share in the stock market, making the company's status prone to stock-market manipulations.

5.7 The Government is fast moving ahead to implement the Kelkar Committee recommendation on Defence PSUs and the Ordnance Factories leading to corporatisation of Ordnance Factories and

pushing through joint venture exercise by other PSUs under Defence Ministry—all aimed at privatisation and free entry of the private sector including foreign companies in the field of defence production. Similar efforts are being made in other areas also in the name of public-private partnership and other dubious routes.

5.9 Crucial public utility services like electricity, water supply, health etc are being privatised in the name of public private partnership (PPP). Such PPP route in these public utility services is meant not for making the services available for larger sections of population at affordable rates but for allowing private players to gain a fortune by increasing the 'user charges'. There are many other examples of such disastrous trends.

5.10 Following in the footsteps of the NDA regime, the present government had promulgated an ordinance to set up the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA). The move is to shift all social security pensions from "defined benefit" concept to "defined contribution" concept. The attempt is to divert the mandatory social security contributions of the workers and employees to the speculative stock market. This is an ominous move to finally privatise the entire social security.

5.11 The danger of FDI entry in retail trade is very much imminent. Already different foreign trading companies are trying to find indirect ways and means to enter into the retail trade sector through joint ventures or by proxy through a supply agreement to apparently Indian entities. Entry of private traders including foreign giants in grain trading also has the potential of their intervention in the retail market as well.

5.12 Much euphoria is being created over the GDP growth rate of 8 per cent plus during the last two years. There is little to rejoice, as such growth remained a jobless one, reflecting complete expropriation of the gains of growth by the big capitalists. The rate of employment generation during the so-called 8 per cent plus growth regime has fallen below the rate witnessed during the 1980s, when the average growth rate was around 4 to 5 per cent per annum. This growth rate could not suppress the crisis surfacing in all sectors of the economy manifested by the increasing spate of closures of units, widespread casualisation of the workforce, increasing incidents of suicides by peasants - all pointing to the phenomenon of impoverishment of the masses and galloping fortunes of a handful of rich and affluent. This has proved beyond doubt that the neoliberal economic model pursued during the last 15 years has hastened the pace of transfer of wealth from millions of commoners to just a few in the capitalist camp. This transfer process has picked up greater momentum during the second phase of neoliberal reforms in the new millennium.

5.13 According to the UNDP report, India ranks 126 in the human development ranking of 177 countries. Yet, the Government contributes only 0.35% of GDP on health when India represents 17% of the world population. Against this percentage of population, India accounts for 23% of child-deaths all over the world, which in numerical terms is 5 million per year; 20% of the maternal deaths, 68% of the leprosy cases, 30% of the tuberculosis cases (10th Plan document vol. II). Government contribution (Central and States together) for clean drinking water and sanitation is only 0.2% of the GDP. In our country, 30% of the total population is still illiterate and 50% of the school going children drop out before they reach class VIII. With such a pathetic record of human indices, the 11th plan Approach Paper claims that in India, 'average people are benefited' from reforms.

5.14 Global poverty has declined marginally between 1990 and 2002. This marginal level of improvement is also due to the contribution made by China, where millions of people have been lifted above the poverty level through an alternative path of development than the one suggested by the

World Bank. The UN world Millennium Development Goals Report 2006 says that 31.2% of India's working population lived, at par with Southern Asia, below 1 dollar wage a day in the year 2002. Rate of decline of poverty in China, according to the report, was 19% against only 8.2% in India.

5.15 The number of unemployed grew more than three times in ten years - from 13.8 million in 1991 to 45.2 million in 2001 according to the census reports. Successive National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) reports reveal an alarming picture about unemployment and poverty. All the economic indicators testify to the intensification of poverty and continuing widening of disparity. This renders the ongoing economic order unsustainable. In India, as is elsewhere in the world, the policies of liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation have completely failed to address the problems of poverty and joblessness. A fresh bout of crisis for the capitalist order itself is a consequent fallout of this. Despite tall claims, by the advocates of 'reforms', of 'India emerging as a big economic power,' a strong disillusionment over these policies is witnessed among the mass of the people. United struggles of the working class have also contributed immensely to this development. The situation thus warrants further widening and intensification of the struggle against these anti-people policies, rallying all sections of people in the same.

6. CHANGES IN BUSINESS STRUCTURE

6.1 Here we must also note the changes in business structure brought about by the neo-liberal economic order, where international finance capital dominates the operation of the economy leading to a fast changing character of the market. These lead to certain drastic changes in the composition and structure of the industrial and service sector economy, which make the situation more critical for the older industries, as well as the workforce in general. The changes are towards more fragility in production relations and regulatory framework of the industry/occupation. The consequential changes are taking various routes having critical implications on the workers and the quality of employment.

6.2 The overriding influence of the finance capital is also being witnessed in the type of business restructuring that is taking place in various industries. The production and marketing processes are segregated, with the production process being collapsed into several segments, enabling large-scale outsourcing down the line. The chain of production units, which employ more number of workers, are under compulsion to sell the product to the marketing unit of the same establishment at a price much lower than the market price. This results in loss or less earning of the production units, while the profit of the marketing unit is zooming. The majority of the workers deployed in the manufacturing units are being compelled to sacrifice their earnings and rights in the name of averting a crisis or collapse. Such dubious practices to extract maximum surplus from the productive workforce, and thus mint much higher profits, go on in the name of business process restructuring. As a result of this process, the producers and consumers are getting distanced with the producers losing out to those marketing the final products, who are making a big fortune. Consequently the workers also lose out the maximum. This trend is visible in several industries in the traditional sector like the tea industry and in many industries producing consumer durables. Added to this is the capacity of international capital to introduce capital-intensive production processes downstream, leading to displacement of labour on a large-scale. The older industries, which have failed to modernise and continued with a large workforce, lose their competitiveness and are edged out eventually. These trends reveal vividly how finance capital engineers a crisis for the productive workforce despite their high contribution in value addition and thus profit generation. The new jobs are created only in the informal sector with very low wages and

sub-standard service conditions. This is the barbaric face of capitalism under neo-liberalism, which we have to confront in India as well.

7. ATTACKS ON LABOUR RIGHTS

7.1 Since the onset of the neoliberal policy regime, the onslaught on the working class has increased manifold. With the dawn of the new millennium, the 'second generation' measures of neoliberal policy regime have assumed a more structured fashion administratively, institutionally and ideologically. The entire exercise has been scrupulously designed by the international agencies. The main pillars of such second generation reforms have been total liberalisation of the financial sector, complete overhauling of labour laws aimed at casualisation and contractorisation of the labour force, and complete liberalisation and deregulation of trade.

7.2 All the three pillars have grave ramifications on the rights and livelihood of the working people. In particular, the exercise of deregulating the labour market through amendment of labour laws in favour of capital is directly affecting the working class.

7.3 The attack on labour right in the post liberalisation period is characterised by two features, one graduating to and overlapping with the other. The first one is non-enforcement of labour laws. Post liberalisation, the non-enforcement of labour laws has been promoted as a matter of policy by those in governance at the Centre and also in many States on the plea of so called investment-friendliness. The inspection machinery has been dismantled in many States by official orders of the respective governments. In some States, the inspection has been forbidden through internal orders. The grievance settlement machinery of the labour department is also being tuned in that direction.

7.4 Gross violations of labour laws like the Minimum Wages Act, Payment of Wages Act, Industrial Disputes Act, Contract Labour(R&A) Act etc, have become the order of the day. The Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act is the highest violated statute and the biggest violators are the governments themselves.

7.5 Side by side with the dismantling of the inspection mechanism, many of the governments, both at the Centre and in several States, have introduced a system of self-certification by the employers on compliance of labour laws. This is a naïve attempt to legalise abetting the crime of non-enforcement of labour laws regarding wages, labour rights, health and safety etc by the employers. The NDA government, overlooking the objections by the trade unions, came out with a notification introducing a new category of 'Fixed Term Employment Workman' in the Industrial Standing Orders. This was designed to institutionalise casualisation of permanent work and to escape the obligations under the Contract Labour Act and ID Act. After the change of government at the Centre, the Labour Minister assured in 2004 to rescind the notification on the floor of the Parliament; but the same has not yet been implemented. Now fixed term employment is being rampantly resorted to in various industries including many PSUs. All these are nothing but legitimising the offence and rewarding the offenders in the capital'st camp.

7.6 The persisting menace of government-abetted violation of labour laws has two dimensions. One is allowing non-implementation of basic labour laws and curbing trade union rights to fight against the same. In general, more than fifty per cent of the workforce, covered by Minimum Wages Act are not getting wages anywhere near the statutory minimum wages notified in the respective States. This is the story almost everywhere, at Gurgaon and Faridabad in Haryana, at Ferozabad and Moradabad in UP, at Ludhiana and Jullundhar in Punjab, at Baroda, Ahmedabad and Surat in Gujarat, at Talcher in Orissa, Ranchi and Bokaro in Jharkhand, Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh, to name only a few. In

fact, the overwhelming majority of the ongoing labour related disputes in our country relate to just implementation of existing labour laws pertaining to working hours, minimum wages, basic rights and nothing more. In such a background allowing self-certification on labour-law-compliance by the employers exposes only the criminal bent of mind of those in governance that grant the same.

7.7 The second dimension is of bringing about drastic changes in labour laws in order to legitimise and institutionalise the violations and non-enforcement of existing labour laws. On this the Government of India has already finalised the blue print of changes to be made in labour laws. The Report of the Second National Commission on Labour was designed as the vehicle for preparing this blue print. The Industrial Disputes and Contract Labour Acts have been the main target of this overhauling to usher in 'hire & fire' regime and contractorise the entire workforce. The Trade Union Act has already been amended to make the formation of a trade union and its registration more difficult besides empowering the authority concerned to deregister any union at any time on flimsy grounds.

7.8 The aggravation of the process of informalisation and casualisation of workplace is another ominous symptom. During the last 3 – 4 years, deployment of contract workers side by side with the regular workers in the same job and under the same roof, has increased phenomenally both in the private and public sectors. The contract worker is paid almost one-tenth of the wages being paid to the regular worker for doing the same work. This practice is indulged in by the administration almost everywhere in the country without any legislative sanction. Such deliberate violation of statute has now become a general phenomenon in private manufacturing everywhere. This is taking place even in many public sector units. Along with this, the incidence of wholesale outsourcing of the entire production job to a number of contractors is proliferating. The entire employment relationship at the workplace is sought to be redefined to inject more and more fragility – only to extract maximum possible surplus from the labour force.

7.9 Despite the National Common Minimum Programme of the UPA carrying a clear stipulation against the policy of 'hire and fire', the Economic Survey of 2005-06 advocated a 'policy of entry and exit' in respect of labour. A simultaneous move is initiated to change the labour laws in that direction. The Bill on Special Economic Zones introduced in Parliament contained provisions for giving exemptions in respect of various labour laws to the investors. The stout opposition of the trade union movement and the determined opposition by the members of Left political parties inside the Parliament forced the Government to withdraw such provisions.

7.10 In this context, the changing role of the judiciary in favour of deregulating the labour market should be noted. This is not surprising because this has reaffirmed the time tested truth that the judiciary is one of instruments of "State"; and that all the instruments of "State" ultimately converge in upholding the interest of the ruling class to perpetuate their class rule. Several judgments of the apex court concerning labour during the post liberalisation period testify to this plain truth. We have discussed these developments in the Ranchi meeting of our General Council and in this Conference a separate Commission will deliberate this further.

7.11 Drastic change in the role of the government in the area of social security is another manifestation of this onslaught on labour rights. At present, only a miniscule section of the workforce in the organised sector is getting some social security benefit in the form of Employees' Provident Fund, ESI, Pension etc. Now the government is bent upon dismantling even these limited social security arrangements and withdraw itself from any responsibility in respect of these.

7.12 Successive reductions in the administered rate of interest have been pushing down the interest rate on Provident Fund and small savings instruments.

7.13 Successive governments have been indulging in shedding crocodile tears for the unorganised sector workers, but no beneficial social security scheme has been worked out as yet. The stark reality of over 93 per cent of workers in the country being deprived of any social security is ironically used to push through the curtailments of the existing benefits under the existing schemes.

7.14 While the spiralling price rise and inflation have seriously impacted the livelihood of the people, the government has been working overtime to manipulate the price index mechanism. Despite firm opposition by all the trade unions, the Labour Bureau, Shimla has published the new series of price index with 2001 as the base year, which is nothing but a fraud on the workers. In the background of protest by all the trade unions, the Prime Minister had to agree for appointing a Index Review Committee with trade union's representation. But the new series is being continued, leading to huge loss in DA payment to millions of workers.

7.15 All these measures are resorted to only for carrying out smoothly the design of neoliberalism, to which the ruling elite in the country is committed. This neoliberalism represents the most atrocious face of capitalism at the present stage. This represents a process of reversing the gains the working class had achieved over a century, facilitating the capitalist economic order to carry out its predatory offensives.

7.16 The ideologues of neoliberalism and the capitalist media preach that a 'regressive labour-right-regime' will lead to more employment generation, or suppression of trade union activities will ensure greater investment flow in the economy. This is far from the truth. Those who advocate such ideas either do not understand how the capitalism works or knowingly plead for this with an ulterior desire to legitimise the unjust order. Unfortunately, a section of the progressive and trade union movement and even a part of the traditional Left is falling prey to such ideological onslaught.

8. STRUGGLES

8.1 We are presenting separately a report on activities as part of the Conference Documents. Hence, we are not going into the various activities and struggles carried on in the States and sectors here. We are briefly commenting on certain important aspect of the struggles waged during this period.

8.2 The opposition to onslaughts of neoliberalism has been mounting worldwide. The developments worldwide have been reasserting the truth that class struggle is the driving force for change and that struggle will advance through many ups and downs, defying all repression. The intervening period since our last conference witnessed numerous struggles at the grass root level throughout the country with workers braving atrocities by the administration. Most of these struggles related to implementation of labour laws and nothing else. Thus the policy of promoting labour law violation by the Govt as a part of their so-called strategy of investor-appeasement nowhere went unchallenged and the CITU always remained in the forefront of such combat. The call given by the CITU in its successive General Council and Working Committee meetings to make the issue of 'state-sponsored violation of labour laws' the focus of all activities could be implemented to a greater extent through these struggles.

8.3 This is borne out by the fact that in the meeting of Central Trade Unions with the Prime Minister held on 19th August 2006, all the central trade unions raised this issue in one voice and the Prime Minister also had to acknowledge the same and assured the matter would be taken up with the state governments. This was followed by intervention by the MPs of the Left parties in Parliament on the

issue of attack on labour rights and rampant violation of labour laws. Many MPs of non-Left parties also joined in this. The Union Labour Minister had to call meetings with the Central Trade Unions along with labour ministers of the state governments on the issue of labour law violations where governments had to admit the reality of improper implementation of labour laws and commit for corrective action. The issue of attack on labour rights in the background of desperate violation of labour laws could be made a common issue of concern before the entire trade union movement. In this process, despite strong opposition by the employers' organisations and hesitation of the government, the issue of "strengthening implementation of labour laws to prevent violation" has been included in the agenda of the forthcoming 41st Indian Labour Conference to be held in early 2007.

8.4 The intervening period also witnessed three countrywide General Strikes on 24th February 2004, 29th September 2005 and 14th December 2006. Each of these general strikes demonstrated a bigger sweep covering wider sections of the toiling masses and all the sectors, than its previous one. In all these countrywide united actions, CITU had taken pioneering initiative.

8.5 There have been many industry wide actions during the period under review. Notable among them has been the coal workers struggle and agitations culminating in a call for strike action of three days and six days, preceded by an intensive preparatory campaign, which finally compelled the government to shift from its position and concede the demands of the workers for wage revision with five-year tenure with full neutralisation. The struggle against privatisation of airports in Delhi and Mumbai witnessed active intervention by the CITU. The role of the CITU state committees in organising solidarity actions is another notable episode of this struggle. Among other major struggles were the indefinite strike by the jute and tea workers in West Bengal, transport workers strike in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Haryana, state level mobilisations and picketing in Kerala, iron ore mine workers struggle in Orissa, spinning-mill workers' indefinite strike actions in two spells in Haryana etc.

8.6 Another notable event in this period was the anganwadi workers' ten-day long- 24 hours dharna and relay hunger strike before Parliament in July 2006. In this, more than fifteen thousand anganwadi workers and helpers participated from all the States, demanding regularisation, increase in remuneration and introduction of retirement benefit. This has created much enthusiasm within the anganwadi workers' movement and created visible pressure on the government to set up a committee to go into the issues raised by our Federation.

8.7 The intervening period also witnessed some important united actions which compelled the government to retreat from their privatisation move in the PSUs, although temporarily. The move to disinvest in Nalco and Neyveli Lignite had to be abandoned by the Government following indefinite strike action by the Neyveli workers and a similar move by Nalco workers. A notable feature is that the initiative for such militant response against the move of disinvestments was taken by the grass root level organisations of workers and officers, indicating the extent of spontaneity and depth of opposition to disinvestment. There had been similar countrywide united actions in the banking and telecom sectors as well.

8.8 During the intervening period several struggles were organised jointly both at the national and industry levels. The CITU took a pioneering role in organising such joint actions along with other central trade unions and independent federations.

8.9 The main thrust of these joint actions has been the resistance to the neoliberal economic policies and their fall out. At the preparatory level tremendous vacillations were noticed among some constituents of the joint platform of trade unions in deciding the form of struggles, culminating in strike action. Further, even in the joint campaign and agitation, participation of many of the constituent trade unions in the Sponsoring Committee remained formal or virtually nil in many of the States.

8.10 Shortcomings are also there in our campaign on the jointly decided programmes such as lack of initiative and failure on our part to approach and reach the followings of other unions in many of the States and industries. Our experience shows that our independent initiatives, side by side with the joint programmes, can create compelling circumstances for other unions to join the joint programmes more effectively.

8.11 We should also note that in respect of both our independent and joint struggles, our inability to ensure continuity and carry on sustained struggles is a major weakness. This failure is creating an environment where workers are led to treat the shrike calls as mere rituals. This also hampers our efforts to carry forward the struggles to militant heights. We have to ponder over this shortcoming on our part and find ways to overcome the same in the shortest possible time.

9. NATIONAL PLATFORM OF MASS ORGANISATIONS

9.1 We failed to activate the National Platform of Mass Organisations (NPMO) as planned in our last conference. There was resistance from some of the constituents of the Sponsoring Committee to activate NPMO. Nonetheless, in successive sessions of the General Council and Working Committee the CITU conceived the idea of organising joint activities and mobilisations along with the mass organisations associated with and friendly to us on the burning issues of the people. This also could not be given effect and as such we failed to sense the priority of such an initiative. Planning concerted actions along with our friendly and associate mass organisations did not find its due place in our agenda both at the CITU Centre and in the states, barring one or two. This reflects the weakness of our understanding regarding the importance and potential of a platform like the NPMO. This also manifests a formal and ritualistic approach towards our prime task of rallying the mass of the people from all walks of life around the working class and building a powerful movement against the exploitative regime. We have to overcome this serious weakness in the days to come.

10. WORK IN THE UNORGANISED SECTOR

10.1 We have already noted that the organised sector has been shrinking and the unorganised sector has been expanding in the era of neo liberal policies. According to the Economic Survey, 2004-2005, around 92-93% of the total workforce in our country is engaged in the unorganised sector. The organised sector's share in employment has fallen from 9 per cent in 1981 to 7-8 per cent in 2004.

10.2 Our work among the unorganised sector workers has improved to some extent and today, the unorganised sector workers constitute more than half the total membership of CITU. The participation of the unorganised sector workers in various campaigns and struggles of CITU, including strike actions have increased. In several states like Karnataka, Haryana, Bihar etc, their membership of CITU from unorganised sector constitutes around 70% to 80% or even more. Unorganised sector workers have played an important role in organising road blocks and rail blocks during all India strikes, which helped in the visibility of the strike actions. Strike by workers in mandis, head load workers, auto drivers, etc created much impact at the time of such strikes.

10.3 During the period under review, efforts have been made to reactivate our work among the unorganised sector. The second national convention of the Unorganised Sector Coordination Committee was organised on 3-4 October 2005 in Ferozabad in Uttar Pradesh. 345 delegates from 16- 17 states participated in the Convention. A new coordination committee was formed in the Convention with PK Ganguly as the Convener. A sub committee consisting of PK Ganguly, WR Varada Rajan, Ranjit Basu and Hemalata was formed at the CITU Centre to monitor the work of the All India Coordination Committee of Unorganised Sector Workers.

10.4 The Convention adopted a charter of demands, on which a massive rally of unorganised sector workers was organised on 8th December 2005 at Jantar Mantar in Delhi. Subsequent meeting of the Coordination Committee decided to organise all India campaign on the charter of demands, particularly focussing on equal wages, minimum wages and immediate enactment of a comprehensive legislation for unorganised sector workers, culminating with a countrywide strike in December 2006. However, it had to be deferred due to the all India strike call by the Sponsoring Committee of Trade Unions on 14th December, in which unorganised sector workers participated in large numbers. In some states like Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Tripura etc state level campaigns, jathas, rallies, etc were organised on the major demands of the unorganised sector workers with very good response, which indicates that workers in this sector are ready to fight for their rights, if we approach them with suitable forms of organisation and struggle.

10.5 Many struggles, including strikes were organised in brick-kiln, spinning mills, mandi-workers, beedi, construction, private transport, FCI-palldars, etc in several States.

10.6 In West Bengal, initiative has been taken by CITU to organise the vast section of unorganised sector workers working in various non-agricultural occupations in the rural areas, in cooperation with Kisan Sabha. A joint meeting of the leadership of CITU and Kisan Sabha, followed by massive joint convention of the unorganised sector workers, has been organised.

10.7 Though we have been discussing our work among the unorganised sector workers repeatedly in the General Council, Working Committee meetings and Conferences, many of the tasks we have taken up remain unimplemented. Still in many states sub committee and coordination committee of the unorganised sector workers have not been formed.

10.8 To strengthen the work among the unorganised sector, it is necessary to identify the different sectors/ trades where large numbers of workers are employed, prioritise the sectors keeping in mind the available cadres and financial resources and work according to a proper plan. We have to overcome the weakness of reacting to spontaneous demands only. Giving priority to such industries/ sectors having state wide presence may help in expansion.

10.9 Conducting surveys and studies in the prioritised industries/ trades etc to identify the serious problems of the unorganised sector workers, and formulating concrete demands and organising state wide campaigns on these will give better results. The existing statutory welfare provisions, if any, (e.g. the welfare funds/ boards etc as in the case of beedi workers, construction workers etc) may also be utilised to approach the workers.

10.10 Besides, a large number of women workers are employed in the unorganised sector like in beedi, anganwadi, construction, etc. Allotting women CITU cadres for work among these women workers will yield better results.

10.11 As most of the unorganised sector workers come from socially oppressed sections and live in slums where basic facilities are not available, it is also necessary for the unions and CITU to address their social issues, gender issues, literacy, residential problems etc, besides work place issues, to gain their confidence. Intermediary forms of organisation like self-help groups, savings groups/ credit groups etc also should be considered to create confidence in the strength of unity among the workers in the unorganised sector.

11. WORKING WOMEN

11.1 The 8th Convention of AICCWW was held on 3-5 November 2006 in Visakhapatnam. 418 delegates from 16 states participated in the Convention. Bihar, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh were not represented. The Convenor's report and the paper on 'Working Women in the Unorganised Sector' that were unanimously adopted are being circulated along with documents of this Conference. The AICCWW was reconstituted with 45 members. A Declaration on CITU Tasks on the Working Women Front is placed before this Conference for adoption.

11.2 Many state committees of CITU, particularly those in the Hindi speaking states, have either not formed coordination committees of working women or they are not functioning. Repeated decisions in the CITU Conferences, general council and working committee meetings could not make any difference in the situation.

11.3 The replies to the questionnaire sent to the state committees of CITU and the state CCWW before the 8th Convention of AICCWW indicate that there have been some efforts in the States with functioning state CCWWs for forming women's sub committees in the CITU affiliated unions. But most of these sub committees were not functioning. Proper functioning of the women's sub committees helps in developing and training women activists of the unions in trade union work so that they can be promoted to leadership positions. All the state committees of CITU should make efforts to form such sub committees at the earliest.

11.4 Some CITU committees and unions are observing International Women's Day on 8th March, though the number continues to be nominal. Vimal Ranadive Memorial Day is being observed on 10th April every year by holding meetings, seminars, round table discussions etc, instead of a lecture. We may consider some other form of observing the day instead of organising Lectures.

11.5 In general, the participation of women in the activities of CITU has shown definite improvement during this period in almost all the states. In several states women workers have faced police repression and victimisation by the employers. The enthusiastic participation of anganwadi workers and helpers in large numbers during the unique programme of mass relay hunger strike organised in Delhi deserves special mention.

11.6 The proportion of women in the membership of CITU has also increased from around 20%, at the time of the last Conference, to more than 22.7% in 2005, as per the annual returns. In Karnataka it is more than 57%, while in Assam, Bihar and Himachal Pradesh it is around 45%.

11.7 It is also observed that several unions with a large number of women members do not mention the number of women members in their annual returns, either intentionally or unintentionally, as a result of which the actual women membership is not reflected in the records. For example, some beedi workers' unions and domestic workers' unions show that all their members are men, which is definitely not the fact. The state committees need to ensure that this practice is stopped.

11.8 In spite of some progress, on the whole it cannot be claimed that proper attention is being paid to the work among working women. It is also debatable whether the increase in women's membership in CITU is the result of conscious and planned efforts by the concerned state CCWWs. The increase in several states seems to be mostly because of the efforts in the unorganised sector including the anganwadi employees, beedi workers etc. While this indicates our weakness, it also points to the possibilities that exist today of bringing large number of working women by making the CCWWs functional.

11.9 Most of the tasks adopted in the 11th Conference of CITU to strengthen our work among working women remain unfulfilled or only partly fulfilled. The number of women in the office bearers and committees of CITU at different levels of CITU and the affiliated unions has considerably increased. The problem of not providing financial assistance to women for attending CITU or CCWW meetings still continues in some states. The resistance to elect women to the Conferences and including them in the committees also continues in different levels. Difficulties like meeting travel expenses, taking leave from their work etc are being cited. Giving a short notice for the meetings makes it difficult for women to make the necessary alternative arrangements for their domestic responsibilities. These issues need to be addressed.

11.10 More than 27 years after the formation of AICCWW, we have yet to develop a unified understanding about its objectives, structure and functions. In some states, the CCWWs have women employees representing non-CITU unions like teachers, state government employees etc. Some state CCWWs continue to have office bearers. The practice of naming the conventions as 'Conferences' and the Convenor as 'Secretary' might also have contributed to the confusion on the status of the CCWW to some extent. The impression that the CCWW is a forum of middle class women employees still persists among many of our comrades, even after the 10th Conference of CITU had dealt the issue in great detail in the Commission Paper on 'Working Women – A Class Perspective'. At the same time there is also a tendency among women members of CCWWs to function the CCWWs as organisations independent of the CITU. Both these tendencies have to be rectified.

12. FIGHT AGAINST COMMUNALISM

12.1 Our Eleventh Conference was held under the dark shadow of NDA rule. The NDA, an unprincipled and opportunistic coalition of disparate parties and groups, was only the façade; behind which it was the BJP, the political outfit of RSS, which was actually running the Government and pursuing with determination the communal-fascist ideology and policy of the RSS. The Gujarat genocide perpetrated under the direct leadership of the Chief Minister Narendra Modi was the high point of this aggressive communalism.

12.2 The Eleventh Conference called upon the working class and the trade unions to resolutely oppose the communal forces, which sought to divide the people on communal line, and posed serious threat to unity and integrity of the nation. It gave a clarion call to the working class to be in the forefront of the struggle to defend the unity of the people, to carry forward resistance against communal fascism and safeguard secular principles.

12.3 With three years having elapsed since the Eleventh Conference, can we claim that the CITU itself had discharged its responsibility properly and adequately? No, we cannot. From its very inception, the CITU declared its resolve to fight communalism. We had adopted resolutions in our Foundation Conference and the subsequent Conferences and meetings of the General Council and the Working Committee of CITU. We have discussed the matter in the commissions during our Conferences on two occasions. We also organised a special discussion in a General Council meeting and developed the strategy and tactics for struggle against communalism and communal forces. But we have largely failed to put these into practice.

12.4 However, the experience of several years of BJP rule itself ranged many sections of the people against this regime. Evidently the aggressive hindutva campaign and actions of the sangh parivar did not pay them the expected dividend. Moreover, pursuit of the IMF-World Bank dictated policies of economic liberalisation, more vigorously than the Congress, further antagonised vast sections of the people. These factors, reinforced by the organised popular resistance movement, in which CITU played an important part, brought about the defeat of the BJP-led NDA.

12.5 While assessing the situation following the installation of the UPA regime, the General Council meeting at Nasik noted that the communal forces were down but not out. They were no doubt defeated at the political level, but not all who opposed them did so for their communal role. As stated, their economic policy also played an important role in alienating people from them. Their defeat was due to the play of complex forces; but the influence of communal ideology persists in the consciousness of large sections of the people even today. The communal outfits can convert this false consciousness to whip up communal tensions under favourable conditions. Therefore, the fight against communalism is as important today as it was three years ago.

12.6 It is true that today the communal forces, the sangh parivar, are somewhat in disarray. They are yet to recover from the shock of electoral defeat. Various pushes and pulls are being witnessed within the sangh parivar itself. But as long as communal ideology lingers in the consciousness of people, there will always remain the possibility of its inevitable political crystallisation. It is only a question of time. The desperate efforts on the part of the sangh parivar are very much in evidence already.

12.7 Every day the BJP and other members of the sangh parivar are picking up one issue or another, which can be given a communal twist. They are using even the issue of terrorism for communal purposes. Be it the Kashmir issue or that of the death sentence to Afzal Guru, they try to communally vitiate the minds of the people against any process of normalisation of relations with Pakistan. They are up in arms against the Sachar Committee report, which has given an objective picture of the condition of Muslim minorities in the country. They constantly harp on a dubious theory of 'appeasement' and accuse the secular parties of practising 'vote bank' policies. The fact is that the BJP is making all efforts to disrupt communal harmony and unity of the people. Our entire organisation needs to undertake the task of combating communalism seriously not only at the political level, but more importantly at the ideological level.

12.8 The working class, because of its class position and its role in the production system is naturally the most effective force in fighting communalism and therefore it has the greatest potential to be at the forefront of the struggle against communalism. It is the task of the trade unions, of CITU in particular, to ensure that the working class actually plays its role.

12.9 Today, considerable sections of the working class and the middle class are more or less under the influence of the hindutva forces. To fight communalism, special steps are necessary for eradication of communal influence from the minds of the working class. This should be the foremost long-term task of the trade unions and for CITU for that matter. It is not easy to eradicate ideas deep-rooted in human mind. This task has to be carried out as a part of the day-to-day trade union work. To be effective, the effort for secularising the workers will have to be blended with the class struggle of the working class.

12.10 It will be an urgent task for the CITU to undertake this overdue task with due seriousness in the forthcoming period.

13. SOCIAL ISSUES

13.1 Yet another threat that looms large before the working class of India is the ever-increasing attempts by the casteist forces to divide the working people on caste lines, seeking to achieve political clout through caste appeals.

13.2 The present phase of disastrous pursuit of liberalisation-globalisation policies has only served to complicate the situation further. The jobless - rather job-loss - growth pattern has given rise to acute discontent among the youth, which the casteist forces are seeking to utilise for their own ends.

13.3 The UPA government in its NCMP made a commitment for introducing job reservation in the private sector. The employer-class has strongly come out against any reservation in the private sector; instead they are talking of 'affirmative action', which is a vague concept.

13.4 We should take a positive view on the reservation issue. The provision for reservation (for education and jobs) is aimed at compensating the so-called lower castes for the centuries-long deprivation that they have undergone. These communities have suffered discrimination and been denied equal opportunities in the past. Hence, the reservations are a sort of compensatory discrimination in their favour. We must, therefore, resolutely counter the 'anti-reservation' moves, as they reflect the machinations of vested interests to maintain the status quo. We must come out strongly in favour of a legislation to ensure reservation for SC/ST and OBC communities in the private sector.

13.5 Yet another feature of casteism is the resort to violence as a tool to sustain caste domination and practices of several forms of social oppression, which is the most pernicious manifestation of casteism. The worst forms of untouchability practiced against the Scheduled Castes, which are among the lowest rung in the caste order, is the most cruel and flagrant violation of human rights. We must resolutely raise our voice against social oppression.

13.6 Sachar Committee's report depicts the sorry state of affairs on employment front for the minority Muslim community. Similar is the situation with other minorities. Suitable space has to be provided for them to ensure that the development process is inclusive.

13.7 Women in India have been the worst victims of both the communal and economic offensives. Atrocities and discrimination against women have increased alarmingly. Sexual abuse and vulgar commercialisation of women as part of a fast spreading consumerist culture have further added to their agonies. The women workers face job losses, suffer inequality in wages and service conditions and work in most unsafe environments. The working class must take up the issues of women's empowerment and fight against the manifold oppression and atrocities they are subjected to.

13.8 It is, therefore, necessary for us in the CITU to address these social issues, apart from addressing the economic issues of the working class.

14. TRADE UNION EDUCATION

14.1 Intensive trade union education has always been recognised as an important means to strengthen the trade union organisation and movement. The Bhubaneswar document laid great emphasis on education and training of cadres. The document also noted that in the context of the growing ideological offensive of world capitalism, trade union education assumed greater importance. But in subsequent reviews it has been revealed that our performance in this regard is poor. The largest share of failure is, of course, on the part of the CITU Centre itself. Only in the recent years, the CITU centre has made some serious efforts to organise a regular programme of trade union education. Comrade BTR's birth centenary year was chosen to start the process. Three central trade union schools were organised, one at Thiruvananthapuram for the southern region, which was conducted in English. The Hindi region school was held at Delhi and was conducted in Hindi. The Eastern regional school was held in Kolkata was conducted in Bengali. The subjects were: (1) Revolutionary trade unionism and reformist

trade unionism (2) Communalism and Casteism (3) Present day capitalism and New Economic Policies (4) Organisation (5) Present situation and our tasks.

14.2 This was the first attempt by the CITU Centre to organise a central trade union school. Due to lack of adequate preparation and other shortcomings, the schools did not attain the desired success and drew some criticism from the comrades who attended. But it was hailed as a good beginning and there was a demand that the effort should continue.

14.3 The CITU has the proud privilege of founding a permanent trade union school and a research centre in memory of our founder General Secretary late Comrade P. Ramamurti. Attempt is on to get a plot of land for a building to house the school. Collection of fund for the purpose is also in progress. However, it was later decided to start trade union classes early under the auspices of the school instead of waiting for the building to come up. Accordingly it was planned to start another series of central trade union classes in three regions. Already three-day trade union classes have been held for Hindi region at the CITU Centre. Drawing on the earlier experience, this time the classes were much better organised and conducted in all respects and the participants expressed satisfaction.

14.4 Due to elections and other important programmes, it has not been possible to organise classes in the other two regions. It may reasonably be expected that it will be possible to organise classes for the remaining regions soon after this Conference.

14.5 It is heartening that some State committees have, from time to time, organised classes for the State, district or union level cadres. The CITU Centre had provided teachers whenever required. While it is the responsibility of the CITU Centre to conduct classes at the central level, it is equally the responsibility of the State Committees to organise classes at other levels. While some State Committees are discharging this responsibility, many are defaulting in this important task. The sooner such State Committees become conscious of this responsibility, the better. The CITU Centre will always be ready to assist them.

14.6 It was also conceived by the CITU Working Committee meeting at Bhopal and subsequently decided by the General Council in its last meeting held at Ranchi in July 2006 that our initiative for the P Ramamurti Memorial Trade Union School should also associate our fraternal trade union movements Banks, Insurance, State and Central Govt Employees, Telecom etc. in setting up and running the school. A Governing Council will be constituted with the representatives of the fraternal trade union organisations. Meanwhile, we are pursuing our quest for securing a plot of land. What is not progressing much is the collections for the P Ramamurti Memorial Fund and many State Committees are in default in fulfilling their quota. The State Committees should take expeditious steps to fulfil their quota of contributions for this fund, detailed information in respect of which is furnished separately.

CITU JOURNALS

14.7 From the CITU Centre we are publishing three monthly journals – 1) The Working Class (English), which is in its 37th year of publication; 2) CITU Mazdoor (Hindi) which is in its 29th year of publication and 3) The Voice of the Working Woman (English) which is in its 27th year of publication. 'Patrika' in Hindi is also being brought out as a quarterly for the past seven years, which is mainly circulated among anganwadi employees. These journals, covering CITU activities throughout the country and carrying CITU views on current issues, are also serving the purpose of educating our cadres. The CITU Centre has been making efforts to improve the quality of these journals, though there is need to hold regular meetings of the editorial boards to make systematic efforts in this direction. But, the CITU State Committees, Industry wise Federations and affiliated unions are not taking the required initiative in enhancing the circulation of these journals and ensure sending of regular reports. The leadership

of the State Committees of CITU, including the members of the CITU Secretariat, are not contributing to the journals, which, if done, would go a long way to enrich the contents of the journals.

14.8 The CITU Centre could not bring out any publication during this intervening period, which is a grave lapse. This task should be addressed with seriousness in the forthcoming period.

14.9 Several State Committees of the CITU, Industry wise Federations and some individual unions are also bringing out journals, mostly in local languages. The meeting of the CITU General Council at Ranchi decided that the CITU Centre should convene a meeting of the editors of all the CITU journals to share experiences and consider our way of improving our campaign through these journals. We should implement this decision soon after this Conference.

15. COMRADE P RAMAMURTI CENTENARY

15.1 The birth centenary year of our Founder General Secretary Comrade P. Ramamurti begins on September 20, 2007.

15.2 The life of Com. PR, as he was affectionately called, was one of incessant struggle, full of sacrifices, incarceration and imprisonment, a life of confrontation not only with the ruling classes but also with the anti-democratic and feudal traditions.

15.3 Comrade PR was a man of exceptional quality and ability, He was a mass leader, builder of the trade union movement, powerful mass speaker and a brilliant parliamentarian, effective journalist, writer of agitational pamphlets and polemical ideological documents, able organiser and educator.

15.4 Com. B T Ranadive, paying his tributes to 'The Indomitable P R', recounted his contribution in the following words; “

When the CITU was formed in 1970, PR was the obvious choice for the strategic and leading post of the General Secretary. His ripe experience, his all India prestige as a trade union leader and leader of the CPI(M) were bound to be helpful to the organisation. And they did help in rapidly spreading the appeal of CITU and enabling it to emerge as a leading centre of the trade union movement. He was quick to understand the trend of discussions at the foundation conference of the CITU. The delegates were bursting with anger at the reformist leadership of Dange and others. There was danger that the new organisation would lose its bearings and embroil itself only in disputes and wordy battles with the AITUC. PR proposed that within a month of the inaugural session, the unions and State Committees should undertake a week's campaign for trade union unity. This was done and the organisation was set on correct rails”.

15.5 We must decide at this Conference to observe the centenary year of Com. P Ramamurti by way of organising seminars, memorial lectures, bringing out publications, organising trade union classes and in many other ways. The CITU Secretariat will chalk out a comprehensive plan in this regard immediately after this Conference.

16. ON ORGANISATION

16.1 Organisation continues to be a major concern for us. There has been some improvement but it is hardly more than marginal and uneven in coverage.

16.2 Membership is an important index of health and strength of an organization. We have not reached our target of 40 lakhs membership even today though the target was fixed in the 10th

Conference, to be reached before the 11th Conference. However, though the membership is below the target the membership for 2005 is close to the target: from 33,31,474 in 2003 it has increased to nearly 39 lakhs, an increase of about 5 lakhs during the three years since the Eleventh Conference. But this figure conceals a number of serious shortcomings. Four states, Gujarat, Goa, Madhya Pradesh and J&K reported no new affiliation and membership. Of the total membership of around 39 lakhs, West Bengal and Kerala together account for 24 lakhs, the share of all other states remaining 15 lakhs. Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh showed a membership of around 3 lakhs each; Karnataka accounts for around 1,19,000; Tripura has around 1,34,000; all other States have below 1 lakh membership only. The scenario is certainly not very encouraging.

16.3 We have noted that Hindi speaking States have to work in difficult conditions and their weaknesses are persisting. The CITU Centre has been regularly organising meetings of leadership of Hindi speaking States, to guide and help them in organisational consolidation. In consultation with the leadership of the Hindi speaking States, a detailed questionnaire outlining the organisational tasks was prepared, based on which the concerned State committees were to discuss and chalk out their plan for organisational advance. Very few State Committees responded to the same in a structured manner, thereby reflecting the very unorganised and directionless state of thinking in the matter of organisation. This is getting reflected in the stagnation and decline in some areas.

16.4 In this connection one aspect should be taken note of. Since the last conference, the activities of CITU, in both nationwide programmes and State level movements, have increased considerably. There have been numerous movements and struggles covering all the States, including the weaker ones. Unfortunately, such successful actions could not always be converted into our organisational strength. For example, the successful continuous strike action by around 20,000 spinning mill workers of Panipat at Haryana in two spells in 2004 and 2006, under the leadership of CITU compelled the employers and the State administration to concede some of the major demands. But only a small segment of these workers could be enrolled in the CITU union. Similar instances can be cited elsewhere as well. The root of this failure lies in our inability to handle the struggles with a proper organisational approach, ineffective organisational machinery and lack of consciousness to address the post-struggle organisational tasks. The Bhubaneswar document has specifically laid down the guidelines to handle such tasks but we failed to keep them in view, not to speak of putting into practice.

16.5 Our industry-level federations are also important instruments of struggle and expansion. The functioning of our federations also requires a lot of improvement if they are to discharge their organisational tasks effectively. The CITU leads ten such federations in coal, steel, construction, road transport, plantation, water-front, anganwadi, electricity, beedi, FCI, medical representatives etc besides having a leading role in the federations of petroleum and defence-production. Besides, we have coordination committees in many industries having units all over the country. Most of the federations, barring one or two, remained functional during the intervening period and in certain sectors such as coal, steel, anganwadi, petroleum, road transport, construction, medical representatives and electricity our federations took the initiative to build up all India campaigns and struggles. In other sectors, though many struggles were organised at the State level, the role of all India federations in building up an all India movement with common demands was not that visible. Such weakness resulted in our failure to expand our influence and membership in the concerned industries in the weaker states. Yet another weakness of most of the federations is the failure to develop an effective functional team of all India leadership.

17. ORGANISATION: CERTAIN ISSUES OF CONCERN

17.1 The present organisational profile of CITU, in the background of fast changes in the composition and character of the industrial economy, is becoming a matter of concern.

17.2 The unevenness in the organisational situation is one of the major problems. Unevenness persists not only between the States, but also between the industries, within the industry and also within the State.

17.3 Beyond our traditional stronghold States, our presence in the organised sector, particularly in major industries, is minimal in other States. Side by side, we could yet reach only a very small segment of the vast unorganised sector workforce even in those States where we have little presence in the major organised sector industries. There is no such State where we are very weak in the organised sector but decisively strong in the unorganised sector. Our weakness in organising the major section of the unorganised sector workers is very much prevalent in our stronghold States also.

CHANGES IN COMPOSITION

17.5 Further, trade union presence in the industrial units and establishments that have come up in the organised sector, particularly in the post liberalisation period, is yet to be visible.

17.6 We are thus faced with a peculiar situation. One, under neoliberal policy regime, organised sector is shrinking fast and within the organised sector a big section of workforce is developing with the service conditions similar to that of unorganised sector through the process of contractorisation and outsourcing. Micro, tiny or very small manufacturing units are employing this new section of unorganised sector workers, which operate within the boundary of organised sector framework and are dependent on the bigger organised sector units. In this situation our already weak position in the organised sector is getting further weakened owing to our failure to organise this unorganised workforce operating within the organised sector industries.

17.7 The unorganised sector is expanding fast and it is no longer confined to manual and low skill occupations. Highly mechanised production processes and skilled occupations are also coming within this unorganised sector framework. Simultaneously, owing to technological advance and also crisis in agriculture, agricultural employment is declining and a new section of non-agricultural workforce is emerging in miscellaneous occupations in the rural areas. This can become a potential force in the trade union movement, if organised. But our work in the unorganised sector remained mostly limited to a very small segment of the traditionally unorganised sector. Even in the traditionally unorganised sector occupations, we could reach out to only a small segment both in terms of workers and type of occupations/trades.

18. PERSPECTIVE FOR ORGANISATIONAL INITIATIVE

18.1 The expansion of CITU activities has to be planned in the backdrop of the above scenario. We have to consolidate our position in the organised sector with a well thought-out programme of organising the unorganised segment in the organised sector itself. This is crucial as the organised sector can wield the striking power effectively both on the capitalists and the Government and it includes all the strategically important industries for the national economy. Our work in organised sector must have a two pronged initiative—1) organising the unorganised sector workers viz., contract workers and ancillary workers operating within the organised sector and 2) reaching the newly emerging units in the organised sector itself. The trade union movement in the organised sector has to take this two-pronged initiative by identifying the area of priorities and equipping itself for the task, especially for organising the new generation workers of the units that have emerged in the post liberalisation period. Organising the contract and other workers within the organised sector must be conceived as an integral part of the task of consolidating our strength.

18.2 Organising the unorganised sector workers must also be taken up with all seriousness. Expanding our work in the vast unorganised sector also requires identification of priorities and orienting our organisational initiative in that direction. The CITU General Council in this regard has already formulated our perspective in 1998 at Chennai and the last convention of the All India Coordination Committee of Unorganised sector Workers held at Firozabad in 2005 has reiterated the same. Our grass root level organisational initiative should focus on a vigorous drive to develop occupation/trade based unions of unorganised sector workers and to develop the movement on the basic issues relating to each sector. The task is easier said than done since the unorganised sector is immensely heterogeneous. Only in some cases are employers identifiable and in most other cases not. For a major section of the unorganised sector occupations, we have to target the administration either at the State or district level. Our grass root level work in the unorganised sector has to take serious note of this heterogeneity and devise an appropriate strategy. The organised sector trade union movement must play a proactive supportive role in this regard with human and financial resources. Keeping the unorganised sector unorganised, the organised sector movement cannot advance beyond a limit. The working class movement will also not be able to play its destined role in discharging its socio-political responsibility.

18.3 We need to combine our vigorous workplace level initiative to organise the unorganised sector workers with a national level initiative to champion their common demands for legislative protection and bringing them under the coverage of various labour legislations. While the government roots for changing the labour laws in favour of the employers, the trade union movement should make concrete alternative proposals for universal application of all labour laws. We must also demand a comprehensive social security net for all workers, including the self-employed, besides pressing for pro-worker changes in all the concerned statutes.

18.4 Our organisational initiative has to address the twin complementary tasks of consolidating our strength in the organized sector and expanding fast in the vast unorganised sector.

19. TRADE UNIONS AND NGOS

19.1 Many Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are of late very active particularly in the unorganised sector, in various forms. They are also operating in many areas in the organised sector, particularly on issues like safety, environment, pollution etc. Some of them are doing good work in various fields, particularly conducting research studies and bringing out good publications, which may be used by the trade union movement as important inputs to formulate appropriate organisational strategies. But many of them, in the name of advocacy, seek to replace the trade unions in the concerned field. In many instances, the government agencies and other connected institutions consciously encourage them. The NGOs deliberately create confusion amongst trade union cadres as if they are acting in concert with the trade unions in the concerned area of activities. These NGOs usually get heavy foreign funding from different sources and their source of funding also depends on as to how many trade unions they could associate with their activities.

19.2 The government, media, and even the ILO are trying to create a wrong impression that the trade unions are neglecting the workers in the unorganised sector and only the NGOs are working among them. This is nothing but a ploy to malign the trade unions and wean the workers away from their influence. We have to counter such malicious campaign against the trade union movement. Trade unions are organisations of workers and accountable to them. The NGOs, on the other hand, are not membership-based organisations of workers and hence not accountable to them; they are accountable only to their donors. The NGOs cannot, therefore, replace the trade unions.

19.3 An NGO, however good it may be, is not a class organisation nor do its programmes envisage confrontation or conflict with the capitalist class. The ruling class and the Governments are making conscious efforts to give the NGOs a larger space than for the trade unions and sometimes replace the trade unions by the NGOs. This has now become an international phenomenon. This is advantageous for the ruling class since the advocacy process by NGOs remains confined to reconciliation with the capitalist system; it never questions or challenges the efficacy of the capitalist system as such.

19.4 The trade union movement is an instrument of class struggle and thus the TUs have to defend as well as expand their space within the working class to carry on and sharpen the struggle as their prime task. Thus, we must have a clear approach towards the activities and our relationship with the NGOs. We must also note that many a times trade unions' weakness and failure to work with continuity among - and effectively intervene on the issues of - the unorganised sector workers allow the NGOs to occupy a larger space among them. We have to overcome this weakness. At the same time we have to make a cautious judgment of the activities of the NGOs. We cannot allow ourselves to be dependent on them or driven by their agenda, nor should we allow the NGOs to usurp the role of trade unions.

20. THE TASK AHEAD

20.1 Comrades, the present situation facing us poses formidable challenges but it offers tremendous opportunity as well. The neo-liberal economic model is incapable of offering even a minimum solace to the mass of the people, facing a profound crisis in their lives. The economy has never before witnessed this perverse development of increasing growth rate in GDP being accompanied by unmitigated sufferings of the people. This is reflected in the increasing protests from all corners of the country and from all segments of the population. The working class movement, as the most organised segment of the common populace, has to convert this rising disillusionment against the neoliberal policies into countrywide organised struggle for change in the policy regime.

20.2 The political scenario facing us is of a complex character. The ruling polity is not strong enough to retain itself in power on its own and thus cannot pursue their anti-people policies without hurdles. But in the face of opposition to their policies by the working class and democratic movement, the ruling polity is becoming increasingly desperate to push through their neoliberal agenda at any cost. They are focusing on curbing labour rights, both through administration and legislative channels, as they perceive the working class movement to be the most greatest threat and obstacle in their path. In this backdrop, the country has witnessed bitter struggles by the working people in defence of labour rights and against arrogant violation of all labour laws by the employer-class, with the help of State administration.

20.3 In this background, the concerted intervention by the working class movement against the anti-people policy regime is of crucial importance. It has the potential to turn the events and force the ruling class to make a retreat. In fact, the dependence of the present ruling combine at the Centre on the Left parties signals the weakening of the grip of ideology of the ruling class on the people. The working class movement has made a formidable contribution to this phenomenon. The working class movement must take the vigorous initiative to mobilise all sections of people in the resistance struggle against the retrograde economic policies. In the process, it can pave the way for developing the objective conditions for emergence of a third force with a common pro-people policy approach and a clear anti-imperialist content. The CITU has to take initiative in rallying the entire working class movement in that direction.

20.4 With this task before us, the CITU must prepare itself organisationally to develop and lead a broad-based peoples' movement and ensure broadest mobilisation of people countrywide. Our immediate task is to build up joint activities and mobilisations along with like-minded unions and mass organizations of our own stream, to create objective conditions for the re-emergence of the NPMO. This initiative must continue side by side with other joint action programmes on the trade union front.

20.5 This initiative should be unleashed at the grass-root level as well. Our State Committees, district committees and enterprise level unions have to make conscious efforts to rally other sections of the people and their mass organisations in the struggle ahead. Our experience is that wherever serious efforts are made, the trade union movement could effectively enlist the active support of the peasantry, students, youth etc in the common struggle.

20.6 We must set our own house in order, strengthen and consolidate our organisation at all levels, to be able to rally others. Without a strong CITU, there cannot be an effective united trade union struggle, nor is a broader peoples' action possible. We must realise our potential for unleashing powerful mass actions and make a serious drive to take the CITU organisation to further heights in order to meet the forthcoming challenges.

20.7 A bigger struggle awaits us. The anti-privatisation struggle has already gained momentum with the action programmes unleashed by the workers of NALCO, Neyvelli Lignite and NMDC, with a loud and clear message that 'privatisation drive shall not pass'. The massive success of the General Strike of 14th December is a pointer to the readiness of the people to resist forcefully the neoliberal policies.

20.8 With this perspective in the vision, this 12th CONFERENCE of CITU should formulate its immediate tasks as under:

- Carry forward the fight against the twin dangers of communalism and neo-liberal economic policies.
- Make the demand for "Right to Work as fundamental right" a central slogan in all our campaigns and struggle against the neoliberal economic policies
- Intensify and widen solidarity actions in support of bitter struggles going on in various parts of the country against repression and onslaught on labour rights and violation of labour laws.
- Demand for implementation of labour laws and resistance against violations to be taken up as a central issue of the trade union campaign and actions countrywide
- Intensify campaign for immediate enactment of comprehensive legislations for unorganised sector workers and agricultural workers separately.
- Intensify activities among unorganised sector workers to focus on immediate legislation, statutory coverage and enforcement of Minimum Wages Act and 'equal pay for men and women workers'
- Mainstream the emerging struggles of the workers and employees in various sectors and industries.
- Integrate the struggles of organised and unorganised sector workers. Unions of organised sector workers must take the initiative in raising the issues of unorganised sector workers
- Organise campaigns and struggles against attacks on existing social security benefits and fight for comprehensive social security for all.

- Make serious efforts to revitalise the Sponsoring Committee of Trade Unions and the National Platform of Mass Organisations to launch massive mobilisations throughout the country
- Strive to achieve the target of 45-lakh membership at the earliest, through consistent and vigorous membership drive.
- Establish the P. Ramamurti Institute of Trade Union Education and Research in the near future.
- Organise trade union education at regular intervals as an integral part of the CITU activities at all level of organisation.
- Organise intensive and structured discussion on the document on “ Cadre Development and Trade Union Movement” finalized by CITU Working Committee meeting held at Bhopal in last December 2005 at all levels of the organisation.

20.9 We must take up these tasks with all seriousness to effectively enable ourselves to play our destined role. Our independent initiative must be heightened considerably to create ground for broader and meaningful unity of the toiling people in the struggle against the exploitative system.

20.10 The opposition to onslaughts of neoliberalism has been mounting worldwide. The worldwide resistance movements are reasserting the truth that class struggle is the driving force for change and that struggle will advance through many ups and downs, defying all repressions and attempts of unprincipled compromise.

20.11 The inhuman face of the present capitalist order - the imperialist globalisation – stands thoroughly exposed. It can in no way be camouflaged by any talk of giving it a human face. History will move in the direction it is destined to, and its driving force – the class struggle - will grow in strength and spread, transcending the roadblocks that the ruling classes may attempt to place in its path. The working class must imbibe this dynamics of socio-economic development and direct its energy towards replacing this inhuman social order, defeating all adversaries and those who advocate capitulation and compromise.

20.12 We must have confidence in the ultimate triumph of the people all over the world. Nuclear weapons and militarism will not be allowed to exercise hegemony over the world! It is the people who will decide their own destiny!

20.13 Let all the unions of the CITU rise to the occasion in achieving these objectives! Shed all lethargy wherever it exists; streamline our organisation so that we can emerge victorious!

- ◆ **Long live the unity of working class and the toiling people in the struggle to defeat the policies of globalisation!**
- ◆ **Down with imperialist machinations to subjugate the world!**
- ◆ **Long live the struggle to achieve Socialism!**
- ◆ **Long live CITU!**
- ◆ **Workers of the World Unite!**

CHITTABRATA MAJUMDAR
General Secretary



CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS TWELFTH CONFERENCE

“Com. Suryanarayana Rao Nagar”

January 17 – 21, 2007

BANGALORE, KARNATAKA

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

Comrade President and Comrades,

I rise to formally place before you the audited statement of accounts of CITU for the years 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06 which has already been circulated.

The meetings of the CITU Working Committee and General Council, held during this intervening period since last Conference, have already adopted these year wise audited accounts, which are placed before you for approval.

On Funds

This time our membership for the year 2005 has reached the figure of almost 40 lakhs and if our State Committees are able to maintain the regularity of collecting and depositing the affiliation fees to the CITU Centre year wise then there may not be any financial difficulty for the CITU Centre in near future to cope up with the expenditure. But the expenses are going up very fast and the income/expenditure account shows a wide increase all round. It is, therefore, necessary that we strictly adhere to the regular payment of affiliation fees, which is our only source of income.

BTR Fund

In spite of the commitments made by the State Committees and the discussions held several times in the meetings of the CITU Working Committee and General Council, the contributions to the BT Ranadive Memorial Fund have virtually ceased. But, I wish to draw the attention of this Conference towards the fact that recurring annual expenses of above Rs. 3 lakhs (against land rent, property tax, water and electricity charges, maintenance etc.) will have to be met by the Trust. You will have to decide and ensure regular inflow towards this fund to meet the annual expenses, which currently is being met by taking loan from the CITU funds.

P. Ramamurti TU School Fund

Com. P R's birth centenary year begins in September this year and it will be a fitting tribute to our Founder General Secretary, if we are able to build the permanent school and research centre. Uptill now we could collect only around Rs.35 lakhs and many of the State Committees are yet to contribute to the Fund. Efforts are continuously being made to obtain the land as already promised by the government but we should be ready with the funds in the meantime.

Tsunami Relief Fund

We have received a total collection of around 1 crore 5 lakhs towards Tsunami Relief Fund. As already decided, utilisation of this fund for providing assistance and relief to the victims has started in consultation and coordination with our Tamil Nadu State Committee.

On your behalf we take this opportunity to express our gratitude for the contributions we have received from the organisations L-Avenir Social (France), Indian Workers Association (Great Britain), Zenroren (Japan) and All China Federation of Trade Unions. We convey our greetings to them.

With this I place this report for your adoption.

With greetings,

RANJIT BASU
Treasurer



CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS TWELFTH CONFERENCE

“Com. Suryanarayana Rao Nagar”

January 17 – 21, 2007

BANGALORE, KARNATAKA

DECLARATION ON CITU TASKS ON THE WORKING WOMEN FRONT

The 12th Conference of CITU endorses the reports adopted in the 8th Convention of the All India Coordination Committee of Working Women held on 3-5 November 2006 in Visakhapatnam and calls upon all its state committees and affiliated unions to ensure proper implementation of the tasks adopted in that Convention.

CITU believes that achieving working class unity requires bringing the large section of women workers into the mainstream trade union movement. It is the firm opinion of CITU that issues of workingwomen are not the concern of women alone but form part of the concerns of the working class and need to be addressed by the trade union movement. It is with this understanding and with the objective of organising women workers and ensuring that they occupy their due place in the trade union movement, that the CITU has formed the All India Coordination Committee of Working Women (CITU) in 1979.

Today women workers constitute 22.72% of the membership of CITU, as per the annual returns. But considering that several unions do not show women membership while filing annual returns, the actual proportion of women members in the CITU membership would be around 25%. The number of women participating in the campaigns and struggles led by the CITU has also increased considerably. Many women workers, particularly the anganwadi workers, have been active not only in their unions but also help in organising other sections of workers as well. It is necessary to train and develop them further to take up more responsibilities in the CITU.

Today CITU has more women members in its decision-making bodies compared to a few years ago. While this is a welcome feature, we also have to note that this does not reflect the increasing proportion of women members in CITU. This 12th Conference of CITU declares that the CITU will continue with its endeavour to ensure more women in its leadership. Given the chance, women can and have proved themselves capable of leading not only unions with only women members but also other unions.

The 12th Conference of CITU endorses the following organisational tasks recommended by the 8th Convention of the AICCW:

1. Organise a workshop at the national level with the central and state leadership of CITU and the CCWW to develop a clearer understanding of the role of the CCWWs at different levels.
2. Form state CCWWs in all states and district CCWWs wherever possible and ensure their effective functioning under the guidance of the respective committees of CITU.

3. Form women's sub committees in all the CITU affiliated unions with considerable of women members; discuss their functioning in state CCWW meetings and make efforts to ensure that they function regularly
4. Organise wide campaigns on the demands of workingwomen and make efforts to ensure that the state committees of CITU discuss and plan campaigns and mobilisations of workingwomen on their specific demands, at local/ district/ state level as possible
5. Make serious efforts to organise different sections of women workers in the unorganised sector including home based workers. Identify areas/ sectors where women work in large numbers and decide priorities after discussing in the state committees of CITU and prepare objective and concrete plans to organise them
6. Make efforts to increase the representation of women in the decision making bodies of CITU and its affiliated unions at various levels
7. Hold regular trade union classes separately for workingwomen; ensure adequate participation of women trade union activists in the regular classes of CITU

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR 31st MARCH 2004

AUDITORS' REPORT

We have examined the Balance Sheet of Centre of Indian Trade Unions as at 31 st March, 2004 and the Income & Expenditure account and Receipt and Payment account for the year ended on that date which are in agreement with the books of account maintained by the said institution.

We have obtained all the information and explanations and in our opinion, proper books of account have been maintained by the above named institution so far as appears from our examination of the books subject to the notes on accounts.

In our opinion and to the best of our knowledge, and according to information given to us, the said accounts read with the Notes on Accounts give a true and fair view:-

1. In the case of the Balance Sheet, of the state of affairs of the above named institution as at 31.03.2004 and
2. In the case of the income and expenditure account, of the excess of income over expenditure for the year ending 31-03-2004

CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH, 2004

RECEIPTS	RUPEES	RUPEES	PAYMENTS	RUPEES	RUPEES
OPENING BALANCE			Magazine Expenses		407,352.00
Cash in hand	127,993.00		Meeting, Rally & Seminar Expenses		44,516.00
Cash at Banks	2,447,038.00	2,575,031.00	Travelling & Conveyance Exp.		161,778.00
Sale of Magazines		581,013.00	Vehicle Expenses		114,101.00
Publication Income		20,113.00	Bank Charges		10,160.00
Affiliation Fee		4,929,099.00	Building Maintenance Expenses		132,852.00
Bank Interest		57,269.00	Electricity & Water Expenses		16,992.00
Donation		314,766.00	Medical Expenses		49,117.00
Interest on F.D.R.		145,012.00	Miscellaneous Expenses		47,899.00
Miscellaneous Income		1,898.00	Communication Expenses		145,632.00
Decrease in Loans & Advances		33,874.00	WSF India Trust A/c		18,033.00
Advance AFFI (AP A/C)		1,283.00	26th Feb., Convention		6,000.00
U.P. State Committee		683.00	AICCWW Conference		22,659.00
			XI Conference A/c		172,077.00
			Relief & Subsidy		12,106.00
			Staff Welfare		4,670.00
			Rent & Taxes		78,277.00
			Repair & Maintenance		139,241.00
			Printing & Stationery		121,495.00
			Tea & Tiffin Expenses		38,496.00
			News Papers & Periodicals		30,888.00
			Wages		616,350.00
			Internal Audit Expenses		3,082.00
			Addition to Fixed Assets		78,470.00
			BTR Trust		6,426.00
			F.D.R. with Banks		5,103,363.00
			Gujrat Riot Relief Fund		53,140.00
			Gujrat Eqrthquake Relief Fund		11,857.00
			CLOSING BALANCE		
			Cash in hand	115,615.00	
			Cash at Banks	897,397.00	1,013,012.00
		8,660,041.00			8,660,041.00

Note : Figures have been rounded off to the nearest of rupee.

For CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

AUDITORS' REPORT

As per our report of even date attached.

For B. M. SHARMA & ASSOCIATES

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Sd/-
(PRESIDENT)

Sd/-
(SECRETARY)

Sd/-
(TREASURER)

Place : New Delhi

Dated : 7/9/2004

Sd/-
(B. M. SHARMA)
Partner

CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH, 2004

EXPENDITURE	RUPEES	RUPEES	INCOME	RUPEES	RUPEES
Magazine Expenses		407,352.00	Sale of Magazines		581,013.00
Meeting, Rally & Seminar Expenses		44,516.00	Publication Income		20,113.00
Travelling & Conveyance Exp.		161,778.00	Affiliation Fee		4,929,099.00
Vehicle Expenses		114,101.00	Bank Interest		57,269.00
Bank Charges		10,160.00	Donation		314,766.00
Building Maintenance Expenses		132,852.00	Interest on F.D.R.		436,344.00
Electricity & Water Expenses		16,992.00	Miscellaneous Income		1,898.00
Medical Expenses		49,117.00			
Miscellaneous Expenses		47,899.00			
Communication Expenses		145,632.00			
WSF India Trust A/c		18,033.00			
26th Feb., Convention		6,000.00			
AICCWW Conference		22,659.00			
XI Conference A/c		172,077.00			
Relief & Subsidy		12,106.00			
Staff Welfare		4,670.00			
Rent & Taxes		78,277.00			
Repair & Maintenance		139,241.00			
Printing & Stationery		121,495.00			
Tea & Tiffin Expenses		38,496.00			
News Papers & Periodicals		30,888.00			
Wages		616,350.00			
Internal Audit Expenses		3,082.00			
Audit Fee		5,400.00			
Depreciation		353,457.00			
Excess of Income over Expenditure		3,587,872.00			
tfd. to Balance sheet					
		6,340,502.00			6,340,502.00

Note : Figures have been rounded off to the nearest of rupee.

For CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

AUDITORS' REPORT

As per our report of even date attached.

For B.M. SHARMA & ASSOCIATES

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Sd/-
(PRESIDENT)

Sd/-
(SECRETARY)

Sd/-
(TREASURER)

Place : New Delhi
Dated : 7/9/2004

Sd/-
(B. M. SHARMA)
Partner

CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st MARCH, 2004

LIABILITIES	RUPEES	RUPEES	ASSETS	RUPEES	RUPEES
GENERAL FUND			FIXED ASSETS		1,253,084.00
Opening Balance	8,962,338.00		(As per Schedule attached)		
Add: Surplus from Income & Expenditure account	3,587,872.00	12,550,210.00	INVESTMENTS		
			Fixed Deposits with Banks	9,370,734.00	
			Intt. Accrued on FDR	291,332.00	9,662,066.00
CURRENT LIABILITIES & PROVISIONS			CURRENT ASSETS, LOANS AND ADVANCES		
a) Current Liabilities			a) Current Assets		
T.N. State Committee Fund	2,073.00		Balance with Banks	897,397.00	
Advance from AFFI	1,283.00		Cash in hand	115,615.00	
Transport Seminar Fund	30,000.00		b) Loans & advances	666,887.00	1,679,899.00
U.P. State Committee	683.00		(Advances recoverable in cash or kind for which value to be received.)		
Audit fee payable	10,800.00	44,839.00			
		12,595,049.00			12,595,049.00

Note : Figures have been rounded off to the nearest of rupee.

For CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

AUDITORS' REPORT

As per our report of even date attached.

For B.M. SHARMA & ASSOCIATES

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Sd/-
(PRESIDENT)

Sd/-
(SECRETARY)

Sd/-
(TREASURER)

Place : New Delhi
Dated : 7/9/2004

Sd/-
(B. M. SHARMA)
Partner

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR 31st MARCH 2005

AUDITORS' REPORT

We have examined the Balance Sheet of Centre of Indian Trade Unions as at 31 st March, 2005 and the Income & Expenditure account and Receipt and Payment account for the year ended on that date which are in agreement with the books of account maintained by the said institution.

We have obtained all the information and explanations and in our opinion, proper books of account have been maintained by the above named institution so far as appears from our examination of the books subject to the notes on accounts.

In our opinion and to the best of our knowledge, and according to information given to us, the said accounts read with the Notes on Accounts give a true and fair view:-

1. In the case of the Balance Sheet, of the state of affairs of the above named institution as at 31.03.2005 and
2. In the case of the income and expenditure account, of the excess of income over expenditure for the year ending 31-03-2005

CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st MARCH, 2005

RECEIPTS	RUPEES	RUPEES	PAYMENTS	RUPEES	RUPEES
OPENING BALANCE			Magazine Expenses		505,707.00
Cash-in-hand	115,615.00		Meeting, Rally & Seminar Exp.		316,452.00
Cash at Banks	897,397.00	1,013,012.00	Legal Exp.		300.00
Sale of Magazines		619,390.00	Travelling & Conveyance		122,291.00
Publication A/c		1,592.00	Vehicle Expenses		164,217.00
Affiliation Fee		1,650,412.00	Bank Charges		4,408.00
Bank Interest		23,165.00	Building Maintenance Exp.		61,268.00
Donation		442,972.00	Electricity & Water Exp.		32,002.00
Interest on F.D.R.		639,919.00	Medical Exp.		116,323.00
Miscellaneous Income		420.00	Miscellaneous Exp.		70,839.00
Interest on Income Tax Refund		1,567.00	Communication Exp.		185,589.00
Com. P.Rammurthy Fund		989,552.00	Publication Exp.		9,611.00
Tsunami Victim Relief Fund		4,496,870.00	Rent & Taxes		26,918.00
Staff Contributory Fund		40,000.00	Repair & Maintenance		121,744.00
			Printing & Stationery		102,098.00
			Tea & Tiffin Exp.		40,261.00
			Staff Welfare		40,000.00
			NPMO rally Exp.		7,972.00
			News Papers & Periodicals		22,379.00
			Wages		581,800.00
			Addition to Fixed Assets		34,350.00
			Addition to Loans & Advances		160,878.00
			Interest Accrued on FDR		619,652.00
			BTR Trust		137,951.00
			CLOSING BALANCE		
			Cash-in-hand	109,825.00	
			Cash at Bank	<u>6,324,036.00</u>	<u>6,433,861.00</u>
TOTAL Rs.		9,918,871.00	TOTAL Rs.		9,918,871.00

Note : Figures have been rounded off to the nearest of rupee.

For CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

AUDITORS' REPORT

As per our report of even date attached.

For B.M. SHARMA & ASSOCIATES

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Sd/- Sd/- Sd/-
(PRESII (SECRETARY) (TREASURER)

Place : New Delhi
Dated : 7/11/2005

Sd/-
(B. M. SHARMA)
Partner

CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st MARCH, 2005

EXPENDITURE	RUPEES	RUPEES	INCOME	RUPEES	RUPEES
Magazine Exp.		505,707.00	Sale of Magazines		619,390.00
Meeting, Rally & Seminar Exp.		316,452.00	Publication		1,592.00
Legal Exp.		300.00	Affiliation Fee		1,650,412.00
Travelling & Conveyance Exp.		122,291.00	Bank Interest		23,165.00
Vechile Exp.		164,217.00	Donation		442,972.00
Bank Charges		4,408.00	Interest on F.D.R.		639,919.00
Building Maintenance Exp.		61,268.00	Miscellaneous Income		420
Electricity & Water Exp.		32,002.00	Interest on Income Tax Refund		1,567.00
Medicall Exp.		116,323.00			
Miscellaneous Exp.		70,839.00			
Communication Expenses		185,589.00			
Publication Exp.		9,611.00			
Rent & taxes		26,918.00			
Repair & Maintenance		121,744.00			
Printing & Stationery		102,098.00			
Tea & Tiffin Exp.		40,261.00			
Staff Welfare		40,000.00			
NPMO Rally Exp.		7,972.00			
News Papers & Periodicals		22,379.00			
Wages		581,800.00			
Audit Fee		5,510.00			
Depreciation		204,512.00			
Excess of Income Over Expenditure		637,236.00			
Transferred to Balance Sheet					
Total Rs.		3,379,437.00	Total Rs.		3,379,437.00

Note : Figures have been rounded off to the nearest of rupee.

For CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

AUDITORS' REPORT

As per our report of even date attached.

For B.M. SHARMA & ASSOCIATES

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Sd/- (PRESII
Sd/- (SECRETARY)

Sd/- (TREASURER)

Place : New Delhi
Dated : 7/11/2005

Sd/-
(B. M. SHARMA)
Partner

CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st MARCH, 2005

LIABILITIES	RUPEES	RUPEES	ASSETS	RUPEES	RUPEES
<u>GENERAL FUND ACCOUNT</u>			<u>FIXED ASSETS</u>		
Opening Balance	12,550,210.00		(As per Schedule attached)		1,082,922.00
ADD: Surplus from income & Expenditure Account	637,236.00	13,187,446.00			
<u>CURRENT LIABILITIES & PROVISIONS</u>			<u>INVESTMENTS</u>		
a) Current Liabilities			Fixed Deposits with Banks	9,370,734.00	
T.N.State Committee	2,073.00		Interest Accrued on F.D.R.	910,983.00	10,281,717.00
Advance From Affi	1,283.00		<u>CURRENT ASSETS AND LOANS & ADVANCES</u>		
Tsunami Victims Relief Fu	4,496,870.00		<u>LOANS & ADVANCES</u>		
Com. P.Rammurthy Fund	989,552.00		A) Current Assets		
Transport Seminar Fund	30,000.00		Balance with Banks	6,324,036.00	
U.P. State Committee	683.00		Cash in hand	109,825.00	
Staff Contributory Fund	40,000.00		b) Loans & Advances	965,717.00	7,399,578.00
Audit Fee Payable	16,310.00	5,576,771.00	(Advances recoverable in case or kind for which value to be received)		
		18,764,217.00			18,764,217.00

Note : Figures have been rounded off to the nearest of rupee.

For CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

AUDITORS' REPORT

As per our report of even date attached.

For B.M. SHARMA & ASSOCIATES

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Sd/- Sd/- Sd/-
(PRESI) (SECRETARY) (TREASURER)

Place : New Delhi
Dated : 7/11/2005

Sd/-
(B. M. SHARMA)
Partner

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR 31st MARCH 2006

AUDITORS' REPORT

We have examined the Balance Sheet of Centre of Indian Trade Unions as at 31 st March, 2006 and the Income & Expenditure account and Receipt and Payment account for the year ended on that date which are in agreement with the books of account maintained by the said institution.

We have obtained all the information and explanations and in our opinion, proper books of account have been maintained by the above named institution so far as appears from our examination of the books subject to the notes on accounts.

In our opinion and to the best of our knowledge, and according to information given to us, the said accounts read with the Notes on Accounts give a true and fair view:-

1. In the case of the Balance Sheet, of the state of affairs of the above named institution as at 31.03.2006 and
2. In the case of the income and expenditure account, of the excess of income over expenditure for the year ending 31-03-2006

CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH, 2006

RECEIPTS	RUPEES	RUPEES	PAYMENTS	RUPEES	RUPEES
OPENING BALANCE			Magazine Expenses		559,080.00
Cash in hand	109,825.00		Meeting, Rally & Seminar Exp.		369,437.00
Cash at Banks	6,324,036.00	6,433,861.00	Travelling & Conveyance Exp.		163,726.00
Sale of Magazines		654,861.00	Vehicle Expenses		154,270.00
Publication A/c		13,020.00	Bank Charges		33,407.00
Affiliation Fee		3,250,700.00	Building Maintenance Expenses		150,450.00
Bank Interest		85,382.00	Electricity & Water Expenses		37,745.00
Donation		283,045.00	Medical Expenses		6,642.00
Interest on F.D.R.		653,574.00	Miscellaneous Expenses		23,555.00
Miscellaneous Receipts		8,760.00	Communication Expenses		227,173.00
Com. P. Ramamurthy Fund		1,856,752.00	Publication Expenses		9,485.00
Tsunami Victim Relief Fund		1,258,036.00	Rent & Taxes		27,203.00
Realisation of Loan & Advances		3,230.00	Service & Maintenance		269,824.00
J & K Earthquake Relief Fund		64,143.00	Printing & Stationery		187,465.00
Realisation FDR		2,431,743.00	Tea & Tiffin Expenses		57,013.00
			News Papers & Periodicals		27,207.00
			Wages		617,500.00
			Right to Work Convention		7,700.00
			Addition to FDR		6,000,000.00
			BTR Trust		436,390.00
			Addition to Fixed Assets		447,660.00
			Audit Fee		16,310.00
			J & K Earthquake Relief Fund		100,000.00
			Bad Debts		3,527.00
			CLOSING BALANCE		
			Cash in hand	38,006.00	
			Cash at Banks	7,026,332.00	7,064,338.00
		16,997,107.00			16,997,107.00

Note : Figures have been rounded off to the nearest of rupee.

For CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

AUDITORS' REPORT

As per our report of even date attached.

For B.M. SHARMA & ASSOCIATES

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Sd/- Sd/- Sd/-
(PRESID (SECRETARY) (TREASURER)

Place : New Delhi

Dated : 7/1/2006

Sd/-
(B. M. SHARMA)
Partner

CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH, 2006

EXPENDITURE	RUPEES	RUPEES	INCOME	RUPEES	RUPEES
Magazine Expenses		559,080.00	Sale of Magazines		654,861.00
Meeting, Rally & Seminar Exp.		387,118.00	Publication A/c		13,020.00
Travelling & Conveyance Exp.		163,726.00	Affiliation Fee		3,250,700.00
Vehicle Expenses		175,649.00	Bank Interest		85,382.00
Bad Debts		8,527.00	Donation		287,084.00
Bank Charges		33,407.00	Interest on F.D.R.		813,076.00
Building Maintenance Expenses		150,450.00	Miscellaneous Income		8,760.00
Electricity & Water Expenses		37,745.00			
Medical Expenses		6,642.00			
Miscellaneous Expenses		23,555.00			
Communication Expenses		227,173.00			
Publication Expenses		9,485.00			
Rent & Taxes		27,203.00			
Service & Maintenance		269,824.00			
Printing & Stationery		187,465.00			
Tea & Tiffin Expenses		57,013.00			
News Papers & Periodicals		27,207.00			
Wages		617,500.00			
Right to Work Convention		7,700.00			
Depreciation		209,565.00			
Audit Fee		5,612.00			
Excess of Income over Expenditure		1,921,237.00			
tfd. to Balance sheet					
		5,112,883.00			5,112,883.00

Note : Figures have been rounded off to the nearest of rupee.

For CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

AUDITORS' REPORT

As per our report of even date attached.

For B.M. SHARMA & ASSOCIATES

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Sd/- Sd/- Sd/-
(PRESID (SECRETARY) (TREASURER)

Sd/-
(B. M. SHARMA)
Partner

Place : New Delhi

Dated : 7/1/2006

CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st MARCH, 2006

LIABILITIES	RUPEES	RUPEES	ASSETS	RUPEES	RUPEES
<u>GENERAL FUND</u>			<u>FIXED ASSETS</u>		1,321,016.00
Opening Balance	13,187,446.00		(As per Schedule attached)		
Add: Surplus from Income & Expenditure account	1,921,237.00	15,108,683.00	<u>INVESTMENTS</u>		
			Fixed Deposits with Banks	12,938,991.00	
<u>CURRENT LIABILITIES & PROVISIONS</u>			Interest Accrued on F.D.R.	1,002,614.00	13,941,605.00
a) Current Liabilities			<u>CURRENT ASSETS,</u>		
Tsunami Victim Relief Func	5,754,905.00		<u>LOANS AND ADVANCES</u>		
Com. P. Ramamurthy Func	3,346,303.00		a) Current Assets		
Transport Seminar Fund	30,000.00		Balance with Banks	7,026,332.00	
Staff Contributory Fund	40,000.00		Cash in hand	38,006.00	
Audit Fee Payable	5,612.00	9,176,820.00	b) Loans & advances	1,958,544.00	9,022,882.00
			(Advances recoverable in cash or kind for which value to be received.)		
		24,285,503.00			24,285,503.00

Note : Figures have been rounded off to the nearest of rupee.

For CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

AUDITORS' REPORT

As per our report of even date attached.

For B.M. SHARMA & ASSOCIATES

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Sd/- Sd/- Sd/-
(PRESID (SECRETARY) (TREASURER)

Place : New Delhi

Dated : 7/1/2006

Sd/-
(B. M. SHARMA)
Partner

ANNEXURE -III

STATEMENT SHOWING STATEWISE MEMBERSHIP AS PER ANNUAL RETURNS RECEIVED TILL 31.12.2006

Name of the State	Unions Submitting Returns			Position of membership according to Annual Returns		
	2003	2004	2005	2003	2004	2005
Andaman & Nicobar	8	9	8	2242(-)	2287(-)	2727(-)
Andra Pradesh	701	761	687	225146(50640)	265057(64641)	300285(72491)
Assam	80	77	78	56012(25635)	60667(25875)	59085(28327)
Bihar	9	11	12	8292(921)	12185(4907)	22415(9871)
Delhi	73	75	72	27003(1103)	24107(1004)	27955(1292)
Goa	7	7	7	1174(116)	947(67)	551(7)
Gujrat	19	18	19	8917(1033)	8532(987)	11238(1307)
Haryana	22	15	17	31167(13584)	25393(8533)	47845(17538)
Himachal Pradesh	28	31	31	12345(6503)	14801(6983)	16746(7378)
Jammu & Kashmir	2	2	2	6352(24)	6204(19)	6376(42)
Karnataka	106	104	104	94341(39696)	95865(57418)	118839(67785)
Kerala	879	860	837	949075(276751)	979003(288125)	1054978(307969)
Madhya Pradesh	62	64	64	19309(2960)	22017(3805)	23075(4154)
Maharashtra	58	61	60	56747(5399)	71189(16033)	71049(17623)
Orissa	69	71	73	50222(13006)	60997(6134)	82235(23039)
Punjab	76	83	83	61373(2711)	61100(5621)	79214(13507)
Rajasthan	71	68	61	30116(2556)	30138(2623)	29675(336)
Tamilnadu	464	477	472	242328(36456)	273159(29084)	329015(70331)
Tripura	32	33	35	98785(21824)	114824(35711)	134215(41959)
Uttar Pradesh	79	75	65	21611(307)	20148(381)	22560(654)
West Bengal	969	936	899	1259850(128908)	1303554(163742)	1401711(194257)
Uttaranchal	37	39	41	11506(2356)	11855(2208)	15657(2703)
Chhatisgarh	16	14	16	15428(1151)	13871(1928)	17279(1584)
Jharkhand	19	18	24	41007(2981)	36174(2151)	43269(4193)
Meghalaya	0	1	0		1460(-)	
Arunachal Pradesh	0	1	0		17900(-)	
Sikkim	0	0	1			370(-)
Total	3886	3911	3768	3330348(636621)	3533434(727980)	3918364(888347)

Year	No. of Unions	Membership
1983	1854	1890993
1984	2005	1575655
1985	1717	1716457(132536)
1986	2412	1844273(209348)
1987	2350	1680884(206482)
1988	2618	1919280(264507)
1989	3114	2425000(247388)
1990	2934	2095550(245060)
1991	2783	2088218(291228)
1992	3343	2381012(321620)
1993	3156	2371405(306344)
1994	3198	2470131(261980)
1995	3523	2784050(358188)
1996	3645	2805127(435285)
1997	3804	2917200(506097)
1998	3502	2881478(483373)
1999	3929	3296808(550583)
2000	3789	3128788(647020)
2001	3797	3152565(600941)
2002	4169	3464745(680117)

* Figures in () indicates female membership

ANNEXURE -IV

BTR MEMORIAL FUND

COLLECTION UP TO 31.12.2006

STATE	AMOUNT RECEIVED	COMMITTED AMOUNT
West Bengal	Rs.5,867,615.00	Rs.10,000,000.00
Andhra Pradesh	Rs.1,524,005.50	Rs.1,500,000.00
Assam	Rs.84,180.00	Rs.500,000.00
Bihar	Rs.77,522.00	Rs.800,000.00
Delhi	Rs.115,430.00	Rs.200,000.00
Kerala	Rs.3,542,500.00	Rs.5,000,000.00
Madhya Pradesh	Rs.76,342.00	Rs.200,000.00
Orissa	Rs.136,813.50	Rs.500,000.00
Punjab	Rs.447,152.00	Rs.1,000,000.00
Rajasthan	Rs.300,615.00	Rs.500,000.00
Tamilnadu	Rs.562,580.00	Rs.3,000,000.00
Tripura	Rs.30,280.00	Rs.500,000.00
Karnataka	Rs.260,016.00	Rs.700,000.00
Himachal Pradesh	Rs.13,756.00	Rs.200,000.00
Haryana	Rs.50,950.00	Rs.200,000.00
Maharashtra	Rs.261,482.00	Rs.1,000,000.00
Uttar Pradesh	Rs.171,750.00	Rs.500,000.00
Goa	Rs.50,000.00	Rs.150,000.00
Gujrat	Rs.14,000.00	Rs.100,000.00
Andaman & Nicobar	Rs.5,000.00	
Jharkhand		
Uttaranchal		
Individuals/Union/Federatio	Rs.888,351.00	
BankUnions/Federation	Rs.574,114.00	
Insurance (AIIEA)	Rs.412,000.00	
AISGEF	Rs.631,670.00	
	Rs.16,098,124.00	Rs.26,550,000.00

ANNEXURE -V

COM. P.RAMAMOORTI T.U. SCHOOL FUND as on 31.12.2006

CITU, Goa State Committee	Rs.1,206.00
CITU, U.P. State Committee	Rs.21,860.00
CITU, A.P. State Committee	Rs.245,399.00
CITU, Chhatishgarh State Committee	Rs.4,151.00
CITU, Tripura State Committee	Rs.10,000.00
CITU, M.P. State Committee	Rs.14,274.00
CITU, Karnataka State Committee	Rs.52,879.00
CITU, Kerala State Committee	Rs.1,022,143.00
CITU, Punjab State Committee	Rs.75,259.00
CITU, Tamilnadu State committee	Rs.718,000.00
CITU, J & K State Committee	Rs.1,240.00
CITU, Orissa State Committee	Rs.14,491.00
CITU, Haryana State Committee	Rs.40.00
CITU, Assam State Committee	Rs.10,000.00
CITU, West Bengal State Committee	Rs.500,000.00
CITU, Jharkhand State Committee	Rs.6,500.00
CITU, Gujrat State Committee	Rs.1,000.00
CITU, Maharashtra State Committee	Rs.20,000.00
Association of SAIL Employees, Kolkata, W.B.	Rs.10,000.00
2nd World Conference of Oil, Gas, Refinery Trade Union	Rs.700,000.00
I.E.L.Employees Union, U.P.	Rs.10,000.00
Central Zone Insurance Employees Association, Chhatishgarh	Rs.10,000.00
TOTAL	Rs.3,448,442.00

ANNEXURE -VI

COLLECTION FOR "TSUNAMI VICTIM'S RELIEF FUND" AS ON 31.12.2006

Name	Amount	Name	Amount
L'Avenir Social , France	Rs.4,560,125.00	Lal Jhanda Hero Cycle majdoor Union, Punjab	Rs.40,000.00
Indian Workers Association, Great Britain	Rs.588,215.00	Lal Jhanda Rockman Cycle Mazdoor Union, Punjab	Rs.19,000.00
Mr. H.Mahadevan, Deputy General Secretary, WFTU (The amount originally came from Zenroren, Japan)	Rs.227,469.00	Lal Jhanda Highway Workers Union, Punjab	Rs.4,500.00
All-China Federation of Trade Unions	Rs.3,270,000.00	Lal Jhanda Avon Bycycle Component Union, Punjab	Rs.4,000.00
Bharat Electronics Employees Union, Ghaziabad	Rs.5,000.00	Lal Jhanda Avon Cycle Mazdoor Union, Punjab	Rs.12,000.00
CITU, Orissa State Committee	Rs.35,400.00	Lal Jhanada Vyas Eng. Mazdoor Union, Punjab	Rs.9,000.00
Collection from CITU Centre Comrades, Delhi	Rs.5,380.00	Lal Jhanda K.W.Majdoor Union, Punjab	Rs.8,500.00
CITU, Chhathishgarh State Committee	Rs.10,449.00	Lal Jhanda K.W.Rim Mazdoor Union, Punjab	Rs.2,500.00
BHEL, Kamgar Union, Hardwar	Rs.6,000.00	Amritsar CITU, Punjab	Rs.10,500.00
Ms. Meenakshi Marwah, New Delhi	Rs.2,500.00	Lal Jhanda (Mangli Div.) Hero Cycle Workers Union, Punjab	Rs.13,000.00
Com. B.D.Prasad, Bokaro Steel, Jharkhand	Rs.3,500.00	Aska Co-Operative Sugar Industry Sramik sangh, Orissa	Rs.2,165.00
All India Road Transport Federation, Kerala	Rs.10,000.00	CITU, Sirmour District Committee, H.P.	Rs.11,800.00
Mr. Rana Siddiqui, New Delhi	Rs.6,000.00	Himachal Hotel Mazdoor Lal Jhanda Union, H.P.	Rs.6,000.00
J.K.Tyre Karmachari Ekta Union (CITU), Rajasthan	Rs.187,190.00	CITU, Goa State Committee	Rs.63,700.00
Phal Sabji Vikreta Vyapar Sangh, Rajasthan	Rs.5,000.00	CITU, Maharashtra State Committee	Rs.600,000.00
Bharat Earth Movers Limited, Karnataka	Rs.5,000.00	Workers of M/s National Controls (India), Goa	Rs.351.59
Construction Workers Federation of India, West Bengal	Rs.5,000.00	Hindustan Cocacola Bottleing South West (Pvt.Ltd.) Employees Union, karnataka	Rs.14,605.00
Com. B.T.Virendra Kumar, Karnataka	Rs.1,872.00	Wipro Karmikara Sangha, Karnataka	Rs.39,632.00
CITU, Assam State Committee	Rs.20,000.00	CITU, Mysore District Committee, Karnataka	Rs.3,120.00
B.H.E.kamgar Trade Union, M.P.	Rs.2,000.00	Foods Fats & Fertilizers Staff & Workers Union, A.P.	Rs.12,500.00
Com. S.K.Dhar, New Delhi	Rs.100.00	Rubber Workers Union, Haryana	Rs.2,600.00
All India Federation of Anganwadi Workers and Helpers, New Delhi	Rs.30,850.00	Mr. Prem Gupta, H.P.	Rs.21,200.00
National Coal Organisation (G.O.I.) Employees Association, Jharkhand	Rs.7,000.00	Mr. J.J.Nath, NRMU, Maharashtra	Rs.500.00
C.F.J.V. Workers Ekta Union, H.P.	Rs.29,000.00	Mr. P.K.Sen Sharma, NRMU, Maharashtra	Rs.300.00
Larjee Project Workers Union, H.P.	Rs.72,450.00	Vikrant Tyres Employees Union, Karnataka	Rs.244,000.00
Steel Workers Federation of India, W.B.	Rs.10,000.00	Suman Dandass	Rs.500.00
Karnataka Workers Union, Karnataka	Rs.56,632.00	Bank Interest Received	Rs.263,946.00
Keonjhar Industrial Workers Union, Orissa	Rs.5,000.00		
TOTAL COLLECTION			Rs.10,577,051.59

ANNEXURE -VII

CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

STATEWISE MEMBERSHIP OF UNIONS & No.OF DELEGATES FOR THE XII CONFERENCE

STATE	Data	YEAR	NO.OF	G.C.	W.C.
		2005	DELEGATES	MEMBERS	MEMBERS
ANDAMAN	TOTAL MEM	2623	2	0	0
ANDHRA PRADESH	TOTAL MEM	291665	183	31	9
ASSAM	TOTAL MEM	58047	36	6	2
BIHAR	TOTAL MEM	22415	14	2	1
CHHATISHGARH	TOTAL MEM	14053	9	2	0
DELHI	TOTAL MEM	27512	17	3	1
GUJRAT	TOTAL MEM	11238	7	1	0
H.P.	TOTAL MEM	16746	10	2	1
HARYANA	TOTAL MEM	45936	23	4	1
JAMMU & KASHMIR	TOTAL MEM	6376	4	1	0
JHARKHAND	TOTAL MEM	43269	27	5	1
KARNATAKA	TOTAL MEM	118839	74	13	4
KERALA	TOTAL MEM	1054823	659	113	33
M.P.	TOTAL MEM	27567	17	3	1
MAHARASHTRA	TOTAL MEM	63521	40	7	2
ORISSA	TOTAL MEM	82235	51	9	3
PUNJAB	TOTAL MEM	74636	47	8	2
RAJASTHAN	TOTAL MEM	24866	16	3	1
T.N.	TOTAL MEM	317717	199	34	10
TRIPURA	TOTAL MEM	134215	84	14	4
U.P.	TOTAL MEM	21722	14	2	1
UTTARANCHAL	TOTAL MEM	16006	10	2	0
W.B.	TOTAL MEM	1401711	876	150	43
GOA	TOTAL MEM	551	1	0	0
SIKKIM	TOTAL MEM	370	1	0	0
ARUNACHAL PRADESH	TOTAL MEM		1		
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP		3878659	2422	415	120
ADD.FROM CENTRE			11	10	5
			2431	425	125

NOTE:-

1. Minimum 15% representation must be given to female comrades in the delegation.
2. Some unions have their membership spread in 2 or more states. Accordingly as per the mutual understanding, the following addition/deletions are included/excluded in the membership of respective states

Name of the Union	M.P.	Maharashtra	Chhatisgarh	U.P.	Uttaranchal
1.Lal jhannda coal mines mazdoor union, Maharashtra	2317	-2317			
2. M.P.Med.& Sales Rep.Union	-818		818		
3. Coal Field lab.union, singrl.	-916			916	
4. Koyla Sramik Sangh, Chhtg.	4044		-4044		
5. U.P.Med.&Sales Rep.Union				-562	562
	4627	-2317	-3226	354	562



ಅಖಿಲ ಭಾರತ ಸಮ್ಮೇಳನ
अखिल भारतीय सम्मेलन
ALL INDIA CONFERENCE
1 January 17-21, 2007 | BANGALORE |

CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS TWELFTH CONFERENCE

“Com. Suryanarayana Rao Nagar”

January 17 – 21, 2007

BANGALORE, KARNATAKA

ACTIVITY REPORT

The period since the 11th Conference of CITU held in Chennai in December 2003 witnessed, in the background fast changing socio-political scenario, appropriate response of the working class movement with CITU as its crucial component. The 11th Conference took place in the backdrop of aggressive onslaught and atrocious expression of the ruling polity against the basic right of the working class to strike work and the country's apex court put its stamp on the most brutal expression of intolerance towards the indefinite strike action by the Govt employees of the Tamilnadu state by the State Govt. The 11th conference took place in Tamilnadu itself to take a pledge to confront and combat head-on the power that be with all its accomplices — through assertive defiance of the judicial prohibition on strike — by a bigger countrywide strike action.

Pursuant to the call of the 11th Conference, CITU took the pioneering role in rallying the working people through out the country, almost all major trade union entities to overcome all vacillations and stage a mighty strike action asserting the right to strike on 24th February 2004. Never before, the toiling people of the country did assert so resolutely against the anti-people NDA regime to defy the judicial dictates through such powerful strike action. The strike took place at such a crucial juncture, in the run up to 14th General Election, that it had also been reflective of a determined no to the NDA combine vying for coming back to power through so called India-shining campaign. The Govt employees against whom in particular, the apex court focussed its prohibitory judgment gave a fitting reply by ever biggest strike action on 24th February 2004 in most of the Govt offices and establishments throughout the country. The strike tuned the entire atmosphere in the country pushing towards a regime change at the centre.

PARLIAMENTARY AND ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

The 14th Lok Sabha Election had been the major political event after our 11th conference. The Conference gave a clarion call to the working class to play frontline role to oust the anti-people communal NDA combine from power. The working class movement played a crucial role in the last general election in defeating the BJP combine. During five years of NDA rule, the trade union movement, despite all limitations, has consistently carried on struggles and campaign against the reckless liberalisation drive by the NDA combine and also against its communal designs. During this period, there have been four countrywide general strikes and numerous sectoral strike actions and agitations of various forms - all directed against the policies of liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation and their grievous impact on the national economy, society and workers. These struggles played a significant role in sensitising the people on the real causes of their distress. These working class actions also laid bare the heinous ploy of the BJP led combine to divert the attention of the people through aggressive pursuit of their communal and divisive agenda to retain themselves in power.

Following the announcement of elections, the CITU called upon the working class to defeat the BJP led combine in favour of a secular government at the Centre and also to ensure a decisive presence

of the Left inside Parliament. CITU published a booklet titled "Defeat the BJP Combine in Forthcoming Election" in English and Hindi, of which nine thousand copies were sold in different states. The State-committees, which have taken the booklets from centre are Delhi, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Assam. Besides, in West Bengal and Orissa, the booklet was translated in local languages and circulated in good numbers. Further, some CITU State Committees like West Bengal, Kerala, Tripura and Andhra Pradesh brought out a number of pamphlets and other campaign literature and used them intensively in their States.

CITU leadership and activists all over the country, and particularly in the States where left candidates contested, were actively involved in the election campaign. Many CITU leaders contested the election and got elected in Parliament. Of the 44 CPI(M) MPs elected from West Bengal, Kerala, Tripura, Andhra Pradesh and Tamilnadu, many are associated with the trade unions. It is also notable that in Andhra Pradesh, where assembly elections took place along with the Lok Sabha election, former CITU Secretary M.A. Gafoor is among the nine CPI(M) MLAs elected to the State Assembly. In Orissa and Karnataka also, the CPI(M) got representation in the Legislatures.

In May 2006, state assembly elections took place in West Bengal, Kerala, Tamilnadu, Assam and Pondicherry. These elections had been of crucial importance for the working class movement. Particularly in West Bengal and Kerala, which are stronghold of the Left forces, the Left Front and Left Democratic Front have been in the fray to retain the Governance for the seventh consecutive terms in West Bengal and oust the anti-people Congress led Govt. in Kerala. CITU organisations played active role in electioneering both in campaigning for the Left forces and participating at every level of the election organizations. From the trade union platform, campaign literatures have been published in several thousands in projecting the pro-people Left alternative of governance and explaining before the people the crucial necessity of victory of the Left forces in these elections in strengthening and carrying forward the struggle against the retrograde neoliberal economic policies. The victory of the Left Front and Left Democratic Front with huge majority in West Bengal and Kerala and increase in the strength of the Left forces in both Tamil Nadu and Assam assembly would result in more assertive role of the Left forces in national political scenario besides strengthening the struggle of the working class countrywide.

THREE GENERAL STRIKES

The intervening period also witnessed three countrywide General Strikes on 24th February 2004, 29th September 2005 and the last one on 14th December 2006. Each of these general strikes demonstrated a bigger sweep covering wider section of the toiling masses and all the sectors than its previous one. And in all these countrywide united actions, CITU had taken pioneering initiative.

On 24th February 2004 strike, INTUC, BMS and HMS did not associate with the strike call. In respect of other two general strikes, all the central trade unions and Federations except BMS and INTUC sponsored the strike call.

The main feature of these strikes is that unlike earlier strikes, the unorganized sector workers' participation has increased significantly and became more visible in the form of road and rail blocks etc on the strike day. There have been supportive actions by other mass organisations of Peasants, agricultural workers, students, youth, women etc in all these three strikes, despite in varying degrees. The active supportive participation of peasantry was quite visible throughout the country on 24th February 04 and 29th September 2005 strike. In the last strike, a few states reported such supportive participation.

Despite the national leadership of INTUC and BMS staying away from the General Strikes as usual, it could cast little effect on the massive sweep and depth of the countrywide strike actions. At grass root

level many of the BMS and INTUC affiliates and followers joined the strike action in a big way; for example, in coal mines, banks and insurance, Bharat Electronics, Bangalore based PSUs, and in the ports and docks the strike was almost total on 14th December 2006 reflecting the participation of workers of all affiliations. Thus, every successive countrywide strike action by the working class against the policies of liberalization, privatization and globalisation and attack on labour rights has reflected much broader unity at the grass root level.

ALL INDIA INITIATIVES

Intervening period also witnessed some important all India initiatives.

RIGHT TO WORK CONVENTION

Pursuant to decisions taken by The CITU General Council at Nasik in 2004 followed by the Working Committee at Agartala, the All India Convention on Right to Work was held on 12-13 March 2005 at Kolkata. The convention was well attended and well represented covering almost all the states and sectors. 735 delegates comprising of CITU leadership from all over the country, also from major independent unions in the bank, insurance industries and state and central government employees' federations, defence industries and establishments as well as from telecom, pharmaceutical and other sectors took part in the convention. Leadership of peasants, agricultural workers, students, youth and women's organizations participated in the convention.

The 'Declaration' adopted by the Right to Work Convention called for phased programme of joint movements/mobilisations at state, district, industrial center level culminating in march to Parliament with our goal of unleashing a powerful nationwide mass movement. The Convention also decided to observe "anti-unemployment day every year on 28th March in association with other mass organizations. In 2005, the anti-unemployment day was observed by almost all the state committees of CITU as per reports received at the centre. But in 2006, many states did not report about its observance.

ON PATENT ORDINANCE AND ACT, AGAINST WTO...

We have witnessed a good response in terms of involvement and protest actions against the Patents Ordinance promulgated in December 2004. CITU took the initiative in organizing countrywide campaign and agitation against the Patent Ordinance in association with other trade unions and mass organizations. As per our report various trade unions, and different mass organizations, experts' body, professionals could be brought into the fold of resistance movement. It is difficult for common workers to understand the subjects. CITU center, state committees and unions have acted satisfactorily to lead the campaign and educate the people on the issue which created an impact among the people and on the government. During February 2005, well attended conventions were held in almost all the states involving other trade unions and mass organizations and massive demonstrations were organized in all major industrial centres in the country. On 26th February 2005 demonstrations were held all over the country and even at New Delhi 10000 strong demonstration took place before Parliament. All these, along with consistent interventions by the Left Parties in Parliament. Finally while passing the Patents Amendment Bill, the Govt had to agree to many of the amendments put forth by the Left Parties, which could some extent, moderate, the pernicious impact of the product-patent regime.

The anti-WTO demonstrations throughout the country on 13th December 2005 in the run up to the Hong Kong Ministerial meet of WTO had drawn participation of wider section of democratic people along with the working class.

ANTI-IMPERIALIST DEMONSTRATION

As decided by CITU working committee meeting held in Bhopal in December 2005 massive protest demonstrations were organized throughout the country on the occasion of the visit of US president Bush in India. This programme have roused good enthusiasm among the workers and the March 2nd and 3rd , 2006 witnessed many big demonstrations in many places of the country raising slogans against imperialism and denouncing capitulating stance of the Govt of India. Working class had been the major constituents of the anti-bush demonstrations throughout the country and people from all walks of life also joined the anti-imperialist demonstration in a big way. The rallies in Kolkata, Kerala and Mumbai had drawn lakhs of people in the street while rallies in Hyderabad, Chennai and Delhi also deserves special mention for drawing the participation in terms of several thousands.

JOINT TU PROGRAMMES ON COMMON DEMANDS

As decided jointly by central trade unions and All India Employees Federations demonstrations were held on 20th August, 2004 in all the states and industrial centres highlighting nine point demands, viz., 1. Against reduction of interest on PF, 2. Against enhancement of FDI in telecom, insurance, civil aviation industries, 3. Against move to privatize airports, 4. Against dereservation of 85 items from small scale sector, 5. Demanding comprehensive legislation to ensure employment and social security benefits to unorganized sector workers and agricultural workers, 6. Revival of sick PSUs, 7. Proper enforcement of labour laws, 8. Clearance of statutory dues of workers and 9. Enforcement of minimum wage. Central demonstrations were held in all the states in the state capitals and as per our report in almost all the districts in the country.

Similarly, the All India Protest Day against reduction in the interest rate on Provident Fund was observed in all the states in December 2005 and most of the industrial centers of the country through demonstrations. All the Central Trade Unions in the country except INTUC had given the call for observance of the protest day.

AGAINST PRIVATISATION

Against privatization, many sectoral struggles including initiative for strike, strike actions etc were organized in public sector units, Banks, insurance, telecom and other sectors.

On 16th December 2003, the entire oil sector industries observed a complete strike against privatization. The significance of this strike is that it was spearheaded by National United Forum against Privatization of Oil PSUs which included, apart from CITU, AITUC and INTUC, Shiv Sena affiliated union as well as several independent unions. Such an unprecedented unity could be achieved only by our initiative against all opposition and prevarication of the other central trade unions. Secondly, this was the first national industry wide strike action after the 6th August judgement by the Supreme Court against right to strike.

After UPA's coming to power, the first initiative to disinvest 10 per cent shares of BHEL taken by the Govt in June 2005 was protested by almost all the trade unions. Owing to strong intervention by Left Parties, the move of disinvestment of BHEL had to be shelved.

Again in 2006, The Govt took a move to go for disinvestment in NALCO and Neyveli Lignite Corporation. This move of disinvestment has again to be abandoned by the Govt following indefinite strike action by the Neyveli workers and similar move by Nalco workers. CITU unions played important role in both the places despite being a smaller force. And most notable is that the initiative for such militant response against the move of disinvestments were taken by the grass root level organizations of

workers and officers which speaks about the extent of spontaneity and depth of opposition against the concept of disinvestments itself prevailing among the mass of the grass-root level workers.

Another most notable event during the period under review was the strike struggle of the employees of Airport Authority of India against privatization of airports. 22000 employees of 124 airports of the country started cease-work from 1st February onwards against the Govt. decision to privatise the Mumbai and Delhi airports on the plea of modernisation. The strike continued till 4th February braving police atrocities and was withdrawn after the Civil Aviation Minister committed in writing to constitute a tripartite committee 'to discuss the issue of modernization of airports by AAI' and other employee related issues. The Govt. violated its commitment subsequently. But the heroic strike struggles by the airport employees had created history. The Airport Employees' Union is not affiliated to any central trade union but in the struggle against privatisation they worked closely with CITU and have still been carrying on their struggle in the face of hell bent bid by the UPA Govt. to hand over all the airports of the country to private hands with foreign collaborator at any cost.

UNORGANISED SECTOR

The 2nd All India Convention of Unorganised Sector Workers was held at Firozabad, Uttar Pradesh, on 3-4 October, 2005. A total of 345 delegates attended the convention from various states. The charter of demands adopted has 15 specific demands covering enactment of central legislation, improving and ensuring payment of a decent minimum wage, implementation of all social security measures, etc. The convention demanded a thorough change in employer-employee relationship making it formal with all the attendant statutory benefits as well as observance of safety rules environmental and occupational health protection measures and medical facilities.

The convention also demanded a change in the policy framework to protect small-scale and tiny sectors and re-introduction of reservation system to stop MNCs and big monopoly houses from destroying jobs of millions of workers.

As decided by the convention, on 8th December 2005 the biggest ever demonstration by unorganized sector workers was held at Patel Chowk, New Delhi. Around 20,000 workers from all over the country came to Delhi from all states including far flung Tripura, Assam, Kerala, even Arunachal Pradesh to demand immediate enactment of a comprehensive legislation on labour rights, service conditions decent wage and social security benefits for unorganized sector workers.

Subsequent meeting of the Coordination Committee held in June 2006 decided to organize all India campaign on the charter of demands, particularly focussing on equal wages, minimum wages and immediate enactment of a comprehensive legislation for unorganised sector workers, culminating with a countrywide strike in December 2006. However, it had to be deferred due to the all India strike call by the Sponsoring Committee of Trade Unions on 14th December, 2006.

WORKING WOMEN

There have been important initiatives during the period under review. At the initiative of All India Coordination Committee of Working Women an all India campaign was launched..... on the demands of 1) Equal Remuneration for women workers, 2) Maternity benefits and crèche, 3) Law against sexual harassment, 4) No blanket withdrawal or ban on night shift work by women and 5) Legal protection for home-based workers, which culminated in an all India Convention of working women at Ramlila Ground, New Delhi on 17th November 2004. Around 900 working women from almost all the states participated in the convention. After the convention, the delegates marched in procession to

Patel chawak to hold a demonstration and submit the mass petition on the demands to the Government with more than two lakh signatures.

The convention was followed by a two day organizational workshop of working women with the leadership of working women coordination committee from the states.

ANGANWADI FEDERATION

All India Federation of Anganwadi Workers and Helpers have organized various campaign and agitation both in the state and all India level during the intervening period. Of them there were two major events worth mentioning.

An intensive all India months long campaign on demand of regularization was launched by the Federation at the grass root level which led to collection of more than one crore signature on the mass petition pressing for the demand for regularization. This was followed by a big convention of Anganwadi workers and helpers at New Delhi in April 2005 which was attended by more than 6000 workers and helpers from all the states.

Another notable event of all India struggle was the anganwadi workers' ten-day long- 24 hours dharna and relay hunger strike before Parliament in July 2006 which has drawn participation of around fifteen thousand anganwadi workers and helpers from all the states of the country demanding regularisation, increase of remunerations and introduction of retirement benefit. On the last day of the dharna, a delegation of the federation leadership met the Prime Minister to press for their demands. This has created much enthusiasm within the anganwadi workers' movement and created visible pressure on the Govt to set up a committee to deal on the demands raised by our federation. This huge programme of dharna and relay hunger strike by fifteen thousand women workers at national capital is the first of its kind in the trade union movement which created tremendous enthusiasm among the concerned workers throughout the country.

Among other major sectoral struggles were the three day strike by Medical and Sales Representatives throughout the country at the leadership of FMRAI in December 2005, Electricity workers' joint strike call against Electricity Act 2003 in May 2005, Road Transport Workers' march before Parliament in January 2006, indefinite strike by the jute and tea workers in West Bengal, plantation workers strike in Kerala, transport workers strike in Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu and Haryana, state level mobilisations and picketing in Kerala, iron ore mine workers struggle in Orissa, spinning-mill workers' indefinite strike actions in two spells in Haryana etc.

FORMATION OF FEDERATION IN OIL INDUSTRY

During the intervening period, formation of Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers' Federation of India, an independent federation of oil sector unions of various affiliations including independent unions at the initiative of CITU is a notable organisational initiative. Through the massively attended conference of oil workers held in Haldia in 2005, the Federation was formed. The initiative of unleashing resistance to privatization move in oil industry through formation of United Forum against Privatisation of Oil PSUs taken by CITU and involving other trade unions of various affiliations in the forum and subsequent programmes taken by this forum paved the way for formation of this federation. PNGWFI now happens to be biggest federation comprising major unions of almost all the Oil PSUs with the CITU leaders in its leading role.

TSUNAMI RELIEF & FUND

The devastating nature of the Tsunami natural calamity in 2004 has prompted CITU as an organization from centre to a unit, if not to an individual worker, to promptly go into action for the relief of the victims

in whatever manner possible at that given point of time. CITU activists were among the first to organize relief work, reach the affected sites, stand by the survivors and help them as best as possible in states like Tamilnadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, etc. Andaman problems were far more difficult and logistically insurmountable. West Bengal State Committee of CITU along with other mass organizations in the state took initiative to send financial, material and physical help in the work of rehabilitation at Andaman besides collecting funds in response to CITU's central call. Our Tamilnadu State Committee took laudable initiative to organize relief work in the devastated coastal areas of the state. Fund collection drive was initiated at all levels, directly or through employers, or along with other organizations or through special relief committees, etc. Some money came from international fraternal organizations also. As far as the reports are available, the role of CITU activists have been recognised by the people and authorities.

CITU centre, besides sending Rs one lakh to Tamilnadu, Rs 50000/- to Andhra Pradesh immediately after the holocaust, had given a call for special Tsunami Relief Fund which has received good response. Besides a huge fund collected by the CITU unions all over the country, contribution was also received from ACFTU, of China and Zenroren from Japan. The CGT, France have also come forward with concrete project assistance. With the support of the fund collected by CGT, France, sewing machines, cycles, cycle-rickshaws and school bags were distributed among the affected people at Southern Chennai, Cuddalore, Nagapattinam and Nagercoil of Tamilnadu and Pondicherry through separate functions held on 27-30 October 2006. Till date Rs 1,05,77,051 have been received in CITU's Tsunami relief fund including the project assistance from various units/states and fraternal TUs abroad. A plan of building an Industrial Training Institute is under consideration with the rest of the fund. We have to plan properly the reconstruction work at our initiative in the affected areas for effective utilization of the collected fund.

Similarly, CITU unit at J&K took laudable initiative in organizing immediate relief to the people affected by devastating landslide in the state causing huge loss of lives and properties. CITU Centre gave a call for fund collection and sent Rs one lakh from the central fund immediately after the devastation. The response to this call from other states was not at all good. But CITU J&K State committee could collect lakhs of rupees and organized relief and assistance to the affected people in an effective manner.

STATE-WISE-REPORT

ANDAMAN

Forest workers under the leadership of Vanvikash Karmachari Sangh sat for a relay hunger strike from 12th August 2005 demanding payment of wages unpaid since June 2005. The employees suffered huge loss due to Tsunami and thereafter wages remained unpaid, resulting in starvation to their families.

Seamen workers in the island staged agitation in various forms during the period under review on their demands. The PWD workers and island administration employees and port & dock employees also had been in the midst of agitation with the active association of CITU pressing for their various demands and also against victimisation.

During the period under review, the State CITU had also played frontline role in organising relief and working for rehabilitation of the vast section of people affected by TSUNAMI.

ANDHRA PRADESH

All the programmes of agitation and campaigns decided by all India centres either independently or jointly with other unions have been observed in the state as per reports received at the centre.

Following months long campaign and agitation both independently by CITU and jointly with other unions, nearly 17000 employees of Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport corporation went on indefinite strike from 4th July 2005 demanding reduction of taxes on motor vehicle, on high-speed diesel, reimbursement of Rs 1350 crore due to APSRTC from the state govt, recruitment of regular workers in all cadres and interim relief to all workers. Joint Action Committee comprising CITU & AITUC called for this strike which was later joined by INTUC. The strike was overwhelmingly successful. Meanwhile in response to an interim court order, strike was postponed to facilitate negotiation with the Govt. But the negotiation failed and again the road transport workers started indefinite strike from 18th Oct 2005 at the call of Joint Action Committee. The strike ended with understanding reached between the JAC and the State govt. on some of the demands.

8000 contractors workers in Visakhapatnam Steel Plant went on a continuous strike from 2 to 16 June, 2005 demanding higher wage, annual bonus, ESI facilities and other statutory benefits. CITU, AITUC and HMS gave the call. Under pressure from the trade unions and also the people of Visakhapatnam the management had to take part in negotiation and an interim settlement was reached. The workers pay was increased in the first step by Rs 300/- per month and ESI and Bonus demands were agreed to.

A 28-day long Padayatra was organised to cover 750 kilometers from 21st November to 18th December 2005 through the rural and urban areas of Visakhapatnam district to highlight the miserable condition of poor workers, migrant workers, agricultural sector workers and other poor sections of the society.

In the Visakhapatnam district, coffee plantation workers struck work for 12 days. 5000 permanent and seasonal workers have joined the strike. Daily wage was enhanced from Rs.68 to Rs 73. Fruit collection charges were enhanced from Rs.1.47 to Rs 1.60. This has created good impact in the tribal areas.

Kakinada anchorage port workers (cargo boat workers) were on agitation opposing diversion of ships (import & export) to Kakinada deep-water port (MNC port) and removal of workers. District CITU led the agitation, even though, those 2000 workers were under the banner of HMS. Godowns were picketed for 31 hours. 250 workers were arrested.

In a jute mill in Guntur district management signed an anti-worker agreement with 11 unions which CITU refused to sign. Workers refused to accept it and militant agitations led to a lock-out. After our intervention the agreement was modified by the other unions and the lockout was lifted and dismissed workers were taken back. The bonus agreement was also modified for payment without ceiling.

In Guntur, a cooperative sugar factory was sold to a private party by the earlier TDP govt. 500 workers were removed and only 74 were retained. Through united agitation led by CITU, THE Sugar mill could be brought back to cooperative ownership and all retrenched workers were reinstated.

Besides above there have been numerous programmes of agitations including strikes by village panchayat workers, village servants, design slate workers, auto rickshaw workers, rice mill hamalis, anganwadi workers etc on their respective demands. There had been statewide struggles by contract based paramedical staff and contract workers in power sector for regularization and increase in wages led by CITU. After prolonged struggle, contract workers in power sector could increase their wages.

To highlight the demands of the unorganised sector workers and for expeditious enactment of comprehensive legislation for them, CITU State committee organised a programme of fortnight long jathas throughout the state. 8 Jathas from different corners of the state started on 3-10-2006. They passed through each and every mandal and town in the state, criss crossing around 25,000 Kms in 15 days. All the 8 jathas converged in Hyderabad on 19th October 2006, where a massive public meeting was held. Chittabrata Majumdar, General Secretary of CITU and BV Raghavulu, former general secretary of the state committee of CITU participated and addressed the rally. Committees were formed in 1100 mandals in the state for preparatory campaign and collection of signatures on 21 point charter of demands of the unorganised sector workers. In some places the state administration tried to create obstacles to the jathas by way of threat and intimidation on the unorganised sector workers in the locality but that did not succeed to disrupt the programme. Rallies were held in various centres of the state in the route of the jathas. 36 lakh signature were collected on the charter of demands which was submitted to Chief Minister of the state.

As a follow up to the jathas, District level picketing was organised on 27th November 2006 before all the district collectorate in which several thousand workers participated. Instead of responding to the just demands, the State police brutally lathicharged on the peaceful picketing in various districts and resorted to large scale arrests. Many workers including women got severely injured.

ASSAM

Almost all programmes of agitation and campaigns decided by all India centres either independently or jointly with other unions have been observed in Assam and reports sent to centre.

Among other notable events of struggles and activities have been the bandh organized on 21st April 2005 at Shibsagar district against the move of the Govt to handover discovered oilfields at Amguri-Shibsagar area to foreign companies for exploration. CITU took a leading role in organizing the struggle along with other unions and mass organizations.

Numerous agitations have been organized in the tea gardens of Assam against the onslaught of management on the rights of workers in the intervening period.

On 22nd February 2005 motor workers all over the state observed one day strike at the call of their joint platform and organized a big demonstration before the Assembly.

On 10th March 2005, 3000 muster roll workers from various departments of Assam Govt organized a big demonstration before the Assembly demanding regularization of their service. The state govt have finally conceded to their demand.

Against denial of trade union rights, non-registration of trade union and victimization of trade union leaders and activists in Kothari Products Ltd at Jorhat, statewide solidarity actions were organized by CITU units through agitation in workplaces and sending of telegrams to Chief Minister and Labour Commissioner.

Reports of programmes and mobilizations of petroleum workers,, contract workers in petroleum industry, plywood workers, anganwadi workers, workers and nurses of private hospitals etc and various organizational activities in the tea-garden areas have also been received from Assam state CITU, besides their participation in all the national level programmes.

During this period, State level trade union school was also organized by Assam State CITU. Arunachal Pradesh witnessed massive mobilization of the workers and employees during the intervening period after formation of the state level CITU organization.

BIHAR

Road transport workers from all over Bihar held a big demonstration in Patna on 21st September 2004 demanding a National Transport Policy to be in place and implementation of welfare and social security measures immediately. It was highlighted that drivers and helpers are hapless victims of physical attacks, extortions by anti-socials, terrorists and even the police. Though they maintain the main supply line, their life is most unsecured. They demanded proper security for their lives. They went in a procession in the city and held a mass meeting.

Beedi workers from many districts joined a rally in Patna on September 23, 2004 where they demanded implementation of statutory minimum wage, issuance of identity cards to all beedi workers and implementation of social security and welfare measures, as well as end of goonda raj, who exploit the poor village beedi workers in connivance with the employers.

At the call of FMRAI the Bihar-Jharkhand unit of Medical & Sales Representatives organisation held a demonstration on 25th Sep at Patna demanding reduction of price of medicines, end of black-marketing, and implementation of SPE Act. It was an impressive gathering.

During the period under review, movements of contract workers and catering workers in railways were organized in the state.

CHATTISGARH

Besides participation in most of the all India programmes against economic policies and other issues, State committee and the affiliated unions in the state took up various issues for agitation and campaign. On 22nd Dec 2004 statewide rallies were organized on 31 point demands. At the preparatory stage dharnas, demonstrations were organised locally in a phased manner.

Demonstrations were organized in the districts against privatization of maintenance jobs in State Electricity Boards. Mandi workers union and Kisan Sabha jointly organized jeep-jatha on 17-19 and 25-26 April, 2005 against amendment of the Mandi Act to curb hoarding and protect the rights of the workers and kisans.

CITU union at Balco continued to assert even after privatization. At CITU's intervention nad strike threat, the Sterlite management in Balco was compelled to pay compensation to the family of two deceased contract workers who died owing to accident in workplace and give employment to their dependents. Subsequently the Sterlite management suspended the President of CITU union and chargsheeted the Treasurer. They had to withdraw both the orders after the workers went on a total strike on 18th and 19th April 2005. The CITU union at Balco could also successfully mobilise all the unions and workers in the struggle against off-loading of balance 49% govt shares in Balco to private hands.

At the initiative of State Committees big rally was organized at State capital against anti-people policies of the Govt and attack against workers dalits and tribal people.

On 11th July 2005 hundreds of health workers demonstrated before the District Collector, Raipur protesting against winding up of village health scheme from March 2005.

On the same day hundreds of Anganwadi workers and helpers staged a big demonstration in Raipur with their 6-point charter of demands which highlighted the issues like restructuring ICDS and bring it under HRD Ministry, introduction of PF, DA and Social Security benefits, wage increase, pension

scheme, setting up of complaint cell against sexual harassment and ending corruption at administrative level. They submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister through the district collector.

DELHI

Delhi State CITU, despite various difficulties and limitations played important role in all central mobilisations of various sectors held at Delhi during the intervening period, both in ensuring mobilisations and in rendering volunteer and other logistic services. Working women's all India convention and parliament march held in November 2004, The Anganwadi Convention in 2005, the mass rally of unorganised sector workers held in December 2005, The ten-day long relay hunger strike by Anganwadi workers in July 2006 and the Kisan rally on 20th November 2006 had been some of the events in which the Delhi State CITU played supportive role in effective manner. In the industrial areas of Delhi viz., Wazirpur, Kirti Nagar, Mangolpuri, Patparganj, Samaypur Badli etc and also in Noida, Ghaziabad and Faridabad, workers in various industrial units had been in the midst of grim struggle against violation of basic labour laws pertaining to minimum wages, working hours, PF, ESI etc braving police atrocities and victimisation by the employers.

Almost in majority of cases agitations had to be organised by the regional committee of CITU both against the employers and also against the state administration in the form of dharna and demonstration before the police station and on many occasion before police headquarters.

Thousands of workers in Small scale industries in Delhi demonstrated at Rajghat on the Ring Road blocking the road for hours against the sweeping orders by Delhi government to close down small scale industries in Delhi taking advantage of a High Court order. The workers demanded a change in Delhi Master Plan and ensure the livelihood of 2 lakh threatened workers. Some employers also joined the programme.

In the unorganised sector, at the initiative of state CITU, demonstrations/rallies were organised by the street vendors in March 2006.

Rickshaw pullers were also organised in big numbers in a massive demonstrations on 20th September 2006 by CITU and on 25th September jointly with other trade unions against the prohibitive orders issued by Delhi Govt.

On 10th November 2004, hundreds of contract worker of Delhi Airport demonstrated before the HQ of Airport Authority of India demanding abolition of contract system in cargo handling and payment of wages to contract workers equal to regular ones. Again in 2005 they intensified their struggle in the process of which the management had to agree for a wage rise of Rs 625/- for all contract workers.

Delhi state CITU also organised massive demonstration around Delhi Airport and all the industrial centres in the city against privatisation of airports in February 2006.

State CITU has also been conducting the struggle of Super Bazar employees for payment of unpaid wages and revival of Super Bazar.

The state CITU also took initiative to organise mass demonstration on 2nd March 2006 in protest of visit of US President George Bush, observe anti-repression day on 10th August 2006 in response to call of CITU general Council. In solidarity with the hydel project workers of Himachal Pradesh and in protest against police repression on the workers impressive demonstration was organised in front of Himachal Bhawan, New Delhi.

GUJARAT

The salt workers went on a hunger strike against non payment of wages in Port Navlakhi area of Rajkot district. Now they are being paid in a group.

Port workers had been in the midst of agitation during the period under review. There have been agitations organised by Fisheries workers in the state in support of their demands.

In Bhavnagar hundreds of poor workers went in hunger strike and got their BPL cards, in all 34000 of them under the leadership of State CITU. They got the cards and fixed date for ration distribution.

Agitation was organised by around 80,000 unorganised sector workers demanding regularization of their hutment holdings. Thousands of urban poor unorganized sector workers have succeeded in getting land and promise to get water from housing board. This has caused great enthusiasm and more and more workers are joining CITU.

Such movements are spreading in other districts like Junagadh Bharuch, Banaskantha.

On 13th September 2005, a peaceful procession was organized in Bhavnagar where thousands of workers and common people took part demanding land, employment and food braving brutal lathicharge by police and mass scale arrests including women. Several people including senior leaders were injured in the lathicharge.

Besides above, the State CITU also took initiative in observing International Working Women day on 8th March, Anti-unemployment Day on 28th March, Anti-imperialism day on 1st September in the state involving other mass organisations.

HARYANA

In Haryana, there have been massive actions by workers of the unorganised sector. 4500 daily rated forest department workers, who were promised permanency by the Haryana government, were finally on the verge of retrenchment. The workers under the leadership of CITU were able to rouse mass consciousness and organise protest to thwart the move.

The militant Brick Kiln workers in Haryana went on an indefinite strike from 24th February 2004 onward in district after district. The owners and the administration initially took recourse to police action, private attacks and implicating the leaders in false police cases. But, undeterred, the workers went for total strike, which forced the State administration to intervene for negotiation and the Brick-kiln owners to come to settlement on wages, dearness allowances.

Similar indefinite strike action was again organized in 2006 in the brick kilns on demands of higher wages.

In the intervening period, spinning mill workers in Panipat, Haryana also went for indefinite strike from 24th February onward, which continued for about ten days and forced the mill owners to come to settlement with the CITU unions there. Brick Kiln workers in Punjab also organised militant struggles including strike for better wages and service conditions. Again in May 2006, another round of indefinite strike was staged by 20000 workers of around 300 spinning mills of Panipat braving police atrocities heroically to force both the state administration and the mill owners to agree for a settlement with the CITU union.

On 12th July, 2004 five construction workers died while working owing to the collapse of a two-storey building at Hissar. The District Administration as usual, ignored the demand of Bhawan Nirman Kamgarh

Union (CITU) for compensation. On 13th July the union led a huge procession with the dead bodies from hospital to Deputy Commissioner's office and demonstrated there. Finally an amount of Rs 2,15,000 to the family of each deceased was agreed upon. The union demanded that Construction Workers Welfare Fund should be constituted as per the Central Act.

20,000 pit-loom workers, mostly migrant workers from West Bengal are working in Panipat in underground small pits to produce carpets and blankets for export, which give the owners huge profits. The workers do not get even the minimum wage. Under the leadership of CITU and IFTU they forced the employers to sign a tripartite agreement on 22nd September 2005 but employers did not implement the agreement leading to continuous dharna from 18th to 26th October before the DLC office.

On 29th October two leaders, P P Kapur of IFTU and Jay Bhagawan of CITU were beaten up by employers goons in front of the police station, but police arrested the leaders. Thousands of workers demonstrated and freed the leaders to take them to hospital and a spontaneous strike was observed on 30th October 2005.

The Roadway workers in Haryana successfully compelled the State Govt not to allow more bus-routes to private luxury bus operators through four day strike action which had completely paralysed the state-run bus services in the state despite police action and mass scale arrest of leaders. All the unions in Haryana Roadways could be united in this struggle.

During the period under review, CITU also led struggle in many industrial units like Speedomax, M-Tech, etc against retrenchment and victimization. The strike by the contract workers of Hero-Honda at Gurgaon had been another notable event which could compel the employer to accede to some of the major demands of the workers.

But the most crucial struggle had been the struggle of 3500 workers of three footwear factories of Liberty Footwear at Karnal Gharounda and Putel. The struggle started in 26th June 2006 when the management victimized seven office bearers of the union and got them arrested by Police on false charges of attempt to murder. The Liberty management had been delaying implementation of a tripartite agreement reached in October 2005 with the union on which the union has been pursuing since last six months with the labour department. In this background the victimization of arrests of the union leaders led to spontaneous strike in all the three factories since 26 June 2006 which continued till end December 2006. But threat, mass scale dismissal of 124 workers, lathicharge and arrest of hundreds of workers could not break the strike. Solidarity actions were organized throughout the state in support of the striking Liberty workers. Ultimately a settlement was arrived at on 22nd December 2006 between the union and the management in presence of DLC.

HIMACHAL PRADESH

Almost all the all India calls have been responded to effectively by the workers of Himachal Pradesh at the initiative of CITU.

Besides the all India programmes, the HP State CITU had been in the midst of numerous struggles including strikes in various sectors. Daily rated workers in PWD department in Himachal Pradesh have successfully frustrated the state government decision to retrench thousands of daily rated workers through militant actions. Defying the leadership of the majority BMS union those PWD workers went for continuous demonstration, dharna, etc at the leadership of CITU and finally the state govt had to yield and on 29th March a satisfactory agreement was signed.

All 1500 contractors workers in two hydel projects on the river Sutlej formed a union under the CITU leadership in December 2004 and went for movement to ensure implementation of labour laws in the matters of wage, safety, medical care, social security, etc. Immediately the management and NTPC, the principal employer swung into action and threatened the workers not to join CITU and stop the rally on 3rd February 2005. There was lathi charge and firing by the police. The workers braved all the attacks and intimidations and finally the management had to sit for negotiation and withdraw the pay cut and actions against the leaders.

Gruesome methods employed by hotel owners in Himachal came to surface in the case of Touthali Resort about 15 kms from Shimla. In September 2004 the owners summarily discharged 32 workers and handed over main jobs to contractors. Despite the workers protests the owners with the help of the administration brought workers from outside and kept them in confinement. On 25th March 2005 one of such workers was found dead and the body was deliberately kept hidden. In protest there was half day strike in all the hotels of Shimla and again a full day strike on 9th April and dharna before the district collector. Then only a judicial probe has been ordered and the union has been involved in the probe.

CITU also, in this period, organized workers in four mini hydro-electric projects namely Kholi, Andhra-II, Ghanwi-II and Shovan. After several strikes and struggles CITU's position in Koldam, Parwati and Uhal power projects got consolidated.

CITU has been organising movements and gone for legal action to stop retrenchment of 1638 PWD workers in Mandi.

Militant struggle of the hydel project workers in the state compelled the employers and contractors in many of the projects to make settlement with CITU unions. In Chamera Project of NHPC, the main contractor Hindustan Construction Corporation got three workers including the CITU state leader Baburam ALONG WITH Bijay Singh and Dan Singh Bhandari brutally murdered by the gangsters employed by them on 10th June 2006. The whole of Himachal Pradesh condemned this gruesome incident by spontaneous strike action on 11th in all the projects in the state, in hotel industry and other establishments. CITU has been carrying on the struggle there demanding arrest of the murderers and concerned HCC officials, blacklisting HCC and payment of adequate compensation to the victims' family members. Entire project work at Chamera-III came to a standstill for around 70 days. Under pressure, the police was compelled to arrest three top officials of HCC on murder charge. Solidarity actions were resorted to through out the state by the CITU affiliates and other mass organizations. In the process of struggle, the General Secretary of State CITU Kashmir Singh Thakur was arrested and brutally beaten in the lock-up. Again all the hydel projects in the state went on strike in solidarity. Ultimately the contractor-NHPC and state Govt combine have release payment of five monts' unpaid wages to the workers. But till now around 300 workers have not been taken to work and the struggle is still continuing in the project site despite severe cold and police disturbances.

During the period under review there have been struggles and mobilizations also by the Hotel workers and Anganwadi workers and workers in other industrial units in the state.

During the period under review another important initiative was taken by CITU in the state. A mass platform called Lok Morcha was formed in the state along with other mass organizations to carry on mass campaign against the policies of both central and state Govt and to press for pro-people development strategy for the state. From this platform several campaigns were organized and demonstrations were held at CITU's initiative throughout the state against the MOU signed between the state and central govt which envisaged mass scale downsizing in Govt offices, drastic reduction in subsidies on public utilities, widespread contract and casual employment etc.

JAMMU & KASHMIR

Inspired by the achievements by Himachal Pradesh Hydel Project workers, workers in SEWA Hydel project in Kathua district of Jammu went on continuous strike from 14th March 2004. The management and contractors did everything possible to terrorise the workers including dismissals, arrests by police. But all the repressive actions failed. They tried to utilize INTUC leaders' service to break the strike, but in vain. After 11 days strike the workers could force the employer, M/s Gammon India to come to agreement on most of their demands like appointment letter, identity cards, medical benefits and also a satisfactory wage rise. But the conspiracy to break the workers unity is still on. In June, the principal contractor Gammon India resorted to fresh repressions and the leader was arrested and tortured. Demonstrators against this arrest were lathi-charged and many villagers were arrested. The workers are successfully resisting the repressions and frustrating all the tactics of dividing the workers as locals and outsiders.

Railway construction workers in Udhampur-Baramullah project have been subjected to unprecedented brutality by local police, administration, the goondas of construction company (HCC), a sub contractor of IRCON, and now by the military. HCC has flouted all labour laws and safety norms. When the workers failed to get justice after months of persuasion, they went on continuous strike from 2nd August 2004. HCC management tried all their tricks to break the strike even by arresting the leadership by the police as 'terrorists' but failed to break the strike. They refused to recognise the union representatives but resorted to firing, driving away the workers from the sites on 10th Sep. 62 workers were injured and Md Hanif, one activist succumbed to his injuries.

On 11th Sep there was bandh in Banihal. Dul Hasti and Baghliar project workers also went on strike. The workers and villagers blocked Jammu Srinagar highway. In support, Hydel project workers in Himachal Pradesh demonstrated in huge numbers. But the strggle have been brutally suppressed by police and also military was deployed against the struggling workers.

On the whole a reign of terror was unleashed in the workplaces in Jammu and Kashmir, on the plea of tackling terrorism. Despite that the struggle is going on in the hydel projects, in coal mines and other industrial units and service establishments in the state. Anganwadi workers in the state are also getting organized. All the three General Strike were a complete success in the state.

For the first time in history a rally of 25000 employees and workers was held in Srinagar on 9th July 2005. The call was given by a Joint Action Committee formed by trade unions, all the organizations of government employees, teachers, Anganwadi workers and helpers, casual workers, contractors workers and ad hoc employees. Their demands were, among others, regularisation of contract workers, temporary workers, withdrawal of new pension scheme, regularization of Rehbar-e-Talem teachers, anganwadi workers, revival of public sector units in state and release 3% DA to state govt employees, and wage increase of all temporary workers. Demonstrators converged at the Sher-e-Kashmir Park from all the districts right from the morning. After a long time there was a massive gathering where all the speakers from different organizations criticized the anti-people economic policies of central and state governments.

JHARKHAND

During the period under review there have been many struggles in both organised and unorganised sector in the state at the initiative of State CITU, besides observance of central programmes including strike actions.

The state is basically colliery dominated areas, besides there being iron ore mines, two steel plants, oil refineries, heavy engineering units, DVC, wagon industry and many small and medium sized engineering and manufacturing units.

In the coal mine areas of BCCL and CCL, CITU is dominating force could draw all other rival unions into joint struggles including strike actions. In all the three general strikes during the intervening period INTUC and BMS unions could not venture to oppose the strike. Besides there were occasions of serving strike notice to coal mines management at least three occasions in three years on coal workers' demands for wage rise at the initiative of CITU and all other trade unions had to join that actions also. Owing to this position of CITU in coal industry in Jharkhand and the industry as a whole, the coal workers could compel the Govt to accept a five-year tenure of wage agreement with full neutralisation DA. After the recent fatal accident in the colliery area, CITU took laudable initiative in rescue operation and pressurising management for proper preventive safety measures. CITU unions in coal mines have also organised agitation for compensation and employment of the land oustees.

In Bokaro steel plants number of demonstrations were organised by CITU both on the demands of regular workers and contract workers. On bonus issue, CITU's initiative in Bokaro steel led to complete strike and compelled the management accede largely to the demands of the workers as per bonus formula prescribed by CITU. For the contract workers also some concessions could be derived from Bokaro steel management, though not to the satisfactory extent.

In the Jamshedpur industrial area there have been numerous struggles and the employers had to accept many demands of the workers. In 2006, in almost all the units bonus agreements were signed in most of the industrial units at Jamshedpur in tune with workers' demands after united struggle of the workers. Not only that, in the struggle against the economy policy including General strikes, the small scale industries Association also joined the strike from a separate platform.

In Heavy Engineering Corporation, CITU could increase its strength to some extent and organised number of demonstration both for proper functioning of the plant and to press for workers' demands.

Among the unorganised sector workers movements were organised among the workers of stone quarries, iron ore mines, beedi workers, contract workers in various sectors etc.

State CITU also took initiative to organise statewide campaign and agitation demanding revision of minimum wages, enactment of legislation for unorganised sector and implementation of labour laws culminating in massive demonstration at Ranchi in April 2006.

KARNATAKA

Besides implementing the all India calls of mobilisation, demonstration and strike action, various agitations and campaigns were organised in the state during the intervening period since 11th Conference of CITU covering both organised and unorganised sector.

At the call of the CITU State Committee a massive rally of unorganised workers was held in Bangalore on 2nd September 2004. Twenty to Twenty-five thousand workers attended the rally. The main demand of the Rally was that the State Government recast the unorganised workers bill and transforms it to enable regulating the service conditions of the unorganised workers rather than adopting the welfare enactment line.

The mass rally was followed by seven jathas throughout the state at the initiative of State CITU to popularize the same demands of the unorganized sector workers.

Based on the same demands campaigns and mobilizations were organized in various sectors of unorganized sector workers separately, such as Panchayat workers, construction workers, hamalis, beedi workers and anganwadi workers. In the process of campaign the mid-day meal workers in the state have been organized in unions at CITU's initiative.

CITU's campaign amongst construction workers and agitations thereon led to formation of Construction Workers' Welfare Board and notification of the central scheme by the State Govt after ten years of its enactment.

The Anganwadi Union at state level has conducted a series of struggles and made substantial gains. The Gram Panchayat Employees' Union has conducted determined struggles and won several achievements from the Government. The Mid Day Meals workers all over the state has also conducted similar struggles and succeeded in protecting their jobs and in winning further concessions. The Hamaly Federation is growing through frequent struggles, campaigns and mobilization during this period. Our Bidi Workers Federation has held successful conferences; taken decisions to make an advance and certain efforts are on in these directions. The Tile Workers at Kundapur have stabilized their organization there are the influence in Uttara Kannada is being maintained as well. The Auto rickshaw Drivers Union of Bangalore has made a mark and is advancing further demonstartions and rallies etc were organized by the workers of automobile and auto-parts manufacturing units against the State Govt move to expand the definition of public utility services to cover this sector. Other unions also could be involved in this struggle by CITU.

State CITU and the affiliated union in Bharat Gold Mines(Kolar Gold Field) carried on united struggle against the closure of Bharat Gold Mines despite there being substantial reserve and the move to hand over the same to private players. But following closure of BGML, such disastrous move could not yet be arrested.

During the period under review the workers of Toyota factory at Bangalore fought a grim battle including multiple days strike under the leadership of CITU braving brutal police atrocities. The CITU units all over the state staged solidarity demonstration and campaign in support of the Toyota workers and solidarity message were received from the trade union of Toyota workers in Japan.

In the wake of the Toyota Struggle, effort was made to broaden the unity of the trade union movement on the issue of attack on labour rights by formation of Bangalore United Trade Union Forum under the banner of which some programmes were organized on common issues. This united forum needs to be activated further for which CITU will have to take more initiative.

In the organized sector, CITU led many struggles and gained ground in MICO Audugodi Plant, Geotze Federal Moghul, Vikrant Tyre, Mysore, INDAL (Belgaum), Ralashree Cement, West Coast Paper Mills etc.

Among the medium scale industries series of struggles were organised at Bangalore, Mysore, Tumkur etc which could make many achievements for the workers. Agitation were also organized by the Textile Workers at Nanjangud and in and around Bangalore. The struggle put up by the workers of Metal Caps at Bangalore was a heroic one.

CITU's intervention in defence of working women of IT/ITES during the heinous rape & murder case in Bangalore also made our presence being felt in this sector. State CITU took some initiative to establish contacts with the BOPO sector workers while unleashing general campaign on their problems including the social problems in order to gradually build up organizational relations and structure in the days to come.

In the Central Public Sector units, CITU union could regain its negotiating status in BEL. Most of the CPSUs in Bangalore are having single union within which CITU cadres are working. CITU's consistent intervention could keep the Bangalore based public sector workers' movement in the track of struggle in defence of public sector against the economic policy of the Govt. CITU played an active role also from within in associating the Joint Action Front(JAF), Bangalore with all India strike calls.

KERALA

All the central programmes were observed throughout the state, both independently and jointly in an effective manner. Besides the central programmes, at the initiative of State committee of CITU and industry based unions, various agitational programmes including strike actions were organised during the intervening period.

From 26th July 2004 onwards for 5 days state public sector workers belonging to all unions excepting INTUC and BMS organized dharna before the state Assembly, protesting against the move to dismantle PSE's and close down 41 out of 69 state PSUs in Kerala by the UDF Govt. Nearly one thousand employees sat in the dharna and workers/employees from trade unions and service organisations came in processions to greet them. The programme had a good impact on the workers and employees. Again on 29th March, 05, a massive protest demonstration was organized by public sector employees against dismantling of public sector undertakings.

Thousands of plantation workers (barring coffee and tea gardens) went on a indefinite strike from 13th Sept which went up to 22nd Sept 2004 when the Plantation Labour Committee was forced to sit under presidentship of State Labour Minister. A settlement was reached enhancing the wages.

Workers protested against privatisation of Steel Industries Ltd Kerala (SILK) in Alapuzha district in a massive way. There were several dharnas and secretariat march to prevent SILK and Autokast, a subsidiary of SILK being privatised.

Unorganised Sector workers are leading sustained movement programmes against the retrograde policies of the UDF government, where workers from traditional industries like coir, cashew, handloom, fishermen, toddy-tappers and also Anganwadi and Beedi workers joined in thousands. During 2004 and 2005 number of indefinite strikes were organised by Coir workers in different districts forcing the employers and the govt to reach a settlement with the unions.

Similarly workers from KSRTC, KSPB, water supply etc, public utility services also are conducting continuous programmes against the anti-worker policies of UDF govt.

On 10th March 2005 processions were organized under the auspices of trade union Sponsoring Committee in Thiruvananthapuram and other district headquarters on the occasion of Protest Day against FDI hike, New Pension Scheme and other anti-labour policies. Karshaka Sangham Agricultural Workers unions organized a 72 hour dharna on 8-9-10th May 2005 before the Govt Secretariat demanding separate package for the protection of foreign exchange earning cash crops.

On 10th May, before the govt Secretariat 25000 headload workers organized a siege demanding withdrawal of retrograde Kerala Loading and Unloading Prohibition of Unlawful Practices and Regulation of Wages Act. It was led by CITU, AITUC, BMS. On 11th May handloom workers picketed before Central and State Govt offices demanding protection of handloom industry. Workers of CITU, AITUC, UTUC, and HMS joined the picketing.

CITU is leading the struggle of 2.5 lakh cashew workers for wage revision, for regular remittance of PF money by employers and job security. On 31st May thousands of cashew workers organized seizure of collectorate of Kollam and other taluk offices and also village offices.

On 31st May 2005 private motor workers under the leadership of CITU, AITUC, INTUC, BMS and STU organized march to the secretariat and collectorates demanding a new transport policy, welfare schemes and legalized minimum wage and job security. On 11th March 2005 Anganwadi workers and helpers organized a massive dharna before the govt secretariat demanding pension and other benefits.

On 25th April construction workers under the banner of CITU organized a march demanding regular supply of construction materials and end stoppage of work because of shortage.

State Transport workers are on a continuous agitation against new employees selected through PSC but being deprived of regular pay scales and benefits. All Unions including INTUC organized a human chain on 20th May protesting against privatizing rural water supply beginning with the NGO route.

State level Sponsoring Committee of Trade Unions in Kerala have unitedly called for a statewide general strike on 5th July 2005 with 3 demands viz (1) stop privatization of State PSUs, (2) protect traditional industries and (3) settle all other issues raised by TUs in various industries. The strike was total throughout the state in all the sectors of economy and has drawn support of all working people irrespective of affiliations. In the preparatory campaign for the strike, statewide jathas were organised which received enthusiastic response from all sections of people.

On 3rd August, 2005 workers from Railway Catering service led by Contract Catering Workers Union, Kerala, took out a march to Jantar Mantar in New Delhi with their demand to the Railway Minister to review the new catering policy as they are being rendered surplus consequent upon the new policy. Again on 23rd August, hundreds of Railway Licenced Porters from Kerala held a Parliament march demanding stoppage of parcel loading and unloading job to private parties, contractors other than the licenced porters.

In 2006, Assembly election was held in Kerala and the working class led by CITU took an active part in election campaign to defeat the anti-people UDF regime. The Left Democratic Front came back to power with huge majority and number of CITU leaders were elected in the state legislature and also took over charge of various ministries in the state Government.

In 2006 the state CITU went for a state-wide general strike in protest of price hike in petroleum products and the strike was total in the state.

MADHYA PRADESH

In Rewa, a massive demonstration was organized before the office of the Deputy Labour Commissioner in October 2004 as per a belated report. Hundreds of workers from Anganwadi, head load, construction, beedi, PWD, etc assembled there demanding implementation of labour laws, social security benefits, proper rule for regularization of contract workers.

Against BHEL disinvestment protest demonstrations, seminars have been organized. Thousands of post cards were sent to Prime Minister against this move.

Anti-unemployment Day was observed in 10-12 centres in spite of Holi festival. Campaign was led against child marriage and against the attack on anganwadi supervisor.

In Nagda, the workers movements could achieve them a new wage agreement in Grasim industries.

Contractors workers in National Fertiliser went on a strike and successfully signed an agreement. Similarly in the power plant of MPEBK also contractor workers went on a strike and realized their

demands. Two major demonstrations and another one day long satyagraha was organized in the Mandidip industrial area against the serious repression on the workers. Programmes of campaign and organizational meetings were organized in coalfield areas as preparation for the all India coal workers strike in July 2005. Emphasis has been given on publication of campaign materials on all major issues or problems touching common people's lives. To supplement our activities, several booklets, pamphlets have been published for educating our cadres, workers and masses.

257 women workers had been on a tool-down strike for 45 days demanding justice. They are mostly widows or dependents of deceased employees of BHEL, Bhopal, who were employed in Masala Papad Kendra run by Ladies Club Welfare Society. CITU led their struggles for just wage and benefits supported by BHEL regular workers' union. The tool down was withdrawn after getting assurance of a favourable consideration.

MAHARASHTRA

Public Sector Employees Coordination Committee organised a big trade union convention on 21st August 2004 where trade union leaders from Railways, Airlines, Banks, Seamen, Airports, shipping, Port & Dock and Hotel industry attended in large numbers. The convention demanded immediate stopping of privatization drive of airports and seaports and reversing the decision to increase FDI limits in telecom, insurance, civil aviation and banking sector. It was a joint convention where central leaders from CITU, AITUC and Kamgar Aghadi attended and addressed the gathering.

In Maharashtra there has been a new initiative to organize domestic workers most of whom are women. Several district committees have been formed and in Pune there was a demonstration on 23rd July 2004 where more than 1000 workers organized a convention and met the collector in a procession. They demanded that there should be statutes to guide their service conditions and social security.

On 26th August 2004, ten thousand workers from unorganized sector assembled at a huge rally in Mumbai demanding jobs, guaranteed living wages and social security for all. Participation by women in large number was a notable feature. They represented industries like Beedi industry, anganwadi, home-based industry as well as employees from schools, colleges who protested against contract system in educational institutions.

CITU has played a leading role in mobilizing the unorganized sector workers on issues facing them. In July and August 2004 the state government has issued gazette notifications announcing the formation of Unorganised Sector Workers Authorities at the state and district levels. But the implementation of this notification is lagging. State CITU has been carrying on agitation statewide on the demands of the unorganised sector workers including social security.

Work among construction and manual workers, auto rickshaw drivers, sugar cane cutting workers, hawkers is also growing. Many district level struggles in these sections were held during the period under review.

In the organized sector workers, there was an 12 day strike of 1700 workers at the CEAT Nasik factory led by CITU. The strike culminated in a settlement of the charter of demands, though that was not the immediate issue for the strike.

A state level convention of workers of closed factories was held on July 5th, 2005, at Mumbai demanding legislation on the pattern of the West Bengal government for subsistence allowance of Rs 1000/- per month to be paid to eligible workers. The protection of dues of the workers in the new situation arising out of the Securitisation Act is also an important issue.

CITU's participation in a mass rally in March 2005 on the second anniversary of the occupation of Iraq by American imperialists was good. Demonstrations against the Patents Act were also held in various districts in response to the national call. Our members have participated actively in demonstrations to protest the demolition of slums in Mumbai.

The Special Leave Petition filed by CITU on the Dabhol project which is pending in the Supreme Court has reached an important crossroad, with notices being issued to all the respondents including Enron to show cause as to why the original scope of the SLP should not be restored.

Transport workers of Bombay Electric Supply & Transport undertaking or BEST decided to conduct a vigorous campaign against privatisation of public transport system (bus) in Mumbai, which is under govt control. On August 25, 2005 in a convention in the Vanmali Hall in Central Mumbai, the workers decided to defeat the World Bank conspiracy to privatise transport system in Mumbai, also in the entire Maharashtra.

CITU took initiative in organising solidarity actions in support of striking airport workers in February 2006. A huge public sector workers' convention was also organised in Mumbai against privatisation.

ORISSA

On 28th July, 2004 a dharna was organized before the state assembly at Bhubaneswar against the anti-labour policies of BJP-BJD govt in Orissa. Thousands of workers from different parts of the state staged a dharna demanding payment of Rs 100/- as daily minimum wage, halting of privatization of public sector units, implementation of social security measures, inclusion of CITU representatives in tripartite committees and advisory boards, ending of police repression on normal TU activities.

On 27th January 2005, thousands of beedi workers under the leadership of All Orissa Beedi Workers Federation demonstrated before the Cess Commissioner, Bhubaneswar to highlight their 10-point charter of demands. Most of them were women who came from several districts near and far, and also demanded CITU representatives to be included in district, regional and state level coordination committees.

On 7th January 2005 in a demonstration in Bhubaneswar 2000 workers protested before the office of Labour Commissioner and in front of the State Bank State HQ against the attack on workers of Oswal industries, JK Paper Mills Raygada and temporary workers of State Bank of India. The demonstration also demanded welfare schemes for beedi, construction, anganwadi, forest and other sections of unorganized sector workers.

On 10th January, 05 Orissa Sales Representatives Union workers organized a colourful and militant demonstration in Bhubaneswar and submitted Memorandums to the Labour Minister and the Health Minister, Orissa on their demands.

Programmes have been taken to highlight the loot of natural resources of Orissa by indigenous and foreign MNCs without paying proper price to the state or proper wage to the workers and polluting the entire environment in a reckless manner.

On 24th May there was a big demonstration before the Regional Director of ESIC demanding coverage of ESI and benefits to the workers.

J K Paper Mill in Rayagada, Orissa employs 1100 regular workers and 3000 contractors' workers. The contract workers get much less than statutory minimum wage and benefits. In October 2004, the workers formed a union. Singhanias, as per the standard Indian practice by the employers, dismissed

A Ganeswar Rao, General Secretary of the union from service. The Orissa government is refusing to take any action against the Singhanias who make huge profit from this company producing costly Xerox papers. The workers are continuing their agitation.

Dharnas, demonstrations, rasta roko were organized in October-November 2005 against the handing over of rich iron ore deposits to Posco of South Korea with a right to export and prime agricultural land near Paradip port for construction of their store-yard. A broad-based convention on 'Save Mineral Resources' was held in January, 2006 at Barbil demanding ban on export of valuable minerals and for a national mineral and mining policy.

A bandh was observed in Jajpur on 29th October against the state government's decision to privatize Ferro-Chrome plant. The CITU, AITUC, HMS and also INTUC led the struggle. Prior to that a convention was organized on 21st October 2005.

Orissa government's decision to privatise Kalinga Studio, OTDC, Kalinga Iron Works was opposed by holding demonstrations, dharna before the Governor's house on 3rd November, and before the Assembly on 29th November 2005 under the leadership of CITU.

3,000 workers marched to Assembly demanding revision of minimum wage, welfare fund for construction workers' identity card for beedi workers and raise of allowance for Anganwadi workers and helpers.

WTO-Virodhi demonstration on 13th December 2005 and protest demonstration against reduction of PF interest rate was observed widely in the state on 20th December.

In Orissa, CITU could mobilize people from all walks of life in the struggle against indiscriminate iron-ore export from the state and the conspiracy to hand over the control of many iron ore mines to private hands including foreign companies.

Besides above programmes, struggles were organized in various spells in 2005 and 2006 by the iron ore mine workers for their demands of proper wages, bonus and other demands.

PUNJAB

Thousands of workers in cycle industry in Ludhiana in Punjab demonstrated on 15th August, 2004 demanding implementation of all labour laws in respect of minimum wage, PF, ESI, industrial safety, leave, etc. The workers are being forced to work extra hours without wages in violation of Factories Act. In retaliation the owners have resorted to mass scale victimization and threats to workers. The workers are braving all these attacks through mass actions.

The cycle industry workers of Ludhiana had been in the midst of almost continuous agitation during the period under review demanding registration of their unions and implementation of other labour laws in the face of conspiratorial move of the cycle-industry owners and state administration combine. On 14th April and again on 24th April 2005 workers from cycle industry demonstrated in thousands before the gates of the cycle factories against the repression by the factory owners and victimization. On 12th May 2005 a dharna was organized before the office of the Registrar of Trade Unions on the same issues. 3000 workers from all over the state took part in the dharna. On 31st July 05, a massive demonstration was organized in Ludhiana by workers under the leadership of CITU to demand that the workers be given trade union rights and the unions be given registration which was being denied for years. The workers protested against the administration playing in the hands of the factory owners, particularly the cycle factory owners.

Workers in cycle industry in Ludhiana finally got their success after years of struggle when Punjab government had to grant registration to 3 unions out of 7 they applied for in November 2005. But the

most powerful industrial house making cycles namely Hero Group retaliated by declaring lock-out in one of the Rockman units. They are spreading provincial hatred to divide the workers. The workers reacted back through massive demonstration against the unlawful lock-out followed by closure and the fight has still been continuing under the leadership of CITU braving victimization, police atrocities and even imprisonment.

In Brick kiln industry also statewide struggle was organized during the period. Brick Kiln industry workers were in serious crisis and massive agitations were organized throughout the state because the govt has notified compulsory use of fly-ash from power plants in making bricks and the brick-kiln owners are refusing to do it leading to closure of kilns one after another. State-level agitation of brick kiln workers was followed by joint-agitation by the brick kiln workers unions of Rajasthan, Punjab and Haryana leading to massive demonstration before parliament on 13th December 2004 against notification on mandatory use of fly ash in brick making.

Agitation was also held against attacks on CITU leaders by DCM Oswal Agro industries management through hired gangsters in collusion with police followed by arrest of 16 leaders of CITU union under false and fabricated charges.

Electricity workers in the state also had been in the midst struggle against privatization move of the state government and CITU took the pioneering role in organizing the strike as well as solidarity actions all over the state. A massive strike by Punjab State Electricity Board (PSEB) workers was observed on 16th December 2004. Again more than 8000 workers in Punjab State Electricity Board went on 2 days strike on 19-20 April 2005 against corporatisation and privatization of PSEB. As reported earlier, State CITU had given all support to this strike with solidarity actions all over.

On 29th Dec 2004 a dharna and rally was organized in Chandigarh against Patent Ordinance. PCMSRU workers took out a torch light procession in the evening and held rally at sector-17. On 6th Feb 2005 there was another convention at Chandigarh.

Forest workers organized state level rally on 21st Dec before the Principal Chief Conservator demanding regularisation of their jobs, payment of wages before 7th of every month and supply of proper tools.

FCI workers organized a joint dharna before the headquarters at New Delhi on 20th December. Majority of the workers joining dharna were from CITU. Again on 29th January a dharna was organized before the office of the Deputy Commissioner by 2000 workers of the FCI. 5000 workers and employees of Chandigarh Union Territory and Municipal Corporation organized a rally on 1st Feb 2005 at the call of coordination committee.

In a significant development, at the initiative of CITU, a Joint Front of struggle has been formed by federation of Punjab govt employees, teachers unions, para medical employees, PWD, Public Health Workers, etc. PSEB employees also have formed a joint front. State, district, local level conventions have been attended by about 50,000 employees. At the initiative of CITU, NPMO meeting was held at Chandigarh on 27th May 2005. NPMO has drawn up a programme of continuous campaign, rallies, dharnas to highlight people's demands and issues of national importance.

During the period under review number of jathas were organized by CITU on different spells. From 4th to 9th November, Jathas were organized all over Punjab, which evoked good response among all sections of workers. Under the banner of CITU the workers raised the demands like a) upward revision of minimum wage (b) implementation of labour laws (c) regularization of contract and casual workers

and (d) against large-scale engagement of contractors workers in regular jobs in industries, offices etc. The jathas culminated in a central rally in Ludhiana on 9th November 2005 where workers participated in thousand members. Another round of jathas focusing on attacks on labour rights was organized in 2006 which has also drawn good response.

CITU also took initiative in organizing successful strike by UT Govt employees of Chandigarh. In Chandigarh Transport Undertaking CITU leadership got massive victory in secret ballot election and compelled the management to withdraw the termination order on some workers through spontaneous strike action thereafter. Solidarity demonstrations were organized in all districts in support of the striking airport employees, brutal lathicharge on Oswal mill employees at Ludhiana and against murder of CITU activists in Himachal Pradesh.

RAJASTHAN

CITU took a leading role in the peasants struggle for water for irrigation in all the districts like Rawalgarh, Anupagarh, Gharsana, etc in October, 2004. The State CITU organized solidarity actions as well as actively organized the bandh after firing by police on 27.10.2004.

Again in October 2006 the said peasants in Gharsana have to renew their agitation for water owing the non-implementation of commitment given by the Govt in 2004. This time peaceful mobilization of workers and peasants faced inhuman police brutality. President of Rajasthan State CITU, Hetram Beniwal was arrested along with others and put in Bharatpur Jail. But atrocities could not deter the peasants in asserting themselves through even bigger mobilization. Solidarity programmes were organized all over the state by CITU unions.

Workers in three agricultural farms at Sardargarh, Jaitsar and Suratgarh under the State Farms Corporation of India, a central public sector undertaking went on a continuous strike from 11th April, 2005. Their demands were regularisation of daily paid workers working continuously for 20 years or more, employment of dependants of deceased employees and withdrawal of victimization of workers and TU activists. The State BJP government led a severe attack against the workers, their families, the women were not spared. Undaunted the workers did not surrender to terror tactics and the govt was forced to sign an agreement on 25th April 2005 and the strike was withdrawn.

Another round of agitation had to be organized again in 2006 by the agri-farm workers of Rajasthan owing to non-implementation of the said agreement by the management.

Reports of agitations and activities among medical representatives, tyre workers of Kankrouli, unorganized sector workers, anaganwadi etc were also received from Rajasthan.

TAMIL NADU

Consistent flow of activities was reported from all the sectors of the state as planned by the State Committee.

In the unorganised sector planned yearwide campaign was launched leading to formation of coordination committee/unions in various segments of the unorganised sector.

More than 30,000 motor pump operators and 20,000 sweepers in village panchayaths have demonstrated in all district collectorates demanding implementation of the Labour Commissioners order to increase their wages from Rs 400 per month to Rs 1980 per month.

On March 18, 2005 a state level coordination committee for workers in the Tailoring Industry was formed in Nagercoil, where tailors from 13 districts assembled and decided to have a programme of

movements. On May 17, 2005 there were historic demonstration in 150 centres more than 70,000 unorganized workers all over Tamil Nadu. Thousands of women workers made a notable presence in the demonstrations. Workers from construction, Beedi, handloom, powerloom, tailoring, fishing industries, as well as auto rickshaw drivers, headload workers joined the programme in large numbers. Workers from organized sector also came in good numbers. Their demands were against winding up of the welfare boards for unorganized sector workers, for proper and just method of fixing minimum wage and its implementation. They also demanded an end of contract and casual system of employment in regular jobs. After a prolonged struggle the Tamilnadu govt has declared a pension of Rs 200/- per month to construction workers but not to the workers of other industries. The workers demanded that the Welfare Boards be reconstituted with greater representation from CITU and pension scheme be started in other industries. Tannery workers went on a 4-day long state wide strike. Handloom workers organized statewide demonstrations on 2nd April demanding insurance scheme coverage. On 17th March there was a massive dharna in Chennai by cooperative employees demanding job security. Again on 9th September 2005 there were rallies by unorganized sector workers in all districts. In Kanyakumari and Coimbatore the participation was particularly good. More than 3000 loading and unloading workers organised a march to the State secretariat in Chennai on 26th August 2006.

Under the guidance of state committee, various industrial federations and unions decided to take organisational initiative to strengthen the campaigns and struggles and also for joint actions on major issues. The State CITU had also decided upon programmes for cadre training and various other programmes in connection with the BTR Centenary celebrations the committee also decided to bring out publications in Tamil. The electricity employees have planned campaign and struggle on the issues of wage settlement pending for the last 3 years, non-compliance of settlements and court decisions, wages for contract workers and for part-time workers.

The CITU affiliated State Transport Employees Federation, held a successful state level convention at Dindigul, on 16th June 2004, against denial of pension benefits, on regaining rights and benefits and against oppression. A signature campaign, undertaken on the demands of workers, from 22nd to 29th June, concluded with massive demonstrations and handing over of the memoranda, addressed to the Chief minister.

On 5th Sept 2004 thousands of workers opposing the move to privatise Tuticorin Port demonstrated in a rally at the old harbour gate. The demonstrators led a huge procession that declared to continue the struggle more intensely in future.

A campaign week was observed throughout Tamil Nadu from 15-22nd Sept, 2004 demanding amendment of Bonus Act, repealing of Electricity Act, restoration of 12% interest on PF and revival of PSUs and cooperatives' and demanding right to strike.

Three sectors in public undertakings in T Nadu registered a partial victory in 2004 when they decided to go on strike demanding wage revision which is pending for years and annual bonus. Interim relief has been agreed in State Transport and electricity board employees, though not for the entire period of the new agreement, to be effected along with 10 per cent bonus.

During the intervening period the sugar industry workers went for a continuous strike jointly organized by trade unions which ended after signing of a satisfactory agreement.

On 12th August, 05, hundreds of activists assembled at Tambaram, South Chennai to express their solidarity with the workers of Visteon India Ltd, a unit of MNC producing automobile components. The management refused to allow any trade union movement there and remained absent in tripartite

meetings on 10 occasions though called upon by DLC of TN Govt. Instead, the management threatened and forced some employees and trainees to sign individual agreement forms. In the militant demonstration several central TU leaders as well as central govt employees, BEFI leaders declared that any attempt to replicate Honda will be resisted and the challenges of the MNCs will be met.

At the call of All India Road Transport Workers Federation 4 days campaign programme was carried out in Chennai in the second week of August 2005. Workers of state transport, goods transport tempos, taxis, auto-rickshaws joined the campaign that included jathas, street corner meetings, distribution of handbills, etc. On 16th August a massive procession marched through the streets of Chennai and a memorandum was handed over to the Transport Minister.

The State government refused to hold negotiations on the charter of demands submitted by State Transport and Electricity Workers. In the State transport sector CITU, LPF (DMK), AITUC and some other unions went on a protest strike on 31st August 2005 and in electricity, CITU organized a strike on 15th October. The DMK union had called for strike but there was no participation from their side.

More than 20,000 contract workers in State Electricity Board went on indefinite strike from 3rd November 2005 which continued upto 9th December, 2005 under the leadership of CITU. The State government refused to pay Deepavali ex-gratia to 12,500 out of the total 21,000 contract workers. The strike was withdrawn after the government announced ex-gratia payment of Rs 750/- to 7500 workers in addition to the 8500 workers paid earlier. The state government had to announce absorption of 2500 workers of the first batch of 8,500 contract workers earlier.

280 workers including 130 women in KICM factory, a mushroom exporting unit went on indefinite strike against victimization of 23 leading activists including 5 women. The issue was successfully settled after 200 days strike and work has resumed. Silk weavers in Kanchipuram conducted a weeklong successful strike against the master weavers as a section of them refused to implement a settlement reached earlier.

CITU organized jathas comprising of 90 squads formed by 1800 men, and women workers and other sections of toiling people which visited 4000 villages and covered a distance of 5000 kilometers to converge at Venmani, a tiny village at Nagapattinam district to commemorate the brutal burning of 44 dalit women by the landlords in 1968. This year this special programme was organised on the occasion of BTR centenary. The jathas raised slogans on the demands of the common people and were greeted by villagers on their way.

On 8th March 2005 hundreds of working women demonstrated in Chennai and districts highlighting a 13-point list of demands. A delegation met the Governor and handed over a memo with 50,000 signatures supporting the demands.

Padayatras were organized to converge in Golden Rock (Trichy) to observe Martyrs Day to commemorate sacrifice of railway workers who were shot down by the government in 1947. 19 groups of CITU participated in this programme.

Tamilnadu State CITU, despite preoccupation with the state assembly election, organized a massive march of working women throughout the state in January 2006 involving participation of more than 15000 women workers from various sectors covering almost all segments of occupations both in the organized and unorganized sector. March and rallies were organized in five centers in the state viz., Chennai, Tiruchy, Tirupur, Madurai and Nagercoil at the initiative Working Women Coordination Committee to highlight 13 point charter of demands of the Working Women.

TRIPURA

During the intervening period, the State CITU had to work within difficult situation arising out of terrorist activities endangering lives of many comrades hurdling free movement in many parts of the state. Braving such difficult situation the CITU units in the state successfully observed all central programmes of campaign including strike actions involving mass of the workers in a big way and increase their membership considerably during the intervening period.

Various struggles and activities were organised during this period among the workers in tea, anganwadi, electricity, transport, construction, beedi, jute, brick kilns, dairy, auto-rickshaw and various other sectors.

The State CITU also took initiative in involving all other trade unions in the state in joint struggles and mobilisations on common issues of the people. On 5th June 2005 in Town Hall, Agartala, State level 'Right to Work' convention was held to carry forward the struggle against unemployment. Posters, leaflets were distributed throughout the state. About 1600 delegates attended the convention and leaders of 17 mass organizations spoke in the convention. It was decided to extend the campaign up to the grass root level within the month of September 2005.

Number of other joint state level mobilisations were organised during the period against price rise, hike in prices of petrol and diesel, against imperialism, and various other issues. On social issues like against conspiracy of divisive and extremist forces, against communalism series of programmes were organised in the state involving the common workers by the state CITU.

UTTAR PRADESH

On 27th August 2004 Lucknow witnessed a big demonstration before the Assembly by workers from different parts of the state. They demanded enforcement of labour laws, opening of closed factories, enhancement of statutory minimum wage. Later, the Chief Minister invited the leaders where a detailed memorandum was submitted to him.

More than two lakh workers in glass bangle industry in Ferozabad have been fighting for long for implementation of labour laws, payment of statutory minimum wage, social security benefits but without results.

On 5th October 04 thousands of workers staged a dharna in Ferozabad when police resorted to brutal lathi charge and then started firing teargas shells and then the bullets. Several people were injured and many more were arrested. Firing continued on the second day also. On the 6th October 2004, a huge gathering of workers blocked the railway traffic for several hours; on the 11th October again several thousand workers demonstrated defying prohibitory orders. CITU is taking initiative to organize the huge number of workers in Bangle, ceramic and other industries in that area.

Struggle of the glass bangle workers of Ferozabad is continuing unabated combating the brutal onslaught of the employers-state administration combine. The General Secretary of Kanch Udyog Krantikari Mazdoor Sangh (CITU) had been arrested in 2004 under Gangster Act and put in jail. After two years when he was released on bail in June 2006, within three days he was again picked up by police at the instance of the employers and put behind bar on several false cases. But that could not break the unity and determination of the workers and they are mobilising and demonstrating before the administration almost every month defying prohibitory orders. The glass bangle workers movement is an encouraging breakthrough in organising the unorganized workers in UP

Ten lakh workers in unorganized sector industries and 30,000 medical representatives went on a statewide strike on 15th February 2005. They demanded implementation of Rs 3500/- per month as minimum wage as recommended by the Advisory Committee. The strike was led by a Joint Struggle Committee comprising CITU, AITUC, HMS, BMS, INTUC, HMKP and AICCTU and FMRAI. Workers from Bangle, Leather, Steel, Carpet, Rubber, Biscuit, Plastics, Chemical Engineering and others joined the strike despite threats from owners and the administration.

The workers of JK Jute Mills have demonstrated in a massive way on 29th January under the leadership of JK Jute Mill Mazdoor Panchayat (CITU) against the illegal closure of the mill since June 2003. A memorandum was submitted to Additional Labour Commissioner, Kanpur. On 7th February a 24-hours dharna was organized before the General Manger of the company. The workers have decided to go for more intensified movement if the mill is not opened soon.

CITU unions in won in secret ballot election in two projects of NTPC at Rihand and Uchahar. The meeting of Anganwadi workers and other unions have been organized in Allahabad, Moradabad, Bijnour, Kanpur during February-March to prepare for consolidation of the anganwadi workers movement in the state.

UTTARANCHAL

There have been struggles in various sectors in the state during the intervening period.

Notable was the struggle in Garawal Mandal Vikash Nigam through statewide demonstrations and dharna before the headquarters at Dehradun demanding regularisation of casual employees and other demands of the workers.

The workers of JalSangsthan-Jalnigam also carried on agitation in various forms viz., demonstration, hunger strike, dharna etc on similar demand of regularisation of work-charged employees, payment of same wages and benefits for same work, and against move of bifurcation of the institution to promote private players in the field.

The contract workers of ONGC head quarters organised agitation demanding regularisation and increase in wages and bonus. The Contract /temporary workers of telecom also staged militant statewide struggle for demanding regularisation and improvement of service condition.

The Anganwadi workers in the state organised statewide agitation demanding enhancement in wages, payment of enhanced wages without deduction in the process of which anganwadi workers and helpers from other unions could be drawn to CITU fold.

Workers of pharmacies run by Divya Yoga Ashram Trust at Haridwar conducted long drawn struggle for payment of statutory minimum wages, eight hours work and implementation of other labour laws and implementation of the tripartite agreement dated 21-05-2005, braving atrocities of state administration, mass scale retrenchment by the management in collusion with the state administration and with direct patronisation by the Chief Minister. This struggle led by district CITU could mobilise the support of other central trade unions as well including INTUC.

In the process of joint struggle of the Sugar Mill workers in the state the Govt was compelled to constitute wage board for the sugar workers and the settlement on wage rise of the workers was finalised in consultation with the trade unions.

Besides above, at state level, many struggles have been organized by CITU, both independently and also jointly with other trade unions. The common feature of these state level struggles and mobilization

is that rampant violation of labour laws and repression on workers have been the issue on focus in almost all the events of struggles.

WEST BENGAL

Besides effectively observing all central programmes including strike actions in the state, the State Committee of CITU and the affiliated unions in the state took initiative to organise various agitations and campaign during the intervening period.

A massive rally was held at Kolkata on 1st October 2004 under the banner of NPMO. Several thousands of workers-peasants-employees-students-youths and women joined the rally. They demanded reversal of economic policies of NDA regime and fast implementation of pro-people programmes and policies as committed in the NCMP.

Massive campaigns were organized in 19 districts on 10-point demands on 9 -14 August 2004. On 13th August 2 hours rail roko was organised by Rail Hawkers Union, Mutia Mazdoor Union Newspaper Sellers Union and Railway Contractors Workers Union to highlight their demands.

Mammoth rally and procession was organised on Anti-Imperialist Day ON 1ST September in all the three years, 2004, 2005 and 2006. Thousands of workers joined the rally. There were rallies in many districts also.

On 30th Jan 2005 officers and workers of Indian Iron & Steel Company, IISCO, Burnpur assembled in Bharati Bhavan under the leadership of 'Save IISCO Committee' and decided to intensify their struggle for merger of IISCO with SAIL and modernization and expansion of the plant. M K Pandhe addressed the gathering. The continuing struggle by the IISCO workers has ultimately culminated in Govt's decision to merge IISCO with SAIL.

CITU took up an elaborate programme of mass movement on 22 point demands covering all sections of the people. The campaign was launched under the banner of NPMO. The programmes were:

- 1) Mass demonstration all over the state on 28th January
- 2) International Women's Day was observed on 8th March jointly with all those mass organizations
- 3) Anti-Unemployment Day was observed on 28th March in a big way

Series of meetings and demonstrations were organised in all the districts which culminated in a mammoth mass rally at Kolkata on 17th April 2005 .

Foundation Day of CITU on 30th May 2005 was observed through organising blood donation camps, health check-up, post-mortem organ donation pledge, etc throughout the state with great enthusiasm.

Workers in the newly set up industries in and around Durgapur suffer from blatant violation of all labour laws and Factories Act by employers. After a massive campaign for about a month they were to go for strike in all the 20 industrial units. Facing the prospect of a total strike the employers were forced to sign an agreement.

Jute workers have been in continuous action and mobilization against the employers who are flouting the tripartite agreement.

Mass mobilization of thousands of railway hawkers against harassment and for valid licence is continuing. They met the Railway Minister along with some MPs. Till now there is no change despite assurances.

Tens of thousands of Beedi workers went on a continuous strike for their 10-point list of demands including Rs 50/- as remuneration for 1000 beedis, DA, equal wage for men and women, identity card etc and withdrawal of tax concession on mini-cigarette. The impact of strike spilled over to adjoining districts of Jharkhand who also joined in the strike action.

The 11-day long complete strike in the entire jute industry involving two and half lakh workers in 59 jute mills in West Bengal from 29th December 2003 to 8th January 2004 had been a landmark struggle by the jute workers. All the 15 trade unions working in the industry came together and led the strike with complete success. On 8th January 2004 the jute mill owners had to sign an agreement with the unions, meeting most of the long pending demands as well as implementation of Payment of Gratuity Act. Once again, the huge number of jute growers, ordinary peasants rallied in support of the jute workers' strike. CITU's leading role in the jute workers movements was consolidated through this struggle and at the same time the issue of protecting the Jute Packaging Act, 1987 developed this strike into a social movement, which was reflected in the next general election.

Again in early 2006, the Jute workers had to go in for indefinite strike in the state demanding proper implementation of the previous agreement and against refusal of the mill owners to pay dearness allowance to the workers leading to a settlement between the mill owners and the unions with the active intervention of State labour Minister. Again on 4th September 2006 one day token strike was organised in Jute industry demanding proper implementation of agreement and payment of unpaid D.A.

The intervening period also witnessed massive indefinite strike action by the tea garden workers in support of their demands for wage rise and other benefit. With the active intervention of the state labour department the settlement was arrived at between the unions and the garden owners.

Against violation of labour laws and denial of statutory social security benefits and demanding adoption of anti-pollution measures, the workers of the Sponge Iron & Steel industries went on for phased agitation in July-August 2006 at the leadership of State CITU. The State Govt also intervened in the matter and held a high-power committee meeting along with CITU leadership to issue directions in the matter.

As per call of the CITU general Council, Anti-Repression day was observed through demonstrations/processions etc in all districts and industrial centres in the state.

An elaborate programme of campaign for the general Strike of 14th December 2006 was held in all the districts and workplaces during September 2006 onwards which culminated in huge workers' rally in the Brigade Parade Ground at Kolkata drawing participation of several lakhs of workers from all over the state.

An ambitious programme was taken by the State CITU to organise the mass or the non-agricultural rural workers with the help of Kisan Sabha. A massive joint convention was held of CITU and State Kisan Sabha at Kolkata on 15th October 2006 which was attended by 12000 workers and peasants delegates. The central convention adopted programme of holding similar district and block level joint convention to take up the work of enrolling rural workers in CITU.



CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS TWELFTH CONFERENCE

“Com. Suryanarayana Rao Nagar”

January 17 – 21, 2007

BANGALORE, KARNATAKA

DRAFT RESOLUTIONS

ON CONDOLENCE

This Twelfth Conference of CITU, being held at Bangalore (Karnataka) on January 17 - 21, 2007 expresses its deep sense of sorrow and pays its respectful homage to all leaders, cadres and activist of the working class and democratic movement, who passed away during the intervening period since our last conference.

This Conference pays respectful homage to Com. E.K. Nayanar, Com. Anil Biswas, Com. Kortala Satyanarayana, Com. Subodh Roy (W.Bengal), all revolutionary leaders of the Communist movement in India.

This Conference records with deep grief the passing away of: Com. C. Kannan, Com. K. Ramani, Com. Amal Ghosh Dastidar, all former Vice Presidents of CITU.

This Conference mourns the death of and pays homage to the memory of:

Com. Ajit Chowdhury, Com. Parameshwar Singh, Com. M. Nanjappan, Com. Bikash Choudhury, Com. K.M. Abraham all Working Committee Members and Com. S. Sudevan (Chhattisgarh) and Com. R.S. Rajendran (Tamil Nadu) both General Council Members and Com. R. Pious D'Silva President, (A&N) State Committee.

Com. P. Sudhakaran (Kerala). Com. Mehboob Zahedi (W.Bengal), Com. Sheopat Singh (Rajasthan) all former Vice-Presidents and Com. P.K. Tandon, former Joint Secretary of All India Kisan Sabha, Com. T.K. Ramakrishnan (Kerala), Com. K.K. Pawar (Maharashtra), Com. Jayanta Bhattacharya (W.Bengal), Com.K. Krishnamoorthy(AP), Com. M.V. Narasimha Reddy (AP) - all prominent leaders of the peasant movement.

Com. Bhan Singh Bhawara (UP), Com. Jagat Singh (Haryana), Com. Ram Swaroop Singh (UP), Com. Jogendra Prasad Singh (Bihar) all leaders of the Kisan and Agricultural workers.

Com. Aswini Kumar (Bihar), Com. Vijay Sharma (Rajasthan), Com. Sukhlal Gaur (Rajasthan), Com. Shyam Chandra Jha (Gurgaon/Haryana), Com. Kailaspati Roy (UP), Com. Gorakh Mal (Rajasthan), Com. Amba Pd. Dubey (Chhattisgarh), Com. Kaiser Imam (Bihar), Com. Albel Singh (Bijnore/UP), Com. C. Babu (A&N Islands), Com. K.R. Suundaram (Tamilnadu) Com Shyam Chand Jha (Haryana) all leaders of working class and TU movement who left us during this period since last Conference.

This Conference also expresses sorrow at the passing away of Com. Ram Sumer Yadav (UP), Com. Kanak Mukherjee (W. Bengal), Com. D. Sarda (AP), Com. Lusie Pereira (Goa), Com. Asha Kotia all leaders of the working class and democratic movement. Veteran Journalist Com. VR Bamma Reddy (AP), Com. OP. Grewal, (Janwadi Lekhak Sangh), Com. Braja Mohan Sharma (Assam), Com. G.C. Graham (both leaders of All India Lawyers' Union), Com.RP Manchanda (leader of the Insurance Employees), Com. T.K. Balan (NGO Union).

The Conference also expresses grief at the passing away of Com. Hiren Mookherjee, (veteran communist leader and brilliant historian) Com. P.K. Vasudevan Nair (Leader of CPI Group in Parliament), Com. Sunil Sengupta, General Secretary of UTUC, Sri Dattopant Thengdi, Founder member of BMS, Sri Chandi Das Sinha, Secretary INTUC and pays its respectful homage.

This Conference expresses deep sense of sorrow at the passing way of Sri K.R. Narayanan, the former President of India, Sri Ravindra Varma former Labour Minister of India and Shri Kanshi Ram, Founder of Bahujan Samaj Party and pays respectful homage to the departed leaders.

This Conference pays its respectful homage to Sehna Maestro Ustad Bismillah Khanji and the noted filmmaker Sri Hrihikesh Mukherjee.

This Conference deeply mourns the death and pays homage to the Palestinian leader Com Yaser Arafat.

This Conference condemns the heinous execution of the Iraqui leader Saddam Hussein and pays homage to his memory.

ON HOMAGE TO MARTYRS

This Twelfth Conference of CITU, being held at Bangalore (Karnataka) on January 17 - 21, 2007 respectfully remembers the courageous sacrifice of those leaders, cadres and activists of the trade unions, peasants, agricultural labour, youth, students and women who left a permanent impression on the democratic movement as a whole and continue to be a constant source of inspiration to the struggle of the toiling people.

This conference recalls the towering determination with which innumerable comrades of the democratic movement have embraced martyrdom confronting the heinous and ghastly attack of the political gangster, the police and employer/landlord nexus. The conference pays respectful homage to the peasant demonstrators who laid down their lives in the movement for water at Ghadsana of Rajasthan braving the firing and lathicharge by Police in 2004 and 2006. The conference also remembers with great respect Comrades Baburao, Bijay Singh and Dan Singh Bhandari, all leaders of hydel project workers who were murdered brutally by the armed gangsters deployed by the Contractor at Chamera-III hydel project of Himachal Pradesh and salutes the martyrs for their heroic sacrifice in the midst of struggle. The conference also condemns the brutal police firing on students in Rajasthan protesting fee hikes and on people of Silampur in Deli protesting against ceiling.

This Conference strongly condemns the heinous attacks perpetuated by the terrorist and divisive forces killing 100's and injuring several thousands through bomb blast, in Malegaon train blast in Belakaba (Jalpaiguri District) riots in Mangalore, in Jammu & Kashmir and elsewhere in the country and conveys heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family members.

This Conference also respectfully remembers those who fell victim to the murderous attack of RSS, TUJS, BJP, Trinamool Congress hooligans and other communalist and casteist forces in Tripura, West Bengal, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Maharashtra (Khairlalanji) and expresses deep sympathy with the bereaved members of the family.

This Conference records its deep sorrow at the loss of innocent lives and cattles in different parts of the country due to devastating floods, earthquake, Tsunami and other natural calamities. It also expresses deep grief at the death of 45 miners in an accident in Bharatdih Coal Mines. This Conference demands adequate relief to the affected families.

This Conference salutes the firm determination with which people of Afghanistan, Iraq, Palestine and elsewhere in the world have been resisting the naked barbarism against humanity perpetrated by US imperialism. While severely condemning the imperialist attack led by US this Conference expresses solidarity with the anti-imperialist movement world over.

This Conference most respectfully remembers the courageous sacrifice of these martyrs who have left indelible impression on the democratic movement as a whole and will remain a constant source of inspiration in our fight against exploitation and for the unity of the people and integrity of the nation.

ON GREETINGS TO WORKING CLASS OF KARNATAKA

This Twelfth Conference of CITU, being held at Bangalore (Karnataka) on January 17 - 21, 2007 conveys warm greetings to the working class of the Karnataka state for their frontline role in the united struggle of the toiling people against the onslaught on the national economy as well as on their rights and livelihood.

This conference expresses gratitude to the working people of the state whose mighty support - physical, material and financial - to the CITU could make such spectacular arrangement of this mammoth five-day conference of 2500 delegates a reality.

This Conference noted with pride last eventful three years of trade union activities in the state since our 11th conference, both in the organized and unorganised sectors which reflected the assertive role of the working class in defence of the rights of the toiling people and also in building up resistance against the anti-people and anti-national economic policies of both the central and state govt. On social issues like advancing the rights of the dalits and downtrodden, against communalism etc, the working people had always been in the frontline of all peoples' actions in the state.

Karnataka is the hub of many public sector units and PSU workers' have been the most active and vocal segment of the working class movement in the State. The PSU workers in the State played crucial role in unitedly asserting themselves through united strikes and other actions against the nefarious game of selling out the PSUs being pursued by successive governments.

The struggle of the workers of Toyota against the union-busting heinous ploy of the Japanese management with the active patronage of the State administration had been a notable event, which broadly brought almost entire trade union movement in the state in statewide solidarity agitation. The formation of Bangalore United Trade Union Forum in the wake of that struggle is a noteworthy step in uniting the entire trade union movement on the issue of basic labour rights and that Forum must be strengthened in the days to come.

In the organized sector, many struggles were conducted in MICO Audugodi Plant, Geotze Federal Moghul, Vikrant Tyre, Mysore, INDAL (Belgaum), Ralashree Cement, West Coast Paper Mills etc. Among the medium scale industries series of struggles were organised at Bangalore, Mysore, Tumkur etc, which secured many achievements for the workers. Agitations were also organised by the Textile Workers at Nanjangud and in and around Bangalore. The struggle put up by the workers of Metal Caps at Bangalore was a heroic one.

In the unorganised sector as well, the toiling people had been on consistent struggle. On the demand for a comprehensive legislation on social security and labour rights campaigns and mobilizations were organised in various sectors of unorganised sector workers separately, such as Panchayat workers, construction workers, hamalis, beedi workers and anganwadi workers. In the process of campaign the mid-day meal workers in the state have been organised in unions at CITU's initiative.

State wide campaign amongst construction workers and agitations thereon led to formation of Construction Workers' Welfare Board and notification of the central scheme by the State Govt after ten years of its enactment. Similarly, the Anganwadi Union at state level has conducted a series of struggles and made substantial gains. The Gram Panchayat Employees' Union has conducted determined struggles and won several achievements from the Government. The Mid Day Meals workers all over the state has also conducted similar struggles and succeeded in protecting their jobs and in winning further concessions. The Hamaly Federation is growing through frequent struggles, campaigns and mobilization during this period. Our Beedi Workers' Federation had also organised number of agitations and campaigns. The Tile Workers at Kundapur have consolidated the organisation there and the influence in Uttara Kannada is being maintained as well. The auto-rickshaw drivers' union of Bangalore has made a mark and is advancing further.

The working class of Karnataka magnificently responded to all the three countrywide General Strike calls since 2004 resulting in a bandh-like situation in the industrial areas and in six-seven districts of the state. The response to last 14th December 2006 General Strike has been even bigger. In fact, riding on the wave of the preparatory campaign for the 14th December strike, the working class of the State generously responded to the preparatory exercise for this historic 12th Conference of CITU, making it a glorious success. This conference once again greets the working class movement of Karnataka!

ON CENTRAL LEGISLATION FOR AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

This Twelfth Conference of CITU, being held at Bangalore (Karnataka) on January 17 - 21, 2007 demands the UPA government to immediately enact a comprehensive legislation for agricultural workers, as promised in its National Common Minimum Programme, protecting their working conditions and providing social security.

The 8 crore agricultural workers in the country, mostly belonging to the socially oppressed sections of the society like the SC, ST, BC etc and comprising of large proportion of women, are the worst effected by the neo liberal policies of globalisation, being pursued by successive governments at the Centre.

The organisations of agricultural workers, the trade unions and the democratic movements have been demanding a comprehensive legislation for the agricultural workers since several years. Though a bill was introduced during the Deve Gowda government, that government did not last till it was passed. The BJP led NDA government kept in the backburner. Though more than half of its tenure is over, the Congress led UPA did not even consider introducing it, though the NCMP clearly committed to enact the legislation.

The capitalist path of development pursued by the ruling classes in India has never seriously addressed the genuine problems and demands of the agricultural workers, the poorest of the poor in our country. The agrarian policies of the government have so far helped only the landlord sections to accumulate wealth through unscrupulous exploitation of the agricultural workers and the poor peasants. Lack of comprehensive land reforms has resulted in retaining the feudal system in rural India. The age-old caste system and backward social structures, which keep alive, the social exclusion and oppression, continue even today, nearly 60 years after we have attained political independence. Whenever the Dalits try to assert themselves, they are attacked and their women raped, as demonstrated in the recent Khairlanji incident.

The neo-liberal policies of globalisation, which have ruined our agriculture, have led to the destitution of a large section of rural masses who depend on agriculture. The shift in cropping patterns from food

grains to commercial crops and the introduction of labour displacing machines in various agricultural operations have led to a drastic reduction in the working days for the agricultural workers. Today agricultural workers get work for only around 70 days in a year. These policies have resulted in large-scale migration of agricultural workers to the cities and towns in search of work, leading to a downward push of wages of the unorganised sector workers there. In most of the states no minimum wages have been proclaimed for the agricultural workers; the minimum wages are rarely implemented even in the states where they have been proclaimed. The withdrawal of the state from its responsibility of providing free health and educational facilities for the poor and the dismantling of the Public Distribution System have led to the destitution of the agricultural workers. Around 20,000 agricultural workers have succumbed to starvation deaths in the last 8 years.

Women who constitute around half of the agricultural workers do not get equal wages; they do not have any maternity benefits nor are there any crèche facilities for their children. The government has not responded positively to the demand to convert the anganwadi centres under the Integrated Child Development Services Scheme, into day care centres cum crèches, which can provide childcare facilities for the women agricultural workers. The government has till now taken serious steps to follow the Supreme Court direction to universalise ICDS. The demand to provide the service through the anganwadi centres on a permanent basis has also not been conceded by the government.

Though the UPA government has enacted the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act under pressure from the Left, till now it is confined to only 200 rural districts in the country. Contrary to the specific direction in the NREGA rules to avoid contractors, in many districts contractors are involved; job cards are not being given to all the eligible workers; the stipulated minimum wages are not being paid; even the paltry wages are not paid regularly.

This Conference reiterates the firm belief of CITU that agricultural workers are the most reliable allies of the working class not only in its fight to reverse the anti working class and anti people policies of the government, but also in its struggle to end all exploitation in the society.

This Conference, while extending solidarity to all the struggles of the agricultural workers on their genuine demands, calls upon all its state committees and affiliated unions to support the agricultural workers in their efforts to organise and launch struggles against the retrograde policies of the government.

AGAINST PENSION FUND REGULATORY AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BILL

This Twelfth Conference of CITU, being held at Bangalore (Karnataka) on January 17 - 21, 2007 reiterates its firm opposition to the move of the UPA government to enact the contentious Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority Bill, to push through its dubious New Pension System.

In this the UPA regime is in fact continuing the measure brought in by the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) to shift to a new defined contribution pension scheme for employees recruited since January 2004. The government employees and trade unions at all levels have been opposing this measure right from the time it was announced by the NDA government.

The opposition of the trade unions to the New pension System and the PFRDA Bill is on four core issues:

1. Changing the very concept of social security pension from 'Defined benefit' to 'Defined Contribution', thereby imposing deduction from employees' salary in the name of contribution.

2. Privatisation of pension scheme by way of entrusting the pension contribution of the employees to Pension Fund Managers, who are in reality Mutual Fund entities and at the same time making the actual pension quantum dependent on the accruals to be decided by the market forces.
3. Diversion of the social security contributions to the speculative share market.
4. This move is coupled with the proposal to allow Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the pension sector.

Moreover, the New Pension System makes the privatised pension scheme mandatory for the government employees while the General Provident Fund has been made an optional scheme. This is not contemplated even in the Bhattacharya Committee, which went into the question.

While the UPA's Bill states, "the New Pension Scheme is mandatory for new recruits to the Central government services," it has ominous portents since the government has been talking of migrating the existing (pre-2004) employees to the New Pension System.

Despite the National Common Minimum Programme committed, "labour-management relations in our country must be marked by consultations, cooperation and consensus, not confrontation", the PFRDA Bill has been resorted to without any consultations with trade unions, in a blatant violation of this commitment.

The present fiscal-related problem cited by the government for the unsustainability of the present "Pay As You Go" pension scheme is of its own making. The present pension scheme was introduced in the past as a substitute to the then Contributory Provident Fund Scheme, to which the Central government had been making a matching contribution. It was replaced by the General Provident Fund with only the contribution by the employees and in lieu of its matching contribution, the Central government brought in place the present pension scheme. Even the Fifth Pay Commission had recommended retention of the present pension scheme.

The government, over the past years, merrily used up the funds that were due on the former contributory provident fund scheme and failed to make any provision for an appropriate funding arrangement in place for meeting the pension liability towards its employees. For this, the employees cannot be penalised as is being resorted to now.

This Conference calls upon the UPA government to rescind the New Pension System introduced by the NDA regime and withdraw the PFRDA Bill. This Conference calls upon all sections of the trade union movement to unitedly resist and defeat the dangerous move of privatising the social security. This Conference also calls for a united struggle to demand formulation and implementation of a comprehensive national policy on social security covering all sections of the population.



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COMMISSION PAPER

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

SOME RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AND STRENGTHENING OF UNITY

The reckonable recent developments in the international trade union movement must be traced in the surging struggles of the working class with very encouraging global spread. There are various contributing factors behind such developments. Some of them are the heightening of the inevitable crisis and the backlash of the neo-liberal economic policies and surfacing fissure in the camp of the advocates of these policies. The other important development is that although at the initial stage the workers in the developing countries were the victims of neo-liberal policies, with the passage of time workers of the developed countries are also increasingly coming under attack emanating from the neo-liberal economic policies.

In the developed countries the issues of serious concern before the workers are relocation of manufacturing activities and other commercial services through ‘outsourcing’ and ‘off-shoring’. The immediate result is that trade union movements in the developed economies are facing serious erosion in power of collective bargaining. Further, cuts in pensions, health plans and vacations and the ever-increasing danger of job insecurity are emerging as big challenges. Ever aggravating unemployment problem is a big contributing factor. And in the developing countries the main issues are low wages, despotic working conditions, autocratic management rule, long working hours and dismantling of social security benefits. Then the problem of industrial sickness, closure of enterprises mainly in the small scale and tiny sectors and related retrenchment of workers, which is further fuelling the problem of unemployment. And of course all round attacks on trade union rights are common all over the world.

Listing out the burning issues and task before the trade union movement in his report to the last session of the ILC, the Director General of ILO has noted, “The absence of work, the quality of work, voice at work, continued gender discrimination and unacceptably high youth unemployment are all at the heart of politics today.” Pointing out the reaction of the people the DG said, “And people are reacting in conversations at home, in the secrecy of the voting booth and, when necessary, by forcefully voicing their complaints on the streets.”

SIGNIFICANT FEATURES OF IMPERIALIST GLOBALISATION

The present policies of Globalisation, Liberalisation and Privatisation, structured by the global imperialist powers are designed to benefit the capitalist class at the cost of the working class. And hence it is said, “globalization is both an imperialist and a class phenomenon.” Imperialist Globalisation has been narrated thus: “It is a major episode in the history of class struggle. It corresponds to a new phase of world capitalism with new class configurations,” and further continued, “In so far as

'liberalization' is not a mere policy option but a process driven by international finance capital in the current stage of imperialism."

A very significant feature of globalisation has been narrated thus: "Globalisation today is not accompanied by significant relative increase in long-term capital flows; it represents predominantly a globalisation of finance in the form of 'hot money' flows. It is not the mobility of capital-in-production that has increased in relative terms, but the mobility of capital-in-finance ... Getting caught in the vortex of international finance has the effect of trapping them (third world countries) into being permanently concerned about retaining the 'confidence' of international speculators ... For this they keep governments expenditure restricted, subsidies lowered, the economy deflated and workers' rights drastically curtailed." (*Prabhat Patnaik*)

It is but natural that in the conflict-ridden situation, different social forces are acting according to their respective class position. It is important to note that classes are identified not in terms of "differences in income, differences in habits or differences in relations, but the places they occupy in social production and relations in which they stand to the means of production." Historical Materialism teaches us: "All they can do is to try to throw the burden of the crises onto the backs of the working people – but this only makes the crises more severe. Thus their efforts to resist the constructive utilization of economic laws only mean that these laws continue to operate with destructive effects." Imperialist globalisation has marked unprecedented disparities all over the world. Further, the underutilization of the productive forces has been on the rise. Such a situation clearly signifies the sharpening contradiction between developed productive forces and conflicting production relations

GLOBAL ONSLAUGHT OF FINANCE CAPITAL

Under imperialist globalization obviously the exclusive beneficiaries are the multinational companies, particularly the USA based ones and the developing economies are the actual losers. Globalisation, it has been very rightly observed, "has become an ideological mask, disguising the power of U.S. corporations to exploit and enrich themselves and their chief executive officers to an unprecedented degree. Globalization can be seen as a code word for the ascendancy of U.S. imperialism." (*James & Henry-2001*)

The plight of the nation states due to huge tax concessions granted to the indigenous and foreign private monopoly capital has created a catastrophic situation for the tax revenue of the Governments. The nation-states are succumbing to the pressure and lowering tax rates at the top half of society and shifting the tax burden from the top directly and indirectly through stealth taxes to the bottom. On the other hand despite huge concessions governments are failing to ensure tax compliances by the corporations. The U.S. has the lowest corporate tax rates compared to any industrialized country. Only 10% of federal revenue comes from corporate tax and 47% comes from taxes on wages.

A startling account has been given as to how neo-liberal economic policies have turned the "governments of nation-states to largest croupers ever known." The loss sustained by the governments due to concession on taxes is compensated by what is termed as 'gambling revenue'. The period of neo-liberal economic policies has witnessed a big rise in 'gambling revenue' in different countries. As per a study report, "worldwide some \$900 billion USD is spent by citizens on gambling". Shockingly "governments spend tens of millions of tax payers' money on advertising to encourage citizens to gamble. In the United States alone almost \$500 million is spent every year encouraging mainly less-educated, poorer people to gamble more: A million a day – Just Play." Casino economy, really !

The international operators of FDI – the MNCs – in effect neither bring much of Foreign Capital nor generate employment in the countries concerned. On the contrary the MNCs suck indigenous capital and kill employment. Above all they never part with technical “Know How and Technology” with any developing economies. Based on the various studies on the role of MNCs in the economies of the developing countries in the matter of investment and employment it has been said, “The import of capital was much less than the yearly exports of profits and royalties; further investment was financed through capital drawn from the local capital market and from reinvestment of profits ... No impulse was given to solution of the unemployment.”

OUTSOURCING, OFF-SHORING AND REGIONAL TRADE PACTS

These are some of the most burning matters before the working class movement through out the world. These issues are affecting labour in both the developed and developing nations. The trade union movement pertaining to the countries of origin and the countries of destination are becoming prey to this modern mechanism of labour exploitation. In fact this is one issue that warrants coordination and cooperation of the trade union movement internationally to combat the attack jointly. The motive behind shifting of industrial and commercial activities is to realize a reduced cost of production and to enhance extraction of surplus value. Now with the revolution in communication technology such goals are attained through many modern methods. One of these methods is ‘Business Process Outsourcing’.

The vicious cycle of stagnated market has encircled the capitalist class all over the world including in the G-8 countries. To shift the burden of the crisis on to the shoulders of labour the capitalists have been adopting anti-labour devices one after another. Further, they have also been extracting huge concessions from the pro-capital ruling classes to protect profit from erosion. Such steps are taken in the name of increasing ‘productivity’, realising ‘cost effectiveness’ and remaining ‘competitive’ in the market. The actual reasons behind these avowed anti-labour designs are to protect the interest of the capitalist class from the impact of the economic crisis. But at the same time such a situation also fuels intensification of the resistance movement by the exploited working class.

Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) or what is termed ‘offshoring’ and ‘outsourcing’ is nothing but a modern method of shifting commercial activities in low wage locations in the period of extreme crisis of capitalism. The BPO has become a means of exploitation of the working class. This is an onslaught haunting the working class particularly in the developed countries. A study by Inductis, a management consulting firm has said that, “American companies save billions of dollars each year by outsourcing of work to India. The US banking industry alone saved \$8 billion over the past four years by outsourcing work to India. Also, the US-based multinational companies have been the biggest beneficiaries of offshore and outsourcing economies. For instance, G E alone saves over \$350 million per year through 18,000 offshore employees. The wage differentials for the same job ranging from 1:3 to 1:10.

The Regional Trade Pacts designed by the imperialist powers are causing huge harm to the working class. Take for example the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Over two million workers were displaced in Mexico in the first two years of NAFTA. In Canada during the first year of NAFTA 2,50,000 jobs were eliminated. In the US half a million jobs have been lost because of NAFTA. It is reported that during the first three years of NAFTA some 8.6 million workers were displaced because of plants closing. Many manufacturing plants were shifted from the U.S. to Mexico where unemployed workers were employed at a pay rate of one-eighth or less of what was being paid by the same companies in the U.S. Similar adverse impacts have been reported arising out of FTAA.

EUPHORIA EVAPORATING

It has been nothing but the brinkmanship of a orchestrated campaign and statistical jugglery about the so-called success story propagated by the advocates of the neo-liberal economic policies, in so far as the developing economies and the toiling people are concerned. In his book 'The Collapse of Globalism', John Ralston Saul has noted, "Global economics came to be presented a tool to weaken government, discourage taxes both on corporations and on the top bracket of earners, force deregulation and, curiously enough, to strengthen private sector technocracies in large corporations to the disadvantage of real capitalists and entrepreneurs."

Yet another critic has noted that the economic policy under imperialist globalisation is, "an unstable one, which is prone to systemic instability and constant possibility of crisis." (Jayati Ghosh) Some of the economic arguments advanced in support of the formulation are as follows:

- The basic tenets of the neo-liberal argument (which forms the theoretical support for the current pattern of imperialist globalisation) has come under serious question, and increasingly the institutions of IMF, World Bank, WTO and so on are losing support and legitimacy
- One important contradiction looks likely to become more significant in the near future. This is the requirement of deflation, which predatory finance capital imposes on the system as a whole even while it encourages differential rates of deflation in different areas so as to maximise its own profits
- World imperialist powers, particularly the USA are refusing to play any role in discounting in economic crisis; providing a market for net exports of the rest of the world, especially those countries required to repay debt.
- Due to various factors the rates of growth of world trade (in value terms) have decelerated despite the enforced liberalization of trade in most countries as well as in declining rates of greenfield investment across the world.
- The recent process of imperialist globalisation has been marked by greatly increased disparities, both within countries and between countries ... as well as a stubborn persistence of poverty and marked absence of the 'convergence' predicted by proponents of the system.
- The anti-globalisation umbrella movement is one expression of such growing dissent in national and global contexts.

Now in the face of surfacing of the failure of the policy measures under the schemes of neo-liberalism, (some prefer to call fracture in the "new economic model under imperialist consensus"), the question of new prescription attempting to rescue the capitalist economy from the clutch of yet another aggravated spate of crisis has been talked of. The dissidents in the 'consensuses' have started to sound, "bring the state back". To some extent this constitutes a re-inclination towards 'Keynesian demand management' policies. They have called for "limited state intervention to soften the blows of the market by financing job training, poverty alleviation and self-employment programs. Some have argued for capital controls to encourage productive investments of capital rather than speculative investment."

GROWING RESISTANCE STRUGGLES

Struggles against imperialist globalisation and opposing neo-liberal economic policies are continuously heightening in both the developed and developing countries all over the world. The movement of the

working class in developed countries of USA and European continent are on the rise. The World Bank, the chief missionary of globalisation, has devoted its 2005 World Development Report to the theme of economic inequality and confirmed for the sceptics what other more critical-minded observers had been pointing out for years: 'Global inequality was sharply rising, as also inequality within nations. The report pointed out that since 1990 "global GDP growth rate had been slower than in previous decades."

The World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalisation in its report published in 2004 mentioned that income and wage inequality increased almost without exception, in the advanced industrialised countries. In the decade since the mid-1990, the highest paid 10 per cent of workers in the U.S. were earning close to 450 per cent more than the lowest paid 10 per cent. The minimum wage in fact, has stagnated in the U.S. since the Reagan era. Commenting on the declining income of workers in USA, Bill Clinton said in 1990s, "The global village we have worked so hard to create (has produced) higher unemployment and lower wages for some of our people ... This is a powerful testament to the painful difficulty of trying to maintain a high-wage economy in a global economy where production is mobile and can quickly fly to a place with low wages."

Similar sharp increases in inequality were seen in the U.K. and Canada. Consumer debt is now at unprecedented levels in the U.S. and U.K. Thus there is every possibility of acute debt-induced distress for the mass of consumers, more real than any time in the recent past.

Naturally the recent years have witnessed bitter struggles by the working class of France, Italy, England and many other countries of Europe. The joint movement of student and working class of France against the law against job security was a historic one. The final round saw huge mobilisation of 7,00,000 people in Paris. At the same time 192 demonstrations across the country were participated in by over three million people. So also have been the struggles of the working class of France against privatisation and dismantling of social security. In fact since 1995 the country has been witnessing a wave of strikes in protest against the broad-ranging policy changes initiated by Chirac and his hand-picked Prime Minister. In Britain the biggest strike participated in by about 1.5 million public sector workers protesting against curtailment in pensionary benefits shook the country. In Italy protracted struggles of the working class ultimately brought change in the ruling polity. The recent strike in Greece was a historic success.

In the face of a severe unemployment problem, the American working class and trade union movement are up in arms against BPO. They are blocking companies from using foreign workers on state contracts. Workers staged a demonstration outside New York's Waldorf-Astoria where an outsourcing conference was going on in the first week of July'03. In Seattle a workers rally was organised before the city Chambers of Commerce where local officials were meeting with a British outsourcing firm. The demonstrators displayed banners which read : 'we are not racists, xenophobes or bigots, we are displaced American workers', 'Foreigners are being used as slave labor in our great country, bringing shame and dishonor to us'. Such protests have prompted the Senators from the American states of New Jersey, Washington, Maryland, Connecticut and Missouri to move Bills to ban overseas outsourcing of tech-service jobs by State Governments.

In Asia, apart from our own experience in India, struggles of the working class in different Asian countries are growing rapidly. The countries in the forefront of the struggles are South Korea, Malaysia, Nepal etc. The South Korean trade union KCTU is currently spearheading a gigantic movement of the working class. Around 50,000 workers were mobilised in a National Workers Rally on 13 November 2006 and on 15 November over 1,50,000 workers from 193 local unions participated in a four-hour warning strike demanding a stop to the Irregular Workers Bill, withdrawal of the current Industrial

Relations Roadmap Agreement, to stop Korea-US Free Trade Agreement negotiations and to fundamentally reform OHS insurance bill. The Malaysian trade union movement is in the midst of bitter anti-privatisation struggles. 'Globalisation erode is workers' rights' was the theme of the last May Day rally. The anti-imperial, pro-democracy, bloody struggles of the people of Nepal have created new history in the people's movement in Nepal. The working class of the country played a leading role while many fell victim to the bullets of military forces.

South Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa have been in the focus of the working class movement. It is important to note that the U.S. imperialists have directed their aggressive moves towards these countries consequent upon the growing public indignation in the countries of Arab and West Asia against the US administration. The oil MNCs have been increasingly capturing the oilfields of these continents. The consequence is increasing conflict between the workers and these multinational oil giants and the Governments supporting the latter. Neo-liberal policies are bringing inhuman miseries to the workers of the continent. Trade union rights are under severe attack. In this situation extra parliamentary and democratic struggles in several countries of Sub-Saharan Africa are worth noting.

DEVELOPMENTS IN LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES

The political developments in the Latin American countries have delivered a severe blow to the neo-liberal economic policies imposed on the developing economies under the doctrine of imperialist globalisation. At the same time it is bound to inspire and boost the struggles of working class against these policies all over the world. The people through ballot boxes have delivered electoral defeats one after another in the countries of the continent. The numbers of countries with anti-imperialist left leaning Government are continuously increasing. Up till now the countries are Venezuela, Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Uruguay, Nicaragua, Peru and Ecuador. But for US engineered necked rigging in the last election, Mexico was also sure to be in this list.

To arrive at a correct understanding about the developments in the Latin American countries we must look at two very important contributing factors – the economic plunder under the neo-liberal pro-US regimes, consequent miserable plight of the people and the bitter struggles fought by the working class against these policies spread over decades.

The demise of military dictatorships in the countries of Latin America around 1980s gave birth to US controlled bourgeois democratic regimes. The dictators had already damaged the economies immensely which, compelled them to surrender to US dictates. Instead of military coups, US imperialism switched over to 'free market' ideology as a means of securing the allegiance of Latin America. "The Free Trade Area of the Americas devised in 1994 was to have done what the military coup otherwise did: ensure the compliance of Latin America to US-led imperialism." Here too the design was the same as elsewhere. "Package of policies dictated by the International Monetary Fund, the U.S. Treasury, the World Bank and Wall Street that came to be called the 'Washington Consensus'. The policies included wholesale budget cutbacks, the dismantling of social protections, trade liberalization, financial deregulation, privatization of state-run enterprises and the marketization of just about everything ...Latin America quickly became the premier economic and social laboratory of neoliberalism." (*Dispatches From Latin America*).

The plight of the people has been a horrifying growth in inequalities. The UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean's November 2004 report noted, "Social Panorama of Latin America 2004 shows a steady growth in the number of people living in poverty since 1990, from 200 million to 224 million people. Huge concentration of wealth in the hands of the top 10 percent of the population in Latin America. In Brazil around 50% productive land is owned by top one percent of the population

while 54 percent of poor farmers possessed only 2.6 percent of the cultivable land. The share of workers in the national income has been continuously declining in the countries of the continent. For instance in Chile it went down from 48% to 38%, in Argentina from 41% to 25%, in Mexico from 38% to 27%. The real wage faced steep erosion and the share of wages in value added to production went down. Thus labour in Latin America faced serious disparities in income and wealth, which was already the worst in the world. The number of people living under extreme poverty as well as people below poverty line increased. 70 percent of the people in Bolivia came under the clutches of extreme poverty. The continent witnessed a menacing rate of industrial sickness and closure of factories. Unemployment grew at an alarming rate.

STRUGGLES OF THE PEOPLE OF LATIN AMERICA

The series of electoral victories by "left-of-center candidates" has not come without bitter struggles by the people of the continent. The growing protests have forced a shift in the political landscape across Latin America. In the face of intense neo-liberal exploitation, the Latin American countries witnessed vast increase in political mobilisation of the working class. Under the pressure of mass movements discredited Governments in Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador and Argentina were compelled to resign. Government initiatives to privatise public services and natural resources were squarely defeated across the region by grassroots movements. In Mexico the peasants in the town of Salvador Atenco successfully stopped plans sponsored by an alliance of multinational corporations, local entrepreneurs and the government to build a multi-billion-dollar airport on agricultural lands and protected wetlands. Again in Bolivia the militant mobilisation of neighbourhood associations, unions and popular organisations reversed the privatisation of local water system. The struggle became popular as "Water War".

Many more popular movements were successfully conducted against withdrawal of the state from its most basic social duties pertaining to everyday life, such as housing, nutrition, childcare, education and other productive work. The fight against the White House's aggressive campaign to force the imposition of Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), Bush's threat to interfere with the transmission of TeleSur (the news and TV network established between Venezuela, Argentina, Uruguay and Cuba), expansion of Washington's geo-strategic reach with the Paraguayan government's authorisation of a U.S. military base in its territory are of paramount importance. Some more mentionable struggles were the strikes and mass mobilisation in Peru (2000), a popular insurrection in Argentina (2001), and rebellions with prominent indigenous participation in Ecuador (1997,2000,2005) and Bolivia (2003,2005). These movements have been the decisive contributing actions that have mobilised the people in defeating the neo-liberal regimes and cronies of Washington in the electoral battles in the countries of Latin America.

WORKER-RUN FACTORY MOVEMENT IN LATIN AMERICA

Beginning in 1990, under the neo-liberal economic policies due to financial and economic deregulation including dismantling of protective tariffs and subsidies, the countries became the hunting ground for the MNCs, flooded the markets with their products from abroad and local industries came under severe commercial assault, many factories turned sick and closed in different countries of Latin America. Hardest hit were small and medium-sized enterprises that catered to the domestic market. The workers of such factories conducted protracted struggles and created history by occupying and running many such factories. This development has come to be known as "the worker-run factory movement".

This development has pushed the anti-imperialist struggles in Latin America to a qualitative height and strengthened the conviction and confidence of the trade union movement of the entire continent. Venezuela under President Chavez has contributed immensely in providing strength to this movement.

On October 27-29, 2005 a conference of the workers of recovered factories of different countries of Latin America was held at Caracas, the capital of Venezuela. More than 400 delegates from 235 recovered factories representing 20 different national trade union centres attended the conference. More than 3000 workers attended the inaugural session.

Inaugurating the conference President Chavez said, "it is capitalism that closes down factories and that these must be recovered by the workers." He compared the struggle of the occupied factories with the struggle for independence from Spanish rule in the 19th century and underlined the potential of the workers in the continent to break their chains and leave capitalism behind. He described the struggle as "part of the struggle for true sovereignty and liberation from the domination of the US." Expressing his views about trade unions, Chavez said that trade union "should never be an appendix of the government, it must be autonomous and free" and further continued, "unions which ended up negotiating behind the workers' backs, of leaders like those in Venezuela who ended up enriching themselves while negotiating about workers' lives with the bosses must be rooted out of the trade union movement."

That this movement is not just an isolated development but is conducted with a political perspective is clear from the deliberations of the Caracas conference. Explaining the character and final aims of the movement the leaders said, "Our movement is anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist. It is a clarion call and an organized movement of the working class against the regime of private property of the large-scale means of production ... a conscious expression, with the final aim of socializing the means of production." They declared, "we have shown how the workers can run the companies, and this means we can run society as well."

THE POLITICAL LESSON

First of all it is very important to understand that Socialist Cuba continues to be a beacon of anti-imperialist struggles in the entire Latin American continent. Moreover, despite economic blockade and constant conspiratorial onslaught of the of the US imperialist and other counter revolutionary forces, the economic and other social progress achieved by Cuba is a matter of great encouragement. Every gain made by the Cuban Revolution in health, science or education is an example to Latin American workers, pointing out the great advances that can be made by breaking the chains of capitalism and U.S. imperialism. However, the current awakening of the people of the continent definitely is a source of strength to the fight to protect the Cuban Revolution.

However, it is necessary to draw a balanced view about the electoral outcome. The supremacy of the struggle of the people in the continent is unquestionable. Class conflicts and class struggles are definitely on the rise. Over the years the countries have been shaken by innumerable struggles rich with political perspective of opposing the neo-liberal economic policies. "These demonstrations have been characterized by a high degree of political content." (*Daniel Vila, Political Commentator*)

In Venezuela, the government of President Hugo Chávez has embarked on a revolutionary process that has inspired millions across the continent.

The Bolivarian Revolution, as the Venezuelan process is known, has unmistakable characteristics that set it apart from any of the other social democratic governments now in power in Latin America. It is firmly based on the increasingly organised working class, which has defeated coup attempts and counter-revolutionary mobilisations. It is firmly anti-imperialist. And it is developing a deepening relationship with socialist Cuba.

However, it is necessary to understand the difference between the numerous elections that have supported President Chávez and those that have taken place in Chile, Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and

the rest. Elections in Venezuela have helped to mobilize the workers and oppressed. But the other elections are said to have the possibility to “ threaten to trap the workers into putting their hopes in governments whose ultimate allegiance is to the ruling class.” Inferring with role of social democrats it has been said, “This is the traditional and historic role of social democracy: to divert the energies of the masses into the electoral arena, granting some social concessions to the masses in return for social peace. Faced with growing rebellion that threatens to turn to revolution, U.S. imperialism is willing to tolerate “the left”—as long as it follows “orthodox” pro-IMF-economic policies.”

The basic contradiction facing the Latin American ruling classes is that their relationship with world capitalism depends in growing degrees on the increased exploitation of the continent's working class. Millions of workers and peasants have seen that reality in the struggles of the last decade. Whether they will take the step from “rebellion to revolution—challenging the capitalist class's right to rule—will depend on the ability of the revolutionary organizations to provide clear class-conscious and anti-imperialist leadership.”

An analysis of the strategic approach adopted by the US imperialist in containing the revolutionary movement in Latin America is worth noting. The following are extensive quotation from ‘Globalization Unmasked’ by James Petras & Henry Veltmeyer:

“Washington sought to divide the anti-dictatorial opposition by financing and advising the bourgeois-liberal sector while isolating and demobilizing the popular Left movements ... Washington, through the National Endowment for Democracy, financed seminars, meetings and publications on the theme of “re-democratisation” ... Through funding election campaigns and training and promoting conservative trade union leaders and community group (read NGO), Washington penetrated different layers of Latin American society... Washington articulated its economic and military policy through right-wing electoral parties and turned towards dividing the Left. Through conferences and overseas seminar Washington supported the so-called “moderate” sections of the Left. By funding non-conflictual trade union bureaucrats, training seminars in free market economics and conferences for intellectuals and Centre-Left politicians, Washington divided the Left. The Centre-Left dropped its anti-imperialist program and accepted the globaloney doctrine.”

Finally the authors concluded on a positive note: “The dynamics of globalisation in Asia, the ex-USSR, Africa and Latin America are creating tremendous hardship but also provide an historic opportunity to transcend capitalism. It would be a failure of nerve of historic proportions to settle for anything less than a new socialist society, the new nation as an integral whole, a new culture of participants and not spectators, and a new internationalism of equals.”

MERGER AND SPLIT OF TRADE UNIONS

Ultimately the merger between ICFTU and WCL has taken place in a joint congress of both the organisations held at Vienna, Austria on 1st November 2006. The post merger name of the new organisation is International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC). Given the identical ideological position of both the organizations, any significant change in the outlook of the new organization is ruled out. Apart from the affiliates of ICFTU and WCL, eight unaffiliated trade unions of different countries also joined the new organization.

CITU was repeatedly contacted by the leaders of ICFTU and WCL as also some of those eight in person and through written communication, to join the new organisation. But the Secretariat of CITU refused to accept the invitation based on the understanding that unification without clear aims and objectives to fight the aggression of imperialist globalisation and oppression of neo-liberal economic

policies will not serve any effective purpose. In his presidential address to this conference Comrade M.K.Pandhe has dealt elaborately with the stand of CITU and therefore it need not be repeated in this paper.

However, critical observations about the conduct of the Vienna congress, the documents adopted and repercussions amongst the affiliates of European Trade Union Congress (ETUC) and WCL have surfaced. The congress was rather silent on the fight against capitalist exploitation, imperialist and colonial offensives. A very shameful incident took place in the Vienna Congress. With due invitation a delegation of National Confederation of Trade Unions (ZENROREN) of Japan was admitted in the Congress but moments before the Congress started they were removed from the Congress hall. Now in the post merger situation, it has become all the more imperative for the anti-imperialist and anti-neo-liberal forces to forge unity for struggle. The WFTU definitely has a role in this struggle for unity and unity for struggle.

Another development to take note of is the split of AFL-CIO (the only central TU of USA). With growing pressure of the US working class, facing the adverse impact of imperialist globalisation on and the aggressive anti-labour assault of MNCs as noted else where in this paper, the trade unions in the country are facing the challenge of providing effective leadership as anticipated by the workers and warranted by the situation. Trade union membership is declining fast in the country. The debate that attained prominence in the recent past was how to bring the workers within the trade movement. The slogan was : "organise the unorganised". The incumbent leadership of AFL-CIO was blamed for lack of initiative in this regard. Anyway, AFL-CIO has been split in the last congress held last year. A new trade union center has been launched in the USA. The name is 'Change to Win'. It is too early to comment on the new development in the trade union movement in USA.

Yet another significant trade union related organisational development is the formation of a new Trade Union Confederation in Brazil. The political commentators have attributed the new development concerning the question of 'class struggle'. The role of the presently biggest "traditional trade union confederation" of the country 'CUT' and MST (Rural Landless Workers' Movement) has led to erosion of class struggle. Now this situation, coupled with reported compromise by Lula regime against the interest of workers of Brazil, the workers of public sector, metal workers and civil construction workers have formed a new trade union confederation called 'CONLUTA, in a conference on 5-7 May 2006. As per reports over 2,700 delegates from 22 states representing nearly 1.8 million workers, "CONLUTA" represents an alternative social pole for the tens of millions of Brazilian workers and poor"

STRENGTHENING THE UNITY

To understand the importance of the international unity of the working class it is necessary to comprehend that under imperialist globalisation, transnational capital has been moving to every nook and corner of the world. The multinational companies have been dominating the world economy. The main features can be identified as the enormous concentration and centralisation of capital, internationalization of production, transnational monopoly, imperialist control over constantly developing new technology with huge capacity of mass production. In this situation the international unity of the working class movement has attained unprecedented urgency.

The fight against the neo-liberal regimes in the era of imperialist globalisation is not a day to day trade union struggle. In the nation states in the present situation the fight is to change the policies or for that matter changing the ruling polity. Thus it is not a matter of concern only to the trade union movement. It is a broader question of the entire toiling people. It is a basic conflict between capital and labour. Therefore the task before the trade union movement is to mobilize the entire toiling class under the clear political perspective of class struggle.

Today the attack faced by the workers in different sectors in the nation states originates in the policies pursued by the ruling polity of the country concerned. Therefore sector-wise struggles in the nation-states must culminate in national struggles directed against the anti-people and anti-worker policies of the pro-neo-liberal regimes. The question of developing international united resistance struggles by the neo-liberal policy hit working class needs to be understood in the light of the perception of the struggles in nation states. Because ultimately it is a question of defeating the policies prescribed by the forces of imperialism and practiced by the political forces in the nation states loyal to their international mentors. Today the basic consideration for strengthening the international unity of the working class should be the anti-imperialist content. We must remember that "Globalization is both an imperialist and a class phenomenon." Therefore, the exploited class must be mobilized against the imperialist forces.

Now the US administration is universally identified as the villain in the on going onslaught of imperialist globalisation. The world has been witnessing the unprecedented ire of the people against the US Administration of the day. According to the Pew Research Centre, a Washington surveyor of world opinion, under president Bush anti-Americanism is widely thought to have reached new heights and new depths. Its report says that "anti-Americanism is deeper and broader now than at any time in modern history." The people's upsurge against US imperialist hegemonic onslaught in Latin America, overt and covert revolt by the people of Arab and Africa against US machination, the resistance movement of the working class of Europe and Asia against the policies of imperialist globalisation, are definitely potential inputs for working out a strategy for the international struggles of the working class.

In such a situation the common ground for building the international unity of the working class can be based on the ever sharpening contradiction between the people and the US imperialism. It is necessary to identify a specific understanding and concrete steps in course of the discussion. To ignite such a process, some issues are recommended hereunder:

- There is no doubt that irrespective of affiliations, more and more workers opposed to US imperialism, imperialist globalisation and neo-liberal economic regimes are coming to the fore throughout the world. The space for unification of these forces is wide open.
- Realignment of forces is bound to take place with the deepening crisis of capitalism, intensification of class conflict and growing struggles of the working class, particularly in the developing countries and in the developed countries as well.
- The question of forging broader international unity of working class willing to join the struggles against the U.S. imperialist onslaughts can be the unifying factor.
- The core responsibility will have to be discharged by forces committed to the ideology of class struggles. Because de-ideologisation of the working class has been used as a means to promote imperialist globalisation.
- CITU today enjoys very high esteem in the world trade union movement. This is because of the commitment towards the struggles of the working class in the country and abroad in the fight against imperialist globalisation and neo-liberal economic policies. Such a position enjoins upon CITU to play a role in strengthening the international unity of the working class



CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS TWELFTH CONFERENCE

“Com. Suryanarayana Rao Nagar”

January 17 – 21, 2007

BANGALORE, KARNATAKA

COMMISSION PAPER

JUDICIARY AND THE INDIAN WORKING CLASS

Jurisprudence is not independent of class conflict. The manifesto of the Communist Party in 1948 clearly pointed out how jurisprudence in the capitalist system mainly serves the interest of the capitalist class. It gives ‘justice’ to a small minority and supports its exploitation of the vast majority of the population. While castigating the capitalist class the Communist Manifesto declared: “Your very ideas are but the outgrowth of the conditions of your bourgeois production and bourgeois property, just as your jurisprudence is but the will of your class made into a law for all, a will, whose essential character and direction are determined by the economical conditions of existence of your class.”

AN ARM OF THE STATE

According to Leninist definition of State the judiciary is an arm of the State and the ideology of the State is the ideology of the ruling class. Now in any class divided society class conflict is an antagonistic contradiction, which can be resolved by the elimination of the one by the other. In his celebrated work ‘The State and Revolution’ Lenin wrote: “The state is a product and a manifestation of the irreconcilability of class antagonisms. The state arises where and insofar as class antagonisms objectively cannot be reconciled. And, conversely, the existence of the state proves that the class antagonisms are irreconcilable.”

Right from slave society to capitalist society the judiciary in each given society has been serving the interest of the ruling class. In the State and Revolution Lenin wrote, “The ancient and feudal states were organs for the exploitation of the slaves and serfs; likewise, the modern representative state is an instrument of exploitation of wage-labour by capital.”

Thus in slave society, for example, in the ancient Greek, the ideology of the State considered slavery is essential and helps development of civilization. Naturally, the Greek judiciary at that ancient time was also in favour of the slave system and supported it. Similarly in feudal society where the ruling ideology was feudal exploitation, the judiciary at that time also favoured royalty and feudal exploitation of the peasantry and other toiling people. The Judiciary stood by all arbitrary royal proclamations as valid law. The situation was no different in capitalist society. In the advent of capitalist society workers were subjected to all round barbarous exploitation and the judiciary fully supported the ruling class.

However, with the passage of time and as a result of growing struggles of the working class the situation changed. The capitalist class was compelled to grant concessions to the workers in respect of trade union rights and in respect of other service conditions including wages and benefits. The role of the judiciary was also in tune with the turn of events. But it must be borne in mind that such change took place due to a massive protracted fight for rights launched by the working class. Labour legislations were enacted by Parliament. In the period of Capitalists’ Welfare State philosophy, workers’

rights and benefits given by the state were also favoured by the judicial rulings because it helped the developments of capitalism in that period.

In India also, in the early period of industrial establishments, the judiciary supported all anti-labour rules and methods of exploitation. However, after independence, the country witnessed many bitter struggles of the workers, which compelled the Government to adopt labour laws to give some concessions to the workers, of course without basically changing the exploitative system. While the legislatures had to enact favourable labour laws, the judiciary also extended jurisprudential support.

CURRENT COURSE OF SHIFT

From day one of the onset of economic liberalization, successive Governments at the center have been striving for bringing about disastrous changes in the existing labour laws. The design is behind such moves are: (i) to erect legal obstructions in organizing trade union movement and (ii) to take away the legal rights and protections at least formally available to the workers under these labour laws. Their ultimate motive is to crush the ever-increasing struggles of the working class to thwart the age-old nefarious game of the exploiting classes to shift the burden of economic crisis to the toiling people.

In concrete terms, the intention of the employers' class is to legitimize 'hire & fire' and full scale contractorisation and casualisation of workplaces along with completely freeing the contractors and principal employers from any obligation towards the contract and casual workers they employ. In reality, the entire exercise by the ruling polity for changing the labour laws is aimed at imparting such flexibility as to render the employment relationship more disguised and ambiguous and thereby facilitating employers' class from all their obligations towards labour who creates wealth for the society and profits for them.

NAKED INFRINGEMENT BY JUDICIARY

Due to multiple factors, even during the long span of one and half decades since the advent of the evil era of liberalization, not much progress could be made by the Legislative and/or Executive wings of the state either at the central or provincial levels in bringing about the designed pro-employer legislative changes.

The legislatures are a body of elected representatives by the people and peoples' movement led by the working class against such pro-employer changes in labour laws and the neoliberal policies in general had a bearing on their positions on the concerned issues; those movements also played a crucial role in altering the political equations in those elected forums. The defeat of the NDA Government and the subsequent UPA Government's dependence on the Left Political Parties are expressions of such changes in the political equations created by peoples' actions, which hurdles sweeping legislative changes in favour of employers' class particularly on labour and people related issues.

In such a situation, Judiciary has crept in to fill the gaps, usurping the role of the legislature. In the era of complete domestication of the 'State' by the forces of capital, both domestic and foreign, under neo-liberal economic policy perspective, jumping over the line by the Judiciary may possibly be explained as the effort of one wing of the 'State' to fill in the blanks created by the failure of the other in suppressing the democratic rights of toiling people. The situation has been captured thus, "After the failure of all these attempts, it is apparently the turn of the judiciary to take the lead in restricting the democratic space enjoyed by the people." Now it is evident that during the last one decade or so the attitude of the judiciary on matters of democratic rights of the working class has been reflecting

the new ethos of liberalization, the market economy friendliness, in conformity with the ideology of class divided society that “the dominant outlook of the ruling classes cannot but affect the various instruments of the state including the judiciary.

Former Justice of Supreme Court of India V. R. Krishna Iyer said, “Unwittingly, class bias may creep into their overt impartiality” Referring to the book “ Politics of the Judiciary” by Professor J.A.G. Griffith, Iyer further said, “judges, being but human, may not be immune to class bias, never intentional but subconscious in their surrender to partiality.”

THE PERIOD OF INCLINATION

However, before we proceed to look at the avowed anti-worker judgments delivered by courts pertaining to the era of economic liberalisation, it would be pertinent to take note of the attitude of the judiciary during the period prior to the dawn of economic liberalization in the country. The fact is that during the pre-liberalisation period the judiciary, upholding the rights of the working people, also pronounced many pro-worker judgments.

The Supreme Court appreciated and implemented the mandate of directive principles of the constitution during the period when the bourgeois - landlord government badly needed the support of the working people for implementing its programme. The judgments delivered upto the period of the eighties demonstrate the attitude of the Court to incorporate the social philosophy of the Constitution into their judgments.”

The Supreme Court built up a regime of employment security for the working class by granting reinstatement as a normal relief with back wages; upholding of numerous decisions of Labour Tribunals on wages and bonus; regularisation of casual and temporary daily rated workers; expansion of the definition of industry thereby covering a large section of population of working class under the protection of the Industrial Disputes Act.

The Court evolved law on immunities under the Trade Unions Act 1926 in *Rohtash Industries Ltd. vs. Rohtash Industries Staff Union* (1976) 2 SCC 82; granted right to worker to participate in winding up proceedings of a Company in *National Textile Workers Union vs. R.P. Rama Krishnan* (1983) 1SCC 228. It recognised the right to strike as a legal right in *B.R. Singh vs. Union of India* (1989) 4 SCC 710. It upheld the constitutional validity of Section 25N (No retrenchment without the permission of the Government) of the Industrial Disputes Act 1947 being a reasonable restriction of the right of an employer to carry on trade and business - *Workmen vs. Mahalakshmi Mills Ltd* (1992) 3 SCC 336.

ANTI-WORKER ATTITUDINAL CHANGE

But the attitude of the judiciary in our country has undergone a directional change under the influence of the neo-liberal socio-economic policies adopted by the successive Governments particularly after 1991. The changed approach of the Court has resulted in tremendous erosion of the rights of workmen and laws are now being interpreted with a pro-employer orientation.

This has sharply manifested in areas such as: right to strike; subtle introduction of the principle of hire and fire by refusing reinstatement and grant of back wages; regularisation of daily wagers, casual workers and temporary workmen employed for years; burden of proof has been placed on the employees although documents of proof may be in the hands of the employers; definition of workmen; tests for determining existence of employer-employee relationship; deterrent and legalistic attitude of the Court in disciplinary proceedings.

In the attitudinally-changed era, the judiciary has become desperate even to go beyond the confine of the proviso of law in their pursuit for the current pro-employer and anti-worker orientation. This has become evident from the fact that the judges have been exercising discretionary jurisdiction instead of statutory provision of concerned law. The Supreme Court, while delivering a judgment has observed, "Discretionary jurisdiction in a court need not always be conferred by a statute."

ATTACK ON BASIC TRADE UNION RIGHTS

The hard earned basic rights of the working class has been targeted by the judiciary of the day - getting more and more committed to the doctrine of liberalization, globalisation and privatization. The most shocking attack on the basic right of the working class has been delivered by the Supreme Court in their infamous verdict in the case of Tamil Nadu state government employees pronouncing that, "coming to the question of right to strike - whether fundamental, statutory or equitable moral right to strike - in our view no such right exists with government employee." Similar attack has been mounted by the Kerala High Court in its judgment against the right of political party to call 'bandh' and so too by the Calcutta High Court's judgment imposing ban on public demonstrations.

In February this year the Supreme Court declared a ban on demonstrations, dharnas and rallies, publication of articles etc. during the pendency of trials in courts. Such pronouncement imposes severe restriction on the right to freedom of speech and expression. It may be recalled that Shri Rajendra Sail was sentenced to seven days' imprisonment by the Supreme Court for criticizing the acquittal of the murderer of trade union leader Shankar Guha Niyogi by the Madhya Pradesh High Court. While pronouncing the judgment the apex court noted, "the accusation that the judiciary is not powerful enough to punish wealthy people would bring the administration of justice into ridicule and disrepute. Such tendency deserves to be firmly curbed."

The above restrictions and bans imposed by the judiciary in pronouncing different judgments has encouraged the employers' class to obtain through the different branches of the judiciary liberal judicial restriction against carrying out even routine trade union activities. Orders of prohibition are liberally issued in advance against gate meetings and simple campaign and propaganda oriented activities like demonstration, rallies etc in the workplace or even near the workplace. Strikes are declared illegal well before its commencement. All these are their source of encouragement for employers' class to a resort to high-handedness against trade union organizers and spreading panic among the general workers.

The anti-worker approach of the court is well framed in the observation that, "The Supreme Court's latest stance contrasts sadly with both the substance and spirit of earlier progressive rights-led rulings by the apex court, delivered by many outstanding jurists."

It is a matter of serious indignation that the judges of the apex court have resorted to virtual falsehood as noted in the editorial of The Hindu dated 13.08.2003 under the title 'Supreme Court and the right to strike' it said, "In the recent case, the Court has cited, not always in context, various judgments to the effect that, "employees have no fundamental right to strike," that there is no constitutionally guaranteed right to "effective collective bargaining", that strikes cannot be justified "in the present-day situation" either for a "just or unjust cause" and that the strike weapon "does more harm than any justice." The editorial further continued to say, "If these quotations were to match the ground reality, then India in 2003 could not claim to be a democracy with any kind of regard for its working people."

NO MORE FULL BACK WAGE ON REINSTATEMENT

In the state of Uttar Pradesh vs. Jaibir Singh, (2005) the Supreme Court has observed that so far the Court has placed over-emphasis on the rights of workers and undue curtailment of the rights of the employers to organize their business.

The court has resented, in direct negation to its own earlier view that “the cases of employment and non-employment have given rise to large number of industrial and labour claims resulting in awards granting huge amount of back wages for past years allegedly as legitimate dues of the workers who are found to have been illegally terminated or retrenched. In many such cases such burdensome awards compel the employer of moderate means to close down industries. The awards of reinstatement and arrears wages by Labour Courts treating small enterprises as industries is experienced as a serious industrial hazard particularly for those engaged in the private sector. “ The court has equated the workers with the employers and opined that workers have equally exploited the employers and declared that exploitation both by workers and employers has to be checked.

Redefining the term ‘industry’ as appearing in Section 2 (i) of the Industrial Disputes Act the Supreme Court has observed that the Learned Judges of the Court in Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board vs. R. Rajappa : AIR 1978 SC 548 and 969 seem to have confined only such sovereign functions outside the purview of Industry which can be termed strictly as constitutional functions of the three wings of the State namely Executive, Legislature and Judiciary. The concept of sovereignty in a constitutional democracy is different. In a democracy governed by the constitution, the sovereignty vests in the people and the government undertakes public welfare activities in discharge of its constitutional obligations. Such activities in discharge of sovereign functions fall outside the purview of Industry.

Reversing its own long standing landmark judgment ruling that full back wage must be paid to the worker on reinstatement in service, the court has come out with recent judgment denying Back Wages and impairment of Security of Service.

The Supreme Court held that although in the past direction to pay full back wages on a declaration that the order of termination was invalid used to be the usual result, but is now realizing that the industry may not be compelled to pay to the workman for the period during which he apparently contributed nothing or for a period that was spent in unproductively.

The Court went on to hold that when justice is the buzzword in the matter of adjudication under the Industrial Disputes Act it would be wholly improper on the part of the superior courts to make them (industrial courts) apply the cold letter of the statute mechanically. Rendition of justice would bring within its purview giving a person what is due to him and not what can be given to him in law. A person is not entitled to get something only because it would be lawful to do so.

Thus by a stroke of pen not only the right of full back wages in case of wrongful termination has been taken away, but right of security of employment is also taken away - as liability to pay back wages in case of order of reinstatement, used to deter the employers to take hasty/malafide actions. U.P. State Brassware Corporation Ltd and Another vs. Uday Narain Pandey (2006) 1SCC 479.

NO ‘EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK’

How the apex court has been influenced by the current disastrous policy of globalisation is clearly reflected in two judgments on same subject pertaining to two periods - before and after the advent of the policy of globalisation. The subject is ‘Equal pay for equal work’. In disposing the case between Randhir Singh vs. Union of India in the year 1982 the Supreme Court ruled clearly in favour of the worker attracting comment that, despite being under the jurisdiction of directive principle of the state policy in the Constitution, it was raised to the level of a fundamental right.

Now in reversing its own ruling and setting aside a judgment in favour of workers delivered by the High Court of Punjab and Haryana, a three member Bench of the Supreme Court in disposing an appeal

by the state Government of Haryana has observed, "The principle of equal pay for equal work has no mechanical application on every case." Castigating the High Court, the Bench has proclaimed that, "These are not matters where a writ court can lightly interfere ... In all these cases, we find that the High Court has blindly proceeded on the basis that the doctrine of equal pay for equal work applies without examining any relevant factors.

Without mincing words the apex court has admitted in clear terms that it has been influenced by the policy of globalisation. In course of writing the judgment in the case between U.P. State Bassware Corporation Ltd. vs. Uday Narayan Pandey decided on December 8, 2005 the two member bench has noted, "The changes brought about by the subsequent decisions of this Court, probably having regard to the changes in the policy decisions of the Government in the wake of prevailing market economy, globalisation, privatization and outsourcing is evident."

As we listen to the ardent advocates of 'market economy' under imperialist globalisation that in the present economic era trade union activities must be curbed if not banned altogether, so too the Supreme Court has aimed a sermon at the workers: "In the prevailing situation ... for redressing their grievances, instead of going on strikes, if employees do some more work honestly, diligently and efficiently, such gesture would not only be appreciated by the authority but also by people at large."

These utterances are undoubtedly the abject expression of class bias, audacity and mockery too. On the one hand workers are being totally deprived of their fundamental rights, brutalities by state machineries are showered on the hungry workers, trade union busting and killing of trade union organizers are constantly on the rise and on the other hand the Supreme Court hurls sermons at the workers to work 'honestly', 'diligently' and 'efficiently'!

CONTRACT LABOUR - NO ABSORPTION ON ABOLITION

In *Air India vs. United Labour Union*: (1997) 9 SCC 377 the Supreme Court held that the contract labour becomes automatically the employee of the principal employer in the event of abolition of contract labour. However, in *Steel Authority of India vs. National Union of Water Front Workers*: (2001) 7 SCC Page 1: the Supreme Court unsettled the settled law and ruled against automatic absorption on abolition of contract labour thus creating a situation where the rights of the workmen were heavily impaired. In subsequent cases on the basis of the judgment in *Steel Authority of India* the Supreme Court has been taking a stricter attitude even in cases where the work of permanent and perennial nature did enable the contract labour to be the employee of the principal employer. The Court held that though control was one of the important tests in determining employer-employee relationship it was not the only test. The Court further held that whether a relationship between employer and employee is genuine or a smoke screen or a camouflage through the mode of a contractor is essentially a question of fact to be determined on the basis of features of relationship, the written terms of employment and the actual nature of employment which were to be decided by the industrial adjudicator. The Court ruled that without ascertaining the facts no relief could be granted to the workmen.

In the case pertaining to Rajasthan Avash Vikash Sangsthan, the apex court going much beyond the issues referred to it, empowered the Employer (Rajasthan Government in this case) to restructure and downsize manpower and abolish posts at will without any obligation to re-deploy the employees rendered redundant by the employer.

The ruling of the Rajasthan High Court Division Bench, which the apex court has squashed, had only granted the affected employees the benefit of redeployment with pay-protection and service-continuity,

while permitting the closure of a unit of the State Housing Board. In fact the court has gone beyond the prayer of the petitioner and delivered the judgment granting the employer the unfettered 'right to hire and fire' which the employers' class have been clamouring for ever since the advent of liberalized economic policy regimes. The excitement with which the media had hailed the verdict goes to prove that the much sought after 'labour market reforms' had arrived, courtesy the judiciary.

The Supreme Court has also adversely ruled against the workmen of canteen although the canteen has been established by the company under its statutory obligations under the Factories Act, 1948 in the premises of the company. The Court held that the workmen could not be held to be workmen employed by the company because: (i) the canteen employees are not directly employed by the company; (ii) they have never moved to the company for leave and other benefits enjoyed by the regular and direct employees of the company; (iii) they got their wages from the respective contractors after signing the Register; (iv) they signed the Attendance cum Pay Register maintained by the Caterers.

It is evident that the Court has taken a completely legalistic view ignoring the fact that since the employees were employed through the Contractor none of these requirements could be fulfilled and the fact that they were the employees of the principal employer could be determined only on the basis of control exercised and the perennial and permanent nature of the work. *Ram Singh vs. Union Territory, Chandigarh*: (2004) 1 SCC 126. and *Workmen of the canteen of Coates of India vs. Coates of India Ltd.*: (2004) 3 SCC 547.

GOOD-BYE TO REGULARISATION

The biggest attack of the Court, however, has been on those sections of the employees who have been employed as casual and temporary daily rated workers for years together. The Court held them not entitled to qualify for regular employment. In *Secretary, State of Karnataka and others vs. Uma Devi and others*. (2006) 4 SCC Page 1, the Court simply upset the age old law on the subject and declared that even though these categories of workers have been employed for years together they are not entitled to regularisation as according to the Court there are "teeming millions" who are waiting for employment. The Court did not pause to consider as to what the authorities have been doing for not initiating the process of regular recruitment according to rules and did not ask why did not do so. On the one hand by its judgment the Court has allowed the authorities to indulge in blatant exploitation of the poor workers by keeping them daily wage workers for years together and on the other has denied their right to regular employment.

The judgment of the apex court precisely legitimates the blatant violation of the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act on unparalleled scale throughout the country - the central and state Governments being the forerunner, and virtually the Act stands amended, which the Government has been, so far, unsuccessfully trying to do in the era of 'economic reform'. In effect by this retrograde judgment the Court has perpetuated slavery. These decisions of the Supreme Court have introduced the doctrine of hire and fire through the back door.

Yet another pro-employer bias of the court was manifested in the case between *Municipal Corporation, Faridabad vs. Srinivas* (2004) 8SCC 195. Totally ignoring the fact that the documents relating to the employment of an employee are with the management, the Court has ruled that the burden of proving that the worker worked for 240 days in the preceding 12 calendar months prior to the alleged retrenchment lies with the worker and thus gave a go-by to the celebrated principle of law of evidence that for a proof of fact the best evidence should be produced, which in the case of employment the best record is always in the possession of the employer.

ON 'DISCIPLINARY' PROCEEDINGS

The Supreme Court has also taken a pro-employer attitude while dealing with the cases of disciplinary proceedings and has given a free hand to the employers to deal as they like in such cases. Here also the Court has stated that the one sided approach to protect the workmen is wrong.

Earlier in case of disciplinary proceedings the Supreme Court had adopted a reformatory attitude but now that is not the case. In such cases the Court has now adopted a very technical approach and adopted a deterrent policy as a general rule. Misconduct on account of law and order problem, long unauthorized absence, so-called lack of devotion to duties, lack of confidence and misappropriation by the employees have been held to be serious enough to deserve the extreme penalty of dismissal.

More recently the court has pronounced judgment upholding employers' action of dismissal of employees for alleged verbal abuse (read altercation with) of higher officials and for being found asleep at work. Delivering the judgment in the case of two workmen of Bennett Coleman, the Supreme Court has ruled that not only the employee be dismissed, but even their gratuity could be forfeited. While upholding the dismissal of a workman by Bharat Forge the court remarked, "falling asleep at work amounted to a level of misconduct that could justify dismissal." In the case of Mahindra and Mahindra the workman was dismissed after eleven years of an incidence of using "filthy" language against his officer. The court said using filthy language is sufficient ground warranting dismissal from service.

The Supreme Court in its earlier decisions had ruled that the law that mere participation in illegal strike or in the strike as such does not amount to abandonment of employment as is clear from the judgment of the Supreme Court in Punjab National Bank Ltd. vs. All India Punjab National Bank Employees Federation AIR 1960 Sc 160 and in Burn & Co, Ltd vs. their Workmen AIR 1959 SC Page 1111 that it is the right of the workmen to go on a strike and that mere participation even in illegal strike does not effect the service of workmen. In U.P. State Bridge Corporation Ltd. vs. U.P. Rajya Sethu Nigam Karmachari Sangh (2004) 4 SCC 268 however the Court has gone on a tangent and held that if the workmen on strike do continue to remain on strike and do not return to work despite repeated general notices, it would be treated as voluntary abandonment of service.

ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE JUDICIARY

It is a matter of serious concern that the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India has gone for a self-proclamation to the effect "that the role of the judiciary is to oversee the functioning of the other organs, so that they do not transgress their proper domains." Pointing out the lack of accountability of the judiciary, it has been said, while the judiciary assumes the authority to prevent transgression by Legislature and Executive, how about transgressions by the judiciary in the domain of the other organs of the state.

According to Professor Prabhat Patnaik , "The unquestioning acceptance of judicial verdicts, which is a typical feature of a modern democratic society, stems from a perception of the judiciary as an interpreter of the existing laws, not as a custodian of the nation's morality. The enforcement of "morality" is a task that in a democracy rests only upon the people, not upon a "select few" who not being elected, are not answerable to anybody."

It is high time that the working class and democratic movement of the country must go for a massive campaign to demolish the myth in the mind of the common people that in status judiciary is superior to the other organs of the state, impartial in functioning and a custodian of morality. For unleashing a popular movement against the onslaught of judiciary on the working class, it is essential that the mask of the 'superiority', 'impartiality' and 'morality' must be removed to acquaint the people with the reality under the mask.

TO SUM-UP

The judicial approach to strikes takes away from the possession of the workmen the great weapon of collective bargaining and has left them at the mercy of the employers. The well-settled decisions for determining existence of an employer-employee relationship have been totally unsettled now and the managements have been encouraged to engage contract labour even in respect of permanent and perennial jobs. It clearly shows that the Supreme Court is resorting to an interpretation of laws in favour of the employers as it feels that the protection of the employees has to be given a go-by so as to render the working class totally defenceless in the face of inhuman exploitation under the regimes of liberalization, globalisation and privatisation.

An in-depth scrutiny of the current behaviour of the judiciary would clearly show that in the cases pertaining to conflicts between labour and capital, on class related issues as a whole, the judgments in the post liberalization period demonstrated a clear bias in favour of the employers' class and the rich. But the most notable and alarming as well is that many of the judgments have gone much beyond the confines of the concerned current statute and the Constitution. These judgments amounted to an amendment of the existing laws of the land on the concerned labour related issues.

These acts of infringement by the Judiciary, an appointed structure by the State into the domain of the legislature constituted by the elected representatives of the people, bears dangerous portents for the democratic set up itself. Even under bourgeois democracy, the separation of power between executive, legislature and judiciary, each one supposed to operate within their domain defined by the constitution without infringing into others' area has been supposedly envisaged for striking a balance and maintaining harmony in democratic governance.

Jumping steps and crossing boundaries by different wings of the 'State' as has been happening of late due to 'judicial activism' poses severe threat to such prospects under the existing set up. Such jumping over the line or usurping the role of legislature by the Judiciary or assertion of dominance over elected peoples' representatives' forum signals danger of aberration in the democratic set up towards rolling back of democratic rights and systems and will have serious bearing on peoples' democratic rights, if not effectively addressed by the peoples' movement.

All round attack on the right of the working class, designed to convert the workplaces to a fertile ground of virtual slavery, thus demonstrates the proactive exercise of non-elected wings of the 'State' in curbing peoples' and labour rights in the face of obstacles being faced by the elected organ of the modern representative 'state'. This signals dangers of attenuation, rather the process of rolling back of democracy. The struggle in defense of the rights of the working class must be understood and fought with a clear understanding of the imminent challenges.

Right from the time the Supreme Court pronounced its August 2004 verdict denying the workers their right to strike, the trade union movement had unanimously urged the government to step in and take steps to undo the pernicious impact of the said judgement. Successive governments at the centre paid no heed to the trade union plea and persisted with their indifference towards labour rights. This has, in a way, emboldened the judiciary to tinker with the hard earned rights of workers by way of verdicts, one after another.

Rather, it appears to be a case not of default by the government, but one of deliberate design. The government has been sitting silent over persistent pleas for legislative intervention to correct the excesses indulged in by the judiciary taking upon itself the task of ushering in 'hire and fire regime', a familiar plea from the reformers' corner.

There are several loopholes and the grey areas in the existing labour legislations, which the employer-class is utilising not only to contravene the provisions intended to protect or benefit the workers. The judiciary also skillfully plays upon these very loopholes and grey areas to lend a legalistic credibility to its otherwise willful onslaughts against labour. The government on its part is fully aware of this aspect as well, but it deliberately refuses to address the issue of undoing the deficiencies in the legislative provisions.

Notwithstanding these deficiencies in the legal framework, the judiciary in pre-reform period had, in several instances, leaned on the directive principles of state policy in the Constitution to protect the interests of the weaker of the two classes in conflict viz. labour. Now, the judiciary goes overboard on the liberalisation bandwagon, throwing to the winds the basic human right to dignified employment and a decent work environment.

This anti-labour mindset that has descended on the judiciary is not accidental. It seems that the executive and the judiciary have decided upon a surreptitious redesigning of their respective roles, supplementary and complimentary to each other. This twin attack on labour rights, in tune with the liberalisation policies, to facilitate ruthless exploitation by the ruling classes, is a class affront. The working class must take on this challenge, rallying together all its forces.

NEED TO DELIBERATE

It is important that in course of the deliberations we focus on our perception and experience concerning the current change in the attitude of judiciary in order to arrive at a centralized understanding about the danger of the onslaught of the judiciary on the democratic rights of the people in general and working class in particular.

We further need to develop a concrete understanding that in the ultimate analysis judicial activism is a potential threat to the democratic structure of our polity. To look upon the judiciary as a custodian of political morality is a potential danger of "benevolent dictatorship".

It is an urgent necessity to identify the task and draw up a strategy to effectively dispel the widespread belief that: (i) judiciary is superior to the other two 'organs of the state' - the Legislature and the Executive and (ii) it (the judiciary) functions strictly under the confine of statutes and that too 'impartially'.

Such misplaced belief creates illusions amongst the common people about the role of judiciary. For mobilizing the people on a massive scale against the anti-working class prejudice of the judiciary, we have to launch a massive awakening campaign to acquaint the people with the anti-labour pro-capital character of the judiciary. The strategy for such a campaign must be focused in course of the deliberations. At the same time there is an urgent necessity to rouse the consciousness of the workers against the negative role played by the judiciary in the matter of labour rights and industrial disputes.

In the meantime we have also to deal with the question of appointing a 'Judicial Reform Commission' to consider the disturbing developments relating to the judiciary and suggest a mechanism to make the judiciary accountable to the democratic society of the people. Such an exercise has become all the more necessary in view of the startling exposure of "Hon'ble Judge's involvement in corruption." The appointment of judges should be done in a transparent manner and no favouritism should be shown in the matter.

Meanwhile the Judicial Accountability Bill piloted by the present Law Minister of the UPA Government has attracted critical observation for the provision for non-inclusion of persons outside the judiciary in the National Judicial Commission. While the supporters say inclusion of "non-judicial members promised

to make the accountability process more impartial”, the oft-quoted concern of judges is “that outsiders cannot be trusted to deal with judicial accountability.”

Concerns have been expressed that the present Bill has diluted a range of provisions at the instance of the judicial lobby, for instance, the existing statutory power of Parliament to appoint a committee consisting of an SC judge, an HC Chief Justice and a jurist to prove allegations made against a judge in an impeachment notice. The present exercise by the 12th conference of CITU will have to adopt a concrete view in the matter.



CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS TWELFTH CONFERENCE

“Com. Suryanarayana Rao Nagar”

January 17 – 21, 2007

BANGALORE, KARNATAKA

COMMISSION PAPER

APPROACH PAPER ON 11th FIVE-YEAR PLAN

A WORKING CLASS PERSPECTIVE

1.00 INTRODUCTION

1.01 The Planning Commission has recently released the APPROACH PAPER of the 11th Five Year Plan. The Plan is supposed to cover the period 2007 – 2011. The Plan would incidentally be the fourth one after India adopted neo-liberal economic policies under imperialist globalisation. Now in an economic regime which by itself is characterized as withdrawal of government from economic activities and no longer regards itself as a collective instrument to preserve and enshrine common welfare and the role of Government as the sole custodian of common economic interest is considered as the matter of history, all talks of planned development in true sense is no more than hoax. This paper would scrutinize whether the assessment and formulations presented in the title paper is in the light of past experience and reflecting the ground reality.

2.00 A BRIEF OVERVIEW

2.01 Incidentally, the 11th Plan would be the first comprehensive economic document to be published by the Planning Commission after the UPA Government is installed. People had reposed great hope that they would learn from earlier mistakes and make the necessary correction in the governance, in order to address the crisis in the economy which has emerged in the recent times and at least minimize the consequent social tension.

2.02 In the past the economic ministries in the Central Government, specially the Ministry of Finance while translating CMP to economic resolutions and annual budgets have generally failed to show the wisdom and firmness which has resulted to endless compromises and dilution. 11th Plan document should take a comprehensive view on CMP with a wider democratic appeal with pro-poor, pro-labour and pro-peasant directions. This alone can help re-surg-ing a new sense of patriotism and effectively combat the economic offensive against the people, which is on increase.

2.03 But unfortunately, it seems that the Planners have refused to take lesson from world experience or, the people perception in this country which had so vehemently expressed three years back about the reform. If all the recommendations commanded by the approach paper are taken together it gives the impression that the planning body has settled itself for furthering a parasitic type of growth basically dependent on trade, service and tertiary sectors. The basic emphasis is posted on an acceleration of growth rate, which would itself ‘trickle’ supposedly to reduce poverty and unemployment. This is nothing but wishful thinking.

3.0 PROJECTION WITHOUT FUND ALLOCATION

3.01 The following are the 'package' in nutshell proposed in the Approach Paper for the common people. These constitute the most elementary human requirement for a civilized society and the Approach Paper has only this much to say for its realization.

- a) "It is also true that large parts of our population are still to experience a decisive improvement in their standard of living. The percentage of the population below the poverty line is declining but only at a modest pace.
- b) "The 11th Plan provides an opportunity to restructure policies to achieve a new vision of growth that will be much more broad based and inclusive, bringing about a faster reduction in poverty and helping bridge the divides that are currently the focus of so much attention.' (Italics are ours). ...These steps must be further strengthened and consolidated into a strategy for the 11th. Plan"
- c) "This must be accompanied by a major effort to provide excess to basic facilities such as health, education, clean drinking water etc. to large parts of our population which do not have such access at present. These essential public services not only impact directly on welfare in the; short run, the also determine economic opportunities for the future.
- d) "These problems are more severe in some states than in others, and in general they are especially severe in rural areas.
- e) "Even if we succeed in achieving broad based and inclusive growth, there are many groups that may still be marginalized. These include primitive tribal groups adolescent girls, children in the age group of 0 to 3, and others who do not have strong lobbies to ensure that their rights are guaranteed. The 11th. Plan must pay special attention to the needs of these groups."

3.02 But these are far short even for a civil society which seek to join a globalize private regime. The matter of eradication of unemployment is totally lost in the approach paper. So the case of ensuring a sensible social security net which other pro-reformed nation took up even before opening up. This social security net constitutes unemployment allowance or insurance provision, health guarantee, and protection against lay off etc. etc.

3.03 The burning question of unemployment is conveniently mixed up with the poverty alleviation programme which the Approach paper sought to eliminate through National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. Thus the matter of immediate relief is mixed up with the long-term perspective. Question of equitable distribution, as mentioned earlier which has been formally dropped in last plan document not been restored. Planner did not commit to the word 'equity' even by mistake which the planners had once regarded as the most 'fascinating' vocabulary.

4.00 TARGETTED GROWTH BETWEEN 8% AND 9%

4.01 The Approach Paper while reposing hope that there could be a growth between 8% and 9% during the plan period, it refrained in spelling out sectoral projections in concrete term except in case of Agriculture. In Agriculture it proposed a growth of 4% annually. So far industrial production is concerned, it envisaged that the "11th plan should aim at raising the rate of growth of the industrial sector to 10% and manufacturing growth to 12% per annum". But one must not miss to note that even the developed countries of Europe or USA cannot think of such rate of growth as proposed by the Planning Commission in India. It is reported that China, having taken lesson from East Asian and

Argentinean crisis, is now trying to avoid such hollow growth. They have identified specific areas where FDI would be encouraged in future

4.02 As a part of strategy on agriculture, the plan envisaged that about 11 million hectare new land would come under irrigation during the plan period. Out of this 5.5 million hectare will cover major & medium scale and remaining 3.5 million hectare to minor irrigation. Remote sensing technology would be made to use in wider area. National Rain Fed Areas Authority would be set up as a vehicle for concerted action in rain fed area. In pursuance to National Commission of Farmers, attempt would be made to link farmer with Universities for increasing agricultural productivity. Approach paper recommends that "accelerated agricultural growth will require diversification into horticulture and floriculture" for the sustenance of growth in agriculture the planners envisaged the need for continuous technological progress. Animal Husbandry and Fishery which contributed 6.3% to total GDP would play important role in 11th plan period.

4.03 In industrial developments special emphasis has been put on infrastructure and skill formation. General infrastructural development initiative would be supplemented with the promotion of Special economic Zones and Special Economic Regions. The approach Paper considers the Technological modernization as the key to high industrial growth. There would be sufficient growth in chemical, Pharmaceutical sectors. Service sector because of its job creation capacity would get special focus during 11th plan period. Growth in professional services in different services, global offshore IT services (out sourced software services) and global business process off shoring (BPO) would play important role during 11th plan. Similarly expansion of construction, housing and real estate business, retail trade & organized trade would get prominence.

4.04 Approach paper's view in favour of exploring the scope for transnational gas pipelines ventilates the need of foreign policy initiative for taking wider view so that the proposed pipe line through India-Pakistan and Iran is explored. Proposal for converting Naptha based fertilizing plant to Gas based is welcoming. So far infrastructure development is concerned National Highway Development and Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana would be expanded in a massive way. When the NHDP would add 13318 km in the golden Quadrilateral, the later would connect 1500 rural habitations from plain and hilly areas with urban centres. Similarly modernization and technological up-gradations is proposed in other transport services and ports. In power sector an addition of 60,000 MW in the capacity is proposed for 11th plan.

5.00 IDEOLOGICAL CONSTRAINT

5.01 Planners claimed that the benefit would flow inclusive of growth and growth should be faster. The title paper says: 'Work done in the Planning Commission and elsewhere suggests that the economy can grow between 8% and 9% per year on a sustained basis..' (Italic is ours). . But big question is why 'inclusiveness' is qualified with so called 'faster' growth rate and this should be 8% or 9% and not less than that. Why it is so?

5.02 Here lies the fallacy of planning, under 'Bankers' regime'. Planning would not benefit people directly, benefit would not flow out of planning but would 'trickle' in the process of making the 'reach further richer'. That is why noble laureate & economist Joseph Stiglitz commented that Globalisation is creating richer countries with poor people.

5.03 The approach paper has finally relaxed to a "supply based" economic strategy and said "The growth component of the strategy is therefore important for two reasons: it will contribute directly by raising income levels and employment for the population in general and it will also help to finance programmes that are necessary to ensure that growth to more broad based and inclusive".

5.04 The title paper has noted: " Competition is the best guarantee of consumer protection and should be strongly encouraged". This is how an economic regime is aimed to attract foreign investment and especially FII fund and also export oriented. This is bound to be consumer based and export oriented and cannot response to basic necessities of the people. Competition becomes the basic ethos of such economy. This competitiveness has been used as prime instrument to destroy indigenous industry and especially small-scale industry and also agriculture.

6.00 GIMMICK OF INCLUSIVENESS

6.01 Title Paper while moving to the details, got it separated from the basic objective it professed earlier. For instance, sector wise targets and the vehicle for execution, together form a basic 'approach' for a planning document. But the planners, it seems initiated the process devoid of that unity. In the name of 'faster growth' the document lost its basic approach of 'inclusiveness' of attaining objectives. As a consequence the Approach paper lost its homogeneity and unity of logic. Parameters are drawn like three parallel lines but desired the people to believe that those would sometime come together.

6.02 After making some pious talk the approach paper suggests for (a) 'trickle' down strategy (b) trade based economic growth (c) 'private' as the vehicle for execution. Planners knew it better no third world nation which has not committed land reform could hardly attain 8% or 9% growth and even it is achieved, it is unhealthy growth which widens disparities.

7.00 PRIVATISATION REITERATED

7.01 The approach paper avoided to make any concrete indication on the matter of public sector outlay but did not fail to suggest number of instruments to effect further privatization and multinationalisation. It cannot be assumed that the process of execution would be public and plan would be privately funded. Approach Paper can be designated as the document towards "Privatised and Multinationalised" India. The Approach Paper says : "The private sector, including farming, small scale enterprises and the corporate sector, has a critical role to play in achieving the objective of faster and more inclusive growth. This sector accounts for 70% of the total investment in the economy and our policies must aim at creating an environment in which entrepreneurship can flourish."

7.02 The Approach paper has invented one more 'noble' instrument so that Public Assets could be directly used by private. While introducing the matter of public investment, it assures "strategy outlined in this paper will require large increases in plan expenditure in several sectors in both the Central and State plans." But in the next immediate paragraph it says 'need for some of the infrastructure expenditure can be moderated by relying on PPP' which planners clarified as Public Private Participation. This is nothing but privatization in disguise.

7.03 The Planners visualizes in the Approach Paper three kinds of such 'partnership' (a) Public-Private investment for private use and management (b) in the areas of infrastructure which is 'unlikely to attract private investment' and also in the areas 'where private investment is feasible, it will need public support through viability gap funding'. The approach paper cardiographs the areas it looks forward for PPP:

- (i) Construction and operation of infrastructure services such as Highways, Roads, Airports etc. In Railways the so called 'freight corridor' is nothing but an arrangement for private business at the cost of Public. System would be provided for private use, but loss of goods in transit would be accounted against Indian Railways.

- (ii) Irrigation, water conservation which may attract 0.5% extra expenditure on GDP annually.
- (iii) In the areas of health services, sanitation and education which are likely to attract new investment.

7.04 The Approach Paper has prescribed private instrument for education. The title paper while highlighting several lacunas in schools, higher and technical education systems summed up, as if, public education system is incompatible to present international challenges. It prescribed a peculiar route which would ultimately not bring improvement to the system but satisfy the 'mentors' who guide us in 'structural adjustment'. There is no doubt in it that our education system needs total overhauling. It should begin from Sharva Sikh Abhijan and expanded to general mass education. Communication system in school education required to be improved as diagnosed in the approach paper. Before, that our policy maker should realize, the character of the basic challenge. The challenge lies for elevating an underdeveloped mind molding to the emerging knowledge based technological revolution. The country during the last sixty years could manage to adjust with the knowledge system flowed from industrial revolution which is now required to be upgraded.

7.05 But our planners should not have forgotten that no private or multinationals have contributed in upgrading our knowledge or technological base at their own wisdom. In many of the third world nations, even armed with proper technology transfer agreement, could not extract them because of low knowledge base in their country. India has once been regarded as is the storehouse of highest number of technical personnel to day, not because of private or multinational companies. It has happened through indigenous process of combining general education, scientific & technical education, research & development with high-tech mass scale production activities and mostly through Public sector industries. In the era of technological revolution we need to upgrade the existing technical education so that we may have easy access to knowledge based technological know how which is occupied by developed nations and mostly USA. Keeping this in view we will have to moderate entire education system right from Sarvaya Siksha to technical education. It is strange that the planners thought that the school based on elitism or private companies could undertake this task. Approach paper showered all praise for the private education system and recommended privatized school education through public funding. It suggested 'coupon system' for public entry to private school, the strategy so designed would satisfy two targets. In one hand it would privatize the education system and on the other would unburden state from the responsibilities of universalized secondary education which becomes constitutional guarantee after India's Constitution is amended to this effect. Planners are thinking also in term of introducing foreign Universities to operate in India independently.

7.06 **Partnership with Civil Society:** Approach paper innovates this instrument to reduce the Public role in social sector development. Title paper says: "11th. Plan should aim at encouraging partnerships between CSOs and PRIs". The so-called civil society would be empowered to execute the matter of 'inclusiveness' for meeting the basic necessities. Matter becomes clear when the approach paper says: "In our situation, access for the mass of our people can only be assured through a substantial effort at public financing of these services. In most cases, this also means public provision though there is obviously room for partnership with private entities, including especially non profit bodies and civil society involvement.." In this context it should be noted that there is an international design for widening area of NGOs, even in the areas which generally trade unions takes care. Many foreign funded NGOs are in work and quite a large number of them are funded directly by USA or questionable quarters. Civil society organisations must grow but those who are originated through conspicuous roots should be under scanner. If question of civil society comes, name of Panchayet and Municipality should come first.

7.07 Privatisation of Coal & Other Mining: Planning Commission has come out for 'denationalization' of coal mines which is so far unitedly resisted by the workers. It says, "Taking longer term view of energy production there is a strong case for denationalizing coal so that private sector investment can come into this crucial area." Further, the document says ' If petroleum, which is much scarcer than coal, is open to the private sector there is no reason why coal should not also be opened up". Reportedly the Ministry of Coal is considering for 100% FDI in green field mining'.

7.08 Planners suggests, however, 'Pending a consensus on this issue, every effort should be made to expand coal production through the route of captive mines. Large coal users, especially in the power sector, can be given available proven coal blocks for developing captive mines.' Thus the planners proposes to legalize illegalities. Already, one third of the coal is produced and sold through outsourcing which would be added by the new tips provided by the planning body, though law remains that all Coal in India is vested with Coal India Ltd.

7.09 The Approach Paper has also called for further change in the Mining Act. It has now suggested for amendment in the Mineral Law for enabling the Indian and foreign private companies to loot the country's minerals resources. Approach Paper elucidates the intention of the proposed change in the regulation: "The procedures should ensure that there is seamless transition from the stage of reconnaissance permit through prospective license."

7.10 Liquidation of Small Scale and Traditional Sectors: Successive Plans have almost eliminated these sectors by way of withdrawal of reservation & subsidies and also by raising the upper investment limit. These sectors account for 40% of the total manufacturing and 35% of the total export and had been employing largest number of work force. Now the approach paper suggests the same prescription. Approach Paper says "We need to change the approach from emphasis on subsidies to creating an enabling environment ... 11th. Five Year Plan should restrict subsidies to those needed to create a level playing field and to reflect the costs or benefits that might be imposed on others in the society.' After narrating how the withdrawal of subsidies would 'help the small scale sector' it went on advising how the removal of import barrier would boost this sector. Title Paper continues arguing "It should incentivise innovation and creativity. It should mitigate business risk for start-ups, by removing all entry barriers. It should provide infrastructure and liberate VSEs from the inspector raj.'

7.11 FDI in Retail Trade: Approach paper while arguing for FDI in retailing says "While the bulk of retailing will continue to be in the small scale and informal sector, it must be recognized that modern, organised retailing brings many advantages to producer and also to urban consumers ..." etc etc. and then the title paper came to the main point: " Foreign Direct Investment in retailing has been allowed to play a larger role including in hyper markets and multibrand retail stores.' The consequence of opening of retailing on self-employment and small producers is not required any explanation. But it is necessary to note that a production system based on 'bad quality' growth and trade orientation can survive alone on USD import, which ever may be the form and content. However, the Approach paper shown some concern about the prevailing public and political response to the matter. It concludes " This is an area of policy where there are different views. We need to evolve a consensus keeping in mind the balance of advantages and disadvantages."

8.00 PUBLIC INVESTMENT AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

8.01 It is noted earlier that The Approach Paper left the matter of investment pattern as guessing affairs. While indicating annual additional expenditure involves in different sectors, it indicated some percentage in terms of GDP but is silent on source fund. So far public investment is concerned it

maintained total silence except indicating that 'However, it is evident from earlier Chapters that the strategy outlined in this paper will require large increased in Plan expenditure in several sectors in both the Central and State plans'.

8.02 If the Planning Commission and the Government decides to pursue the earlier policy in the matter of public investment, the declared objective of 'inclusive growth' would remain an unmitigated wisdom. No plan finds its creditability so long it is not suitably linked with specific outlays. More precisely fund should flow in creating social assets and productive capital. Inclusive growth could only be based on public investment. Private never invest for addressing 'access to basic facilities' but keeping eye over rise and fall of the sensex. Planning Commission should take lesson from past experience. Second plan which contributed a notional rate of growth by 4.2.% but was responsible for the creation of highest quantum of social assets and basic facilities and also giant productive capacities. Basic facilities created so long in India has been the contribution of collective co-operation between government and Public sector efforts. Even if the matter of poverty alleviation is considered, according to planning commission assertion poverty declined by only 8% during 11 years since 1983, which was just half the mark of 13 years' attainment between 1977 and 1990 when rate of growth was much more lower.

8.03 But, experience of post-reform planning has been different. Targets and outlays had been fixed on pre-determined notions and assumptions. Mostly, those were notional. Ultimately, funds were allowed to flow for meeting administrative and overhead cost. And of course a small percentage went for creating assets in strategic areas like defense, communication and such special areas. Agricultural sector which, employs 50% of the country's workforce, had been totally out of focus from the planning and was stripped from any asset creation. This, combining with other internal and extraneous constraints reduced our economy unviable both in quantity and quality.

8.04 Under investment has been regarded as one of the reason why the 10th plan could not attain its target of 8% and there was a shortfall of 1%. This was mainly because of under investment of Public Sector savings and surpluses. According to 2003-2004 Public enterprises Survey 50 % of the Enterprises had together a surplus and reserves amounted to Rs. 2,21,157 crores which accounts for 7.5% of GDP, but actively invested amount was only Rs. 81,805 crores i.e. only 37% of such savings & surpluses.

8.05 For people oriented success of the plan huge amount of public investment is required. Productive activities both in agriculture and industry required to be re-oriented towards high quality mass production which would proliferate down stream production. In the field of education and Research & Development too heavy public investment would be required. Past experience teaches us that on these crucial areas nation cannot rely on private.

8.06 Public investment is possible by increasing saving which could be created through better use of existing productive assets and by means of increasing internal resource mobilization. Internal resources can be mobilized basically by raising mining royalties, raising of taxes on high profit and on high cost consumer goods like luxury car, air journeys, capital gain tax and high cost gift etc. Money could be realized through unearthing of black money and progressively reducing wasteful expenditure etc. and even through deficit financing.

9.0 UNEMPLOYMENT

9.01 On Current Daily Status unemployment stood at 7% in the year 2000. According to NSSO report male unemployment in rural areas shoot up from 5.06% in 1993-94 to 9% by 2004. and from 6.7% to 8.1% in urban areas and female unemployment increased from 5.6% to 9.3% in urban areas and in

rural areas from 10.5% to 11.7%. Most dangerously, according to 10th plan report, youth unemployment had been 13% at the end of 9th. Plan. The Approach Paper estimated that unemployment amongst youth would touch the figure of 15% by the end of 10th plan. Recent ILO report too vindicated the danger of unprecedented rise of unemployment amongst youth.

9.02 Calculations of unemployment is becoming irrelevant because of quality decline. In the year 2000 when rate of unemployment has been only 7% the rate of poverty had touched the rate of 27%. Latest NSSO report estimated 28% of total male industrial workers belongs to hotel Industry. ILO report too estimated that against a 74% rise of productivity, real wage in manufacturing fallen by 22% during the last 10 years. Another revealing input for thought found in course of 61st. round of NSSO survey, the report of which is released recently. It found that in most of the so called high growth area poverty level has gone up. They mentioned specifically of Maharashtra, Delhi and Hariyana when rate is declined in economically backward state like Orissa or Bihar.

9.03 **Right for Hire and Fire:** So far the trade union movement is concerned, the matter of legislative sanction for 'hire and fire' is already a rejected issue. In view of the fact that high handedness of employers brought unprecedented distress for Indian worker there remained no space to consider this aspect. Planning commission knows the situation. Still it commanded in the Approach Paper for amendments in Section V-B of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 and Contract Labour (Abolition and Regulation Act.) . This mind set cannot be entertained.

9.03 (a) **Declining Manufacturing:** Quality decline in employment is the result of downhill journey of Manufacturing. Decline is registered both in quantity and quality. Our Steel and cement Industry do no longer dependent over Engineering or capital goods industry but over the unhealthy urbanization, free-estate flare up and also high-way expansion which cannot be 'manipulated' indefinitely. Already, the Chief Executive of a major steel producer cautioned the industry about the impending crisis. India lost its excellence over Engineering and Capital goods to knowledge based high tech goods import. Growth in capital goods was reduced to negative growth, which was (-) 3.7% in 2001-02. India's competitive edge over automobile spares, pharmaceuticals and chemical industries is hanging on fire. In Sugar of course we are sustaining. Technological up-gradation in textile has provided some increase in growth and also in manpower but impact of such up gradation in Jute is marginal. Even than it is doubtful whether the textile industry would be able to take advantage of the withdrawal of quantitative restrictions.

9.03 (b) Despite all restrictions and denigration, Public Sector is still contributing best of the quality and also quantity in manufacturing. To consider Industry as a whole also Public sector's performance is satisfactory. Its working in the area of gas and electricity, steel & engineering, petroleum is commanding and contributing fairly to GDP. In the mining sector Public sector is playing commanding role in Coal. In the field of high-precision knowledge based industry public sector is doing very well.

9.03 (c) But the matter of greatest concern is that the sector which are basically responsible for 'QUALITY GROWTH' i.e. Manufacturing and Agriculture are declining cumulatively. High growth in these two crucial areas could provide quality life to society. India's manufacturing contribution to GDP ranged between 15.8% and 17.2 % during 1998 and 2000 which has not improved in the subsequent period. This is against China's 32.9 and 34.5%, Malaysia's 19.3 and 32.8% . Even Thailand's record supersedes India with 21.9% and 31.9%. This is according to World Development Report, quoted in 10th Plan mid term appraisal report.

9.03 (d) **Glorification of I. T. to cover Manufacturing collapse:** However, having considered all these factors planners thought that if the reform has to be carried forward there is little hope for

manufacturing survival. This led them towards trade orientation and encouraging service sector, which is nothing but choice for tertiary in lieu of primary area and also on outsourcing of low based knowledge through IT. Hence the Approach paper glorifies the capitulation : "India's remarkable success in IT enabled services has prompted some observers to conclude that China has a comparative advantage in manufacturing whereas India has an advantage in services and we should therefore concentrate on growth of high value services." What a great and easy capitulation. Reality is that India competes with Ireland, China, Ceylon and few other middle group developing nations on the matter of IT outsourcing with a global share of 3% which is again shown a declining trend. So far IT industry is concerned India inhibits only three of the 270 IT Companies and none of them manufactures the basic ingredient, which is called IC or Integrated Circuit. In recent period some of the companies are making the design of IC structure or case of lower quality. However, India exports a good amount of low knowledge based Software, which is again dependent on the access of high quality items through import route.

9.03 (e) **High growth 'inclusiveness' drags towards foreign exchange trap:** It is reckoning that the Approach paper links 'high growth inclusiveness' with the balance of payment system. It calculates against a prospective GDP growth of 7%, current account deficit would rise from present level of 2% to 2.4% and for a growth of 9% deficit would shoot to 2.8%. In all these calculations it is implicit that India's economy is now fully dependent on high cost import. Globalisation has forced us to import everything from 'sand to elephant' Each shipment from foreign harbor for India to follow counter shipment of our precious mineral at their dictated price and low priced manufacturing. Still negative current account balance is widening in leaps and bound. More the growth, more is the acceleration of import to cause heightening of current account deficit. For meeting the negative balance country has to maintain a reserve. But most tragic part of the 'game' is that nation is put for a ransom for making a reserve house for low technology based 'consumer goods' production. Our self reliance in technology and technical manpower are being transform to create 'export hub' and 'assembling point' at the cost of our own future. Our mineral resources are being looted 'at our consent' and sometime with 'legislative consent'. We are made to mobilize foreign exchange to meet the current account balances by handing over our land and productive assets to foreign hand. Inflow of each USD under FII route means transfer of our productive capacities or landed assets to foreign hand. All the more country is getting indebted towards an 'foreign exchange trap'. Consequence is now well known as it happened to East Asian and Latin American Nations. According to Reserve Bank Report FII component to total reserve has shoot up to 43.2%.

9.03 (f) Trade based high growth inclusiveness will push the government for desperate mobilization of USD, this should come from any where and through any route and also at any cost. This is the context behind suggesting change in the mining law, denationalization of coal mining, innovating public private partnership (PPP) route for private use of Public fund etc. etc. This is the reason why India is made to succumb to the pressure of FII (Foreign Institutional Investor). They are allowed to fraud the country from within and outside. Many Private Equity Fund (PEF), in foreign land, are acting as front of third parties for picking up controlling stakes in listed Indian Companies. They sometime use Maritious route for tax evasion and some time operate at the strength of the license issued to FII stationed in India. These FIIs promote speculative economy within the country. Ministry of Finance has allowed them free business. It has recently permitted them to procure Government security to the tune of 2.6 billion dollar and market them in the stocks. This right would be extended up to 3.2 billion dollar by the end of March,2007.

9.03 (g) FDI movement is no longer a one way journey. FII got the test of the blood. As they know that the country has to live on their toe, they withdrew funds without any notice. It so happened when

in May, 2006 the Department of Direct Taxation acted over a CAG report and tried to fix those FIIs who are operating from outside, stock market dropped overnight making the people pauper. Finance Ministry had withdrawn the move to pacify the FIIs But they did never oblige to pick up equities of middle level companies. Present hype in stock market based on equities of multinationals and big companies but equity price of middle investor is not rising at all.

9.03 (h) Outflow of foreign exchange for acquisition outside, too has become cause of concern. During first nine months of 2006 alone the amount of such outflow was 15 billion dollar which stand 15% of total Asian merger and acquisition. It is against 4.34 billion dollar in the corresponding period of previous year, according to Reserve Bank. Outflow on account of merger, acquisition and investment may be compared against the trend of inflow. Total inflow in the year 2004 had been 15.94 billion dollars with a complement of \$ 3.24 billion as short term loan \$ 8.91 billion FII investment and only 3.79 billion \$ as FDI. The moment the full capital account convertibility would be implemented, as it is announced by the Government would open the flood gate of outgo. Outgo would take place business transactions route, acquisition or mergers but also through free re-patriation of profit, other income and investment. Reserve Bank announces that after full capital convertibility every non-residential Indian would be permitted remit 50,000 USD annually where his citizenship exist. This is against the existing limit of 25,000 USD. Similarly, any mutual fund can remit one billion USD annually for investment abroad..

10.00 GRAVEST AGRICULTURAL CRISIS OF POST INDEPENDENCE

10.01 Agricultural crisis has taken serious dimension. The Approach paper while suggesting an accelerated GDP growth of around 4%., expressed doubt simultaneously about achievability of the target. The title paper commits " Actual growth of agricultural GDP, including forestry and fishing, was only 1% per annum in the first three years of 10th. Plan ...The challenge posed is to more than double the growth rate achieved in the 10th. Plan. This will require action on both the demand side and supply side." Gross capital formation in agriculture has been stagnating at 1997 level. Agriculture's contribution to GDP gone down at an accelerated pace from 61% in 1950 to 21% currently, but no positive steps were taken. Government as a rule of globalization allowed unrestricted import. International agricultural price had been sharply declining during all these years. Between 1980 and 1998 itself decline was 45%. Against this trend the support price increased marginally. When all the developed countries were increasingly funding agriculture both in technology up gradation and subsidization India's public investment maintained at a rate around 1.3% of GDP since long years and many of the agricultural subsidies were withdrawn. USA being the second highest cotton growing country in the world subsidies 4.7 billion USD a year which Indian peasant cannot sustain by themselves. Backwardness in technology application and also multinationalisation of seeds made Indian farmers poorer.

10.02 Big Farmers and Farm houses survives the onslaught any how. But small and marginal farmers and obviously landless agricultural workers had no means to survive. Many of them left farming which caused decline in the hectare coverage of agriculture. Problem got further accelerated with the large-scale immobilization of village industry, which owed to Govt. Policy, made other source of income plugged. Liberalization forbids the government to make intervention in the way of relief or making bank credit easy available. Even to-day 42% of agricultural credit is linked with moneylenders. These have caused the present agricultural crisis, which is taken the shape of peasant crisis causing death and suicides. According to Government's own yardstick about 74.5% of the rural population in the year 1999-2000 were living in poverty. The pace in which agricultural devastation is taking place, when considered that the year 1973-74 the figure was only 56.4%. Our PDS system guaranteed supply of food grains at subsidized rate to such population living below poverty line. But Planning

Commission itself has found in a study that 57% of entitled population are not enlisted as claimant. That is the reason it is demanded that let there be universal PDS. This would ensure food security, help peasantry and also people.

10.03 No amount of Special Economic Zone or Corporatisation of agriculture and the funny idea for 'linking farmers with universities would help the situation. Introduction of corporate marketing of the agricultural product, as proposed in the Approach document would not be of much help for amelioration of the problem. Rather such steps would aggravate rural engagements and employment situation. First of all planners are to realize the root cause of the current crisis then they are to search for a long time recourse. Any short term solution may turn to be source of future crisis and distortion as it happened during the earlier period.

10.04 Indian Government and the planners has been refusing to accept the existence of any crisis and globalization has nothing to do with this 'imagination'. Responsible people in the government argued that peasant suicides takes place because of Govt. helps the suicide victim families. Therefore, Planning Commission has to agree first that it is a crisis and concerned with globalization. In this economic regime the developed countries always try to maintain the price of primary article below the manufacturing and sometime absolutely stagnant. In such a scenario agriculture cannot survive without an integrated approach towards entire society and specially agricultural community. Approach Paper believes that problem could be addressed by undertaking some irrigation programme, improvement of agricultural marketing, building of new assets in the villages, specially roads to connect villages with town. These would not alone suffice. All these supports are required but at the same time Government has to undo some of the old mistakes over village industry, they are to maintain all the subsidies including the fertilizer subsidies. It has to create a food guarantee by making the Public Distribution system universal. But in the end it has to link entire Planning process with the human development.

11.00 HUMAN ASSETS

11.01 Approach Paper is absolutely right to observe that in present day situation, re-orientation and updating of knowledge base assumes prime importance. But High tech knowledge base cannot be upgraded unless the basic needs of people are satisfied, Sarva Siksha Programme are taken to success and universal primary education is ensured. It is now proved that no government can keep a nation within 'competition', even if reform is taken as granted, taking refuge to an island, leaving the rest of population into bewilderment.

11.02 The ground level human condition is such that one cannot designate India as a civilized society. Already indicated 31% of India's workers live on a wage below one dollar a day. Central Government contributes only 0.35% of GDP on health when India represents 17% of the world population. Against this percentage of population India represent 23% of worlds' child death which in numerical term is 5 million per year, 20% of the maternal death, 68% of the leprosy cases, 30% of the tuberculosis cases (10th plan document vol. II). Government's contribution (Central and state together) for clean drinking water and sanitation is 0.2% of the GDP. In our country 30% of the total population are still illiterate and 50% of the school going children are dropped out till they reach the class VIII. With such record of human indices Indian People are sermonized by Approach Paper that 'average people are benefited' from reform. Therefore, Planning report has to be drafted with the direction that all the basic necessities of the people is solved during 11th Plan period. And it has to provide minimum amount of social security for all people so that the matter of minimum amount of income, elementary education, supply of clean water and sanitation and specially food security are ensured.

11.03 Indian Parliament has amended constitution guarantying universal compulsory education unto primary level. It is a shameful that the Government is trying to shift this responsibility to private school and the state government because this involve between Rs. 50,000 and 70,000 crores annually in a span of six years period. It is reluctant to pass the model bill tabled in Parliament, despite the fact that a sum of Rs. 48,000 crores remained unspent from the cess collected in the year 2004-05. Unfortunately, the Planning Commission, in the approach paper sought to follow the dotted line. 11th. Plan should see that the responsibility for bearing this important task is not denied by the Central Government.

12.00 HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

12.01. If India has to bring a real break in the technology cycle, work has to begin from primary level of education and gradually stretched to higher university and technical studies. This break is of paramount importance for even for sustaining existing superiority in the areas like pharmaceutical, chemical. In textile also technology break is required in weaving and down stream areas to maintain competitiveness. No major breakthrough is hardly possible in manufacturing, so long globalisation is there, unless a technology break is assured. Scientific mind molding should stand as the basic focus of primary and secondary education. In secondary level itself student should be involved in investigative study in science, social science and mathematics.

12.02 Approach paper has rightly recommended the need for upgrading existing universities to global standard. Emphasis should be placed to upgrade all the Universities without any discrimination and at the same time to open new universities with special curriculum. This would be a erroneous step if this task is are handed over to private. Government should rather open more ITI with the arrangement of tying with international research institutions and technologically developed industries in India.

12.3 (a) **Research and Development in doldrums:** Approach paper talked profusely on the question of knowledge based technological break and also about new innovation for upgrading our manufacturing & agriculture. But no wisdom can be translated to action unless means are provided and people are motivated. All the zeal and comprehension India's technical manpower was having on the matter of indigenous innovation during the pre-globalisation period seems to have now lost. Matter of innovation was being regarded as the religion. Multifaceted arrangements were set up for R&D purpose, both in institutional form and connected with industry. We are to get back the spirit of that early independence period.

12.3 (b) Unfortunately, after structural adjustment when public sector has been denigrated, private companies did never come forward to fill vacuum left over by the Public enterprises. They found more convenience to live under protection of multinationals. Till 2002 Private sector investment in R&D had been to the tune of 10 to 15% of expenditure. Country is running behind all kind of scientific research in almost all fields. Beginning from new molecular separation for keeping hold over low cost drug which India still dominate to the immediate challenge, technological break and also developing industrial science, India is failing to keep pace even with its neighbors. May be we are loosing our earlier excellence in space science too for want of non-availability of facilities.

12.3 (c) None but the Prime Minister has expressed his anguish while he has been addressing the National Academy of Sciences when he says 'I have encountered growing concern among our scientists that China has overtaken us in science. If true, then we must ask ourselves why and what can we do about it.' It is reported in an American study that in the year 2006 China stand as the world's third largest R&D performers. Since last 25 years' its research output has increased more than 25 times vis-à-vis India. Our country is even lagging behind South Korea. But no government could ignore the

fact that these countries, could make some appreciation about the present international economic order and continued with all pervasiveness for a break in the knowledge based high technology cycles through hundred of thousands means and repetitive endeavors. By 2002, the Chinese and the South Korean R&D expenditure were around USD 15-16 billions as against less than \$ 4 billion in case of India. Most of R&D expenditure in South Korea was by the private sector and in China also the private sector is beginning to dominate.

12.3 (d) It should be regarded as a matter of concern that our reluctance over the matter of R&D is being exploited by the advanced capitalist countries. It is reported that a study conducted by the National Institute of Science, Technology and Development Studies (NISTAD) said that between 1990 and 2002, 266 patents were filed in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by companies for research done in India. Most of them are for high tech productions that have a huge market in the US.

12.4 Unfortunately, the Approach Paper remained almost blank to indicate a way out from the current impasse where lies the biggest disquiet. Since scientific activities are basically linked with people science and re-molding the national ethos on scientific philosophical understanding, the matter of Research & development ultimately connected with the need of human development where education occupies driving position. That is why an integrated policy on knowledge has assumed paramount importance.

13.00 ENVIRONMENT

Approach paper desired that the process of Environment clearance for setting up of industries or mining be made more congenial. While there should not be any problem, there should be a strong view that under no circumstances the environment provisions are allowed to compromise. This is specially important because of the fact that in recent revaluation indicates that the global temperature has reached so high which never took place in course of last 12,000 years and it is propelled owing to increasing rate of emission since last 30 years. The US as being the most pollution making country in the world and refused to sign the Kyoto Protocol would always encourage under developed countries to pollute more. In recent time, many of the developed nations have worked out a mechanism to trade 'emission'. This game has become all the more dangerous because recent spurt in the emission rate of methane. In this context, it may be noted that US's contribution to emission has increased by 16% since 1990 against 3.3% decline in entire Europe.

14.00 INVOLVEMENT IN RE-MAKING THE NATION

14.01 Planning Process is not considered alone as a an institutional arrangement for fixing growth rate and expenditure target. Its recommendations do also creates an appropriate economic regime. In the end execution part falls in the hands of state to which State Government, Municipal bodies and Panchayet plays important role. At the same time people is integrated through mass organizations like trade unions, peasant organization and of course employers too. The Institutions as Planning Commission, Finance Commission too plays important role on the question of devolution of powers to state and distribution of funds. Role of the Finance Commission has become all the more important in view of the fact that states are increasingly burdened with the phasing out of welfare role in the centre. WTO agreement is signed and multilateralism are advancing the economic policies in the country is guided by the terms and conditions of such instruments. Specially, in recent times talks are in progress for free trade agreement individually with countries and also with a group of nations.

14.02 In the emerging situation Planning may consider various means so that in the planning process more wider sections of the people are involved through their representative organization, as

it is consulting with states and various employers groups. This discussion should not be ritualistic but structured and detailed. Similarly, constitution provision may be created re-structuring of Finance Commission's function with wider involvement in formulating recommendations. Both the Planning Document and the Finance Commission recommendation should be ratified by the Parliament. Similarly, we should create an instrument so that all international agreements are ratified in Parliament and State Legislatures concerned with the issues involved.



CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS TWELFTH CONFERENCE

“Com. Suryanarayana Rao Nagar”

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COMMISSION PAPER

MENACE OF CONTRACTORISATION

Following the onset of the neoliberal economic policy regime, the workforce in the organised sector of the industrial economy is gradually shrinking and the size of the unorganised sector is expanding.

The profile of the unorganised sector had also undergone certain structural changes over the period. In the initial stage of development, the unorganised sector workforce had been mainly engaged in occupations of low-skill, mostly manual jobs in the traditional sector, basically different and demarcated from the mechanised production process. The unorganised sector was normally understood as the sector/occupation not usually covered and governed by industrial and labour related legislations, of course with exceptions. And such exceptions were created by the unionised workforce of that segment of the unorganised sector, bringing some relief to the workforce of that segment.

The process of industrialisation also developed, in a phased manner, certain occupations in the periphery of industries which were also broadly of the same nature as unorganised sector occupations but having a backward linkage with the activity of the industries at the centre. And as the process of industrialisation advanced, a new segment of workers gradually emerged within the boundaries of the organised sector industries themselves, with fragile and temporary working conditions without much legislative protection. They were being deployed on contract under contractors and subcontractors and though operating within the organised sector, were and are being bracketed as unorganised sector workers owing to the very fragile character of their service conditions.

The vast unorganised sector economy of our country thus reveals a mix of workers of traditional sectors basically dominated by manual labour like beedi, loading /unloading, cashew and coir, leave-plucking, handloom, low-end transport like rickshaw-pullers, manual segment of construction, stone-quarries etc along with unorganised segment of contract and temporary workers of various forms within the framework of organised sector industries. The neoliberal economic policy regime is operating to inflate this segment of industry-related unorganised workforce enormously through an aggressive pursuit of contractorisation of various forms. This paper seeks to deal with this particular phenomenon in the industrial economy and draw an appropriate strategy to confront this ominous trend.

BEFORE LIBERALISATION

Contractorisation has been spreading fast leading to casualisation of the majority of the workforce and introduction of 'hire & fire' through the backdoor. Such fast track contractorisation and casualisation of workplace has led to a serious deterioration of the work environment, posing a severe threat to the trade union movement, which it could ignore only at their peril.

The character of the contract system has undergone a sea change in the post liberalization period. Prior to the onset of the neoliberal policy regime too, the contract system of work had been widely resorted to in the industrial economy. In fact from the mid-sixties onwards proliferation of the contract system surfaced as a prominent phenomenon in industries in particular, both in public and private sector. The organized trade union movement reacted effectively against this device of exploitation through direct industrial action and through judicial forum in the process of which the Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act 1970 came into being. This Act provided for prohibition of deployment of contract workers in permanent/perennial nature of job in any enterprise on the one hand and also reiterated coverage of the contract workers by all labour laws along with making the principal employer responsible for regulating the service conditions of contract workers as per the laws of the land. Through the contract system, the employers sought to make the employment relationship between the principal employer and contract worker indirect and vague, thereby evade responsibility and extract bigger surplus by taking advantage of their fragile service conditions and indirect employment relation with the main employer. But, under the Contract Labour Act, the triangular employment relationship between the principal employer, the intermediary contractor and the contract worker had been given a recognition thereby making the principal employer responsible for regulation of the service condition of the contract worker on the one hand and seeking to restrain deployment of worker on contract in permanent and perennial nature of jobs on the other.

The Contract Labour (R & A) Act 1970, despite many procedural limitations and loopholes and ineffective implementation by the enforcement authority, could serve some purpose in empowering the organized segment of the contract workers' movement to gain many rights including regularization in many places. This Act also paved the way for many landmark judgments by the judiciary at different levels in favour of workers' rights in the seventies and eighties.

But the moot point is that during the pre-liberalisation period, at least till the early eighties, the contract workers were being mainly deployed in peripheral and low-skilled work in any industry/enterprise, although many of those peripheral works had been permanent and continuous in nature. Normally in the core operational jobs in any enterprise, deployment of contract workers was not that widespread. And in this background, through direct organized struggle and also through the judiciary, a large section of the contract workers deployed in permanent/perennial jobs got regularised in many sectors such as steel (Durgapur, IISCO, Rourkela, Bhilai canteen workers etc), civil aviation (Air India, Indian Airlines, Airport Authority), electricity (State Electricity Boards in Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and some other states), transport etc.

AFTER LIBERALISATION

Following the liberalized policy regime, in the nineties, the character of deployment of contract worker within the enterprise/ industry has undergone a drastic change covering also the core operational jobs. At the same time the whole work-organisation has undergone a restructuring and decentralization in phases, drastically increasing the share of workers with indirect employment relationship with the principal employers in the total workforce in any production process. The principal employer here is the entity that is the ultimate recipient of the benefit of the production process in its final form.

The above phenomenon has given rise to broadly two different types of situation. One, in any industrial unit/establishment the share of temporary workers of various forms and names (contract, temporary, contingent etc) in the total workforce has increased substantially, in many places crossing the number of regular workers. These temporary workers are being deployed either through contactors or supplied by various employment agencies to any establishment thereby making the employment relationship

with the owner of that establishment totally indirect. For example, the security and watch & ward jobs in a majority of offices, establishments, stockyards and godowns in the major cities in almost all public sector units in the country are being manned mostly by private security agencies deploying workers on a 12 hour shift and the principal employer, the ultimate recipient of the security services, has made himself free from even the regulatory responsibility of their unlawful 12 hours deployment. For the workers deployed through contractors, the principal employer has got some responsibility under the still existing Contract Labour Act but when the workers on contract or supplied by outside agencies become the majority of the workforce in any enterprise, the employer can ignore his responsibility under the law with impunity as is the general phenomenon in the workplace today.

The second type of situation pertains to decentralization and fragmentation of the workplace through offloading/outsourcing/distributing various parts or whole of the production jobs/processes of a particular enterprise to different agencies and marketing of the final product in the brand name of the enterprises after assembling and stamping in the main centre or sometimes getting that job done by another separate agency. In all the cases, such agencies are small-scale units and in many cases they depend wholly on the principal company even for credit of working capital and supply of raw materials. Many enterprises maintain both the system of decentralized production and in-house (factory-based) production where in-house production is also manned by a majority of contract workers. Maintenance of both the systems of production helps the employer to bargain with both the decentralized agencies and in-house workers and dictate terms to both the entities. For example all the major footwear companies in the country like Bata, Liberty, Baluja, Taj-shoes etc operate in such two-wing production operation. All the three production units of Liberty Footwear at Haryana, mainly catering to the northern Indian market, have been in shut-down condition since June 2006 but there has been no dearth of Liberty shoes in the show-rooms of Northern Indian cities since the supply has been coming from the outsourced agencies. In the automobile, engineering, television production sector etc there are many examples of such contract-offloading or decentralized production system.

Suiting the requirements of the employers, contract employment also has been reflecting different patterns. In the steel, engineering, and capital goods sector and also in consumer durables, a kind of job-contract system is emerging, where a part of the production process is being off-loaded to another agency at a pre-determined rate for that job and in many cases that agency is carrying on its work in the premises of the principal employer. In this manner the principal employer evades his responsibility towards the workers under the job-contract system, though for all practical purposes, the job is carried on wholly for the principal employer.

The newly emerging decentralized production process should not be confused with the ancillary units of a major production unit. For example, a major manufacturing plant of BHEL gets fabrication jobs done through ancillary units but cannot yet conceive of getting its main products like turbine, motors etc produced through a decentralized agency. But in the field of light engineering, electronic gadgets, consumer durables etc, this decentralized production process of manufacturing different parts of the products and assembling the same in different outsourced agencies has emerged as new phenomenon posing a big challenge before the trade union movement.

The whole profile of the workforce has been changing fast owing to this fast track contractorisation and temporaryisation of workplace. Even in public sector units, both at the Centre and in the states, the proportion of contract/temporary workers in the total workforce has already crossed the 50 per cent mark on the average and in most of the cases the contract/temporary workers are being deployed in core operational jobs. In the mining sector, particularly in non-coal mining, the temporary contract workforce is much bigger than the regular workers. In coal mining also owing to leasing and outsourcing

the mines to private hands, the number of contract/temporary workers are increasing at an alarming pace. In BHEL, contract workers involved in core operation jobs is around 20 per cent of the total workforce and if all types of deployment of contract workers, mostly in permanent perennial jobs, are taken into account they represent almost 40 per cent of the workforce and the number is increasing every day. In the case of the petroleum sector, contract-workforce has become almost 70 per cent of total. Coal is another sector where a huge number of contract workers were deployed since beginning in transporting, loading/unloading and various other jobs and since mid-eighties itself, contract workers started being deployed in a big way in core production jobs, particularly in open cast mines. And these contract workers mostly deployed in regular production jobs are paid less than one-tenth of what is being paid to permanent workers. Even in the sectors engaged in highly sophisticated and mechanised production process, contract workers are being deployed increasingly the same shop floor with the permanent workers. Alarming, a pernicious trend of reconciling with this monstrous reality is surfacing in the trade union movement at some places.

In the private sector, the situation is far worse. In the private sector units, particularly those, which mushroomed from 1991 onwards, the contract (or non-permanent) workers represent more than 90 per cent of the workers in the concerned unit. Even in the major large-scale production units like Hero Honda, Honda Motorcycles & Scooters Ltd, Speedomax, Shivam Autotech and Amtech Siccardi Ltd—all located in Gurgaon-Dharuheda area of Haryana, 60 per cent of the workers are on contract/temporary/trainee deployed in regular production work. In Ghaziabad, many industrial units reopened after closing down and retrenching all permanent workers to start production with hundred percent workers on contract with a few supervisory workers in regular grade. In the national capital at Delhi the majority of the factories in the industrial area of Patparganj, Wazirpur, Kirtinagar, Samaypur Badli, Peeragarhi, Okhla etc engaged many more workers on contract than on regular basis. The same is the situation in almost all industrial areas, particularly in newly emerging ones with active state patronage, where the very concept of regular jobs has been practically banished from the workplace. This represents the pattern emerging in industrial employment in the country, where the right to 'hire & fire' at will is allowed surreptitiously for the benefit of the employers.

The data of employment pattern published by official agencies confirms the above trend. As per NSS data, manufacturing sector in our country employs around 4.80 crores of which only 66 lakh are in the organized sector and the rest 4.14 crore accounts for the unorganised sector. Given the type of manufacturing units in our country and its employment pattern, it can well be presumed that overwhelming majority of the unorganized sector manufacturing employment is of contract or temporary nature. In mining & quarrying, of the 23 lakh workforce the share of unorganized sector employment is 13 lakh—all working under various contractors and sub contractors. The construction sector is another segment where unorganised sector employment is ten times more than the regular employment in the sector, around 1.65 crore—again mostly employed under various contractors and numerous petty sub-contractors.

The character of contracts as revealed by various official reports, reveals that most of the contract workforce in the country is outside the boundaries of legal inspection and scrutiny. The number of contract workers working under licensed contractors has been declining throughout the country although the contract employment is increasing sharply all around. This means a sharp increase in subcontracting where subcontractors are mostly unlicensed and therefore evading all legal scrutiny by the labour law enforcement machinery. As per the Annual Report (2005-06) of the Union Labour Ministry, the contract workers covered by licenses have declined from 13.27 lakh in 2002-03 to 9.6 lakh in 2004-05 and the trend is continuing.

Quite consistent with this mass scale contractorisation and temporarisation of the workforce, the share of labour cost in total cost of production is declining steadily over the years and as per the Report of Annual Survey of Industries it has gone down from 7.84 per cent in 1999-00 to 6.82 in 2003-04. The same Survey also exposed that the average daily wage of the contract workers is around 65 per cent less than the total average daily wage of all workers in the industry. This reflects the pitiable condition of the majority of the industrial workforce in our country.

PROMOTING INDIRECT EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP

UNDER LIBERALISAION

In fact, segmentation and decentralisation of the production/operational system emerging under the neo-liberal economic regime has led to these changing patterns of employment. The employer-employee relationship is getting more and more vague and abstract and indirect, enabling the principal employer to fully expropriate the fruits of production with the least possible obligation towards the labour, which generates those fruits.

This fragile employment pattern that has been emerging in the post liberalization scenario has its roots in the very character of the neoliberal economic order dominated and governed by finance capital. Finance capital, extremely mobile in character, seeks to multiply itself faster by nesting on most profitable posts and quest for the most profitable makes it more mobile and speculative. Such restlessness of finance capital also reflects in the behaviour of industrial capital which operates under finance capital's dominance and sometimes overlaps with it. Thus industrial capital, besides seeking to take part in speculative activities at available intervals, seeks to adjust all the factors of production including labour with every up and down of the market situation to maximize profit and also to maintain the resources at hand in extremely liquid form. For adjustment of labour force with every up and down of the market, what capital needs is total flexibility, rather fragility of employment relations through outright contractorisation and temporarisation of workforce. The present trend of changes in the employment relationship, the indirectification and decentralization of production relations, along with growing concentration of economic power and wealth has become the distinctive feature present day neo-liberalism, which represents the most barbarous form of extraction of surplus by the capitalist order.

MOVE TO CHANGE LABOUR LAWS TO PROMOTE CASUALISATION

The Executive, Legislative and Judiciary together have been nursing such atrocious inhuman employment relationship to gain larger ground. All the labour laws are being sought to be changed in that direction at the centre point of which remains the motive to completely flexibilise the labour market and make the employment relationship as fragile and indirect as possible. The UPA Govt. is trying to push ahead with its design of bringing pro-employer changes in various labour laws. It has incorporated anti-labour provisions in various Bills already introduced or under process for introduction in Parliament. In the background of widespread opposition and campaign launched by the trade union movement, the representatives of Left Parties have consistently been intervening against such moves. They have succeeded in stalling such anti-labour moves in some instances. The Bill on Special Economic Zones and the Small and Medium Enterprises Bill contained retrograde provisions on taking out the workers in the concerned areas/establishments/zones from the purview of all labour laws. Owing to staunch opposition by the Left Parties inside the Parliament, such anti-labour provisions had to be dropped from that Bill before it could be legislated.

There have been some more Bills pending for passage by Parliament, which also contain several anti-labour provisions. The Labour Laws (Exemption from Furnishing Returns and Maintaining Registers

by Certain Establishments) Amendment and Miscellaneous Provisions bill 2005, seeks to provide for exemptions to employers in furnishing various returns, registers, statements, mostly pertaining to employees and employment conditions, thus empowering the employers to violate them in a big way. Further the Bill contains a general clause empowering the governments both at the Centre and the states to exempt any establishment from whatever obligations remain with the employers even after various exemptions under the proposed legislation. In fine, in the name of simplifying forms and procedures, the Bill aims at giving a free hand to the employers to casualise the workforce at will and complete exemption from their substantive obligations under various labour laws. This Bill also has to be stoutly opposed by the trade union movement.

Besides the above Bills already introduced in Parliament, the UPA Govt. has been working overtime to bring in a labour-law-free or 'hire & fire' regime in the workplace in a multidimensional route. Despite repeated chasing, the Govt. has not yet rescinded the notification on "Fixed Term Employment Workman" introduced by the NDA Govt., despite an assurance by the Labour Minister on the floor of Parliament in July 2005. In the 40th session of the Indian Labour Conference held in December 2005, all the trade unions assertively rejected in toto the Govt. proposals for pro-employer changes in the Industrial Disputes Act. Despite this, the Union Labour Ministry had again sought to push through these retrograde proposals in a tripartite meeting held on June 21, 2006, and subsequently in the meeting of the Standing Labour Committee on December 20, 2006, where all the trade union representatives reiterated their rejection of these proposals. The Industry Ministry has again initiated an exercise for developing so called "Manufacturing Investment Zone" (MIR), where all the labour laws will be made ineffective under the dubious garb of "simplification".

ROLE OF JUDICIARY

Side by side the Judiciary has become proactive to cover-up the failure of the Govt to yet bring about the changes in labour laws as desired by the employers. There are numerous examples of apex court judgments undermining and in many cases nullifying basic labour rights recognized over a couple of decades. Not only that, in many cases, the implication of such judgment has been one of changing the provisions in concerned statutes in stead of disposing of the complaints in terms of those statutes. To oblige the capitalist class, the judiciary is now desperately transgressing its boundaries defined by the constitution and usurping the role of the Govt in the event of their failure to change the labour laws in favour of capital. The Apex Courts order setting aside its own judgment on regularization of contract workers (Air India case) while responding to a subsequent petition of SAIL, the judgment in the case Vs Karnataka State Govt, denying the daily wage workers working continuously for several years the right of being regularized, and reiteration of similar judgments in all subsequent cases of similar nature reflected in clear manner more a proactive legislature's role by the judiciary than its constitutional role as arbitrator under the existing laws of the land. And all such judgments are aimed at one single point destination—to make the employment relationship permanently indirect and freely adjustable in the interests of capital.

Apparently such developments may be surprising but not unexpected. The above judgments reflect endorsement of the ethos of ongoing neoliberalism, which domesticates all the wings of the 'State' under the forces of capital. And after all, the judiciary is the inseparable segment of the 'State'.

A separate Commission of the 12th Conference of CITU is dealing the role of judiciary vis-à-vis the working class.

THE TASK BEFORE US

Now, the question before us is how to address such fast changes in the employment pattern? Unionisation of workers under such a fragile pattern of employment relationship in the workplace is

rendered more and more difficult. This creates an environment which is making the workers reconcile, though for the time being, with this extremely predatory order. There have been instances, where workers themselves have approached the court for getting a stay on the order prohibiting deployment of contract workers in permanent and perennial work as per the Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act because such an order leads to loss of jobs.

Simultaneously, a kind of opportunism is also being noticed among the permanent workers to take an indifferent attitude towards the contract workers in the same workplace, which, if allowed to continue as it is, would damage the permanent workers' movement as well. Particularly in public sector units such kind of opportunism is noticed in many places.

AT WORKPLACE LEVEL

The General Council meeting of CITU held in May 1998 at Chennai, while dealing with the issue of unorganized sector workers' movement, formulated correctly that the regular workers' trade unions have to take an effective initiative in organizing and unionizing the contract workers of all forms in the concerned industry and must remain actively associated with their struggles. The forms of organizing the contract workers, i.e., whether in a single union along with the permanent workers or in a separate union for the contract workers alone, may vary from place to place depending on the situation; but preferably, contract workers should be organized in a separate union if their demands are to get the required focus and priority and for developing leadership from amongst them. But active association and initiative of the permanent workers' movement in the activities among and struggle of the contract workers is a must if that exercise is to succeed and advance effectively. This formulation was drawn on the basis of concrete grass root level experiences.

INDUSTRY LEVEL INITIATIVES

In the Steel industry, the permanent workers unions took the initiative in organizing the contract workers in Durgapur, IISCO, Rourkela, Bhilai, Bokaro, Visakhapatnam and iron ore mines of Orissa and MP and that experience revealed that such initiative strengthened both the contract workers and regular workers movement in most of the places except Rourkela and Bhilai. In Rourkela and Bhilai, contract workers and regular workers were organized under a single union and lack of balance among the plant level leadership in the matter of priority and inaction in organizational activity could not deliver the desired result.

In the petroleum industry, particularly in the eastern and north eastern segment, and to some extent in the southern units, contract workers' issues got some attention from the regular workers' movement and the contract workers could be organized in a better way than other places and this has given dividend to the overall movement in the concerned units.

There are other examples too. On the whole, wherever the regular workers took active initiative in organizing the contract workers, both the contract workers and regular workers movement benefited from the same and the trade union movement in that particular unit could play a more assertive role. Owing to increase in contractorisation across the industry, the contract workers position in the industry has become decisive in carrying on the production process and without organizing them, the trade union cannot achieve effective striking capacity. The recent anti-privatisation struggle in NALCO and Neyveli Lignite could become successful since the contract workers in both the industries joined enmasse in the strike action. The composition of the workforce in the petroleum sector has so changed owing to proliferation of contract system, that complete strike only by the regular workers would have little effect on production if the contract workers stay away from the strike.

The trade union movement has to draw appropriate strategy to combat such a situation, as otherwise this will overpower the trade union movement, however temporary a phase that may be. We have to study the situation thoroughly both at the enterprise and industry level and also on the national plane to formulate our demands for legislative measures for redefining the employment relationship based on the link between the recipients of the gains of production vis-à-vis the producer at the lowest rung of the production process. At the same time we have to evolve appropriate strategies to organise the contract/casual/indirect/non-permanent workers. This may require vigorous efforts both at the workplace and even beyond that periphery extending to workers' dwelling places.

As we have noted, temporarisation process of employment pattern has taken broadly two routes. One— deployment of workers through contractors or job contractors in the same workplace., and the second type is through decentralization of the production process through outsourcing various segments of production. The two types of situation have to be tackled with different strategies. But it is the trade unions in the principal enterprise who have to take interest in organizing the workers of the agencies operating for the principal enterprise. The regular workers' movement has to take direct initiative in organizing the contract and job-contract workers operating within the enterprise. They have also to coordinate the efforts in unionizing the workers in the outsourced agencies and build up movemental coordination between the unions and workers of those agencies.

AT SECTORAL AND NATIONAL LEVEL

Already some initiative in that direction has been taken by the CITU in the public sector. The All India Coordination Committee of Public Sector Unions (CITU) in its last session held in December 2005 stressed upon the need for vigorous initiative by the regular workers' movement for organizing the contract workers in the industry and also to raise and agitate over the demands of the contract workers along with regular workers' own demands. The idea could also be popularized and at least formally adopted by the joint platform of public sector workers - the CPSTU in its sessions held in March and November 2006, at CITU's pioneering initiative. In the run up to the seventh round of wage negotiation in the PSUs, the charter of demands formulated by the permanent workers' unions also raised the demand that the contract workers deployed in different PSUs should be paid at least the minimum entry point wages for the regular workers of the respective PSUs. The CITU leadership in the PSUs have to ensure that this basic demand of the contract workers is pursued seriously in the forthcoming wage negotiations and agitational programmes.

AT NATIONAL LEVEL

But when the retrograde process of changing the employment relationship in workplaces through all out contractisation is being promoted as a part of its policy drive by the governance, all our grass-root level initiative to organize the contract and temporary workers has to be combined with appropriate strategy-initiative at the national level for reversal of the policy and projection of an alternative policy for governance of the workplace. In the face of Government's demand for changing the Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act to universalize contract system in all jobs, trade union movement should make concrete alternative proposal for pro-workers changes in the concerned statute.

PROJECTING ALTERNATIVE

Our alternative proposal must also take due note of the phenomenon of outsourcing of the production jobs in parts to various agencies as enumerated above. The same may be inter alia:

1. Redefining employment relationship on the basis of the linkage between the final recipients of the gains of production, i.e., the principal employer, vis-à-vis the producer at the lowest rung of the production process deployed through various decentralised agencies.

2. Outsourcing should be treated as contract and should be covered by Contract Labour Legislation.
3. Reiterating the equal pay for same and similar work principal both for regular and contract/ temporary workers in the main body of the legislation (at present similar provision is there in the rules framed under the present statute.
4. Regularisation of contract workers deployed in permanent/perennial jobs in the permanent roll of the company and stringent punishment (This is required to negate the pernicious impact of the Supreme Court Judgments on the rights of contract workers)
5. Payment of the minimum wage prevalent in the company/establishment to the contract workers of the said company if it is higher than the statutory minimum wage
6. All contractors must obtain license from the appropriate authority for running its operation
7. Even if contractor changes, the contract workers engaged by previous contractor should continue to be deployed without any interruption and change in service conditions: this provision should be incorporated as a condition in the tender to be invited for appointment of contractors.
8. The Annual Return on employment to be submitted to labour department by the principal employer should compulsorily include details of the contract workers including the contractors and their licence details.
9. In case of death owing to accident or otherwise in course of employment, contract workers should be paid same compensation as the regular workers
10. The Principal employer should be held responsible for implementation of all labour laws for the contract workers including maintenance of employment register, submission of annual returns to labour department, PF, ESI and other social security measures and workmen's compensation any violation of those laws should attract stringent punishment on the principal employers as well.
11. A separate inspectorate with adequate manpower has to be established in all states only for the purpose for inspection of the contract-employment related matters.
12. Contract labour monitoring board must be constituted in all states and central level with the representatives of unions, employers and government to monitor implementation of labour laws in respect of contract workers etc.

The above is illustrative and not exhaustive. Finalisation and giving our proposal a structured form would require more consultation at the grass root level and also with experts in the field. But the basic spirit of our approach should be like above and we should not be confused by so called idea of flexibility theory on the labour market dubiously touted as instrument for employment generation. Based on above alternative we have to build up massive mobilizations at national State and regional levels.

FIGHT BACK THE IDEOLOGY OF CONTRACTORISATION DRIVE

We have to develop a unified understanding as to how to confront the phenomenon of contractorisation or temporarisation of the workforce in various forms and unleash a countrywide campaign against the barbarous form of exploitation through outsourcing and contractorisation. While doing so we must explode the theory touted by protagonists of the flexible labour regime that "temporary employment is

better than no employment" which is designed to smuggle in social sanction for perpetual temporarisation of the workplace. Another satanic theory is that unprotective and repressive labour laws help generating more employment. None of these theories stand the test of reality so far as the empirical grass root level experiences are concerned, not only of our country but all over the world.

The General Council meeting of CITU held at Nasik in July 2005 conceived the idea of holding an all India convention on contract workers' issues to exchange ideas and formulate a strategy to effectively address the problems both organisationally and with a movemental perspective. The Working Committee meeting of CITU held in Bhopal in December 2006 reiterated the same. It is imperative that we should hold such an exercise and adopt a strategy to build up a strong countrywide campaign against the onslaught of contractisation and outsourcing by the capitalist lobby with the active indulgence of the Government on the one hand and unleash an aggressive organisational drive at the grass-root level with focus on the contract and temporary workers of all forms on the other and the entire CITU organisation must be geared up in that direction.



CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS TWELFTH CONFERENCE

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COMMISSION PAPER

WORLD TRADE ORGANISATION

PRESENT ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

India has completed fifteen years of economic liberalisation policies pursued by the successive governments at the Centre. It is a universal fact that this process of economic ‘reforms’ is mandated and driven by the international financial and trade institutions. It is often mentioned that it is the trio of World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Trade Organisation (WTO), which together dictate the content and directing of the economic ‘reforms’ policies to be followed by the developing countries of the world. But, historically these three institutions did not take birth at the same time. While the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund had their origin as far back as 1944, the World Trade Organisation, in its present form, came into being only in 1995.

WORLD TRADE AND THE GATT

The twentieth century had witnessed two World Wars. After the First World War, there was a period of severe world wide economic crisis, which is known as the ‘Great Depression’ of 1929. The ‘Great Depression’ adversely affected all the industrialised countries of the developed world, which fought the World War I for a re-division of the colonies amongst themselves. They were also engaged in trade wars to tackle the problems confronted by their respective economies, following the ‘Great Depression’. This resulted in these countries resorting to ‘protectionism’, which denotes measures to curb imports through raising the custom duties to enable the domestic industries to withstand and survive the competition from the other countries.

In this backdrop, the industrialised countries apprehended a recurrence of an economic crisis, like that of ‘Great Depression’, after the end of World War II as well. Hence, even when the World War II was going on, these countries wanted to take measures to avert such a recurrence. So, they were eager to organise smooth flow of international trade in the post-war period. With this end in view, even as the World War II was drawing to a close, the industrialised countries took the initiative to convene the United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference, which was held in July 1944, at a place called Brettonwoods in New Hampshire in the USA. At the end of this conference, the World Bank (which initially took the name of International Bank for Reconstruction and development – IBRD and was re-designated as World Bank in the 1960s) and the International Monetary Fund were established. That is the reason for these two being called as ‘Brettonwoods Twins’. At the same time the industrialised countries also wanted to have some sort of an institutional mechanism for governing the international trade as well. But, it could not materialise then and the decision was to have separate negotiations on trade related matters.

There were several initiatives on this score.

Immediately after the end of World War II, fifteen countries commenced talks in December 1945 to reduce the customs tariffs, to boost the international trade. The main aim was to end the protectionism that had been in vogue from the early 1930s.

The attempt was to create a third institution to handle the trade side of international economic cooperation, joining the two "Bretton Woods" institutions, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Over 50 countries participated in negotiations to create an International Trade Organisation (ITO) as a specialised agency of the United Nations. The draft ITO Charter was ambitious. It extended beyond world trade disciplines, to include rules on employment, commodity agreements, restrictive business practices, international investment, and services. The aim was to create the ITO at a UN Conference on Trade and Employment in Havana, Cuba in 1947. But the move failed mainly because of opposition of the US Congress to 'outside interference in trade policy'.

(A further attempt to establish an international body, the organisation for trade cooperation was made in 1955. But, it also floundered because of fears in the developed countries of interference in their domestic affairs.)

But, at the international conference on trade held in the year 1947, 23 countries signed an interim agreement, as a result of which the General Agreement on Trade and Tariff (GATT) came into operation in 1948. GATT was provisional with its action being limited to the field of reductions in tariffs in order to accelerate the rate of growth of world trade. It did not take long for the General Agreement to give birth to an unofficial, de facto international organisation, also known informally as GATT. Over the years GATT evolved through several rounds of negotiations.

Since the GATT was implemented, there had been eight rounds of global trade talks, each including more number of countries and taking trade liberalisation faster than the previous round. The last and largest of these was the Uruguay Round, which lasted from 1986 to 1993 and led to the creation of the WTO.

By the early 1980s the General Agreement was clearly no longer as relevant to the realities of world trade as it had been in the 1940s. The world trade had become far more complex and important than 40 years before: the globalisation of the world economy was underway; trade in services — not covered by GATT rules — was of major interest to more and more countries; and international investment had expanded. The expansion of services trade was also closely tied to further increases in world merchandise trade. In other respects, GATT had been found wanting. For instance, in agriculture, loopholes in the multilateral system were heavily exploited, and efforts at liberalising agricultural trade met with little success. Even GATT's institutional structure and its dispute settlement system were causing concern.

THE URUGUAY ROUND AND THE WTO

In September 1986, the Uruguay round of negotiations commenced. This round included a negotiating agenda that covered virtually every outstanding trade policy issue. The talks were for extending the trading system into several new areas, notably trade in services and intellectual property, and to reform trade in the sensitive sectors of agriculture and textiles. All the original GATT articles were up for review.

On 15 April 1994, the deal was signed by ministers from most of the 123 participating governments at a meeting in Marrakesh, Morocco. With this, the WTO was launched on 1 January 1995, marking the biggest reform of international trade since after the Second World War. It also brought to reality — in an updated form — the failed attempt in 1948 to create an International Trade Organisation. The membership of the WTO comprises 149 countries as of now.

Whereas GATT had mainly dealt with trade in goods, the WTO and its agreements now cover trade in services, and in traded inventions, creations and designs (intellectual property).

The WTO is mandated to discharge the following functions:

- Administering WTO trade agreements
- Forum for trade negotiations
- Handling trade disputes
- Monitoring national trade policies
- Technical assistance and training for developing countries
- Cooperation with other international organizations

At the top of the structures created by the WTO is the WTO Ministerial Conference, which is the highest-level decision-making body. It meets “at least once every two years”, as required by the Marrakesh Agreement - the founding charter of the WTO.

So far SIX Ministerial Conferences have been held as under:

First: Singapore – December 9 –13, 1996.

Second: Geneva – May 18 – 20, 1998.

Third: Seattle – November 30 to December 3, 2001.

Fourth: Doha – November 9 – 14, 2003.

Fifth: Cancun – September 10 – 14, 2003.

Sixth: Hong Kong – December 13 – 18, 2005.

These Ministerial Conferences have caused great tension and anxiety to developing countries like India. The U.S. and the European Union have pushed their agenda strongly and obtained concessions from the developing countries without giving them any benefit in return. The developing countries get divided during these meetings and are unable to defend their positions.

Despite the long years it had consumed, the Uruguay Round agreement could not cover all the areas that were being negotiated. Hence, the agreement, besides giving birth to the WTO, contained timetables for new negotiations on a number of topics.

In the first Ministerial Conference itself in 1996, several countries openly called for a new round early in the next century. The issues, which the proposed new round was expected to cover, were known as ‘Singapore Issues’, since they were mooted at the First Ministerial Meeting of the WTO. They included the new areas of investment, competition policy, transparency in government procurement and trade facilitation.

The move, to commence a new round of trade negotiations, met with resistance, particularly from the developing countries. But, they could not succeed. The Marrakesh agreement did already include commitments to reopen negotiations on agriculture and services at the turn of the century.

THE DOHA DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

The Doha WTO Ministerial Meeting in 2001 drew up a work programme in terms of which negotiations are to be concluded not later than 1 January 2005 on the following issues:

IMPLEMENTATION-RELATED ISSUES AND CONCERNS

AGRICULTURE

SERVICES

MARKET ACCESS FOR NON-AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS

TRADE-RELATED ASPECTS OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRADE AND INVESTMENT

INTERACTION BETWEEN TRADE AND COMPETITION POLICY

TRANSPARENCY IN GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT

TRADE FACILITATION

These issues are classified into “implementation issues” “agriculture related issues” and “new issues”. This huge agenda drawn up at the Doha meet is itself a controversial one. This agenda is called ‘Doha Work Programme’ or the ‘Doha Development Agenda’, in which besides the Singapore Issues, the area of electronic commerce have also been incorporated.

Let us briefly recapitulate what are the issues covered by the Doha Development Agenda, which will give an idea of the a magnitude of the tasks before the WTO member-countries, as also what these issues have in store for the developing countries.

On the conclusion of the Doha meeting, Government of India had stressed that they have “achieved” postponement of the launch of negotiations on these “new issues” for a two-year period and that the option of preventing an “explicit consensus-decision” to formally launch the negotiations on these issues, was still open.

It was also claimed that “implementation issues” i.e. the issues, which needed to be addressed to reduce the inequity and imbalance inflicted on developing countries in the WTO system, would be addressed on a priority basis in the Doha Rounds. These included better access for developing countries for their textile exports, preventing misuse of anti-dumping provisions by developed countries against exports of developing countries, revising/reinterpreting certain provisions of TRIPS agreement so as to enable better access to and diffusion of technology in developing countries, making dispute settlement and appellate processes in WTO accountable to the legislative organs of WTO etc.

The so-called ‘new issues’ - also known as “Singapore Issues” (since they were mooted at the first ministerial meeting at in December 1996) are: trade and investment, trade and competition policy, transparency in government procurement, trade facilitation.

A multilateral discipline on “Investment” in WTO will legally tie the hands of all future governments and make it extremely difficult for any government to follow the policy of self-reliance. The interests of foreign investors will override the social priorities such as employment generation, creation of egalitarian society and a balanced regional development.

In the name of a global “Competition Policy” to be laid down by WTO, national governments will be prevented from taking measures to control and direct the activities of multinational corporations in the public interest. Under such a regime, it will not be possible for the national governments to give preference to indigenous firms, small, medium or large.

Even government purchases will be eventually brought under WTO discipline on “Government Procurement”, so that no preferential treatment can be extended by the state or central government to indigenous or local firms in regard to such purchases. International suppliers will have the same right as the local suppliers in the matter of making bids for supplies to the governments.

“Trade Facilitation” is a name given to the initiatives of big multinational business-houses in respect of the provisions of GATT on freedom of transit, fees and formalities connected with import and export and publication and administration of trade regulations. This is another exercise to compel developing countries to revise their laws, rules and regulations to bring them in conformity with those of the developed countries and the requirements and convenience of multinational corporations, without regard to different background circumstances and differing objectives of such regimes in developing countries.

In the WTO, there are already codes on customs-valuation and pre-shipment inspection, which weaken the regulatory power of governments of developing countries. The new initiative in the name of trade facilitation is intended to further weaken and undermine the ability of national governments to enforce discipline on foreign trade transactions and to prevent mal-practices such as over- and under-invoicing which deprive country/government of its foreign exchange resources/ customs revenues.

The other issues on the Doha agenda viz. agriculture, special and differential treatment, implementation issues and industrial tariffs have been the most contentious. Agriculture, which has become the centrepiece of the Doha round, has seen only accusations and counter-accusations between countries that provide large subsidies and those wanting to liberalise global trade in this sector. While the developing countries too have an interest in farm exports, the main tussle is between the European Union, Japan, and to a certain extent South Korea on one side — all countries resisting liberalisation — and the U.S. and the Cairns group of exporting countries (a coalition of developed and developing countries like Australia, Argentina, Brazil, Malaysia, Thailand and South Africa) on the other.

On the question of agriculture, EU announced that there would be no question of their reducing the subsidies to agriculture until 2006, that is to say, until the end of the Doha round of negotiations. USA also would not reduce their support to agriculture either. Indeed USA has launched a programme of further increase in their support to agriculture. The current order of magnitude of the annual domestic support to agriculture in EU, USA and Japan, taken together, is around 200 to 300 percent of the entire value of our national agricultural output in a year! On the other hand, there are pressures building up that high tariffs on agriculture imports in countries like ours must form the main subject matter of negotiations on agriculture. Such huge subsidisation of agriculture in the developed world will not only continue but also escalate in the years to come.

The Doha meet, however, saw a small advance with the adoption of the Doha Declaration on Public Health and TRIPS, where it was clarified that countries are allowed by the TRIPS agreement to put in place national legislations that safeguard Public Health.

POST-DOHA DEVELOPMENTS

It should be noted that the programme envisaged under the Doha Work programme served only to enhance the imbalances and inequities in the WTO agreements. It gave special treatment to the

areas of interest to the major developed countries, ignoring the areas of interest to the developing countries.

It was, therefore, natural that the Doha round could not proceed smoothly. Despite intensive talks at several levels, the situation led to an impasse. The Fifth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO) was held in Cancun, Mexico, during September 10-14. A group of 22 countries – known as G-22 – in which Brazil, China, India and South Africa played a leading role, made a common cause and high-pitched the issue of huge farm subsidies in the US and the EU. The talks failed — for the second time in four years (first time in Seattle in 1999) as the differences between the rich, developed nations and the poorer and developing nations were irreconcilable.

But, in the subsequently held meeting of the WTO General Council at Geneva, aimed at carrying forward the 'unfinished' work at Cancun, a 'July framework Agreement 2004' was evolved. At this meeting, the need was to continue and consolidate the unity of the G-22 countries and stand up to the pressures of the US-EU led developed countries. But, India joined the team of five interested parties (FIP) along with USA, EU, Australia and Brazil, in bringing about this 'framework'. This has immensely harmed the interests of the country and marked the weakening of the resistance developed at Cancun, as well as the unity that emerged among the developing countries, particularly the G22 countries.

The Sixth Ministerial Conference of the WTO was held at Hong Kong on December 13 – 18, 2005.

Although expectations were not very high from the ministerial in Hong Kong in December 2005, it was a disappointing affair, as it highlighted the lack of substantial progress in key areas. While modalities for negotiations could not be agreed upon in the meeting, it established various deadlines in all the areas being negotiated with the intention of concluding the talks by December 31, 2006.

Agriculture: On domestic support, it was decided that there would be three bands for reductions in final bound total aggregate support and in the overall cut in trade-distorting domestic support, with higher linear cuts in higher bands. It was also decided to eliminate export subsidies by end-2013.

Industrial goods: It was decided to finalise the modalities for the negotiations by April 30, and schedules by July 31.

Services: It was decided to launch plurilateral negotiations in services, in addition to the ongoing request-offer approach to fast-track the negotiations. A number of countries have decided to participate in the plurilateral negotiations.

It was decided to have a second round of revised offers by July 31, 2006 and the final draft schedules of commitments by October 31, 2006.

It may be seen that the developed countries like USA and European countries did not give any notable concession, particularly on the huge subsidies being given to their agricultural sector. Promise to end subsidy on exports is an eyewash because it is less than 3.5 per cent in European countries, while overall average are not more than one per cent. In return, they have got commitment from India and other developing countries for reduction in tariff rates for import of agricultural produces from developed countries. The so-called concession for protection of selected crops is vague and unexplained. Ending of procurement on minimum support price is also contemplated.

The Indian representative even did not ask for the right of re-imposing QRs on imports by developing countries like India. Opening of service sector has also been promised which will naturally engulf agricultural sector also.

SETBACK AGAIN

However, belying predictions regarding a rejuvenation of the WTO negotiations after the Hong Kong Ministerial, it stuttered towards another collapse as a mini-ministerial meeting in Geneva, in July 2006, ended without any progress. The talks seem to have reached an impasse. This was borne out by WTO chief Pascal Lamy's comments that: "There has been no progress and therefore we are in a crisis."

The latest breakdown came as a result of the extreme intransigence of developed countries, specifically their demand on developing countries to reduce industrial tariffs and open up the service sector while refusing to respond likewise by cutting subsidies that they provide to their agriculture.

Pascal Lamy, the WTO Director General commented: 'Collapse is too harsh a word at this time. Let us call it suspension or time out'.

But, almost six months are over since the 'suspension' of the negotiations in July 2006. The WTO members have obviously given up the deadline of 2006 for the conclusion of the Doha round.

At stake is five years of negotiations on a package to sweep away barriers to the international flow of goods and services, valued at more than \$12 trillion a year. The complex areas of negotiations are all interrelated. As the WTO itself puts it, "nothing is agreed until everything is agreed." The accord must be approved by all members, which will reach 150 when Vietnam joins the WTO in January, 2007.

EMEGING TREND OF BILATERAL AGREEMENTS

The multilateral trading arrangement brought into play – first through the GATT and later the WTO – the principle of non-discrimination in international trade. Any deviation from this principle is considered to be as an exception. Deviation from this principle occurs when two or more countries offer preferential treatment (such as low tariff) to each other's products. This takes place through the formation of Regional Trading Agreements (RTAs) or Preferential Trading Agreements (PTAs). These are also known as Free Trade Agreements (FTAs). In the recent period, the exception is fast becoming the rule.

More and more countries are entering into RTAs/PTAs. This trend has increased manifold since the birth of the WTO. From 1995 to 2002 the number of RTAs/PTAs have increased from around less than 150 to 250. As the Doha round of negotiations have hit several roadblocks, the developed countries have taken the route of RTAs to get the developing countries to agree to accept more severe conditions and obligations than what the WTO is presently imposing.

The failure of the multilateral talks might increase the focus on the expansion of bilateral and regional trade deals, but these have all along been galloping. Currently, 197 RTAs notified with the WTO are in force; the number exceeds 300 if those being negotiated, those in the proposal stage, and ones that are signed but not yet in force are counted. An estimated 60 per cent of world trade is now covered by regional pacts.

Since 2000, the US has concluded 14 RTAs and is negotiating 11 more. The EU intends to pursue bilateral deals in Asia following the failure of talks.

There is an unmistakable trend here. Developed countries have been effectively using the regional and bilateral route to extract commitments that developing countries collectively refuse at the WTO.

In fact, the regional route has been used to either make the existing commitments at the multilateral level more stringent or to facilitate the entry of non-trade issues.

A new wave of bilateral agreements could undermine the WTO's authority. And the absence of a global trade agreement poses other risks. It may escalate trade tensions among large economies, including China, the United States, and the European Union. Trade experts also warn of a possible rise in protectionism as both rich and emerging nations seek to pry open markets.

ASSERTION BY THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

The WTO has, since its inception, functioned through murky backroom deals and arm-twisting by developed courtiers. This has often made a mockery of the supposed democratic decision making process in the WTO, where technically each country has one vote. What we are now starting to see is a closing of ranks within developing countries, apparent since the last rounds of negotiations in formation of coalitions of developing countries in the form of G20 (group of 20 developing countries), G33, G90 etc. While such coalitions have tended to be fragile and open to subversion by the US and EU, they seem to have started solidifying into groups that speak with coherence in the interest of developing countries.

The issue for developing countries like India has always been, at what terms should they agree to be part of the global trading system. It is natural that there are differing perceptions regarding how global trade should be regulated, depending on which side of the North South divide one comes from. Developed nations see the expansion of global trade as a way to prise open markets in developing countries on one hand, while on the other restricting the ability of developing nations to develop their independent capabilities in manufacturing and services. Developing countries on the other hand would like to see global trade as addressing their needs of accessing the markets of rich countries, while at the same time developing their independent capabilities. There is an obvious dissonance between these two objectives. Developing countries erred grievously during the Uruguay Round of negotiations, by agreeing to terms that placed onerous conditions on them through the WTO agreement. Having been sucked into this system, developing countries now have to look for ways to negotiate terms that provide them with some advantages. As the earlier account would show, this has not been an easy process, neither has it been accomplished with any great success. On the face of it, should be able to negotiate better deals for themselves. In practice, such an unity of developing countries have been almost impossible to forge. Part of this has to do with bilateral pressures exercised by the US and EU to break the unity of developing nations. The other part also has to do with the policies promoted by ruling classes in developing countries themselves, which rely on virtues of the market.

ROLE OF INDIA IN THE WTO

The Indian negotiating team in the successive meetings of the WTO has been a sordid story, both under the NDA regime and the present UPA governance. Our representatives have been making bold statements but have also been seen dragging their feet quite often. At Cancun and recently in Geneva, India was part of the developing country bloc that refused to be browbeaten into agreeing to an unfair deal. But, the Government of India has not followed up this position with other measures. India's positions at the WTO need to be consistent with its domestic policies. For instance, the Government needs to impose Quantitative Restrictions (QRs) again on imports from developed countries, because clearly the US and the EU have refused to honour their side of the bargain. Rather, India proceeds to liberalise imports of agricultural commodities on its own, without being obliged by the WTO to do so. India should also refuse categorically to negotiate on NAMA till there is a firm commitment from the US and EU to reduce farm subsidies. Further, the Government's belief that GATS represents an opportunity for the country is misplaced. Similarly in the services sector the Indian Government has proceeded with its unilateral liberalisation programme by opening up large swathes of its services, without being required by the WTO to do so.

With domestic economic policies in India being informed by the neoliberal framework, India's role in the WTO negotiations will continue to be viewed with suspicion. It also prevents India from providing firm leadership to other developing countries in the WTO. The vacillating character of the present Indian State is manifest in the dubious role that it plays within the WTO-at times standing firm in the face of imperialist pressure, and at other times succumbing to such pressure. This has been characteristic of India's role in successive WTO Ministerial meetings.

Clearly India has been seen to be too eager to bail out the developed countries in recent negotiations. While this has been presented as a necessity by India, to prevent a total collapse of the negotiations, the moot point really is what stakes do we have in perpetuating a framework that is as iniquitous and discriminatory as the present WTO regime. Developing countries do have a stake in promoting a multilateral framework, but this has to be tempered with the realisation that an unjust and grossly discriminatory framework can be worse than no framework at all. This is where the terrain for future battles lie – a terrain where developing countries need to preserve their unity and battle for a just framework. In the absence of such an approach, an attempt to merely prop up the WTO serves no purpose and is against national interest.

The present negotiations may be on the verge of a collapse, but the WTO is far from dead. What has already been negotiated in the WTO continues to haunt the developing world such as the TRIPS agreement. Future battles lie in not only halting further negotiations that are contrary to developing country interests, but also in reversing much of what has already been negotiated.



CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS TWELFTH CONFERENCE

“Com. Suryanarayana Rao Nagar”

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COMMISSION PAPER

SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES: NEED FOR POLICY REVIEW

BACKGROUND

The original idea behind the creation of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) or Export Promotion Zones (EPZs) was to allow employers to import materials to be worked on and then re-exported without having to pay duty. It was seen as a cheap way of creating jobs avoiding the system of reimbursing import taxes on goods intended for export. However, from the beginning, this seductive idea had a major drawback. It required the sealing off of the zone or of designated factories, often behind high fences, to prevent untaxed goods being smuggled into the rest of the economy. Such ‘sealing off’ encouraged an unregulated and repressive labour regime. Such exclusive, privileged zones with a liberal tax and labour regime was to attract investors from developed countries interested in taking advantage of cheaper costs and fewer regulations to set up manufacturing units that would send back products for sale to richer markets. Importantly, these zones were used as a ‘test base’ for liberalisation of trade, tax and other policies that were then gradually applied to the rest of the economy.

The first EPZ was established in 1959 in Ireland but it was in East and South East Asia that the idea found most enthusiastic support. Countries like Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia and the British colony of Hong Kong embraced the concept that economic growth can be promoted best through encouraging exports rather than through import substitution.

In the sixties there were just 10 such zones around the world, which by the mid-eighties had increased to 176 zones across 47 countries. In 2003, the number of zones increased to over 3000 across 116 countries.

As the EPZ concept spread around the world, governments found that they had to add more and more incentives to attract footloose investors to their enclave; subsidised factory buildings, telecommunication links, energy supplies and most worrying of all, guarantees that the labour force would stay cheap and uncomplaining.

The concept of SEZs is not a new one in India. Its earlier avatars were Free Trade Zones (FTZ) Export Oriented Unit (EOU), or Export Processing Zones (EPZs). The country’s first FTZ came up in Kandla in 1965. After Kandla, seven EPZs were established in different parts of India.

In April 2000, the NDA Government announced a Special Economic Zone scheme with a view to what it said, “provide an internationally competitive environment for exports.” Before the enactment of the Special Economic Zone Bill, 2005 in May 2005, by the UPA Government, there were eleven functioning SEZs in FALTA and Salt Lake (West Bengal), Kandla and Surat (Gujarat), Santacruz (Maharashtra), Cochin, (Kerala), Chennai (Tamil Nadu), Vizag, (AP), Indore (MP), Jaipur (Rajasthan) and Noida (UP).

In addition, approvals were given for setting up 35 new SEZs in private/joint/state sector before the Bill was placed in Parliament. The eleven functioning SEZs were actually started as Export Processing Zones.

OBJECTIVES OF THE NEW SEZ ACT, 2005

In the statement of objects and reasons at the time of introduction of SEZ Bill, 2005 it was stated: "While the policy relating to the Special Economic Zones is contained in the Foreign Trade Policy, incentives and other facilities offered to the Special Economic Zone developer and units are implemented through various notifications and circulars issued by the concerned ministries/departments. The present system, therefore, does not lend enough confidence for investors to commit substantial funds for development of infrastructure and for setting up of the units in the zones for export of goods and services. In order to give a long term and stable policy framework with minimum regulatory regime and to provide expeditious and single window clearance mechanism, a Central Act for Special Economic Zones has been found to be necessary in line with international practice. To achieve this purpose, a "Special Economic Zones Bill, 2005" is proposed. The salient features of the Bill are as under:

- i) Matters relating to establishment of Special Economic Zone and for setting up of units therein, including requirements, obligations and entitlements;
- ii) Matters relating to requirements for setting up of off-shore banking units and units in International Financial Services Center in Special Economic Zone, including fiscal regime governing the operation of such units;
- iii) The fiscal regime for developers of Special Economic Zones and units set up therein;
- iv) Single window clearance mechanism at the zone level;
- v) Establishment of an authority for each Special Economic Zone set up by the Central Government to impart greater administrative autonomy; and
- vi) Designation of special courts and single enforcement agency to ensure speedy trial and investigation of notified offences committed in Special Economic Zones."

Besides, the new Act permits SEZs to be set up in the public, private, joint sector or by the State Governments with a minimum size of not less than 1000 hectares. The SEZ is supposed to be an almost self-contained area with high-class infrastructure for commercial as well as residential inhabitation. The SEZs will have their own security, operation and maintenance rules and all environmental and labour clearances vested with the Development Commissioner of SEZ.

The main attraction of these zones lies however in the fiscal incentives given, which are usually used to manipulate accounts and to show profit/loss, export/import figures that add to the company's profits in ways that mere manufacturing and exports never can. Some of the fiscal incentives provided to investors in Indian SEZs are:

- 100% income tax exemption for a block of five years, 50% tax exemptions for two years and up to 50% of the Profits ploughed back for next 3 years
- Supplies from Domestic Trade Area to SEZ to be treated as exports
- Carrying forward of losses

- 100% Income-tax exemption for 3 years & 50% for 2 years for off-shore banking units.
- Exemption from Central Excise duty on procurement of capital goods, raw materials, consumable spares etc. from the domestic market.
- Reimbursement of Central Sales Tax paid on domestic purchases.
- Private sector proposals or making one on their own for setting up a SEZ should endeavour to give the following commitments:
- That the area incorporated in the proposed Special Economic Zone is free from environmental restrictions;
- That water, electricity and other services would be provided as required;
- That the units would be given full exemption in electricity duty and tax on sale of electricity for self generated and purchased power;
- To allow generation, transmission and distribution of power within the SEZ;
- To exempt from State sales tax, octroi, mandi tax, turnover tax and any other duty/cess or levies on the supply of goods from Domestic Tariff Area to SEZ units;
- That for units inside the Zone, the powers under the Industrial Disputes Act and other related labour Acts would be delegated to the Development Commissioner and that the units will be declared as a Public Utility Service under Industrial Disputes Act.
- That single point clearances system and minimum inspections requirement under State Laws/ Rules would be provided.

THE EXPERIENCE OF INDIAN EPZ/SEZS

y valued at Rs 16,000 crore. Around 98000 people were employed. Foreign investment worth Rs 423 crore had flown into the units in these EPZ & SEZs though the government had allowed 100% exemption to foreign direct investment through the automatic route for manufacturing units located in these zones. Duty free import of goods for the development, operation and maintenance had been permitted and various tax exemptions had been extended to them. Supplies from Domestic Tariff Area (DTA) to SEZ units were treated on par with physical exports and were exempted from service tax and central sales tax. Offshore banking units were allowed to open in these zones in order to smoothen international financial transactions. Obviously such exemptions/concessions did not give the intended result.

Before enacting a more liberal legislation for SEZs in May 2005, in terms of fiscal concession, there was an urgent necessity to examine prevailing concessions given in the name of "export promotion" under different schemes including EPZ/SEZ. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance, in its 33rd report presented to Parliament on 17.2.2006, examined this aspect and its findings are revealing.

As per the report the salient features of export promotion schemes are:

- i) Advance Licence Scheme
- ii) Duty Free Replenishment Certificate (DFRC) Scheme

- iii) Duty Entitlement Press Book Scheme (DEPB) scheme
- iv) Duty Draw Back Scheme
- v) Export Promotion Capital Good (EPCG) Scheme
- vi) Export Oriented Units (EOU), Electronic Hardware Technology Parks (EHTP), Software Technology Parks
- vii) Served from India Scheme
- viii) Target Plus Scheme
- ix) Vishesh Krishi Upaj Yojna (2004).

Duty foregone under these export promotion schemes for the year 2004-2005 is Rs 41,032.56 crore as against Rs 24,798 crore in 2001-2002. Out of that, the duty foregone for EOU/EPZ/SEZ during 2004-2005 was more than 10,000 crores. This is not an anticipated notional figure but actual figure furnished by the Ministry of Finance before the Parliamentary Standing Committee. If we add 181 SEZ projects formally approved till early October 2006, and the 128 SEZ projects approved in principle, the duty foregone on Export-promotion would surpass much beyond the 1,60,000 crore estimated by the Finance Ministry. This is only revenue loss to the central government. It does not take into account the tax exemption by State governments. No specific data on revenue implication has been worked out SEZ wise before approval. This is scandalous. We are witnessing a "revenue scam" in the name of export.

MISUSE OF EXISTING SCHEME

As per the standing committee report, instances of misuse of various export promotion schemes, including EPZ/SEZ, revealed that amount involved in the show cause notices (SCN) issued during 2002-2003 to 2004-2005 totals to an enormous figure of Rs 3,442 crore. The relevant extract from a study by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), states: "... The modus operandi for evasion of duty under Export Oriented Unit (EOU) schemes include (i) diversion of duty free inputs and utilisation of the same for purposes other than for fulfillment of export obligations (ii) non-fulfillment of exports obligation (iii) unauthorized/excess DTA sale, (iv) clandestine removal of goods (v) over-invoicing of export goods (vi) export by/in the name of non-existent/fictitious or pseudonymous entities, etc." There is now a vast scope to use the same modus operandi in the mushrooming SEZs under the new Act.

The Standing Committee recommended that there is an urgent need to review all the existing export promotion schemes, after obtaining necessary inputs from DGFT, DRI, etc so as to make them evasion-proof. Yet, instead of acting on this recommendation, the government is in a tearing hurry to extend more concessions to hundreds of tax-heavens in the name of SEZs. The recommendation was made in February 2006 after the Act was passed in Parliament in May 2005. But this hardly mattered to the government, particularly the Commerce Ministry, which went on approving new SEZ schemes recklessly. Review of the SEZ Act in light of revenue loss and misuse of the schemes was never on the agenda for these "SEZ" zealots, parroting the name of China, day in and day out.

CHINESE EXPERIENCE

But what was the road map that China followed? In 1980 China set up first group of four SEZs in the coastal area of South East China, followed by other 10 in coastal cities as second group. In the

beginning of 1984, the Chinese government, based on the experience of these SEZs, decided to establish Economic & Technological Development Zones (ETDZ) along coastal line. China's first group of 14 ETDZ were established from 1984 to 1988 successively. Since then SEZ in China has been developing in three dimension, viz, extending from SEZ to ETDZ, stretching from east coastal region to inland, middle and west region, upgrading from fundamental industries to high tech industries. To-date there are 54 national level ETDZs in China. Subsequently, provincial and municipal ETDZs have been established. They had a clear vision and plan. First they chose location. Next objective was "Technology" For example, article 4 of the regulation on SEZ in Guangdong province, approved by 15th session of the People's National Congress on August 26, 1980, states "Investors may establish with their own investment or in joint venture with our side all projects, that have positive significance for international economic corporation and technical exchanges including those relating to industry, agriculture, animal husbandry, tourism, housing & construction and research and manufacture involving advanced technology"

This was further amplified and scope expanded during the formation of ETDZ, which were focused on developing industry, introducing urgently needed advanced technologies, developing new technologies, manufacturing high grade export oriented products, providing new type materials and key component to the inland and spread new techniques and technologies. For example interim regulation (1985) of Guangzhou ETDZ concerning the introduction of technology contains one chapter on the content of modes of technology introduction and preferential treatments only.

More importantly in China, ownership of land is not being handed over to the investor in SEZs. For instance, Article 12 of Regulation on Special Economic Zones (1980) in Guangdong province stipulates: "Land in the Special Zones is owned by the People's Republic of China. The land to be used by investors will be provided according to actual needs; the duration of its use, the amount of the use fee and the method of payment will be given preferential consideration according to the different types of business and uses; and specific measures will be separately provided."

Further, Article 5 makes it clear that development would also be carried out by the State. It states, "The Guangdong province committee for administering Special Economic Zones shall be responsible for undertaking and leveling projects and building various public utilities in the Special Zones such as water supply, drainage, power supply, roads, communication and warehouses, etc."

So it was the meticulous and careful planning, which helped the success of the scheme in China. But what is our planning? Location and technology have no place in SEZ Act and rules. The following pattern of approval speaks for itself.

States with most number of approved and in principle approved SEZs

Maharashtra	-	69	Tamil Nadu	-	27
Haryana	-	34	Karnataka	-	36
A.P.	-	29	Gujrat	-	20
UP	-	9	Punjab	-	7

The above figures shows the SEZs were approved or approved in principle without showing any planning, or concern for regional balance. No prioritisation has been done for the type of products and technology development. The objective of SEZ Bill was only a one point agenda as stated in the objects and reason of the Bill, i.e. single window clearance mechanism with minimum regulating regime

for concessions in terms of revenue and land, opening the floodgate for "Special Land Grabbing Zone" in the name of SEZ. Without any specific criterion for location or product-cost-benefit analysis, the SEZ Act stipulates only a minimum ceiling for land for SEZ without fixing any upper limit. Thus the whole state can also be offered for SEZ as per the present Act, with free land to the 'Developer' to develop whatever he/she wants. Be it a golfcourse, mall, recreation centers, residential complexes, hospitals and hotels etc. The developers are being given fertile agricultural lands for carrying real estate business with impunity in the name of infrastructure, which in the case of China was created by the Government in China. That is why there is such a mad rush for SEZ in India. Though the Act was passed in May 2005 and the rules framed in February 2006, yet within six months there were 181 sanctioned SEZ projects, 121 approved in principle and hundreds are waiting for clearance with states like Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Gujarat, etc leading from the front. This is in stark contrast to China's 54 ETDZ over a period of 20 years. The 54 ETDZs in China have developed a total area of around of 40 to 50 thousand hectares while their foreign direct investment account for 15% of the whole country. In our case mainly *desi* direct investors are being allowed to utilize only 25% of land for processing/manufacturing and how much land has been acquired? According to informal estimates based on proposals for SEZs, the total land that has been acquired or would be acquired for formally approved SEZs is to the tune of 30,000 hectares. The SEZ projects that have got "in principle approval" and those that are "under consideration" are expected to consume another 95,000 ha. This would mean a total of 1,25,000 ha and of course project like the Reliance SEZ in Haryana has not even come up for approval before the BoA, though the State government has already offered Reliance 10,000 ha.

In other words limitless land acquisition, without any linkage to product to technology, has been legislated through their Act in its present form. As for the quality of the land it is not the barren and wasteland but prime agricultural farm land that is being offered on a platter to the selected developers at throw away prices. Big corporate companies are taking over even fully cultivated land in the name of promoting SEZ in states like Maharashtra, Haryana, Punjab, Orissa and others. For eg: just outside Bombay, farmers have been served acquisition notice for 14,000 hectare SEZ, which is one third the size of the metro polis. Government records estimate the land value at around 1.7 lakh to 2.5 lakh an acre. The market rate depending on location and quality is between Rs 20 lakhs and Rs 40 lakhs. Similar is the story in Dadri, UP, where a power plant is being set up for export promotion purposes under SEZ scheme. This is the major reason for the mad rush for SEZ, which otherwise defies economic logic.

By demarcating only 25% of the area procured for SEZ for development of processing area it becomes quite clear the remaining 75% are being planned to be converted mostly into expensive real estate business. The government seems to be acting as a broker of the developers and forcibly acquiring the lands at a pittance. The result is lakhs of people from far flung states like Haryana, Orissa Maharashtra etc mostly engaged in agricultural activities, are on an agitational path for fear of losing their livelihood. There is a strong indication that the rural sector, which is already under severe distress, is being exposed to social unrest. The total silence of the Act, on the acquisition, compensation and rehabilitation is encouraging the corporates to go for such large-scale land loot. Pious words of assurance, that agricultural land will not be taken over, are hardly of any use unless the same is legislated.

LABOUR RELATED ISSUES

During the process of deliberation on the Bill in Parliament, the government had to drop the labour related clauses originally proposed in the Bill providing for power to state and central government to exempt the establishments in SEZ from the purview of operation of various labour laws because of the

pressure from the Left parties. Therefore, the Act does not touch on the labour related issues, which are being governed by existing labour laws of the land under designated agency as per the relevant Act. But during framing of rules, the government has cleverly introduced the same though backdoor. Rule 5(5)(e), (f) and (g) calls upon the State governments to endeavour to delegate power to Development Commissioner under ID Act, 1947 (No.14 of 1947) in relation to units in SEZ, workmen employed by the Developer and declaration of SEZ as public utility service. Transfer of power of State Labour Commissioner to Development Commissioner, through such a rule without a legislative backing is totally untenable. It is also in complete violation of concrete recommendation of ILO as have been specified by the Committee of Freedom of Association of ILO and recorded in the Report of 332rd session of the Committee (in response to complaints no.2228 on violation of labour rights in Vishakhapatnam Export Processing Zone) and endorsed by the Governing Body of ILO of which Government of India is a member, in its meeting No.GB288/7 during November 2003. The ILO Committee observed: "The Committee recalled that in its previous conclusions, it had noted that there could be incompatibility between the two functions of Deputy Development Commissioner and Grievance Redressal Officer when performed by the same persons and had requested the government to review this situation. The Committee further recommended that categorically to Government of India "to take all necessary steps so as to ensure that the functions of Grievance Redressal Officer (GRO) are not performed by Deputy Development Commissioner in the EPZ of Viskhapatnam but another independent person or body having the confidence of all parties.." (para 751-d)

Though the functions of Development Commissioner have been specified in Sec 12 of the Act, the Rules provide enormous power to him disproportionate to the functions assigned to him under the Act. He has virtually been an overall authority of a 'deemed foreign territory' in the name of SEZ where even the fundamental right to movement of an Indian citizen has been curbed. Such unbridled power without accountability will be utilized by the Development Commissioner to crush all democratic movement including the right to form an association and union and right to move freely as mandated under Article 19 of the Constitution. The rule should be so framed that his powers are limited to the function for which he is deputed and his accountability should be clearly defined.

COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS

Sec 5 (1) of the Act stipulates the following guidelines to justify setting up of SEZ:

- a) Generation of additional economic activity;
- b) Promotion of exports of goods and services;
- c) Promotion of investment from domestic and foreign sources;
- d) Creation of employment opportunities;
- e) Development of infrastructure facilities.

Keeping in view the above guidelines vis-à-vis the amount of direct and indirect tax exemptions, the cost benefit analysis has to be worked out and a set parameter be fixed based on which the performance of each SEZ has to be assessed. Rule 53 however, quantifies success of the SEZ based on Net Foreign Exchange Earning only, without any linkage to the above guidelines. The enormous revenue loss by way of concessions has to be counter balanced by earning, for an objective assessment of the "success" of the SEZs, as otherwise the common people have to bear the brunt of additional taxes. Rule 53 should, therefore, be suitably amended based on cost benefit analysis.

NEED FOR URGENT REVIEW

In the final analysis it is neither the government, nor farmers, nor the labour who are gaining. The government loses its revenue, farmers lose their land and the labour lose their earning. The sole beneficiaries are the corporates and MNCs for whom it is a golden opportunity to loot the land and revenue. Therefore there is an urgent necessity to review the present SEZ Act.

The approved proposals as well as proposals approved in principle warrants an immediate fresh look keeping the above in view. The Act has to be reviewed in line with the following guidelines:

1. Overall planning perspective vis-a-vis location, regional balance, product and new technologies.
2. Prioritisation of the products for export promotion'
3. Cost benefit analysis for each SEZ before granting approval
4. Specific provisions on type of land to be acquired, modality of compensation and rehabilitation to those affected, like land losers, farmers and agricultural workers.
5. Stringent provisions against misuse of fiscal incentives based on earlier experience
6. Increase the processing area to minimum 50% of the land allotted.
7. Strict provisions against use of SEZ for real estate purposes
8. Ensuring product identification for SEZ such that a level playing field is maintained for similar products produced in the domestic tariff area.
9. Fixing accountability for the Development Commissioner
10. No changes in existing labour laws within SEZ, which should remain under the purview of state labour department

The CITU had submitted a memorandum to the Committee on Subordinate Legislation, Rajya Sabha, demanding review of the Act and the rules on the basis of the above guidelines.

CONCLUSION

The issue has far reaching implications involving land, labour and revenue. The "tax free", "trade union free" regime envisaged by corporates in SEZ is likely be replicated in more non-SEZ areas in the name of a level playing field. As there is a tremendous corporate pressure on the Government to resist review of the existing Act, it is imperative that there is a united movement of peasants and workers to mobilize public opinion so as to force the Government to review and change the existing SEZ Act and Rules. Experience from different States, shared during the deliberation in the commission discussions, would further help in strengthening the movement against the serious acts of omission or commission in the present Act.



CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS TWELFTH CONFERENCE

“Com. Suryanarayana Rao Nagar”

January 17 – 21, 2007

BANGALORE, KARNATAKA

INFORMATION DOCUMENT

8th Convention of the

All India Coordination Committee of Working Women (CITU)

3-5 November 2006

Sarada Nagar, Visakhapatnam

REPORT OF THE CONVENER

(The full text of the Report contains reference to international and national developments, economic situation, attacks on labour rights etc issues which have been covered in the Report of the General Secretary to the CITU all India 12th Conference. Hence we are not carrying these portions to avoid repetition. We are giving the extracts from the Convener's Report dealing with the issues of working women and the tasks before the CITU)

CONDITIONS OF WORKING WOMEN

Women workers face all the problems and attacks as the male workers. But, because of the persisting attitude of the society to consider women's role principally as care takers of the family and their income as supplementary to men's income, they face many additional problems. Globalisation has added to the discrimination against women resulting in disproportionately heavy burden on workingwomen. Contrary to the widely propagated concept that globalisation and liberalisation lead to increased job opportunities for women and the so-called 'feminisation of labour', in India, the work participation rates of women have actually come down, both in urban as well as in rural areas.

For example, between 1993 –94 and 1999 –2000, the absolute number of women employed in agriculture came down by more than 23 lakhs but this was not compensated by increased opportunities in either manufacturing or services. Work participation rate of rural women declined sharply from 328 women workers per thousand women in 1993 – 94 to 299 in 1999- 2000. Though it has increased to 315 in 2004, much of this is of subsidiary status category and is still less than what it was in 1993-94. The work participation rate in principal status employment continues to fall from 234 in 1993- 94 to 231 in 1999 – 2000 to 228 in 2004. Several reports and studies have noted that the need for employment among rural women has considerably increased but they do not get any employment.

In urban areas, the number of women workers has consistently increased but still the urban female work participation rate too dropped from 155 per thousand in 1993 - 94 to 139 per thousand in 1999 - 2000, though it has increased to 150 per thousand by 2004, it still remains lower than that at the beginning of the preceding decade. Contrary to the common perception, the share of women in urban

employment has not increased. It has stagnated at around 21 per cent between 1993-1994 and 2004. Female work participation rate in urban areas is the lowest in the age group of 20 and 49, which is the age group when the need for employment and the abilities are the highest. This indicates that increasing numbers of potential or even previously employed women workers are unable to find employment.

In the last one and half years of neo liberal reforms, unemployment among women has increased as a proportion of the female population and also compared to unemployment among men. The unemployment rate rose from 5.6 per cent in 1993-1994 to 9.3 per cent in 2004 for rural women and from 10.5 per cent to 11.7 per cent for urban women across the same period. The corresponding increases for rural men were from 5.6 per cent to 9 per cent and for urban men from 6.7 per cent to 8.1 per cent.

Agriculture continues to be the major source of employment for women in the country. Around 73% of women workers are employed in agriculture. Women's share in the total number of agricultural workers has been increasing rapidly. In 1991 it was 31.8%. In 2004, it is estimated that out of the 24.8 crores workers employed in agriculture, more than 10 crores or more than 40% are women. In some states like Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, women constitute more than half of the total agricultural workers.

The increasing crisis in agriculture has led to changes in the patterns of employment in agriculture and pushed large numbers of workers, particularly women into low-paid service sector and manufacturing employment. Earlier, women who were driven out of agriculture, found work in the low paid beedi industry that showed the single largest increase in women's employment in the manufacturing sector. In the service sector across the same period the single largest increase was in self-employed retail trade. But, by 2004, the number of workers finding work in the beedi industry has fallen and the employment expansion for women in retail trade has slowed down.

The shift in the cropping pattern from food crops to commercial crops, the introduction of machines in various agricultural operations have drastically reduced the number of working days for agricultural workers, with women being affected more.

Lakhs of peasants and agricultural workers dependent on land are also being displaced in the name of development. Lakhs of peasants in several states are being evacuated from thousands of hectares of land without adequate compensation or alternative employment, on the pretext of constructing big dams, roads etc or to provide land to the big national and multinational corporations for establishing production units or for the development of Special Economic Zones. This is forcing the peasants and agricultural workers, including women, to migrate to urban areas in search of livelihood. Most of them get only menial jobs as casual or daily wageworkers with no job security or social welfare benefits. Many a time the men who migrate to the cities lose contact with their families back home, leaving the entire burden on the women. The women headed families are among the poorest in the country.

Most of the traditional industries where large numbers of women work, like coir, cashew, plantations, beedi, fisheries etc are adversely affected by the neo liberal policies and are in crisis leading to loss of jobs, irregular work, non payment of wages, non implementation of social security benefits to the workers etc.

Though the UPA government has committed itself to increase the expenditure on education and health, it is continuing the same policy as the NDA, of withdrawing from its responsibility of providing education and health services to all the citizens. Public Private Participation (PPP) in all sectors has become the 'mantra' for development. This policy of PPP in such basic services as health and education

will in fact result in privatisation of these services. Already India is one of the countries where public expenditure on health is extremely low at only around 30%. Around 70% of health care is provided by the private sector. The government hospitals are in miserable shape with severe shortage of staff, equipment and medicines. Hundreds of posts are lying vacant. Instead of taking measures to improve their condition, the governments in several states are handing over the Primary Health Centres to NGOs or private medial practitioners. The big corporates in health care are provided enormous benefits like cheap land and tax concessions. These policies impact not only deny health care to the poor, they also adversely affect the interests of the lakhs of women employed in health care. While private hospitals charge huge fees from the patients, the nurses and other staff are not paid minimum wages and other benefits, and are not allowed to get organised. Similar is the case with the hundreds of thousands of women working in the private educational institutions.

96% women workers are employed in the unorganised sector, where labour laws are neither applicable nor implemented. It is now 30 years since the Equal Remuneration Act has been in place. But it remains only on paper for most of the women workers. Women workers in agriculture, construction, beedi, shops etc are paid less than their male counterparts for the same work. Work is segregated into women's jobs and men's jobs and the wages for women's jobs are fixed lower, on the plea that they are light and less strenuous, which is obviously not the fact. In some cases, like the sugar cane plantations in Andhra Pradesh, women are now engaged in sugar cane planting, which was earlier done by men, at wages 30- 50% less than those that were paid to men. Even in the organised private sector, some establishments pay less to their women employees by simply changing the designation though the work done by the men and women is the same. The difference in the average earnings of men and women in some industries is given in the table below.

Trend in Average Daily Earning by Sex In Some Industries

(From Occupational wage surveys of the Labour Bureau, Government of India, Fifth Round 1993 – 2002)

Sl. No	Industry	Average Daily Earnings	
		Men	Women
1	Cashew nut	58.13	46.72
2	Cigarette	213.29	101.41
3	Cotton Textiles	78.12	73.24
4	Woollen Textiles	69.31	59.24
5	Silk Textiles	63.98	39.56
6	Synthetic Textiles	62.38	40.86
7	Jute Textiles	89.73	85.99
8	Textile Garments	60.60	37.83
9	Paper and Newsprint	134.86	66.62
10	Printing & Publishing	129.97	104.16
11	Footwear	94.63	50.68
12	Chemicals and Gases	106.20	68.13
13	Fertilisers	145.95	59.99
14	Drugs and Medicines	122.75	74.47

15	Soap	194.20	50.06
16	Matches	67.42	36.07
17	Glass & Glass products	93.27	40.84

Not only in wages, workingwomen are discriminated from every stage from recruitment to retirement. The airhostesses of Air India had to launch a protracted struggle to get their right to retire at the same age as their male counterparts, implemented. Working women with the same educational qualifications, experience and abilities as men are denied promotion on some or the other pretext, in favour of men.

The vast majority of women in the unorganised sector do not get any maternity benefit. The government has not ratified the ILO Convention on Maternity Benefit on the pretext that it has enacted the Maternity Benefit Act. But the Maternity Benefit Act is not applicable to most of the women in the unorganised sector, and even where it is applicable, it is not implemented. Many units in the Special Economic Zones and other factories deny employment to married women because they will need maternity leave and childcare facilities.

A new form of exploitation of women workers has emerged in some places like Tiruppur in Tamil Nadu, where young unmarried women are employed in the textile/ garment industry. The girls are employed for a fixed period and are kept in congested dormitories without proper sanitation and water facilities. They are not paid any monthly wages, but at the end of the specified period their services are terminated and they are paid a consolidated amount in the name of 'marriage expenses'. They do not get minimum wages or any social security benefits and are subjected to abuse including sexual harassment by the employers/ supervisors etc.

The women workers in the unorganised sector do not have any childcare facilities like crèches; even in the organised sector, very few establishments provide crèches. Working women either have to carry their small children to their workplace exposing them to different kinds of hazards or leave them to be looked after their neighbours or older children, particularly girls. Many young girls are withdrawn from school to look after their younger siblings. The government has not conceded the demands of the unions of the anganwadi employees to convert the anganwadi centres into day care centres cum crèches so that women workers, particularly in the rural and unorganised sector, will get child care benefits.

The government has not yet implemented the Supreme Court directive given in 2001 and again reiterated in 2004, to universalise the Integrated Child Development Services to cover all children below 6 years. The UPA government has in its own CMP committed to 'universalise the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme to provide a functional anganwadi in every settlement and ensure full coverage for all children'. But no serious efforts have been made to implement this. It is estimated that a total of 17,18,428 would be needed to cover all the human habitations and universalise the ICDS. But at present the number of functional anganwadi centres is less than half this number and even in these, lakhs of posts of anganwadi workers and helpers are lying vacant.

Majority of employers are insensitive to even such basic necessities of working women as separate toilets. Many establishments including hospitals and educational institutions, both public and private, and shopping complexes etc where large numbers of women work, do not have any separate toilet facilities for women.

Bowing to the demand of the employers, particularly in the SEZs, the government has amended the Factories Act, allowing night shift work for women, on the plea of removing discrimination and increasing employment opportunities for women. There is no exemption for pregnant women and women with

small children or with other responsibilities. Safe transport arrangements up to the residence of the women employees are not ensured. While night work interferes with the normal body mechanism of both men and women and impact their health, the impact is more on women, because they cannot take adequate rest during the day time, due to their domestic responsibilities.

A large number of women, including well educated women in high positions as well as illiterate women in the unorganised sector, face sexual harassment at the workplace. Some surveys found that the proportion of working women facing sexual harassment at workplace at some time in their working lives was extremely high. The increasing tendency in the media to portray women as objects of sex, the increasing commodification of women's bodies and the increasing exposure of the youth to the degenerate culture in the era of globalisation have increased sexual harassment of women. It is almost ten years now since the Supreme Court has given its judgment on sexual harassment and directed the government to enact legislation against sexual harassment. The Supreme Court has also given some guidelines like creating awareness, forming complaints committees and amending the Standing Orders to include sexual harassment as an offence etc. But, till today the government has not passed any act against sexual harassment. Though some drafts have been prepared, the bill has not even been introduced in the Parliament. Neither are the Supreme Court guidelines being implemented.

Mechanisation and introduction of newer methods for downsizing in the name of increasing productivity and reducing drudgery are leading to the loss of employment for women. For example, recently it has been reported that several textile mills in Coimbatore are employing young rural women as 'roller skaters' on contract basis to handle the spinning mills. The same work of managing 100 feet long spinning frames with 500 spindles on each side, which required four persons to handle is now handled by one person skating round the machine. While three out of four workers are being rendered jobless, a spinning mill with 50,000 – 60,000 spindles is reported to be saving Rs 6 lakhs a month.

As has already been mentioned, the government has not yet introduced the Unorganised Sector Workers' Bill in the Parliament. It has circulated several drafts for the comments of the Central Trade Unions and other concerned parties. The Central Trade Unions have given their concrete and unanimous suggestions to the Labour Ministry. But till today the government had not come up with a comprehensive legislation incorporating the suggestions of the Trade Unions, to cover the aspects of social security as well as working conditions in the Bill and simultaneously introduce a separate comprehensive bill for the agricultural workers. Instead, it is resorting to dilatory tactics to delay or entirely evade the introduction of the bill altogether.

HOME BASED WORK

The number of home-based workers has increased enormously in the last decade. Globalisation has made it easy for manufacturers in the advanced capitalist countries to outsource work to the workers in the poor and developing countries taking advantage of the cheap labour and lack of any legal protection for the workers there. This has contributed to an unprecedented increase in the number of home-based workers. In addition to traditional jobs like weaving, lace, chikan, handicrafts etc, many types of jobs are done by home-based workers. Garments, leather products, electronic goods marketed under the brand names of some multinational corporations also produced by home based workers. A large number of home-based workers are women. Though some home based workers market their products themselves, large number of them work for the employers who supply them the raw materials through middlemen/ contractors/ sub contractors etc. Thus the employer employee relationship is masked and the workers have no direct contact with the principal employer. They are paid abysmally low piece rate wages. Work is irregular. Often women workers have to take the help of their family members including children and work for 10- 12 hours a day to earn as little as Rs 10 – 15.

Though the government of India has voted for the ILO Convention on Home Based Workers, it has not yet ratified it. It has not made any efforts to bring the home-based workers under legal protection providing them job protection, minimum wages and social security benefits.

SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES

On the pretext of promoting exports and creating employment opportunities, the government is sanctioning hundreds of Special Economic Zones (SEZs). Already more than 200 SEZs have been sanctioned in several states like Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal etc. The central government has even reserved the right to sanction the SEZs without consulting the concerned state governments. Thousands of hectares of land are being provided to the big private corporate developers, leading to the displacement of lakhs of peasants and agricultural workers. If the rules framed under the SEZ Act are implemented it will lead to formation of a state within the state, as the SEZs are treated as 'deemed foreign territory'. The rules prescribe a minimum area of land for the SEZs but fix no maximum limit. Thus they permit ownership of thousands of hectares of land to the developers without any ceiling. The developers have to use only 25% of the land for setting up manufacturing or services' units and are free to utilise the other 75% as they wish including as real estate.

Most of the fiscal and executive powers that are at present in the hands of the state government are being transferred to the Development Commissioners appointed by the Central government, who have no defined accountability. The rules facilitate the powers of the Labour Commissioners to the Development Commissioner, despite the recommendation of the ILO to the contrary. They also enable the state governments to declare the units in the SEZs as 'public utility services'. The CITU has lodged a complaint to the ILO about the violation of basic labour rights at the time of the struggle of the workers in the Visakhapatnam Export Processing Zone. Reacting on that complaint, the ILO governing body of which government of India is a member has endorsed the categorical recommendation of the Committee on Freedom of Association of the ILO. It said the government of India should 'take all the necessary steps so as to ensure that the functions of Grievance Redressal Officer are not performed by the Development Commissioner in the EPZ at Visakhapatnam'. The unbridled power without any accountability to the Development Commissioners will be utilised by the developers to crush all democratic and trade union rights of the workers including the right to organisation.

Already it is the experience in the various existing SEZs that though there is no exemption from any labour laws, unions are not allowed and no labour laws are implemented. The slightest suspicion that they were getting organised leads to termination of services. Around 40-60% of the workers in the SEZs are women who are mostly engaged in the garment, electronic, diamond-cutting units etc. Workers are forced to work for 10 – 12 hours without any compensation and night shift work is compulsory. Women workers are not given maternity leave and crèche facilities are not usually provided. Instead, young and unmarried girls are preferred. Women are subjected to lot of harassment and sexual harassment; the time for using the toilet is marked and the supervisors often use abusive language.

WOMEN IN THE SERVICE SECTOR

Contrary to the hype that is being created that India is marching ahead to being a service dominated economy, the share of services as a proportion of total employment has been increasing very slowly and at present stands at 25%. And also contrary to the general perception that the service sector is

providing lot of employment opportunities to women, the share of services in women's employment too has been growing very slowly being 11% in 1977 – 78 and 14% in 2004 and is considerably lower than that of men (30%). In fact, women's share in total service sector employment is only 18%, less than their share in manufacturing sector at 28%. This indicates that the service sector, which accounts for 52% of India's GDP, has not provided matching employment opportunities.

Structure of the female labour force in India by major sectors

INDIA (women)	Agriculture	Industry	Services
1961	86	8	6
1977-78*	79	10	11
1983*	78	11	11
1987-88*	74	14	12
1993 – 1994	78	11	11
1999 – 2000	75	12	13
2004	73	13	14

A big hype is also being created since the last 5- 6 years that the ITES (Information Technology Enabled Services) and BPO (Business Process Outsourcing) industry will create lot of employment opportunities and forecasts are often made of millions of jobs being created in the next few years. Cities like Delhi and the surrounding areas like Gurgaon and Noida, Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai, Calcutta, Hyderabad etc have emerged as hubs of call centres and ITES. Visibly large units, some with thousands of employees working under one roof, can be seen in Delhi – Gurgaon – Noida area. But with all the hype, the report of a round table discussion organised by the National Commission for Women in January 2006, in which senior police officers, representatives of the Call Centre Association of India and others participated, estimated that only around 3,50,000 employees were working in the call centres in the entire country. This constitutes less than 0.1% of all workers in the country and around 0.2% of workers and employees in the service sector alone. Around 40% of the call centre employees in the country are women.

Many young people are attracted to call centre work because of the ready availability of jobs and the seemingly high wages, which range from Rs 4,500 to 8,000 per month in domestic call centres and Rs 8,000 to 20,000 in international call centres. But these are only about one seventh of the wages in countries like the USA and UK. For example, in Australia the average salary per annum of a call centre employee is \$22,000 compared to \$ 1,600 in India. The average cost of transaction in Australia is US\$1.99 whereas in India it is only \$0.29. The government is projecting the BPO industry as the solution to the problems of unemployment in the country and bending over backwards to encourage it, unmindful of the intense exploitation taking place there.

Cheaper and lower wages provide higher profits for western companies whose customers are based in Europe and America. The service contractors in India also make huge profits out of the work extracted from the workers. Captive units (i.e. those units that are operated for servicing their own clients and not third party clients) account for 65 – 70% of the capacity of India's call centre industry. GE capital, an American company itself employs more than 16,000 employees. The government has exempted the incomes of these companies from taxes but the salaries of the employees are not

exempted from any tax. A survey by India's National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) estimates that for every \$ 100 of work outsourced by US firms, \$ 143 is invested back into the US economy in repatriated profits, increased sales of telecom equipment and cost savings.

Work in call centres takes a heavy psychological and health toll. The workers are often given names according to the country of their clients and are trained to speak with their accent. There is constant surveillance and monitoring and intense pressure to meet impossibly high targets. A worker normally has to attend to an average of 250 – 300 calls in an 8-hour shift and most workers, including women are compelled to do a 14 hour shift. There is no time to take breaks and women often develop urinary tract infections since they cannot go to the toilet often enough. Other problems, common to both men and women workers include insomnia, acute anxiety, ulcers and digestive problems from the hurried consumption of junk food and most commonly, depression. Frequently they also have to face the menace of abusive language and racial comments from the customers.

The work in the call centres is largely unskilled, monotonous, humiliatingly supervised in addition to the discomfort of compulsory night work. It can be said to be a little more than clerical job. But workers are given the designation of 'customer care executives' to create a feeling that they are not workers but executives. In reality however, they are made to work as 'cyber coolies'. Often they are given quotas of hundreds of calls per shift. They must turn up exactly on time every time. The first 'beep' that signals a call coming through prompts the worker to respond. At that point they must be constantly attentive and conscious of what the customer is saying. At the same time they must be recording the call through notes on a computer and simultaneously resolving the inquiry. This same process repeats itself every 5 - 10 minutes, every hour, every day. Most of the call centre employees are casual and part time.

There are no regulations for employees at call centres. The government is allowing violation of protective legislation for workers, like the 8-hour day. The workers are not unionised. In some places there is a 'No Union' clause that prevents unionisation.

The ghastly rape and murder of Pratibha, a call centre employee in the multinational Hewlett Packard in Bangalore, brought into focus the conditions of the call centre employees, the safety and security of women employees who are compelled to work in night shifts and the attitude of the employers towards their workers. We must study the issue deeply and examine how the CITU can help them in improving their conditions.

ACTIVITIES OF THE AICCWW IN THE LAST THREE YEARS

The tasks and suggestions for effective functioning of the CCWWs among working women adopted in the 7th conference were placed in the 11th Conference of CITU for ratification in the form of a 'Declaration on the Tasks of CITU among workingwomen'. The entire Conference discussed the Declaration in a half-day session and unanimously ratified it. The AICCWW has made efforts to implement these tasks with limited success.

It was decided that women should comprise 20% of the delegates to the 11th Conference of CITU from all the states with more than 15% women membership and at least 15% from the other states. Most state committees tried to ensure this but because of the inability of some of the stronger states to elect women members as per this decision, the proportion of women in the Conference reached only around 15%. Keeping in view the past experiences, the Ranchi General Council meeting of CITU has decided that the state committees of CITU should try to ensure that the delegation should reflect the proportion of women members of CITU in the state and in any case should not be less than 15%. The state CCWWs should help the CITU state committees in ensuring that this is implemented.

In general the participation of working women in the activities of CITU has considerably increased during this period. In several states, working women constitute around half or more of the mobilisations by CITU. The proportion of women members in CITU in some states like Karnataka and Maharashtra has reached around 60% while in some others like Himachal Pradesh and Assam it is close to 50%. In several states the proportion of women members is between 25- 40%. At the national level women's proportion continued at around 20% during this period. It is observed that many unions with large number of women members do not specifically mention their number while filing the annual returns. If this is rectified, the proportion of women members in CITU will go up considerably in many states. State CCWWs should identify such unions and ensure that this is corrected and women's membership is correctly reflected in the annual returns.

In several states a major part of the increase in membership of CITU during this period has been from the unorganised sector, women forming a considerable part of it. Though the continuous persuasion by the AICCWW (CITU) and the CITU centre played a definite role in increasing our activities among working women, it must also be noted that the increasing activities of CITU state committees among the unorganised sector workers in several states, (particularly where the state CCWWs has not yet been formed or are not functioning properly) has equal contribution if not more in this development.

Three members of the AICCWW including the convenor are presently working from the CITU centre. They make efforts to organise the AICCWW meetings, bring out the CITU journals for working women regularly and try to improve their quality. Improved sharing of the tasks that need to be done by the AICCWW functionaries working from the CITU centre will help in better implementation of the tasks of CITU among working women.

Four meetings of the AICCWW were held during this period. The attendance in these meetings continues to be a cause for concern.

Two important activities that have been conducted in this period are the national convention of working women on 17th November 2004 and the national workshop on 18- 19 November following the convention. Around 900 workingwomen from different industries in the organised and unorganised sectors from 16 states – Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chattisgarh, Delhi, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal, West Bengal participated in the convention. This was preceded by a campaign focussing on the major demands of equal wages, maternity benefits and crèches, law against sexual harassment, legal protection for home based work and opposing lifting of the ban on night shift work for women. Lakhs of signatures on a memorandum to the Prime Minister were collected and 2 lakhs signatures were received by the centre out of which 1 lakh were collected from Kerala alone. In Kerala the signature campaign was conducted for 4 months by groups of working women by distributing leaflets including in ladies' compartments in local trains, organising public meetings, district conventions etc, organising sector wise conventions in some districts, in schools and colleges, in the market places, organising functions in front of offices and other workplaces etc. Similar efforts were made in Tamil Nadu and to some extent in Andhra Pradesh also. Enthusiastic response from working women has been reported in all the states including Bihar, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh etc. This was the first time that any Central trade union has organised a national convention specifically on the problems of working women. The President and General Secretary of CITU, M K Pandhe and Chittabrata Majumdar and other CITU Secretariat members participated in the convention. A colourful procession was held from Ramleela maidan to Jantar Mantar in Delhi. But we also have to note that the mobilisation did not match the reported enthusiasm during the campaign. This is because the state CCWWs in the Hindi speaking areas adjacent to Delhi and including Delhi have not been formed or have become defunct. This weakness has to be rectified.

The AICCWW members from the centre along with the CITU President met the Union Labour Minister, submitted the memorandum and held discussions. Again, another delegation consisting of the General Secretary of the CITU and three other Secretariat members of the CITU, including the convenor of the AICCWW, raised the issue with the Labour Minister when they met him on some other issues. On both the occasions, the Minister assured to reconstitute the Equal Remuneration Advisory Committee including trade union representatives and to ensure implementation of all the legal benefits. But nothing has been done till now. The Labour Minister was mostly unavailable even for the Central Trade Unions as he was mostly confined to his home state and campaigning for a separate Telangana, on which issue he has resigned and since then the vacancy was not filled up for an unduly long time. Only recently has the vacancy been filled.

An All India workshop of working women activists was held on 18 – 19 November 2004 in Delhi. 81 activists from 12 states - Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Delhi, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Tripura and West Bengal - participated in the workshop. Four issues – continuation of the campaign on the demands, organising home based workers, domestic workers and fisheries workers, developing an all India movement of nurses and formation and effective functioning of the WWCC and women's subcommittees in the unions – were discussed in the workshop, on the basis of background papers. In view of the encouraging response to the campaign on the demands, the workshop decided to continue the campaign and submit memoranda to the Governors in the states on the International Women's Day in 2005. It was also decided to conduct surveys on the conditions of home based workers and domestic workers in an effort to organise these sections. Accordingly memoranda were submitted to the Governors in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Tripura etc as per reports available with the centre. In Tamil Nadu a demonstration was organised in front of Raj Bhawan in Chennai in which around 1,000 working women from different sectors participated before submitting the memorandum to the Governor.

The CITU Centre has been issuing circulars directing all its state committees and affiliated unions to take the initiative to observe the International Working women's Day on March 8. There has been some improvement in the initiative of the CITU in the observance of IWD. Some state committees of CITU and the affiliated unions, though their number is still small, have been taking initiative by issuing leaflets, organising meetings, round table conferences, seminars etc. The state CCWWs too have to take more initiative to follow up the matter to ensure that all CITU affiliated unions, at least those having women members, observe IWD.

Similarly the centre has been regularly communicating the topic for the Vimal Ranadive Memorial Lecture on 10th April. The 2004 general elections and the elections to the state Assemblies of Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal this year, created difficulties in observing the Day. In some states it was observed on a later day. In many places, instead of organising lectures by local eminent personalities on the specified subject, seminars, meetings, round table meetings, conventions etc are conducted. The CCWWs need to take more initiative on the implementation of the Memorial Day, by ensuring proper discussion in the respective committees of CITU.

Though some efforts were made to organise a meeting similar to the 5th December 2002 meeting to discuss the role of the CCWW in order to develop a better, unified and clearer understanding among our cadres, this could not succeed. We have to plan such a meeting soon after the 12th Conference of CITU.

ACTIVITIES IN THE STATES

The detailed state wise reports of the activities received by the centre are given separately. Here we try to analyse the experiences in different states, on the basis of the available information, which may be useful in formulating our future activities.

State CCWWs have been formed in 16 states - Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Delhi, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttaranchal and West Bengal. In some states like Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal district level CCWWs have also been formed. In Tripura sub division level CCWWs have been formed in all the sub divisions.

State conventions have been held in Assam, Karnataka, Kerala, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Tripura and Uttaranchal. In Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and West Bengal state conventions of workingwomen are proposed to be held after the national convention. In Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu district conventions have also been completed.

The functioning of several state CCWWs, the participation of members from CITU affiliated unions and the involvement of the CCWWs in implementing the various calls and programmes of the CITU has shown definite improvement. But most of the state CCWWs, particularly in the Hindi speaking region, have not met even once after formation. Several others have remained dormant since long and need reconstitution. In some other states, good conventions are held and CCWWs are formed but they do not function regularly, mostly due to the lack of initiative on the part of the convenors and also lack of regular monitoring by the concerned state committees of CITU.

But the attendance in the state CCWWs, even in those functioning regularly, is not satisfactory. The average attendance in most of the state CCWWs is only around 50%. While it is somewhat better in some states like Tamil Nadu, in some like Maharashtra, it is as low as 30%. The state CCWWs should discuss this problem seriously with the concerned state committees of CITU about the necessary steps to ensure attendance.

Most of the district CCWWs in Kerala and Tamil Nadu and some in Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal function regularly with the average attendance of around 50- 60%.

No federation of CITU has formed a women's sub committee at the national level. But there is some improvement in the formation of women's sub committees by the CITU affiliated unions in some industries and sectors like construction, beedi, plantations, medical and health, municipal, road transport, fisheries etc in some states. But in most of the cases the women's sub committees are not functioning regularly. The state CCWWs, in consultation with the concerned unions need to ensure proper functioning of the women's sub committees because these are important training grounds for workingwomen activists.

There is some improvement in the state committees of CITU in ensuring that the travel expenditure for the CCWW members for attending the meetings is provided for. But still instances where the CCWWs members are asked to arrange for the travel expenses on their own are not infrequent; they have to spend from their own pockets or collect money from some well wishers. This is particularly observed at the CITU district committee and union levels and occasionally at the state level also. The state CCWWs will have to look at this aspect seriously when discussing the attendance of members and take up this issue with the concerned state committees of CITU.

All the functioning state CCWWs have been actively planning to involve more women workers in the campaigns and struggles of the CITU, including strikes. In some states, they have been preparing leaflets linking the general demands with the specific demands of the working women and distributing them widely, organising lunch hour/ gate/ street meetings and meetings in the residential areas of women workers. They also actively campaign for the Left candidates in the various elections, as per guidance by the CITU.

The contribution of the anganwadi employees in many states in effective implementation of the CITU activities needs specific mention. Besides actively participating in all the calls of the CITU, in some states like Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra etc they take initiative in organising other sections of the working class like the community health workers, coffee curing workers, mid day meal workers, domestic workers, construction workers and even agricultural workers. In some states like Andhra Pradesh, they organise May Day in villages by mobilising other rural workers like construction workers, village servants, panchayat workers etc. As they are present in all the nooks and corners of the country, organising them and raising their consciousness will help in the expansion of the CITU and enhance the role of workingwomen in CITU.

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN CITU

The number of women in the decision making bodies of CITU has also increased during this period. Out of the total 35 office bearers of the CITU, 4 are women. But the number of women in the General Council of CITU has actually gone down because some strong states have in fact drastically reduced the number of women representatives from their states. This is a matter of serious concern.

The number of women in the committees and as office bearers in the national federations of CITU, even in those where around 90% of the workforce are women like the All India Beedi Workers' Federation, is not at all commensurate with the women membership of these federations. In fact, the number of women members in the AIBWF has actually come down. One of the major reasons is that the unions affiliated to these federations are often reluctant to nominate women on some or other pretext; many do not provide the necessary finances for the women members to attend the meeting as a result of which the women members find it difficult to attend the meetings.

Almost all the state committees of CITU have at least one woman office bearer, with Karnataka and Maharashtra having 5 office bearers out of total 23 and 32 state office bearers respectively. Some like Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, etc have 3-4 women as office bearers of the state committee. Kerala and Bihar have two women state office bearers. In some states like Himachal Pradesh, Assam etc women constitute around 25%- 30% of the state committee members. Women members have been elected in almost all the district committees of CITU in Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala etc. In Himachal Pradesh two women are working as important office bearers in two districts – one as the president and one as the general secretary. One district committee in Andhra Pradesh has a woman president. In Karnataka women have been elected as the president in one and as the treasurers in two district committees of CITU.

The Andhra Pradesh state committee has formed another tier below the district committee named 'mandal committees'. Out of the around 1,100 mandals in the state, CITU committees have been formed in around 900 mandals. Anganwadi employees have been elected as president or general secretary in more than 200 mandal committees. In many others they are elected as office bearers. In some mandals, community health workers and beedi workers have also been elected as office bearers.

The AP state CCWWs need to make efforts to ensure that all the women workers who are elected to the various positions in CITU are given opportunities to enhance their skills in trade union work and discharge their responsibilities effectively.

Women leaders of CITU have been nominated to participate in several international conferences, seminars, workshops etc and training programmes of the ILO.

JOURNALS

The comrades working from the centre for the journal have been making continuous efforts to improve the contents as well as the get up of 'The Voice of the Working Woman'. Special issues focussing on some aspects related to workingwomen are brought out occasionally, on the occasion of IWD, national convention of workingwomen in 2004, CITU conferences, AICCCWW conventions etc. Efforts are made to collect advertisements with the help of the CITU centre, on these occasions. But sadly, the response from the state CCWWs to increase the circulation and collect advertisements has been very poor. The circulation has not yet reached the target of 5,000, which was set several years ago.

A large portion of the circulation is among the insurance employees. This is mainly because of the initiative taken by the different units of the All India Insurance Employees' Association and its women's sub committees. In some states like Kerala and West Bengal, the state government employees' leaders try to enrol subscribers. The women leaders of electricity board employees' unions in Tamil Nadu and West Bengal and women bank employees in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka also make efforts to increase the circulation. But except among the insurance employees, the circulation among other sections is widely fluctuating. This is mostly because the efforts are not sustained and consistent and not much attention is paid to renew all the old subscribers. A large amount of dues have also been accumulating from some agencies.

It is a fact that it is difficult to enrol women members of CITU as subscribers to the journal because of the language problem. We have mostly to depend on our contacts with the middle class employees. In view of our increasing contacts with middle class women employees, who are more and more appreciating the role of CITU in the struggle against the attacks on the working class, if the state CCWWs plan properly and implement the plan effectively, it is not difficult to increase the circulation to at least to 5,000. They should also ensure that the dues from different subscribers in their states are promptly cleared.

The 'Patrika' in Hindi is intended to cater the working women in the Hindi speaking areas, where the CITU is spreading and more women are also participating in the struggles led by the CITU. It is now brought out regularly as a quarterly. But the circulation is stagnant at around 2,000 and remains confined almost entirely to the anganwadi employees. It is necessary to enrol working women in other industries as subscribers. The state CCWWs in the Hindi speaking region should make such efforts.

DEMANDS

1. Reverse the anti people, anti worker and anti women policies of neo liberal globalisation
2. Stop amendments to laws that adversely impact the interests the workers and facilitate 'hire and fire' by the employers
3. Create more employment opportunities for women, as a matter of policy
4. Effectively implement NREGA and extend it to cover the entire country. Bring Employment Guarantee Act for the urban areas immediately.
5. Provide unemployment benefit to all the unemployed including those workers who lost their jobs due to closures, lock ups, retrenchment etc
6. Introduce the Unorganised Sector Bill incorporating both the aspects of social security benefits and working conditions and the unanimous suggestions of the Central Trade Unions in the Winter Session of the Parliament and ensure its passage

7. Simultaneously introduce the Comprehensive Bill for Agricultural Workers
8. Strictly implement eight-hour working day in all the factories and establishments, including the SEZs and call centres. Ensure payment of over time wages whenever the workers have to work for longer hours.
9. Strictly implement the Minimum Wages Act. Fix the minimum wages taking into consideration the recommendations of the 15th ILC and the Supreme Court judgment in the Raptakos Brett case
10. Strictly implement the Equal Remuneration Act. Constitute and ensure effective functioning of the Equal Remuneration Advisory Committee with due representation to the Central Trade Unions
11. Stop discrimination against women employees in training, deployment and retirement in both public and private sectors
12. Provide maternity benefits to all workingwomen including those in the unorganised sector, home based workers and agricultural workers. The benefits should also cover miscarriages
13. Universalise the Integrated Child Development Services to cover all the children below six years to ensure the Right to Food, Education and Health of the children. Convert the anganwadi centres into day care centres cum crèches to ensure child care facilities to the working women in the unorganised sector and reduce the school drop out rate of girl children
14. Ensure that crèches are provided in all the workplaces where women are employed; women with small babies should be given breaks to feed them
15. Immediately enact legislation against sexual harassment at workplace
16. There should be no blanket permission for night work for women

TASKS

The capitalist system utilises the advances in science and technology not for the benefit of the common people who are instrumental in their developments, but for the benefit of a few rich. It tries to overcome the crisis inherent in the system by transferring the burden to the working class and the poor to protect the profits and properties of the employers and the rich.

The last decade saw coalition governments at the Centre under different names, but the economic policies pursued by these successive governments have been the same. In this situation, people are gradually becoming disillusioned with these parties and are searching for an alternative. The example of West Bengal, where the Left Front is in power since the last around 30 years, has made the people pay more attention to the alternate policies advocated by the Left. The prospects of the emergence of a third force with clear-cut pro people policies and firm anti imperialist stand have brightened. In the international arena, the developments in Latin America, Iraq, Iran, and Lebanon indicate the limitations of the military might of US imperialism and the possibilities of countering it with political determination and by mobilising the masses.

But this situation may not last long. The working class must take vigorous initiative and act fast to unite the entire working class and mobilise all sections of people in the struggle to defeat the present policies of neo liberal globalisation, at the same time projecting alternate pro people policies. This

alone will pave the way for the emergence of a viable pro people alternative. The CITU in its General Council meeting in Ranchi has decided to seize the initiative to rally the entire working class in this direction. The AICCWW (CITU) should play an effective role in mobilising working women in this initiative.

Keeping this objective in view, we must urgently overcome our present weaknesses wherever they exist and undertake the following tasks with due seriousness:

1. Organise a workshop at the national level with the central and state leadership of CITU and the CCWW to develop a clearer understanding of the role of the CCWWs at different levels.
2. Form state CCWWs in all states and district CCWWs wherever possible and ensure their effective functioning under the guidance of the respective committees of CITU
3. Form women's sub committees in all the CITU affiliated unions with considerable of women members; discuss their functioning in state CCWW meetings and make efforts to ensure that they function regularly
4. Organise wide campaigns on the demands of workingwomen and make efforts to ensure that the state committees of CITU discuss and plan campaigns and mobilisations of workingwomen on their specific demands, at local/ district/ state level as possible
5. Make serious efforts to organise different sections of women workers in the unorganised sector including home based workers. Identify areas/ sectors where women work in large numbers and decide priorities after discussing in the state committees of CITU and prepare objective and concrete plans to organise them
6. Suggest effective measures to increase women's membership in CITU
7. Make efforts to increase the representation of women in the decision making bodies of CITU and its affiliated unions at various levels
8. In consultation with the respective committees of CITU, hold regular trade union classes separately for workingwomen; ensure adequate participation of women trade union activists in the regular classes of CITU
9. Utilising our contacts with the educated sections of women employees, organise a campaign for subscription enrolment for 'The Voice of the Working Woman'; in the Hindi speaking states enrol subscribers to the 'Patrika'

For effective intervention on the issues of workingwomen and further increasing the participation of women in the activities of CITU, this convention makes the following suggestions for the consideration of the 12th Conference of CITU to be held in Bangalore:

1. Form state level CCWWs, wherever they are not formed, ensuring that their composition enables effective functioning under the guidance of the state committee of CITU
2. Give responsibility to guide the state CCWW to a state office bearer of CITU, functioning from the state centre; monitor the functioning of the state CCWW regularly and review its work periodically
3. Allot a full timer, preferably a woman, at the state centre for the work among workingwomen. If a woman full timer is not available, allot a male full timer for the work

4. Ensure that all the expenses necessary for the effective functioning of the CCWWs at different levels, including the travel expenses of the women members of the CCWWs and women's sub committees of the CITU affiliated unions, are met by the respective CITU/ union committees
5. Incorporate gender issues as part of the regular curriculum in the general trade union classes

I trust that the discussions in this convention will enrich this report, help in improving our collective functioning and strengthen women's participation in the activities of CITU.

Long live working class unity!

Long live CITU!

**Hemalata
Convener**



CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS TWELFTH CONFERENCE

“Com. Suryanarayana Rao Nagar”

January 17 – 21, 2007

BANGALORE, KARNATAKA

INFORMATION DOCUMENT

8th Convention of the

All India Coordination Committee of Working Women (CITU)

3-5 November 2006

Sarada Nagar, Visakhapatnam

BACKGROUND PAPER ON ‘WOMEN IN THE UNORGANISED SECTOR’

The total workforce in our country is nearly 40 crores out of which around 30.43 crores are in the rural areas and 9.36 crores are in the urban areas. More than 12 Crores of these are women. The workforce in India is generally dispersed in three sectors of the economy viz. Primary (Agricultural and allied activities), Secondary (Mining & Quarrying, Manufacturing and Electricity) and Tertiary (Trade & Services). Under each of these sectors of the economy there are two segments – one, organised sector and two, unorganised sector. Both nationally and internationally the terms ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ are used interchangeably with those of ‘organised’ ‘unorganised’ sectors. The term ‘unorganised labour’ includes workers in the unorganised sector of industry, trade and services as well as workers both in the organised manufacturing and services sectors, who are yet to be drawn into trade unions. There are also a large number of non-unionised workers, contract and casual workers, etc in the organised sector, but their problems are to some extent different from those workers in the unorganised sector.

According to the Economic Survey, 2004-2005, around 92-93% of the total workforce in our country is engaged in the unorganised sector. The organised sector’s share in employment has fallen from 9 per cent in 1981 to 7-8 per cent in 2004.

Millions of workers are engaged in the beedi, construction, brick kilns, hotels and restaurants, automobile, private hospitals and nursing homes, private schools, as anganwadi workers and helpers, domestic workers, in market yards, rice and oil mills, bakeries, stone quarries, shops and other small establishments, in traditional industries like handloom, fisheries, coir, cashew, toddy tapping, as petty traders and vendors etc. A large proportion of them are women. These workers are mostly employed on contract, casual, daily waged, temporary, part time or piece rated basis. According to the National Sample Survey 1999 –2000, out of the total 39.7 crores workers 2.8 crores workers are engaged in the organised sector and 36.9 crores in the unorganised sector. According to the Annual Report 2004 –2005 of the Ministry of Labour, of the total workers in the unorganised sector, 23.7 crores are

working in agriculture, 4.1 crores in manufacturing activities, 3.7 crores in trade and transport, 3.7 crores in communication and services and 1.7 crores in construction. Percentage of female workers to the total workers in the unorganised sector is 20.2%. That is, a huge number of around 7.5 crores women or 96% of the total workingwomen in the country.

The share of the unorganised (informal) sector in Gross Domestic Product is estimated to be around 63%. About 47% of the value added in the non-agricultural sector and 35% of the total value added in the urban economy come from the informal sector activities, which are much higher in agriculture and also in construction and trade.

The conditions of unorganised sector workers are generally marked by lack of regulation of employment, seasonality of employment, denial of benefits under labour legislations, absence of any social security protection and apparently no formal employer – employee relationship.

The employment relationship in the unorganised sector may be broadly categorised, though not exhaustively, as follows:

- a) Direct employment relationship in some cases like brick kiln, shops and show-rooms, workers in forest-plantations, security, etc, which are covered by labour legislations to some extent but most of these establishments escape implementation of these laws by employing less than 10 employees.
- b) Workers having multiple employers, like loading-unloading workers in markets, railway stations, or those attached to group of transporters transporting commodities from various production centres, construction, domestic workers etc
- c) Home based workers who are supplied raw materials through middlemen and paid piece rated wages; the employer employee relationship is masked and some times the entire transaction is made to appear as selling raw materials and buying end products.
- d) Independent artisans who supply their products or services to a trader or group of traders or market themselves.
- e) Self-employed workers constitute around 59 per cent of the non-agricultural employment in the informal sector employment. A considerable section of these self-employed workers in various occupations like petty manufacturing, transport, marketing etc are actually attached to or serve a single employer or a particular group of employers but the employment relationship remains disguised in the form of apparent job-contracts or commercial contracts.

The conditions, problems and demands of the absolutely self-employed workers and apparently self-employed workers are distinctly different and should be kept in mind while organising the unorganised sector.

The unorganised sector is further expanding due to the neo-liberal economic policies being pursued by the successive Governments since 1991. Even in the organised sector, the number of contractor workers, casual workers etc is increasing and most of them are non-unionised. In several Public Sector Undertakings, the number of contractor workers outnumbers that of the permanent or regular workers. In many units in the private sectors, more than 90% of the workers are engaged on contract basis. Because of the increasing practice of outsourcing, several jobs, which were earlier done by permanent employees, are now being done by casual or contract workers within the same establishment or small enterprises outside.

The number of home-based workers has also increased as a result of the neo-liberal economic policies of the successive governments in the centre. Even big national and multinational corporations are getting their jobs done by home-based workers through agents, middlemen, contractors and sub-contractors. Garments, laces, shoes, electronic and electric appliances, sports equipment etc, besides beedis, pappads, etc are produced by home-based workers in several parts of the country. Lakhs of women are engaged in such work.

Most of the workers in the unorganised sector are not members of any trade union. The employers subject them to severe exploitation. They are not given appointment letters, not paid even the low minimum wages stipulated by many State Governments, have no job security, or social security benefits like provident fund, ESI, maternity benefits, etc. Any suspicion that they are trying to get organised and form trade union brings in the ire of the employers and the services of the workers are immediately terminated. The brunt of the adverse affects of the neo liberal economic policies is borne by the unorganised sector workers. The fear of losing the job, howsoever ill paid, makes organising the unorganised sector workers all the more difficult.

One of the main objectives of the CITU is to unite the entire working class to fight against all types of exploitation in society. The CITU Constitution says 'The CITU believes that the exploitation of the working class can be ended only by socialising all means of production, distribution and exchange and establishing a Socialist State. Holding fast the ideals of socialism, the CITU stands for the complete emancipation of the society from all exploitation.' Achieving this objective by uniting the entire working class will be possible only when the vast sections of the unorganised sector workers and workingwomen are also organised and brought into the mainstream trade union movement. Accordingly, CITU has formed the All India Coordination of Working Women and the All India Unorganised Sector Coordination Committee to help in concentrating on the work in these sections. As in the case of workingwomen, the question of organising the unorganised sector, the difficulties, the possibilities and the organisational measures that need to be taken are also repeatedly discussed in various CITU meetings like the General Council and Working Committee meetings and Conferences. In general there is very good response from the unorganised sector workers wherever sustained efforts are made to organise them. The membership of unorganised sector workers in the total membership of CITU has enormously increased in the recent period. At present at the national level it is around 60%, while in several states, it is 70- 80%. As a large number of unorganised sector workers are women, women's membership has also increased as a proportion to total membership of CITU.

As already mentioned because 96% of workingwomen are engaged in the unorganised sector and the around 7.5 crores women workers in the unorganised sector constitute around 20% of the total unorganised sector workers, the AICCCWW (CITU) also needs to pay special attention to organise them. It will be easier for women activists of the CITU to approach them, understand their problems and convince them on the benefits of organisation than the male activists of CITU. Because of the prevalent cultural practices all over the country, women workers in the unorganised sector will be more receptive when women activists approach them. With large number of workingwomen activists in the CITU today, many in important positions in the state and district level CITU committees, they should particularly take initiative to organise the women workers in the unorganised sector. The response to such efforts by the anganwadi employees in several states like Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra etc in organising the beedi workers, community health workers, coffee curing workers, domestic workers etc has been very encouraging.

IMPACT OF GLOBALISATION

The recipe for efficient management propagated by the World Bank, and faithfully practiced by the managers of industry, is to have a small core of regular workers and get as much work as possible

done by informal workers, towards whom the management need not have any responsibility or obligation. As part of this strategy, many big industries, e.g. in garments, shoes, electronics etc are outsourcing work to small establishments or contractors or getting done by contract or casual workers. The whole gamut of the workers in the unorganised sector of the industries, non permanent and contract workers even in the organised industries, home based workers, self employed workers, workers in the service sector etc has been fast expanding in almost all the countries in the world, particularly in those countries following the World Bank dictated policies of liberalisation and globalisation.

In the wake of liberalisation, the government has allowed free import of thousands of items indigenously produced in the country by the small-scale sector; big capitalists are allowed to produce the items earlier reserved for the small-scale sector. This has resulted in closure of thousands of small industries in the unorganised sector and loss of jobs for lakhs of workers. They re enter the informal sector again in different non-regular jobs.

As a result of down sizing of establishments, both public as well as private, closures of lakhs of industries and the measures adopted by firms to cut costs of production to face competition, and the workers losing jobs, the unorganised sector is being overcrowded.

Technology has made it possible to fragment work into many small parts, each carried out in different places, and assembled in yet another place by workers removed from each other. The necessity of skilled work is gradually brought down, each task consisting of simple operations, which can be performed by non regular workers, enabling the employers to do away with regular employees and employing cheap unskilled labour including women and children.

The liberalisation policies have also accentuated the process of migration of the unorganised industries, from one region to another. The crisis in the agrarian sector, the peasants losing their land, the agricultural workers not getting work for more than 60 days in a year, the lack of employment opportunities in the rural areas etc have led to increasing migration from the rural areas to the urban areas. Workers losing their jobs due to closures, lockouts, retrenchments etc also join the unorganised sector workers, as small retail traders or vendors, rickshaw pullers, auto rickshaw drivers, etc. The unorganised sector also comprises vast segments of inter state and cross border migrant labour, particularly in such industries like brick kiln, fish/ prawn processing, domestic workers, construction, hydro electric projects, road construction etc.

Several studies of a number of industries in this sector like, garments, lace, beedi, cotton hosiery, coir, carpet etc have shown that though these sectors are unorganised, capital is not unorganised. The production, though scattered, is well organised from within, progressively coming within the folds of organised capital. Thus the employers, starting from the Multi National Corporations to the local contractor, subject the workers to intense exploitation.

COMPOSITION OF LABOUR

The composition of the workers in the unorganised sector and the nature of the jobs being done by them have undergone a vast change due to the policies of liberalisation and globalisation. Technically skilled and educated workers are also engaged on piece rate or on contract basis. Development of Information Technology has enabled such work as preparation of accounts, data feeding, medical transcription, attending to complaints, providing information to clients etc –to be done on contract or piece rated basis, for example as in the call centres. The call centre workers are relatively better paid than the ordinary unskilled workers in the unorganised sector. These so called 'knowledge workers'

are also highly exploited, as they do not have any job security or get any social security benefits and the employers get huge profits from their services. They are entirely left out of the trade union movement.

A large proportion of the workers in the unorganised sector belong to the down trodden and socially oppressed sections of society like the SC, ST and other backward castes, who are victims of both capitalist exploitation and social oppression. It is important to take both these aspects while planning strategies to organise them and launch their campaigns and struggles.

DETERIORATING CONDITIONS OF THE WORKERS

The crowding of the unorganised sector and the desperate competition to get some work have led to further deterioration of the already miserable conditions of the workers in the unorganised sector.

Many of the industries in the unorganised sector are not even included in the Minimum Wages Schedule. Need based minimum wages, as per the norms decided by the 15th Indian Labour Conference and the later Supreme Court judgment, are not considered by the governments, while fixing minimum wages. Rather the minimum wages fixed are mostly below poverty line. In around 90% of the cases, the minimum wages are not implemented. Employers get stay orders from the Courts against the minimum wages notifications and matters are allowed to linger on for years together.

Conditions similar to bonded labour exist in many areas. In some states, workers are forced to sign on promissory notes even when they have not borrowed any money from the employers. These are later used to intimidate the workers, when they demand higher wages or other benefits, or desire to leave in search of better living. Often, workers are made to sign for higher amounts while in reality they are paid far less amount in wages.

There is neither job security nor social security available for the unorganised sector workers. Most of the workers are under constant fear of losing their jobs. Appointment letters, wage slips, identity cards etc are not given. They do not get dearness allowance and even if it is legally available, it is not implemented. Social security benefits like Provident Fund, ESI, etc are not implemented. Out of the 350 million strong work force (in both organised and unorganised sectors), only 22 million are covered by the EPF Scheme, 9 million under the ESI Scheme, 4.5 million under the Workmen's Compensation Scheme and under 0.5 million only by the Maternity Benefit Act.

Women workers are not paid equal wages as men for the same or similar work. Maternity Benefit is not implemented. No childcare benefits exist. The UPA government has not taken proper initiative to implement its commitment to universalise the Integrated Child Development Services to cover all the children in the eligible age group. The government does not heed the demand of the unions to convert the anganwadi centres into day care cum crèches so that unorganised sector women can have childcare facilities throughout the day. Even after 30 years of ICDS, it has not regularised the services of the more than 15 lakhs women working as anganwadi employees and ensured minimum wages and social security benefits for them. Sexual harassment of women workers by the employers, contractors, or 'mistris' is rampant. Children are employed without any payment or with paltry wages, in the name of trainees.

The labour department is almost entirely negligent and callous in protecting the interests of the unorganised sector workers and in ensuring implementation of the protective legislations. Rather, in many instances, it is found to be working in tandem with the employers and safeguarding their interests.

Besides the severe exploitation by the employers, the unorganised sector workers live in miserable conditions in their residential areas. Majority of them have no proper dwellings and live in slums, without proper sanitation and drinking water facilities even. They do not have ration cards. Many are not provided with BPL cards, because of the absurd criteria fixed by the centre in the name of 'targeting', which in effectually leads to the exclusion of most of the really poor. Because of the withdrawal of the state from its role in providing education and health facilities for its citizens and resorting to privatisation of these services, unorganised sector workers are forced to withdraw their children from school and send them to work. It is reported that they are forced to spend a large proportion of their meagre income on health and incur heavy debts from private moneylenders, which they can never repay.

CHALLENGING TASKS AND OUR ACTIVITIES

Since the last more than one and half decades CITU has been paying more attention to the task of organising the unorganised sector workers. The AICCWW (CITU) too contributed to these efforts by taking initiative to organise the anganwadi employees. A national convention was organised and the All India Federation of Anganwadi Workers and Helpers has come into existence. Over the years it has expanded to the entire country and has developed into the foremost fighting organisation of the anganwadi employees in the country. Similarly the federations of the beedi workers, construction workers etc at the all India level, and the unions of brick kiln workers, domestic workers, tailoring workers, coir, cashew, handloom workers etc have emerged as strong and active unions in some states.

With persistent efforts, our activities among unorganised workers in some states have definitely improved. Different types of activities like surveys to understand their problems, jathas, rallies, dharnas, picketing, jail bhara, marches to the Assemblies, strike actions etc have been organised in several states like Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. The workers from different industries like brick-kiln, handloom, power loom, glass bangles, carpet, agarbatti, beedi, rice mills, head-load workers, contract workers, construction workers, anganwadi workers, stone quarries, etc participated in these campaigns and struggles. In many states our workers and leaders faced victimisation by the employers, police repression and were arrested and kept in jail. Women workers in all these sectors and states participated in the movements in large numbers. In some states, like in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Haryana etc coordinated movements were launched by different sections of the unorganised sector workers and the agricultural workers.

The consistent campaign and activities independently by CITU and also joint campaigns with the other unions in construction sector has resulted in the passing of the Construction Workers Welfare Cess Act, 1996 and initiation of certain welfare schemes in some States. In Kerala, welfare boards have been constituted for several categories of unorganised sector workers as a result of the struggles led by CITU. In West Bengal, the Left Front Government has formulated a separate Provident Fund Scheme for the unorganised sector workers. In Tamil Nadu also, the pressure from CITU has led to setting up welfare boards for different categories of unorganised sector workers by the state government. Movements had been launched for making them functional. In some states, the CITU state committees could successfully pressurise the state governments to get minimum wages notified/ revised for sections of unorganised workers and campaigns are on for getting them implemented. In several states beedi workers' unions affiliated to CITU led struggles for the issue of identity cards and implementation of the Beedi Workers' Welfare Fund Act. In Solapur in Maharashtra, ten thousand houses have been constructed for the beedi workers with the sustained effort by the CITU. The anganwadi workers and helpers have, through their persistent struggles, been able to win substantial

increases in the honorarium, to get additional remuneration from the several state governments and other benefits like PF, pension, festival allowance/ advance, and other welfare measures in some states.

It is a ground reality that in pursuing the demands of the unorganised workers, the movement has to confront the state administrative machinery head on in several states. But the experience in the last few years clearly indicates that the militancy and determination shown by the workers, including the women workers, on such occasions in some states has been heroic.

But compared to the vast size of the unorganised sector our strength is only like a drop in the ocean. Though as has already been noted, the proportion of the unorganised sector workers in CITU membership and activities has considerably increased, compared to the huge number of workers in the unorganised sector and the vast spectrum of industries covered in the sector, we are still an insignificant force.

Out of nearly 13 crores workers in the unorganised sector, excluding the agricultural and rural workers, the membership of CITU is only around 20 lakhs. Again that membership is mainly concentrated in beedi, anganwadi, plantations, private transport, construction, and few other occupations. Even in these areas, our membership is only a tiny fragment of the total number of workers. In many States we are yet to mark our presence in these comparatively organised segments. Our presence among the non-agricultural rural workers), which represents the major chunk of the unorganised sector workers, is minimal (2.5 lakh).

In the urban economy, the unorganised segment of the manufacturing sector, which has expanded in a big way along with sharp decline in organised manufacturing sector employment, does only have negligible presence of CITU unions. Similar situation is there among the loading-unloading workers in various market places, the number of which is increasing every day owing to large migration of workers from rural to urban areas. In the unorganised road transport sector also, we do not have much of a presence. Construction segment is another area, where despite there being huge potential, we could not make much headway and our membership is only around 3.8 lakh including those working in organised segment of the construction sector. Though other central trade unions or local unions are also working among these sections of workers, by and large, the vast majority of workers in the unorganised sector are left entirely out of the general trade union movement.

Our work among workers in certain industry-specific unorganised sectors, in which large number of women are working, had progressed to the stage of forming all India federations as in anganwadi, beedi, construction and plantation, which have been functioning for quite some time. But there are vast possibilities to increase women's membership in these federations by planned work by the concerned state CCWWs, according to the directions of the concerned state committee of CITU.

For example in beedi, where our work has relatively been better organised, our membership is only around 3 lakhs out of more than 50 lakhs workers in the country; and in 11 states out of 24, we have no membership at all. Even in states where we are said to be strong, our membership is less than 15% of the total beedi workers in the state.

Similarly in anganwadi, our membership is around 2.5 lakhs out of the total 14-15 lakhs employees; though in some states like Pondicherry, Tripura etc, where the total number of anganwadi employees is not large, we could achieve more than 90% membership, in several other states where almost no other union exists, our membership does not exceed 40- 45% of the total employees. In some states with around 1-2 lakh anganwadi employees, like Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh etc, our strength is either nominal or we are almost non-existent. At the all India level it is around 18%.

In other industries like construction, brick kilns, carpet, pottery, bangles, fireworks and matches, food processing tanneries and so on, it is still worse. While lack of cadre and planning is generally the reason, it also appears that in some states, the leadership of some unions, particularly at the lower levels, become satisfied with their initial performance and becomes complacent. No efforts are made to expand and bring the entire workforce into our fold.

The state CCWWs can help in forming/ developing/ strengthening the unions in these sectors, as large numbers of the workers in them are women. Of course, this has to be done after discussion in the respective CITU committees and under their guidance. But it is necessary for the state CCWWs to identify the sectors where large number of women are working, consider priorities, plan strategies and place them in the concerned CITU committees for the final decision. This type of initiative on the part of the CCWWs will certainly help in increasing women's membership and participation in CITU.

The All India Unorganised Sector Coordination Committee, in its second convention in Firozabad has adopted a charter of demands for the unorganised sector workers and decided to hold campaign in all the states, particularly focussing on minimum wages, equal wages and immediate introduction of the Unorganised Sector Workers' Bill along with a separate comprehensive bill for the agricultural workers. The state CCWW should plan for mass participation of women workers in the campaign.

To contribute effectively in organising the unorganised sector workers, particularly the women workers, the following tasks are suggested:

1. Identify the sectors/ trades where large numbers of women are working and study their problems and demands; prioritise the sectors/ trades in consultation with the respective state committees of CITU.
2. Concentrate work on the prioritised sectors/ trades by preparing a proper plan.
3. Utilise the welfare provisions provided by different state and Union governments to organise the unorganised sector workers. It will be useful if the CITU Centre collects all the information related to the welfare facilities provided by the different state governments and the Union government and circulates it to all the state committees of CITU, to be utilised in organising the unorganised sector workers.
4. A national workshop on the above and how these welfare facilities can be utilised by different states may be useful
5. Review the work regularly at the national level and also ensure that it is reviewed in the state committees of CITU.

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