

CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

172, Lenin Sarani, CALCUTTA - 13.

February 24, 1973

The following statement has been jointly issued by
Sri B.T. Ranadive, President and Sri P. Ramamurthy,
General Secretary of C.I.T.U.:

" We are seriously concerned about the terror unleashed at Raniganj by the ruling party to crush organised CITU unions in the area. Since 20th February 1973 the workers of Bengal Paper Mills, Burn (Refractory) and Aluminium factory at Jay-Kay Nagar all belonging to CITU unions are confronted with repeated goonda attacks helped by the police and 115 workers and union leaders have been arrested so far including 26 arrested yesterday night. Sri Haradhan Roy, CITU leader in the area and member of General Council of CITU and Sri Bikash Choudhury, General Secretary of Bengal Paper Mills Mazdoor Union have also been arrested. Fifteen houses of adibasi workers at Narayanpur have been burnt by the goondas and office of Bengal Paper Mills Mazdoor Union has been attacked and ransacked. One worker has been murdered and the houses of Rashu Das and Jagrnath Singh have been looted by the Congress Goondas.

Continuous police raid is going on in Jay-Kay Nagar since 21st February 1973. In Raniganj workers are being chased inside their houses and as a result a number of workers had been forced to leave their dwellings at Belunya, Sahebganj and Ballavpur localities of Raniganj.

Unable to crush the moral of the workers, the goondas are now forcing the workers to sign membership forms of the union of Congress(R). Information has been received that workers have been forcibly prevented from reporting for their duties even this morning.

This development belies all pretensions of the Government and the ruling party of restoring law and order and freedom of trade union functioning in West Bengal.

This is a part of the systematic attack intensified by the ruling party since 1972 election in West Bengal to capture all left trade unions by force and suppress democratic rights.

We strongly condemn the Government and the Ruling Party for this barbarous attack on the workers and CITU unions at Raniganj and demand that goonda attacks helped by the police should immediately stop, the arrested workers and union leader be immediately released, the workers whose houses have been looted, burnt and damaged be compensated and rehabilitated and freedom of trade union functioning be immediately restored. We also demand that adequate compensation be paid to the family of the worker murdered.

This goonda attack perpetrated by the ruling party with police help on the workers and left trade unions portend far reaching consequence. This is an attack on trade union rights and freedom of trade union functioning.

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We call upon the working class and all Central Trade Unions to realise the gravity of the situation and take a forth right stand in defence of trade union rights and freedom of trade union functioning.

We, on behalf of CITU, pledge full support to the struggling workers of Raniganj and call upon the working class and unions of all affiliations to voice their protest against this barborus attack and demonstrate solidarity in support of the workers of Raniganj."

for Kamend Samra.
Secretary.

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The News Editor

For favour of publication/circulation.