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# THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

**CITU  
Working  
Committee**



**Jaipur  
13-16  
Nov. '99**

**Procession  
and  
Mass Rally  
(14.11.99)**



# SEATTLE MINISTERIAL MEET: TUs DEMAND

In the meeting convened by the Minister of Industry and Commerce, Murasoli Maran, on 15.11.99 all the five Central Trade Unions viz. CITU, AITUC, INTUC, BMS and HMS asked the government to mobilise the developing countries against the threats of US and other developed countries to force non-trade issues related to Labour and Environment in the Agenda of ensuing ministerial meeting of WTO at Seattle. Apart from Maran, the Labour Minister, Munnialal, was also present. Chittabrata Majumdar & Dipankar Mukherjee (CITU), K. L. Mahendra (AITUC), Chandidas Sinha & Asoke Singh (INTUC), R. K. Bhakt & Hasubhai Dave (BMS) and A. D. Nagpal & R. A. Mital (HMS) represented the Unions.

CITU in its Memorandum presented to the Government on this occasion pointed out that in spite of recommendation of Indian Labour Conference to the Govt. of India to include representatives of Labour in the delegation for Singapore Ministerial Meeting of WTO, no one was included. For the Seattle meeting, this time again the Central Trade Unions have requested the Government to include the representatives of Labour in the Indian delegation. In view of the fact that representatives of the Industry have been included in the delegation, CITU along with other Central Trade Unions exhorted the Government to ensure presence of Labour representative in the forthcoming ministerial meeting. Maran, without giving any assurance, agreed to take up the matter with the Prime Minister.

CITU in its memorandum strongly opposed any attempts to link market access to non-trade related areas such as labour standards and protection of environment. No country should be coerced to set the standards at levels that are not sustainable, given its stage of development. Government of India should take the lead in mobilising all the developing countries on this issue to meet the threat of using trade measures to enforce labour standards, which should be addressed only by the ILO.

However, CITU made it clear that regarding core labour standards, it does not agree with the Government position as enumerated in the background note furnished by the Ministry. CITU strongly calls for immediate ratification by the Govt. of India of all the ILO Conventions, specially the

Convention No. 87 concerning Freedom of Association and Convention No. 98 concerning Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining. This would nullify/blunt the scope of linking these issues with the world trade by the developed countries. The Union Labour Minister agreed to convene a meeting on this issue shortly.

Regarding the protection of environment CITU stated that the labour has a definite say in the matter and enforcing proper environmental norms in the workplaces and the surrounding is one of the major tasks; before the unions but this cannot be another tool in the hands of developed countries to force a non-tariff barrier to protect the interest of the technologically developed countries. Apart from the above, CITU called for immediate review of the various issues pertaining to the existing agreement under Uruguay Round (UR) Treaty. As it is, the unequal world trading order has tilted more favourably towards the developed countries, after this agreement. CITU asked the Government to apprise the trade unions on the present status relating to the following, in the post-UR period from 1995 onwards:

- 1) The gains from increased access to foreign market vis-a-vis the loss of market within country because of greater international competition.
- 2) Tariff benefits gained vis-a-vis the loss by non-tariff barrier in areas where India and other developing countries have competitive advantage because of low wage cost.
- 3) Impact of TRIPS agreement on Chemicals, Drugs and Pharmaceutical Industries.
- 4) Impact of TRIMS with dependence on Transnationals and Multi-nationals, vis-a-vis the decline of indigenous industry.
- 5) Number of anti-dumping initiations in developing countries including India vis-a-vis developed countries.

CITU called for a review of post UR developments as the top most agenda in the next Ministerial Meeting and called for rolling back on issues where India and other developing countries have not gained anything other than erosion of self-reliance. CITU's stand on WTO was again reiterated—that free access to market without free access to technology would always keep an unequal world trading order at the mercy of the developed countries.

# THE WORKING CLASS

CITU MONTHLY

DECEMBER 1999

## STOP PRESS

29th NOV.'99.

MAGNIFICENT  
DEMONSTRATIONS  
IN DELHI BY  
INSURANCE AND  
BANKING SECTOR  
EMPLOYEES AND  
OFFICERS, JOINED  
BY RANKS OF  
CONSTITUENTS OF  
SPONSORING  
COMMITTEE OF  
TRADE UNIONS!  
RALLIES HELD  
ALL OVER INDIA!  
CONGRATULATIONS!  
KEEP THE POWDER DRY!

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## EDITORIAL

### 'SECOND GENERATION REFORMS' SHALL NOT PASS!

The buegle has been sounded with the strike by insurance employees on 29.10.99, the day after introduction of the Insurance Regulatory Authority Bill in Parliament.

29th November, 1999 witnessed massive militant demonstrations in Delhi. The united mobilisation of officers and employees in the Banking and Insurance Sectors was joined by thousands of workers at the call of the Sponsoring Committee of Indian Trade Unions. In all the State capitals and industrial centres, workers demonstrated in thousands extending solidarity and support.

The Parliament opened for winter session on that day (29.11.99). With the Atal Behari Vajpayee and his motley coalition of 24 parties determined to push through the Second generation reforms, the stage is set for a series of retrograde, anti-people legislations to be taken up for passage.

The main opposition in Parliament, viz., the Congress Party under the leadership of Sonia Gandhi, who had declared unstinted cooperation and total support to the 'reforms' agenda, at the FICCI annual session, is destined to play second fiddle to the BJP-led Government moves.

But it is the working class of this country, who had braved the chilly weather in the capital, to rock the Parliament, which had declared:

**'Second Generation Reforms shall Not Pass'**

The financial sector employees have vowed to stage another strike on the day following the one on which the Insurance Bill is taken up for discussion in Parliament.

The Committee of Public Sector Trade Unions has also drawn up a series of agitational programmes to fiercely resist the liquidationist moves of the BJP Govt., in post-haste privatisation/closure of Public Sector Enterprises and the offensives against the PSU workers.

The Sponsoring Committee of Trade Unions and the National Platform of Mass Organisations will move on top gear to broaden and strengthen the struggle against the 'Second generation reforms' which is nothing but utter ruination of the economy, total subjugation before the dictates of the international financial institutions and untold misery for the people.

**Let the message be loud and clear.**

"Mr. Prime Minister! you may be calculating on permutations and combinations of parties or MPs inside the Parliament to carry out your designs against our country and the people. But we are here out to frustrate your designs from the streets, offices and factories. because we are motivated by patriotic concerns for the future of our nation, our people!

**ON TO FURTHER STRUGGLES!**

# CITU WORKING COMMITTEE CALL: UNLEASH COUNTRYWIDE UNITED STRUGGLE

**Vimal Ranadive Nagar, Jaipur, 13-16 Nov. 19 99.**

The all India working committee meeting of CITU, after its three day long deliberation, called upon the working class to prepare for a country wide united action to halt to the anti-people, anti-national policies of the Vajpayee Govt which has set-in the process of decline, disruption and disaster of the economy and the civil society. CITU urged upon all its affiliates to prepare for a big struggle in the coming days.

The Working committee meeting was preceded by a huge rally of thousands of workers in the city of Jaipur on 13th November which was addressed by E Balanandan, M K Pandhe, President and General Secretary of CITU respectively, Chittabrata Mazumder, Secretary, CITU, Hetram Baniwal, Ravindra Shukla President and General Secretary of the Rajasthan State CITU and Amra Ram, MLA, Vice president of State Kisan Sabha. The mass meeting was presided

over by Krishnakant Verma, Vice President of State CITU.

On 14th, the session of the working committee commenced with flag hoisting and the inaugural Presidential Address by E Balanandan. ( box on page 5) While placing the General Secretary's report, M K Pandhe highlighted the dangerous symptoms surfacing on the whole body of the society consequent upon return to power at the centre by the BJP led combine. The opportunist 24 party combine with the communal BJP heading the group in the seat of governance signals ominous portents. The communal machinations perpetrated on the society by the same combine during their last 17 months rule is going to mount further. The saffron brigade has started demonstrating its fangs and claws with renewed ferocity emboldened by the electoral victory on the occasion of Pope visit to India. Shameless bid to saffronise education, administration and all other institutions by the BJP led Govt

has been going on in full swing. This also signals danger for democratic fabric and the unity of the toiling people and the working class has to assert its organised opposition to all such communal and disruptionist machinations of the BJP led Govt and the *sangh parivar*, Pandhe reiterated.

## DECLINE IN ECONOMY

In his report, M K Pandhe also dealt with the national economic situation signalling all round decline in all the sectors and aggravating and widening poverty among the mass of the people following the vigorous pursue of the policy of so called liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation by the BJP led Govt during the last one and half years. Industrial growth rate has declined along with aggravation of sickness and closure and employment generation has turned negative implying job losses and mounting unemployment. Only in the organised sector, more than few lakh jobs were lost in a span of last one year, ending -March 99



as per estimate. Gross underemployment has become the order of the day in the unorganised sector. In the name of attracting foreign investment, the liberal concessions being granted to foreign capital in various forms ultimately resulted in least inflow of FDI. It rather showed a steady decline over the period, while plunging the domestic industries in serious disadvantage and facilitating

12th Lok Sabha by the BJP Govt in collusion with the Congress party is destined to bring about a calamity like situation in the national economy in the coming years. Pandhe also pointed out the exercise being carried on by the G-7 countries to perpetrate further depredation on developing countries in the coming Seattle Ministerial meet of WTO, which the Govt of India must oppose

the private sector and foreign companies has been introduced in the first session itself of the 13th Lok Sabha as committed by the BJP minister before the American business lobby at New York. The Govt also stepped up move for privatising the nationalised banks. The frenzy of the BJP led Govt to privatise the country's financial sector in haste exposes their loyalty to imperialist capital, allowing them

### **RESISIT IMPERIALIST MACHINATIONS - E BALANANDAN**

The machinations of the imperialist powers led by USA aim to re-establish their political and economic hegemony on the developing countries in the world in the background of deep seated recession ruling the world economy. IMF, World Bank, WTO and other international agencies are being utilised by them to subjugate the economies of the developing countries to make them the hunting ground for profit by the Multinational companies, setting in a process of recolonisation. On the other hand, US led imperialist block has been flexing their military muscles on the world polity under various pretexts, to assert their political domination. The happenings in Nicaragua, Cuba, Iraq, Kosovo, Bosnia, Korea and many other places through nineties are cases of shameless intrusion on the sovereignty of various nations in the world by the imperialist block, with the United Nations remaining approver/silent onlooker. The post soviet world is witnessing even deeper crisis for the capitalist system, by way of widening disparity, aggravating poverty and squeezing the market space, and the policies of globalisation liberalisation and privatisation are being piloted through IMF/WB/WTO mechanism on the developing countries to make wider space for the multinational companies operating from the rich countries for their loot and plunder. Like many other countries, the Indian rulers are also capitulating to the economic and political designs of the imperialist powers, which has posed a serious threat to the sovereignty of the country and the rights and living of the working class and the toiling masses. There is no alternative to a bitter struggle, if we are to defend the country's interest and our rights and livelihood, and working class must take up the challenge of mobilising the common people in the united countrywide struggle.

take over of Indian companies by the MNCs. Fact reveals that the net employment creation by foreign companies is practically negative, in view of the fact that employment got drastically reduced in all the companies taken over by MNCs.

Contrary to the tall promises by the champions of liberalisation and despite opening of the country's economy to its bottom, obliging the WTO and IMF bosses, India has consistently been losing out on the export front, which dipped in absolute term last year. Hasty passage of Patent Amendment Act in the

at all cost.

#### **II GENERATION REFORMS**

Expressing concern over the desperation of the BJP led Govt to oblige their masters at Washington, Pandhe said that it has gone to such an extent that in the name of second generation reforms, they are virtually putting the country on sale. Shares of blue chip public sector companies in oil, gas and telecom sector have been sold abroad at a price lower than the price prevailing in the domestic market. Insurance Regulatory Authority Bill for opening the nationalised insurance sector to

to usurp the savings of the Indian people at the cost of national interest.

#### **CHANGING LABOUR LAWS**

Pandhe also pointed out that, to complement their design for total sell out of the country's economy, the Vajpayee Govt is working overtime to completely dismantle the existing labour laws to give the employers the right to hire and fire, withdraw all regulatory provisions guiding working hours and other service conditions, introduce exit policy, drastically curtail the trade union rights and virtually illegalise strikes, impose stringent

restrictions on formation and registration of trade unions and legitimise deployment on contract system in almost all permanent areas of work. All these are being done in the name of labour flexibility. The 2nd National Commission on Labour has already been constituted by the BJP led Govt, mostly with the yes-men of BJP combine with a tailor-made terms of reference in that direction. In fine, the move is to impose conditions of slavery on the working class and weaken the forces of resistance against the economic misdeeds and crimes of those in governance and thus allow the capitalist class a heyday of ruthless exploitation. The working class must close its ranks and defend its hard earned rights at any cost, Pandhe asserted.

38 members out of 120 present took active part in the deliberations of the meeting. The debate stressed the urgent need of building up country-wide united struggle to combat the disastrous anti-national policies of the BJP led Govt at the centre and their communal machinations to disrupt the unity of the common people. The speakers also gave a detailed account of their experience during the election campaign and also the ploy of both the BJP led and the congress led camps to establish the so called irreversibility of, and their competing assertion for the liberalisation policies, to enlist the support and assistance of the capitalist lobby. Such a situation mandates the working class and the trade union movement to assert the alternative to the policy of liberalisation before the mass of

the people and build up widespread people's resistance to the retrograde anti-people policies throughout the country, as reiterated by various speakers in the meeting.

E Balanandan, President, CITU, winding up the debate, stressed upon the urgency of building up united struggle in the days to come and called upon the CITU affiliates to make all out organisational preparation to take on the challenge. The deliberations were summed up by M K Pandhe. The concluding address was given by Samar Mukherjee, Vice President, CITU, as com Balanandan had to leave early for another important meeting. The Working Committee concluded with the reassertion of the following urgent tasks to be taken up with all seriousness.

#### **RESISTANCE STRUGGLE**

The working committee unanimously concluded that building up a countrywide resistance struggle against the desperate haste of the Govt in the name of second generation reform and attack on labour right is the most urgent task of the day and CITU must take all out initiative for the same. All the CITU units must unleash an intensive campaign among the mass of the workers and the people on the dangerous implication of the mad drive of privatisation, and other policy measures and its unscrupulous design of attack on labour rights and the communal and divisive policies of the BJP led Govt. They must prepare organisationally for a bitter struggle ahead.

The Working Committee expressed satisfaction that all workers and trade unions cutting

across affiliations have voiced their opposition to the retrograde economic policies of the Govt and attacks on trade union rights. The Committee called upon the working class to expand such opposition to widespread resistance struggle throughout the length and breadth of the country. The Working Committee, while reiterating the decision of the Sponsoring Committee of Indian Trade Unions gave a call to observe "National Protest Day" on the opening day of the winter session of Parliament on 29th November, through massive demonstration in all state capitals and industrial centres. On the same day a massive workers' demonstration will be held before the Parliament along with employees of bank and insurance sectors.

The Committee welcomed the joint decision of the tradé unions and officers' associations in banking and insurance sector for going on countrywide strike action on the following day, the IRA Bill is taken up for discussion in Parliament. The Committee calls upon the entire trade union movement, and CITU affiliates in particular, to stage protest agitation in solidarity with the employees of financial sector on the day of their strike.

The Working Committee also decided to take initiative in association with the Committee of Public Sector Trade Unions(CPSTU) to build up united struggle of the public sector employees through a phased campaign and agitation to culminate in a countrywide strike action in the coming months. It noted that initiative is already being taken to build up

united movement in Coal, Port & Dock, Transport, Cement, Textile and Electricity sectors by the respective CITU unions.

The Working Committee decided that CITU, in consultation with its allies in the Sponsoring Committee of Indian Trade Unions and also other Central TUs and other all India independent federations, and in co-ordination with the movemental initiatives in various sectors, would strive for a massive agitation including countrywide strike action against

VHP, Bajrang Dal and the move of the BJP led Govt to communalise the education, administration and various other important institutions of the country. The communal harmony must be protected at all cost, which is a prerequisite for advancing democratic movement to safeguard the interests of the nation and toiling people.

#### **On Working Women**

The Working Committee noted that number of women members in CITU, both in absolute terms

cadre allotment.

#### **ORISSA CALAMITY**

Besides the above, the Working Committee while expressing serious concern and sorrow over the devastation and loss of lives caused by super-cyclone in Orissa, called upon the working class and the CITU unions in particular to come forward and donate their mite for the cyclone affected population. It noted that already many State committees and unions have taken initiative to raise funds and material assistance for cyclone-relief.

### **CITU ON THE MOVE**

The Working Committee of CITU decided various steps on the organisational front :

- \* A three day workshop on organisation will be held from 18th to 20th February 2000, at New Delhi. The CITU centre has already circulated questionnaire, which the State committees/federations should reply by 15th January, 2000.
- \* The next all India conference of CITU will be held on 27-31 December, 2000 in Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh.
- \* A two day conference of the All India Working Women Co-ordination Committee will be held separately. The date and venue to be finalised later.
- \* The CITU general council will meet during April 2000, in Kozhikode, Kerala.

disastrous anti-national policies of the Govt and attack on labour rights and to resist the nefarious design to put the country's economy on sale.

CITU noted the opposition voiced by INTUC and BMS also against the anti-people, anti-worker policies of the Govt and appealed to their leadership also to join actively the initiative of the Sponsoring Committee of Indian Trade Unions for countrywide united struggle.

The Working committee called upon the working class all over the country to be vigilant against the disruptive activities of the communal outfits like RSS,

as well as per centage of CITU membership has slightly increased. But it was also noted that large sections of these women were ideologically backward and in many states voted for BJP and its allies. Hence it was decided that CITU state committee should take initiative to active and mobilise them by taking up state wide campaigns on their issue like maternity benefit, equal wages and enactment against sexual harassment. It was also decided that all state committees of CITU should immediately review the work among working women and prepare a plan with proper

The CITU called upon the affiliates to redouble the effort for organising relief and demanded the Govt of India to declare the Orissa situation a national calamity and extend all required help and assistance for relief, restoration and reconstruction. The Working Committee, by a resolution, unanimously condemned the brutal killing of 17 innocent people at Tripura by the terrorist outfit. It demanded the Govt of India to increase deployment of security force at Tripura for combating terrorist machination. The orchestrated campaign against the L. F. Govt. of Tripura shall be defeated

[Reproduced below are excerpts from the speech made by Dipankar Mukherjee, MP and working committee member of CITU, in the Rajya Sabha on 29-10-99, exposing the deceitful propaganda of the BJP led Govt justifying the massive hike in diesel price in the name of import-parity-Editor]

## DIESEL PRICE HIKE: AN ACT OF DECEPTION !

"... This discussion should have taken place much earlier here, in a full house, because it is not merely a question of diesel price rise, it is a question where deception, deceit and hoodwinking have been going on in the name of import parity.

First and foremost, who had taken the decision to raise price of diesel ? ..... There was a mask that it was not a Govt decision, it was done by Oil Co-ordination Committee...But when the question was raised and pressure came to reduce it, then the Govt, and not the Govt even, the Prime Minister comes and says " No, no, it cannot be reduced. It is a decision." The minister must clarify this point.... Next, the minister referred to a note . That note hides more, reveals less, not transparent...A list of revision of diesel price has been given from September 97 to 1999, stated to be as per import price parity... But the international price movement of diesel based on which revision has been stated to be made was not given....You have stated that international price of diesel rose by 114% and.... you have raised the diesel price only by 40% and all that... But what about the corresponding international prices of diesel when diesel prices were revised nine times here from July 1997 onwards ?

What game is being played and how the Govt is hoodwinking the people would be clear from one example. On 2-9-97, when the import parity policy was announced, the international diesel price was 163 dollars per metric tonne...and the consumer at Mumbai was to buy one litre of diesel at Rs 11.53....In February 99, (when BJP Govt is in power) it ( international price) was down, rather lowest at 83 dollar...and still the consumer(at Mumbai) had to pay Rs 11 per litre ....It was around Rs 11 when the international price was 163 dollar and it remained still Rs 11 when international came down to 83 dollar.. and still parity with import price being talked about....And again when international price was 163 dollar per tonne in 97 domestic price at Mumbai was Rs 11.53 per litre ...and today for the same price(international) at 162 dollar per tonne consumer has to pay Rs 16 per litre....(see table on

page 9) It is sheer deception.... This cannot be justified even as per the "reformer's" policy, the great second stage reformer and performer as per Confederation of Indian Industry..... Do you call this parity with import price ?

The basic problem is in the budget.....In the budget of 1999-2000, Mr Yashwant Sinha, the reformer and the performer, said " Currently the international and domestic prices of crude oil and petroleum products are soft... raising some additional revenue through this commodity would be an equitable method of resource mobilisation"....When the international price is soft, it is not the petroleum minister, but the finance minister comes and says " there will be one rupee extra levy per litre"...From 1998-99 it was two rupees per litre extra, courtesy the reformer and the performer. The consumers do not know the basic price.... Then when market becomes hard, from 83 dollar per tonne to 162 dollar, now the Petroleum Minister comes and says, "This is import parity, and so I add another three rupees per litre." This is how the Govt are trying to fool the people.

Then next point. What about this oil pool ? The Fourth Report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Petroleum and Chemicals (of which many members are now in the Cabinet) said "...regrets to note that the Govt allowed to accumulate oil pool deficit...The Govt assured the Committee that now onwards, deficit will not be allowed to occur....The Committee recommends that the new concept of zero deficit should be ensured through enhanced efficiency of the oil sector and not by increasing prices of petroleum products every now and then."

The Oil companies had problems. They did not have money to import crude oil, unless this price hike was effected, it has been told...They have no money but still in the name of disinvestment through cross-holding of shares between the oil PSUs....Rs 4000 crore of the oil companies have been grabbed by the Govt. At the time of United Front Govt, in this house , Shri Satish Agarwal of BJP challenged correctly the-then gov't that

## PRICING OF DIESEL

Date of Price revision	Diesel Price US \$ per MT	Crude Price US \$ per barrel	The basic selling Price excluding Excise duties and taxes (Rs/ltr)	The retail selling Price including excise duties, taxes and local levies (Rs/litre)			
				Delhi	Calcutta	Mumbai	Chennai
2.9.97	163.15	18.56	8.37	10.34	10.63	11.53	11.39
7.11.97	167.08	18.74	7.98	10.29	10.58	11.47	11.34
25.12.97	141.11	18.74	7.99	10.39	10.68	11.53	11.45
1.3.98	107.10	14.07	7.84	10.25	10.55	11.43	11.30
4.4.98	121.20	13.36	7.64	10.01	10.30	11.16	11.04
20.5.98	110.56	13.36	7.54	9.87	10.16	11.01	10.89
9.1.99	99.36	11.79	6.72	8.89	9.11	10.04	9.79
28.2.99	83.39	11.79	6.72	9.94	10.18	11.21	10.91
20.4.99	117.00	16.10	6.88	10.37	10.52	12.23	11.27
6.10.99	162.10	-----	9.63	13.91	14.20	16.54	15.24

withdrawal of Rs 4000 crore from Oil pool Account by the Finance ministry was a misappropriation of money and the govt must see that the money was again appropriated. We have supported his stance despite lending support to UF Govt from outside.. Have that been done at all ?... Or is it the case that while in opposition, say something and forget that while you are on other side ?.... What about the Oil Industry Development Act ? The Standing Committee on Petroleum and Chemicals recommended in its 7th Report placed before the house on 17th March 99: "...so far the OID Act is concerned, the Govt must give back the money which was collected as cess Under OID Act" As on 31st March 98, the amount(cess collection ) was Rs 31000 crore ...and out of this only Rs 902 crore have been given for the improvement of the oil sector...and the CAG had to comment that "...imposition of cess loses much of its justification."...over the period dependence on oil import increased from 60% to 70%in the 9th plan...our oil production is decreasing from 32 million tonne to 30 million...courtsey, the reformer and the performer Govt.....

Hardly, fifteen percent population may afford this hike in diesel price of 40%, and those who support, their captive press, TV do not talk about this. But the nation cannot afford this petro-cost.

There is no reason why should you have this 40% hike, ...when 163 dollar was the international price and today it is 167 dollar again....If resource problem is there...Can't you give the list of those dodgers(corporate houses) and ask them to give

money who are holding up Rs 45000 crore of the nationalised banks as non-performing assets ? ...Your Govt has given bail out packages to these companies (to the tune of Rs 5400 crore) who have diverted crores of Ruppes outside....You can bail out the industrialists with thousands of crore rupees and you will say "Govt have no money"... And then Govt will raise money by increasing Rs 3 per litre of diesel. Is this the only alternative for resource mobilisation ?

The Govt said "We have no other way". They better say, " We are industrialist-friendly and we can do anything for them at the cost of the poor; we remember them only when the election comes and at that time we have our own signals." But the Govt have no business to talk about import parity, budget and other things to justify the price hike. The price hike in diesel is a source of mobilisation at the cost of poor people, leaving out the rich, which is an atrocity. This must be reviewed.

### LEFT MPs in 13th LOK SABHA

The tally of the Left MPs in the 13th Lok Sabha ( the list published in Nov. '99 issue) has gone up by one more. SUBHODH ROY of the CPI(M) was declared elected from the Bhagalpur constituency in Bihar, for which elections were held on 28th October, 1999.

# BJP's 'Second Generation Reform': FINANCIAL SECTOR TOP IN THE HIT LIST

Swadesh Dev Roye

The 'second generation reform' initiated by the BJP-led Government has concentrated its attack on the public sector and particularly the financial sector. It is an urgent task for the government to satisfy the World Bank and IMF which have been expressing their unhappiness for the slow pace in reforming (read ruining) these two sectors in India, thanks to the resistance movement launched by the trade unions in the country. The World Economic Outlook released by the IMF on 22.9.1999 in Washington noted: "The priority for the new government (in India) will be, in addition to public sector reforms...prioritise faster progress in privatisation of state-owned banks, combined with measures to increase labour market flexibility." The economic agenda placed before the Vajpayee Government by the CII also stressed for the necessity of privatising the public sector banks.

## ASSAULT ON INSURANCE

The BJP-led Government started their second innings by implementing the assurance given to the US industrialists by Yeshwant Sinha, in Washington on 29th September, 1999 that if BJP returned to power, within three days the IRA Bill would be tabled in Parliament. True to this commitment the Insurance Regulatory and Development Bill, 1999 was introduced in Lok Sabha on 28th October, 1999. While the public sector LIC and

GIC have got an excellent track record in all respects in our country, the record of the private insurance companies all over the world is one of cheating and fraud on the people. Naturally, opening of the insurance sector to the domestic and foreign private capital will inevitably inflict all the ills of privatisation in the country.

The income on account of insurance premium under LIC and GIC have been continuously increasing. This in turn increased the supply of cheap capital to the Government for funding various planned developmental projects. Now with the opening of the insurance sector, while the insurance business shall be grabbed by the foreign insurance companies through various foul means, flow of capital from insurance premium for executing developmental and welfare schemes of the Government are bound to be affected. Because the private insurance companies will cheat the Government in fulfilling their obligations on investment, they will not even fulfil the obligations of payment of tax, dividend etc. It may be noted that in the single year of 1997-98 the LIC paid to the Government Rs.700 crore on account of corporate tax. From various experience it can be said that the cap of 26% foreign equity participation shall also be violated through different loopholes in the laws.

The worst victims of privatisation shall be the rural poor. Today,

over 51% of LIC's new policies are sold in rural areas, over half of its branches are located in mofussil and half of the LIC agents are from rural areas. This rural thrust shall be totally missing in the privatised insurance business. Over 1.20 crore landless agricultural labourers, 1.23 crore IRDP beneficiaries, over 50.19 lakh persons belonging to 24 occupations among the most weaker sections of society have benefited from the group insurance covers provided by the LIC. The private insurance companies entering our country at the invitation of the BJP-led Government will not provide such group insurance covers to the weaker sections of our society.

From international experience it can be said that with the entry of the foreign private companies in the insurance industry, the days of misappropriating the hard earned small savings of the people shall emerge in our country. Investigating into the cases of frauds by insurance companies, the American Congress came out with a report titled: "Failed promises" listing out frauds indulged in by the American insurance companies. The cases of hundreds of foreign insurance companies' collapse mainly on account of speculative and unethical practices have been reported in recent times. The BBC carried a feature entitled: "the great pension gamble" describing the fraudulent and unethical acts of

the foreign insurance companies.

### **BANK PRIVATISATION**

Immediately on re-assuming office, in great hurry, the Vajpayee Government have made policy pronouncements that banks shall be privatised through different routes. The Banking Secretary while addressing a meeting of the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industries on 3rd November, 1999 in New Delhi has announced that: "the Nationalised Banks Act and Banking Regulation Act will be amended to bring down the government stake in public sector banks below 51 per cent." He has also said that the amendments are likely to be carried out in the forthcoming winter session of Parliament.

In the meantime, the Verma Panel appointed by the BJP-led Government have submitted their report. It has prescribed restructuring exercise for three public sector banks, which are in effect, closure of bank branches, retrenchment of employees and imposition of wage freeze. It also prescribed "resort to an across-the-board wage cut." The Panel had given a target of more than 20,000 workers to be thrown out of the rolls of the three banks. The Panel did not hide the fact that they have formulated their recommendations based on IMF's "well-researched document...on operational restructuring".

The main factor contributing for the major ills of the public sector banks is the menace of Non Performing Assets (NPA). The latest available figures of NPA is around Rs.48,000 crore. But for the "evergreening" exercises

of the bank managements in league with the industrial houses, the actual figure of NPAs could have been much more. Even the notorious Narasimham Committees had to admit that the huge NPAs of the banks is the main cause behind the banks' weak commercial position. It is reported that out of the total amount of NPAs, overwhelming amounts are due to the loans taken by the big Industrial Houses in the country. The real culprits behind the NPAs have never been brought to light, since these economic offenders provide political funds to the bourgeois ruling parties in the centre. In such a situation, the burden for the remedies of ills of the public sector banks are prescribed at the cost of the employees and consumers.

A Reserve Bank study identified *inter-alia* the following major causes for the banks' sickness or for that matter the problem of NPAs: The motivated diversion of funds by the big industrial houses, time/cost overrun while implementing the projects, (deliberate) business failure by the borrowers, willful default, siphoning of funds, fraud, misappropriation. The study has pinpointed diversion of funds by the borrowers as the single most important cause for NPAs. Without addressing the major causes of these ills, privatisation shall not serve any purpose.

Like the past such Committees, the Verma Panel also has not uttered a single word about the actual defaulters of NPAs, let alone prescribing any stringent measure against the defaulting big industrial houses. Strangely, without taking any lesson from the ineffectiveness and dismal

performance of the Debt recovery Tribunals (DRT), for addressing the acute problem of NPAs, the Verma Panel have recommended setting up of Asset Reconstruction Fund (ARF) to be managed by an 'independent private sector Asset Management Company (AMC)'. Such exercise may help the defaulters but certainly not the banks.

### **EXEMPLARY UNITY**

All the trade unions in the insurance sector came together and staged a countrywide magnificent strike on 29th October, 1999. The United Forum of Bank Unions voiced their strong opposition to the move to privatise the banks. The entire forces opposing the privatisation onslaught in the whole financial sector have come together to launch countrywide united movement. The Sponsoring Committee of Indian Trade Unions also extended active support. With all the available indications, the BJP-led government will have to confront the strongest opposition in their bid to satisfy their overseas masters in speeding up the process of 'reforming' the financial sector.

Trade unions from all affiliations, including BMS and INTUC have come together in the insurance sector to fight the steps to open up insurance sector to private foreign capital. Thus, they have set a shining emulative example that affiliations cannot be a barrier in launching united movement. **To oppose the privatisation of financial sector is not the responsibility of the employees of banks and insurance alone. It is a national task to defend the economic sovereignty of the country.**

# 5th CONFERENCE OF SIGTUR CALL: STRENGTHEN STRUGGLES AGAINST GLOBALISATION

Chittabrata Majumdar

The Southern Initiative on Globalisation and Trade Union Rights (SIGTUR) met at Honey Dew, Johannesburg in South Africa from 25th to 29th October 1999. Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) hosted the conference. This was the 5th Conference of the initiative. The earlier conferences were held under the name and style of Indian Ocean Region Trade Union Conference (IORTUC).

IORTUC was an initiative of unions bordering the Indian Ocean Region. With the globalisation drive and capital mobility by the imperialists, it has been felt that instead of geographic identity, the initiative should have a Southern focus, the region of the world where the workers are most exploited and their trade union rights are negated.

The objective of this initiative is **not** to form a parallel international organisation. The primary objective of the initiative is to share experience on the pertinent issues the trade union movement is facing today under pressure of globalisation, to highlight the key struggles being fought, to provide a basis for strengthening of campaign and movement and exchange of information and to develop solidarity action. In this process, the initiative likes to maintain relations with all the international Trade Union organisations and Industrial Federations.

Dr. Blade Nzimande, General Secretary, South African Communist Party (SACP) and Zwelinzima Vavi, General Secretary, Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) addressed the inaugural session of the Conference. Dr. Nzimande explained the real face of globalisation and trade liberalisation and the character of the attacks on the working people. Both the speakers stressed the need for building united struggles of the working class and the toiling people to combat the offensives.

The conference was conducted through 4 subject-wise workshops, i.e., global unionism, globalisation and union strategies, international campaign against MNCs and building a common May Day focus across the region. To give opportunity to involve them in discussions, each subject-wise workshop was divided into several

groups. Taking into account the reports from the groups, the resolutions of the conference were adopted in plenary session.

The initiative acknowledged that the struggles of the working class should be national in form and international in content. Unless strong trade unions and united struggles of the working class are developed in nation states, it will be difficult for them to defeat the offensives of the capitalist globalisation. To build strong unions and united struggles in nation, states, the conference adopted an action plan on 'Globalisation and Trade Union strategies'. The main stress of this action plan has been given on the following strategies:

- \* Depending on the concrete situation to move from servicing to organising,
- \* To address previous weaknesses and educate on globalisation and its impact,
- \* Strengthening the capacity of union leadership to respond to threats from globalisation,
- \* To develop from union membership to union activism,
- \* To organise casual/contract/unorganised workers in the unions,
- \* Special attention on involvement and representation of working women and young workers within unions,
- \* To take up the issues of unemployed in the charter of the unions, etc.

The action plan also emphasised the need to debate on the strength and weaknesses of forming alliances with particular political parties of Governments.

Realising that the struggles of the working class at the national levels only is not strong enough to fight globalisation effectively, the conference adopted another action plan to build 'Global Unionism'. The main emphasis is on:

- \* Developing international solidarity as the basis for global unionism,
- \* Building international solidarity at all levels in the movement: union to union; federation to federation; south to south; strengthen Industrial unions to support solidarity in campaigns,
- \* Building international solidarity through networks to exchange resources and ideas,

\* Sharing of information about the operations of specific MNCs,

\* Developing solidarity action across region against particular MNCs,

\* Sharing of information on the impact of trade agreements on workers and develop joint strategies,

\* Debate the 'social clause' and develop common approaches/strategies/campaigns, etc.

On the issue of 'International Campaign against MNC's', the conferences adopted that the international campaign conducted for the past 2 years against the activities of a multinational mining giant Rio Tinto towards workers and the environment can be a model for conducting campaign against MNCs. Hence the adopted resolution stressed that:

\* Rio education materials to be circulated to all participant unions,

\* The model be adopted appropriately for other sectors and will serve for campaign against other MNCs,

\* ILO conventions should form the ideological basis for a counter offensive against MNCs,

\* Campaigns against MNCs should involve both unions and communities and at both industrial and political levels,

\* Boycotts are effective but require careful education of workers and winning the wider community through good publicity, etc.

The conference adopted the resolution that the May Day 2000 will be observed throughout the region with common focus. The core themes will be: \* Trade Union Rights and Collective Bargaining, \* No surrender to IMF and World Bank, \* No Encroachment by WTO, \* Right to Work and Job for all, \* No discrimination in EPZ/FTZ.

There was a debate in the plenary session on 'Globalisation and the future of Trade Unionism'. Following alternative positions were posed.

**Position one:** Globalisation in opening up trade and thereby generating economic growth, has, on balance, benefited the working men and women, strengthening their material position and securing their future.

**Position two:** Globalisation is a Thatcherite, liberal economic ideology that has undermined workers' conditions security and the future of their collective organisations.

Almost all the speakers spoke in favour of Position Two. In fact, despite hesitation among a few delegates, none spoke in favour of Position One.

Some NGOs from some countries also attended the conference as observer. A question arose about their status and role in the conference. To avoid any future complication, a resolution was adopted unanimously by the conference. In at said resolution it has been clarified that this is a conference of Trade Unions in the region. An NGO, which is not a Trade Union of a country can not represent that country's Trade Union and place an action plan. Similarly, a representative of an NGO, which has nothing to do with Chinese Trade Union can not come and speak on behalf of Chinese Trade Unions and make a country report and action plan. This precedence will lead to wrong approaches in future and affect the unity. Hence the records are to be corrected to the extent of exclusion of such reporting as country report, but taken only as input of the NGOs.

The conference also gave a call to the trade unions to raise their voice against arrest of trade unionists and political activists in many of the countries.

The delegate session of the conference started with presentation of collective resistance to globalisation from Korea, India and Australia through VDO films and speeches. M K Pandhe spoke on behalf of India after the VDO prepared for the purpose was shown.

A statement of intent to advance the process of linking the ports of Fremantle in Western Australia and Durban in South Africa organisationally was signed before the conference on 28th October 1999, by the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) and the South African Transport and Allied Workers Union (SATAWU), Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU).

Trade Unions affiliated to ICFTU, WFTU and independent National centres attended the conference. ICFTU, WFTU and WCL were also invited to attend the conference. They appreciated the initiative but regretted inability to send representatives.

121 delegates and observers attended the Conference from 14 countries including India, South Africa, South Korea, Australia, Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nigeria. From India, 14 delegates from various organisations attended the conference. Cultural performers from among the Indian delegates sang various revolutionary songs in Hindi, Bengali, English and Zulu languages, which was highly appreciated by the delegates. They visited Soweto and the Workers' Library in Johannesburg.

[The country's economy under BJP led regime is a sad commentary of economic mismanagement, all round decline, deeper indebtedness and desperate bid of those in governance to put everything precious on distress sale to garner funds for immediate tomorrow's spending. It is also an episode of loss of jobs to several thousands of workers along with no prospect for job creation anywhere and cruel usurping of entire gains of workers' toil by the employers. Yet they claim that the economy has been on the rails. Height of hypocrisy indeed !

Reproduced below are the observations of some of the National Dailies-Editor]

## ECONOMY ON RAILS ! HEADING WHERE ?

### DEEPER DEBT BURDEN !

The post reform period has been an increasingly indebted Government to meet the debt service obligation, and interest payment is the sole category of expenditure undergoing a rise. Debt service payments are about to touch 4.9% of GDP in 1999-2000, a clear 2% point above than the pre-reform period....Another integral part of this long term, seemingly irreversible debt service malaise is that it accounts for an ever larger share of tax revenue, that contrasts starkly against the relative fall of total Govt expenditure which is all set to decline from 20% of GDP in 1985-86 to projected 15.7% in 1999-2000.

According to Dr Partha Sarathi Shome of ICRIER, the other part of the scenario is that this revenue receipts have been falling too....total revenue receipts in 1999-2000( net of share of states )will amount to only 10.7% of GDP. Even the gross tax revenue (including shares of states ) is put at just 9.8% of GDP by the end of current fiscal, as compared to 10.9% in 1985-86.....Dr Shome blames tax-restructuring and lower customs duties, since neither was balanced by any consistent policy to ensure that lost revenue would be redressed by gains in direct tax revenue during post reform years.

(The Economic Times-26-10-99)

In 1999 the total external debt obligation of the country reached 98.3 billion dollars.

(Annual Report, Reserve Bank of India, 1998-99)

### OMINOUS PORTENTS !

The budgetary arithmetic seems to have gone awry judging by desperate loud thinking in the North Block....In short, fiscal consolidation has proved to be far from the facile exercise assumed by 1999-00 budget. The problem now is, how to fill the expanding hole in the budget.... The fund strapped fisc wants to dip into the oil (petrol & diesel) cess, estimated to garner Rs 5800 crore

this year...A cess, be it noted, is not a tax. Should the Parliament let the govt get away with funds raised for specific purposes ?

Fiscal consolidation is promised, *inter alia*, on privatisation.... But instead of using the realisation in support of the declared objectives, equity disinvestment receipts are proposed to be used to narrow the revenue gap. Worse, generating stations of NTPC are to be sold off piecemeal. What will NTPC be without its generating units ?...But the Govt seems too desperate to think things through. This is ominous for the next budget, barely three and a half months away.

(Editorial, The Financial Express, 17-11-99)

### ALL GLOOM !

A report on India's economy by M/s Standards & Poor(Credit rating agency) reveals: "Successive Govts have failed to address the weakness of public finances, even as they have liberalised private sector"....According to the report, poor education and health, along with profound challenges to India's identity from movement based on caste and religion, will continue to complicate governance in coming years...."Failure to control and reverse growing trend of fiscal deficit, the combined deficit of national and state Govts reaching 9% of GDP this year, could erode Govt's ability to meet its spending needs and service its growing debt burden, placing pressure on India's credit rating."

(The Financial Express, 17-11-99)

### MISPLACED OPTIMISM

Yashwant Sinha is optimistic about economic growth....(but) a buyant economy should spell growth in Govt tax revenues. But finance minister omitted to point to this connection. The reason is simple. Revenue collection in excise and customs are slated to fall short of the budget target by Rs

5958 crore in 1999-00.

....Given the fact of accelerating manufacturing output, the shortfall in excise collection does call for an explanation. Besides slack in customs revenues, specially in non-oil import is ominous. The decline in non-oil and non-gold import shows

the growth in manufacturing output has not led to investment in industrial capacity expansion...so, will the rise in industrial output be sustained ? If strong investment demand does not emerge soon enough, industrial growth will falter...

*(Editorial, The Financial Express, 19-11-99)*

## WORKERS GOT A RAW DEAL !

### 57000 JOBS LOST IN ONE YEAR IN TEXTILE SECTOR ALONE CLOSURES GALORE !

Till August 99, total number of closed spinning mills reached 218. Together with 105 idle composite units, the total number of closed textile mills reached 323 by the end of August 99....Thus, since March 1998, in just 17 months, as many as 103 textile mills became idle depriving near 57000 employees of their jobs, directly and indirectly affecting nearly 2.5 lakh people including their family members....but nothing seems to move New Delhi.

This, according to analysts, was

largely due to textile policy pursued by the Govt....Though the domestic supply of cotton was more than adequate to meet the local demand, huge import of this natural fibre took place in 1998-99 season, leaving the country with an unprecedented opening stock at the start of the current year....meanwhile, in view of unwieldy inventories and large new crop estimated at 180 lakh bales, cotton prices have started shrinking and cultivators are being punished for increasing production...

In view of the excessive excise burden on textiles( including a steep hike on cotton yarn in the last budget) along with liberalisation of import, and the crippled purchasing power of the masses, the demand for cloth remains weak. Even Export remained depressed....Export of cotton textile used to have an average annual growth of 22% during five year period ending 1996-97. The growth rate nose-divided to 6% in 1997-98 and turned 3% negative in 1998-99...

*(The Financial Express, 9-11-99)*

### SLOW DOWN OF ECONOMY HIT WAGES

Consumer wages (calculated as wages deflated by consumer, price index for industrial workers) remained below....according to data of Annual Survey of Industries... Also welfare component of wages has fallen sharply during

the last two years....At the aggregate level, the slow down in the economy hit wages quite hard....wages in terms of consumer price index has in fact fallen to 1994-95 level.... Moreover, from 1992-93 onwards, the value added per

worker increased by 32.7% while producer wage went up by only 13.8%....the rate of wage increase has been much less than the rate of increase in labour productivity...

*(Business Standard, 12-11-99)*

### DEPRESSED WAGES AND EMPLOYMENT

....The updated data of Central Statistical Organisation(CSO) make another revelation. While labour productivity has risen consistently through the 1990s, increase in wages lagged behind. Real value added per worker rose by 39% during 1990-98, whereas real producer wage of workers (wage deflated

by Wholesale Price Index) went up by only 10% over the same period...Increased competition in a liberalised economy forced companies to cut costs and inevitably they resort to measures like switching to cheaper labour, subcontracting to informal sector and contractual employment. All

these keep wages under check...

The overall employment scene is still marred by under-employment and disguised under-employment of skilled and unskilled workers, as also the educated and uneducated labour force.....

*(Editorial, Business Standard, 12-11-99)*

## DOCUMENT

# SECOND NATIONAL COMMISSION ON LABOUR

*(We append the text of Government of India "Resolution" setting up the Second National Commission on Labour, which gives the composition of the Commission as well as its terms of reference. It may be noted that the Government of India has constituted Second National Commission on Labour mostly with the yes-men of the employers' lobby and the BJP combine to give concrete shape*

*to the nefarious design of completely stripping the workers of all their rights.*

*The terms of reference of the Second National Commission on Labour makes it amply clear that the entire direction of the labour law reform is to dismantle whatever protection for labour exist in existing labour laws, to free the employers' class from all its obligations and to empower them with the right to 'hire and fire' and through that*

*casualise the entire workforce. The CITU will endeavour to formulate a common stand towards the Second National Commission on Labour along with the other central trade union organisations.*

*Meanwhile, the contents of the Government of India Resolution in this regard can be used to campaign among the workers on the forthcoming offensives.*

*- Editor)*

(To be published in the gazette of India Part I Section I)

## GOVERNMENT OF INDIA/ BHARAT SARKAR MINISTRY OF LABOUR/ SHRAM MANTRALAYA

Shram Shakti Bhawan, Rafi Marg,  
New Delhi, Dated the 15th Oct. 1999.

### RESOLUTION

No.Z-20014/8/99-Coord - The Government of India have decided to set up a National Commission on Labour consisting of following:-

#### CHAIRPERSON

Shri Ravindra Varma

#### Full Time Member

1. Dr. B.R. Sabade

#### Part Time Members

1. Shri Sunil Shastri

2. Shri Sudharshan Sarin

3. Dr. sanjeeva Reddy

4. Shri Jitendra Vir Gupta

5. Smt. Ela R. Bhatt

6. Shri Arvind R. Doshi

7. Shri Hasubhai Dave

#### Member-Secretary

1. Shri N. Sanyal

2. The terms of reference of the Commission will be as follows:-

(a) to suggest rationalisation of existing laws relating to labour in the organised sector; and

(b) to suggest an "umbrella" legislation for ensuring a minimum level of protection to the workers

in the unorganised sector.

While developing the framework for its recommendations, the Commission may take into account the following:-

- (i) Follow up implications of the recommendations made by the commission set up in May 1998 for review of various administrative laws governing industry;
  - (ii) the emerging economic environment involving rapid technological changes, requiring response in terms of change in methods, timings and conditions of work in industry, trade and services, globalisation of economy, liberalisation of trade and industry and emphasis on international competitiveness and the need for bringing the existing laws in tune with the future labour market needs and demands;
  - (iii) the minimum level of labour protection and welfare measures and basic institutional framework for insuring the same, in the manner which is conducive to a flexible labour market and adjustments necessary for furthering technological change and economic growth; and
  - (iv) improving the effectiveness of measures relating to social security, occupational health and safety, minimum wages and linkages of wages with productivity and in particular the safeguards and facilities required for women and handicapped persons in employment.
3. The Commission will make its recommendations as soon as practicable but not later than 24 (twenty four) months from the date of publication of the resolution in the gazette of India. It may, if it deems fit, submit interim reports for any specific problem(s).
  4. The Commission will devise its own procedure. It may call for such information and take such evidence as it may consider necessary. The Ministries/Departments of the Government of India will furnish such information and documents and render such assistance as may be required by the Commission.
  5. The Government of India trust that the State Governments/ Administrations of Union Territories, Public Sector Undertakings, Organisations of employers and workers and all other concerned organisations will extend to the commission their fullest cooperation and Assistance.

Sd/-

(Dr. L. Mishra)

Secretary to the Government of India

Z-20014/8/99-Coord

New Delhi, dated the 15th Oct., 1999

#### ORDER

Ordered that the resolution be published in the Gazette of India Part I and Section I.

Ordered also that a copy of the resolution be communicated to all Ministries/Departments of the Government of India, State Governments/Administrations of Union Territories and all other concerned.

Sd/-

(Dr.L. Mishra)

Secretary to the Government of India

#### COMRADE DHANIRAM KHOSLA

Com. Dhaniram Khosla, Working Committee Member of the CITU, a former President of the Assam State Committee and a veteran and popular trade union leader in the State passed away on 13.11.1999. Com. Khosla, who was ailing for some time, died of cancer at the CMC Hospital in Vellore, Tamil Nadu, at the age of 64.

Com. Khosla was also a leading figure in the democratic movement in Assam and a member of the State Secretariat of the Communist Party of India (Marxist).

Com. Khosla dedicated himself in the service of the working people right from his student days. He organised the tea garden workers of Assam and led many a glorious struggle. He was the President of the Akhil Bharatiya Chah Mazdoor Sangh, founded in 1956, until his death.

The CITU Secretariat and 'The Working Class' deeply mourn the death of Com. Khosla and dip the red flag in respectful homage. We convey our condolences to the bereaved members of his family and comrades.

## WFTU MEMORANDUM TO SEATTLE MINISTERIAL MEET

1. The World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) and its affiliates in all continents are greatly interested on all the issues before the Third Ministerial Meeting of the World Trade Organisation since they directly affect the jobs, working conditions and the well-being of the working people in all Member States of the United Nations.

2. For all those who expected that the Uruguay Round and the establishment of the WTO would promote equitable and just international economic relations, trade and economic growth, there are now growing misgivings. Established structures such as the transnational corporations continue to dominate world trade. Already a larger part of world trade takes place as internal transactions within the transnational corporations and outside the framework of national or international regulation, an aspect which should be seriously examined by the III Ministerial Meeting of the WTO.

3. It is widely felt that the multilateral trade agreements which are supposed to create a level playing field for all trading partners have apparently failed to impose a sense of equity and fairness in the global market.

4. Evidently, world trade does not measure up to its actual potential mainly because demand is inhibited by the falling purchasing power of the vast majority of the world population. As UN reports show, one-half of the world population has an income per capita of less than two dollars a day. The purchasing power of developing countries as a whole has been declining because of the low prices their peasant producers and small undertakings get from the transnational corporations. Moreover, the outflow of resources from the developing countries resulting from declining terms of trade and the high cost of debt service to the foreign banks show up in their declining import capacity. Most developed countries have not fulfilled their commitment to devote 0.70 per cent of their GDP as Official Development Assistance (ODA).

5. Moreover, the overall purchasing power of the working people, both in developed countries and developing countries is declining because of the decline in real wages. This is a major reason for the recession in several industrial sectors, which affects trade growth as well.

6. Therefore, there should be a comprehensive review of these negative effects of the ongoing "globalisation" under the auspices of the transnational corporations and banks and, in particular, over the

negative impact of trade liberalisation on employment and living standards of the working people in many sectors and the consequent deterioration in the world social situation.

7. Such a comprehensive review should cover all the trade agreements negotiated and to assess the gains and losses in order to provide necessary relief to those negatively affected by these agreements.

8. While the solemn commitments undertaken by member States of the United Nations at the World Summit for Social Development, which was held in Copenhagen five years ago, are not acted upon, tremendous economic and political pressures are applied on countries to liquidate the social safety net and hand over the vital public services to the private sector and foreign capital. The central point of the Copenhagen Programme of Action that all economic decisions should be aimed at the eradication of poverty and unemployment and should have a social dimension is thus totally ignored.

9. The WFTU wishes to reiterate that the basic issues outlined in the international development strategies and the General Assembly Declaration and Programme of Action for the establishment of a New International Economic Order (NIEO) which was adopted a quarter of a century ago, it appears, are being sidelined - if not ignored. That is why the WFTU wishes to emphasise that Member States reiterate their commitment to the NIEO to work towards an international order "based on equity, sovereignty, equality, interdependence, common interest and cooperation between States . . . which shall correct inequalities and redress existing injustices (and) make it possible to eliminate the widening gap between the developed and developing countries."

10. The trade unions are of the opinion that in the last 25 years, no serious efforts were taken to eliminate the distortions, inequalities and the pernicious influence of monopolies and cartels on vital sectors of world trade. As a result, the grim statistics of the Human Development Reports produced by the UNDP are now all the more glaring and scandalous. For instance, some 250 financial tycoons have more wealth than the combined assets of almost one-half of the world population. The other side of the global picture shows that one-third of the labour force is either unemployed or under-employed, that more than one billion people are unable to meet even their most basic human needs, over 800 million are undernourished and hungry and that nearly 60 per

cent of the population of developing countries, more than 2.5 billion people, have no access to basic sanitation and 30 per cent cannot get safe, drinkable water.

11. It has to be pointed out that the current priority to impose privatisation can only further strengthen the stranglehold exercised by the monopolies and cartels and undermine the goal of the international development strategies adopted by the UN. It was specifically stated in UN documents that economic order should be founded on several guiding principles, among them recognition that all states had "full permanent sovereignty" over their natural resources and economic activities. It was specifically stated that states were entitled to exercise control over them, including the right of nationalisation - and should be free of economic or political coercion for exercising those rights.

12. It was also widely agreed that steps should be taken to establish a "just and equitable" relationship between the prices of products, raw materials and primary commodities exported by developing countries, and the prices of capital and manufactured goods and equipment imported by them with the aim of bringing about improvement in their "unsatisfactory terms of trade"

13. In other words, the WTO is called upon to take energetic measures to eliminate the unequal trade and economic relations which lies at the root of the vast belt of poverty and exploitation of the working people and blocks the normal development of world trade and economic exchanges.

14. The events which led to the Great Depression of the 1930s must alert all those formulating strategies for the 21st century to the grave dangers of market manipulation, domination and control exercised by the monopolies and cartels and their modern incarnations as transnational corporations, trading companies, banks and finance cartels. Recent turmoil in the capital and currency markets has already created a huge social crisis.

15. The proposed multilateral discussions on services should draw the right lessons from the recent financial turmoil, which undermined the economies of several countries and regions. While capital transfers for productive purposes and to finance trade should be encouraged, strict measures should be taken to eliminate all forms of illegal practices and economic crimes.

16. The WFTU reiterates its submission to the earlier Ministerial Meetings that WTO should act upon the basic issues and ensure that international trading systems are based on principles of equality, sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs.

In particular, the WFTU draws attention to the non-implementation of the resolution of the UN General Assembly asking the US Administration to lift sanctions on Cuba. The Helms Burton Act which claims extra-territorial jurisdiction has not been repealed as yet. From a humanitarian point of view, the WFTU has repeatedly called for the lifting of all trade sanctions against countries such as Cuba, Libya, Iraq and Iran, which deprive working people of access to food, medicines and other essential commodities. The WFTU hopes that the Third Ministerial Meeting will impress upon all Member States of the WTO to uphold the basic principles of international trade law and cancel all trade bans and other such measures which affect the free flow of international trade. States, which have imposed arbitrary sanctions and boycotts, should be obliged to pay compensation to the countries and peoples who were victimised in this manner.

17. The WFTU believes that effective mechanisms exist within the tripartite structures of the ILO to oversee the implementation of international labour standards and investigate complaints related to violations of ILO conventions. The ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-Up adopted by the 86th Session of the ILO (1998) notes the consensus, on this issue.

18. National and international programmes of action should be put in place to ensure the universal implementation of international labour standards. In this connection, laws on corporate governance should be updated, to include provisions requiring all undertakings to include in their annual reports all facts concerning the implementation of international labour standards. Institutions should be established for a "Social Audit" with authority to look into the social consequences of all economic decisions by all private and public sector enterprises, the transnational corporations as well as governmental institutions.

19. In all these matters, the WTO should further strengthen its cooperation with the ILO and the world trade union movement, calling on member States and all those concerned to coordinate efforts to secure the implementation of these international labour standards.

20. In this spirit, the WFTU reiterates its position that the World Trade Organisation should establish a system of regular consultations between the WTO and the international and regional trade union organisations as well as other NGOs concerned with trade and development, in order to find effective ways of dealing with all trade issues which have a bearing on jobs and living standards and the enforcement of international labour standards and social justice.

# REPORTS & EVENTS

## CALL FOR COUNTRYWIDE UNITED ACTION

The Sponsoring Committee of Indian Trade Unions comprising the central trade unions, viz., AITUC, CITU, HMS, UTUC, UTUC(LS), TUCC and AICCTU, along with various all India trade union federations in Bank, Insurance, State Govt and Central Govt employees and other service sectors, met on 5.11.99 at New Delhi to take stock of the situation arising out of the hasty steps being taken by the Govt of India for implementation of the anti-people, anti-worker policies and decide the course of action. The meeting was presided over by E. Balanandan, President, CITU.

The Sponsoring Committee noted with concern the mad drive for privatisation of PSUs including the banking and insurance sector and attempts to deregulate the labour market with drastic amendments to trade union legislations through the

mechanism of the 2nd National Labour Commission.

The Sponsoring Committee expressed satisfaction that the trade union movement irrespective of affiliations has recorded its strong disapproval to the above moves by the NDA Govt. The Committee congratulated the employees of the Insurance sector for their countrywide magnificent strike action on 29th October. It welcomed the joint move of all the unions in the insurance and banking sector to stage massive demonstration before the Parliament on its opening day on 29th November.

The Sponsoring Committee called upon the working class to prepare for united action against the anti-worker, anti-people and anti-national policies of the Govt. It called upon the trade unions of all affiliations to hold massive united demonstration and rally in

all the State capitals and industrial centers on 29th November '99 against privatisation and attacks on trade union rights. The Committee also called its constituent organisations and trade unions at Delhi to join *enmasse* the demonstration before Parliament on 29th November along with the employees of financial sector. The Committee also appealed to the public sector unions to jointly decide for agitation and action programmes against the anti-PSU policies of the Govt on urgent basis.

The Sponsoring Committee decided to meet shortly again to decide the next course of action.

(Extracts from the joint statement issued on 8.11.1999 by K.L. Mahendra (AITUC), M.K. Pandhe (CITU), R.A. Mital (HMS), Abani Roy (UTUC), R. Sharma (UTUC(LS)), S. Mukherjee (AICCTU), and D.D. Shastri, (TUCC).

## JYOTI BASU GREETES AIRF JUBILEE

The Platinum Jubilee Convention of the All India Railwaymen's Federation (AIRF) was held in Lucknow from November 2 to 4, 1999. In a message of greetings sent on the occasion, Jyoti Basu, Vice-President CITU, and Chief Minister of West Bengal said: "This federation has travelled a long way since its inception and has, to its credit, an impassive

record of providing effective leadership to railwaymen's struggles and movements. Further, this organisation has always been endeavouring to uphold the interests of commuters of the railway system in India.

My association with AIRF started in the early forties. In 1943, I was the Vice-President of this organisation and in 1946, I was first elected to the Bengal

Legislative Assembly from a Railway Constituency. During the forties, thousands of employees and workers addressed themselves to fight for the democratic and trade union rights. After independence, they withstood various attacks on them and worked assiduously to intensify their struggle.

The Platinum Jubilee Convention of the AIRF is being organised at

# REPORTS & EVENTS

a time when the country is in the midst of a very critical situation. The employees and workers of the railway sector have to strengthen themselves in order to fight for

their just causes. At the same time, they need to discharge their duties effectively so that the public interest is protected and enhanced. It is incumbent on the part of the

AIRF to make a correct assessment of the issues and problems relating to the railway sector in particular and the country in general".

## ORISSA : RELIEF EFFORTS BY FMRAI

The Federation of Medical and Sales Representatives' Association of India (FMRAI) and the Orissa Sales Representatives Union (OSRU) organised relief work at Balasore, Paradeep,

Behrampur etc. in super cyclone hit Orissa with other organisations. FMRAI and OSRU have decided to collect money, material and medicine worth of 30 lakhs.

Already FMRAI's West Bengal unit collected medicine worth of 10 lakhs. FMRAI members have been sent from West Bengal, Bihar and A.P. directly to Orissa with relief materials to work there.

*(Report from D.P. Dubey)*

## MAHARASHTRA CITU ON THE MARCH

The CITU observed a Kargil week in June when lectures and meetings were organised to counter the BJP propaganda. Fund drive was launched with a call for one days wage to be contributed for the Army Central Welfare Fund. The response was enthusiastic, and CITU collected between 23 and 25 lakh ruppees all over the state. which was handed over to Army representatives in various districts.

A one day State level education class was held in Belapur, New Mumbai, at BTR Bhavan, which was attended by around 80 senior activists of CITU. The Marathi language, **CITU Sandesh**, monthly, which was launched in May this year is regularly being published with a print order of 5000 copies.

At Nasik and Aurangabad, CITU is making steady gains in membership and struggles are being conducted in many small

and medium units. At Nasik the CITU panel won secret ballot elections in Mahindra and Mahindra after a long legal battle to have elections conducted. But the Mahindra management is still refusing to deal with CITU.

A broad unity of unions in Mumbai is in the process of being forged on the issue of defending the right of contract workers to be absorbed after abolition. More than 40 unions including CITU, INTUC, HMS, AITUC, Kamgar Aghadi and many independent unions have formed the Kedar Padhati Virodhi Manch' for this purpose and are collecting a common fund to put up a legal defence in Supreme Court where the Air India judgement is coming up before a Constitutional bench for review. A mass campaign will also be conducted after Diwali on this issue. CITU is playing a leading role in this mobilisation. An ambitious subsidised housing

scheme for 10,000 beedi workers is taking shape in Solapur. The Godavari Parulekar Housing Society has been formed at our initiative and efforts to get Central and State subsidy are at an advanced stage. This scheme will be a path breaking project, if successful.

A four member delegation from the Egyptian Trade Union Federation was hosted by Maharashtra CITU between 11th and 16th October '99. Meetings, discussions and visits to railway establishments were arranged at short notice for the visiting delegates with the help of NRMU.

The CITU has already taken steps to conduct some classes/workshops for unorganised sector in Aurangabad, Poone and Chanrapur. The presence of women workers in all such programme was significant.

# REPORTS & EVENTS

## CITU CONDEMNS PRIVATISATION MOVE IN SAIL

CITU denounced the move of the Steel Authority of India Ltd to privatise Salem Steel Plant through joint venture route. In a letter to Chairman, SAIL on 20-11-99, General Secretary of CITU, MK Pandhe demanded immediate reversal of such retrograde move of SAIL to hand over the control of Salem Steel Plant to private sector. Pandhe stated that such move of the SAIL management would seriously affect the interest of the public sector company including the Salem unit besides paving way for closing down of Alloy Steels Plant, Durgapur,

since operation of both Salem Steel Plant and Alloy Steels Plant are closely linked with and interdependent on each other.

CITU's letter also mentioned that although the SAIL Chairman made a public statement on 2-9-99 at Durgapur that the recommendation of the American consultant firm, M/s McKinsey has not been accepted by SAIL, it is now moving on the same lines of McKinsey Report on SAIL, which is nothing but a blueprint for dismantling, demolishing and destroying the public sector steel giant and the steel workers would

not accept such disastrous move, lying down.

CITU demanded immediate reversal of SAIL's move to privatise Salem Steel Plant and demanded installation of additional facilities in Alloy Steels Plant, Durgapur, which would make both the stainless steel units viable, as committed by SAIL Chairman in the joint meeting with the trade unions.

Management's unilateral move towards privatisation would result in serious industrial unrest, Pandhe warned.

## PSU WORKERS, ON TO NATIONWIDE STRUGGLES

The meeting of the Core Group of the Committee of Public Sector Trade Unions (CPSTU) held on 23rd November 99, at New Delhi expressed serious concern at the hasty steps being taken by the Govt of India to put the entire public sector network in the country on outright sale. After in depth consideration of the present situation and offensives against the PSU workers the CPSTU has adopted the following programmes:

• IT WAS RESOLVED TO CALL UPON THE ENTIRE PUBLIC SECTOR WORKERS TO PREPARE FOR NATIONWIDE STRIKE STRUGGLES.

• To observe 'National Protest Day' on 29.11.1999 by holding Dharna/Demonstration/Gate meeting etc. throughout the

country.

• Delhi unions to organise massive mobilisation along with the Insurance and Bank unions to stage demonstration before Parliament on 29.11.99.

• All Public Sector trade unions are called upon to extend active solidarity support with the strike action of Bank and Insurance sectors unions, already announced to be launched on the day following the Insurance Regulatory and Development Bill, 1999 is taken up for discussion in Parliament in the forthcoming winter session

• In view of the on going preparations for joint struggles including strike actions in several industrial sectors, CPSTU called upon public sector unions to extend solidarity support with all such struggles against

privatisation

• An extended meeting of the CPSTU has been fixed for 16.12.99 in New Delhi

• Dharna before Parliament on 17.12.99 to be participated by the representatives of public sector unions from all over the country and all the public sector unions in Delhi and adjoining locations to organise massive mobilisation

• To go for a NATIONAL REFERENDUM among the public sector workers on 11h JANUARY, 2000 seeking support for effective long drawn DIRECT ACTION including strikes AGAINST:

a) All forms of privatisation b) Non-revival and closure of sick PSUs c) Non-payment of wages in many PSUs d) Retrograde conditions on wage revision e) Attack on Trade Union Rights &

# REPORTS & EVENTS

Labour Laws.	already in the midst of struggle	PRIVATISATION before/during
• Initiate consultations with	against privatisation for	the next budget session of
Central Trade Unions and	organising joint NATIONAL	Parliament.
Industrial Federations who are	CONVENTION AGAINST	

## ASSAM: TEA GARDEN STRUGGLE FUND

Responding to the appeal of the CITU, General Council meeting held at Ghaziabad a total sum of Rs. 2,02,475 had been contributed by CITU Committees/Unions towards the Assam Tea Garden Workers' Struggle Fund. Here are the details.

<b>1. Contributions in Ghaziabad Council Meeting</b>	Rupees
a) Kerala State Committee	7,000
b) Rajasthan State Committee	2,000
c) Delhi State Committee	1,000
d) Haryana State Committee	1,000
e) Council Members, West Bengal	5,120
f) Laljanda Punjab Bhatta Mazdoor Union	2,000
g) Council Members, Tamilnadu	650
h) All India Federation of Anganwadi Workers and Helpers	5,000
i) Other Council Members	1,250
<b>Subsequent contributions sent to Assam State Committee</b>	
2. Bank Employees Federation of India	1,000
3. FMRAI	1,000
4. Mumbai Sramik Sangha	5,000
5. ITC Sramik Union, Bangalore	3,000
6. Maharashtra State Committee	5,000
7. Tamilnadu State Committee	20,000
8. Construction Workers Federation	500
9. Delhi State Committee	1,000
10. West Bengal State Committee	75,000
11. Forward Seamen's Union	5,000
12. Kerala State Committee	19,400
13. Punjab State Committee	5,000
14. CITU, Centre	1,000
15. Andhra Pradesh State Committee	32,555
16. Nilgiri Estate Workers' Union Ootti	500
17. Kerala State Road Transport Employees Association	1,500
18. Orissa State Committee, CITU	1,000

Total 2,02,475

Assam State Committee has acknowledged with gratitude the fraternal assistance extended to their struggle.

(Report from Deben Bhattacharyya)

## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

The international Oil and Gas Conference was held in Paris, France, 18-20 October, 1999. The CGT National Union of Chemical Industries, Union of Mediterranean Oil Workers' Organisation and International Energy and Mines Organisation had jointly sponsored the international conference.

83 participants from 30 countries participated. The CITU was represented by S. Dev Roye (Secretary), T.S. Rengarajan (Tamil Nadu), S. Kumar (M.P), S.K. Mitra (West Bengal) and Anima Dev Roy.

The preparatory discussion document placed at the conference examined the world energy situation and prospects, environmental questions, role of Governments, Oil companies and international institutions and raised issues of trade union strategies to meet the needs of countries, peoples and workers of

oil and gas industries.

S. Dev Roye presented a paper outlining "A Trade Union Approach to Global Oil & Natural Gas Industry". He was also in the drafting committee which drew up the final declaration of the Conference.

An International Trade Union Forum on Energy was held at Grenoble, France, 24-26, October, 1999. The International Energy and Mines Organisation sponsored the event. The CGT National Energy Union, the CGT National Miners Union, and the CGT National Chemical Industries Union jointly hosted the meet. 240 participants from 69 countries, and 27 experts from France and other countries attended the meet.

The CITU delegation to this conference comprised W.R. Varada Rajan, Ardhendu Dakshi (both Secretaries), S. Kumar (MP), T.S.

Rengarajan (TN), S.K. Mitra (WB), George K Antoy (EEFI), D. Saraswathi (Working Woman) and Aliba Dakshi (observer).

A discussion paper entitled "The Energy at the service of the human beings" was presented by Jean Paul Escoffier, Forum Coordinator.

W.R. Varada Rajan presented a paper on "Energy in India, the present context, crisis and challenges". He and A. Dakshi addressed the forum.

The Forum Coordinator summed up the three days deliberations and called for strengthening of international cooperation and solidarity to carry forward the struggle against privatisation and MNCs' control over energy, besides resisting the anti worker offensives.

Detailed reports on these two conferences will be carried in the next issue of 'The Working Class'.

### SOUTH KOREA:

## MASSIVE WORKERS' RALLY AGAINST PRIVATISATION

November 22, 1999, 2000 workers marched in the streets of Seoul, demanding a shorter working hours and against privatisation move of the state-run companies, in the name of restructuring.

Waving blue, red and white coloured trade union flags in thousands, the workers

demonstrated shouting for reduction of working hours and opposing privatisation.

The centrepiece of Govt's move was the privatisation of Korea Electric Power Corporation and state-run Gas & Financial Corporation. The Federation of Korean Trade Unions organised the rally.

### READ

**The Voice of  
The Working Woman**

**CITU's bimonthly journal  
for Working Women**

**Annual subscription  
Rs. 20/- only**

## TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR PLANTATION WOMEN

Photographs of women plucking two leaf buds of tea, with the big baskets on their backs make beautiful cover pages. But the lives of these poor women are not so beautiful. They are subjected to severe exploitation by the estate managers and the owners. In the scenic beauty of the mountains with lush green tea gardens, contrast is provided by the luxurious lives of the estate managers in their spacious bungalows and the lines of the dwellings of plantation workers without even the basic amenities like drinking water.

The problems of the plantation workers were discussed in the trade union classes for women activists of the All India Plantation Workers' Federation, organised by the CITU with the help of the ILO. The classes were held at Coonoor, 22-24 October, 1999. 24 activists from South India participated. The subjects discussed were 'Women and Trade Unions', "ILO Conventions for working women and their implementation", "Challenge to trade union unity from Castiest and Communal forces", "Policies of liberlisation and globalisation and their effects on the Plantation Workers", "Plantation Labour Act and its implementation" and "Trade Union Organisation". V.J.K.Nair, General Secretary, Karnataka State Committee of CITU, A.K. Padmanabhan, Secretary, CITU, J. Hema Chandran, President, Tamil Nadu State Committee of CITU, Lalaji Babu, General Secretary, All India Plantation Workers Federation and K. Hemalata, Secretary, CITU were the facilitators.

After each session, the participants held group discussions, relating the subject to their own experiences, and then these were discussed in the entire class. All of them were remarkably attentive in the class, as well as in the discussions. It was pointed out that in Karnataka Coffee Estates, when a man retires, only his son is given job but not his daughter. But when a woman retires neither her son nor her daughter is given job. All the women pointed out the difficulties with the male supervisors. They told that when they needed to go home at the time of their monthly periods, they

find it very difficult to ask permission from the male supervisors. They wanted women supervisors. Wages for 2 hrs. are deducted even when they take permission for a few minutes.

The policies of liberlisation and globalisation have made their lives more difficult. It was reported that now some estates are resorting to scissors cutting of tea leaves, instead of manual plucking. But with scissors, it is not possible to have only the two leaf buds, which are required for export. So, the women are asked to separate the two leaf buds manually. The other leaves are discarded and workers are paid only on the basis of the weight of the two leaf buds. This results in double work for the workers with less pay and leaves them with pain in the arms because of the use of scissors. Computers are used to cheat the workers. At the end of the month, the Computers show that they have worked for only 20 days, while they have actually worked for 26 days. When the workers complain and argue with the managers, they agree to pay the wages for the remaining six days also, but only the minimum wages. The incentive for the extra leaves they have plucked in addition to the minimum quota, is not paid. As a result, besides losing the incentive wages, they get less bonus also. It is really strange that computers, not in one estate but in many, not in one state, but in all states, show less working days!

Most of the plantation workers belong to BC, SC and other oppressed sections and they were very interested to learn how caste is used to divide the unity of workers. They related their own experiences. Women from Tamil Nadu and Karnataka wanted to know why caste oppression was not so serious in Kerala, while they faced such serious oppression and discrimination in their States.

Music and Elocution competitions were conducted in which all participated enthusiastically. All of them felt that the classes were very useful and decided to have such classes at the estate and State levels so that more and more workers can be enthused and educated to participate in union activities and the union can be strengthened.

## Consumer Price Index Numbers for Industrial Workers on base: 1982 = 100

Sr. No	Centre	July 99	Aug 99	Sep 99	Sr. No.	Centre	July 99	Aug 99	Sep 99
1	Gudur	438	441	444	45	Amritsar	378	383	387
2	Guntur	413	413	418	46	Ludhiana	384	383	383
3	Hyderabad	394	395	397	47	Ajmer	414	418	417
4	Visakhapatnam	409	412	414	48	Jaipur	389	398	397
5	Warangal	410	415	417	49	Chennai	445	446	446
6	D D Tinsukia	388	386	391	50	Coimbatore	394	397	407
7	Guwahati	441	439	444	51	Coonoor	408	407	408
8	Labac-Silchar	379	379	379	52	Madurai	418	422	431
9	Mariani Jorhat	404	415	417	53	Salem	407	407	423
10	Rangapara-Tezpur	407	420	425	54	Tiruchirapally	460	461	458
11	Jamshedpur	390	390	407	55	Agra	397	409	410
12	Jharia	360	364	376	56	Ghaziabad	446	454	455
13	Kodarma	380	380	390	57	Kanpur	435	437	442
14	Monghyr Jamalpur	409	418	421	58	Saharanpur	389	396	390
15	Noamundi	372	377	379	59	Varanasi	481	481	485
16	Ranchi-Hatia	416	416	422	60	Asansol	399	399	404
17	Ahmedabad	425	428	433	61	Calcutta	433	433	443
18	Bhavnagar	450	452	453	62	Darjeeling	386	387	390
19	Rajkot	413	414	414	63	Durgapur	447	444	449
20	Surat	436	438	442	64	Haldia	461	466	475
21	Vadodra	407	410	412	65	Howrah	484	482	493
22	Faridabad	442	446	446	66	Jalpaiguri	402	405	414
23	Yamunanagar	388	395	393	67	Raniganj	369	369	373
24	Srinagar	465	463	466	68	Chandigarh	449	456	455
25	Bangalore	405	405	407	69	Delhi	479	485	483
26	Belgaum	455	459	460	70	Pondicherry	463	466	471
27	Hubli-Dharwar	430	429	431					
28	Mercara	442	444	445		<b>All India</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>429</b>
29	Alwaye	428	422	422		<b>Additional Series of Labour Bureau</b>			
30	Mundakayam	452	447	442					
31	Quilon	431	429	427	1	Kothagudem	425	425	436
32	Thiruvananthapuram	476	473	463	2	Himachal Pradesh	406	406	413
33	Balaghat	384	391	391	3	Bhilwara	420	420	425
34	Bhilai	372	372	386	4	Chhindwara	418	418	428
35	Bhopal	442	443	442	5	Tripura	412	412	413
36	Indore	428	433	429	6	Goa	489	489	485
37	Jabalpur	435	436	444					
38	Mumbai	470	471	471					
39	Nagpur	440	445	445					
40	Nasik	430	427	433					
41	Pune	467	465	470					
42	Solapur	443	448	454					
43	Barbil	394	393	390					
44	Rourkela	395	396	396					

Government of India  
Ministry of Labour  
Labour Bureau  
Shimla - 171 004

# IRAQI TU FEDERATION CONGRESS

The 12th Congress of the General Federation of Trade Unions, Iraq was held in Baghdad, 9-11 November 1999.

W R Varada Rajan, Secretary CITU and D Saraswathi (Working Women) represented the CITU at the Congress.

The Congress was inaugurated by Ali-Hassan Al-Mazid, Member of the Revolutionary Command Council of Iraq, attended by a huge gathering of delegates, workers and fraternal delegates from abroad. Fadhil M Charib, President of GFTUI chaired the inaugural session.

Over 230 trade union representatives from several countries participated. The biggest contingent was from the Arab countries. A notable feature was that trade unions from some of the Arab countries, whose rulers were supportive of the USA, visited Baghdad to affirm the solidarity of the workers and peoples of the very same countries with their Iraqi brothers and sisters.

Greeting the GFTUI Congress on behalf of the CITU, W R Varada Rajan spoke:

"You Iraqi people have seen the worst of sufferings. You have been threatened and blackmailed. You have been subjected to aerial bombardments and missile attacks, perhaps next only to Vietnam. You have been faced with an economic embargo that stifles your attempts to provide a decent standard of living to your families. Though painful, you have endured all these.

Yet, you have the courage - you have the determination - You have the will - to defy the most richest and mightily weaponised state of the world - the United States of America and its allies. You have declared in one voice that however mighty the imperialists are, they cannot subjugate the Iraqi people.

You, Iraqi people, had summarily rejected the most obnoxious demand of the US imperialists to change the leadership of governance in your country. You have proudly reaffirmed your faith in President Saddam Hussain and asserted that you are prepared to face any challenge under his leadership.

We from India have many reasons to be on the same platform as you Iraqis are.

We both are part of the third world countries. We are independent but our sovereignty is daily

threatened by the rich countries of the world. We are poor and our economies are driven from one crisis to another by the neo-colonial ambitions of the imperialist camp.

In India, in the name of liberalisation and globalisation dictated by the IMF and World Bank, untold miseries are heaped on our people. Poverty, unemployment and price rise are haunting our countrymen. The greed of profit of the Multi National Corporations has converted our country and its vast market, a happy hunting ground for them.

The Indian workers have firmly supported the Iraqi people in your long-drawn struggle against the US imperialism.

As we enter the new millennium, as we step into the 21st century, we must demand that let the new century dawn on *embargo free-sanctions-free* world.

We must demand an end to naked militarist intervention by the imperialists, as witnessed in Iraq, Afghanistan, Yugoslavia, etc..."

On 10.11.1999 all the delegates, including those from international community, marched to the UN office in Baghdad and staged a powerful demonstration demanding end to economic embargo against Iraq.

The same day, all the delegates went to the huge monument built in memory of the martyrs of 1991 US attack against Iraq and paid homage.

The GFTUI Congress concluded with an address by Taha-Yaseen-Ramadan, Vice President of Iraq. The delegates from abroad were also taken to sites of bombardment by the US and NATO troops besides a visit to Babylon, the ancient site of civilisation.

Despite facing extreme difficulties in view of the harsh economic situation caused by the blockade, the Iraqi people took pride in the fact that they have been able to reconstruct all places razed to the ground by the US missiles, without any foreign aid or expertise. They presented a living symbol of how the death defying courage and patriotism of a whole people can stand up to the mightiest state of the world and face every adversity with a brave smile.

*(See back cover for photographs)*



Photos: (above) International Delegates at Martyrs Monument (see report on page 27)  
(below) Delegates from India with Dr. Blade Nzimande, General Secretary,  
South African Communist Party (see report on page 12)

## B T R BHAVAN

**DUE TO UNAVOIDABLE  
CIRCUMSTANCES  
RESULTING FROM  
PROCEDURAL DELAYS  
INVOLVING MUNICIPAL  
AND OTHER  
AUTHORITIES,  
INAUGURATION OF B. T.  
R BHAVAN, SCHEDULED  
FOR 19.12.99 STANDS  
POSTPONED**

