



THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

AGAINST THE ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL POLICIES

Sponsoring Committee calls for Countrywide Jathas to Culminate into March to Parliament

The Sponsoring Committee of Trade Unions in a meeting held at Delhi on August 10, 1992 called for organising countrywide Jathas to culminate in the March to Parliament programme, which was already taken by it earlier to carry forward the struggle against the IMF dictated economic and industrial policies of the government.

The meeting was presided over by Veereswarayya of HMS and attended by representatives of the constituents of the committee including the regional federations and central trade unions.

The meeting at the outset expressed condolence over the premature death of the HMS leader, D.V.K. Prasad in train accident near Bhubaneswar and at the demise of Achut Patwardhan the veteran freedom fighter and socialist leader.

Countrywide Jathas :

The meeting discussed further details of the March to Parliament programme taken earlier and decided to mobilise maximum number of workers from all sections and launch campaign amongst the people against the economic and industrial policies of the government by organising statewide Jathas. The statewide Jathas should culminate into all India Jathas at various points in the country to finally culminate into the March to Parliament at Delhi on the closing day of the winter session of the Parliament in the month of November '92.

The Sponsoring Committee decided to meet again to chalk out concrete details of the programme.

It called upon all the constituents of the Committee to make preparations of the Jatha in each state through the respective State Sponsoring Committee. It appealed to all other trade unions which have not yet joined the Sponsoring Committee and all

mass organisations of agricultural workers, kisan, students, youth and women to support and participate in the Jathas and the March to Parliament programme, so that millions of toiling and working people in the country can be mobilised in the campaign against the government's industrial and economic policies and safeguard the country's economic sovereignty.

Apart from the Jathas, the meeting reiterated its earlier call to all the constituents to make the All India Convention against the Economic and Industrial Policies to be held at Mavalankar Hall, New Delhi on 13th September, 1992 a grand success by sending delegates as per quota already fixed. The All India Convention is to be followed by statewide, regionwise and industrywise conventions to mobilise workers for the jathas and the March to Parliament.

Convention Against Communalism :

As earlier decided, the meeting discussed further details about the Convention Against Communalism to be held at Sapru House, New Delhi on 23rd August, 1992. It called upon the constituents to send maximum delegates to attend the convention, especially from the northern States, in view of the dangerous Ayodhya issue created by the VHP-BJP-RSS.

Death Anniversary of Sankar Guha Niogi :

The meeting reiterated its call to observe 28th September, the first death anniversary of Sankar Guha Neogi, as an All India Protest Day, in pursuance of the five point demands already circulated including resignation of BJP Government of Madhya Pradesh. A massive demonstration will be held at Bhopal on the day, which will be addressed by the

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14th State Council Meeting Calls For Intensified Movement Against Centre's Policies

The fourteenth Council meeting of the CITU-West Bengal Committee was held on 8th & 9th August at Shramik Bhawan in Calcutta. More than 300 hundred members from all the districts attended. Comrade Niren Ghosh, seniormost Vice-President presided over the meeting.

At the outset, the meeting condoled the death of Comrades M. Basavapunniah, Monoranjan Roy, Kamal Sarkar and Md. Abdullah Rasool and other departed leaders of the Party and Trade Union movement. The meeting also mourned the deaths of CITU leaders and workers who were murdered by GNLFF extremists in Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri in recent months.

Chittabrata Majumdar, General Secretary, then proposed the name of Comrade Niren Ghosh as the President of the State CITU, which post had fallen vacant due to the sudden demise of Comrade Monoranjan Roy. The proposal was duly seconded and carried unanimously amid loud applause.

In his short inaugural speech, Niren Ghosh condemned the attempts of the Narasimha Rao Government to adamantly continue with the anti-people policies at the dictates of the I.M.F. and World Bank, despite vehement protests of the entire working class in the two All India General Strikes, and called for a more intensified and sustained mass struggle under the leadership of the working class to resist these policies.

The General Secretary's Report, presented by Chittabrata Majumdar, reviewed the activities of the State CITU since the last Council meeting held in August 1991 and also various organisational issues. It laid special stress on the growing attacks on the working class and the people in the wake of the new economic, industrial and trade policies of the Centre, threatened closure of the PSU's in the State and mass retrenchment of over a lakh of workers looming large as a result of the implementation of the Exit policy in PSU's. The report also outlined the series of steps taken by the State CITU to unleash a sustained campaign among workers to raise their consciousness about the dangers posed by these policies with a view to unite all sections of workers irrespective of affiliations to fight these policies. In particular, the report reviewed the success and weaknesses of the June 16 general strike and bundh in the State.

The report also reviewed the industry-wise struggles in the State during this period, particularly the 50-day united strike by Jute workers, the campaign launched during this period against imperialism and in support of Socialism and socialist ideology, against unemployment and rising prices, in support of and solidarity with the fighting people of Cuba, against the mass killing of workers in Bhilai etc.

In all 28 members, representing all the districts and some major industries, took part in the discussions on the report. After the reply of the General Secretary, the report was unanimously adopted along with the annual accounts of 1991, presented by Treasurer Somen Kundu.

The Council unanimously adopted three resolutions—on demand for release of the renowned Communist leader and former GDR President Erich Honekar; against Communalism; and expressing solidarity with the people of Cuba.

While replying to the discussions, the General Secretary highlighted the weaknesses in our campaign against the anti-people policies of the Centre, particularly our campaign at the grass-roots level of workers regarding the dangers posed by these policies, and stressed on the need to overcome this weakness.

The General Secretary also outlined the programme of movement in the coming months, which was endorsed by the Council. The programme includes : 1. processions and mass rallies in Calcutta and districts on August 19, against communal and divisive forces; 2. observance of Anti-Imperialist Day on September 1 ; 3. a mass rally in Calcutta on 28th September, the first death anniversary of Sankar Guha Neogi who was murdered by hired goondas of employers in BJP-ruled Madhya Pradesh; 4. All India Convention of Unorganised Workers from 30th October to 1st November, beginning with an open rally in Calcutta on 30th October; and 5. Convention of Working Women in Calcutta on November 15.

During this entire period, all-out preparations would go on for the success of the March to Parliament in November, proposed by the Sponsoring Committee and supported by the CITU. The next State Council meeting will be held in the first week of November and will be devoted entirely to discussion on organisational matters.

CITU Endorses the Call for March to Parliament by the Sponsoring Committee

The full secretariat of the CITU meet at Delhi on July 24 under the presidentship of Com. E. Balanandan. The meeting condoned the death of Com. M. Basavapunaiah, Com. Manoranjan Roy and Com. Kamal Sarkar.

Reviewing the 16th June strike as per the reports received from the states and industries, the Secretariat noted that despite some weak areas, the strike was more successful and widespread than that of the 29th November, 1991, drawing in new forces in its sweep. The Secretariat warmly congratulated the working class, especially the various sections of the Central Government employees for their glorious participation in this strike and for their determination to carry forward the struggle to safeguard the sovereignty of the country.

March to Parliament

The Secretariat noted with satisfaction that the Sponsoring Committee of Trade unions in its meeting held on July 17 had decided to mount up the struggle and fully endorsed its call for a March to Parliament programme during the Winter Session of Parliament in November mobilising lakhs of workers from all corners of the country and hold another All India Convention at Delhi on 13th September, 1992.

Taking stock of the situation the Secretariat noted that, totally ignoring the massive protest actions by the working class, the Narsimha Rao Government was adamantly going ahead implementing IMF prescribed policies under its supervision. Public sector shares have been disinvested cheaply. While under the impact of the policies, threats of closures and retrenchments were looming large with escalating prices, the government had made further application to the IMF for Extended Fund Facility Loan, where by more pressing conditionalities would be imposed, further fleecing the people and subverting the sovereignty of the country. Over and above, the notorious Dunkel proposals to recolonise the country were hanging like Damocle's Sword.

Demand Resignation of the Finance Minister

The direct result of the deregulation and liberalisation was seen in the swindling of thousands of crores of bank funds. The Secretariat noted with serious concern that not only the multinational and private banks, but even the state Bank of India and other financial institutions were involved in this scandal. Despite earlier indications, the RBI did not take any rectification measures. The involvement of the Commerce Minister, Planning Commission Member, etc laid bare the political nexus in the swindling. The

Secretariat demanded immediate resignation of the Finance Minister and the Governor of the RBI.

Broader Mobilisation of Workers

In the background of the all round worsening situation during the last one year, consequent to the new economic policy which adversely affected all sections of the working and toiling people and the rural masses, the Secretariat felt the urgent necessity to launch massive educative campaign to mobilise all sections of working people into action programmes culminating into the massive march to Parliament.

Statewise Jathas

With this view, the Secretariat planned to organise jathas to mobilise maximum number of workers, other mass organisations and other sections of the people in all the states within the ambit of the campaign and struggle against the economic policy of the Government. All these jathas should culminate into all India jathas to converge at New Delhi march to Parliament in November.

The Secretariat called upon all the state committees to start immediate preparations for the jathas and make all efforts to form statewise Sponsoring Committees, wherever not yet formed, taking all its constituents to move jointly in all the states so as to mobilise at least one million workers in the march to Parliament programme.

Danger to National Unity

The Secretariat expressed serious concern over ongoing construction of Ram Temple at the disputed site in Ayodhya by the VHP and Bajrag Dal supported by the BJP and its Government in UP, in total disregard to the Higo Court and Supreme Court orders. The Secretariat condemned the Narasimha Rao Government for making compromises with these divisive forces, which have posed a serious threat to the unity and integrity of the country and its secular character. Secretariat demanded of the Narasimha Rao Government to enforce honouring the Court orders by the BJP Government and establish the rule of law by stopping the constructions at the disputed site immediately. The Secretariat further called upon all the state committees and unions to remain vigilant against any communal conflagration and physically intervene in case of any such happenings. The meeting also endorsed the decision of the Sponsoring Committee to organise a convention against communalism at Delhi.

Solidarity with Cuba :

The Secretariat discussed the acute situation faced by Cuba due to the growing intimidations and the embargoes imposed by the USA against it since the last 30 years. The meeting most favourably considered the appeal made by the Solidarity Committee to extend full help and support to the Cuban revolution and noted that several State Committees have been collecting funds, medicines and rice for Cuba. The Secretariat called upon all the State Committees, unions and federations to redouble their drive for such collections and contribute to the Committee by 15th August to enable it to make the shipment to Cuba by the third week of August.

U S Threat to Iraq :

The Secretariat denounced the USA for its continued pressure against Iraq and the threat to bomb the country for its resistance to allow the UN team to inspect its Agricultural Ministry for nuclear weapons. The actions of the UN team at the behest of the USA tantamounts to subversion of Iraq's sovereignty.

1st September-Anti-Imperialist Day :

The Meeting expressed serious concern over the mounting pressure exerted by the USA on India and other third world countries in pursuance of its drive towards global domination and recolonisation of the third world. Its drive towards developing new war technologies and nuclear armaments for the creation of a new world order under its hegemony had posed a serious threat to world peace and sovereignty of the third world countries. Its refusal to sign the Bio-Diversity Treaty was another nefarious game in this direction. Its continuing pressure on India through the IMF/World Bank, Dunkel proposals, Special and Super 301, sanctions against India's development of its rocket technology, the pressure to accept the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, etc have not only unnermined India's sovereignty, but have also posed a threat to the country's freedom and independence.

In view of such mounting pressure by the US imperialists and growing surrender by the Narasimha Rao Government, the Secretariat decided to observe 1st September as the Anti-Imperialist Day all over the country. The meeting called upon all the State Committees and unions to organise rallies, processions, demonstrations, gate meetings seminars, conventions, etc campaigning against the US imperialists' designs mobilising all anti-imperialist, democratic and patriotic forces.

Organisations :

As decided by the Nagpur General Council meeting held in last March, The Secretariat decided to hold the Special General Council meeting on organi-

sation at Bangalore in December, 1992. Prior to that the Working Committee will meet at Delhi in November, 1992.

Standing Labour Committee Meeting :

The meeting condemned the Government for making a mockery of the Standing Labour Committee meeting, which was convened after six years and reduced to only half a day deliberations from the erstwhile two days. It demanded of the Government to convene the Committee meetings regularly for two days. It further condemned the Government for not including any of the agendas suggested by the CITU.

Indian Labour Conference :

The Secretariat nominated the following office bearers for the forthcoming India Labour Conference.

1. Com. E. Balanandan, President — Delegate
2. Com. M K Pandhe, General Secretary — „
3. Com. R Umanath, Vice President — „
4. Com. K. N. Ravindranath, Secretary — Adviser
5. Com. P K Ganguly, Secretary — „
6. Com. Chittabrata Majumdar, Secretary „

International Visit :

The Secretariat nominated Com. Shyamal Chakrabarty, Secretary to attend the U N International Conference on Palestine to be held at Geneva from August 24-28, 1992.

The meeting also endorsed the nomination of Com. M K Pandhe General Secretary by the safety Council to attend An Asian Seminar on Safety to be held at China from September 21, to 26 1992. The Secretariat meeting was attended by the following members :

Com. E Balanandan, M K Pandhe, R Umanath, A K Padmanabhan, Vimal Ranadive, N. Prasada Rao, S. Suryanarayana Rao, Amal Ghosh Dastidar, Chandi Prasad, Balwant Singh, Chittabrata Majumdar Jibon Roy, Shyamal Chakrabarty, Ranjit Basu P K Ganguly, M M Lawrence, K L Bajaj.

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central leaders of the Sponsoring Committee constituents.

Support Struggle of South African People :

The meeting extended full support to the struggle of the South African people and the strike of the workers at the call of the ANC for establishment of a free, non-racial democratic South Africa.

Government Makes Mockery of The Standing Labour Committee Meeting

P. K. Ganguly

The real face of the Narasimha Rao Government, showing so much concern for labour, especially in the wake of the IMF-prescribed new economic and industrial policies, was fully exposed, when the 31st Session of the Standing Labour Committee met on July 25 last only for half a day.

The Standing Labour Committee (SLC), which is constituted after each session of the Indian Labour Conference (ILC), functions as the apex body in between two sessions of the ILC and is supposed to meet every six months to consider the implementation of the ILC decisions and other vital issues concerning labour. It is the only overall apex body supposed to be functioning regularly where the central trade unions can have a say on the conditions of labour on their vital demands and on the impact of the policies of the government on labour.

The growing insignificance to which the government has been treating the SLC can be seen from the fact that this 31st session of the SLC was called after six years; instead of every six months. The last SLC, ie the 30th session was held on September 22 and 23, 1986. Not only that, all the other SLCs held during the last three decades were of two days duration. But this time, despite the government's so called assurances to "immunise" the working class against the toxic effects of the IMF prescriptions, the meeting was initially called for only one day. Then suddenly one day before the meeting, it was reduced to only half a day telephonically. It was beyond the imagination of anybody as to how 12 items of the agenda could be discussed in just half a day. And the agendas included important issues like actions taken on the conclusion of the last SLC held six years ago; the implementation of Labour Laws: Amendment of ID and TU Acts; the New Industrial Policy and its impact on labour; closures and sickness and the role of the Special Tripartite Committee; Central legislation on workers participation in management, agricultural workers and construction workers, etc. The meeting thus turned out to be a mockery for the workers, but a holiday trip to the capital for the employers' representatives incurring huge expenses by the government.

The CITU was represented in the meeting by M. K. Pandhe as delegate and P. K. Ganguly as advisor. At the outset, M. K. Pandhe objected over reducing the meeting to half a day deliberation only and demanded regular convening of the SLC to discuss the issues seriously.

P. A. Sangma, who chaired the meeting remained totally insensitive to the concern of the trade

union leaders over the irrelevance of such a meeting according to demands of the situation. When large scale closures and retrenchments were looming large following the new industrial policy, when the public sector was being systematically dismantled and the country's sovereignty was being undermined to satisfy the imperialist money lenders, when attempts were being made to recolonise the country and drag the people under the worst neocolonial exploitation by the US led imperialists and when the working class of the country launched two massive strike actions against these policies, the Labour Minister instead of showing any urge to discuss these developments, squeezed the entire agenda into three categories and turned the purpose of the meeting to finalising the agenda of the for the coming Indian Labour Conference. He said, the items in the agenda could be broadly categorised into (1) Implementation of Labour Loss, (2) the new Industrial Policy and its impact on labour and (3) New Industrial Relations Law.

Regarding implementation of labour laws he suggested constitution of sub-committees under the SLC to look into the implementation of particularly the Child Labour Act, Equal Remuneration Act and the Minimum Wages Act. Regarding the other two items, he suggested that they can be discussed in the forthcoming ILC. So the entire set of agenda were shelved, as according to the Labour Minister, they could not be discussed due to the shortage of time. In a passing way he referred to the sick units and informed that revival packages were being made "as discussed" in the Special Tripartite Committee. He gave example of the revival package for the NTC units which is awaiting the approval of the cabinet.

M K Pandhe, General Secretary, CITU criticised the government's unilateral actions over the sick units and the farce of the Special Tripartite Committee, which never met after 20th January. He urged for consideration of the unanimous recommendations of the Ramanujam Committee and prepare a Draft for discussion in the ILC. The areas of disagreements could be discussed further, he said. He also urged for discussion on the consumer price index in the ILC and invitation to the national federations in the ILC, particularly Central and State Government employees' federations. He raised the burning question of closures and sickness, unorganised labour, legislation on workers participation in management, and on construction and agricultural workers, and the necessity of abolition of ceiling on bonus. He further brought to light the burning question of unemployment and severely assailed the Exit Policy and urged for discussion on the employ-

ment policy of the government.

The AITUC representative, M S Krishnan raised identical issues. He also raised the issue of Anganwadi workers, on which the note supplied by the government had mentioned that Labour Ministry was not directly concerned with Anganwadi workers. HMS, AITUC and UTUC (LS) also urged for discussion on the employment policy, G. Ramanujam of INTUC although supported the issue of employment policy, served a most discordant note by observing that the Ramanujam Committee's report, situation had drastically changed both in the international and national spheres. So although there were many unanimous recommendations in the report, the question of amendment of the labour laws should be in tune with the changed situation. He referred to globalisation, liberalisation and the market economy and even went on to suggest for constitution of Bipartite Productivity councils at the Central, State and Plant levels for the "survival of Indian economy, for the survival of industries and for the survival of employment". He further opposed the inclusion of national federations in the ILC. Representatives of the employers who had during the discussions urged for faster implementation of the new policies and the exit policy, got a

spurt from Ramanujam's deliberations which were almost overt support to the government's policies and immediately supported his suggestion for the so called Bipartite Productivity Councils. Even P A Sangma forgot his position as the Minister, chairing the meeting and openly supported him. The CITU and all other trade unions however vehemently opposed such obnoxious ideas and the matter was nipped in the bud. Several State Labour Ministers and State Labour Secretaries also participated in the discussion. It is to be noted here that the Labour Minister of West Bengal was not invited in the meeting. West Bengal was represented by its Joint Secretary, who was not allowed to speak even.

Thus ended the 3 hour exercise with more than 20 speakers participating in it. Concluding the meeting, the Labour Minister finalised the agenda for the forth coming Indian Labour Conference as (1) New Industrial Relations law (2) New Industrial Policy and its impact on labour and (3) Employment policy of the Government. As mentioned earlier, sub-committees would be formed to oversee implementation of several labour laws. He announced that the Indian Labour Conference would be held on September 7 and 8, 1992.

Consumer Price Index Numbers for Industrial Workers

(Base 1982 = 100)

Centre	May, 1992	June, 1992	Linking factor for Old base								
ALL-INDIA	234	236	4.93	Belgaum	242	242	—	Varanasi	248	256	5.12
Gudur	226	229	4.33	Hubli-Dharwar	244	246	—	Asansol	220	221	4.77
Guntur	236	238	5.60	Mercara	225	228	—	Calcutta	232	235	4.74
Hyderabad	226	228	5.23	Alwaye	215	218	5.19	Darjeeling	216	216	4.55
Visakhapatnam	237	238	—	Mundakayam	225	228	4.67	Durgapur	239	239	—
Warrangal	233	238	—	Quilon	223	228	—	Haldia	243	244	—
Doisom-Dooma-				Trivandrum	238	246	—	Howrah	247	249	4.12
Tinasukia	214	216	4.05	Bhalghat	228	234	5.24	Jalpaiguri	220	219	4.16
Gauhati	234	235	—	Bhilai	211	215	3.49	Raniganj	216	218	4.40
Labac-Silchar	219	221	3.96	Bhopal	242	246	5.46	Chandigarh	234	234	—
Mariani-Jorhat	225	228	3.95	Indore	249	256	5.18	Delhi	242	244	4.97
Rangapara-Tezpur	227	226	4.29	Jabalpur	252	254	6.41	Pondicherry	246	253	—
Jamshedpur	222	224	4.68	Bombay	255	258	5.12				
Jharia	214	218	4.63	Nagpur	251	254	4.99	Additional Series of Labour Bureau			
Kodarma	217	213	5.43	Nasik	255	258	—	Kothagudem	233	241	3.25
Monghyr	227	229	5.29	Pune	248	254	—	Himachal Pradesh	222	221	3.75
Noamundi	231	229	4.58	Sholapur	259	264	5.03	Bhilwara	240	241	3.20
Ranchi-Hatia	230	231	—	Barbil	229	234	5.00	Chindwara	240	243	2.59
Ahmedabad	241	240	4.78	Rourkela	215	216	3.59	Tripura	238	237	4.37
Baroda	238	242	—	Amritsar	218	217	5.19	Goa	254	259	3.40
Bhavnagar	247	245	4.99	Ludhiana	217	216	—				
Rajkot	237	239	—	Ajmer	242	245	5.01	Other Series of Labour Bureau			
Surat	252	257	—	Jaipur	227	226	5.17	Centre	Base	Mar.	Apr.
Faridabad	218	224	—	Coimbatore	224	224	5.35		1990	1990	
Yamunanagar	215	214	5.53	Coonoor	240	242	4.80	Ammathi	1960	873	895
Srinagar	229	229	5.47	Madras	233	236	5.05	Chickmagalur	1960	887	894
Bangalore	226	229	5.66	Maduri	234	23	5.277	Kolar Gold Field	1960	910	914
				Salem	215	218	—	Gwalior	1960	1022	1025
				Tiruchirapally	232	235	—	Sambalpur	—	—	—
				Agra	226	233	—	Berhampur	—	—	—
				Ghaziabad	236	238	—	Cuttack	—	—	—
				Kanpur	240	241	4.69				
				Saharanpur	228	229	5.06				

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.

CITU Condemns Move to throw away 86,000 Textile Workers

The Secretariat of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) has issued the following statement to the press on August 12 :

The CITU is extremely concerned at the move of the Central government to render 86,000 textile workers of the textile industry jobless. The so called 'comprehensive turnaround strategy' announced by the Minister of State for Textile in the Parliament on 11th Aug.'92 unilaterally without consulting the trade unions is highly condemnable. The government has totally ignored the Tripartite Committee on Textile Industry. In the meeting of the committee the trade unions had made certain concrete suggestions for revamping the industry and the government had promised to consider the same. But with this unilateral announcement it has dishonoured its promise and has made mockery of the Tripartite Committee.

Further, the union Labour Minister has been making statement that there will be no closure of PSUs and no retrenchment of workers. But the current move is to retrench 86,000 workers in the name of Voluntary Retirement and close down many textile mills.

The CITU strongly opposes the current move and demands that the Tripartite Committee's meeting must be called immediately to formulate revamping scheme of the textile mills taking into confidence the suggestions of the trade unions and till then the current move of the government must be stopped. CITU warns the government that any policy which envisages massaging of thousands of jobs will be resisted by the trade unions at all costs.

CITU appeals to the entire trade union movement irrespective of affiliations to oppose the policy of the government and come together to fight out the policy jointly.

Apart from the statement, the CITU wrote the following letter to the Textile Minister :

CITU's Letter to the Textile Minister

Shri Ashok Gehlot
Minister of State for Textiles
Government of India
Udyog Bhawan
New Delhi
Dear Sir,

Re : Your Statement in Parliament on 11.8.92.
Sub : Turn Around Strategy on NTC and BIC Mills.

This has reference to your statement in the

Parliament on 11th August regarding the Turn Around Strategy on the NTC and BIC Mills, to which, as stated by you, the government has given approval.

The statement made by you has taken the trade unions to surprise, and aroused total unrest among the workers of the NTC and BIC Mills in particular and the workers of the entire textile industry as a whole. This is because the scheme approved by the government is absolutely unilateral and arbitrary, and in total violation of the decisions taken by the Industrial Committee on Cotton Textiles in its meeting held on 21st February, 1992.

As a member of the Industrial Committee on Cotton Textiles and Alternate Member of the Special Tripartite Committee representing the CITU, I would like to draw your attention to the following facts in brief which are relevant in this respect :

1) The Minister incharge of Labour, Shri P A Sangma had convened the second meeting of Special Tripartite Committee at Delhi on 26th January, 1992 to discuss the National Renewal Fund. All the trade unions unanimously rejected the National Renewal Fund and so refused to discuss it, as they did not accept anything contained in the document, including the so called Voluntary Retirement Scheme. In that meeting Shri Sangma announced the constitution of six Industrial Committees, including one in Textiles.

2) The Industrial Committee on Textiles was constituted on 10th February in a truncated manner excluding the CITU.

3) On protest, the Committee was reconstituted on 11th March, 1992 including the CITU and making some other alterations.

But before the reconstitution, the truncated Committee had its only meeting on 21st February, 1992 under the chairmanship of Shri PA Sangma.

5) This meeting of 21st February considered the issue of 34 sick NTC mills and BIC mills. The meeting decided that data on these mills would be furnished by the Ministry of Textiles to the Trade Unions within 15 days. The trade unions and the NIC would submit specific proposals for revival of the sick units within 2 1/2 months. Thereafter the matter would be discussed at the next meeting (vide minutes of the meeting prepared by the Labour Minister on 5th March).

6) The above minutes of the 21st February meeting and the data on the mills were despatched to me by the Ministry of Labour on 23rd April, 1992, ie two months after the meeting of the Industrial Committee (truncated) and nearly one and half months after its reconstitution.

7) Thereafter no meeting of the reconstituted committee was called, despite repeated reminders by me and other trade unions.

8) Shri P A Sangma informed the trade unions in a meeting called on 3rd June about the revival package on NTC awaiting approval by the government. When the trade unions protested and demanded meeting of the Industrial Committee he assured that nothing would be done without consultations with the trade unions.

9) The same assurance was repeated by Shri Sangma in the meeting of the Standing Labour Committee held on 25th July, 1992, when the matter was raised.

10) It was also decided in the Industrial Committee meeting on Textiles on 21st February that till the Committee takes final decision, the Government shall continue the budgetary support to the sick NTC mills.

11) Under the above circumstances, the decision taken by the Government and the revival package approved by it in the name of comprehensive turn around strategy on the NTC and BIC Mills are totally in contravention of the decisions taken in meetings and assurance made by the government. It is in pursuance of the government's policy of going ahead with the implementation of the retrograde schemes of National Renewal Fund, Exit Policy, closure of the PSUs, etc, which have been rejected and being opposed by the trade unions.

The Government, in fact, has made a mockery of the Special Tripartite Committee and the Industrial Committee on Textiles. It would be pertinent to point out here also that Industrial Committee meetings in the other industries out of the declared six have not yet been called at all. All the assurances being given by the government have turned into hoax.

As a member of the Industrial Committee on Textiles, I, therefore, urge upon you not to take any move on the turn around strategy as announced by you which actually means closure of the mills and retrenchment of about 86,000 workers. As a member of the Committee, I further demand that the meeting of the Committee be called immediately to discuss the issue. Since your statement has created a volatile situation among lakhs of workers in the country,

I hope you will realise the realities and do the needful as urged for.

Soliciting your reply, with thanks,

Yours sincerely,
sd/-
(P.K. Ganguly)

Secretary, CITU, and Member of the Industrial Committee on Textiles.

CC : Shri P A Sangma
Minister in-charge-of Labour
Government of India
Shram Shakti Bhavan
Rafi Marg
New Delhi-1

Tripartite DA Committee Accepts Multi-Slab System of DA for Public Sector Undertakings

The Secretariat of CITU has issued the following statement to the press:

The Tripartite DA Committee which met in New Delhi on 23rd July 1992 agreed to recommend multi-slab system of Dearness allowance to the public sector workers. The Government agreed to work out the slab rates in consultation with trade unions.

The Government agreed to pay Rs. 2 per point of rise in price index (base 1960) instead of Rs. 1.65 as at present with effect from 1.1.1989.

The representatives of the INTUC proposed that half the arrear payment will be deposited in the Provident Fund Account. The representatives of the CITU, AITUC, HMS and UTUC (LS) did not agree with the proposal. However, P.A. Sangma announced that the government accepts the proposal.

P. A. Sangma announced that the multi-slab system will be applicable from 1.1.92. The CITU, AITUC, HMS, UTUC (LS), did not agree with the proposal and wanted to implement the multi-slab system from 1.1.89. However, the other trade unions gave their consent to implement the new rate from 1.1.89.

The CITU feels that it would have been possible to achieve better results if all the trade unions had remained united on their proposals.

The CITU appeals to the workers to carry forward their struggle till the government accepts full neutralisation in rise in cost of living at all levels.

Preparation for Massive Struggle in Tamilnadu

A.K. Padmanabhan

Various sections of working people in Tamilnadu are up in arms against various policy measures of the State and Central Governments.

CITU State Committee in its meeting held on Madras on July 16 and 17, has called upon the workers to organise a Statewide struggle against the anti-labour policies of the Government and demanding amendments to the payment of Bonus Act. A one week campaign is to be organised from 16th to 23rd August, and on 24 August massive rallies and demonstrations in district centres and other important industrial centres will be held.

The meeting reviewed the strike on 16th June and congratulated the various sections of workers and employees in the State for making it successful. It was noted that thousands of workers from various sectors who had not participated in the nation wide strike on 29th November 1991 had took part in the strike on 16th June.

The meeting reviewed the industrial relations issues in the state. The meeting discussed with concern about the serious situation faced by the workers in Engineering, Automobile and Electronic industries in the state. Thousands of workers have been affected by layoffs, lockout and threatened by closures.

In these circumstances the meeting decided to carry forward the campaigns and struggle against economic policies of the Central and State Governments. It was also pointed out that the State Govt. was also moving ahead with its unilateral pronouncements on industrial relations policy.

The State Govt. had in consultation with various organisations of employers formulated a new Industrial policy statement, which has a chapter on Industrial relations. The State Govt. had not thought of having any discussion with any of the Trade Union organisations on these issues.

As part of its industrial relations policy, the Govt. has said that the wages should be linked to productivity there should be long term settlements on Bonus. They have also given green signals for retrenchments and lay off. The State Govt. has also decided to create a fund to help the restructuring of industries on exit policy for the State Govt.

In these circumstances, CITU has decided to go ahead with the struggles against these policies. The first phase of the programme will be the campaign

from 16th to 23rd and the mass rallies on 24th August.

Court Arrest Programme

The State Committee also discussed about the attitude of the Govt. and the State Electricity Board. After protracted struggles over years and legal actions, the Supreme Court had ordered for the formation of a commission to go into the issues of contract workers in the Board. The commission headed by Mr. Justice Khalid had ordered regularisation of 18000 contract workers within a period of 3 years. The Board has been refusing to implement the orders. Only 1800 have been regularised. Now, authorities have approached the Supreme Court so as to get rid of their responsibility to regularise these workers, who have been in service for years.

CITU State Committee and the Central organisation of Electricity employees have decided to face this challenge. Thousands of these contract workers will picket the Electricity Board offices all over the State on 26th August and Court arrest, under the leadership of CITU leaders.

Textile Workers Struggle

Nearly 2 lakhs of Textile workers, under the banner of a JAC, which consists of all Central TU's in the State—CITU, AITUC, INTUC, HMS, NLO, LPF (DMK) and ATP (AIDMK)—are preparing for a united struggle for wage revision. A charter of demands was submitted before a year but the Southern Indian Mills Association (SIMA) has not been forthcoming for discussion. JACs have been formed in all the districts and in almost all factories. Regional conventions, covering all districts have been organised and the State level convention is being held on 18th August to chalkout future programme of action.

CITU State Committees have called upon all the Textile workers, to be prepared for the united struggle to achieve their demands. In the meanwhile SIMA has come out with statements demanding 25 per cent wage cut and withdrawal of the workers to 'save the ailing industry'.

State Transport Workers Prepare for Struggle

State Transport Workers in the 16 State owned corporations are also in the field demanding settlement of their charter of Demands including wage increase.

CITU led State Transport Employees Federation, conducted Statewide Jathas explaining the Charter of demands and then organised a massive march to the State Secretariat and submitted the Charter to the State Govt. Efforts are also on to organise a united movement of State Transport workers.

Other Struggles

State Govt. employees, who have been demanding settlement of long pending issues are going on a day's statewide strike on 5th August after the failure of the discussion with the Government. Three major organisations of the State Govt. employees and various departmental associations have called for the strike.

More than 2.5 lakhs of workers in State Govt's noon-meal programme have been on struggle demanding wage increase, weekly holiday, regularisation as Govt. employees etc. Recently thousands of them, majority of them women, had organised a massive march in Madras City. The State Govt. instead of settling their demands, have been taking a vindictive attitude. It has now been decided that these men and women, many of them graduate and even post-graduates, who are paid Rs. 150/- and Rs. 250/- will court arrest on 15th September. Massive participation is expected.

CITU has also called upon all its members to extend their solidarity and support to the 'cycle jathas' being organised by DYFI. Two Jathas, one from Kanyakumari and the other from Coimbatore will proceed Madras on 7th August and culminate in a mass rally in Madras on 28th August. The main points of campaign are communal harmony, unemployment and other ill effects of economic policies of Central and State Governments.

Students, Medicos and Govt. are also on strike and struggles in the state against privatising medical education. The immediate issue is the High Court's order, nullifying the take over of medical college by the previous Govt and the decision of the State Govt to hand it over to the previous management, Liquor baron Ramasami Udayar of Binny mills. Students, Doctors and various other mass organisations and political parties are demanding take over of this college by the State Govt. itself, but the Govt has acted otherwise. All medical colleges have been closed. There was a one day strike by Govt. doctors, who have decided for an indefinite strike.

On the whole, the State Govt. which has completed one year in office, with a record of authoritarian, undemocratic and repressive measures and enactments, is now facing a series of struggles by various sections of the people.

Bhilai Massacre Condemned in Bombay

The gruesome massacre of workers perpetrated by the BJP State Government of Madhya Pradesh through its police firing at Bhilai on July 1 was strongly condemned within 24 hours in Bombay. On July 2, a two-hour joint working class demonstration was organised by the CITU, AITUC and IFTU in peak evening hours at the Churchgate Railway Terminus. Holding placards and giving resonant slogans against the BJP state Govt., the timely demonstration attracted the attention of thousands of people.

On July 15, the Trade Union Joint Action Committee (TUJAC) in Bombay organised a large protest meeting was presided over by TUJAC Convenor and CITU State General Secretary K.L. Bajaj, and was addressed by CITU State President Prabhakar Sanzgiri, AITUC State General Secretary Gangadhar Chitnis, Kamgar Adhadi President Datta Samant, Vasant Khanolkar (HMS), Somnath Dubey (HMKP), Balkrishna Bapat (Sarva Shramik Sangh) and Murthy (IFTU). A special slide-show depicting the Bhilai firing was also screened. The speakers flayed the anti-working class policies of the BJP State Government, cited various examples from other BJP-ruled States that betrayed its basic class bias, attacked the diversionary Communal antics of the BJP-RSS-VHP combine on the Ayodhya issue, and also castigated the Narasimha Rao Government for its IMF-WB dictated economic and industrial policies, as well as its compromising stance to communalism.

The meeting demanded full compensation to the families of the workers killed or injured in the Bhilai massacre, and called for launching a statewide campaign against the Madhya Pradesh Govt. as well as intensifying the struggle against the Central Government policies as a continuation of the June 16 All India Industrial strike.

The CITU translated and widely circulated the report of M.A. Baby, MP and Jibon Roy on the Bhilai firing, and this provided much-needed first-hand information on this dastardly event to all trade union activists.

On July 19, a nearly 2000-strong Statewide Convention at Bombay organised by the Yuva Vidyarthi Hakka Sanghrsh Sawiti (comprising the SFI, DYFI, AISF, AIYF, Yuva Janata Dal and Chhaatra Janata Dal), which met to draw up its plan of statewide agitation on issues concerning education and employment also passed a special resolution condemning the BJP state Government and its police for the Bhilai killings, and paid homage to the workers who had lost their lives in the brutal firing.

Cement Wage Agreement Signed by CITU and other Central TUs

Kanai Banerjee

The new wage agreement for cement industry has been signed in Delhi on 31st. July 1992 between the Cement Manufacturers Association (CMA) representing the management and CITU, AITUC, HMS, BMS and INTUC representing the workers. It was signed in the presence of the Chief Labour Commissioner, at his office in Shram Shakti Bhawan at the conclusion of the hour long conciliation proceedings initiated by him at the request of CITU and other Central Trade Unions. The Agreement was signed by Kanai Banerjee on behalf of CITU, T. N. Uidhanta and H N Narendra Prasad, for AITUC, Veereshwar Tiagi and Prabha Narain Singh for HMS and for BMS R. B. Joshi and R. K. Bhakat. H N Trivedi, N. Nanjappan, Ram Lal Thakkar, S. N. Rao and Vinod Joshi signed on behalf of INTUC. The earlier agreement expired on 31. 3. 1992.

SIGNIFICANT

What is significant about the present wage agreement is that this IS THE FIRST time all the Central Trade Unions operating in cement industry were involved in the process and all of them are party to the agreement. So long the CMA had been stubbornly refusing to involve in wage settlement in cement industry any Central Trade Union other than the INTUC which was treated by it as the sole representative of the cement workers although other Central Trade Unions together represented unquestionable majority. In fact a nexus was formed between the CMA and the INTUC federation and it was this that determined the fate of the workers. This state of affairs in which the majority of the workers were kept away from the bargaining table, put the cement workers as a whole in disadvantage. As a result though the industry was constantly earning high profits over the years the workers were being deprived of reasonable share in it. The present agreement involving, as it does all the central trade unions, has been the significant first step to put an end to this state and if the workers remain vigilant and is able to maintain the system introduced this time, they in future will be able to bring their full bargaining power to bear upon the employers.

RESULT OF PERSISTENT STRUGGLE

This undoubtedly is an achievement for the workers in cement industry. This however has come following persistent effort on the part of CITU, AITUC and HMS. For almost a decade CITU along with these organisations had been striving for a system of bipartite/tripartite wage settlement in this industry, a system that is prevailing in almost all major industries in the country. But neither the CMA nor the Govt paid any heed. The effort on the part of CITU and others was specially intensified

after the signing of the last wage agreement between the CMA and the INTUC Federation in 1989. Conventions were jointly organised by the non-INTUC Trade Union centres, sustained programme of agitation adopted in this connection were being carried out at plant level. During the early period the BMS was also involved in the joint effort. Finally in the last joint convention held in September 1991, a joint charter of demand was adopted to which CITU, AITUC and HMS were parties. The BMS unfortunately for reasons best known to them chose to keep away from this convention and subsequently it was learnt that they have submitted joint memorandum with the INTUC federation and they were conducting joint negotiations.

THE PLANT LEVEL SETTLEMENT

At one stage it came to light that the management of the ACC was engineering plant level agreement with the pliant unions operating at their plants in an attempt to wreck the system of national level wages settlements, which, if successful, would have led to complete chaos in the sphere of wages in cement industry. Immediately the three central trade unions, CITU, AITUC, and HMS jointly voiced their protest against this and reiterated the demand for national level bipartite/tripartite wage settlement involving all trade unions in the field. At least in one instance, the workers had thrown out the leaders of the union which entered into plant level agreement and elected new leaders with the mandate to reject the agreement. Workers in some other plants also opposed plant level agreements.

In the mean time it was known from press report that wage negotiation was not only going on with the INTUC-BMS combine at the exclusion of CITU, AITUC and HMS, but it was already near the stage of finalisation. The 3 organisations warned the CMA not to finalise the agreement without involving the unions representing the majority of the workers. They demanded immediate action of the Chief Labour Commissioner. A deputation of the 3 organisations met the Labour Minister and urged him to intervene.

FINAL STAGE

Ultimately the CMA invited CITU, AITUC and HMS to Madras on 31st July for discussion on Charter of demand submitted by them. The 3 organisations made their position clear that they wanted bipartite settlement involving all trade unions in the field and in presence of the Chief Labour Commissioner (Central). Finally the settlement came on 31st July, 1992.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE AGREEMENT

The agreement is by no means the best that can

be expected, there are many issues facing the workers which demand serious attention but yet to get it. However, there has nevertheless been some gain for the workers, certainly more than what the ACC "agreement" gave. It is certainly better than the agreement of 1989 with INTUC alone. And this is over and above the right to collective bargaining gained by majority workers.

As a result of this agreement there will be a total increase of workers income by an amount of Rs. 485.00 with the addition of 3 instalments of "settlement benefit" the total increase will reach the level of Rs. 600.00 on 1.4. 1995. Those workers who have completed 5 years service will get one additional increment, those with 10 years service will get 2 additional increments and who have completed 15 years will get 3 additional increments. Earlier settlement benefit of Rs. 130.00 will be merged with the basic wage. Dearness allowance will be as recommended by the Tripartite DA committee. The total pay as on 1. 4. 92 against all India consumer price Index No 1106(1960=100) will be 2237.70, at the existing rate of DA. Arrears due to this agreement will be paid by 31 August 1992.

The agreement will be in force for 4 years.

It is now the immediate task of the workers in Cement Industry to ensure that the agreement is properly implemented. For the long run the present achievement has to be consolidated and carried forward.

This agreement, though it covers all categories of workers in major cement plants, does not cover the mini cement plant workers. Now we will have to think about our brothers and sisters working in mini cement plants also.

Massive Demonstration Against Staff Reduction Attempt and Import of Electric Loco

A massive demonstration of more than 8 thousand workers held at the call of CLW Labour Union on 17th July voiced their protest and stern warning against any attempt at reduction of staff by off loading work of the Chittaranjan Locomotive Works by various means leading to crippling of the factory which was the nation's pride. More than 7 hundred workers are in the process of being rendered surplus through off loading, privatisation and finally through stoppage of production of diesel locomotives of all types, metre gauge, narrow gauge and shunting loco-

motive. The demonstration demanded abandonment of the plan for import of electric loco.

Already there had been a lot of furore in the Parliament against the nefarious move of the Railway Ministry to import electric locomotives from the ABB in the name of He Tech a cost of not less than Rs. 13 crores per loco when the CLW has already produced locomotives of 5000 HP at the cost of Rs. 2.5 crores plus duty.

The whole matter was also taken up with the Prime Minister by the West Bengal Chief Minister Jyoti Basu. The issue was further raised in the Lok Sabha by Somnath Chatterjee MP during the 'O' hour queting the Chief minister's letter to the Prime Minister.

The workers of CLW are determined to fight back the attempt at scuttling national industry leading also to staff redundancy.

Facts And Figures on The Us Led Aggression Against Iraq

According to health statistics, the US-led aggression against Iraq has caused severe pollution on the environment that caused the death of 7,335 people.

45 per cent of these deaths occurred among children of the age group between 6 months and 11 years. 1300 deaths of the mentioned number was caused by cancer.

The statistics also indicated that the allied air and missile attacks have destroyed water networks at a total cost of 280,000,000 dollars depriving two thirds of Iraq's population from drinking water.

As a result, deaths because of unhealthy water particularly among children have reached 9,486 for the period January 17, 1991 until February 1992.

According to estimates made by experts some 1,965,000 donum (a donum equals 2,500 square meters) were affected by the US aggression. Also as a result of the heavy damage sustained by electricity networks the size of cultivable land decreased by 5,905,385 donums.

According to statistic issued by United Nations Food and Agriculture is estimated at 90,000,000 dollars.

Joint Trade Union Proposal on Modernisation and Joint Partnership in IISCO

Five major Central Trade Unions, INTUC, AITUC, CITU, HMS and BMS has submitted the following memorandum to the Prime Minister expressing concern against the move of Govt of India for Joint Partnership of IISCO with private industrialists :

Memorandum to the PM.

Date : 19.8.92

Shri P V Narasimha Rao
Prime Minister
Government of India
New Delhi

Dear Sir,

Modernisation of Indian Iron & Steel Co. (IISCO)

On behalf of INTUC, AITUC, CITU, HMS and their affiliated trade unions in IISCO we express grave concern at the reported move of the Govt of India for joint partnership of IISCO with private industrialists.

IISCO was incorporated in 1918. It owns and operates an integrated steel plant at Burnpur, captive collieries at Chasnala, Jitpur and Ramnagore, a coal washery at Chasnala, a large foundry at Kulti and iron ore mines at Gua and Chiria with other subsidiaries.

The total strength of manpower would be about 35,000.

The company was taken over by the Government of India on 14 July, 1972, brought under control of the Steel Authority of India (SAIL) from 1 May 1978 and with transfer of shares etc. It was wholly merged with SAIL by an Act of Parliament from March 30, 1979.

After considering several proposals including one from the Soviet Union for modernisation and for proper expansion an agreement was signed in November 1988 with a Consortium of five Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for a turn key modernisation of Burnpur Works costing 3000 crores. The in-house engineering and consultancy wing of SAIL, (CET) was inducted as Indian Consultants for engineering purposes. The objective was to achieve 2.15 million tonnes crude steel capacity by almost scrapping and rebuilding the steel plant.

IISCO's human resource was considered as its

greatest with its qualities of mature skill, work discipline and adaptability to changes. It gave confidence that the performance and future of IISCO could be raised to greater heights with the aid of this unique resource. This was also an imperative necessity given the prevailing financial and technological health of the organisation.

After a series of meetings between the Unions and the Chairman and other Directors of SAIL the basic objectives of IISCO were agreed upon.

1. To modernise IISCO Burnpur for output of 2.15 million tonnes.
2. To introduce new technology and operate the plant at international standards.
3. To complete the whole process in four/five years.
4. To make IISCO the catalyst for changes in Indian industries.

For the purpose a detailed programme of phasing out uneconomic units, construction schedule, deployment and retraining of personnel including a scheme for employees making voluntary separation of contractor's labour and make them more secure financially by providing regular monthly income was chalked out and agreed changes.

A national Consortium of PSUs, BHEL, HEC, MAMC, MECON and R & D Unit of SAIL was set up accordingly.

A Memorandum of Settlement and Understanding was signed by SAIL (IISCO) and the functioning union on 12 July, 1989.

Steps were taken by the management over :

- (a) Phasing out including demolition of some units.
- (b) Levelling over the area.
- (c) Separation of contractors employees.

The employees of Burnpur Works cooperated over the above and also worked as per requirement of the rescheduled production programmes. As the earlier Japanese turn-key proposals by Nippon Steel was considered very expensive (Rs. 7000 crores approximately) Government assigned in 1990 Dastur & Co. to submit a cost reduction study which was done the same year (Rs. 5000 crores) and accepted by the Government. This was on a non-turn-key

basis but did not exclude Japanese Participation on a competitive basis.

Meanwhile due to efforts and cooperation of the workers the IISCO turned the corner in 1991-92 and made profit of 12 crores, first time after take over. It has a plan of making profit of 25 crores this year.

At no time the SAIL management had indicated that the agreed schedule and the targets had been recast or changed excepting that the issue was being formally cleared by the PIB. It is learnt that the PIB had cleared the IISCO plan as outlined in Dastur Co's cost reduction study and PIB said that financing it would have to be managed without Government budgetary support. Chairman, SAIL, has gone on record that SAIL would be able to finance IISCO modernisation through internal generation. Dastur Co. were also appointed Principal Consultants to the IISCO modernisation project. Foreign exchange requirements was the keygap.

At this stage the move of the joint partnership with some units without the target of 2.15 m tonnes as visualised in the agreement of upgrading Burnpur Unit to 2.15 m tonnes capacity instead of implementing the original project is not justified nor regular and is certainly to cause complete annihilation of Burnpur works of SAIL.

And now it is reported that the whole plan as per agreement is being scuttled and a new proposal with joint partnership is being envisaged. This would force the workers to come out of their commitments in the Agreement.

The present situation is :

- 1) IISCO is making profit.
- 2) IISCO is an integral part of SAIL.
- 3) Several units of Burnpur Works have been demolished without replacement as per terms of agreement.
- 4) Levelling up of area has been completed SAIL has already incurred an expenditure of 211 crores besides restructuring with its loan of Rs. 600 crores to IISCO.

Therefore :

1. Modernisation of Burnpur Works should be similar to other units of SAIL and should be modernised as a part of SAIL to ensure that it does not fall prey to speculative bids such as offering Rs. 10 crore or 2 per share and taking possession of national assets worth several thousand crores. According to HDFC the current cost of land and buildings

excluding plant and structures on it at Burnpur is over Rs. 1000 crores. The move would also have dangerous precedents in other steel plants.

2. Burnpur Works cannot be treated separately as a joint venture.

3. The turn-key offer of the Japanese as well as Dastur Co report of 1990 referred to earlier which forms the basis of PIB clearance and a recent Japanese offer of venture capital which we understand has been submitted may be examined and Dastur Co may be asked to also suggest procuring financial requirements.

A committee of Experts consisting of the following with task of (1) Reviewing the whole situation (2) suggesting ways and means and plan within three months :

1. Shri R P Billimoria
2. Representative of Macon
3. Shri Hiten Bhaya
4. M/s Dastur & Co.
5. One expert from the financial institution.

The committee must consult representatives of the trade unions. Meanwhile the current activities should continue and no other steps be taken to disrupt existing agreements with the workers.

This is a very critical situation. The employees of IISCO particularly Burnpur and employees of SAIL are very much agitated on this interminable uncertainty and adverse development.

We request you to intervene immediately and take steps as mentioned above.

We request you to spare sometime early for us so that we could acquaint you with the problems and make our submission. We hope you will kindly let us know early.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,

Sd/- (GOPESHWAR) INTUC

Sd/- (GAYA SINGH) AITUC

Sd/- (M K PANDHE) CITU

Sd/- (R K BHAKT) BMS

Sd/- (V. TIAGI) HMS

32nd Conference of Kerala Nurses

Vimal Ranadive

The followers of 'Nightingale'—the Lady with the Lamp—in Kerala turned angry demanding 8 hours working day, accommodation for nurses and promotion, increase in the stipend for student nurses, one day leave for 24 hours night duty, etc. at the Kasargod conference held on 21-23rd August 1992. The 32nd conference of Kerala Government Nurses Association was the attraction of the whole town. The 400 and odd nurses who attended from 14 districts of Kerala gathered for the flag hoisting with the sound of crackers, which is Kerala's speciality. The present conference had little difference from all the other conferences of working women attended by me. The nurses are of course a part of the working women's movement and a part of our democratic movement too. The nurses are presently working for 12-14 hours. Can she attend 40-60 beds or patients? Can she give medicines to the patients which are not available in stock? And if anything goes wrong which happens many a times—nurses are the first targets of the managements and the patients!

After the welcome speech by Advocate K. Puroshothaman, Chairman Reception Committee and inauguration by Vimal Ranadive, the General Secretary's report was placed. The working conditions of the hospitals in Kerala and also at other places are completely different. The Left Front Govt granted many demands of the Kerala nurses. The nurse-bed ratio in Kerala now is 1 : 4 or 6. The nurses are on duty for 8 hours only. Student nurses were given a stipend of Rs. 250/-. Promotions were given as per rule.

The first thing the last UDF govt, did after coming to power was to stop the stipend of the student nurses. The student went on protest agitation but the govt did not relent. The last LDF govt again reintroduced the stipend and enhanced it by Rs. 50/-. One after another the delegates spoke about their miserable life and working conditions.

One delegate said the Nayanar Government strictly observed the norms of transfer. Now the nurses are to pay Rs. 50,000 to get a transfer order cancelled or to get a transfer.

The situation in hospitals in other states is not at all different from Kerala. The so called prestigious institutes like AIIMS and Safdarjung hospitals reveal many stories. With the increasing social and political tensions in the country, the increase in murders, accidents, rapes communal riots, etc have added to the problems. The ratio of patients to doctors is also inadequate.

The nurses have announced a programme of action too. On the concluding day a procession was taken out by the nurses in white saris carrying a white flag with the symbol of a lamp with a marching hand. A new committee with Com. Vijayadevi as President, Com. Thambi as General Secretary was formed unanimously. Com. V S Achuthanadan, Com. M.L. Narayanan and Vimal Ranadive were the main speakers in public meeting. Shri Kadannappally Ramachandran also spoke.

Anganwadi Women to Prepare for Strike

The Samyuktha Sangharsh Samity of the Anganwadi Women consisting of the trade unions working among Anganwadi Women met on 10th August in the CITU office at 6, Talkatora Road, New Delhi.

The meeting noted with serious concern the apathetic attitude of the Govt of India towards the several lakhs of anganwadi women all over the country, who are being denied all sorts of justice, and are made to work under heavy pressure with a very low monthly remuneration as Rs. 110 and Rs. 250/- 300/- as honorarium. Whenever the Samyuktha Sangharsh Samithi met the concerned Minister and the Prime Minister, they are assured, that something was being done to better the conditions of the Anganwadi workers and helpers. But years are rolling by and nothing is being done, with Govt of India sitting completely idle.

In such a situation, the meeting unanimously decided to intensify the struggle and to go in for All India strike sometime in the month of November 1992, if the urgent and genuine demands are not met. Meanwhile, there will be dharnas organised at the State capitals all over the country on the 16th Sept. 1992.

A delegation of Samyuktha Sangharsha Samity will meet Prime Minister to urge upon him to appreciate the gravity of the situation and to come forward with positive steps such as an increase in their honorarium and other demands. The Samyuktha Sangharsh Samithi will have, otherwise, no alternative but to resort to a nationwide struggle, including strike.

Meeting of the Tripartite Committee for Engineering Industry

Being hard pressed for convening meeting of the Tripartite committee for Engineering Industry, the constitution of which was announced by the Labour Minister as far back as on 20th January in the Special Tripartite Committee meeting, the Labour Ministry had to call a meeting of the committee on August 18, 1992. As happened in other three Industrial Committee meetings for Textile, Jute and Chemical industries, this meeting was also held to observe the formality only, as 13 units marked sick in the Engineering Industry have already been referred to BIFR and government funds have been withheld.

The Labour Minister was in the chair and representatives of all the Central Trade Unions in the Committee were present. A.K. Padmanabhan and B.K. Chakraborty represented the CITU. Many representatives of employers and of the State Governments were also present.

At the outset the CITU representatives pointed out that the agenda papers circulated by the Ministry appeared to have been prepared by the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) and demanded its withdrawal.

The Minister made a remark that the agenda papers circulated by the Department of Industry and Heavy Industries Department were not satisfactory and even he could not make out much out of it. He also said that the note of CII circulated by the Department of Industrial Development should not have been circulated in the name of the Department. He also opined that the second note by Heavy Industries Department also is not comprehensive and does not give full picture.

The Minister said that there were 13 sick Engineering units, out of which 5 were in serious condition. But the remaining 8 units have to be helped because they were involved in certain import substitution production etc. He asked the Joint Secretary of the Heavy Industries Department to see that the units which were viable should be revived.

Gopeshwar (INTUC) in his speech complained for the delay in calling the meeting. His view was that the agenda for the committee should include engineering units of Central and State PSUs and private sector as well. He wanted to develop a mechanism by which all issues could be bilaterally discussed. He opposed the idea of workers co-operatives.

The representatives of BMS said that they generally agree with the views of Gopeshwar.

The CITU representatives again demanded the withdrawal of the note of CII and the Minister

agreed.

The reference of the units to BIFR was criticised by CITU representatives. They pointed out that these units were suffering for want of funds and demanded release of funds by the government. It was also stressed that there should be unit-wise discussion with a time frame but it should be tripartite and not bipartite as suggested by Gopeshwar.

The representatives of AITUC and UTUC (LS) also opposed the reference to BIFR and formation of Workers co-operatives.

Summing up the discussion, the Minister said that there will be unit by unit discussion. The management of the 5 chronically sick units will give all details to the unit level unions within 15 days and the unions should send their comments or alternative suggestions within 2 months and then the Tripartite Committee will meet again to discuss and decide accordingly. Further, the Minister said that regarding units other than the chronically sick units any suggestion can be sent to the Chairman without waiting for a meeting of the committee. Regarding continuance of the financial assistance to the sick units, he said that the Department has already moved the government for giving financial assistance not only for wages but also for production assistance.

Anganwadi Delegation Meets Prime Minister

A delegation on behalf of Samyukta Sangharsh Samiti of Anganwadi Workers & helpers led by Com. Samar Mukherjee M. P. met the Prime Minister Sri P. V. Narasimha Rao on 21st August 1992. Mrs Geeta Mukherjee MP and Com. Ranjit Basu (CITU) also accompanied the delegation. The Prime Minister once again assured the delegation that he had already asked the department concerned to work out a package for the Anganwadi workers and helpers which he said will be announced shortly. Ofcourse, this time the officers of the Ministry concerned were also present during the discussion and apprised the Prime Minister about the steps being taken in this regard. Mr Narasimha Rao assured Com. Samar Mukherjee and the delegation that he will personally see that some announcement regarding increase in honourarium can be made soon. The delegation consisted of Mr B K Prasad (ABMS), Kiran More and Rajkumar (HMS), Hukumsingh (NFTU) and Mr Francis (AITUC).

Trade Union Convention Call for Observance of All India Communal Harmony Day on September 24

P. K. Ganguly

The National Trade Union Convention organised by the Sponsoring Committee of Trade Unions at Sapru House, New Delhi on August 23, gave a stirring call to the Working Class to fight the diabolical communal game being played by the BJP-VHP on the Ram Temple issue at Ayodhya and physically intervene, if necessary, to stop any communal flare up on the issue in any part of the country.

The resolution adopted unaimously called upon the trade unions to unitedly carry forward intense campaign to mobilise the opinion of the people against the aggressive and provocative designs of the BJP-VHP-RSS and demanding resolution of the dispute through negotiations, failing which the court verdict to be accepted by BJP-VHP. In pursuance of this demand, the Convention called for observance of All India Communal Harmony Day on September 24 by holding joint rallies, gate meetings, etc all over the country and in all factories.

The convention was an unique demonstration of unity and determination by the trade unions to fight the obnoxious role played by the BJP-VHP and not to allow it either to disrupt the class unity of the workers or the unity and integrity of the country. With the experience of the adverse impact of the new economic and industrial policies of the government and with the consolidation of unity achieved through the countrywide strikes, the deliberations of the convention pointed to the deep realisations of the workers that unless their class unity and the unity and integrity of the country are maintained, neither the battle against the IMF-prescribed policies can be successfully fought, nor the sovereignty of the country can be safeguarded. While fighting the new economic policy therefore, the convention resolved to further consolidate the unity of the workers and the trade unions and forge a broad patriotic front of left, democratic and secular forces to compel the BJP-VHP combine to settle their dispute through negotiations or through court verdict. The resolution made fervent appeal to all secular and individuals to support the endeavour of the trade unions in this direction.

Having already exhibited itself as the most organised force fighting against the new economic policy of the government, the Sponsoring Committee of Trade Unions with this Convention successfully projected itself also as the largest organised force challenging the BJP-VHP and vowing to safeguard the national unity.

The Convention was conducted by Presidium

consisting of P.K. Ganguly (CITU), T. N. Siddhanta ((AITUC), Kamala Sinha (HMS), Pritish Chada (UTUC-LS), Abani Roy (UTUC), D. D. Shastri (TUCC) and Rajiv Dimri (AICCTU).

Among the Central Trade Union leaders who spoke on the resolution were Md. Amin (CITU), B. D. Joshi (AITUC), Veereshwar Tiagi (HMS), Ashutosh Banerjee (UTUC-LS), Abani Roy (UTUC), D. D. Shastri (TUCC) and K.K. Niyogi (AICCTU). Others who spoke on behalf of the industrial federations and states included A.B. Baradhan (Electricity Federation), G. K. Bhardwaj (Reserve Bank), Harish Sharma (BEFI), S.B. Bhardwaj (Delhi CITU), Nagesh Singh (Haryana HMS), J. P. Choubey (AIRF), Waqarul Ahad (Rajasthan CITU), R. S. Gill (FMRAI), Laxmi Narian (AIIEA), Y. D. Sharma (Petroleum Federation), Subhas Chakraborty (Water Transport Federation) and Ramakant Pandey (Fertilizer Workers Federation).

There was an unique unanimity among the speakers to condemn the role of BJP-VHP to incite religious fanaticism among the majority community on the Ram Temple issue and try to inflame communal passion. While it created panic and a sense of insecurity among the minority community, it at the same time provoked religious fundamentalism among a section of them too. The growth of Islamic Sevak Sangh was an example. Most of the speakers specifically dwelt on the danger of subversion of rule of law and the Constitution and warned against the fascist overtures of the BJP-VHP. At the same time they made scathing criticisms against the Narasimha Rao Government for its continued compromise with the BJP-VHP and failure to compel them to honour the Supreme Court orders. The compromise was a face saving formula, they asserted, without any solution, threatening to erupt like a volcano after three or four months. They pledged for continuous campaign and struggle against the BJP-VHP-RSS combine as a regular agenda in the trade union activities in defence of secularism and in defence of unity and integrity of the country. Several leaders emphasised the danger from the majority community and called for continuous alert on the part of the workers to protect the minority community and assure them the support of the working class, so that they do not get alienated from the people and fall prey to the fundamentalist forces among them. While supporting the resolution, they pledged to observe September 24 in massive way and as the beginning of the united trade union struggle to isolate and defeat the nefarious game of the BJP and its allies. The resolution was adopted with thumping slogans. Kamala Sinha of HMS concluded the

deliberations on behalf of the presidium.

Resolution Adopted in the Trade Union Convention against Communalism

Held at Sapru House, New Delhi on August 23, 1992

This Trade union convention against communalism held at Sapru House, New Delhi on August 23, 1992 expresses serious concern over the happenings in Ayodhya following the move of the VHP-BJP to construct Ram Temple at the disputed spot in violation of the courts orders. The politics of using religion for electoral interest has reached a stage threatening collapse of the democratic and political system.

After the communal conflagration following the Rath yatra by L K Advani in 1990, the Ram Janam Bhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute took yet another dangerous turn when the BJP Government following its victory in the 1991 election acquired 2.77 acres of land in Ayodhya adjoining the disputed area in the name of promoting tourism.

In the face of widespread protest by the secular forces and the Status Quo order by the High Court, the BJP and the Chief Minister of UP assured the National Integration Council (NIC) meeting in November, 1991 that they will abide by the Status Quo order and will not violate the court orders.

However, the BJP and its Government in UP did not abide by the commitment made to the NIC. It allowed the VHP to start construction in the acquired land. The High Court's order of maintaining Status Quo at the disputed area was violated in several ways like demolition of several temples, a cemetery, police outpost, levelling of the ground and building of a boundary wall.

A team of the NIC alongwith some MPs, who visited the area, confirmed violation of the Status Quo orders by the BJP-VHP. But ignoring the voice of the secular and democratic forces and the rule of law, the BJP and its UP government actually chalked out a plan for construction of the temple which would enclose the Babri Masjid, and allowed the VHP, RSS, Bajrang Dal, etc to start the construction from July 9.

The action of the BJP-VHP created an inflammatory situation in the country. On July 15 Allahabad High Court granted another stay against construction of temple. This was followed by similar orders by the Supreme Court. But exhibiting deep contempt towards the High Court and Supreme Court orders, the BJP allowed the construction to continue. In the NIC meeting of July 18, the BJP adamantly defended their stand. While expressing their willingness to implement the Court orders, they maintained the contradictory stand that they were following the mandate given by the people. The argument

of the BJP that there were other instances of violation of court orders shows that they were deliberately violating the court orders themselves. By refusing to take administrative measures to stop the construction in the name of avoiding violence, the BJP Government in UP in fact encouraged the 'Kar Seva' in violation of the court orders.

While the entire country was sliding towards a dangerous situation, Advani and other leaders of the BJP and VHP adamantly characterised the developments as a milestone in the onward march of the Ayodhya movement and declared that the UP Government was prepared to pay any price to honour the mandate given to it by the people.

In the same tone, they went on reiterating that they will not abide by any court orders which may go against their decision to build the Ram Temple at the disputed site.

The action of the BJP and its storm-troopers flouting the orders of the highest law court of the land and defying all public opinion, constitutes one of the worst subversion of rule of law with fascist overtures to demolish the secular and democratic fabric of the Constitution. Their actions provoked the fundamentalists in the minority community resulting in the growth of Islamic Sevak Sangh in Kerala. Communal riots also broke out in Kerala and Maharashtra.

While denouncing the role of the BJP-VHP- RSS combine, the Convention unequivocally condemns the Narasimha Rao Government of Cong (I) at the Centre for its attitude of compromise with the communal forces. It refused to intervene even after its own Home Minister S. B. Chawan reported that the construction was being done at the disputed spot. It is because of the compromising role of the Congress (I) Govt. that these communal forces have now been able to hold the country to ransom and challenge its unity and integrity. It was the Congress (I) Govt. which allowed to open the temple after three decades. It was the Cong (I) Govt. which allowed the Shilanyas at the disputed spot. Now it is the Cong (I) Govt. again which by refusing to take any administrative measures exactly in line with the BJP Government in U. P., is tacitly allowing the communal forces to subvert the rule of law in the name of religion and rouse the seeds of communal conflict. It has even refused to concede the demand of the non-BJP opposition to acquire the disputed land. On the contrary, it came to an understanding with the Sadhus only to shift the construction work to an undisputed site for the Laxman Temple for three months, by which time the Prime Minister has promised to find a solution.

But solution can only be by negotiations, failing which the parties concerned must abide by the court verdict. But experience has shown for the last

several years that the BJP-VHP combine is not so amenable to negotiations, as it is adamant to construct the Ram Temple at the Babri Masjid spot only. So far as Court verdict is concerned, it has negated the same. The Sadhus also, who had discussions with the BJP-VHP-RSS before meeting the Prime Minister, have given a different version of their meeting with him. Thus the situation will again become explosive after the expiry of three months.

It is extremely ominous that the Narasimha Rao Government in its desperation to maintain the Cong (I) BJP nexus, which is so vital for the sustenance of the new economic policy, has given respectability to the communal forces by forging a clandestine compromise with them.

Under such circumstances the situation ahead augurs grave dangers for the unity and integrity of the country, which is already being plagued by the divisive forces of all sorts being helped by foreign agencies, as is being experienced in Punjab and Kashmir.

The Convention therefore calls upon all sections of the working people to remain alert against any attempt by the communal forces to disrupt the unity and integrity of the country while fighting against the economic policy of the Government and unitedly physically intervene against any future communal flare up in any part of the country.

The trade unions must project themselves as the most organised force uniting the entire working class against the communal and all other divisive forces emanating from the feudal land relations creating obscurantism and religious fundamentalism which divide the class and the people.

The situation demands that they must unite to forge a broad patriotic front of left, democratic and secular forces so as to compel the BJP and its allies to settle the dispute through negotiations, or ultimately through court verdict.

The Convention therefore demands that the vexed issue of the Ram Janam Bhoomi-Babri Masjid must be solved through amicable negotiations between the parties, failing which court verdict must be abided by the BJP-VHP as already agreed to by minority community. In pursuance of this demand, the convention calls upon all constituents of the Sponsoring Committee to carry forward campaigns and observe 24 September as an All India Communal Harmony Day by holding joint rallies, demonstrations, gate meetings, etc. in all the states, factories and establishments in the country.

The Convention appeals to all other secular and democratic forces and individuals to associate and join hands with the trade unions in this noble endeavour.

CITU Opposes Proposed Rise in Prices of Oil and Petroleum Products

The Secretariat of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions has issued the following statement to the press :

As reported in the press, another round of increase in the prices of oil and petroleum products is on the card of the Central Government. The people are already under acute economic hardship due to the unchecked continuous spiralling rise in the prices of essential commodities. Any increase in oil price will surely reflect in the prices of essential commodities, thereby pushing the people to further economic hardship. But the Central Government does not appear to be concerned of the people's plight.

It has been clearly reported that the Narasimha Rao government has given commitment to the World Bank and Asian Development Bank (ADB) that subsidy to oil pool account will either be withdrawn or atleast reduced. Thus it is quite clear that the current move to rise the prices is to satisfy the World Bank and ADB by fulfilling its anti-people commitment.

Since last few months the international prices of oil and petroleum products have been increasing as a result of which the country's oil pool account has come under heavy financial pressure. This is more so due to our increasing dependence on import of oil. But the government instead of augmenting indigenous production is moving in the opposite direction. The principle of self-reliance has been given a good bye. The oil policy adopted and pursued by the Narasimha Rao government under its NIP is to handover the oil sector to the Indian monopoly capital and foreign multinational companies and that too under such terms and conditions that the country will have to mainly depend on these agencies on the requirement of oil.

The CITU strongly opposes the contemplated rise in the prices of oil and petroleum products and denounces the anti-national oil policy of the government and demands that the government must take all necessary steps to increase the country's oil production in the public sector. It may be noted that many experts have opined that if the crude oil potentialities of the country is seriously exploited, then the country can become self-reliant in oil production.

The CITU further appeals to the working class to build up strong resistance movement unitedly to compel the government to reverse the World Bank dictated oil policy and also to prevent any rise in the prices of oil and petroleum products.

On The Proposed Industrial Relations Law

The Secretariat of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions is surprised at the press reports quoting Shri P A Sangma, Union Minister of Labour, who reportedly has claimed that the trade unions have reached a consensus on a number of items in the industrial relations law which the Govt of India is contemplating to bring before the next session of Parliament. It must be amusing for the trade unions to find the report of their consenting to something which they did not even see to at all. Barring the instances in which the Central Trade Unions are coming across such press reports circulated occasionally by the Minister, there has been no meeting between the trade union and the Government of India on this specific issue, after, the Ramanujam Committee Report had been placed before the Govt, on which the CITU and four other Central TUs had given a note of dissent.

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions has every reason to find ulterior motives in the Labour Minister's continuous assertion of a consensus which does not exist at all. Mr Sangma in his press briefing at Madras claimed agreement on imposition of 30 days' notice as mandatory for all strikes. The trade union movement cannot agree to such stringent conditions when it has become obvious that the restriction on strike is aimed at the smooth sailing of anti-labour tirades in the New Economic Policy. The CITU is firm on its opinion that the existing system of 14 days notice in case of essential services and no notice for other categories of industries should be the agreed approach. In view of the reality that the New Economic Policy with its notorious Exit Policy has extended unrestricted authority to employers, it would be too much for the Minister to expect the unions to agree to a ballot before a strike. Similarly, workers should have the right to withdraw from conciliation or tribunal proceedings and resort to direct action including strike. There is no truth behind the story that unions have consented for a strike ballot and not to go on strike during conciliation.

The Government's assertion to inscribe a qualifying membership of 10% in the new law and restrict formation of new trade unions are aimed to conform to the conditions stipulated by the IMF and World Bank for gradually wiping out militant trade union movement. The Centre of Indian Trade Unions stands for the unanimous decision of Ramanujam Committee that the minimum strength for registration of a trade union should be 10% of the employees or 100 employees whichever is less, subject to a minimum of seven members.

CITU Condemns PM's Statements

The Secretariat of the CITU has issued the following statement to the press :

The Prime Minister's 46th independence anniversary day speech is aimed in the direction of exploiting the extreme poverty in our countryside to mobilise support for the IMF sponsored restructuring of the Indian economy, which will ultimately end up in de-industrialisation of the country. His game is intended to hoodwink the poverty stricken masses of the countryside, by holding out a hoax of a better deal while the two successive budgets of his own government has drastically reduced the budget allocations on rural development head as a whole, curtailed food and fertilizer subsidies, enhanced the prices of all the basic commodities resulting in all round inflation. It is disgusting to see a Prime Minister of the biggest democracy in the world trying to cheat his own people, concealing the grim record of his own government and ministerial colleagues, betraying the nation's self-reliance, bartering away on a platter the industrial economy to a handful of big industrialists and multinationals, selling off the public sector practically at no price and introducing corruption of unparalleled proportions. It is a blatant lie that the nation has no resources. What is lacking is the political will to mobilise resources from big industrial tycoons, land grabbers and unearthing black money. The Prime Minister has asked for a moratorium. Moratorium on what? Moratorium on loot, on closure and unemployment? Those are to continue. But he obviously meant moratorium on the right to protest and right to strike.

In self aggrandisement the Prime Minister has talked about a so called national consensus. Had he or his Government attempted for a consensus on the matter of the new economic policy before it put its thumb impression on the dotted line pointed out by the IMF? However, the CITU refused to accept any suggestion of moratorium to the persuasion of any right of the people to protest and resist including strike.

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They Lie to People, yet They're Hon'bles

Jibon Roy.

Share market began Hotting up by the end of 1991. By March and middle April, 1992 market got exploded. Sudden entry of tens of thousands crores into the market appreciating the value of capital-stocks by more than 100% and in case of particular shares by more than 1000% within quick succession could not cause any concern in Finance Ministry and Reserve Bank. It is a great surprise.

At a time, the Finance Ministry and Reserve Bank are complementing each other and Hon'ble Finance Minister painted Reserve Bank Governor as an eyeball to his NEP even when evidence has already heaped about RBI's utter negligence and indulgence to the scam to reach an unprecedented height. RBI knew about clandestine deal of Bank of Karad with brokers as early in Jan. 92. In fact the RBI nominated one of the principle player of the scam. Bupen Dalal, a leading Broker, into the Board of Directors of Bank of Karad. The said Dalal has been arrested by CBI later.

But what is about Finance Ministry! It is in record that the Finance Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh in a statement, said 'you can not have a booming market in a crashing economy'. Signal was very indicative. He was citing the so called 'boom' to assure the people about the impending growth of economy. In fact, he was hoodwinking people. When the Minister, who was being treated by the press as the Meshiah of hope for the dwindling economy of the country was talking of glittering future at the stock market's sky-voyage, none other than internal assessment of Finance Ministry had been signalling that the year 1991-92 was heading for a negative growth. Therefore, looking for a 'boom' in the economy through the mirror or mysterious behaviour of stock market was conspicuous.

Of course, in the period of implementing NEP, telling lies to the people by the Ministers has suddenly assumed the stature of virtue; specially those Ministers attached with the economic ministries. Immunity Springs from the highest order under whose confidence they serve. Nobody can blame IMF that it had ever tried to find immorality in activities of those Third world Governments which satisfy the cause and design of globalisation. If the high climbing graph of stock market could be used for stimulating people in favour of NEP where is the wrong? After all politics is not economics. Distortion of Economics, therefore, was no wrong for the newly baptised politician.

Finance Minister, Hon'ble Shri Manmohan Singh has once again very recently reaffirmed that his Ministry would bring down inflation into single digit by next year. This announcement came only at a

moment when the Reserve Bank of India concluded that arresting the inflation in the current period of time is impossible. Reserve Bank's calculation shows that money circulation (M3) is increasing to stupendous height. Taking 1st May of 1992, it is 18.5% higher than corresponding date in the previous year, but, goes up to 18.95% if the cut off date is taken as 29th May 1992. When the Hon'ble Minister was assuring the people that price graph would climb down, in reality inbuilt condition was being created for price spiral.

Hon'ble Finance Minister was painting a rosy picture the other day about the impending flood of foreign investments in the country. He was doing so even when the scam already started revealing itself. The reality is that unprecedented nature of scam scared the foreign investors who were showing some interest for investment.

Recent review of economy by the Economic Affairs Committee of Ministry has further proved that the Hon'ble Finance Minister has successfully attained the Congress (I) virtue of hoodwinking people. Cabinet committee reviewed the period between April '91 and Feb '92 and found a grim picture. Contrary to the indication in economic survey the review found decline both in manufacturing and agriculture. Review shows the decline of 2% in manufacturing 9.6% growth in the corresponding period of 1990-91, decline of petroleum production by 11.9%, saleable steel by 1.4%. Thanks to 19.4% negative growth of import which expresses the symptom of industrial recession and has saved the balance of payment situation from disastrous consequence, as export has further shown negative growth. Against 8th plan stipulation of 13% growth, export has already come down by 1.9%. Review says that production of foodstuffs would register a decline by 4 million tonnes in the year compared to the preceding 1990-91. Procurement of foodstuffs dropped by 20% endangering entire Public Distribution System. Therefore, showing the buoyancy in stock market behaviour as the reflection of 'growing economy' had been a philistine effort of mischievous deception to people.

The Hon'ble Finance Minister having been hounded by fundamental weakness of NEP got over jubilant to allow the side-tracking of the fact that country's stockmarket indices (BSE indices) was galloping the heights to keep all other stock exchange of the world far behind in percentage of increase. The Bombay stock exchange which had practically led all other exchange had recorded a rise of 112.9% increase which was 4 time the rise of Tokyo during the same period, seven times to New Yaak, double to Karachi, five times to Taipei, eleven times to

Sydney and so on. The following tabulation in the growth of Stock Exchange indices in different countries during 1991-92 as recorded in Asia Week, July '92 speaks surprising phenomenon of stock exchange indices growth in Bombay.

Increase in Stock Exchange Indices during 1991-92.

Hongkong	65.2%
Singapore	.4 ,,
Kualalampur	2.0 ,,
Sydney	10.0 ,,
Manila	38.2 ,,
Bangkok	3.4 ,,
Jakarta	6.7 ,,
Seoul	9.9 ,,
Taipai	22.7 ,,
Bombay	112.9 ,,
Karachi	54.9 ,,
Colombo	35.9 ,,
Tokyo	28.2 ,,
London	2.0 ,,
New Yark	14.6 ,,

Asia Week, July'92

It is astonishing that this loaded phenomenon has gone out of sight of an Economist like Dr. Manmohan Singh and he went on teaching that any 'boom' and 'crash' in stock market necessarily indicates 'rise' and 'crash' of economy. But, reality is that in the current context of international economy stock exchange is becoming more and more dominant with speculative activities in relative term to economic growth. 1987 world wide crash in stock market which had been mentioned as tornado in London did not bring simultaneous crash in the economies though this was a crash worst than pre-world war crash of 1929.

Finance Minister and his Ministry is continuing to deceive the people and they have that right because, their master, IMF, wants it. He hoodwinks the people, and yet he is honourable because U.S.A looks at him as honourable. He continues because he serves the IMF best.

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Fund for Revamping Old Fertilizer Plants Agreed by Finance Minister

Dr. Manmohan Singh, Finance Minister has agreed to release capital for implementing the Revamping Scheme. provide Working Capital, write off outstanding loans and restructuring of capital base of Fertilizer Corporation of India (FCI) and Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation (HFC).

The Minister made the above commitments to the Members of Parliament—Chaturanan Mishra, Brsudeve Acharya and Surya Narayan Singh who led a delegation of Fertilizer Workers' Federation of India (FWFI) represented by Rama Kant Pandey, S. Dev Roye, D. B. Kumar and Ramsagar Singh and National Confederation of Officers Associations of CPSU (NCOA) represented by K. Ashok Rao. The meeting took place on 7.8.92 at the North Block office of the Finance Minister.

Dr. Manmohan Singh told the delegation that since no new fertilizer plants are being set up, revamping of the old plants necessary for optimal utilisation of the existing capacity installed in the country. Mr. Krishnaswamy, Secretary, Department of Fertilizers participating in the discussion told that since retention price for the new plants is much higher compared to the old plants and international price has a growing trend, revamping of the old plants with their existing infrastructural facilities is economically prudent. The Minister told that the 'Techno-Economic Revival Plan' submitted by the FWFI and NCOA merits serious examination.

The following concrete decisions have been taken in the meeting after a protracted discussion :

1) As short term measure, Working Capital would be provided immediately to tackle the financial constraints in the old plants for maintaining production and payment of salaries and wages to the employees in order to create congenial atmosphere both technical and human for the long term measures,

2) A joint committee consisting of the government representatives from Department of Finance, Fertilizer and an incumbent of the level of Joint Secretary, representatives of Management and Employees would undertake exercise plant by plant to finalise the long term revamping scheme on the basis of the 'Techno-Economic Revival Plan' submitted by the FWFI & NCOA. This exercise would be completed by 4/5 weeks.

3) The delegation on its part assured the govt. of the full co-operation of the employees for creating conducive atmosphere to implement the short term and long term schemes.

Struggle in South Africa—Workers on the Lead

It was millions of workers who were on the streets. And the factories all over South Africa suddenly stopped emitting steam, while the business and commercial establishments wore a deserted look, with the barely partial fleets of public transports forcibly run by the white administration plying empty on the roads. It was around 4 million strong workers of South Africa who were on strike on 3rd and 4th August 1992 to demand a rule by the majority, and minority racist whites.

The South African Working Class were on the forefront with a determined bid to end hated apartheid from the soil of South Africa. The massive strike action was called by the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and South African Communist Party (SACP) along with a call for mass action by ANC demanding transfer of political power to the majority blacks.

The barbaric apartheid regime could survive too long on the soil of South Africa in the midst of present day civilized world, with the tacit and shameless support of so called civilized industrialised powers of the Western world. It was till recent 1982, even after United Nations decided for sanctions and boycotts against South African Apartheid regime. the racist govt. continued receiving monetary support from IMF. Only since 1982, with the increase in mass struggles inside the country and mounting pressure of international solidarity, the US-backed IMF was compelled to give in to popular pressure and break off loans to South Africa. Even the UN decision for sanction against South Africa did not come automatically. It was owing to ever increasing pressure of the struggle of the South African people and working class along with increasing thrust of the public opinion all over the world against the apartheid regime, the western capitalist power had to concede to deciding a sanction albeit reluctantly against South Africa in the UN forum.

It was again the same 'do or die' determination of the South African masses, their continuous and organised mass action in the face of inhuman brutality, killings, arrests and tortures, by the racist state machinery, that drew the international opinion in their favour and made the UN and other international bodies to intervene more effectively and even could create vacillation among the racist rulers also. And the South African rulers had to come out for a negotiation for dismantling the Apartheid regime. The racist state had also to concede to the demand for freedom of political activity for the black population and lift the ban on ANC and releases Dr. Mandela after more than two and half decades imprisonment.

The racist rulers thus started a new game. It was

the same traditional divide and rule. Inter black confrontation was sought to the pampered and the Zulu dominated "Inkatha party" was being made a pawn to engineer assault on the other black population with active support from the state machinery and the same was given the colour of so called ethnic strife.

During the two year regime of President F W Deklerk more than 8000 people were killed by so called state-engineered ethnic strife, the biggest and the most atrocious of which was the recent massacre at Biopatang township killing 42 people, majority of whom were women and children.

Sharply reacting to this ghastly killings the ANC pulled itself out of ongoing talks with South African Govt. While withdrawing from talks the ANC leader Dr Nelson Mandela said "I can no longer explain to our people why we continue to talk to the regime which is murdering our people". Dr Mandela also called upon to build up speedy mass movement to force the resignation of the Govt. The movement of South African people entered a crucial stage while the racist regime has been compelled to initiate negotiation stated to be for a democratic govt. with the representatives of the black population, ceaseless effort was on, on the part of the Deklerk Govt to disrupt and weaken the unity of the South African people and also to encash the difference in perception prevailing between the various segments of South African black population participating in the negotiation. Along with the question of establishing a democratic govt many more questions would naturally surface as to what would be the socio-economic set up and structure of future South Africa, as well as the Economic Policy approach.

It is a reality that difference in perception and approach prevails on the future socio-economic set up, institutional framework and policy formulations among the freedom aspiring South African population, may surface more profoundly in the days to come.

In such a situation, increasing intervention of the working class, and their frontline role in the mass action for ousting the racist regime and establishing a democratic govt as manifested during July/August no doubt would play a pivotal role in shaping the destiny of South African people and in orienting the urge of the people towards establishing a system meaningfully for the people and by the people.

Recent mass actions in South Africa manifest the development of such situation with the militant working class taking the lead. More than 4 million workers took active part in the two days long strike

during August preceded by rows of demonstrations and rallies all over the country. The racist regime deployed its full force to deffuse the struggle. 5000 soldiers and police were camped only in the black township of Johanesburg. Arrest and tourture under detention has become the every day affairs during the days before the strike action and killings under detention has exceeded all records. A South African Pathologist who has examined the bodies of about 200 people who died in custody said that 90% of the prisoners were killed by the police.

On the first day of strike itself 27 workers were killed while total killing during the strike action and after has exceeded hundred as per report received. Despite unprecedented repression and storming of the black townships by the police and soldiers, strike was overwhelming all over the country not only in factories and workshops but also in the commercial establishments, shops, and in the schools also when students and teachers deserted the schools to join the protest rallies across the city.

Only in the capital more than 50000 strong rally was led by Dr Ne'lson Mandela while all other cities and industrial centres witnessed similar protest rallies. Dr Mandela reiterated the demand that "we must have an interim govt of National unity and De Klerk Govt must quit. All South Africans had to have a direct say in drafting a democratic constitution. This means there must be a commitment to a sovereign democratically elected Constituent Assembly."

What is more important is to note is the statement made by the trade unions while declaring their programme of action. A joint news conference of COSATU & SACP commented on 30th July "We all know big busines has supported the regime and they would try to disrupt the united strike action of the South African Workers. Our struggle is also against the way they govern." Besides supporting the ANC demands for multiracial democracy, COSATU reiterated their demand for a national minimum wage, nationalisation of major industries and workers

participation in management of industries. not talking of nationalisation of barbar shops' General Secretary of COSATU Jay Naidoo assed "We say the public sector, social services, educ health facilities should be nataionalised so that people have access to them". Naidoo reiterated

"Thousands of our people sacrificed their lives. We have shed our blood in the freedom struggle. With so much sacrifice and blood shed we cannot allow a system to develop which would continue to suck our blood as is happening now" a prominent COSATU leader quipped.

The entire world is eagerly awaiting the birth of a New South Africa being dreamt of by striking South African people. The working class and the people of South Africa are on the determined move in that direction.

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