

# The Working Class

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## United Action Will Alone Win Workers' Demands

The twenty seventh session of the Indian Labour Conference held in New Delhi on October 22 and 23 ended without achieving any tangible results. On all the three questions discussed viz, bonus, gratuity and recognition of unions not much progress was recorded. Though the Official spokesmen claimed agreement on the question of gratuity it was only an eye-wash. Long before the ILC the Government announced its intention to bring legislation providing gratuity. When all the Central T. U.s have been repeatedly demanding all India legislation on gratuity the show of consultation on this question was only a device to postpone taking action in the matter.

On the question of bonus the trade union representatives unanimously advocated 8.33 per cent minimum bonus but the employers took a recalcitrant position and resorted to dilatory tactics by harping upon another Bonus Commission. The Government spokesmen however refused to take a firm position inspite of its earlier commitment.

On the question of union recognition the INTUC, AITUC and HMS have made it their own internal affair. Instead of discussing this question among all the trade unions these three organisations are planning secret parleys and come to some settlement behind the back of workers. Sinister plans are also being mooted to give up the principle of secret ballot in name of a compromise formula. Some Organisations are giving up secret ballot because they are afraid to face the workers. The CITU has already made it clear that it will never agree to any proposal which does not include this most democratic principle.

The issues which remained unsettled through the tripartite meeting can be solved satisfactorily for the workers only if unity of the working class is achieved for countrywide actions to force the employers and the Government to give up their present positions.

Will the trade unions rise to the occasion and mobilise workers for country-wide struggles against the anti-working class policies of the Government? The CITU has already expressed its readiness to forge such a united front.

The CITU hopes, the other Central Trade Union Organisations will realise the gravity of the situation and help bringing about unity of the entire working class for repelling attacks on their living conditions.

# West Bengal's Mighty Protest against Victimisation of State and Central Government Employees

The successful observance of general strike and hartal on October 13 was a mighty expression of protest of the people of West Bengal against most arbitrary dismissal of 13 top leaders of the State Government employees and dismissal of 32 leaders and workers of four Ordnance Factories in Calcutta Industrial area.

The toiling masses of West Bengal, true to their fighting tradition, once again have shown their determination to defend trade union and democratic rights by their all out and massive participation in the State wide general strike.

## Cong. (R) and Governments Nefarious Role

The Government mobilised huge police and CRP forces to frustrate the strike. Even army was kept ready. Congress (R) gangsters armed with bombs, firearms and other lethal weapons and openly helped by police and CRP carried on ruthless attack assaulting and intimidating the workers in various areas forcing them to report to their duties. In Dakshindari (24-Parganas), enraged by the refusal of the workers to act as strike breakers, these armed gangsters in presence of police and CRP burnt about 100 houses of the workers. One old woman and a three year child were trapped in the fire. The Congress (R) gangsters did not allow the workers to rescue the old woman and the child. Even when Fire Brigade came to put out the fire, the gangsters opposed their entry and CRP and police stood as statues when the old woman and the child were burnt to death in the

fire. Chatra Parishad and Youth Congress of the Ruling Congress Party were in the forefront of these attacks.

In Soorah Jute Mills at Belia-ghata, the Management declared by putting up a notice that the Mill was closed for the day as the workers did not report to duties. Then Congress (R) gangsters came inside the Mills and forced at gun point to withdraw the notice and to declare that the Mill was open. There are innumerable instances of such nature.

## AIR and Bourgeois Press to Mislead the People

These incidents were used by the Government, All India Radio and bourgeois press to propagate that the strike on October 13 had failed, carefully hiding the ruthless attacks of the Congress (R) gangsters assisted by police and CRP. They quoted false figures of attendance in factories and offices to confuse the people.

In Calcutta State Transport Corporation, drivers and conductors dismissed earlier for defalcation of money were given fresh appointments on the eve of general strike. On the strike day they were used to ply some of the State buses, pulled out from the Depots a few days earlier on various pretexts. These buses were escorted by police vans and the passengers were Congress (R) gangsters. The Government took the same method in bringing out some Tram cars on the road on the Strike day.

The State Transport Authorities

declared that Pay Commission's recommendation regarding pay rise, as accepted by the Government, would be given effect to in case of only those workers who would join their duties on the strike day. The workers of State Transport were fighting for last two years for implementation of Pay Commission's award. And it was therefore a very tempting offer. But the workers of State Transport enmasse joined the strike and gave fitting reply to this nefarious attempt to blackmail them. The workers of North Bengal State Transport and Durgapur State Transport also maintained their fighting tradition. In North Bengal State Transport 1800 workers were chargesheeted for their participation in the Strike.

The massive success of the strike further strengthened the base of CITU in West Bengal; its urge for united action came out more prominently as the champion of struggle.

## CITU Strives For United Action

In fact CITU West Bengal Committee took initiative on the very day (13th September) the leaders of State Government employees were victimised to unitedly protest against this dastardly action and to demand withdrawal of the victimisation orders. On 14th September CITU State Committee leaders proposed to the Central Trade Unions to observe protest general strike on 16th September, 1971. But this was not then acceptable to AITUC, UTUC (Lenin Sarani), HMS and INTUC. They said that they wanted to build up prolonged united struggle but opposed the general strike. Subsequently they took the plea that so long the Co-ordination Committee

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# Indian Working Class and Bangladesh

**B. T. Ranadive**

President, CITU

The democratic and progressive forces all over the world are supporting the valiant struggle of Bangladesh. A section of American dock workers refused to handle goods to be shipped to Pakistan a month or so back. All over the world there is a wave of anger and indignation at the atrocities perpetrated by the Yahya Regime on the people of Bangladesh.

What has been the role of India's trade union movement and the working class on this vital question!

## Our Serious Failure

It must be admitted to our great shame that with the solitary exception of West Bengal working class, which raised financial contributions and offered political help to this struggle, the trade union movement in the rest of the country and the working class have virtually done nothing to help their fighting class-brethren. Barring some anemic conventions there has hardly been any response to this great struggle.

Is there anything in recent times to compare with sufferings of the Bangladesh people. Lakhs of people killed, millions forced to flee their motherland, their houses razed to the ground, their wives and daughters raped, and their children killed before their eyes—there is not one crime left uncommitted by the bestial hordes of Yahya Khan. A correspondent of a foreign news paper recently stated that hundreds of Bengali women have been kidnapped and kept in military brothels by the authorities.

Against this massacre, against these rapings of working class and toilers' women should there be no angry protest, no indignant expression of the Indian trade union movement? Should it remain callous and indifferent to this outrage against a whole people—its own class?

## Nature of Bangladesh Struggle

The struggle of the Bangladesh people is perhaps the biggest political event in recent times in this part of the world. It is the freedom battle of the people against the military tyranny of W. Pakistan Junta, a struggle for democracy, for minimum rights to the common man, for the freedom of Bengali language, for the rights of the people to rule themselves, for the end of the martial law regime, for ending of national exploitation at the hands of the Pakistani exploiting classes.

Under this regime let it be remembered that the working class strikes are punishable with more than ten years' jail. And yet the workers of Bangladesh fought many battles which often ended in cruel massacres at the hands of military. The courageous and fighting students of Dacca University fought numerous battles and hundreds laid down their lives to free their motherland.

The peasant masses along with the working class and the middle classes were mercilessly exploited by the Pakistan Junta and repressed with utmost ferocity.

The working class has no rights

under the Pakistan regime. It has no right to organise trade union; no right to strike or hold meetings; no right to have its own class party. It is against this slavery that the working class and the people of Bangladesh are fighting.

Whose duty is it to help this working class—the people of Bangladesh? The working class of India, the trade union movement utters loud cries of Workers of the World unite on May Day, on the 7th November Revolution Day, on the Chinese Revolution Day. Has that cry any meaning, does it not become hypocritical and hollow if the working class fails to do its minimum international duty towards its Bangladesh brethren, towards the freedom struggle of a fighting neighbouring people?

## Importance of the Freedom Struggle

Every successful freedom struggle weakens the imperialists and the exploiters and facilitates the progress of the proletarian struggle for socialism, for ending poverty and unemployment. The Bangladesh struggle besides is of direct and vital importance to the democratic and working class struggle in India. The working class and the people of Bangladesh are undermining the foundations of the reactionary military dictatorship in the sub-Continent thereby releasing tremendous freedom forces in the neighbouring country. If successful these will be of tremendous help to the Indian people and the working class in their march to socialism.

The freedom struggle besides has yet another importance. It is undermining that monstrosity created by the British—the religious barrier between the two peoples

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# The Working Class and Bangladesh

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which prevented fraternal co-operation between the toiling classes of the two countries. By their joint struggle against the military dictatorship, by mingling their life's blood in the common struggle the Muslim and Hindu workers and people of Bangladesh have blown up the old barrier and opened new vistas for fraternal co-operation of the two movements. The common struggle if successful will not only bring freedom to Bangladesh will also bring freedom to the people of W. Pakistan and give a big momentum to the struggle in India.

It is therefore not accidental that American imperialists are openly helping the Yahya regime to crush the movement. This hateful gendarme of world reaction is piling up arms for the defence of the military junta and engages in double talk and downright cheating.

It is amazing that the leaders of the Soviet Government still support a solution within the framework of Pakistan while the leaders of People's China continue to voice their friendship with the military regime.

## Our Responsibility

Who will then support this struggle? It is the responsibility of the Indian working class to champion the cause of the Bangladesh, discharge their fraternal international responsibility.

What can the working class do? If united the working class is a powerful force which can compel the Indira Government to change its policy of equivocation and vacillations which threatens to end in open betrayal. After supporting the freedom aspirations of the Bangladesh

people the Indira Gandhi Government is now going back on its previous commitments, refuses to recognise the Bangladesh Government and give the requisite help to the fighting people. The fighting guerrillas, the commandos and Mukti Bahini warriors all require arms, more arms and still more arms. Their armed struggle will have a legitimate claim on the Indira Government if the working class compels it to recognise the Bangladesh Govment.

The Government of India is afraid of U. S. A. reaction, it is afraid of displeasing the Soviet leaders all of whom are against a freedom solution.

## Unity—Need of the Hour

The working class of India must unitedly raise the demand for recognition of the Bangladesh Government and all help to the struggle. The trade union movement must join hands with all democratic forces who stand for recognition. All democratic parties support the demand. A powerful movement should be created to pressurise the Government and save the Bangladesh struggle. The trade union movement must unitedly demand that every possible help be given to the struggle.

The danger of downright betrayal is very great. The External Affairs minister brazenfacedly said at the Simla Session of the AICC without the least sense of shame that a political solution could be found within the framework of Pakistan. International conspiracies are about to encourage a fake political solution and betray the fighting people.

## The Revisionists' Role

Taking their cue from the Indira Congress and the Soviet leaders the revisionists who lead the AITUC only talk about Bangladesh but are against a movement to compel the Government to give recognition. Some of the other organisations follow this same line of sabotage in practice.

The Government and all its agencies are now talking only about the return of refugees, as if the problem of freedom is not there at all. Everything should be done for the refugees but it should be realised that they will go back only when the people are victorious and the military dictatorship is defeated. Otherwise the huge burden will remain and the same people who are betraying the Bangladesh struggle will tomorrow attack the living conditions of the working class in the name of looking after the refugees.

## CITU to Rouse the Working Masses

The sufferings through which the millions of refugees are passing, the atrocities which the Bangladesh people are facing, the courage with which the guerrillas are fighting—all these are still unknown to the vast masses of the workers. There is less awareness of the importance of the struggle as we go away from W. Bengal and in the South very small sections of the workers understand the importance of the Bangladesh struggle. It is the task of the CITU unions to break through this deadlock and rouse the working masses to the vital importance of the Bangladesh struggle. They must organise united protest against the atrocities of the military regime and raise united demand for recognition of the Bangladesh Government.

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# Legal Notes

Though Bonus is conceived to be nothing else other than deferred wages, and, in fact, that is the basis on which the Bonus Commission gave its recommendations, Parliament, in enacting the Payment of Bonus Act, 1965, also made a provision in section 36 of that Act that the appropriate Government may by notification exempt any establishment or class of establishments from all or any of the provisions of that Act.

Section 36 of the Act provides as follows :

“If the appropriate Government, having regard to the financial position and other relevant circumstances of any establishments, is of opinion that it will not be in public interest to apply all or any of the provisions of Act thereto, it may, by notification in the official Gazette, exempt for such period as may be specified therein and subject to such conditions as it may think fit to impose, such establishment or class of establishments from all or any of the provisions of this Act.”

In *Jalan Trading Company vs. Mill Mazdur Sabha*, reported in 1966 (2) *Labour Law Journal* at page 546, the Supreme Court had an occasion to pronounce on the vires of the different provisions of this Act. While striking down several other provisions of the Act, the Supreme Court held section 36 of the said Act *intra vires* and observed as follows :

“... Parliament has clearly laid down principles and has given adequate guidance to the appropriate Government in implementing the provisions of section 36. The power so conferred does not amount to delegation of legislative authority.

Section 36 amounts to conditional legislation, and is not void. Whether in a given case, power has been properly exercised by the appropriate Government would have to be considered when that occasion arises.”

The occasion referred to by the Supreme Court arose in the context of an application made by *Sreenath Tea Company Limited* for exemption from the provisions of the Payment of Bonus Act on the ground that the Company was heavily indebted and was carrying on the business of producing tea under very adverse circumstances. That application was rejected by the State Government by the following order :

“With reference to letter no. 1092/M-41 dated September 15, 1965 on the above subject, I am directed to say that Government do not consider your prayer for exemption from the provision of the Payment of Bonus Act, 1965, to be justified.”

The Company moved for a Writ under Article 226 of the Constitution of India in the Calcutta High Court and a decision was given in the case by Mr. Justice Anil Kumar Sen and reported in 1971 *Indian Factories and Labour Reports* in Volume 23 at page 162. The decision can be taken advantage of by the working class. As happens in many other cases, decisions taken in their favour by the propertied classes do sometimes enure to the advantage of the working classes due to the operation of the contradictions inherent in the bourgeois society.

The question that arose in this case directly was whether the considerations that were to be taken into account in deciding under section 36 of the Act were in fact taken into account by the Government before passing the above-quoted order. Did the Government

have regard to the financial position and other relevant circumstances before passing that order ?

Nothing appeared on the face of the order to show that the Government had taken into consideration the matters relevant to a decision under section 36 of the Act.

And the importance of the High Court decision is just here that the Court has decided that, in such a case as this, the order must be a “speaking order”, that is to say, it must disclose the reasons for the order.

Unless in any case initiated by a Trade Union for challenging an order of exemption granted to a company the effect on the instant decision is avoided by saying that it was applicable to the peculiar facts and circumstances of this case alone, (observations the like of which we are so well accustomed to) a Trade Union can always ask, on the basis of the instant decision, for a judicial scrutiny into the reasons which led the appropriate Government to arrive at the opinion that the exemption should be granted to a company from the provisions of the Act.

Section 36 was so drafted as to make it depend on the subjective discretion of the Government whether to grant exemption or not. The judgment in point, by holding that the considerations behind the formation of the opinion are objectively assessable, will now make it extremely difficult for the bureaucrats to show clandestine favour to chosen capitalists. The reasons for the opinion must be disclosed in the order itself and, if they are bad reasons the order is liable to be struck down.

—A. P. Chatterjee

# A New wave of Strike Struggles In Kerala

( From Our Correspondent )

The anti-labour policies of the Achutha Menon Government are facing with stiff opposition from all sections of working class in Kerala. The policies on certain occasion were so naked that even the AITUC leadership could not swallow the decisions of the Government.

The Electricity Board workers in Kerala gave a notice of strike from September 23. The Achutha Menon Ministry instead of conceding the just demands of the workers ran to Delhi for help from the Central Government in declaring the electricity undertaking as essential services. Prohibitory orders were issued banning the strike in electricity undertakings. This evoked protests from all sections of T. U. movement including T. C. N. Menon, AITUC leader.

Eight thousand toddy tappers resorted to mass picketing in 8 districts on September 20, in protest against the non-payment of contribution by shop owners to the toddy tappers' welfare fund and other demands. The call for the action was given by All Kerala Toddy Tappers' Federation.

## Struggle of the Agricultural Workers

Fifty thousand agricultural workers of Palghat, Alatur and Chittor Taluks of Palghat District went on one day strike in support of their demand for higher wages in last week of September bringing the work in all the districts to a standstill. Fifteen thousand agricultural workers of Changanassary Taluk struck work on October 14 in protest against

the attack on them by police and goondas.

Arrest of T. U. leaders on false pretext has become a handy weapon for the Kerala Government. The tea plantation workers of Peerumedu area struck work on October 14 in protest against arrest of their leaders in a false theft case.

Agricultural workers all over Kerala went on protest strike on October 19, in support of the demand of withdrawal of false cases against trade union leaders and other economic demands. In All-eppey District one lakh workers participated in the strike while in Palghat District one lakh 56 thousand workers joined the strike. The participation in other areas was as follows: Ambalapurha-10 thousand, Kuttanad-65 thousand, Kartikapilly-20 thousand, Shertallai-4 thousand, Mavilakara-5 thousand, Chenganoor-5 thousand, Tiruralar-5 thousand, Trichure-9300.

The fishery workers in Kerala have taken steps to co-ordinate their activities. In a Convention held in Cochin on October 17 Kerala Fisheries Workers' Federation has been formed. E. Balanandan was elected as President and C. A. Peter as General Secretary.

One thousand handloom workers of Calicut went on indefinite strike demanding 50 per cent wage increase and D. A. linked with price index. The strike was led jointly by CITU and INTUC unions.

The non-implentation of the assurances given to the Private College teachers was also a cause for the strike of 6000 teachers from September 15. Despite the early promise that the salaries of the teachers would be directly paid by the Government, Achutha Menon issued statement opposing its implementation on the ground that it would involve additional expenditure of Rs. 40 lakhs. The leaders of the college teachers however sharply criticised going back from the commitment. They also pointed out that a committee constituted by the Government under the Chairmanship of Dr. George Jacob which included management's representatives unanimously recommended it. Employees of the Poly-technique Institute in the State went on sympathetic strike on October 7.

The P & T employees were also not lagging behind. Mass picketing was conducted all over Kerala on October 5 demanding withdrawal of victimisation measures taken against the employees participating in 1968 strike of Central Government employees and withdrawal of PD Act.

The workers of Railway Locoshed at Shornoor struck work on October 8 in protest against unjust suspension of a worker. The workers resumed their duties only after the action was withdrawn.

Four hundred employees of different sub-offices of the Rubber Board in Kottayam went on one day's protest strike on October 7 against the anti-labour policies of the authorities. The workers of Government seed farm in Kangol resorted to a spontaneous strike on October 13 in protest against the discriminatory

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# The Onward March of Vietnamese Workers

HOANG QUAC VIET  
PRESIDENT,

VIET NAM FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS

*(The elections to the Fourth Legislature of the National Assembly of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam held in April last ended with brilliant success. 98.88 per cent of the registered voters cast their votes. Out of 420 deputies elected to the National Assembly 91 were workers, 90 collective farmers and 87 socialist intellectuals. We give below excerpts from the article published in Lao Dong, Central organ of the VNFTU on the eve of the elections, which explains the achievements of the T. U. movement and the revolutionary significance of the State power in Viet Nam. The author along with many trade union leaders was elected to the National Assembly during these elections.—Ed.)*

Today, looking back to the historical stages we went through, we are very glad and proud of the leaping progress of our State, the first worker-peasant State in South-East Asia, founded by our Party and President Ho Chi Minh after the victory of the August Revolution. This rapid growth was proved by the fact that our State, though still young, overcame numberless difficulties right at its inception, braved the hardest trials of the war of aggression and succeeded in defeating two big imperialisms, French imperialism and American imperialism, and in the meantime has led half of our country, formerly a colonial and semifeudal country, on the path to socialism, turning it into an all-sided strong base of the struggle for national reunification.

## The Effects of August Revolution

After the success of the August Revolution, the working class has become master of the factories, master of the country, the society and the trade union organisation, a solid mainstay of the power. In these concrete conditions, the important and primary tasks of the wor-

kers and trade unions were to spare no efforts to boost up production to directly contribute to solving the the immediate difficulties at that time, in economic field and to creating new and solid material bases for the power, while holding firm their guns to frustrate the enemy's counter-revolutionary manoeuvres and acts at home and from outside. The movement of "working hours for national salvation" and the build-up of self-defence units of the workers in the factories right after the success of the August Revolution constituted the most vivid proofs.

## The Working Class the Real Master of State

As for the State, since its coming into being it has manifested its confidence in the workers and trade unions. With the laws adopted by the National Assembly, with the decrees issued by the Government, our State has ceaselessly paid attention to the political and economic interests of the workers, and created favourable conditions for the workers and trade unions to participate more and more widely in the management of economy and the State

and in law making. This has an extremely important significance for the revolutionary cause of our country in general and for the emancipation of the working class in particular because the working class cannot carry out the struggle for self-emancipation if it had no influence on the State's affairs, on the management of the State and on the promulgation of laws.

Reflecting this conception, the second session of the National Assembly approved the fundamental principles for the setting up of a labour law. The right to organise into trade union, their juridical personality and the fundamental democratic liberties were approved by the National Assembly and promulgated by the Government. Despite the hard conditions of the resistance war, since early 1949 our Government issued a decree on the formation of Enterprise Committees (committees for the management of the enterprises—Ed.) and in 1952 it enforced the regulations of democratic management in the enterprises.

In September 1957, at the 7th session of the National Assembly the report of the Ministry of Labour on the draft Trade Union Law was approved. It asserted that the trade unions have become the pillars of the power... In the 8 to 9 years of the protracted and hard resistance war and in the three years of economic rehabilitation and cultural development, the General Confederation of Labour (now the Viet Nam Federation of Trade unions—Ed.) has broadly united manual and intellectual workers, educated and mobilised them in production and work and scored many brilliant achievements." The National Assembly unanimously adopted the Trade Union Law "to clearly define the role and tasks of

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# West Bengal ESI Enquiry Committee Findings

## Will the Doctors Come Forward to Rectify The Abuses of ESI Scheme ?

The rampant corruption prevalent in working of the ESI Scheme has been a cause of deep resentment among the workers in West Bengal. The points on which the trade unions were agitating have been now admitted by a Employees' State Insurance Enquiry Committee constituted during the Second United Front Government in April last which has brought to light certain glaring malpractices prevailing in the operation of the present Panel System.

### Short Comings in the Panel System

The shortcomings which were observed by the committee in the working of the Panel System in West Bengal are that "(a) The Insurance Medical Practitioners rarely supply any medicine to the Insured persons which they are required to do under the Rules.

(b).....In some cases Insurance Medical Practitioners do not even open their clinics in the afternoon.

(c) There are some Medical Practitioners specially in Greater Calcutta area who do not reside within two miles of their clinics.

(d) Some Insurance Medical Practitioners are holding cards in excess of the ceiling limit of 750.

(e) Domiciliary visits by Insurance Medical Practitioners are few and far between. It has been complained that some Medical Practitioners refuse to visit patients lying in serious conditions.

### Rampant Corruption

Regarding malpractices and corruptions the Committee observed that these will be found mainly in

purchase of medicines, absence of inspection of medicines and drugs supplied by the contractors and distribution of medicines and supply of medicines by the chemist shops and reimbursement thereof. The Committee further observed that the corruption is rampant in the system of distribution.

Corruption is multifaceted and may originate inter alia from any one of the following sources.

"(i) Issuing of over-prescriptions.

(ii) Issuing of ghost-prescriptions.

(iii) Selling out of prescriptions and sharing of sale proceeds.

(iv) Manipulations and submission of inflated bills on forged prescriptions.

(v) Collusion in passing manipulated and inflated bills."

### Slackness of Administration

Moreover, the slackness of the administration and absence of timely intervention by the senior officers of the Directorate also encourages indirectly the growth of corruption and abuse. The following instances are revealing.

"(i) Assistants attached to the Accounts Section (Bill checking) who are primarily responsible for checking and passing of the chemists' Bills, have been alleged to be engaged by the chemists for preparing their bills. This is a highly irregular practice.

"(ii) The Accounts officer of the Administrative Medical officer has furnished details to the Committee, which show that he had retrenched more than Rs. 3 lakhs from the bills of the chemists for overbilling after he assumed office during the period of August, 1969."

### No Medical Treatment

The Enquiry Committee further noted the gross drawback in the procedure of offering medical treatment to the insured persons. The number of available hospital beds is very much insufficient. Selection of sites of most of ESI hospitals have not been made on the basis of concentration of insured persons or the availability of cheap and easy transport. Thus many hospital beds remain unoccupied because of the distance from an insured person's residence or the difficulty of access. In almost all the hospitals, the number of existing medical officers and other staff are less than the number sanctioned for corresponding categories of personnel. Moreover the medicine and diet given to the patients in different ESI hospitals is unsatisfactory in respect of both quality and quantity.

### Shortage of Finance

The Committee lastly noticed that shortage of finance has often been responsible for inadequacy in providing assured medical benefits to the insured persons. It therefore suggested that "the State Government should enhance their contributions and the Central Government start contributing to augment the resources of the the ESI Corporations."

It is hightime that the Medical profession comes forward to end these malpractices. In Bombay, the medical profession and trade unions are discussing ways and means of ending corruption that is playing havoc with the Scheme.

Will the Medical profession in West Bengal rise to the occasion and take suitable steps to end the corrupt practices which are depriving adequate medical facilities to the mass of workers ?

# CITU Condemns Murderous Attacks on T. U Leaders in Durgapur

B. T. Ranadive, President, CITU has issued on October 9 the following statement to the press on murderous attacks on T.U. leaders in Durgapur :

"The Centre of Indian Trade Unions strongly condemns the dastardly attack on comrades Ajit Mukherjee, Member, Working Committee of the CITU, Sunil Acharya, General Council Member of Hindusthan Steel Employees' Union, Sasanka Majhi and Sisir Banerji in broad daylight on 8th October 1971 when they were waiting for a bus. The premeditated attack had taken place when police were said to be standing at a short distance in which Comrade Sunil Acharya was killed and others seriously injured.

"The gangsters in the afternoon again stabbed to death the AITUC worker Jiten Chowdhury and seriously injured the CITU worker B.C. Mukherjee. The CITU has reasons to believe that the police connived at this repetition of Cossipore in Durgapur with the vile design of suppressing the workers' struggles led by the CITU. It was clearly seen from the fact that a senior police officer refused to carry the wounded leaders to the hospital. The precious life of Comrade Sunil Acharya could have been saved if medical help would have been given in time.

"The cowardly attack on T. U. leaders in Durgapur is a clear indication that the authorities, having failed to suppress the T. U. movement in Durgapur through police repression are resorting to such gangster attacks under the police supervision. The press reports and the police version that the whole

incident arose out of a clash between two parties is a mere smokescreen to cover the conspiracy to kill the leading T. U. comrades.

"The police instead of attacking the guilty have arrested two CITU workers comrades Parimal Sarkar and Paresh Maitra from which it is clear where the sympathies of the police lie.

"The CITU congratulates Durgapur workers for launching protest through strikes and demonstrations and calls upon the working class of West Bengal to strengthen their struggle against the conspiracy of the Government to suppress their rising struggles through such attacks.

"The CITU calls upon all the affiliated unions in India to raise their powerful voice of protest against the increasing murderous attacks with police encouragement against the Trade Unions and democratic movement in West Bengal.

"The CITU pays its homage to the martyrs who laid their lives facing the gangster attacks and shares the grief of the bereaved members of the families of the heroic martyrs.

"The CITU demands immediate arrest of the culprits and drastic punishment to the guilty officers."

## **CITU Protests Against Arbitrary Dismissal of 32 Ordinance Workers in West Bengal**

B. T. Ranadive, President CITU has issued on October 6 the following statement to the press on the arbitrary dismissal of 32 ordinance factory employees in West Bengal. :

"The Centre of Indian Trade

Unions records its strong protest at the summary dismissal of 32 employees of 4 defence factories at Ichapore, Cossipore and Dum Dum without assigning any reason. This action will be a precursor of series of such actions if the trade union movement does not jointly resist the reckless use of the arbitrary powers given to the President under the Indian Constitution.

"Following the dismissal of the 13 leaders of the State Government employees in West Bengal, this wanton attack constitutes a premeditated conspiracy of the Central Government to trample underfoot the elementary trade union and democratic rights of the working class.

"The CITU considers it as an attack on the T. U. movement of the country as a whole and appeals to all the Central T. U. organisations to take up this challenge and raise their resolute voice of protest so that the Central Government is forced to retrace from its highhanded steps. The CITU calls upon its affiliated unions to organise a country-wide protest through demonstrations, leaflets and rallies in order to mobilise the working class of India in protest against the suppression of trade union rights.

"The CITU appeals to all the trade union organisations in West Bengal to come forward in a united State-wide General Strike and Hartal and other forms of protest actions so that the entire working class of West Bengal is rallied behind for solidarity action with the State Government employees and the employees of ordinance factories, which alone can be a powerful rebuff to the vile machinations of the Central Government."

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# Tamilnadu Workers on The Path of United Struggles

The last two months witnessed a series of united strike struggles in Tamilnadu despite repressive actions taken by the DMK Government.

After several tall promises the DMK Government is coming out in its true colours. Only three months ago the Chief Minister assured the T. U. representatives that the Government would take over and run the six closed mills in Coimbatore within two months. However not a single mill has been taken over by the Government so far. On the contrary Sarada mills was allowed to close down during this period.

In Pudukottah Textiles Ltd., despite prolonged closure the Government prevented the workers from securing loans from Provident Fund. Not satisfied with this, the

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Government forced the workers to sign individual undertaking to accept a cut in D. A. to the tune of Rs. 100, renunciation of past arrears, employment on day to day basis and non-payment of lay-off compensation and depriving them of all statutory benefits. In return workers were told that the Government would take over the mills.

The workers however soon found that they were cheated. After securing undertakings from the workers the Government gave up its decision to take over on the plea that the erstwhile employer had come forward to run it himself on the basis

of undertakings secured by the Government.

In Coimbatore, displacement of women workers from textile industry which was indirectly done before, is now being resorted to openly through retrenchment. This led to a strike in Kasturi Mills.

## Struggles for Better Living Conditions

Several struggles were organised by different sections of workers to protect their living standards. A powerful movement of handloom weavers for 25 per cent wage rise and 10 per cent bonus has assumed a statewide character. The entire silk weavers of Kumbakonam and Papanasam taluks of Thanjavur District and Palur taluk of Trichy District went on a general strike. 1500 powerloom weavers of Madurai also organised a strike on similar demands. Twenty thousand handloom weavers of Madurai observed a hartal and 5000 demonstrated before the collectorate. Six thousand Weavers of Paramakkudi (Ramnad District) organised a big procession in support of the same demands.

The handloom weavers of Nagarkoil who were paid wages fixed 20 years ago spontaneously united under the leadership of DMK and the CITU and launched struggle for 20 per cent rise in wages and 10 per cent bonus.

Ten thousand Salem Magnesite workers downed their tools for abolition of contract labour and for wage increase. In Kappaloor, Thenur and Pavarai Meenakshi, the 3 profit-making mills of Karimuthi Thiaga-

raja Chettiar Group of mills, joint strike notices were served for extension of terms of Harvey mills agreement on increase of gratuity, confirmation of learners, casuals and badlis etc.

Forty thousand Beedi workers of North Arcot district are on the eve of a general strike for wage increase. In Coimbatore CITU, HMP and Indicate Unions have formed a joint committee and strike of cotton textile workers is going on successfully. The agitation of electricity workers and State Transport workers is in full swing.

Most of these struggles were fought unitedly which included AITUC and DMK unions. In Rajapalayam, a successful hartal was sponsored by all parties including DMK and trade unions demanding re-opening of the closed Shanmugar Textile Mills.

An example of tenacity of the workers is demonstrated by the fight carried against the lockout faced by 800 New Ambadi Rubber Estate workers of Kanya Kumari District who have been locked out for the crime of demanding abolition of contract labour system. They are withstanding the lockout for more than 4 months, fighting back by courting arrests at the collectorate and R. D. O. offices etc. and also with the help of solidarity protest strikes of the other estate workers.

The united strike of 10,000 Salem Magnesite forced the Government to change its earlier decision. When the Central Government referred only one demand to tribunal and prohibited the continuance of strike, the workers defied the order and continued the strike. Normally, the State Government after prohibitory order against the strike refuses to negotiate unless the strike is withdrawn unconditionally. In this case however, the Government was forced

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# Reports From Unions

## Railwaymen Protest Against Arbitrary Dismissal of West Bengal State Government Employees

Reports of railwaymen organising movement in support of the West Bengal State Government employees in their struggle against victimisation have reached us. The Garden Reach, Calcutta and other Branches of South Eastern Railwaymen's Union had organised processions, demonstrations and meetings on this issue from time to time. They have also joined the mass rally on October 11. The Adra Divisional Action Committee had brought out a thousand strong demonstration in support of the West Bengal Government employees. The Central leadership of the South Eastern Railwaymen's Union has issued a statement to the effect that the action of the Governor is condemnable. But no central directive has been issued to the Branches to join in solidarity action. An appeal has been made by the Garden Reach Branch to the central leadership to observe October 22 as a 'Protest Day' throughout the railway.

The Eastern Railwaymen's Union had observed a protest day and demonstrated locally. They have also led a mass deputation to the Governor on September 24, and protested against the victimisation. They have, however, not joined the programme on October 11, officially. Demonstrations have been held at Asansol under the leadership of Asansol Divisional Co-ordination Committee.

There had been demonstrations at Madras, Tiruchirapalli, Olavakot and Madurai by the railwaymen under the leadership of Dakshin Railway Employees' Union, an

affiliate of the CITU, on demands of railwaymen, which have created sufficient enthusiasm amongst the railwaymen in general.

In North Frontier Railway, September 13 was observed as "Demands Day" and demonstrations took place at Katihar, Bongaigaon, New Bongaigaon Workshop, Pandu, Lumding, Mariani and Badarpur. Due to the reign of terror created at Alipur Duar Junction, there could not be any general mobilisation, but the leaders had handed over the memorandum to the authorities.

## The Calcutta E S I Employees State Agitation

The Employees' State Insurance Corporation employees, Calcutta has decided to launch a week long strike from November 1, if their 10 points Charter of demands including payment of house rent allowance and city compensatory allowances irrespective of the places of postings, submitted with the authorities as long back as in August, 1970 are not met by October 31, 1971.

The ESI authorities including the Director General of the Corporation have repeatedly failed to act on their promises to meet the fair demands of the employees. Even the Central Labour Minister, Shri Khadilkar, who admitted the demands of the employees as genuine, failed to settle the dispute despite his assurance. The union in a statement said that the employees, by the repeated failures of the authorities concerned to keep their promises to settle the dispute, have been forced to take the decision of going in for a strike.

## CITU WINS

### The Durgapur Chemicals Employees' Co-operative Credit Society Elections

The first annual general meeting of the Durgapur Chemicals Employees' Co-operative Credit Society held on September 2 unanimously elected to the managing committee all the nominees of the CITU union.

The meeting adopted the accounts and the report of the secretary, Sunil Kumar Banerjee. It also resolved to create a "Death Benevolent Fund" for the interest of the employees.

### Wagon Shortage Forcing Closure Of Jute Mills In West Bengal

The management of the Premchand Jute Mills of Chengail, Howrah has threatened close down of the Mill or reduction substantially in the Looms if sufficient wagons are not immediately allotted to replenish the stock of raw jute of the Mill.

The Mill authorities allege that neither the Jute Commissioner nor the Indian Jute Mills Association, under whose authority wagons are to be allotted, took appropriate action in the matter of allotment of wagons.

The Lawrence Premchand Chatkal Mazdoor Union, Chengail, has already urged the Prime Minister, the Railway Minister, the Labour Minister, and other appropriate authorities to intervene in the matter so that the 4500 workers of the Mills may not lose their employment.

### Great Eastern Hotel Calcutta Resorts to Gangsterism and Victimisation

The management of the Great Eastern Hotel, Calcutta refused to take back some prominent leaders of the Great Eastern Hotel Employees'

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# West Bengal Cotton Textile Industry Pays Lowest Wage In India

The cotton textile millowners in West Bengal are raising a hue and cry about their financial difficulties and the so-called labour trouble in the State. Occasionally threats of shifting companies from West Bengal to some other States are given to create a scare among the mass of workers. Out of 44 units in the State 26 mills employing 28,000 workers have already been closed down. Threats of closure of some more mills is resorted to whenever cotton textile workers raise further demands.

For the last two years the dearness allowance of the workers is frozen to Rs. 106'33; the employers agreed to pay an interim rise of Rs. 20 only in the wages of workers in the wake of strike of cotton textile workers during 1969. The U. F. Ministry was toppled down soon after that and the Congress Government later on encouraged dilatory tactics of the employers to deny any further wage rise of the workers. As a result of this no final settlement could be reached so far.

## Closure Handy Weapon For the Employers

The threat of closure has become a handy weapon for the textile millowners in refusing to come to any settlement with the workers on the question of wages. Thus the 1969 agreement is implemented one-sidedly and the D. A. freeze is imposed despite rise in price index.

The Annapurna Cotton Textiles in 24 Parganas has been closed down just to bring pressure on the workers to accept retrenchment of about 400 workers. The mill is financially sound and has introduced modern machines some time back. However the Congress Government refuses to intervene and compel the millowners to reopen it.

The attitude of the cotton textile mill owners is clearly seen from the extremely low rates of wages they are paying to the workers in West Bengal Mills. The textile workers in West Bengal are the lowest paid workers in India and they have every right to fight for

higher wages and D.A. to advance their living standards.

The data compiled by the Labour Bureau of the Union Labour Ministry amply proves this fact.

## Deliberate Failure of the Government

The refusal of the Government of India to force the employers to reopen the closed mills or taking them over and run them efficiently has only made the matters worse. The oft-repeated promises given by Siddharta Shankar Roy and R. K. Khadilkar about reopening of the closed units have proved to be empty words. This atmosphere only helps the employers in keeping the existing wage level down and in bringing pressure on the workers of closed units to accept further wage reduction as a pre-condition for reopening of the mills.

## Task of the Working class

The trade unions in cotton textile industry in West Bengal must come together and seriously ponder over the present state of affairs. A state-wide united struggle of cotton textile workers for reopening of the closed units, for higher wages and against D. A. freeze will alone force the cotton textile millowners to bring the West Bengal wage level at par with the other leading textile centres.

The Working Class is available at Madras With

P. Sankaran

CITU Office

81, North Beach Road Madras

## MINIMUM WAGES AND D.A. IN COTTON TEXTILE MILLS ( JUNE 1971 )

Centre	Minimum Basic Wage Rs.	D. A. Rs.	Total Rs.
Ahmedabad	38	182.67	220.67
Baroda	36	164.71	200.41
Bombay	40	204.05	244.05
Coimbatore & Madras	40	168.24	208.24
Delhi	40	176.71	216.71
Indore	38	147.94	185.94
Kanpur	38	144.83	182.83
Nagpur	34	139.75	173.75
Sholapur	34	156.00	190.00
West Bengal	36.17 + 20.00 (i nterim relief)	106.33	163.00

# The Onward March of Vietnamese Workers

(From Page Seven)

the trade union organisation in the people's democratic regime led by the working class, thus creating favourable conditions for the working class to develop and consolidate its organisation, to enhance the positive effects of the trade unions in the building up of power, in economic building and cultural development to further strengthen the North to lead it toward socialism, to make it the basis of the struggle for national reunification and of the building of Viet Nam into a peaceful, unified, independent, democratic and prosperous country."

It is obvious that the more consolidated is the people's democratic regime, and the more strengthened is the State, the immediate and long term interests of the working class and trade unions will be more assured, their right as collective master will be more enhanced. That is a firm basis for the workers and trade unions to cling ever more tightly to the new regime, to be more determined in production and work, in practising thrift and standing ready to fight to defend and consolidate their own State. That is also the reason why the working class and trade unions have welcomed and enthusiastically participated in the National Assembly.

## Significance of Elections to the National Assembly

So the elections to the National Assembly this time have a particular significance, a force to mobilise the masses. They should be a manifestation of the might and the ironlike determination of the working class and the people of our country to lead our just struggle to new and yet greater victories. They should fully reflect the tight link of our working class and people with the new regime, a regime they have built up and consolidated with their blood and sweat in more than a quarter of a century of hard and violent struggle. The elections to the National Assembly once again

prove the invincible force of the people's democratic State on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance under the leadership of the Party of the working class, a State elected by the people, and which ceaselessly struggles for the happiness of the people and enjoys the confidence and support of the people. Our working class and trade unions have spared no efforts and will spare no efforts in production and fighting to build up and defend the power. So on this occasion, let us show our spirit of responsibility and role of collective master by actively preparing for zealously participating in the elections, and consider this as the most positive way to strengthen our State regime. That is the duty of each citizen, the vital interest of each worker, of employee. That is also the glorious responsibility of our trade union organisation.

Our State is a democratic State with dictatorship by the people

against the enemy. It relies on the forces of the organised people such as the Fatherland Front, the democratic parties, the mass organisations, etc. The National Assembly is the supreme organ of power of our State. The activities of the National Assembly have a direct influence on the destiny of our Fatherland and the life of our people. The qualities and capabilities of the deputies are of great importance for the activities of the National Assembly. So the trade unions should make the workers and employees fully aware of their responsibility as collective master of the society and of the State when they introduce their candidates to the elections and make their choice of only those who are faithful to the Fatherland, devoted to the people, moulded with

revolutionary virtues and able in work, in a word they must use well their votes to cast only for those who are worthy to represent them at the National Assembly.

## CITU Statements

(From Page Nine)

### CITU Congratulates Striking Textile Workers of Bombay, Coimbatore and Ahmedabad

B. T. Ranadive President CITU has issued on October 12, the following statement to the press on textile workers' strike in Bombay, Coimbatore and Ahmedabad:

"The Centre of Indian Trade Unions congratulates the two lakh textile workers of Bombay for their strike in support of 8.33% minimum bonus. Despite the efforts of the Government and the millowners to underestimate its impact this strike has been a grand success. By their determined action the textile workers of Bombay have broken the stranglehold of the INTUC and given a good rebuff to the Central Government for going back from the earlier public assurances given by Union Labour Minister Shri Khadilkar.

"The strike in Bombay would have been more spectacular had there been a united committee for popularising and conducting the strike. The struggle will be immensely strengthened if such a joint committee is formed even now to lead the struggle unitedly.

"The CITU congratulates the Coimbatore textile workers who have organised a joint committee of CITU, AITUC, and HMP unions to lead the strike on bonus. In Ahmedabad also a joint committee has been formed of CITU, AITUC, Republican Party of India and a section of INTUC, which has given a call for indefinite strike from October 13. Spontaneous strikes have already taken place in Ahmedabad in two mills and CITU hopes it will spread in other mills too. The CITU is glad to note that these strike struggles have given a big blow to the Bonus Act which is heavily loaded against the workers.

"The CITU demands that the mills and factories taken over by the Government should also be compelled to pay 8.33% minimum bonus irrespective of profit and loss.

"The CITU congratulates its affiliated unions for their struggle to build united actions in Bombay, Coimbatore and Ahmedabad which have resulted in forming united committees in Coimbatore and Ahmedabad. It is confident that these struggles would be developed in other centres and industries and the Government will be forced to honour its commitment."

# Tamilnadu Workers On The Path Of United Struggles

( From Page Ten )

to call a tripartite conference during strike and settle the issues.

## Greater Hopes for Unity in Action

These struggles had its impact on the DMK ranks in the trade unions. The DMK leadership in State Electricity Board and State Transport was always opposing the demand of bonus to workers on the plea that they were public sector undertakings. This year the pressure of ranks worked and the leadership was forced to raise a demand of 20 per cent bonus. They however try their best to prevent their ranks from joining any united struggle.

The DMK leadership in State Electricity undertakings was always giving emphasis on settling disputes through their Ministers. Their union, after submitting a memorandum to the Chief Minister on their demands issued a leaflet stating that the Chief Minister assured them sympathetic consideration of their demands. The Union was prompt in abusing CITU in this leaflet.

## The Real Face of DMK and AITUC Leaders

The things however could not be improved in spite of passing of 2 Weeks. The situation became hot for the leadership and they had to announce a programme of agitation including shouting slogans at the desk inside the office hours. The Chief Minister was so intolerant that he issued a Government Press Note stating that he had directed the Electricity Board to take disciplinary actions. He ordered suspensions which however were kept in abeyance on "prayer" of the union leaders.

Another example is of the Kumbakonam Silk Weavers' recent strike for wage revision and bonus. The CITU unions mobilised for direct action but the DMK and AITUC kept out. This having failed, they tried to organise separately. Workers forced them to join the Joint Committee. The DMK moved the Labour Commissioner to send a telegram to the Unions to postpone their strike proposed on September 10. The workers defeated the game and struck work as scheduled. The DMK moved the Labour Commissioner to fix a date for conciliation and call for withdrawal of the strike under its pretext. The Commissioner did so by fixing September 24. The workers defied the DMK and the Commissioner and continued the strike. On this the AITUC and DMK walked out of the Joint Committee which only isolated them but not the strike, which continued under CITU's sole leadership.

## CITU week

It was in this background that the CITU week was organised in all Trade Union Centres. In Madras City, Madurai City and Neyveli Complex, meetings were held on all the days from September 12 to 19. In all other centres, two or more meetings were held during the week. Speakers for all the Trade Union Centres for various dates were fixed and distributed from the CITU Centre itself. On the whole this was one of the successful and most organised and centralised State-wide explanatory campaign conducted in recent times on this front.

## Attack On the CITU

It is in this context of continuance and extension of class struggles

extension of united actions, revival of Railway Trade Union mass activity, set back to DMK Government's attempt to put a brake on direct actions and united actions, and the DMK losing some of its key Unions in Madras City, that the DMK Government struck at the Trade Union Movement by arresting 4 Trade Union leaders (3 of them belonging to CITU) under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act.

Unexpectedly for the Government, the CITU hit back with a powerful mass campaign of condemnation. It concided with the CITU campaign week as well. The CITU took up the position of organising united movement for the release and against detention without trial. On August 8 at the instance of CITU, protest day was organised throughout the State.

## Still Greater waves of Struggle

Immediately following the arrests in Coimbatore, in a number of Textile mills and Engineering concerns, there was half-day strikes and a big demonstration. In Madras City, there was a day's protest strike on August 17 by about 500,000 workers under the joint auspices of CITU and Unions led by Kuchelar. Large number of Unions sent protest telegrams to the Government. At a later date, representatives of about 60,000 workers in Coimbatore, including HMS AITUC and others met and passed a unanimous resolution warning the Government that they would be constrained to resort to direct action, if the 4 TU leaders were not released forthwith. The grounds of detention was thoroughly torn to shreds in the High Court by P. Ramamurti, General Secretary, CITU. All these compelled the Government to release the comrades unconditionally after 39 days.

# N.C.D.C. Workers Fight Callous Attitude of Bureaucrats

The callous attitude of the bureaucracy in the National Coal Development Corporation has forced the workers to go in for agitation against the top heavy administration of the premier public sector undertaking.

On October 10 K. Chandran, electrocution of Bhurkunda was electrocuted at his work place. He was not provided any medical treatment for an hour. He was not provided any vehicle to go to hospital for an hour though the co-workers of Chandran had informed the concerned authorities of medical department and other offices. At the moment the officers were participating in the farewell party of an officer in a Club and two vehicles of the NCDC were standing before it. B. Singh, Colliery Manager received the information of the accident of Chandran but refused to send the vehicles. After 55 minutes one of the officers of the NCDC gave a lift to Chandran in his car and got him admitted in the hospital where he died after some time. According to the statement of the attending doctor if Chandran would have been admitted in time, there was chance of his survival.

On hearing this shocking news the workers of Bhurkunda spontaneously gheraoed the Manager and demanded the suspension of Colliery Manager, Chief Medical Officer and two other officers who were responsible for the negligence. After four to five hours the General Manager came from Bharkakhana and he was also gheraoed. Two hours later he suspended the four officers, and the workers took out the dead body in a procession.

On October 12, all the officers of Karanpura area took mass casual

leave and reached the head quarter of the NCDC at Ranchi and demonstrated before the Chairman and Managing Director. They also gheraoed the Directors and Managing Director. Ultimately Managing Director withdrew the suspension order of all the four officers.

After withdrawal of the suspension order, workers of Bhurkunda Colliery went on strike and within five hours all the Collieries of Karanpura area came to a stand still. Workers also formed a joint committee of all the Unions including the INTUC. The leading core of National Coal Organisation Employees' Association of Gidi A, Gidi C and Barkakhana Central Workshop

took lead in the formation of Joint Council of action in Karanpura. The strike was complete.

Similarly the employees of the Head Quarter of NCDC went on strike on October 17 and submitted their 8-point Charter of demands to the Management. The Charter of demands is submitted jointly by the NCOEA and OMS (INTUC). On the same demands the workers of Korba (MP) also went on strike since October 19.

In a meeting of the workers held at Lounda, Chandi Prasad, Secretary, Bihar State Committee of C. I. T. U. condemned the behaviour of the NCDC Chairman and Managing Director and congratulated the workers for their struggle against the bureaucrats of N. C. D. C.

## A New Wave of Strikes Struggle In Kerala

(From Page Six)

attitude of the farm manager.

Nearly four thousand Khadi weaving and spinning workers from Uduma in the north to Pazh-aiyangadi in Cannanore District went on strike since September 23 for higher wages. Cannanore spinning workers strike which began three months ago demanding regular payment of wages continues even now due to the refusal of the management to come to a settlement. The strike involves six hundred workers.

On October 15, workers of Cochin Division of FACT went on one day protest strike demanding job permanency and wage increase. Workers of Cracco Co. also went on strike from October 12 for Bonus and other demands.

### Unity In Action

Last one month saw several united actions of workers in Kerala. The workers of Gwalior Rayon in Mavoor are fighting the lockout declared by

the management unitedly. A Joint Council of Action comprising of CITU, AITUC and INTUC unions has been formed to conduct the struggle.

A call for one day general strike in Calicut on October 26 in support of Rayon workers has been given by CITU, INTUC, AITUC and other unions.

Workers of Western Plywood and Hardboard Industries, Valapatnam in Cannanore District are in struggle against the arbitrary lay-off declared by the management. A joint meeting called by the CITU, INTUC and independent unions decided to observe one day protest strike in different industries in Valapatnam, Pappinessery and surrounding areas in support of their struggles. More than 1000 workers of MPBS Factory in Quilon District went on an indefinite strike from October 13 in support of their demands.

The developing actions of the workers are assuming broad united character with each passing day.

# For United Struggle The Eighth September Committee In Ranchi

Following the Convention held at Delhi in May last the CITU of Ranchi initiated the move for identical meeting of the entire Workers' and Employees' Unions/Associations situated at Ranchi on August 18-26, 1971.

Besides the representatives of the CITU, AITUC, the following organisations were also represented :

(i) All India National Coal Organisation Employees' Association, (ii) Confederation of the Central Government Employees and Workers, Ranchi, (iii) Insurance Employees' Association, Ranchi, (iv) The Central Government Hospital Workers' Union, Kanke, Ranchi, (v) The Survey of India Class III Survey Association, Ranchi, (vi) The C.P.W.D. Workers' Union, Ranchi, (vii) All-India Telegraph Traffic Class III and IV Association, Ranchi branch, (viii) The South Eastern Railwaymen's Union, Ranchi, (ix) Jharkhand Mazdoor Sangh, Hatia, Ranchi, (x) Hatia Project Workers' Unions, (Recognised faction I. N. T. U. C.), Hatia, Ranchi and many others. The meeting adopted all the eight point demand of the May Conference and added the following local problems for United Struggle :

(i) Project Allowance to Government employees and workers (ii) Declaration of Ranchi as 'B' Class City (iii) Non-interference of Police in trade union movement (iv) Nationalisation of Ranchi Electricity Supply Co. Private Ltd., (v) Disbursement of Scarcity advance to the Government employees at Ranchi etc.

As per decision of the committee, a meeting was held on the

September 22, 1971, which formed an 'ad hoc' Committee to chalk out further line of struggle.

The Committee received a message from S. K. Vyas, Secretary General of the Confederation of the Central Government Employees and

Workers, who said,

"Please convey my hearty congratulations to the sponsors of this Committee—I am sure the 8th. September Committee of Ranchi would grow from strength to strength, in course of time and would be one day acquiring the status which the 12th. July Committee of Calcutta to-day enjoys amongst the working class of Calcutta."

## Remove All Anti-Social Elements From Nationalised Coal Mines

B. T. Ranadive, President CITU has issued the following statement to the press on October 20.

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions since its foundation demanded nationalisation of coal mining industry without compensation. The measure taken recently by the Government however concerns only the coking coal mines and huge compensation is being paid to the mine-owners of the takeover.

The Government has further exempted mines owned by the iron and steel producers in the private sector while the non-metallurgical coal mines remained untouched. Since 81 per cent of the mines taken over are small mines producing less than 1,000 tons of coking coal per day the action of the Government is mainly to facilitate the amalgamation of the management of the mines and introduce mechanisation in them.

The Government deliberately leaked out the news of the proposed Ordinance beforehand just to enable the mine-owners to remove valuable machinery etc. from the mines. Though the vigilance of the workers prevented it in some mines, a large number of mine-owners have been

able to remove machinery and equipment sufficiently in advance of the takeover bid.

During the last general elections Smt. Indira Gandhi was clamouring for two third majority in Parliament to amend the Constitution to take stringent action against big business. However, despite passing of six months the Government had not brought any amendment to the Constitution to nationalise industries without compensation which clearly shows that the Congress Government is in no way serious to take any such measure.

The taking over of the 214 mines raised hopes among a section of workers that they would at least get a fair deal under the Government management. However the hopes are being belied. The anti-social elements used by the former mine-owners are being given jobs by manipulating the muster-rolls. The workers whose cases were in dispute in the court are however being arbitrarily removed and thrown on the streets. Over and above that the Government has given wide powers to the custodians to dismiss any worker by just giving one

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# Reports From Unions :

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and Workers' Union (CITU) in their job when the hotel reopened on September 25.

Earlier about 1100 workers were virtually rendered unemployed when about a hundred anti-social elements along with some plain-clothed police personnel entered into the hotel premises on July 1, intimidated and terrorised the peaceful workers. The hotel was closed since then and all the boarders including several foreigners left it.

The local police remained silent although a number of representations have been made by the union to officer-in-charge of the nearest police station.

Md. Ismail, M. P. and President of the union called on personally the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Central), Calcutta and asked for his immediate intervention. But even then the police continued to abate these unauthorised outsiders.

The design of the management is to suppress the trade union of the workers by creating a reign of terror and thus they retrenched the union leaders after reopening of the hotel.

However, the workers are still fighting against the vile design of the management.

## **Andhra Municipal and Panchayatraj Workers' Federation Formed**

A convention of unions working in Municipal and Panchayatraj in Andhra was held in Eluru on September 18 and 19 and decided to form Andhra Pradesh Municipal Panchayatraj Employees' Federation. 226 delegates and 25 fraternal delegates from all over Andhra Pradesh representing 16 Municipalities and

several Panchayat participated in the Convention.

The CITU flag was hoisted by Com. V. Suryanarayana and the Convention was inaugurated by T. R. V. Chandram.

The Convention adopted resolutions on Bangladesh, on the dismissal of N. G. O.s' leaders in West Bengal, demanding better working and living conditions for the Municipality and Panchayat staff and condemning ban on strike.

A. Subba Rao, Convenor gave a report of activities of the unions and emphasised the need for a co-ordinated approach to launch a State-wide struggle of Municipal and Panchayatraj employees. Parasa Satyanarayana, President, Andhra Pradesh Committee of CITU greeted the Convention.

P. Laxmidas was elected President and A. Subba Rao as General Secretary of the newly formed Federation.

## **Patna Engineering Workers' Strike**

The workers of India Machinery Patna downed their tools since September 21, against the victimisation and in support of the 12 point charter of demands. The Government of Bihar however posted the CRP and Bihar Armed Force to suppress the just and peaceful struggle of the workers. Police have arrested several leading cadres of the union. In spite of the repressive measures adopted by the Management and Police and Magistrate, the strike was complete.

The workers of other engineering factories of Patna, namely M/s. Linkers P. Ltd. have also been agitating for the implementation of the decision of the wage committee. The Subdivisional Officer, Suder in

# The Working Class and Bangladesh

( From Page Four )

Through conferences and conventions, the voice of the working class must be raised on behalf of the sacred cause to overcome the resistance of the Government.

Along with this political campaign, funds must be collected from the unions in support of the Bangladesh struggle. If the movement is united, it will be easy to ask the workers to contribute a day's wage for the success of the struggle.

Unite the trade unions to demand Recognition to Bangladesh Government, All help to the freedom fighters, to collect financial help for the struggle and for aid of refugees.

Protest against atrocities :

Express solidarity with our class brethren in Bangladesh.

collusion with the management promulgated Section 144 and four leading workers of that factory were debarred from work. This was unprecedented in the trade union movement of Bihar.

Patna Engineering Workers' Union (CITU) appealed to all workers and employees as well as the democratic forces of Patna to raise their voice against the anti-working policy of the Management and Government.

## **Bihar Biri Workers Observe Demands Day**

Biri workers of Bihar have observed demands day on September 17 according to the decisions of the Bihar State Committee, CITU. Biri workers of Jhahga and Monghyr demonstrated and held public meetings. They demanded that the Biri & Cigar Workers Act should be implemented in all parts of the Country without delay.

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# Remove All Anti-Social Elements

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month's notice. This has created apprehensions among the workers that a new offensive of retrenchment is in the offing.

The CITU warns that if the Government continues such policies in these mines and go ahead with the bureaucratic management the sorrowful experience of other public sector is likely to be repeated in this case also.

The CITU therefore urges upon the Government to remove all the anti-social elements formerly employed by the mine-owners to intimidate the workers, to reinstate all the victimised workers, stop the practice of underpayment and fully implement the coal wage report and to abolish contract labour in coal mines immediately.

The CITU further demands nationalisation of all coal mines without compensation and calls upon the workers to raise their voice in support of this demand.

## Reports From Unions

(From Page Seventeen)

### Horlicks Workers to form All India Federation

A joint meeting of the Bangalore unit of the Horlicks Company (Hindustan Milkfood Manufacturers Ltd.) and the representatives of the Company's Calcutta unit was held at Bangalore on October 2.

The meeting resolved that an All-India Federation of Horlicks workers would be formed in the early next year under the CITU Leadership. Representatives could be elected to the Federation from the different units of the Company.

The British—controlled Horlicks

Company has been earning enormous profits by exploiting the workers and consumers under different heads. According to Accounts of the Company the British firms who are the sole selling agents of Horlicks have alone received a huge commissions of Rs 28,67,000 only in the year 1970-71.

The meeting was presided by Moni Dutta, President, Calcutta unit of Horlicks Company and Suryananrayan Rao, Secretary, Bangalore unit.

### Lay-Off In Hindustan Teleprinters

The management of Hindusthan

Teleprinters, Madras arbitrarily laid-off from October 19, about 300 workers in retaliation to the workers' agitation for revision of job evaluation procedure.

Hindusthan Teleprinters Ltd. Employees' Union (CITU) demanded change in the job evaluation which was highly disadvantageous to the workers. The management refused to consider the demand which forced the Union to launch a struggle for a revision in the job evaluation procedure.

## Employment Exchange Statistics

TABLE A. 3. 1.—Employment Service Statistics during June, 1971

S T A T E	Number of applications on the live register at the end of the month.
Andhra Pradesh	291,500
Assam	68,335
Bihar	345,527
Gujarat	166,067
Haryana	91,601
Himachal Pradesh	45,471
Jammu & Kashmir	19,255
Kerala	316,569
Maharashtra	390,385
Mysore	241,375
Orissa	160,164
Punjab	109,761
Rajasthan	135,115
Tamil Nadu	432,253
Uttar Pradesh	420,652
Madhya Pradesh	286,327
West Bengal	745,852
Chandigarh	15,517
Delhi	132,122
Goa	9,926
Laccadive Island	1,223
Manipur	32,195
Pondicherry	9,077
Tripura	28,270
Central Employment Exchanges	—
	4,494,576

# CITU West Bengal Committee Meets

The first meeting of the Working Committee of CITU West Bengal Committee after the State Conference was held on October 17. 55 members from Calcutta, 24 Parganas, Howrah, Hooghly, Burdwan and Darjeeling participated in the meeting which was presided over by Md. Ismail M.P., President of CITU, West Bengal Committee. Monoranjan Ray, General Secretary of the West Bengal State Committee of the CITU in his report narrated in details the present stage of the negotiation with Central Trade unions on united action, the implication of the attack organised by Congress (R) gangsters against Trade Unions with the direct help of police and CRP and the effect of the general strike on October 13.

Tarun Sen Gupta from 24-Parganas, Bimal Chatterjee from Calcutta, Harisadhan Mitra from Howrah, Com. Rabin Sinha from Hooghly, Bamapada Mukherjee from Burnpur, Sunil Basu Roy from Assansol. Robin Chatterjee from Raniganj Coal fields and Paul from Siliguri reported in details the participation of the workers and common people in the General Strike and hartal. These reports further confirmed that propaganda carried on by the Government newspapers and All India Radio that the General Strike was a failure, was a barrage of lies.

It was decided in the meeting that CITU West Bengal Committee should take further initiative for a discussion with the Central Trade unions for united action.

Decision was taken that CITU unions should organise demonstrations and meetings in all factories

and offices on November 5 when 40 Lakh State Government employees observe West Bengal Day. On the same day the workers will put on badges demanding withdrawal of dismissal orders issued to 45 State and Central Govt. employees' leaders and workers. They will also submit a memorandum to their respective management covering this demand.

The Working Committee decided to observe a week from 1st to 6th November 1971 against unemployment. Job for everybody or unemployment benefit, reopening of all closed factories, offices and establishments, reduction in prices & taxes these will be the main demands on which the campaign will be launched during the week. Unions were directed to organise meetings, demonstrations and conventions at factory level and regionally during this week. Efforts will be made to include students, youth, mahila kisan and non-CITU unions. State Committee will issue a small booklet on unemployment during the week in Bengali, Hindi and Urdu.

Following the meeting of the

Working Committee the State Committee has written to all Central Trade Unions to decide on the form of united struggle. Their reply is still awaited.

## Tax Burden Goes by Rs. 70 Crores

The Congress Government through Presidential Ordinance announced new taxes of Rs. 70 crores. This new attack on people's necessities like newspapers, postage and railway travel will further hit the common men most.

Instead of taxing the big business and the richer strata of the society Smt. Gandhi's Government has imposed this new burden on the people in the name of Bangladesh refugees. While Indian people have every sympathy for these unfortunate refugees, their rehabilitation could have been done by forcing the big business to pay more.

This action of the Government has once again brought the Government in its true colours.

This new attack on the livelihood of the people will bring more and more people into action against the Government.

## West Bengal's Mighty Protest

( From Page Two )

of State Government Employees (CCSGE) do not agree to form a Joint Council of Action with all organisations of the State Government Employees, they will not support the strike call and on the same plea opposed the general strike proposed by CITU West Bengal Committee on 13th October.

### Joint Council of Action

As a matter of fact there was no question of forming Joint Council of

Action with the Organisation of Congress (R) among the State Government Employees who openly supported the dismissal orders. But as regards organisations of other political parties among the State Government Employees, who represent not even 5% of the total strength, the CCSGE in an open letter addressed to the dissenting Central Trade Unions said that in the interest of united action they themselves were

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# West Bengal's Mighty Protest

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keen to form a Joint Council of Action. When this letter was sent (before 13th October), to UTUC (Lenin Sarani), AITUC, HMS and INTUC, were left with no other argument or plea to stand on. Still they refused to sponsor the general strike on 13th October jointly with CITU West Bengal Committee.

In such a situation CITU West Bengal Committee resolved to stick to the decision of the general strike on 13th October. UTUC, West Bengal Committee, Rashtriya Sangram Samity and 12th July Committee supported the strike call. UTUC (Lenin Sarani) and AITUC in a belated decision scared by isolation from the people, issued a separate statement supporting the strike. HMS and INTUC opposed the strike.

CITU West Bengal Committee, however, welcomed the decision of AITUC and UTUC (Lenin Sarani) supporting the general strike of 13th October. CITU West Bengal Committee is eager than any body else to build united action for it is impossible to combat the offensive of ruling class if broad unity and all out participation of the toiling masses is not ensured. That is why despite repeated refusal CITU West Bengal Committee is approaching the Central Trade Unions to agree on joint programme of action.

In the resolution adopted in the Working Committee held on 17-10-71 CITU West Bengal Committee again appealed to the Central Trade Unions to join the platform of united action in the following words :

"If this attack is allowed to continue it will be difficult to maintain existence or to ensure func-

tioning of any democratic organisation. All embracing united action with participation of all sections of the democratic people can alone create guarantee to resist this attack.

The Working Committee of CITU West Bengal Committee appeals to all Central Trade Unions and mass organisations to realise the gravity of the situation and to understand the nature and purpose of the attacks and to come forward to build up united action with the entire working class, peasantry and all sections of the democratic people to defend the trade union and democratic rights earned through years of struggle and immense sacrifices."

It was further suggested to the Central Trade Unions by CITU West Bengal Committee that on 5th November, 1971 when 40 lakhs State Govt. employees in all the States pursuant to the decision of their Federation observe West Bengal Day and resort to 2 hours' cease work, the working class of West Bengal should join them and express solidarity in proper form in support of State Government Employees' struggle. Pursuant to the suggestion, the Central Trade Unions were requested to 'unitedly decide the form of solidarity action and direct their constituent units to observe it on 5th November.

Today the Government Employees of West Bengal are in the forefront of the struggle. They are fully conscious of their responsibility to carry forward this struggle. Immediately following dismissal orders given to the leaders of State Government Employees on 13th

September, the State Government Employees came out in robust protest and carried on protest demonstration for 8 days with frequent stoppage in work. On the day of general strike the participation of Government Employees was almost complete. Even though the Government announced fictitious figures of attendance they could not hide the deserted look of Writers' Building, New Secretariat Building and all other Government Offices in Calcutta and in the districts.

The State Government employees are threatened of pay cut for 8 days they carried on continuous protest action. Despite this threat the employees have paid one day's wage to build up their fighting fund. This shows the mettle and determination of the State Government employees to continue the Struggle.

The dismissal orders were issued under Article 311 (2) of the Constitution in case of State Government Employees and under Article 310 (1) in case of the employees of the Ordnance Factories wherein arbitrary power is vested in the hands of Governor and the President to terminate the services without assigning any reason. This is not only a challenge to trade union movement, this is direct attack on the democratic rights of the people. Along with the people of West Bengal 40 lakhs State Government Employees in all the States of India have taken up this challenge and are determined to defend their trade union and democratic rights. The President of CITU B. T. Ranadive has already issued a circular directing all State Committees to join the State Government Employees on 5th November and observe West Bengal Day unitedly demanding withdrawal of the dismissal orders. And the struggle will grow in dimension and continue till the dismissal orders are withdrawn.