



# THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

## COUNTRYWIDE STRIKE ON 23RD FEBRUARY AGAINST PENSION SCHEME

*\* SAVE PROVIDENT FUND*

*\* DEMAND PENSION AS THIRD BENEFIT*

In the background of mounting unrest among the mass of the workers all over the country against Govt. Pension Scheme and the related Ordinance and also the Govt. of India's adamant approach of pushing through the scheme, the need for united nationwide action has gained immense urgency.

The more the details of the scheme are reaching to common workers, unity among the mass of the workers irrespective of affiliations is developing at the grassroot level in opposition to the Govt. Scheme, which also manifested the increasing concern of the mass of the workers to save their hard earned Provident Fund from imminent disaster as designed by the govt scheme.

In this background, CITU, along with UTUC, UTUC (LS). IFTU has decided to give a call for Nationwide strike on 23rd February 1996 to demonstrate united protest of the mass of the workers against the Govt.'s evil design and their determination to save the Provident Fund. AICCTU also extended support to the strike call.

Given below the Press Statement released by the trade unions calling for strike action on 23-2-1996.

"In spite of mounting opposition from the mass of the workers' against the Govt. Pension Scheme impounding almost half of the PF generation of the workers from 16-11-95, the Govt of India prefers to remain adamant in its attitude towards the valid criticism and opposition against the scheme and promulgation of the ordinance on 5th January 1996

revivifying the earlier Ordinance reflects such arrogance of the Govt.

The trade union movement and the working class cannot accept such arrogance of the Govt of India lying down. Fact remains that the entire trade union movement has voiced criticism against the Govt Scheme in its present form and put forth various suggestions. None of the basic suggestions to bring about radical change in the scheme has been accepted by the Govt although some minor changes have been carried out.

Even in the last session of the Indian Labour Conference in November, '95 the demand for fundamental changes in the Pension Scheme was strongly voiced by CITU, UTUC, UTUC(LS) and other trade unions and particularly opposed any encroachment on the provident fund of the workers. However, in subsequent meetings the Government declined to accept any basic changes in the scheme, including that of indexation. This attitude of the Government climaxed by its refusal to concede option to individual workers.

Opposition to the Govt, Pension Scheme by the workers from all sectors all over the country is mounting every day and getting manifested through demonstration, rallies, dharnas, protest telegrams etc. In the National Seminar on Pension Scheme, organised by CITU at New Delhi on 15th January, all the participating Central Trade Unions including AITUC and HMS voiced their criticism against the govt

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**Observe All India Strike Against  
Pension Scheme on 23rd Feb.**

**REFORMS MUST STAY**

As the general elections draw nearer and the spectre of a change looms large in the horizon, the apex bodies of India's private capital - the different chambers of commerce and industry such as the FICCI, CII, Assochem, PHDCCI etc are organising meetings and seminars to underscore the marvels unlocked by the on-going reforms, the wonderful developments in the economy and the imperatives of vigorously pursuing the reforms. A document has been prepared to emphasise that no detraction or derailment must be allowed to set in. Appeals have been issued to all major political parties to ensure that reforms are left alone irrespective of the outcome at the hustings. More efforts in this behalf can be reasonably expected when the election dates are announced and the campaign fever catches on. Why suddenly the chieftains of India's private capital and their powerful organisations feel impelled to stir up by the approaching elections as never before!

Whatever the concern for the country's economy being expressed, there are the solid reasons for them to be worried, for what is at stake is the bonanza brought in by the reforms.

A report widely published in the Dailies on a study carried out by Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India (ICICI), Bombay, in mid-January this year on the performance of India's private corporate sector for the last two financial years, 1993-94 and 1994-95 throws interesting light. Based on a sample 580 ICICI - assisted companies covering 22 industries, the survey confirms further consolidation of uptrend in major directions. The progress made in 1993-94 was further improved on in 1994-95 in the

sphere of total income, operating profit, gross profit, rate of dividend, return on capital employed etc.

Sales increased by 25.2 per cent in 1994-95, the highest since 1991-92 while total income grew by 27 per cent as compared to 16 per cent in 1993-94. Growth of gross profits was from 29.8 per cent in 1993-94 to 49.6 per cent in 1994-95. Effective rate of taxation faced by the corporates as a whole declined from 18.7 per cent to 13.9 per cent in 1994-95 owing to operating profits growing faster — 80.7 per cent—than tax liabilities—23.7 per cent. The return on capital employed rose from 13.8 per cent in the previous year to 15.4 per cent in 1994-95. Rate of profit retention jumped from 71.0 per cent in the previous year to 78.5 per cent in 1994-95 while rate of dividend swelled from 26.0 per cent the previous year to 28.2 per cent in 1994-95. Of the 580 companies studied, 210 companies are zero tax companies. More details are unnecessary. It is, in all, a portrait of cheap supply of capital, less and less taxes, higher sales and profits, more dividends and greater rate of return on capital employed.

They had never had it so good. With the regulatory controls so as not to be out of step with social obligations gone and surveillance of MRTPC, FERRA etc vanished and the government not tolerating any hindrance to smooth operation of private corporate sector, the war horse has smelled gunpowder. It is quite natural, therefore, that the chieftains of private industry should be anxious that the reforms are in place whatever the change in government. Reforms must continue to shower profits.

**Public Sector Workers' meet at Bhopal****\* Denounces Govt Pension Scheme**

The workshop organised by All India Coordination Committee of Public Sector Unions on 22nd and 23rd January 1996 at Bhopal BHEL Township denounced the Govt pension scheme and decided to observe strike on 23rd February 1996 in all the public sector units all over the country.

The workshop was held to discuss the steps to be taken organisationally to strengthen the trade unions in public sector units to enable the trade union movement in PSUs to mount stronger resistance against the Govt of India's design to dismantle and denigrate the public sector units in favour of monopoly capital and MNCs and in defence of country's self reliance. The two day long workshop also dealt on various aspects of changes in technology, business environment, and management pattern and underscored the need for developing a comprehensive understanding within the public sector movement on the real face of those changes and also the need for formulation of appropriate organisational strategy to confront the

**\* Calls for strike on 23rd February**

changing situation. The workshop also stressed the need for re-orientation of approach on the organisation of the trade unions to ensure unleashing of greater initiative among grass root level workers in carrying on the stupendous task before the trade union movement.

The workshop was participated by 45 representatives from various public sector units all over the country including NTPC, Steel, Coal, BHEL, Engineering, Construction, Electricity, Electronics, etc.

On 23rd January mass meeting was held in the Foundry Gate, of BHEL which was attended by thousands of workers cutting across affiliation including officers and was addressed by Com.M K Pandhe, General Secretary, CITU, Com.Jibon Roy, MP, Secretary, CITU, Com.Badal Saroj President MP State Committee of CITU and also by Com.J L Nandy and Com.Promod Pradhan, General Secretary and Working President of the BHEL Kamgar Trade Union, Bhopal respectively.

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scheme and demanded radical improvement. Deliberation by various unions in the Seminar also underscored that the govt propaganda regarding the pension scheme was totally mischievous and motivated to confuse the workers particularly of the unorganised sector.

The arrogance of the Govt of India to push through the Scheme and their refusal to bring about basic changes in the scheme must be combated by the working class through nationwide action. Under this circumstance, we call upon the working class to observe countrywide strike in all the industries and establishments on 23rd February, 1996 demanding:

1. Pension should be as third retirement benefit with contribution from Govt./Employer.

2. Pension Scheme to cover all workers including the entire unorganised sector.

3. No encroachment in Workers PF Money.

4. Scheme should not be imposed and option must be allowed to all individual worker.

5. Commutation facility and full return of capital.

6. Market rate of interest on Pension Fund and enhancement of Pensionary benefit.

7. All anti-worker conditionalities in the Scheme must be removed.

8. Automatic linkage of the pension amount with consumer price index.

9. Separate Pension administration authority with workers' representation for administration of the Scheme and not the corrupt and inefficient PF organi-

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## Com.B T Ranadive's 91st Birthday

A packed to capacity audience composed of workers, political and trade union activists, students and youth, academicians and other citizens assembled at the JNU City Centre on December 19 to pay respect to the revered memory of Com.B T Ranadive, popularly known as BTR on the solemn occasion of his 90th birthday. A seminar on workers and the new economic policy in which three distinguished economists participated was arranged on the occasion. M K Pandhe, General Secretary, CITU presided.

Paying tributes to BTR, Pandhe recalled his sterling qualities of head and heart, his contributions towards building up the working class and communist movement, his untiring work for uniting the trade union movement as founder president of CITU and the incisive and inspiring power of his pen which he wielded till the last day of his life in furtherance of the cause of the toiling masses.

Participating in the seminar, Dr Ashok Mitra MP, paid his respect to the memory of Com.BTR and said he is not with us today when far-reaching changes are taking place in the world and in what was once the Soviet Union. Briefly referring to the features of development of capitalism in its initial stages and the discipline it used to preach and practice for the sake of its own consolidation, he emphasised that capitalism extolled hard work, thrift and savings habit to facilitate accelerated growth of capital. The Indian bourgeoisie though engaged building up capitalism has given a good-bye to all these. With a view to pleasing the overseas mentors, they are relentlessly urging people to go in for more and more consumer goods, to buy and spend more and more, to throw away all inhibitions on consumption. The result is catastrophic drop in national savings rate. People must earn more to spend more even if in unsavoury ways. This is spreading the cancer of corruption in society. The public sector is looked down upon as useless junk and even the facade of socialism given up. The public sector is being dismantled to facilitate incursions by foreigners into our economy in spheres where we have attained a degree of capability. What is growing is foreign debt and repayment obligations, import bill to feed unbridled consumerism, money supply, industrial sickness, economic inequality, unemployment and number of poor; what is falling is incomes of toiling masses and workers, access to life-sustaining necessities, employment opportunities, and all that. Drastic cuts in investments has brought

development activities to a standstill. Health of people and education are the two worst casualties. The drive of the economy is to serve top 10 per cent of the people by squeezing the rest 90 per cent who must have no claim on the state. The Indian bourgeoisie is acting a contractors of advanced countries and what the multinationals are siphoning out as transfer pricing, technology charges and dividends is much more than the benefits claimed to be accruing to the country. Despite the showering of concessions, foreign investments are coming in trickles. It averages 400 million dollar annually, less than what Indonesia is receiving. The path chosen by the present government is a prescription for suicide—economic enslavement eventually endangering political sovereignty.

Speaking next Dr Arun Ghosh, a former member of Planning Commission, described Com.BTR as a leader of outstanding qualities with deep knowledge about the cross currents of events around.

In a lucid exposition of the grim situation emanating from the new economic policy, he discussed certain features of present day global economy, the already known dangers inherent in the open-door to foreign capital and a push towards so-called globalisation. Emphasising the differences of role and propensities of finance capital and industrial capital, the recent changes in their roles notwithstanding, he elaborated on he never before seen mobility of capital. Those who regale in the flow of foreign capital into India quite often lose sight of the fact that the amount going to stock market is several time more than investments in industries. This hot money can play havoc with our economy, destabilise any of the Indian industries and may fly out to greener pastures suddenly one fine morning, leaving this country high and dry. There are examples in recent years. This is essentially capital for speculative purposes which throws up profits without adding to productive capacity, technological upgradation or expansion of infrastructure. Great care has, therefore, to be exercised in selecting priority areas for foreign capital. Even if there is the supreme need of capital for development, the capital available within the country—and more can be created with proper policy instruments—has not been harnessed. If only tax evasion is checked, over-invoicing and underinvoicing in export-import is ruthlessly suppressed and part of the black money unearthed, we can meet several demands. In the present day world scenario, foreign capital is not

neutral to political and strategic considerations. Dependence on foreign capital has nowhere provided a stable foundation for development.

The last speaker of the evening was Utsa Patnaik, Professor of Economics, JNU who dealt with agriculture in the context of drive of export of agricultural products as part of new economic policy. Citing the historical background of India under the British when Indian agriculture was attuned to the needs of British industries and consumers there, she established that diversion of land from food production to cash crop to feed British industries resulted in decline in food availability and caused widespread famines at regular intervals. The Fund-Bank prescription for Indian agriculture which the food multinationals are to carry out is to perpetuate this scenario, reverse even the fragile and inadequate food security and make India dependent on food imports. The cash crop and product in countries like India in the tropical region such as tea, coffee, tobacco, sugar spices, numerous varieties of fruits and vegetables etc enabled the affluent West to attain their present life-style. The climate and soil conditions of those countries simply do not permit their production. The countries and multinationals are, therefore, immensely interested in ensuring in ever so many ways more and more diversion of land for cash crop. The multinationals are interested that our production of food grains de-

crease so that they may have market for their huge surplus of wheat and dairy products. Already in India food production is lagging behind the rate of growth of population and per capita availability of cereals is declining. The fall with regard to pulses is very sharp and it is being imported. The food multinationals have so manipulated that the exporting countries do not receive the due price. This is borne out by the experiences of all countries especially in Latin America and Africa. These countries have lost food production, have become dependent on food imports while their exports of food have fetched them little or no benefit. Those who are pressing India to go in for agricultural exports are turning blind eyes to these realities. Already there is a decline of more than 5 million hectares of land in food grains production. The fragile food security built up by India, apart from being built on the lack of purchasing power of millions, may disappear in the event of nature refusing her bountiful rainfall for two consecutive years. The only beneficiaries will be the handful of capitalist farmers and the food multinationals abroad.

The seminar was a fitting tribute to the great intellectual that Com.BTR was. A set of 3 volumes of BTR's selected writings was presented to each of the three distinguished participants. Thus ended the meeting.



*Com. M.K. Pandhe addressing the BTR Birth Anniversary Seminar*

# State Reports

## Madhya Pradesh

### Mass arrests, demonstrations and conventions against retrenchments, wage freeze and closures of mills

**Bhopal:** Madhya Pradesh CITU has organised big actions on the issues of workers especially working in unorganised sector on various divisional headquarters. Workers courted arrest and other programmes like demonstrations, dharnas and public meetings were organised in this regard.

The daily wage earners working in the Madhya Pradesh Government offices were in the centre of this agitation. The issue of closure of JC mill in Gwalior was raised as a main demand. The problems of Anganwadi workers and municipal employees were also raised.

The biggest action was in Gwalior where more than 2000 workers gheraoed the divisional commissioner. One thousand workers courted arrest. Working women came in large number to court arrest.

Speaking in the rally prior to courting arrest vice president of state CITU Com. Shailender Shaily highlighted the main problems and the causes of attack on the working class. He severely criticised the new economic policy of central government which was followed under the pressure of imperialist forces. He said the previous Patwa government of BJP was also not lagging behind Patwa government was responsible for closures of factories. It had frozen the wages and DA of the workers. He called upon the workers to fight back these attacks of the Govt and employers. State CITU president Com. Badal Saroj, Regional Convenor Com. Ram Bilas Goswami, Anganwadi workers' leader Com. Com. Manyata Saroj and Member of the State Committee Com. Ram Lal Dohre also spoke. Com. Dani Ram presided over the meeting.

**Guna:** More than 700 workers of CITU gheraoed the Dy Commissioner's office and courted arrests. The workers are facing severe exploitation in this home town of State Chief Minister Shri Digvijay Singh. State CITU president Com. Badal Saroj, Regional Convenor of CITU Com. Ram Bilas Goswami and State Committee Member Dr Vishnu Sharma led the procession.

An impressive action of dharna and demonstration in front of state legislative assembly on the call of dist action committee of CITU was held in Bhopal. Hundred of workers of PHE, PWD, Irrigation had taken leave from their offices to participate in the action. The working women also participated in large number. The police had taken them into custody later on. Com. Shailender Shaily the state vice president of CITU addressed the gathering.

**Indore:** An impressive demonstration was held here the previous day under the leadership of CITU. Their main demands were as under: make permanent the temporary employees, constitute divisional committees for the fixation of wages, make provision of pension for the daily wage workers also. Com. Jag Nath Bhartiya addressed the work-

ers on this occasion.

**Mandla:** An organisation of daily wage workers was established in Niwas Tehsil. A conference was held on this occasion. Com. Badal Saroj, A T Padmanabhan Prakash Chander Jain etc addressed the workers. Similar demonstrations were held in Jabalpur, Bahar and Mehgaon in Bhind district.

## Rajasthan

### Rajasthan Government's anti-labour order criticised

**Jaipur:** Rajasthan Government for the first time issued an order under which workers would not have any right to demonstration nor can they adopt work to rule or go slow tactics in favour of their demands. On the contrary it had given free hand to the employers to crush the movement of the workers. There will be no restriction on then to declare lock out, closures, retrenchments, etc. This order will be in force for one year. The BJP government of the state has issued this anti-labour and pro-employers order under section 10 of Rajasthan Industrial Dispute Act (Amended) 1947.

Com. Krishna Kant and Com. Ravinder Sukhla President and General Secretary of CITU's Rajasthan state committee in a joint statement severely criticised this anti-labour order of the state government. They said that the state government has issued this order in favour of Modern Syntex (India), Alwar. The owners of this factory has enforced lockout flouting all labour laws since last one year. As a result the workers and their families are on the verge of starvation. They are adopting all sort of repressive measures to crush the movement of workers.

A deputation consisting of Com. Hard Ram Chauhan and Com. Ravindra Shukla met the state Chief Minister Bhairon Singh Shekhawat on January 6, 1996 in this regard. They demanded that the lock out of the Modern Syntex (India) should be lifted immediately so that the workers can be saved from starvation, they also demanded that the wages of the full period of lockout should be given to the workers, rehabilitations of all suspended workers, guarantee of minimum 20 days work in a month, ban on lock out all closures in the factory. They warned that the workers will be forced to start an agitation against this if their demands were not met.

## UP

### Kanpur: Demonstration Against Pension Scheme

Hundreds of CITU workers working in IEL, textile mills and unorganised sector industries held a demonstration against the new pension scheme in front of Union Labour Minister when he was here. They also raised the slogans like 'go back labour minister, pension scheme is a mockery'. They were led by Com. Daulat Ram Paras Nath Yadav, Md Zayef, S B Misra, Lalai Ram, Anila Mishra and Ram Lakhani Singh etc

A deputation also met Union Labour Minister under the leadership of Com. Arvind Kumar.

# Haryana State Workshop on Child Labour

The CITU-ILO Haryana State level workshop on Child Labour was held at Panipat on December 30 and 31, 1995. The workshop was attended by 43 leading comrades from all over the State representing the industries in the unorganised sector like Brick Kiln, Powerloom, Handloom Engineering, Construction, and other industries, where child labour is rampant.

Com.S N Solanki, President, State CITU, presided over the workshop. Com.Anand welcomed the delegates. Com.Ranjit Basu, Secretary, CITU inaugurated the workshop. He pointed to the growing phenomenon of Child Labour due to growing poverty and called for struggles with the demand for alleviation of poverty and for employment generation programme with particular emphasis in the unorganised sector.

After initiation of the proceedings by Com.Satbir Singh, the State General Secretary, Com.P K Ganguly, Secretary CITU detailed the approach of CITU on the issue of Child Labour. The workshop was greeted by Com.Raghuvir Chowdhury, the State President of AITUC; Com.Santokh Singh, the Kisan Sabha leader; Com.Sunil Dutt of DYFI and Com.SA Khan of Sarva Karmachari Sangh.

Com.SN Solanki placed the Theme Paper of the workshop. In his paper, Com.Solanki dwelt on the problem of child labour in the unorganised sector with special reference to the situation in Haryana. He pointed out that grinding poverty in the rural sector, lack of even living wage, lack of educational facilities, etc were the main causes of child labour. There was a general discussion thereafter, in which 17 comrades participated.

The workshop was divided into five groups on the second day with Brick Kiln, Textiles, Engineering, construction and general groupings. The group discussions were led by Coms. Prabhat Singh, Ramesh, Satbir Singh, Ram Chander and Hawa Singh. The groups discussed indepth on the guideline points given by Com.P K Ganguly.

After the reports placed by the group leaders the workshop decided to pursue the following demands and action plan:

**Demands:** Genuine land reforms, need based wages, employment generation programme and right to work, free compulsory education to working children, special free schools in the child labour infested

areas; ration at 50% price; medical expense, 6 hours work, equal wages as per adults, etc

**Organisational Task:** Increase in membership by 20 per cent

**Action Plan:** Districtwise workshops; districtwise rallies on 24th January and State rally on 15th February

## Convention of Unorganised Sector Workers

The Haryana State Committee also organised a convention of unorganised sector workers at Panipat on 30th December. The Convention was attended by about 400 workers from all parts of the state.

The convention was addressed by Coms. P K Ganguly, S N Solanki, Satbir Singh and Santokh Singh. The convention decided to organise districtwise rallies on 24th January and state level rally on 15th February.

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We appeal to all sections of workers and employees in all industries, organised, unorganised, public sector, etc. to join the strike action on 23rd February, 1996 and also appeal to all trade unions irrespective of affiliations to support and join the strike action to compel the Government to accede to the just demands.

Sd/-  
M.K. PANDHE  
GENERAL SECRETARY  
CITU

Sd/-  
TAPAS DUTTA  
GENERAL SECRETARY  
UTUC (LS)

Sd/-  
S.R. SEN GUPTA  
GENERAL SECRETARY  
UTUC

Sd/-  
V. PATOLE  
SECRETARY  
IFTU

## Calcutta High Court Stays Diversion of PF Money to Pension Fund

In a Writ Petition under Article 226 of the Constitution filed by the Hindustan Motor and Hyderabad Industries Workers Union and others, the Calcutta High Court on 12th January has directed the company that while it may deduct the 8.33 per cent of the employers' share of contribution to the PF, it shall not remit the same to the Pension Fund until further orders. The hearing will come up two weeks later.

**CONSUMER PRICE INDEX NUMBERS FOR INDUSTRIAL WORKERS  
(BASE 1982 = 100) Centre**

	Linking factor for Old Base			Linking factor for Old Base			
	Oct '95	Nov. '95		Oct '95	Nov. '95		
All India	319	321	4.93	Solapur	341	341	5.03
Gudur	318	324	4.33	Barbil	312	311	5.00
Guntur	317	324	5.60	Rourkela	291	295	3.59
Hyderabad	294	296	5.23	Amritsar	293	287	5.19
Visakhapatnam	306	310	—	Ludhiana	300	299	—
Warrangal	315	315	—	Ajmer	315	316	5.01
Doom-Dooma Tinsukia	294	297	4.05	Jaipur	299	302	5.17
Guwahati	327	332	—	Coimbatore	310	314	5.35
Lapac-Silchar	286	287	3.96	Coonor	333	337	4.80
Mariani-Jorhat	312	314	3.95	Madras	340	342	5.05
Rangapara-Tezpur	314	313	4.29	Madurai	325	328	5.27
Jamshedpur	294	297	4.68	Salem	335	341	—
Jharia	276	281	4.63	Tiruchirapally	343	341	—
Kodarma	277	280	5.43	Agra	302	300	—
Monghyr	304	308	5.29	Ghaziabad	311	310	—
Noamundi	285	287	4.58	Kanpur	322	322	4.69
Ranchi-Hatia	310	312	—	Saharanpur	300	296	5.06
Ahmedabad	315	317	4.78	Varanasi	326	327	5.12
Baroda	323	321	—	Asansol	301	304	4.77
Bhavanagar	334	334	4.99	Calcutta	333	344	4.74
Rajkot	307	313	—	Darjeeling	281	287	4.55
Surat	338	335	—	Durgapur	328	341	—
Faridabad	314	312	—	Haldia	351	353	—
Yamunanagar	304	304	5.53	Howrah	343	352	4.12
Srinagar	312	311	5.47	Jalpaiguri	305	303	4.16
Bangalore	312	314	5.66	Raniganj	286	296	4.40
Belgaum	337	341	—	Chandigarh	304	309	—
Hubli-Dharwar	323	322	—	Delhi	343	340	4.97
Mercara	317	319	—	Pondicherry	362	365	—
Alwaye	320	322	5.19				
Mundakayam	321	327	—	Additional series of Labour Bureau			
Quilon	333	327	—	Kothagudem	329	322	3.25
Trivandrum	345	334	—	Himachal Pradesh	301	304	3.75
Bhalaghat	314	316	5.24	Bhilwara	315	316	3.20
Bhilai	281	284	3.49	Chindwara	329	334	2.59
Bhopal	325	325	5.46	Tripura	311	323	4.37
Indore	329	328	5.18	Goa	349	348	3.40
Jabalpur	324	330	6.41				
Bombay	348	352	5.12				
Nagpur	327	326	4.99				
Nasik	335	334	—				
Pune	343	349	—				

**Note:** Figures on old base can be obtained by multiplying the Index Number on New Base by the linking factor given and rounding off the result to nearest whole number. —Dash denotes new centres under 1982 series,

# National Platform of Mass Organisations

## Declaration of the Joint Mass Dharna at Jantar Mantar against Retrograde Economic & Industrial Policies of Government of India, Friday, the 15th December, 1995

Persuant to the decision of the National Platform of Mass Organisations,, this mass Dharna against highly retrograde Economic & Industrial Policies of Government of India is being organised on Friday, the 15th December, at Jantar Mantar, New Delhi. Synchronising with this mass dharna, demonstrations and rallies at State and District Headquarters, are being held all over the country.

Development and intensification of country-wide agitation and struggle against the so-called ANew Economic Policy dictated by World Bank and IMF, is becoming all the more urgent and necessary in view of persistence of the Central Govt in pushing them through in utter disregard of national interests and despite opposition from the mass of the working and toiling people.

The highly anti-people and retrograde outcome of the economic and industrial policies pursued by the govt is manifesting itself almost in every sphere of nation's life.

Continuing inflation has already resulted in skyrocketing prices of almost every item of common use, with the prices of essential commodities taking the lead. The deliberate undermining of the public distribution system both in terms of its coverage of items as well as its spread over to rural areas has further led to jacking up of prices of primary articles of food inflicting untold misery of the toiling masses.

The Fund-Bank prescribed structural adjustment programmes as implemented through reckless restructuring of industries, with relentless drive for privatisation, rationalisation, besides large-scale closures, is rendering tens of million people jobless. Even the official employment exchange records place the number of urban unemployed at nearly 4 crores. The employment situation in rural areas is even more horrifying. Failure to carry out land reforms and distribution of land to the landless coupled with fall in the investment in agricultural sector has aggravated situation to an extent where rural unemployment is crossing the mark of 8 crores.

The peasantry, including marginal farmers are being badly hit on account of reduction in subsidy on essential inputs like fertilizers, seeds, etc, and increase in electricity and water charges, curtailment of credit facilities besides absence of other infrastructural facilities. They are also unable to get remunerative prices for their produce.

The process of dismantling public sector through starving it of budgetary allocations and disinvestment of shares at throw-away prices is being shamelessly carried out. This is accompanied by throwing open vital sectors of national economy, like power, airlines telecommunications, banking, insurance and other services, to indigenous and foreign monopolies. About one-third ownership of the most profit making large public enterprises have already been transferred to private hands.

Planned cut-back in budgetary allocations for health and education and a marked tilt towards privatisation of these vital social services is leading to their commercialisation, depriving vast sections of our population of their basic civic rights. Corruption at all levels is leading to one scam after another.

Discrimination against women in economic as well as social sphere is being allowed to continue.

Trade union and democratic rights of workers, won with bitter struggles and sacrifices are sought to be drastically curtailed by amending existing labour enactments in line with the insistent demand of MNCs, endorsed by the World Bank, to implement the so-called exit policy giving employers unfettered right to hire and fire. The dark forces of communal reaction are increasingly cashing in on the desperation and frustration bred by the anti-people policies and practices of the govt, threatening the fountain-head of our secular democratic polity and disrupting working class unity. The Fund-Bank prescribed policies have in their natural course led to the Central Govt signing the GATT and joining the World Trade Organisation despite popular opposition. These instruments forged with neocolonialist designs would once again enable MNCs to further intensify their plunder of the resources of our country. The proposed amendment of the Indian Patents Act is one of the steps sub-serving the interest of foreign monopolies and their govts.

Desperate attempts of MNCs to penetrate out print and electronic media gravely threaten our intellectual and cultural life.

The working people of our country in factories and fields, in cities and villages, therefore, demand as follows:

1. Scrap the New Economic Policy;
2. Reject amendment to the Indian Patents Act;
3. bring down prices of essential commodities to the level of purchasing power of the common people;

4. Strengthen Public Distribution System and expand it to the entire countryside., All items of mass consumption should be made available at controlled prices at fair price shops;

5. Guarantee right to work as fundamental right and ensure unemployment allowance to the jobless;

6. Guarantee gainful employment to agricultural workers through out the year;

7. Enact central legislation for the benefit of agricultural workers without any further delay;

8. Implement thorough land reforms;

9. Ensure supply of inputs like fertilizer etc at subsidised rates to small and marginal peasants;

10. Stop closures and retrenchments;

11. Stop the drive for privatisation and give public sector the leading role for the country's industrialisation.

12. Drastic punishment to all persons involved in various corruption scandals;

13. Scrap anti-national Enron deal;

14. Take drastic steps to curb communal and other divisive forces;

15. Put an end to atrocities and discrimination against women, minorities and deprived sections of the society;

16. All repressive laws like TADA to be withdrawn and efforts to retain provisions of TADA by way of amendment to criminal law be given up;

17. Stop privatisation and commercialisation of education; and ensure education to all and jobs for all.

This rally calls upon all workers, peasants, agricultural workers, students, youth, women, cultural and scientific groups and appeals to all democratic, secular and patriotic forces to further intensify the struggles against the new economic policies unitedly till the government is compelled to retrace from its path.

New Delhi

15th December 1995

## Child Labour Workshop in Agarbatti Industry

The CITU-ILO national workshop on Child Labour in Agarbatti industry was organised by the Karnataka State Committee of CITU at Bangalore on January 18 and 19.

The workshop was attended by 28 comrades from the Agarbatti industry from Bangalore, Mysore, Kolar in Karnataka and one from Rajasthan. 18 participants were working women in the Agarbatti industry. There were about 16 observers also including 12 women from the industry.

The workshop was presided over by Com. Dastagir and inaugurated by P K Ganguly, CITU Secretary. He briefed the CITU's approach to the problem and called for strengthening the organisation and struggle in this unorganised sector of industries so as to improve the economic conditions of the workers and alleviate the poverty conditions, the main causes of child labour.

V J K Nair, the General Secretary of the Karnataka State CITU placed the Theme Paper for discussions. There was a general discussions, which was participated by the comrades.

On the second day, the workshop was divided into four groups to discuss in concrete terms several specific points, the guidelines for which was given by P K Ganguly.

The group discussions were led by comrades Varlakshmi, Veeramani, K S Sharda and Mohan

Kumar, who submitted the reports of the group discussions. The participants in the group discussions focused at the grinding poverty and wages below poverty line as the main causes for child labour in the industry. They further formulated the following demands and suggested action plans in pursuance of the demands.

### **Demands:**

1. Genuine land reforms,

2. Need based wages

3. Employment generation programme by the Govt and right to work as a fundamental right in the constitution.

4. Free compulsory education to children and opening of special schools in the child labour infested areas in the state.

5. Application of labour laws and social security measures in the industry.

6. Six hours working for children with half an hour recess and leaves and holidays.

7. Equal wages at par with adult workers and equal wages to women and girl child.

8. Free quarters or housing allowance

9. Safety rules, sanitation and free medical care

10. No further recruitment of child labour

11. Amendment of Child Labour Act to include the provisions of the National Policy on Child Labour.

(On Page 16)

**Table 1: Top 20 houses ranked according to assets 1994-95**

	Industry houses		No. of unit		Rank		Total assets(Rs crore)		%change	
	94-95	93-94	94-95	93-94	92-93	94-95	93-94	94-95	93-94	
Tata	41	1	1	26850	22684	19171	18.4	18.3		
BK-AV Birla	13	2	2	13814	10740	8585	28.6	25.1		
Reliance	3	3	3	11705	8736	6508	3.9	34.2		
Essar	4	4	4	10505	6756	3958	55.5	70.7		
RPG	17	5	5	7401	5855	3387	24.3	75.8		
Thapar	12	6	6	4663	4100	3509	13.7	16.8		
J K Singhania	8	7	7	4655	3701	3112	25.8	18.9		
Jindal	6	8	16	4311	1848	1081	133.3	70.9		
Larsen & Toubro	2	9	8	4163	3150	2825	32.1	11.5		
Shriram	13	10	10	3666	2620	2083	39.9	28.5		
ITC	8	11	9	3487	2757	2085	26.5	32.3		
Ispat	4	12	11	3327	2469	1362	34.8	81.3		
Mafatlal	12	13	12	3106	2386	2115	30.1	12.8		
Bajaj	5	14	14	3024	2111	1900	43.2	11.1		
Hind Lever	7	15	13	2827	2123	1733	33.2	22.5		
Williamson Magor	13	16	-	2555	1644	1263	55.4	30.2		
Videocon	3	17	19	2398	1749	1124	37.1	55.6		
UB	16	18	15	2270	1956	1852	16.1	5.6		
M&M	10	19	18	2185	1819	1558	20.1	16.7		
LNS-S Birla	10	20	17	2147	1830	1592	17.3	14.9		
<b>Total</b>				<b>119059</b>	<b>91134</b>	<b>70803</b>	<b>30.6</b>	<b>28.7</b>		

- Notes: 1) Only major public limited companies have been considered.  
2) Finance/leasing companies are excluded.  
3) Some companies data are estimated due to non-availability.  
4) % change are calculated on the basis of lakhs figure.

**Table 3: Top 20 houses PBT ranking in 1994-95.**

	Industry houses			Rank		PBT(Rs.crore)*		% change	
	94-95	93-94	94-95	93-94	92-93	94-95	93-94	94-95	93-94
Tata	1	1	1867	1073	746	73.9	43.9		
BK-AV Birla	2	2	1307	934	575	40.0	62.6		
Reliance	3	3	1076	575	324	87.1	77.3		
Essar	4	6	574	404	209	42.2	93.6		
Hindustan Lever	5	5	553	424	332	30.4	27.5		
Bajaj	6	7	514	399	108	28.6	269.0		
ITC	7	4	507	430	323	17.9	33.1		
Larsen & Toubro	8	8	331	234	192	41.3	21.7		

Jindal	9	10	301	161	87	87.3	84.9
Thapar	10	9	261	195	71	33.9	172.5
M&M	11	12	231	118	21	95.2	458.1
Williamson Magor	12	15	207	96	71	115.6	35.2
RPG	13	11	207	159	95	29.6	66.9
J K Singhania	14	14	162	104	46	56.5	125.9
Mafatlal	15	16	137	79	107	74.6	26.6
Videocon	16	13	137	106	68	28.9	56.3
UB	17	17	123	77	31	59.6	150.9
Shriram	18	19	118	53	4	122.3	1081.2
LNS-S Birla	19	18	76	56	37	37.4	51.1
Ispat	20	20	16	15	-	7	10.0
Total			8705	5592	3440	52.9	65.5

\*Annualised Notes: PBT ranks have been worked out from the data of the 20 largest business houses in terms of assets.

## BEEDI WORKERS' STRUGGLE

### Tamilnadu

As per the decision of the All India Beedi Workers committee held at Kannur (Kerala) one day strike was conducted on 27.12.'95 by the Beedi workers belonging to CITU of Vellore Town and its surroundings. Nearly fifteen thousand Beedi workers have participated in the strike. A big procession was held at Vellore town in the morning on the day of the strike. More than thousand Beedi workers participated in the procession. At the end of the procession a massive demonstration was held in front of Vellore Taluk Office. A memorandum was handed over to the Tahsildar, Vellore Tk. for submitting to the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamilnadu. In the memorandum it was insisted that the charter of demands of the All India Beedi Workers Committee should be implemented. Particularly it was insisted in the memorandum, that the orders issued by the Central Govt. reducing the excise duty for 50mm mini cigarettes should be withdrawn as lakhs of Beedi workers are affected due to the competition in the market by selling 50mm mini cigarettes for cheaper rates and as a result of which sales of beedies are affected in the market and the beedi workers are not given 6 days work in a week.

The demand for withdrawal of conclusion in excise duty for 50mm mini cigarettes attracted the Big Trade Mark Beedi Employers. They closed down the Beedi factories on 27.12.95 in support of the strike.

As per the decision of the All India Beedi workers committee campaignings were made among the Beedi Workers in and around Vellore Town and also in Katpadi area. Fifteen Campaign meetings were held.

In those meetings our charter of demands, the dangers arising due to the sale of 50mm mini cigarettes and also the dangers of New Economic Policies were explained. The line of approach of the CITU with regard to the New P.F. Pension Scheme, the bad effects of the scheme and suggestions given by the CITU for the modification of the scheme in favour of the Employees/workers were also explained in the campaign meetings.

**Madhya Pradesh** : About 2000 bidi workers, who were staging a demonstration at a call given by CITU and were arrested on 27th December 1995 near the Chief Minister's residence. CITU state president Badal Saroj and many prominent CITU leaders were among those arrested. All the arrested persons were later released in the evening.

Earlier the bidi workers, who had arrived from different parts of the state, gathered at Yagdare-E-Shahjahan park where they held a meeting. The meeting was presided over by freedom fighter Dr Ram Prasad Pathak. Speaking on the occasion, CITU leaders said that the labour laws were being most flagrantly violated in the case of bidi workers in Madhya Pradesh.

Chief Minister Digvijay Singh had assured to provide dearness allowance to bidi workers in January 1994, but the government later capitulated to pressure from bidi magnets and did not implement the Chief Minister's assurance. Badal Saroj appealed to the bidi workers to intensify their agitation. He demanded the government to implement the Parliamentary committee recommendations and the Su-

(On Page 13)

# KARNATAKA STATE CONVENTION OF TEXTILE WORKERS

A state level delegates convention of Textile Workers was organised by the Karnataka State Committee of CITU at Bangalore on January 20. The convention was attended by about 80 delegates from different parts of the state representing the organised mills from the NTC, Private Sector, and Cooperative mills, and from the Handloom and Powerloom Sectors.

The Convention was presided over by Nityanand Swamy and inaugurated by P.K. Ganguly, Secretary, CITU. He detailed the critical situation in all the three sectors of the industry, viz. in the mill sector, handloom sector and powerloom sector. He drew attention to the callous attitude of the Government to the threatening situation in the NTC mills, as well as its apathy to the growing sickness and closures in the private sector mills, and the fleecing of the handloom and powerloom workers. He called for intensification of untied movement and implementation of the organisational tasks as decided in the Coimbatore All India Convention of the Textile Workers of the CITU with the perspective of formation of an All India federation in the coming future.

V.J.K. Nair, General Secretary of the Karnataka State CITU briefed the situation in the state and proposed to form a state level Co-ordination Committee comprising of all the three sectors and for contribution of funds for the All India Coordination Committee as decided at the Coimbatore Convention.

About 15 delegates from all the sectors of the industry participated in the discussion. The delegates further discussed among themselves in groups in each sector of the industry and unanimously decided to form the state level Co-ordination Committee and contribution of funds.

## State Co-ordination Committee

The Convention unanimously formed the State Co-ordination Committee with V.J.K. Nair as the convener and the following comrades as members of the Co-ordination Committee:

V.J.K. Nair - State Convener.

Nityanand Swamy - /c Handloom Sector.

Meenakshi Sundaram - /c Powerloom Sector.

## Members

Veerana, Ravikumar, (Binny Mills); Revanna, Pusparaj (Minerva Mills); Thopaiiah, Shankar, Gopala Krishna, Srinivas, Rajasekhar, Babu Navab, Vithal Poojar (Powerloom); D.M. Khalusi, Baivappa Hanugi, A.A. Mulla, Prakash Gayad, Shivaram Goudhar, C. Anjaneyalu, Vishwanath Nimbarge, Nagamma Jogin, Satashiv Gandhkar (Handloom).

## Funds

The convention decided that Rupee one from each member from all the three sectors will be collected for the All India Co-ordination Committee of Textile Workers. Further fund will be collected from a state rally, the date of which will be fixed later.

## Demands

The Convention decided to carry forward the united movement in pursuance of the following demands in addition to local demands:

Immediate modernisation of the NTC mills as per the agreement in Special Tripartite Committee; Re opening of all closed mills in the Private Sector; supply of hank yarn to handloom sector at subsidised rates, minimum wages, labour laws and social security measures in handloom and powerloom, etc. □

## (From Page 12)

preme Court judgement in connection with the bidi workers. He also demanded the Chief Minister to convene a tripartite meeting to solve the problems and demands of the bidi workers. CITU state secretary Ram Vilas Goswami conducted the meeting. Bidi-Samiti convener Tanul Mandalwar, CITU district convener Pramod Pradhan, Narayan Prasad, Arun Pande, Gulab Singh and others also addressed the meeting.

Later the Chief Minister met a delegation of the bidi workers. The delegation told the Chief minister that the labour rates for bidi workers in the state were the lowest in the country, even less than half of West Bengal. At this the Chief Minister instructed a 5-member team, with representatives from CITU and INTUC, to visit West Bengal and submit its report by January 20.

The Chief Minister said that decision about other demands of bidi workers would be taken after that.

**W. Bengal:** In West Bengal three central rallies were held at Calcutta, Baharampur and Bankura. The rallies were joined by workers from the adjoining districts. The Calcutta rally was held at Rani Rashmoni Road junction, joined by workers from several districts including Burdwan, Hooghly, Medinipur, Howrah and Sealdah. Leaflets and posters were made for all the rallies. Deputations were given to local authorities with the 20-point demands formulated by the A.I. Committee of Beedi Workers.

**Kerala:** The day was observed all over the state with rallies and demonstrations. A massive rally was organised at Kannur. the rallies focused at the 20-point demands. A large number of women joined the rallies. □

## CITU's Comments on Ordinance On Coal Miners' Pension

The President of India issued an ordinance on 9th January 1996 promulgating a pension scheme for the coal miners. The ordinance is only an enactment enabling Govt of India to introduce a Pension Scheme through a Gazette Notification at a latter date. Since the details of the notification are not available it will not be possible to offer a detailed criticism of the scheme.

The last session of the Parliament proceedings were stalled due to the refusal of the government of India to refer the telecom scam to a joint parliamentary committee. However, during the din in Lok Sabha on 19th Dec Shri Jagdish Tytler is supposed to have introduced the coal Mines Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions (Amendment) Bill 1995., which completely ignores the commitment given by the Coal India management to the JBCCI that the management will contribute 2% of the workers wages every month to the Pension Fund. The 7 lakh coal workers have been contributing 2% of their wages towards the pension fund from 1.4.1989 and the total contribution of the workers have exceeded Rs 200 crores. However, the CIL management failed to give matching contribution due to the pension fund which was responsible for delay in finalising the pension scheme for the coal miners.

The CIL management has been informing the JBCCI that the govt of India refused to give them permission to contribute management's share. According to the directive issued by the Department of public enterprises, the management would contribute only Rs 100/- (one hundred only) for all the workers per year.

The MOU signed on 29th April provided that the coal managements would contribute only one increment to each worker from 1st July 1995 which would be added to the pension fund. The CITU did not sign the MOU because the same was totally ignoring the commitment given in writing by the management that it would give matching contribution to the pension fund. The MOU thus had made a mockery of solemn commitment given by the coal managements. It also absolved the management from making any contribution from 1.4.1989. Meanwhile, thousands of workers retire every year without getting any pensionary benefits. The ordinance issued by the Govt is therefore essentially proposes the pension scheme on the basis of workers' contribution alone. The family pension scheme for the coal miners has been work-

ing without much benefit to the coal miners as a result of which over Rs 1000 crores have accumulated with interest so far. This money will now be transferred to the new pension fund. The pensionary benefits to the workers will be reduced considerably due to the absence of management's contribution. The rate of interest on the pension funds will be much lower than the market rate of interest as a result of which workers' pension will be further reduced. The coal mines provident fund organisation which mismanaged the coal miners family pension scheme, are again being asked to handle the pension fund. This organisation is seething with corruption and no job of workers' is being done without payment of bribe. Therefore, the workers' pension fund cannot be safe in the hands of this organisation. The discriminatory policy of the Govt of India has resulted in denial of representation to CITU and HMS on this organisation. The demand for creating of a separate bipartite trust to handle the pension funds is not accepted by the govt.

The details of the pension scheme will not be finalised in the JBCCI but by the CMPF organisatin which is top heavy and controlled by bureaucrats.

The CITU therefore, demands that the coal mines pension scheme should be properly modified in the following manner:

1. Ensure management contribution of 2% of the workers' wages from 1.4.1989 as per written commitment by coal India management.
2. The scheme should be jointly prepared and executed by a separate trust under JBCCI.
3. The pension funds should pay the interest rates at market rates and should not be used as a cheap source of finance for the govt.
4. The pension given to the coal miners should be linked with price index.

It is only with such changes that the real pension scheme can be implemented in the interest of coal miners. □

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# AITUC's Role During All India Coal Workers Strike on 18th December, 1995

We are publishing hereunder a letter written by the General Secretary of CITU to the General Secretary of AITUC on the Coal Strike along with the joint statement signed by AITUC, which are self-explanatory—Ed)

January 2, 1996

Com. A B Bardhan General Secretary,  
All India Trade Union Congress  
24 Canning Lane  
New Delhi - 110 001

Dear Comrade,

I was glad to see the joint statement to the Press issued by CITU, AITUC and HMS in support of the one day all India strike of the Coal workers on 18th December 1995 on their five point charter of demands. I felt it was a correct step in view of our earlier discussion regarding joint movement in coal industry by AITUC, CITU and HMS.

However, I was surprised to note that the AITUC representative signed the settlement in Chief Labour Commissioner's office on 14th December 1995. The terms of settlement were identical to the offer given by the management before serving the strike notice. It is also surprising that the settlement does not alter the basic situation that existed prior to the serving of strike notice. On the contrary the agreement period was extended by six months which was opposed by the AITUC earlier.

The joint statement was published some of the national as well as the local newspapers. According to report received by me in the meeting of the working committee of All India Coal Workers Federation, AITUC actively opposed this strike in most of the coalfields.

I wish to draw your attention to this aspect since such issues come in the way of united movement in the coal industry. Please note that HMS did not sign the settlement on 14th December and actively work in favour of the strike. According to reports received by me this strike was by and large successful though it was not hundred per cent successful.

The coal industry is facing acute crisis after reference of BCCL and ECL to BIFR. The Coal Minister is continuously harping on the theme of privatisation of coal mines and is actively working for it. The

condition of the welfare and safety of coal miners is deteriorating rapidly. Corruption and pilferage is increasing. A joint movement is very much necessary to tackle this problem effectively.

I am writing this letter to you with the hope that even now we can jointly work together to protect the interest of coal industry and its 7 lakh coal miners.

With greetings,

Yours fraternally,  
Sd/-  
(M K Pandhe)  
General Secretary

## Press Statement

New Delhi  
16.12.95

### CITU, HMS and AITUC Call for strike in Coal Industry on 18th December

Since the negotiation on 14th December on the strike in coal industry has failed and no new proposals were offered by the Ministers, the CLC(C) and the coal management, the CITU, HMS and AITUC have decided to go on one day protest strike in the coal industry on 18th December, 1995. The CITU, HMS and AITUC call upon the coal workers in the country to make the strike on 18th December successful, and appeal to INTUC and BMS to join the strike responding to the sentiments of the workers.

Sd/- B D Joshi                      Sd/- P K Ganguly  
Dy. General Secretary, CITU      Secretary, AITUC

Sd/- V Tiagi  
Secretary, HMS

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# EEFI CONDEMNS REVIVAL OF ENRON DEAL BY SHIV SENA- BJP GOVT.

E. Balanandan, MP - President of the Electricity Employees Federation of India (EEFI) - has issued the following statement on the BJP-Shiv Sena government's decision to revive the Dabhol Power Project.

The BJP-Shiv Sena Government of Maharashtra in spite of their tall claims has finally succumbed to the pressure of the foreign multinational power company, Enron, and agreed the revival of the Dabhol Power Project without open tenders.

There is no doubt that the claim of Manohar Joshi, the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, that the decision of his government to revive the Dabhol Project "is going to have a positive impact on other schemes in which big multinationals are interested in investing" amounts to a major climb down from his earlier stand of November 21 that "the Project is scrapped and still dumped in the sea".

The hollowness of Joshi's claim become apparent when the "achievements" of the BJP-Sena government of having reduced the capital cost, per MW cost and the rate of power to be supplied to Maharashtra State Electricity Board (MSEB) when compared to the different features of the agreement that the earlier Sharad Pawar Government had concluded with the Enron company. It is patently clear that whatever changes have taken place in the costing of the Project pertains to the second phase which was outside the purview of the earlier agreement. The present negotiation has left those of the first phase totally unaltered. And in the process the BJP-Sena Government has repeated the same questionable method which was earlier charged of total lack of transparency I would like to draw the attention to the fact of awarding of contract for the second phase of the route. The biggest criticism against the earlier Sharad Pawar government was that it had settled such a big Project through bilateral negotiation and the complexity of the Central Power Ministry in arriving at such an obnoxious agreement so much so that the Central government itself was forced to issue guidelines to all the state governments on 18.1.1995 making the competitive bidding route mandatory. It is shocking that the BJP-Sena government has now adopted a method which even the Central government was forced to abandon.

It is clear that the reduction in capital cost from

Rs.9060 crores to Rs.6424 crores is largely on account of separating regasification plant from the D.P.P. Further, the present reduction is also an account of removing the responsibility of building a Jetty and other infrastructure in the project area from the Enron company. Besides the fact that power equipment cost has come down in the global market.

The claim of reducing the unit power price is also questionable as the tariff continues to be linked with dollar price. Even at the present dollar rate it works out to rs. 2.04 as against 1.86 which the Maharashtra government is claiming with the current downward trend of the rupee depreciating against dollar makes it anybody's guess as to what will be the actual unit price of Dabhol Power when it will be actually supplied.

Similarly the guarantee from MSEB to buy 90% of Dabhol Power implies that MSEB will have to cut down on its own generation when the two phases with an installed capacity of 2450 MW become fully operational. The Maharashtra Electricity Board has to use high cost power, while keeping their own system idle, beside the people have to pay more for the sake of Dabhol Power company.

Therefore, we would like to urge upon the people at large and the electricity employers in particular to call the bluff of the present BJP-Sena Government of Maharashtra and rally against the capitulationist posture of surrendering the interest of the consumer and the people before the unscrupulous manoeuvres of the giant power multinational. □

*(From Page 10)*

## **Organisational Task and Action Plans:**

1. Formation of State Coordination Committee in Agarbatti industry and drive for increase in membership.
2. Propaganda campaign on the demands by formation of groups
3. Holding of a state convention of Agarbatti workers after discussing in the state committee of CITU.
4. Observation of a day in the state by holding demonstrations, rallies, etc in pursuance of the demands. The date is to be fixed by the state committee of CITU.

□

# CITU PLANS CAMPAIGNS AND MOVEMENTS

□ A.K. PADMANABHAN

Tamilnadu State Committee of CITU has planned campaigns and movements against the Central and State Governments. The State Committee met at Madras, on 19th and 20th November. K. Ramani, Vice President chaired the meeting.

The decisions of the All India Working Committee meeting at Bhilai was reported in detail by W.R. Varadarajan and R. Singaravelu, Secretaries of the State Committee.

A report on activities after the last meeting in June was presented by A.K. Padmanabhan, D. Janaki Raman, Treasurer submitted the Accounts of the State Committee and CITU Seithi upto 31st October.

Discussions, in which 39 comrades appreciated, was summing up by T.K. Rangarajan, General Secretary.

The Committee decided the following campaigns and movements.

## On Pension

State Committee decided to have an extensive state wide campaign, demanding amendments to the Pension Scheme. on the basis of the pamphlet published by the Centre State Committee will publish a pamphlet in Tamil explaining the scheme. 73000 copies will be printed.

On 27th November, campaigns expressing solidarity with Cuba will be conducted in all districts. In Madras, demonstration will be held in front of the US consulate.

If was also decided that all efforts should be made to make the 15th December rallies successful.

The Committee expressed concern over the clashes and murders in southern district of Tamilnadu, on the basis of caste. The Committee called upon affiliates to conduct campaign to maintain unity among the people.

State Committee decided to collect medicines to be sent Srilanka, to help the war affected people in Jafna.

State Committee discussed about organisational matters including submission of Annual returns in time.

A State level convention of head load workers is to be held in Salem on 13th December.

State Committee has directed all district committees to complete collections to BTR memorial fund at the earliest.

## Silver Jubilee

The State Committee noted with satisfaction, that the Silver Jubilee Celebrations were conducted by the District Committee and many of the unions successfully. The remaining three districts will hold the Celebrations in december. The Celebrations will conclude with the Madras district celebrations on 23rd December.

The State Committee has also decided to contact other fraternal organisations for an extensive and massive campaign against privatisation.

## Conference of COTEE

The 9th Conference of the Central Organisation of Tamilnadu Electricity Employees (COTEE) concluded at Erode on 21st December with a stirring call for campaigns and struggles against privatisation and on the demands of regular and contract workers. The conference which began on 19th December was preceded by Silver Jubilee Celebrations of COTEE.

Nearly 15,000 men and women marched through the streets of Erode, high lighting the achievements of the organisation during the last 25 years and also expressing their resolve to fight for the cause of electricity workers and the toiling masses in the country.

The massive procession was led by K. Ramani, D. Janakiraman, A.K. Padmanabhan, S. Pancharatnam and other leaders of COTEE and CITU. Representatives of State Government Employees Association and NEPTE greeted the rally enroute. Public meeting at the end of the procession was presided by K. Ramani, President of COTEE. Among those addressed the rally were E. Balanandan, President of CITU and EEFI, T.K. Rangarajan, S. Soundarajan, and A.K. Padmanabhan on the occasion of silver jubilies former leaders of COTEE were honored. Many of them are now working in leading capacities in various fronts. Souvenir brought out on the occasion was released C. Govindharajan, founder president of COTEE.

Cultural and literacy programmes continued till down, which was witnessed by a large crowd.

The 9th Conference which was inaugurated by T.K. Rangarajan, was attended by 470 delegates including 21 women. Among the delegates 98 were contract workers. All the categories of regular workers were represented.

The report submitted by the General Secretary noted the overall improvement in the function and strength of the Organisation present membership is 35000. But the membership of regular workers have not been showing any improvement. During the last 3 years, notable achievements have been made after struggles on the question of regularisation of contract workers, appointment of Trainees etc. Efforts to build up T.U. unity has been successful to an extent, not with standing efforts of some of the unions.

After detailed discussions on the report, the conference has called upon for various agitations. Contractor workers are to picket Board Offices in January protesting against delay in regularisation as per Supreme Court Order and for equal wage for equal work, and other statutory benefits. On the demands of regular workers also, a campaign to be followed by struggles have been decided. Conference has also decided to intensify the struggles against privatisation. Efforts to build up unity on these questions will be made.

COTEE, on the occasion of its Silver Jubilee has contributed Rs.50,000 to the state committee of CITU and Rs.50,000/- to Theekathir Daily for its contribution to the struggles conducted by COTEE during the last 25 years.

COTEE also presented Rs.30,000/- each to the family of two contract workers and a van driver who had been killed in an accident on their way to attend a contract workers rally in Madras in August 1995.

The conference also elected new office-bearers D. Janakiraman has been elected the new President and S. Pancharatnam the New General Secretary. V. Rajasekaran is the New Treasurer. There are 8 Vice-Presidents, 3 Deputy General Secretaries, and 12 Secretaries R. Umanath, in his concluding address called upon the Electricity workers to further strengthen their organisation and also take efforts to build up worker-peasant unity. Among those who had greeted the conference were A.Soundarajan, General Secretary to State Transport Employees Federation and K. Varadarajan, General Secretary of Tamilnadu Kisan Sabha.

### **Head load workers conference**

A state level conference of head load workers unions in the state was held at Salem on 13th December. The conference began with a procession of more than 4000 headload workers including some women. The participants in the procession were mainly from Salem District. 11 other districts were also represented.

A charter of demands, was presented by R. Venkatapathi convenor of the preparatory committee. The demands included implementation of Welfare Schemes and formulation of welfare Board Fixing of 50 Kg limit on weights of bags etc. The conference was inaugurated by R. Singaravelu. Representatives from all district participated in the discussion. K. Raju, Vice President of the Kerala State head load workers federation, greeted the conference and explained the achievements of head load workers in Kerala. A.K. Padmanabhan, in his concluding address explained the efforts being undertaken by CITU in mobilising unorganised workers. The conference decided to observe a demands day on 29th January by holding demonstrations, all over the state. The Conference has also elected a state level co-ordination committee with R. Venkatapathi on convenor to guide future activities.

### **Other struggles**

Tannery workers all over the state went on joint strike on 21st December demanding fixation of Basic Wage, DA and increase in wage and other demands the call for the strike was given by a joint committee including CITU, AITUC, INTUC and others. The strike call was for an indefinite strike. As the Labour department had intervened and fixed up date for negotiations, the strike was called off on the second day.

Powerloom workers in the state have also decided to observe a demands week, from 15th to 20th February. preceding the demands week, intensive campaign is to be undertaken all over the state Enrollment campaign also is to be undertaken. Decisions on these campaigns were taken at the meeting of the Co-ordination Committee of Powerloom Unions held at Erode. As state level conference of powerloom workers is to be held in February.

Construction workers federation is also conducting state level campaigns on implementation welfare schemes all over the state and for allotment of dwelling sites and other demands.

Public Sector workers all over the state observed demands day on 29th November in the rallies and meetings textile workers in Co-operative mills held demonstrations in front of Co-operative Banks, demanding enhancement of Working Capital of Mills. Dharna were held in point of all the 18 mills, on 26-12-95 calling upon State Government to properly run the co-op. mills.

Beedi workers in the state joined the nation wide strike on 27th December as per the call of the All India Beedi Workers Committee (CITU).

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# NRF MISUSED FOR RETRENCHMENT

□ M.K. PANDHE

The National Renewal Fund was established by the Government with the avowed objective of providing a "social safety net" for workers adversely affected by the new economic and industrial policy. In his July, 1991, Budget speech, Manmohan Singh spell the main features of the policy thus:

"The Government will establish a National Renewal Fund with a substantial corpus. the main objective of the fund will be to ensure that the cost of technical change and modernisation of the productive apparatus does not devolve on the workers... This fund will not merely provide ameliorative measures for the workers affected in the course of technical change, but more importantly it will provide retraining to them, so that they are in a position to remain active productive partners in the process of modernisation".

The Ministry of Industry was made the nodal agency to handle the funds. its first task was to prepare a concept paper identifying 58 sick public sector units for disbursement of money. It concluded that 4.5 lakh workers needed to be retrenched at an estimated cost of Rs.6,000 crores. As for its funding, the concept paper noted that "although a good portion of these requirements can potentially become available from the disposal of the assets of these enterprises, the dimension of the problem is nonetheless large within the public sector itself".

The trade unions unanimously rejected the concept paper during a Special Tripartite committee meeting since it dealt only with the retrenchment of workers and the trade unions are opposed to it.

The budget for 1991-92 provided Rs.150 crore for the NRF, but since the Government did not constitute the Empowering Authority till February, 1992, the amount remained unspent. The guidelines for implementing the scheme were notified only on December 21, 1992. These specified, inter alia, the following:

1) To provide funds, where necessary, for compensation to employees affected by restructuring or the closure of industrial units, both in the public and private sectors.

2) To provide assistance to cover the costs of retraining and the redeployment of employees consequent upon modernisation, technological upgradation and industrial restructuring.

3) To provide funds for an employment generation scheme, both in the organised and unorganised sectors, so as to put into place a social safety net for labour dislodged as a consequence of industrial restructuring.

The NRF, therefore, visualized two types of

funds, namely the National Renewal Grant Fund (NRGF) and the Employment Generation Fund (EGF). In reality, the apprehension of the trade unions that the NRF was meant for the retrenchment of workers has proved to be correct in the light of the four year working of the scheme.

The budgetary allocation for the NRF in 1991-92 was Rs.150 crores, whereas the disbursement was nil; in 1992-93 the allocation was Rs.829.66 crore and disbursement Rs.688.72 crore; in 1993-94 the allocation was Rs.1,020 crore, of which only Rs.700 crore was transferred to the NRF, but disbursement came to Rs. 542.23 crore; and in 1994-95 allocation came to Rs.700 crore and disbursement Rs.104.68 crore.

Thus disbursements have been poor, and more than 98 per cent of the amount has been spent as retrenchment compensation is the garb of the Voluntary Retirement Scheme. In all 61 central public sector undertakings were given money out of the NRF. The so-called Employee Resource Centres (ERC) were set up in 22 undertakings, which have only done a lot of paper works, without providing any assistance worth the name to workers who have lost their jobs. As if this was not enough, the Business Development Cells which were also constituted in some undertakings for giving advice on self-employment have failed to assist retrenched workers. The only achievement of these two schemes was to provide employment to those who worked for them!

The total number of workers retrenched till January 31, 1995, came to 75,004. The break-up is: 1991-92 nil; 1992-93 - 38,626; 1993-94 - 34,613; and 1994-95 - 4,765.

No study has been conducted on what has happened to the workers who accepted VRS. In one seminar on this subject, I heard from senior public sector executives that a large number of workers in several undertakings who accepted VRS were skilled or highly skilled workers who could find better jobs elsewhere. These senior executives were aware that such an exit had resulted in a loss of skilled manpower to these undertakings. In SAIL, BHEL and other undertakings, VRS has been discontinued due to this phenomenon.

According to one study, till the beginning of 1995 less than 500 workers had been trained with money from the NRF, but how many of those trained could get jobs is not known to the framers of the scheme. It seems the Government has trained these workers without knowing whether jobs are available for them.

Instead of properly assessing the outcome of the programme, the Government has allotted Rs.50 crore on account of training to various employers' organisations like CII, Assocham and National Small Industries Corporation. The fate of this fund also is not going to be different. In a Special Tripartite Committee meeting, the then Union Labour Minister, P.A. Sagma, had observed that he was to at all satisfied with the usefulness of the training given under NRF. He said he had visited some institutions where he found some computers purchased but virtually no training being imparted. The nomenclature of NRF should mean that the fund is used for the renewal of the country. Full utilization of human resources should be the bedrock of the national renewal. The real purpose of the NRF should be to revive the sick undertakings for the further generation of jobs. However, the Government has not provided any fund for the revival of the sick and closed units. Many of the sick units have machinery in good condition. Due to mismanagement they have not been able to carry on with production. It would be a waste of investment for such units to be allowed to close down. Therefore, the revival of sick and closed units should have been the priority of the NRF rather than throwing out workers from their existing jobs. The NRF has been aptly characterised as the National Retrenchment Fund.

Initially the NRF had been made applicable to the public sector only. Latterly some state Governments and the private sector are clamouring for assistance under the scheme to shed part of their labour force. The Central Government has put forward the proposal that state governments as well as the private sector should contribute towards the fund. However,

not much progress has been made in this regard. When the scheme has not served its purpose in the public sector, how can it be successful in the states or in the private sector?

When the scheme of NRF was mooted, the World Bank had agreed to contribute \$ 500 million to it. However, no contribution has come to the fund so far. Earlier, the World Bank had waited to see the operation of the fund, but later it appears it found that the fund did not serve the purpose for which it was set up. A World Bank official has told me that the Bank is not happy with the working of the scheme.

In short, the National Renewal fund has failed in this objective to revive sick units. Most of the funds were used only to reduce manpower in the central public sector undertakings. There has been a flight of skilled manpower from these undertakings which has prevailed upon some of the undertakings to withdraw the VRS.

Nor have the retraining schemes under NRF resulted in any training or job-oriented education. Despite spending about Rs.100 crore, the number of persons redeployed is only 300 or so. No data re available on how many of them have retained their jobs.

Therefore, there is a need for the government to review the entire working of NRF in consultation with the trade unions. The NRF should be a fund for the revival of sick units. If the units are revived they would be able to tackle the problem of retraining and redeployment without any difficulty. Will the Government exhibit the political will to take firm measures to tackle the question of industrial sickness in the public sector?

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## CITU Opposes Equity of Private Sector in Coal Mines

The CITU strongly condemns the decision of the Ministry of Coal to allow 49% equity to user industries in the private sector such as cement industry, steel plants, power generating units etc. This decision is a clear cut attempt to privatise the coal mines and defeat the very purpose of nationalisation of coal mines by GOI.

To facilitate the privatisation process the Coal Minister has already taken initiative to refer BCCL & ECL to BIFR so that they can be ultimately open to the private sector undertakings.

Since Mr Jagdish Tytler has become the Coal Minister the performance of Coal industry has deteriorated considerably resulting in acute shortage of coal through out the country. This is being purposefully done to open up the coal mines to private sector.

India's import bill of coal has sought up to Rs 5000 crore which also is a matter of concern to everyone.

The CITU, therefore, appeals to all the Central TUs in Coal Industry to unitedly resist this machinations by the GOI so that Coal Industry can be kept in the public sector. If the Govt seeks cooperation of TUs to improve the performance of coal industry they have always been offered such a cooperation. However, due to mismanagement and bungling by the Coal Ministry the condition is deteriorating sharply.

CITU firmly believes that a joint movement by all the coal mines in India can only protect the public sector coal industry and ensure its viability.

The CITU appeals to all the Coal workers to launch such a campaign so that the GOI is forced to retrace from its dangerous game of privatisation.

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# FRANCE RISES AGAINST CUTS

## 45TH CGT CONFERENCE DISCUSS NEW APPROACH

□ T K Rangarajan

The Confederation of General Trade Union of CGT could not have expected a better period to begin its centenary celebrations and to hold its 45th conference. While the Conference was being held from 3rd and 4th DEcember, the working people, especially from the service sector had risen against the attacks from the government and all the service sectors had come to a halt.

The French President Chirac and Prime Minister Alain Juppe's planned to cut all welfare schemes. This led to the present waves to strike.

The Rail workers are bitterly opposed to a plan to overhaul the State owned Railway company. Postal employees are defending their pension plans. Utility workers have deregulation and job losses. Students want more money for teachers and class rooms and telecommunications employees are outraged at the prospect of partial privatisation. Air France employees joined the movement by blocking air traffic as well. Dock workers, Truck drivers, Electricity gas and postal workers also have joined the stoppage.

The Bank of France is out as well. And to top it all the papers cannot carry the weather forecast because the Met Office is on strike.

The demand of the CGT 45th conference was the Juppe plan must be withdrawn. The Prime Minister had gampled that public sentiment will turn against the strikers in the run up to Christmas, but it is a measure of the govt's profound unpopularity that the support for the strike remained. A poll published showed 62% of respondents in favour of the strike. Finally the govt had to come down and Mr Alain Juppe started discussions with the unions. The CGT was represented in these talks by its popular Secretary General Louis Viannet.

While all these were happening outside the conference hall, the delegates were discussing not only about strike but also the draft policy document for the 45th congress. The conference was attended by more than 800 delegates and 110 foreign delegates from more than 70 countries. Ten international Organisations participated in the conference. CITU

was represented by its vice president T K Rangarajan, INTUC and AITUC were also represented.

The draft policy note contained the following points:

1. The damage done by the dictatorship of finance is spreading and accelerating;
2. Solidarity, fraternity, feminism, anti-racism,, progress, peace and international solidarity;
3. The declared aim of construction of Europe was to promote solidarity between the people of Europe. Instead, European Union's policies as defined in the Masstrict Treaty, increase tensions, competition between workers and conflicting interests;
- 4) Full employment;
- 5) On democracy;
- 6) On alliance and unity.

The CGT developed difference with WFTU and this conference decided to pu an end to its affiliation about the future.

In the fact of the current crisis in international relations, market disorder, the dictate of international institutions and the demands of multi-nationals, trade unionism has ever greater responsibilities to take an ever broder role to play. The CGT has proposed to hold a round table conference it is discussing with like minded unions.

The CGT wants to be a part and parcel in the renewal of International Trade Unionism. The note says "Which is essential if we wish to succeed in creating a balance of forces favourable to workers, at all possible levels and for every given problem."

The discussion were healthy. Comrades spoke freely and frankly.

All foreign delegates were introduced to the delegates. The delegates from Cuba, Cosatu, South Africa and Algeria were given rousing reception.

CITU representative had the opportunity to discuss with number of foreign delegates including those from Indonesia, Mexico, Organisation of African Trade Union unity and Cosatu of South Africa.

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# Report of Standing Committee on Energy - IV

*(We are publishing hereunder the fourth part of the Report of Standing Committee on Energy (1995-96) on the subject, "New Policy Initiatives in Power Sector - status of Implementation and their impact on the Economy", dealing with the impact on Public Sector-Editor).*

## KAMENG PROJECT

During on the spot study visit to Arunachal Pradesh and Assam the Sub-Committee was informed that Kameng Hydro Electric Project identified for implementation by NEEPCO was transferred to private sector.

Kameng Hydroelectric Project in Arunachal Pradesh was investigated by the Central Water Commission. The project had been identified for implementation by NEEPCO as a Central Sector Project in consultation with the State Government. Accordingly, the project estimates had been updated by NEEPCO for clearance by CEA and NEEPCO had gone ahead with various activities like hydrometeorological observations at a cost of Rs.4 lakh with a view to firm up the Project parameters. in view of the resource constraints, Ministry of Power had approached the Department of Economic Affairs for posing the project for external financial assistance. Simultaneously, the project was included in the eighth five year plan and some funds had been earmarked to enable its investment approval and initiation of works. Action had been initiated for obtaining the necessary clearances including investment approval of the project. the State Government of Arunachal Pradesh had also issued a Government Notification Section 29 and Section 33 of the Electricity (Supply) Act, 1948 for implementation of the Project through NEEPCO. NEEPCO also proposed to utilise tunneling equipment imported for Ranganadi Project on the two tunnels of Kameng HE Project.

A pre-PIB meeting was held in the Department of Power on 15.10.1991 to consider the project report of Kameng Hydroelectric Project and associated transmission system before it could be posed to the public Investment Board. One of the requirements of the Project before it could be posed to the PIB was the Environment and Forest clearance for which the Ministry of Power had been pursuing with the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MOEF). MOEF conveyed their approval to diversion of 710 hectares of forest land for the project subject to transfer of the cost of compensatory afforestation over double the degraded forest land in favour of the Forest Department revised cost of Compensatory Afforestation amounting to Rs.3.42 revised crores had been worked out by the Forest Department of Government of Arunachal Pradesh. NEEPCO conveyed their agree-

ment to release the funds to that extent in a phased manner over a period of five years from 1992- 93. However, the expenditure would be released only after the necessary investment clearance has been accorded by the Government of India.

The necessary investment clearance could not be processed further although forest clearance was available as the project was yet to receive environmental clearance. Ministry of Environment and Forests were requested to carry out a quick impact assessment of the project so that atleast 'in principle' clearance from environmental angle is available and detailed conditions of environmental clearance may be incorporated alter on when the formal letter of environmental clearance is issued. This was to ensure that NEEPCO could undertake infrastructural development before the main project is taken up. In response to this Ministry of Environment and Forests in their letter dated 7.4.1993 informed Ministry of Power that with a view to ascertain the existence of gene pool reserve in the project impact area, the National Bureau on Plant Genetic Resources, Pusa, New Delhi had been contacted by the Ministry of Environment and Forests who in turn informed them that there area a good number of plant species endemic to the area and also the existence of economically important/threatened plants. Accordingly, Botanical Survey of india has been requested to carry out necessary survey.

Meanwhile the State Government informed the Ministry of Power of their intention to take up the project through private sector participation. The State Government was immediately informed that the justification of the project depended upon absorption of its power output in the North Eastern and Eastern Regions and being the largest power project being taken up in the region, the State Government did not have either the wherewithal to execute the project or to enter into regional or inter- regional distribution of power. In view of this it would not be possible in the State Government to undertake implementation of the project of such a magnitude. NEEPCO who are already executing Ranganadi Hydroelectric Project in the State would be geared to take up the Project with funds provided in the central Plan. Further, as NEEPCO was at that time implementing the 400 KV Kathalguri-malda Transmission Line for evacuation of surplus power from the North Eastern Region to the Eastern Region they are in a better position to manage the project. With this stage of development, size of the project, inter-regional transfer of power and implementation of conditions of environmental and forest clearance, Ministry of Power did not feel it desirable by the State Government to withdraw the project from the execution in the Central Sector.

## 40 YEARS OF STRUGGLE AND DEVELOPMENT

November 15th 1995 - November 15th 1995 is a 40-year long road of struggle and development and the achievements of the Vietnamese Trade Union Review in this period are worth taking great pride in.

Starting with the bulletins printed in foreign languages, not so regularly as they should have been during the years of the war of resistance against the French colonialists (1946-1954), this trade union bulletin had then such a small circulation that copies could only be sent to ten national and international trade union centres closely connected with the Vietnam General Confederation of Labour namely: the World Federation of Trade Unions (W.F.T.U), the French CGT, the Italian CGIL, and the trade union centres of socialist countries. When peace finally prevailed after half a century, the Vietnam General Confederation of Labour decided to issue an external bulletin with a periodical character published first in French (and then some months later in English). This is the bi-monthly bulletin of the Vietnam General Confederation of Labour published in two languages: English and French and has been published from January 1957 onward. Fifteen years later, in early 1972, the Vietnamese trade union centre added to this bulletin a third language: Spanish.

It is worth saying that tremendous efforts were made to make this periodical beautiful in appearance and rich in content.

For the past forty years, the Vietnamese Trade Union Review has striven to keep foreign readers abreast of information, both accurate and systematic about the lines and policies of the Communist Party and the State of Vietnam in the former earth-shaking war of resistance against American aggression as well as in the present renovative process. This has won much attention and concern from friends throughout the five continents, thereby securing their interest and support. As a review for external relations of the Vietnam General Confederation of Labour, the information given in it has dealt more and more extensively with the role and functions of the Vietnamese trade unions within the political system of the State of Vietnam, and with the varied and multiple activities of the Vietnamese trade unions in the country and abroad.

Through its special columns, the review has given wide coverage to the history of the Vietnamese trade unions, Trade Union Law, trade union activities in all fields, especially those in the field of education, politics, trade and profession, and care for and protection of the legitimate interests of the working

people. Mass motivational movements have also been publicised, such as the "The hammer in one hand, the rifle in the other", "Each person redoubling efforts for the sake of liberating South Vietnam and reunifying the Fatherland", "Good men, good deeds", "Developing initiative and improving technique", "Skilful labour".... In the review, there have been many articles written about labour heroes and heroines, about "the golden hands" in labour and production, and about professionally proficient managers in business undertakings. The trade union review has brought to readers general and lively news and information about the multi-faceted activities of the Vietnamese trade unions, the ardour and enthusiasm as well as the will and endurance of the Vietnamese workers, both manual and intellectual. This comes from ordinary labourers to technicians, scientists, managers in the former struggle full of privations and hardships, not to mention their life sacrifices for the independence, freedom, unity of the Fatherland. As well as this, in the present fight is beset with numerous difficulties of national reconstruction, for the elimination of famine and reduction of poverty and for the doing away with the country's backwardness to industrialize and modernize the country.

With its international column on the Vietnamese trade unions, the Vietnam General Confederation of Labour has provided the readers of its review with information about the orientation, policy and activities of its counterparts throughout the world, and its relations with foreign countries. By this special column, the readers know more about the intention and the advocacy of the Vietnam trade union centre to expand on an ever increasing scale and with an ever bigger number of countries its relations of friendship and solidarity with all the trade union organizations now engaged in the struggle for the workers' interests, irrespective of their political trend, religious belief, or international affiliation. It aims to win the maximum support of the world workers' and trade union movement for Vietnam and at the same time, actively to work towards the cause of solidarity and unity of the workers' and the trade union movement towards peace, democracy, and development and social progress.

Besides these columns, since the country has declared its open-door policy and proclaimed its intention to integrate itself into the region and the world, (which has brought about vigorous external relations between Vietnam and the countries concerned) the review of the Vietnam General Confed-

eration of Labour has still given a wide coverage of the Law on Foreign Investment in Vietnam, of the ever expanding activities of foreign companies operating in Vietnam and of the Vietnamese firms having the potential for cooperation and joint ventures with foreign partners. It has also mentioned the high-quality commodities of commerce that Vietnam may export for sale to foreign countries. There have been many articles dealing with customs and habits of the nationalities living in Vietnam as well as the places of scenic beauty which would attract foreign tourists to this country.

All this information has found expression in different articles written in over 200 numbers of bulletin and review published during the past 40 years with more than 30 million printed papers and sent out to national, regional and international trade union centres, to labour research institutes, the trade union movement, trade union leaders and national libraries of 168 countries in the world as well as the embassies of other countries, representative offices, and international agencies in Vietnam.

Many readers in countries have written letters expressing their enjoyment and thanks to the Vietnam General Confederation of Labour for the interesting information contained in its review. Many organizations have called on the Confederation to pay attention to the possibility of providing them with back copies of the review or desire to subscribe permanently. The American Microfilm Company has sought to reproduce the review on microfilm for supply to organizations which need it. It would be difficult to know about the concrete result so far achieved by the Vietnam General Confederation of Labour but it is common knowledge that this trade union centre has really contributed to the clarification of misinformation and slander against Vietnam, thus making the working people and trade unions in other countries have a better understanding of Vietnam in the latter's renovative process and its pursuit of the policy of making the country strong and prosperous, the society fair and civilized.

With the achievements of the past period of time, the Vietnam General Confederation of Labour has become an integral part and a necessary means in the area of spreading information in particular and in all the foreign activities of the Vietnamese trade unions in general. For this achievement, all the officials and correspondents of the Editorial Board of the "Vietnamese Trade Unions" were awarded by the State the Labour Order on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the review's foundation. By full integration in the process of socio-economic changes in the country and by a profound involvement in the

renovative process of the trade union system and of the mass-media in general, the "Vietnamese Trade Unions" has contributed no modest part to the great victory that the trade unions and the State of Vietnam have won in the field of external relations.

"The Vietnamese Trade Unions" is now making an all-out effort to deserve the merit it has gained during the past 40 years. It strives to be worthy of the praise lavished on its and to remain for ever a reliable channel of information for Vietnam's friends throughout the world. □

*(From Page 22)*

Further as Arunachal Pradesh abounds in economical viable hydro-potential, private sector participation could be considered for some other project preferably of medium size. Separately, NEEPCO had meeting on 18.11.1992 with the State Government authorities and informed them of the merits in implementing the Project in the Central Sector.

The State Government, despite being informed of the merits of continuing the project in Central Sector for implementation by NEEPCO went ahead with signing of an MOU with Snowy Mountain Engineering Corporation of Australia for implementation in the private sector. Since 'water power' is a subject in the State list, concurrence of hydroelectric project in the State. Hence, Ministry of Power claimed that there was nothing more than this Ministry could do in the matter except persuade the State Government based on the merits for not withdrawing the project from the Central Sector and going in for private sector implementation. There has not been any tangible progress on the project after signing of the MOU in march, 1993.

During the evidence of the Ministry of Power, when it was pointed out that the Centre remained as a silent spectator on the plea of 'water power' being a State subject, the Power Secretary conceded:-

"I confess that in between when the State Government threw the spanner in the works we did not pursue if the way we ought to have." □

## Book Post