

# CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

General Council Meeting

Siliguri, West Bengal

22-25 April 2002

## TIME TABLE

## DOCUMENTS

- \* PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS
- \* REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY
- \* CONDOLENCE RESOLUTIONS
- \* TREASURER'S REPORT
- \* STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS - 2000 AND 2001
- \* SPECIAL DISCUSSION PAPER ON  
"UNITED STRUGGLES AND ORGANISATIONAL CONSOLIDATION OF  
TRADE UNION MOVEMENT"

L

# CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

## General Council Meeting

22-25 April 2002

Siliguri, West Bengal

### AGENDA

1. Condolence resolutions
2. Presidential Address
3. Report of the General Secretary
4. Audited Statement of Accounts for the years 2000 and 2001
5. Special discussion on "United Struggles and Organisational Consolidation of Trade Union Movement"
6. Resolutions
7. New affiliations
8. Any other subject with the permission of the Chair

### TIME TABLE

22 April 2002:	10.00 a.m.	Flag Hoisting & Homage at Martyrs' column	
	10.30 a.m.	Welcome Address Condolence Resolution Presidential Address Resolutions	
	12.00 noon	Introduction of General Secretary' Report Presentation of Treasurer's Report	
	3.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.	Debate on General Secretary's Report	
	23 April 2002:	10.00 a.m. to 1.30 p.m.	Debate on General Secretary's Report
3.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.		Debate on General Secretary's Report	
24 April 2002:		10.00 a.m. to 11.30 p.m.	Debate on General Secretary's Report
	12.00 noon	Introduction of the Special Discussion Paper	
	12.30 p.m. to 1.30 p.m. & 3.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.	Debate on Special Discussion Paper	
	25 April 2002:	10.00 a.m.	Credential Committee Report Resolutions Summing up by the General Secretary Adoption of Reports and Accounts
		12.00 noon	Concluding Remarks by the President
2.00 p.m.		Mass Rally	
DAILY		11.30 a.m. to 12.00 noon and 5.00 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.:	TEA BREAK
	1.30 p.m. to 3.30 p.m.:	LUNCH BREAK	

# PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

by  
E BALANANDAN

**Comrades,**

This meeting of the CITU General Council is being held here in Siliguri in West Bengal, seven months after the meeting of our Working Committee held in Bangalore during the last week of August, 2001. During these seven months we continued our hectic activities on different issues, which are dealt with in the General Secretary's report outlining the immediate tasks as well for your serious consideration and decision. We are passing through a very serious situation internationally and nationally, due to the continuing imperialist offensive led by the United States and the dangerous policies pursued by the Vajpayee Government in many areas. Of these, I wish to confine myself to draw your attention to some issues, that too briefly.

## **GUJARAT IN FLAMES**

The communal conflagration started soon after the unpardonable crime of the ghastly killings of 58 karsevaks - including women and children - returning from Ayodhya by Sabarmati Express by torching a bogie at Godhra station on 27th February, 2002, is still continuing over a month. The Chief Minister's claims that they could restore normalcy in the State within 72 hours has proved to be false. The communal riots are continuing in large parts of Gujarat. Out of 23 districts more than 10 districts are affected and the death toll is estimated to be beyond 750 till 1st of April. About One lakh people comprising men, women and children of the Muslim community are languishing in the so-called refugee camps where even bare minimum facilities for human living, including sanitary facilities, is absent. There are no visible signs of easing of the tension and restoration of normalcy in the State; on the contrary violence is spreading to new areas in remote villages.

The saffron brigades are intensifying their anti minority campaign by issuing leaflets calling for boycott of Muslim shops and trading centres. The attacks are specifically targeted to drive away the Muslims from the areas where they are running their business and trading activity. The land and property of Muslims are made special targets of attack by killing them wholesale and burning their houses and business establishments. This planned operation is being carried out to cleanse the entire villages and urban suburbs of the minority population to cripple them economically and drive them away to separate ghettos with the active connivance of the State administrative machinery and the police.

I do not wish to refer to the detailed accounts published daily by the media about the monstrous and inhuman methods resorted to by the frenzied rioters, led by the sangh parivar. They are killing the Muslim families enmasse - including women and children - sealing all the escape routes and burning down the whole houses using inflammable materials ignoring their tearful plea to let them live. Their frantic calls to the police and administrative personnel, for protection did not invoke any response as if they were under orders not to act. Reports of barbaric killing a whole family of 19 members by bringing them into a room filled with water and applying high voltage electric shocks for causing instant death etc. are comparable only to the methods used by the fascists for eliminating Jews during the horrific days of Hitler's Germany. In short, fascism is in action for a month and more in Gujarat, exposing Narendra Modi Govt. in the State and the RSS led Vajpayee-Advani Govt. at the centre.

The game plan of the RSS seems to be to scare the Muslims and other minorities to force them into submission that they dare not oppose the BJP in the elections to Gujarat State assembly, which is due in an year. They feel this to be the only way to avoid a repeat performance of defeat as in the recent

elections in Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal, Manipur and Punjab. That is why the BJP leader Jana Krishnamurthy issued a good conduct certificate to Narendra Modi for "handling the communal flare up in the state", with the Home Minister L.K. Advani underplaying the gravity of the situation. The Bangalore resolution of the RSS warning the religious minorities that "their safety lies" in "earning the goodwill of the majority" is also to be noted in this context. The State and the Central Governments refusal to intervene firmly to protect the Muslim minorities prove this heinous plan.

The National Human Rights Commission in its interim report noted: "The Commission would like to observe that the tragic events that have occurred have serious implications for the country as a whole, affecting both its sense of self-esteem and the esteem in which it is held in the comity of nations. Grave questions arise of fidelity to the Constitution and to treaty obligations. There are obvious implications in respect of the protection of civil and political rights, as well as of economic, social and cultural rights in the State of Gujarat as also the country more widely; ... But most of all, the recent events have resulted in the violation of the Fundamental Rights to life, liberty, equality and the dignity of citizens of India as guaranteed in the Constitution. ...". The Commission also raised serious questions of discriminatory treatment of in the matter of compensation to the next-of-kin of the victims - Rs. 2 lakhs for Godhra victims and Rs. 1 lakh for the victims of the subsequent violence.

The NHRC squarely condemned the Gujarat Government for not functioning as per the constitution and the law of the land. Therefore, the Narendra Modi has no right to continue in office and he should be removed from Chief Ministership immediately.

This demand is being raised not only by opposition political parties but also by the large chunk of democratic minded people, including the national media, all over the country. It unfortunate that the so-called secular parties, who are part of the NDA, have still not realised the danger.

### **Comrades,**

It is obvious that the BJP rulers at the Centre and in Gujarat are implementing the RSS agenda of Hindutva through fascistic means. We have to mobilise the whole working class and the people against this, in order to save the country.

We are totally opposed to religious fundamentalism - of both the minority and majority, since it disrupts the unity of the working class. We have, therefore, to intensify our ideological campaign against religious fundamentalism and obscurantism. We must boldly intervene to stop communal conflagration for restoring peace and amity at all costs.

### **THE DRACONIAN POTA**

A joint session of the Parliament was specially convened on 26th March 2002 to get the Prevention of Terrorism Bill approved after it was defeated in the Rajya Sabha.

The opposition strongly opposed the bill as it is intended to trample upon the civil liberties of the citizens guaranteed by the constitution. The Home Minister Advani strongly defended the bill in the name of the developing cross border terrorism and "proxy war".

Participating in the discussion, Somnath Chatterjee and other leading members of the opposition charged the Government for bringing the bill with ulterior motives for curtailing the freedom of citizens, to use it against the Muslim minorities and against those who challenge the Government policy of saffronisation and for the imposition of the "hidden agenda" of the RSS the so called "Hindu rashtra" against the basic tenets of our constitution. They demanded of the Home Minister to explain the steps taken by the Government using the ordinance, which was there for the last five months, its effect in

Jammu and Kashmir North-Eastern States, in curbing the ISI activities and the details of those apprehended and arrested using POTO. They also pointed to the Government failure to prevent the terrorist attack on the Parliament house on 13th December, though POTO was very much there. There was no satisfactory reply from the treasury benches. They also pointed out the double standard of the BJP Government of Gujarat in applying the POTO against the Muslims, including 16-year-old boys and not against the RSS/VHP hoodlums, who indulged in large-scale killings of Muslims in the State.

Many civil rights activists and eminent jurists had stoutly opposed passing of this law. The National Human Rights Commission was also "unanimously of the considered view that there is no need to enact a law based on the draft prevention of Terrorism Bill, 2000 and the needed solution can be found under the existing laws, if properly enforced and implemented, and amended, if necessary. The proposed Bill, if enacted, would have the ill effect of providing unintentionally a strong weapon capable of gross misuse and violation of human rights which must be avoided particularly the experience of the misuse in the recent past of TADA and earlier of MISA of the emergency days."

However the bill was pushed through and passed by the joint session with 425 voting for and 296 against. The opposition described it as a black act, which went against the interests of the nation.

We have to take special note of the dubious way the Government is imposing their hidden Hindutva agenda in spite of the promise made to their own allies to keep the contentious issues out of the agenda. But the Government was openly collaborating with the attempt by the sangh parivar for constructing the Ram temple at Ayodhya ignoring the Supreme Court directives. It brought the country to the brink of a serious crisis of Hindu Muslim divide which led to tension and surcharged atmosphere in the country. The Gujarat carnage flared up was in this background. As the Government is patronising and implementing a fascist agenda, it resorts to such draconian law curtailing democratic rights and infringing freedom of the citizens.

The first victims of this anti democratic law will be the political opponents of BJP Raj. To scuttle the developing working class resistance against the economic policies of the Government, this law will be a weapon in the hands of the government. So we have to resolutely oppose this draconian law which will be used against citizens to keep them behind the bars for long periods denying the right of judicial justice, by developing united resistance.

## **THE GROWING IMPERIALIST ARROGANCE**

The barbarous terrorist attack that took place in New York and Washington on September 11,2001, has skilfully been used by the United States administration to declare a "war on terrorism". The U.S.A. arrogated to itself the right to decide which organisations or countries are terrorists and to launch war against them, which nobody can question. Holding Osama Bin Laden and his al quida outfit, (which was their own creation), responsible for the attack, the US declared war against the Taliban Government of Afghanistan on October, 7. They could finally impose a proxy Government in Afghanistan under their control through mass scale devastation of the entire territory and innumerable lives, though they failed to catch hold of Osama Bin Laden and completely get rid of Al quida outfit. However, they have succeeded to impose suzerainty over Afghanistan to be used for implementing their main agenda of exercising control over the oil and gas rich Central Asia.

Having completed their first agenda, they wish to proceed with their second agenda of attacking the so-called "rogue states" listed by them viz., Iraq, Libya, North Korea, besides Syria and Iran, of which the first priority is Iraq. To canvas support for this attack the United States sent its emissary Vice President, Dick Cheney to all the Arabic countries and other world capitals. However, the Arabic world in general did not consent to the move and objected any armed attack against Iraq by the United

States. Many other countries of European Union, including France and Italy, too did not agree to the move, which had to be deferred for the time being.

Here one point must be taken note of. The aggressive onslaught of economic exploitation indulged in by the world capitalist system, led by the imperialist powers, has resulted in widening inequality and disparities worldwide. This in turn has led to fundamentalist forces of various hues raising their heads at different parts of the world, which have become the bedrock for all terrorist activities. The imperialist forces, led by the U.S., pampered and aided these fundamentalist-terrorist brigades to undermine the democratic and progressive forces on various occasions. Now, the same US led imperialist bandwagon, on the plea of countering terrorism is pitching for further aggressive hegemonic onslaughts for global dominance.

The situation in Middle East is reaching a flash point due to the Israeli Army's attack against the Palestinian people. Using their full military might, the Ariel Sharon Government of Israel has laid a siege on the Palestinians leader Yasser Arafat. The attack was continuing for weeks killing hundreds of Palestinians and thousands of them wounded. Still the Palestinians resistance is continuing. The world public opinion against the Israeli attack is growing. The Arab world - the Arab league and the organisation of Islamic countries -have rallied behind the Palestinians and unitedly opposed the Israeli attack and demanded immediate withdrawal of Israeli Armies from the Palestinian territory.

Israel is deliberately backed by the United States to develop into a fully armed military power to be used as a base to exercise U.S. domination over West Asia in the eventuality of a conflict. The U.S.A.'s so called non interference in this conflict invited big criticism against them not only from the Arab world but also from countries which are their allies. The peoples' protests against Israeli aggression have been growing not only in Europe but also all over the world. Therefore, at last George Bush was forced to formally demand that Israeli Army should be withdrawn from Palestinian territory and sent his representatives to persuade Ariel Sharon. However, till now Sharon has not fully endorsed the idea, but only ordered a partial withdrawal of his forces, keeping a bulk of them in Palestinian areas. The situation still remains to be explosive.

### **Comrades,**

Let me bring to your notice the "new nuclear policy" officially presented to the U.S. Congress on 8th of January this year titled as "Nuclear Posture Review" (NPR), which has provoked widespread criticism in the United States and other countries. This unveils a new dimension of the United State's hegemonic design.

The "NPR", which outlines several situations where the use of nuclear weapons could be "justified", offers a chilling glimpse into the world of nuclear war to cover every conceivable circumstance.

This Nuclear Policy Review says that the "United States should develop plans to use nuclear weapons in an Arab-Israeli conflict, in a war between China and Taiwan or in a conflict between the two Koreas and lists seven countries - Russia, China, North Korea, Libya, Iraq, Iran, and Syria - as targets against which nuclear weapons might be used".

It is said that the US strategic command is taking steps to develop new generation of low-yield bunker-busting mini-nukes and other nuclear weapons and to prepare a plan for their use.

The NPR has also stated: "Nuclear attack options that vary in scale, scope and purpose will complement other military capabilities. The combination can provide the range of options needed to pose a credible deterrent to adversaries whose values and calculations of risk and gain and loss may be very different from and more difficult to discern than those of past adversaries."

This represents a qualitative and dangerous change in the nuclear doctrine by the United States. This has to be considered with the steps taken by the US to abrogate the Anti-Ballistic Missiles (ABM) treaty, construct a missile defense system, explore the weaponisation of space and accelerate the development of mobile and precision conventional weaponry. The political meaning of the steps being taken by the Bush administration is to gain absolute military superiority over its friends and foes alike, so that no one is capable of challenging U.S. imperialism's drive for the complete domination of the world.

The NPR changes the concept of nuclear missiles being a weapon of last resort and makes them a weapon of first use and extends to many theatres of conflict.

This policy of the United States is facing stout opposition from many nuclear scientists and weapon experts in the United States and even the conservative newspapers are openly voicing their opposition to these policies. The New York Times on March 11 came out with an editorial titled "America as a nuclear Rogue" and said: "Nuclear weapons are not just another part of the military arsenal. They are different, and lowering the threshold for their use is a reckless folly."

The US Vice-President visiting the world capitals to canvas support for their plan of attack against Iraq, could not explain the new nuclear policy of their Government.

This new official policy of the United States shows that they are again planning to plunge humanity into a nuclear disaster like that of Hiroshima during the Second World War. However, the opposition growing against this policy, among the Governments of the world - including the allies of the United States - and the developing opposition from the people all over the world, will definitely force the United States to refrain from the proposed nuclear madness.

In this connection we have to note that the policies being pursued by the Vajpayee Government to coordinate our defence strategy with that of US Government, which I need not detail here, will definitely endanger our freedom. We must oppose the same strongly.

We must be in the forefront of opposing the continuing Israeli attack against Palestinian people. We must expose the US imperialist arrogance projected in their new nuclear doctrine, which is against humanity.

### **Comrades,**

This time I do not wish to go in to the details of the developments in the World capitalist economy, which we were examining in detail in previous meetings. However, we have to note that the economic deceleration and recession, which started and aggravated from the middle of 2001 is continuing. The IMF forecast a growth of 0.7 percent for the USA in 2002. Japanese economy, now facing its fourth recession in ten years, is projected to decline at (minus) 1.3 percent in 2002, after a (minus) 0.9 per cent decline in 2001. The European Union is estimated to have grown by a mere 1.5 percent in 2001. Growth in Germany, the leading economy of the European Union, is estimated at 0.7 percent in 2001 and 1.3 per cent in 2002. The latest claim by the United States is of an improving growth rate crossing 4 per cent in the first quarter of this year but many economic experts are questioning this projection. Retrenchment and closures are on the increase in the developed world.

The deceleration of the economic growth in the developed countries has its adverse impact, on the third world countries, due to the crash of their export trade. Many of their industries are closed down and production capacities became idle, with increase in loss of employment. The crisis of over production leads to the intensification of trade war, in spite of the WTO conditionalities. To cite the latest example,

the United States has imposed restrictions by on steel imports, in order to revive their own steel industry forced to closed down due to the demand crunch. This step has invited serious opposition from Germany, Russia and some other countries. They have threatened that they will also impose restrictions on entry of many American goods into their countries. Some economists have described that this development will end in the death of globalisation itself.

Inherent weakness or contradiction in the “new economy” based on advance technology is its nature of jobless growth i.e., while productivity and production goes up, the job opportunities not only remain stagnant, but in many cases decline. This leads to increase in unemployment to alarming proportions even in the developed countries and drastic curtailment of benefits of the workers. This in turn brings in large sections of the workers in the struggle.

Another inbuilt nature of the “new capitalism”, which is controlled by the big multinational corporations and finance capital, is that it plunges the third world countries into the vortex of debt crisis along with the greater concentration of wealth in the developed countries, that too in the hands of the rich few.

The crisis and contradictions in the world capitalist system had never been so prominent in the last four decades or so. This is leading to a desperate bid by the international finance capital controlled by the imperialist powers led by US to impose economic slavery on the developing countries. In the background of arrogant demonstration of muscle power by the US led imperialist forces in the world political arena, notwithstanding their occasional internal contradictions, the aggressive machinations to impose economic hegemony over the globe is going on.

The developing inequalities between the developed and the under developed countries, between the few rich and vast majority of the population, who are suffering due to poverty and deprivation, cannot be solved within the frame work of capitalism. Nor can they be resolved through the so-called reforms prescriptions rolled out by the World Bank, IMF and WTO. It is, therefore, absolutely necessary to mobilise the working class in strength, together with the large majority of the population, to change the very system. I need not emphasise the important role we, the trade unions, have to play in this.

## **Comrades,**

I do not wish to go into the other issues, which are dealt with in detail by our General Secretary in his report. I only wish to make some observations on the issue of “United struggles and organisational consolidation of trade union Movement”. I need not stress the importance of this subject. You have to examine this issue objectively and in-depth and arrive at proper conclusions. You might remember that when we have launched the Centre of Indian Trade Union, we had, among other things, put forth two important objectives: (1) “Unity and Struggle” - to develop united struggles of the working class against the employers’ attack and retrograde policies of the Government and 2) to strive for cohesion and unity of the trade union movement on a national scale. In other words, our objective has all along been uniting the class as a whole to launch bigger battles of resistance and to strengthen the struggle for change of policies. With this end in view, we had put forward the interim slogan of “confederation of trade unions”.

On the first objective, we have been making some headway, in different industries and sectors, to unify the trade unions irrespective of their organisational and political differences for united action on many issues. This was not a simple straight-line process but a zigzag one. In spite of the difficulties encountered, we have consistently pursued this policy, which is yielding increasing results today. Without going into details here, I can mention the latest one, the April 16 strike of workers of the public sector and financial and other sectors, which is definitely a big step forward. However, we should not forget that we have to go a long way ahead to carry along the backward sections of the workers with us, which is still a Herculean task. But the increasing all round attack by the employers and the Government

is pushing all forces for developing unity and struggle.

On the second objective, we are yet to register any notable progress. Though we were making various efforts, which need no elaboration, an objective examination by us is necessary now. The objective situation is getting ripe for making new proposals and suggestions for uniting the trade unions and our class. At the same time, we must not forget that in the capitalist society the ruling classes will take many steps in various ways to keep the workers divided. They will use many ideological weapons, the nationality, caste, community, religion, and language, besides the existing differences in the nature of work, pay scales etc., and politics. Therefore, our task of uniting the class and uniting the trade union movement is a Herculean one. We have to consistently and persistently try to overcome all the hurdles noted above. Perhaps, we have to evolve new line of action to achieve the aim. I only wish to say that we have to put our collective wisdom to evolve it.

Lastly, I have to refer to the Left-Front Governments of West Bengal and Tripura, which are citadels of democracy in our country. These Governments are functioning under several constraints. But, the latest Central budget has targeted the pro-people orientation of the Left Front Govt.s, by tying up allocation of funds by the Centre with the implementation of the so-called reforms. This is nothing but a further infringement on the States' rights in a federal system, against which we must raise our voice. However, I wish to record my appreciation that they are using their limited powers to provide a better life for the people - the peasants, workers and all the toiling sections.

**Thank you.**

# REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

**Dear Comrades,**

After the 10th Conference of the CITU held at Hyderabad in December, 2000, the General Council of the CITU is meeting for the first time now. According to our constitution the General Council should have met once during 2001. However, despite our best efforts we could not hold the meeting, due to unavoidable circumstances.

2. During 2001, the Working Committee met at Bangalore in the month of August to review the activities of the organisation and chalk out programmes of future action. Again, according to the CITU the constitution, we should have held another meeting of the Working Committee in 2001 itself. As the General Council meeting could not be held last year, this requirement also was not met. These are lapses on our part were due to circumstances beyond our control. I hope the comrades will appreciate the circumstances under which these constitutional obligations could not be fulfilled.

## HOMAGE

3. In a short period of 8 months since our last working committee meeting, the CITU lost three of our senior leaders whose contribution to the growth of CITU was immense. We lost Comrade Niren Ghosh, who was a Secretary of CITU since its inception and played a commendable role in development of CITU during the last 3 decades. He was also the President of the West Bengal State Committee of CITU. Com. Niren Ghosh's revolutionary activities through out his life were an inspiration to the new generation of our cadres.

4. Comrade Susheela Gopalan worked tirelessly to build movements of the workers in the traditional sectors and industries, while she was consistently championing the cause of working women. Despite her busy schedule as a Minister of Industry in Govt. of Kerala, she was keen to find time for the trade union activities. She was our Vice President for several years, a post she held till she breathed her last.

5. Comrade N Prasada Rao was indeed a symbol of worker-peasant alliance in the trade union movement and he was relentlessly fighting for building such an alliance. He had been a frontline leader in the peasants' movement in the country before he started working in the trade union front. His remarkable contribution in strengthening of CITU in Andhra Pradesh was witnessed by all during the successful organisation of the 10th conference of CITU at Hyderabad. His outspoken self-critical observations about the weaknesses of the organisation will always be remembered. His simple living and un-assuming behaviour endeared him amongst all who knew him.

6. The passing away of these stalwarts created a big void, which is extremely difficult to fill in. While paying homage to these departed leaders, let us take a pledge to strengthen the revolutionary movement for which they laid down their lives.

## GROWING IMPERIALIST ONSLAUGHT

7. Since we met at Bangalore in August 2001, the intervening period witnessed many important developments, which have a serious bearing on the working class and democratic movement, not only in our country but also all over the globe. We noted during the Bangalore meeting that the growing

recessionary trend in the world economy reflected the gradual deepening of the crisis of the world capitalist system. In this background, the imperialist powers became more aggressive in their design to establish their political and economic hegemony over the entire globe. On the one hand, they sought to suppress any dissent over their hegemonic design from any corner of the globe by brutal display of military power. On the other, they also imposed on the developing countries, simultaneous machinations in various forms in the economic plane, through the World Bank, IMF and WTO and other multilateral agencies. The developments in the intervening period reiterated the same trend more profoundly.

### **SEPTEMBER 11 AND AFTER...**

8. The events following the terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre and Pentagon on September 11 had brought before the entire world more prominently the crude, inhuman and atrocious face of both imperialism and the terrorism, the face of both massacre and dominance, one supplementing the other. These developments have been dealt with in the President's address.

9. But, one significant aspect must be borne in mind. While the people all over the world, even within USA itself, condemned the genocidal war on Afghanistan, the Governments in India and Pakistan, both run by fundamentalist forces, competed with each other in displaying their servility to the US bosses. But,, the people of both the countries expressed their strong disapproval through massive anti-US demonstrations.

### **NATIONAL SITUATION**

10. In this context, it is important to take note of the increasing servility of the ruling BJP led NDA combine to the US imperialists. While, in the name of economic liberalisation, the Govt. of India is continuously surrendering the vital interests of the national economy to them, on the political front as well, they are gradually going on the lap of imperialist camp, betraying the position of non-alignment. Even on Kashmir situation attempts are being made to impose a US sponsored solution on the vexed question. India's Home Minister L K Advani went to the extent of visiting the CIA headquarters and developed intelligence links with the US imperialism. The visit of Deputy Chief of CIA and talks with RAW officials showed the extent to which NDA government went to side with imperialism. The Vajpayee Government in its eagerness for a virtual surrender to US hegemonic design, has repeatedly stressed the concept of strategic alliance with US.

### **TERRORIST ATTACK ON PARLIAMENT**

11. The terrorist attack on the J&K Assembly and Indian Parliament showed utter laxity of the security measures by the Government of India. The suicide squads could penetrate in the security wing of the Government and create an atmosphere of terror. These agencies have been financing even Hindu chauvinists outfits. The NDA Government, however, purposefully ignored the imperialist machinations in India. It is helping the imperialist agencies indulging infiltration of CIA in the name of cooperation and joint exercise, to allow their further inroads for destabilising the situation in India. The entire world knows the CIA's role in pampering and promoting insurgency and terrorist activities in various countries of the world to suit US political interests. The BJP led Govt. refuses to recognise this reality. Their nasty design is to use the event of attack on Parliament in maligning minority community as a whole. And they are justifying authoritarian laws, which has exposed the unprincipled opportunist character of the ruling combine, totally unconcerned about the national interests.

## **DRACONIAN POTO**

12. The Vajpayee Government, in the name of countering terrorism, promulgated the Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance taking arbitrary authoritarian powers in the hands of state, sweeping powers to detain persons without trial and banning organisations of its dislike. The BJP used the ordinance against minority organisations, while Hindu Chauvinist terrorist organisations have been given full freedom to carry forward their terrorist activities. VHP and Bajrang Dal openly campaigned in support of murderous atrocities against the minorities but the NDA Government did not take any action against them. Despite stiff opposition in Parliament, the BJP Govt. got the POTO Bill passed a joint session of Parliament. The US Government spokesman immediately welcomed the passing of the POTA. It shows the interest taken by imperialist agencies to enact such undemocratic legislation in India.

13. It has been the experience of trade union movement that DIR, ESMA, MISA, NASA were recklessly used against trade unions, though they were introduced in the name of defending the security and integrity of the country. TU movement will have to continue to unleash vigorous campaign against this black law.

## **UGLY RISE OF COMMUNALISM**

14. Our President in his address has dealt with the horrendous crimes that have been perpetrated by the sangh parivar outfits, in the aftermath of Godhra incident and other issues. The Gujarat carnage points out to what extent VHP, Bajrang Dal and other RSS outfits or in that matter the BJP itself can go to achieve their Hidutva agenda and pursue their political design.

15. The industrial development of Gujarat greatly suffered due to riots. So long Modi remains at the helm of affairs in Gujarat minority communities will not feel sure about their security in the State. And now, as revealed from the outcome of the BJP national meet at Goa, the BJP is now desperately seeking to go for snap poll in Gujarat riding on the wave of more-than-month-long continuing Govt. sponsored communal passion to get back to power.

16. It is the duty of the trade union movement and CITU in particular to expose the heinous criminal design of the BJP-RSS bandwagon through vigorous grass root level campaign, along with their effort to unite the working class in the struggle against anti-people policies of the same BJP led Govt. The TU movement in India must mount their vigilance and campaign to defeat the evil designs of communal forces so that class unity is preserved, secular fabric of India can be saved and India's image is restored in the world.

## **CORRUPTION GALORE!**

17. Several financial scandals have come to light - most serious ones among them have been reported in the Ministry of Defence. Though George Fernandes had to resign as Defence Minister following Tehelka expose, Vajpayee had taken him back in the Cabinet even though the committee appointed in this case is yet to complete the enquiry. Subsequently also, a number of scams and scandals, mostly related to defence purchases like coffin and ammunition etc., besides scams in share market and distress-sale of public sector units, were witnessed, one after another, with the direct complicity of the BJP-NDA Ministers.

18. Recently even the Government intelligence had to admit that Daewood Ibrahim and Chotta Shakil gangs had financed Jet Airways. However, the Government of India is tolerating all these developments, since they are part and parcel of globalisation outfit.

## **ROLE OF BJP ALLIES**

19. Though some of the secular allies of NDA Govt. condemned Gujarat killings and some of them demanded Modi's ouster, these partners failed to take a firm stand against BJP carrying out their Hidutva agenda. In spite of talking time and again about NDA agenda, the BJP has been so long pursuing its communal agenda through VHP, Bajrang Dal and other RSS wings. Now from their Goa meeting, they came out more openly with their communal design. Some of the NDA allies also criticise certain economy related decisions of the Govt., including the latest budget proposals.

20. BJP could successfully carry forward their hidden agenda due to the opportunist role of the non-BJP allies in NDA. They wanted to stick to power at any cost and hence they do not desire to have a downfall of Vajpayee government. Though the trade union wings of these parties openly came out against NDA Government economic policies, these parties were supporting BJP polices due to their selfish motive. The role of these parties for the present situation should be taken into consideration by the trade union movement during the struggle against the NDA Governmentl policies. Consistent united working class action and massive countrywide mobilisation against the policies of the NDA Govt. can alone expose the notoriety of this opportunist political combine and create condition for ending the disastrous regime.

## **ECONOMIC SITUATION**

21. The report, placed in the last working committee meeting held at Bangalore in August 2001, pointed to the trend of terminal decline in the growth rate in all the sectors of the economy at the end of a decade-long pursuit of the policy of so called economic liberalisation. The period since then witnessed a confirmation of such declining trend in the whole economy, with its pernicious effects on the life and living of the workers and the common people.

### **INDUSTRIAL DECLINE**

22. As per the Central Statistical Organisation (CSO) estimates, all the sectors of the industry witnessed a consistent decline in growth rate throughout the year 2001-02. In manufacturing sector, it declined to less than half that of the previous year - from 6.7% in 2000-01 to a mere 3.3% in 2001-02. The growth rates in mining, electricity and construction dipped to 1.4%, 5.2% and 2.9% respectively in 2001-02 from 3.3%, 6.2% and 6.8% during the previous year.

23. A closer look will reveal a further dismal scenario. As per data released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the infrastructure sector recorded a mere 2% growth during April-December 2001, as against 6.8% during the corresponding period in 2000. Of the six industries in the infrastructure group, crude petroleum and steel recorded an absolute decline by 1.9% and 0.3% respectively, while the growth rate in other four items viz., coal, electricity, cement and petro-products was much below that of the previous year, indicating the deterioration of the situation. The capital goods sector, an important indicator of the strength of the industrial economy recorded a negative growth of 8.6% during April-September 2001. The basic goods sector grew by only 2% during the same period (against 4.3% in the previous year). Growth in consumer non-durables fell from 4.3% last year to only 3.1% during April-September in 2001(The Financial Express, 13-11-2001).

24. The industrial slowdown is also reflected in the sharp decline in domestic capital formation. Despite large-scale bonanza granted to the private corporate sector, both domestic and foreign, to the tune of 15 to 20 thousand crore rupees crore in the budget every year, the investment climate is still not out of the gloom. While speaking to the representatives of the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) in a post-budget interaction this year, the Revenue Secretary, S Narayan pointed to the abysmally poor

performance of the private sector, while reminding them of Rs 16000 crore provided in the last year budget (2000-01) in the form of "give-aways" to the corporate sector, through various provisions and concessions.

25. The corporate sector enjoyed those giveaways through manipulations but contributed practically nothing in response. As per CSO estimates, the gross capital formation by private corporate sector consistently declined from 1997 onwards both in absolute terms (from Rs 1,27,304 crore in 1997-98 to Rs 1,23,022 crore in 2000-01) and also as percentage of GDP from 8.4% to 5.9%. During the same period, despite all hostility and discrimination by the owner Govt. itself, the public sector's contribution to capital formation has gone up by Rs 48000 crore, which worked to keep the economy somehow alive (Business Line, 5-02-2002). The rate of growth of value added in industry has gone down from an average of 8.5% during 1993-97 period to mere 4.8% during 1997-2000. This clearly reveals that the feature of industrial decline is just not accidental for one or two years but it has taken a cancerous turn in the post liberalisation regime.

26. The state of affairs in the economy has been more glaringly revealed by sharp and consistent nosedive by Business Confidence Index (BCI) measured and reported by National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) from 2000 onwards. From a high of 122 in April 2000, the index has fallen to a 24 months low of 82.5 in October 2001. As observed by NCAER, the decline in business confidence is widespread across sectors and regions and insufficient domestic demand is the single most important factor in all the segments of the industrial sector inhibiting growth in production. The Economic Times (7-11-2001), which otherwise is a strong supporter of the policies of liberalisation, had to editorially comment: "How else can one reconcile the optimism of service providers with the reality of an economy that seems to have few macro-economic indicators going for it? Exports are down, as is the rate of growth in industrial production and more alarmingly the capital goods..."

## **DECLINE IN AGRICULTURE**

27. The agricultural sector also faced a severe downward pressure, with the accompanying disaster for the rural folk constituting the overwhelming majority of the population. For the first time since independence, the rate of growth in food grains production has gone down below the rate of growth in population in the 1990s. At the same time, the withdrawal of quantitative restrictions on imports leading to flooding of Indian market by foreign agri-products and the resultant collapse of prices also hit the non-food grain agricultural sector the hardest.

28. The extreme distortion of the rural economy owing to the most irrational policies of the NDA Govt. also manifested by the paradox of decline in agricultural production along with the Govt. godowns overflowing with food stocks of over 60 million tonness on the one hand and phenomenal increase in starvation deaths and suicides in the countryside on the other.

29. As per Govt. records, despite huge stocks at Govt's disposal, the net per capita availability of cereals per day has declined from 468.5 grams in 1991 to 390.6 grams in 2001 and that of pulses from 34.3 to 26.4 grams over the same period. The growth of value addition in agriculture has gone down from 4.5% in 1993-97 to mere 1.2% during 1997-2001.

30. The investment in agriculture also witnessed a decline in real terms and so also the rural credit to lower strata of the agricultural economy. As a result, both agricultural employment and also non-farm employment sharply declined signalling deepening poverty in the countryside. The agricultural wages have also gone down in real terms - a trend that had already set in since last three years. All these manifest a sharp decline in the purchasing power of mass of the people and aggravating the poverty all around, thereby affecting the industrial economy as well by way of deepening demand constraints.

31. The best way of tackling the situation should have been to rejuvenate the rural economy by starting a massive food-for work programme utilising the surplus food stocks, which could help in improving the rural infrastructure and also the purchasing power of the common people. But the Govt. has instead decided to dismantle the public distribution system, stop procurement and remove all control on food prices and its movement leaving the entire food economy to the market forces to benefit the rich landlords and unscrupulous traders. This is going to further aggravate the crisis in the rural economy. The combined effect of complete deregulation of agriculture, removal of Quantitative Restrictions on imports and entry of MNCs in the agricultural economy is going to spell graver disaster particularly among the poorer strata of the peasantry and agricultural workers through greater concentration of land and increase in landlessness, commercialisation of agriculture with the strengthening of the grip of MNCs .

32. The increasing grip of MNCs on the agricultural economy of the country is also facilitated by the virtual capitulation by the Govt. to the pressures mounted by the rich nations in the WTO ministerial meet at Doha. That is now followed by recent approval granted by the Govt. to the use of genetically modified (GM) seeds in the country, particularly the Bt Cotton of Monsanto. The use of GM crops, the benefits of which is questioned by a major section of our scientific community, was banned in many European countries including England, Japan, Brazil etc. The use of GM crops and seeds will, besides making our agriculture vulnerable to unforeseen perils, also led to greater control of the MNCs over our vital agricultural produces.

33. Through a recent statement released to Press by the finance ministry, the Govt. made an attempt to project a marked improvement in agricultural production in the last quarter of 2001-02, showing the annual growth rate in agriculture for 2001-02 to be around 5.7%. This is nothing but a ploy to confuse and cheat the people. The fact remains that this illusory growth took place over the negative growth in index of Agri-production or absolute decline during the previous two years (—0.9% and -6.6%: Economic Survey) and in real terms the food grains production in 2001-02 has remained well below the 1999 level.

### **GRAVE EMPLOYMENT SCENARIO**

34. The all round economic decline has further made the employment scenario more critical. In fact, the net contribution of the liberalisation policies to employment generation during the last decade turned negative, both in quantity and quality. It has killed more jobs than it could create and whatever jobs created, mostly in the informal sector, have been more than neutralised by massive job losses in the organised sector through hectic process of downsizing with active Govt. patronage.

35. The Central Govt. itself is the initiator of the job killing exercise. The Govt. has already embarked on implementation of the report of the Geethakrishnan Committee (Expenditure Reform Commission). It has prescribed downsizing through VRS, and forced retrenchment, of various Govt. departments to the tune of 10% in five years, of which one year has already passed. A number of Govt. departments under various ministries have already been declared redundant. Many State Govt.s are also pursuing the same policy. Madhya Pradesh Govt. has already notified retrenchment of over 28000 daily rated workers. However, this course could partially be stayed by the CITU's initiative in moving the High Court.

36. In the Central public sector units, the Govt. and the respective managements are aggressively pushing for VRS, along with the exercise for privatisation. During the last two years, more than one lakh jobs were lost in Central public sector alone. Besides, in the banking sector, the nationalised banks had axed 99452 employees, through VRS till August 2001.

37. In the private sector also the decline is even more prominent. As per latest CSO data, reported in

The Economic Times (21-3-2002), during the process of last two years, manpower in the factory sector has gone down by more than seven lakhs. Of this, two major units, TISCO and Tata Engineering together had sent out more than 20000 workers, Voltas had reduced workforce by 41.61%, Philips by 35.44%, LML by 15%. To name a few more, Bajaj Auto downsized 4785 workers (in two years till 2001), Hind Motors 1500, Reliance Industries 1500 and ACC 6000. The IT sector, which created much euphoria, has witnessed loss of more than 10000 jobs within one-year in 2001.

38. The textile sector is, perhaps, facing the worst situation. As revealed by a study published by Business Standard (18th August to 3rd September 2001), 35% of the textile workers or 3.49 lakh workers lost jobs in last two years and 395 of the total 1850 registered textile mills are reportedly shut down. Of these, 47 had been closed down within 15 months till 2001. Textile division of Reliance laid off 4600 workers, Grasim (Birla) by around 1500, Bombay Dying closed down two units at Jamnagar and Roha, besides planning to reduce workforce by 3000 in other units. In almost all the major textile centres in the country, closure, sickness and job losses have become the order of the day.

39. Another feature of the employment scenario is the fast deterioration in the quality of employment. Doing away with the permanent workforce through closure and reopening the same unit with contract workers has become the standard modus operandi of the employers. This is reported from many industrial centres in the country like Ghaziabad, Kanpur in UP, Dharuheda, Gurgaon, Panipat, Faridabad in Haryana, and many other States. The Govt. machinery in many States has directly been indulging in such gross unlawful exercise by the employers. This resulted in sharp decline in the quality of employment and in the level of workers' earnings - in most cases below the statutory minimum wages. This has led to gradual casualisation and deeper impoverishment of the workers.

40. Even the report of the Montek Singh Ahluwalia Committee (Task Force on Employment) report had to admit this alarming phenomenon of declining quality of employment. It noted: "The purely quantitative approach ignores the very important issue of low 'quality' of employment. ... This is evident from the fact that while unemployment according to CDS(current daily status) measures was only 7% in 1999-00, the percentage of population in poverty line was 26%. In other words, large number of those currently employed according to NSS (National Sample Survey) definition earn income level which is insufficient to take them above poverty line."

#### **UNION BUDGET 2002-03: CONTINUATION OF THE FAULTY POLICIES**

41. The trend of all round decline in the economy since last five years had to be admitted by all concerned, including those in the camp of liberalisation. The severe demand constraint in the economy consequent upon spreading unemployment, large scale impoverishment and reduction in the purchasing power of the masses, squeezing of the domestic market as well as declining access to international market etc. have been identified by eminent economists across the board as the important factor for the vicious circle of slow down, decline, job losses and further aggravation of distress and recession. Even one of the leading Chambers of Commerce, ASSOCHAM urged upon the Finance Minister in the pre-budget discussion for adopting demand and investment stimulating policies.

42. But the both the General and Railway budgets, moved just in the opposite direction and sought to address only the supply side of the economy by conferring more 'give aways' to the capitalist and landlord lobby. Each and every measure in the revenue front announced in the budget is aimed at imposing more burdens on the already impoverished masses, depressing the demand situation further.

43. The cruel attacks on the people comprise hiking excise duties by Rs 6700 crore (while cutting down import duties by Rs 2200 crore), hiking LPG prices by Rs. 20 per cylinder and PDS kerosene by Rs 1.50 per litre, hike in postal tariff by 20 to 100 per cent, reduction of subsidy on fertilisers, hike in

railway fares, 5% surcharge on the income tax in the name of national security, reduction in interest rates on PF and small savings and various other measures.

44. On the other hand, a fresh series of concessions have been granted to private corporates and foreign capital, despite their dismal performance last year, even after liberal largesse worth Rs 16000 crore granted to them in the last year budget. Tax reduction on foreign companies from 48 to 40 percent, allowing 15% depreciation for the new plants and machineries, freedom to NRIs to repatriate interest and income, freedom to Mutual funds to invest abroad, despite decline in domestic investment, are some of the numerous bonanzas granted out of the national exchequer to the capitalist, landlord class and foreign lobby. Added to this is the dereservation of 50 more items from the domain of small-scale sector in order to marginalise them further in favour of the monopoly houses, both domestic and foreign. Side by side, the policy of total deregulation of agriculture has been announced, which is aimed at handing over the rural economy to the absolute control of the landlord-capitalist nexus, encouraging MNCs in the agro sector and further marginalisation of the poor peasants and agricultural workers.

45. The anti-people bias of the Govt. further clearly manifested by its targeting the people of the lower strata for revenue generation. Last year, it fell much short of the target mainly owing to industrial slow down and criminal tax evasion by the corporate lobby. The tax outstanding on account of corporate tax, income tax, central excise and customs duty as on 2000 was more than Rs 62000 crore, mostly from the big corporate houses. The same corporate lobby also has usurped Rs 80000 crore from the nationalised banks in the form of NPA, which along with interest liability on the same has crossed Rs 1,20,000 crore. Instead of taking stringent action for recovering the tax outstanding and NPA from the criminal defaulters and tax evaders, more concessions have been showered on them in the current budget. On the other hand, the Govt. spread the income tax net downwards to trap even the lowest paid unskilled workers of the organised sector in the tax net. Besides the salary, all basic welfare related benefits and perks have been subjected to income tax. Fleecing the honest taxpayers and rewarding the criminal tax evaders have become the bedrock of Vajpayee Govt's budget exercise.

46. The Finance Minister, in his budget speech, claimed to have taken action for augmenting the demand in the economy through higher public investment in infrastructure, mainly the power, roads and railways. He claimed to have increased the Central plan outlay in these three sectors by 22, 39 and 23 percent respectively. A close look into the arithmetic of such outlay exposes the dirty tricks of framing false projections in budget speech. The budgetary arithmetic shows that the three sectors - power, roads and railways - will receive a budgetary support lesser by Rs. 400 crore than that in last year budget. The increase in Central plan outlay for these sectors is expected to come from internal and extra-budgetary sources, i.e., from the public sector enterprises, the materialisation of which is mostly uncertain, given the crisis situation in which they have landed due to the hostile policy of the Govt itself.

47. Further, budget this year has become instrumental in distorting the federal character of the Centre-State relations further by linking major part of the Central financial allocation to the States with the so called Fund/Bank dictated reforms. The game plan is to prevent the State Govt.s from trying for alternative roots for development despite all limitations.

48. In totality, Central budget this year has followed the same policies, which are a proven failure by all standards - they failed to deliver anything, neither growth, nor employment, nor any dent in the poverty situation, throughout the entire nineties.

49. The EXIM policy announcement that followed the presentation of budget is yet another example of misplaced diagnosis of the problem. In reality, this is a ploy for further giveaways to corporate and foreign lobby. The last year's exercise also doled out lot of concessions to export oriented industries,

which ended in further deterioration in the export front. By April-September last year, the Indian exports recorded an absolute decline in dollar terms by around US \$ 184 million (Economic Survey). Figures recently published by the Commerce Ministry show that during April 2001-February 02, export grew by mere 0.06 percent and the Commerce Minister, in his recent statement did not rule out the possibility of negative growth in export during the year ending in March 2002 (Economic Times 2-04-2002). A CII Survey reported that out of 48 exports oriented industries under survey, 34 have reported decline or moderate growth (Business Standard, 8-04-2002).

50. The problems lie somewhere else, which the policy makers refuse to look at. The increasing protectionist measures, resorted to by the developed countries in the period of slow down of the global economy, are at the root of the problems. The growth of world trade volume has been projected to be around 1% last year and following the September 11 incident, it is destined to decline further. In such a situation banking on the exports front, ignoring the task of improving domestic market situation will result in further failure and reduce revenue generation. The US has already resorted to aggressive anti-dumping measures against various Indian exports. The European Union is expected to follow suit. This led to continuously declining and/or restricted access of Indian exports to the markets abroad. In the face of such a situation, the Indian Govt. should have taken appropriate measures for protecting the Indian industries. Instead, the Govt. has further liberalised imports in a big way. The increase in export incentives in the form of various concessions is only a futile exercise, draining the exchequer. The result is already visible in the decline in domestic industrial growth including the export oriented ones.

51. Every time, towards the end of fiscal year, the Finance Minister comments with all seriousness (or pretension?) that 'the period of decline is almost at its end' or 'we are almost at the end of tunnel and recovery is going to start soon'. The industry lobby joins the Finance Minister in this chorus. But, soon thereafter the budget is out with all bonanzas for the capitalists and fleeing measures for the people.

52. This time also, the CII survey attempted the same trick. The CII Survey Report, while being compelled to record overall deterioration in the basic goods and capital goods sector as well as in the export oriented industries, ultimately commented: "Some sectors have shown clear sign of revival and may pick up in the first quarter of the present fiscal, depending on the Govt's commitment to reforms. The policy environment needed further streamlining for the growth of industry" (Business Standard, 8-04-2002). By 'streamlining' they mean more concessions. Can hypocrisy go any further?

## **PUBLIC SECTOR UNDER LIQUIDATION**

53. The period, since the last working committee meeting, witnessed a hectic exercise by the Govt. of India to sell out the PSUs at any cost. Each and every event of either off-loading of shares or outright sale of PSUs exposed gross irregularity and corruption. The CAG and the Parliamentary Standing Committee had pointed out such irregularities and loss to exchequer time and again.

54. After Modern Food and Balco, a number of PSUs have been sold off in a scandalous manner. Paradeep Phosphates Ltd., has been sold to private hands at a price much less than the minimum reserve prices decided by the agency appointed by the Disinvestment Ministry itself. Highly profit-making VSNL has been handed over to the Tatas at a price less than the dividend received by the Govt. from that company during the year. Nine ITDC hotels, with huge real estate properties in the prime locations of various major cities of the country, have been sold to private parties in exchange of only Rs 181 crore, which does not cover even a small fragment of the price of the landed property, not to speak of the palatial buildings and other assets. Same has been the story of distress sale of other PSUs viz., CMC, HTL, Hindustan Zinc. Now Jessop is being processed for transfer to the Ruias, almost free of cost. In the same manner other PSUs in almost all vital and strategic sectors of the economy like Airlines, Airports, Coal, Oil, Power, Metal and Heavy Engineering, wagon-manufacturing

etc. have already been scheduled for sale, to garner Rs.80,000 crore during the tenth five year plan, while the target for 2002-2003 has again been fixed at Rs 12,000 crore.

55. Government Departments and the Departmental Undertakings including Railways are being downsized and privatised. As an enabling step for privatisation, the Telecom Department has already been corporatised into BSNL and MTNL. Corporatisation of Port & Docks and Defence Production units has been reiterated in the 2002-03 budget. Further to facilitate early and easy privatisation, the PSUs are being split into pieces in the name of restructuring, mostly under advice from foreign consultants appointed at huge consultancy fees. All these moves for strategic sale of PSUs are against the basic spirit of the Indian Constitution and in line with World Bank/IMF prescriptions.

56. On the other hand, the sick PSUs are being pushed deliberately towards closure and winding up. In the case of most sick PSUs, where the Govt. had already announced the decision for closure, the cost of the revival package was much less than the financial cost of closure on account of VRS and other payments alone. The case of IISCO is the typical example of forcing the ruin of the most resourceful and potentially viable integrated steel plant in the country by deliberate indecision and neglect of the Govt. Another example is the case of Eastern Coal Fields Ltd (ECL), supplying the best quality coal to the nation, where the Govt has resorted to the destructive move to close down collieries with huge reserves of quality coal, that too on the plea of financial revival of the company.

57. Besides the BIFR route, the Govt. has also been speeding up the closure of many sick and loss making but potentially viable PSUs, by granting liberal permission through the Union Labour Ministry in exercise of the provisions in the Industrial Disputes Act, without even consulting the concerned State Governments. The PSUs referred to BIFR have been denied wage revision, in some cases for two rounds. The workers of many sick and loss making PSUs are not getting wages for months together, in some cases for more than 25 months. Now the SICA is being repealed and the Companies Act is being amended to facilitate fast track liquidation of all sick companies, including the PSUs.

58. The Union Ministry of Disinvestment has brought out a "Manual on Privatisation". The manual seeks to systematise and legitimise the process of loot of national wealth through fast track privatisation as prescribed by the World Bank. While dealing at length on various methods of valuation of the PSUs under sale, the manual recommends a particular method - 'the discounted cash flow method' (DCF), which ensures price-fixing for the PSUs under sale at a very low level, without any consideration of its huge asset base and replacement cost, solely to the advantage of the prospective customers.

59. The "Asset valuation method", by which the real value of the huge national assets created by the public sector industries over a long period can correctly be assessed, has squarely been discarded by the said Manual authored by the Disinvestment Ministry. While recommending the Discounted Cash Flow method (DCF), the Manual went a step ahead to advise that the prospective cash flow to the company under sale must also take into consideration the after-sale presumable cost for modernisation, capital-replacement, market etc. that may be incurred by the new owner, which would lead to assessment of the 'cash flow' at a further lower level and facilitate low pricing for the prospective customer.

60. In the case of the PSUs, which are split into several pieces in the name of restructuring, the process will also weaken the concerned PSUs and ensure a reduced 'cash flow' as per DCF method and hence a lower price for sale. Thus SAIL is being restructured into multiple 'special business units' as a prelude to formation of separate entities and then for sale. Similar exercises are going on in many Oil PSUs as well. Dismantling of the monolithic structure of certain mega-size PSUs is also one of the strategies designed to facilitate easy privatisation to the advantage of the private capitalists.

61. Thus, the whole privatisation process has become an instrument of transferring valuable public assets to private hands for a song, much to the detriment of the national interests and the industrial

economy of the country in particular. Corruption is woven intrinsically with the whole process,. The very concept of disinvestment/privatisation of public sector units, more so the blue chip ones, is in itself a bankrupt policy perception and a treachery with the nation and fraud on the people of the country.

62. Another aspect in respect of privatisation needs special attention. The bankruptcy of the policy of privatisation has already started to surface glaringly in many countries in the world signaling a reverse process. The countries, which pioneered privatisation during the last decade and half, have silently started a reversal process. The power sector in the State of California in USA, which was privatised into multiple companies had created such a mess that the Govt. had to take back the control again. The British Govt. privatised Railways with much fanfare during the Thatcher regime, again into multiple companies to take care of different areas of operation. After a decade of experience, the biggest of the private companies in Britain - Rail Track - went into liquidation and the U.K. Govt. had to take it over to keep the railway operations on, again quite silently. The same is the story of privatisation of Airlines in New Zealand, where the Govt. after a visible mess in the entire airline sector of the country, re-nationalised it. These are only select examples. But, there are many such cases all over the world to underline the futility of the policy of privatisation. These countries, the U.S.A., U.K. and others, are prescribing wholesale privatisation for India and other developing countries, even while similar exercises in their own countries has already flopped. The intention is quite clear. They want to create a bigger mess in the economy of the developing countries to establish the economic hegemony of the imperialist powers.

### **ATTACKS ON TU RIGHTS**

63. The Second National Commission on Labour, appointed by the Government of India, without either proper consultations with or due representation to the trade unions, had been mandated to recommend changes in labour laws in tune with the liberalisation policies. But, the Finance Minister has, in his successive Budget speeches had announced far reaching amendments to the labour laws, reducing the Second National Commission on Labour exercise to a mockery. The Task Force of the Planning Commission on Employment had made further recommendations, touted as 'remedies' for the grim employment scenario in the country, which no civil society can accept.

64. The Trade Unions Act has already been amended. It is an attack on the right of workers to form trade unions of their choice. In the name of tackling the multiplicity of trade unions, registration of new trade unions by workers had been rendered almost impossible.

65. The Industrial Disputes Act is proposed to be amended to make the provisions for securing the permission of the appropriate Government for effecting lay-off, retrenchment or closure applicable only to establishments with 1000 or more workers. This is virtually conferring the right to 'hire and fire' workers on the employers

66. Another area of labour law changes in the offing relates to the legislation on Contract Labour. The Supreme Court by reversing its own judgement in the Air India case has obliged the employer class with unfettered right to contract out jobs. The Finance Minister had announced that contract labour legislation will be further amended permitting outsourcing in both the core and peripheral jobs. The Task Force on Trade and Industry, constituted by the Prime Minister comprising employer representatives, and the Ahluwalia Committee report have recommended other numerous amendments to labour laws, which are aimed at annulling all the trade union rights secured by the workers through decades of struggle and imposing conditions of slavery on the workers.

67. The NDA Government had already introduced a bill in Parliament for repeal of Sick Industrial

Companies (Special Provisions) Act and winding up of the BIFR and the AAIFR. By another bill, the Government has proposed to constitute National Company Law Tribunals, which will facilitate fast track liquidation of these units, with no concern for their rehabilitation or revival.

68. Another dimension of the attack on TU rights, particularly in the post-liberalisation regime, is the desperate violation of all the existing labour laws by the employers with active patronage of the administration. The system of inspection has officially been discontinued in many States and wherever such system still exists, internal orders have been issued in most of the places not to go for inspection without prior approval of the highest authority.

69. Taking advantage of such situation, almost all the labour related statutes - on minimum wages, payment of wages, maintenance of employment registers, accident compensation, working hours, night shift work by women etc. - are being flagrantly violated by the employers in most of the States. The complaints lodged against such violations are ignored by the law enforcing authorities and agitations by the workers against such violation meets with victimisation by the employers and atrocities by the police and administration, in the name of maintenance of law and order. In fact, the issues relating to some of the major struggles of the recent period - by the EPZ workers at Visakhapatnam, the stone quarry workers and the spinning mill workers of Haryana etc. - are mainly implementation of existing labour laws, for which the workers have to fight braving brutal attacks at the hands of the custodians of those very laws.

70. This is the scenario of labour law enforcement as per reports received from various parts of the country. Added to this is the ban imposed by judicial orders on regular trade union activities like gate-meetings, demonstration etc. at the workplace. This exposes the growing arrogance and bias of all the institutions of governance against the working class movement in the era of liberalisation.

71. The entire trade union movement in India has unitedly expressed its opposition to the proposed labour law changes and also against the growing anarchy in the labour law enforcement. But, the NDA Government, which is carrying out the dictates of the World bank and the IMF, is in no mood to pay heed to the voice of united opposition by the trade unions. It is, therefore, imperative that the trade union must assert through heightened struggles to defeat these draconian changes in the offing.

### **ATTACKS ON SOCIAL SECURITY**

72. 'Social security' and 'social safety net' are often talked about alongside with economic liberalisation, as a ploy at least to give the reforms a 'human face'. But the Government of India has no concern for this.

73. The social security situation in India, despite several decades long implementation of some of the measures like the Employees Provident Fund, Pension and the Employees State Insurance Schemes, which gain do not have any significant coverage, is characterised by a lack of coherent policy.

74. The Task Force on Social Security also in its reports made this critical observation: 'Even though the social security programmes / schemes have been on the ground for many years, the social security system in the country continues to suffer from several weakness which, intel-alia, include the absence of any well formulated plan, design or policy on social security; limitations in the scope of coverage consequent on specification on class (es) of industries, wage ceiling and employment threshold and absence of uniform criteria for coverage; exclusions from protection of the self employed and workers in the unorganised sector whose needs for social security is more pronounced.....'

75. But, the NDA Government has not bothered to place the report of the Task Force on Social Security for discussions before the tripartite labour forum even. While the same Government is speeding up

the labour law amendments without waiting for the report of the national Labour Commission, it has sent the report on social security to the Commission for examination. This is nothing but a dilatory move.

76. The NDA Government has embarked on measures to systematically undermine even the existing social security measures, available to a limited section of the workers. The interest rate on Provident Fund, as also on all small savings schemes, had been reduced from 12 to 9.5 per cent and is slated to be further lowered, with a view to rob the workers and the saving public of the return on their hard earned moneys for the purpose of Governmental fiscal management.

77. The new recruits to Central Government jobs will not have the benefit of the existing scheme of Government pension. They will be pushed to a self-contributory scheme.

78. The past six years of the implementation of the Employees Pension Scheme, which was introduced with much fanfare, has only confirmed the worst apprehensions voiced by several trade unions including the CITU. The Supreme Court has not yet pronounced its orders on the related case, even though the hearing thereon was concluded on May 1st last year. But, already the Government has initiated moves to reduce even the paltry benefits provided for in the Scheme.

79. In the name of pension sector reforms, the Government is planning to restructure the existing social security schemes, mainly with a view to divert the workers' earnings to the speculative stock market operation.

80. On the plea of implementing the Sathyam Committee recommendation, the Government is moving in the direction of privatising the ESI dispensaries and hospitals, besides severely restricting the benefits available to the workers under the scheme.

81. The trade union movement must take up these issues relating to social security as a priority task and oppose the negative moves initiated by the Government. The very process of liberalisation and globalisation is rendering an increasing proportion of workers vulnerable to severe attacks. In the name of industrial restructuring, downsizing of workforce is resorted to on a large scale. More and more workers are pushed into non-permanent and insecure employment. The need to strengthen and improve social security measures is acquiring urgency and paramount importance, which cry for urgent attention of the trade union movement.

## **REVIEW OF STRUGGLES**

### **OBSERVANCE OF GLOBAL TU ACTION DAY ON 9TH NOVEMBER**

82. From the last Working Committee meeting, a call was given to observe 'Global Trade Union Action Day' against policies of 'neo-liberal, anti-people globalisation' on 9th November at the call of international trade union centres viz., ICFTU, WFTU and WCL. The working committee directed all the CITU units to strive for united mobilization of the entire working class against the policies of imperialist globalisation, on the day of commencement of WTO ministerial meet at Doha(Qatar).

83. CITU centre took initiative to enlist the support of all the trade unions for observance of the global TU action day. All the trade union centers of the country viz., CITU, AITUC, INTUC, BMS, HMS, UTUC, UTUC-LS, TUCC, AICCTU had issued joint statement giving call for countrywide observance of the day through joint demonstrations. This joint call created high enthusiasm among the workers and trade unions throughout the country. In the preparatory stage itself thousands of meetings were organized at factory gates, townships, and industrial centers, all over the country. Various regional trade union centers like those affiliated to Shiv Sena and Kamgarh Aghadi in Maharashtra, AIADMK, MDMK and TMTUC in Tamilnadu, etc also joined the campaign. Several millions of printed pamphlets

in almost all the Indian languages were published and distributed among the workers; tens of thousands of posters were released.

84. On 9th November 2001, the country witnessed several thousands of joint demonstrations by all the trade unions and workers from both organized and unorganized sector, in almost all the State capitals, district headquarters and major industrial centers. From West Bengal, Tripura, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh, reports were received about participation of agricultural workers and peasants in the demonstrations at many centres.

85. Most of our State Committees, barring a few, have taken up seriously the task of preparatory campaign for observance of the global trade union action day through mobilizing other trade unions in the joint campaign and simultaneously carrying on independent campaign among the mass of the workers. This campaign for the observance of the global action day was taken up in continuation of the joint trade union conventions organized in all the States against the anti-people policies of Govt of India during the preceding months, which created the enthusiasm for countrywide all-in united trade union action among the workers. This also led to widespread participation by the mass of the workers in the programme organized in numerous centres in all the States.

86. There are certain gray areas too. In certain States, like UP, and also in the Capital city at Delhi, participation in the programme reflected ritualism among the leadership in respect of the observance of this historic occasion of global protest day, first of its kind in the history of world trade union movement. The mobilisation was far less than the usual capacity of CITU in the concerned State/centre, not to speak of others which clearly revealed the casual approach of the concerned leadership in the preparatory campaign and lack of realization of the importance of the occasion.

#### **NATIONAL PROTEST DAY ON 14TH MARCH**

87. The call for observance of National Protest Day on 14th March 2002 against the economic policy given by all the central trade unions in the country was also responded to by the working people all over the country magnificently. Though initially the INTUC did not join the call, but subsequently through our persuasion, they decided to join the programme.

88. As per reports received at the centre, the call was observed through massive joint demonstrations, rallies and processions etc in almost all the State Capitals barring a few exceptions. Not only that, in many States, joint demonstrations were also held at the district headquarters and major industrial centres and industrial townships which could draw enthusiastic participation by the mass of the common workers. The joint rally at Kolkata was participated by more than 30000 workers and Mumbai witnessed a eight kilometer long procession of workers and trade unions of all affiliations. Reports of several thousands strong rallies were also received from Chennai, Thiruvananthapuram, Agartala, Bangalore, Jaipur, Shimla, Chandigarh and other places. In the national capital at Delhi also, more than 15000 strong demonstration was held before the parliament.

#### **STRIKE ON 16TH APRIL**

89. The countrywide public sector strike on 16th April is another important event of united action during the intervening period. The strike call was given by all the central Trade unions except the INTUC central leadership but several industry level INTUC unions and the INTUC led federations in Port & Dock joined the strike call against privatisation, downsizing and attack on workers' rights. The special implication of the 16th April Strike is that although the initial call was for a strike in central PSUs against the anti-people policies of the Govt, the canvas of the strike got further extended. The State Govt employees all over the country joined the strike action and also four all India federations of Anganwadi workers and organisations of beedi workers decided to go for countrywide strike on the

same day.

90. Till going to press, reports of successful observance of Strike was received from most of the central PSUs, banks and insurance and also in all the major ports all over the country. In Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Himachal Pradesh the workers of both public and private sector observed complete industrial strike. In Jharkhand, the call for bandh given by the left parties in support of the public sector strike received very good response. The strike was also quite massive by the State Govt Employees and Anganwadi workers in most parts of the country. Reports were also received about joint solidarity mobilisation by the workers of private sectors, services etc. in other states. While taking part in discussion, comrades may give detailed report of the strike action and solidarity programmes on 16th April.

## **OTHER STRUGGLES**

91. The intervening period also witnessed many important trade union actions both from united platform and also on independent initiative of CITU. Even the weaker States witnessed militant working class actions.

92. Three days strike in the coal mines against privatization move on 3-5 December at the joint call of CITU, AITUC, HMS and BMS unions saw the participation of more than 85% coal miners in all the collieries and establishments all over the country. Although INTUC central leadership did not endorse the strike call, the colliery level unions affiliated to INTUC took active part in the strike campaign to make the strike a total success.

93. The strike struggle by the workers of export processing zone at Visakhapatnam in two phases, ten day long strike in October 2001 and 39 day long strike action from 10th January 2002 braving police repression; mass scale arrests and prohibitory orders were also the notable actions during the period under review. CITU took initiative to organize the VEPZ workers and lead their struggle both against the MNC management and the State administration which could draw the support of other trade unions and common people of the industrial town.

94. Beedi Workers united demonstration before the Parliament on 27th November 2001 is another important event which saw the participation of more than 20000 Beedi workers from all over the country, belonging to all the trade unions.

95. The 1,25,000 workers of the Andhra Pradesh State Transport Corporation went for indefinite strike from 15th October 2001 under the leadership of joint Action Committee comprising all the trade unions demanding wage revision. Strike continued for 24 days braving police atrocities and mass scale arrests, suspension and victimization of workers and could evoke solidarity action not only from the workers of other sectors but also from all opposition parties. The State Govt had to ultimately come to a settlement with the striking unions on 7th November in the face of Statewide General strike called by the trade unions and independent federations in support of the striking workers on 8th November which was supported by the opposition political parties including Congress through a bandh call.

96. 1.25 lakh State transport workers of Tamilnadu and 30000 workers of civil supply department had also gone for indefinite strike from 10th November 2001 under the leadership of Joint Action Committee demanding bonus for all. This strike also continued for almost a month combating police attacks, mass scale arrests. The strike continued paralled along with statewide programmes of courting arrests not only by the strikers but also workers from other sectors demonstrating unique solidarity actions by the entire working class. More than 15000 workers courted arrest in that process and successful General Strike was observed in the State on 23rd November in support of the ongoing transport strike. In the face of such united militant action by the workers, the State Govt had to come forward for

a settlement to end the strike.

97. The heroic one and half month long strike by the Stone quarry workers in the Bhiwani District of Haryana from 2nd February under the leadership of CITU has been another notable event of working class action during the period under review. The demands of the workers were implementation of the Mines Act, registration of the workers, basic safety provisions and accident compensation and stoppage of illegal extortion by the contractors. The strike was sought to be crushed by the State administration by mass scale arrests and brutal terrorizing attacks on the workers and villagers, indiscriminate beatings injuring many including women and children and converting the entire quarrying area into a police camp. The atrocity by the police under direct instigation by the Chief Minister had gone to such extent that the police had ceased the office of the Pahar Khan Mazdoor Union. Almost entire leadership of the union, including the General Secretary of the State CITU, Satveer Singh were arrested while they came for negotiation at the invitation of the Dy Commissioner of Bhiwani District and they were in Jail for more than one and half month on fabricated charges. The Strike continued till 20th March and the District administration had to commit for early settlement on the major issues. The struggle of the stone quarry workers also evoked Statewide solidarity action by the workers of other sectors and other mass organizations of peasants, students, youth, women etc.

98. The struggle of daily rated workers in the Govt departments of Madhya Pradesh was another important initiative by CITU during the intervening period. In the face of notification by the State Govt to retrench 28000 daily rated workers, CITU took initiative to mobilize the workers and agitate over the issue which could draw the support of other unions and political forces. Side by side, CITU moved to Supreme Court to get the move stayed. That the Supreme court order nullified the move of the State Govt to take the daily rated workers out of the purview of the Industrial Disputes Act.

99. The month long continuous strike by the State Govt employees and teachers of Kerala from 6th February had been a united action by the entire trade union movement throughout the State including the unions having allegiance to ruling UDF combine. The decision for strike was taken in the background of spontaneous protest of the mass of the employees against the Govt notification for reducing wages and benefits during the end of January. The hell bent effort by the UDF Govt to disrupt the all in unity of the striking employees and teachers could not succeed. Several thousands were arrested. But many more thousands not only the workers and trade unions, but students, youth, women and other mass organizations took to the streets through processions, rallies, demonstrations in support of the striking employees. On 5th March, Statewide general strike was observed which completely paralysed the normal life in the State. Ultimately, the State Govt had to come forward for a negotiated settlement.

100. During the intervening period, in the background of the ongoing struggle by the workers of small scale sectors at Nasik in Maharashtra, Dr Karad, General Council Member of CITU was convicted with life-imprisonment order by the court. An appeal was filed against the conviction order and at present he is released on bail.

101. The month long countrywide relay strike by the medical and sales representatives under the leadership of FMRAI from 8th April onwards is also another notable event of struggle which was supported by all the central trade unions in the country.

102. Besides above, there had been numerous mobilization and agitations organized by CITU both independently and also along with other unions all over the country.

## **STRUGGLE IN PUBLIC SECTOR**

103. The last Working Committee meeting stressed upon the need for independent initiative of CITU unions to build up countrywide united struggle in the public sector against fast track privatization. The

meeting of the all India coordination committee of CITU unions in public sector was held on 2nd-3rd October 2001 at Kolkata which was attended by more than 100 representatives from various PSUs from all over the country. As per the decision of the Coordination Committee, month long campaign against the anti-PSU policy of the Govt was carried on by our unions which culminated in massive demonstration in all the PSUs in the country on 19th October. From many places, reports were received about workers from other unions joining the CITU-led campaign and demonstration.

104. During the same period there had been numerous industrywise mobilizations and struggles in various public sector units against privatization. The countrywide agitation by the telecom employees, strike by the workers and officers of Jessop, struggles of PSU workers at Visakhapatnam, struggle of Neyveli Lignite corporation\* at Tamilnadu braving police atrocities, struggle of the STC employees braving suspension and other vindictive action are a few examples of such countrywide agitations.

105. In this background, the extended session of the Committee of Public Sector Trade Unions(CPSTU), the united platform of public sector workers' movement, met on 17-18 November 2001 at Bangalore which received enthusiastic response from all the constituent PSU unions. The extended session decided on holding an all India convention of public sector workers at New Delhi at the time of budget session of Parliament and announce the date of countrywide strike in PSUs from that convention. The period following the extended session saw intensive campaign by the CITU and other unions for the convention and countrywide strike in the PSUs against privatization and attack on trade union rights.

106. The all India convention of public sector workers was held on 5th March which was attended by more than 600 representatives from all the unions in PSUs, irrespective of affiliations. From Cochin Shipyard, BEL etc., even the INTUC and BMS unions took part in the convention. The convention decided to go for countrywide strike in the PSUs on 16th April against privatization, downsizing, attack on labour rights and increasing tax burden on the workers.

107 On 6th March a massive Dharna by public sector workers along with the delegates to the all India convention was held before Parliament which was attended by more than 3000 public sector workers. The attendance in the dharna and the mood of the workers was itself an indication of the rising anger among the workers against the disastrous Govt policies.

108. The intensive campaign launched by CITU and CPSTU from November onwards, in the background of hectic move by the Govt to sell out one PSU after another in a scandalous manner created such atmosphere that the BMS which was not a constituent of CPSTU had to endorse strike call in the PSUs on 16th April. Although the national leadership of INTUC did not agree for the strike action, many of the INTUC unions at the industry level have declared their support to strike call. The INTUC unions in Banks and financial institutions have already sponsored the strike call. The INTUC unions in Port & Dock joined along with all other unions in a well organized dharna before the Surface Transport Ministry at New Delhi on 28th February where from they had announced their decision to join the Strike action on 16th April.

109. It should also be noted here that all the trade unions in Defence production units all over the country including those affiliated to INTUC and BMS have decided to go for two days' strike on 23rd and 24th April against the Govt's move to privatize the defence production sector and allow foreign participation.

110. The offensive of privatization is not going to end by 16th April strike. The policy of privatization is not just selling out of PSUs, it is an offensive on and complete reversal of the so long accepted policy of State's active role in the industrial development in the developing countries like India which is synonymous with a move for deindustrialisation. Hence the struggle against privatization should not remain limited within the periphery of PSU workers alone since this involves the question of self reliance

and welfare of the common people as well.

111. Secondly, downsizing of the workforce has also become an integral part of the privatization process. And not only in the PSUs, but also in various Govt departments as well, hectic exercise of declaring surplus and downsizing is going on. The PSUs also cover a wide range of public services or sectors having close bearing with public services, like transport, trading in essential commodities, electricity, food corporation, fertiliser units etc., which are also slated for privatization. In fact, the report of the Expenditure Reform Commission(Geethakrishnan Committee) has recommended for privatization of various public services and downsizing of the concerned workforce in a big way. Further, the policies of the central govt to tie up all central assistance to States with the implementation of so called reforms including privatization are building up compulsion on various State Govts to privatize fully or partially various public services like education, hospitals, municipal services etc or increase the user charges beyond the capacity of the people. Hence the real face of privatisation has to be understood comprehensively by the trade union movement as an offensive not merely for selling out some PSUs but also a ploy to destroy the self-reliant industrial base and employment potential and also to do away with or commercialise a wide range of public services.

112. The trade union movement has to carry on intensive campaign among the mass of the people on this real face of privatization drive to enlist their active support to the anti-privatisation struggle, but for which these policies cannot be defeated. Here lies the importance of the independent initiative of the CITU to create consciousness at the grass root level workers on this uphill task of the PSU workers' movement and also to carry on campaign among the common people against the Govt policies.

113. Another important aspect is the task of maintaining continuity in the united movement of the PSU workers and carry the same to militant heights. Given the aggressiveness of the move of the Govt, the organized expression of determined opposition to the policies through various united actions must be more frequent and ensure much bigger mobilization of workers and common people. After the successful countrywide strike on 16th April, we have to consolidate ourselves to go for further round of actions in continuity, with greater mobilization and spread.

114. For that purpose we must consolidate ourselves first to initiate a more vigorous campaign for a bigger struggle. We must finalise the schedule for holding the organizational convention of our all India coordination committee of public sector unions (CITU) at the earliest to review our activities and experiences in the present phase of struggle, identify our shortcomings and consolidate our organization in the public sector units. We need to launch with a proper planning, another round of intensive campaign while parallely making exercise at the CPSTU level and also with other trade unions to organize a series of countrywide agitational programmes to culminate in another countrywide action by the public sector workers along with other section of the workers and toiling masses. At the same time we must utilise in full the possibility of further militant united actions unfolding in certain sectors like Port & Dock and Oil sector, telecom, electricity etc in the face of ongoing privatization drive.

## **TEXTILES SECTOR**

115. Some observation is required to be made regarding the developments in the textile sector. This is one of the traditional and largest manufacturing sector where the trade union movement is also quite old and the development in this industry particularly in the post liberalisation period is having serious bearing on the trade union movement as a whole.

115. In the post liberalisation scenario, this vital sector is witnessing severe crisis along with surging profit by the monopoly houses like Reliance, JK, Raymond, Mafatlal, Orkay and others operating in this sector. Rs 25000 crore of subsidised assistance has been given by the Govt for modernisation,

which was wholly cornered by these big operators. Small and medium sized mills in particular are facing closures. As reported by Business Standard, 395 textile mills closed down during the last two years period. As per report more than half of the power looms units in the country have been closed.

117. At the same time, the larger mills operated by the monopoly houses also downsized substantially by outsourcing their production through numerous small firms which mushroomed during the recent years and where the trade union movement is yet to make their headway. There had been a gradual structural change in the industry as a whole. The workers are the hardest hit in consequence.

118. There is urgent need to have detailed study on these changes and developments in this sector to enable ourselves to address the problems of the workers and the trade union movement effectively and frame up suitable strategy.

119. So far as NTC mills are concerned the Joint Action Committee of the NTC mills comprising all the trade unions have been periodically agitating over their revival in the face of BJP Govt's decision to close down most of them. In the process of such agitation situation has changed a bit in the sense that the BJP Govt which earlier decided to revive only 12 mills is now talking about 47 mills to be revived. But the situation is still fluid and vigorous effort must be made by us to develop united struggle from the platform of Joint Action Committee for revival of all the mills at least as decided by the Special Tripartite Committee in 1995.

## **HANDLOOM**

120. The Satyam Committee report has particularly dealt a severe blow to the handloom industry. Our Coordination committee organised a Convention of handloom workers at Kolkata and drew up a series of action programme demanding rejection of the Satyam Committee recommendations, which were implemented more or less successfully.

121. Now recently the Government have imposed an Excise Duty of 9.2 per cent on Hank Yarn used in handloom industry, as per the Union Budget proposals. This is for the first time that Excise Duty on Hank Yarn has been imposed. There was Handloom industry bandh in Tamilnadu on March 22. The weavers in Andhra Pradesh, Bengal, Karnataka etc. also launched agitations. The last meeting of the handloom Sub-Committee held at Chennai on March 26 decided to intensify the agitations. The meeting decided that meetings of Handloom should be held separately and not tagged with the Coordination Committee meetings. A Statement was issued demanding withdrawal of the Excise Duty and other specific demands. The meeting decided to observe All India Protest Day on May 13, preceded by District level and State level rallies, hunger strike, etc. The meeting also decided to mobilise the Handloom workers for a demonstration at Delhi tentatively during the Monsoon Session, with the slogan, " Save the Handloom Industry, Save the Handloom Workers".

122. The meeting also discussed the organizational position. It was noted with serious concern that although Handloom industry is there in all the states, yet, our unions are concentrated still in Tamilnadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, West Bengal and Tripura only. Handloom being the biggest sector after agriculture in the unorganised sector, with over 10 million workers in the industry living under poverty line, all our State Committees must plan to form our unions in handloom sector to build up movement to resist the onslaught.

## **UNORGANISED SECTOR**

123. In several meetings we have been emphasising the need for strengthening our activities among the vast multitude of the workers in the unorganised sector. But still, our activities in this sector continue

to suffer from serious shortcomings. Though our membership in this sector has improved in the recent past, in comparison with the vast size of the sector, our presence still remains to be just symbolic in this sector.

124. With a view to have a collective appreciation of the magnitude of the problem and for effective planning of our work in unorganised sector, we had a special discussion on this subject in the Chennai meeting of the General Council held in April 1998. The meeting emphasised the need for deciding the priorities by the State committees in respect of specific areas/segments of work, given the vastness of the unorganised sector and drawing the plan of activities accordingly. Since employment of women is quite large in this sector, the work among them was also specifically stressed. The State Committees were directed to form sub-committees to promote and monitor our work in the unorganised sector according to the guideline evolved in the Chennai General Council. At the Central level also, it was proposed to form a sub-committee of CITU to monitor the work in the unorganised sector.

125. Following is the latest position regarding the implementation of the Chennai General Conference tasks as per reports given by the members in the All India Coordination Committee:

1) State level Coordination Committees have been formed in the following States: W.Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu, Kerala, Delhi, Rajasthan, MP, UP, Uttaranchal, Maharashtra and Karnataka. Bihar had also formed it, but it has become defunct. In UP, Uttaranchal and Rajasthan also, the Coordination Committees are not functioning. From Maharashtra and Karnataka there is no report after the formation of the Coordination Committees there. Kerala also does not send any report. Tripura had committed to form the State level Coordination Committee. But there is no report thereafter.

2) In fact, organised and planned way of functioning under the State Committees of CITU is limited to only W. Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu, Delhi and Madhya Pradesh. Reports are received from these States only. In all the other States, despite job distribution and nomination of Convenors, there is no report of the State Committees having taken up the Unorganised Sector as an agenda for discussion and review in the State Committee meetings. The priorities have also not been identified. The functioning continues haphazardly on the basis of adhocism and individualist style of functioning.

3) But from W. Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu and Delhi also, there is no report of formation of Sub-Committees under the State Committees to monitor the activities of the State Coordination Committees. As per reports, Sub-Committees are there only in MP, which places report in the State Committee meetings.

4) Workshops have been held in Rajasthan, UP, Uttaranchal and Maharashtra. But there is no report of any follow up or review of implementations of the decisions taken in the workshops by the State Committees. Only some movements have taken place. But there is no report even to the Centre regarding the implementation of the organisational decisions taken in these workshops, concerning identification of the industries in the States, formation of unions, increase in membership, etc. As per reports, holding of TU classes/ workshops in a more or less regularised manner is being done only in W.Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Tamilnadu.

5) There is no report of any special attention or programme being made by any State in organising the working women in the Unorganised Sector.

126. Though the Coordination Committee has 44 members, average attendance in the meeting is not beyond 15. Representatives from some States remain absent from the meeting almost continuously despite the fact many of those concerned State Committees are working mainly in the unorganised sector. Though there have been many local level agitations being organised in several States in the unorganised sector, the work of increasing the union membership and entering newer areas is lagging

behind.

127. We should form a smaller all India Coordination Committee at the Central level and make it functioning. Without proper and planned functioning of the State level bodies, all India functioning cannot be improved. Since the area and scope of the movement is so vast, one comrade from the Centre cannot look after the whole work in a planned and effective manner. It was earlier proposed that the Centre should constitute a committee of CITU Secretariat members to monitor our work in the unorganised sector. We could not form such a team due to various reasons. We propose now to form a three-member sub-committee at the centre to look after our work in the unorganised sector and develop our activities systematically. The State Committees, which have not yet formed the state level sub-committee, should form them so that work can be undertaken in planned and systematic manner. Since more and more workers from the organised sector are now being thrown to the unorganised strata, this aspect assumes greater importance.

## **WORKING WOMEN**

128. The Tenth Conference of CITU had emphasised the task of forming sub committees of working women in unions in industries with large number of women. But this has been implemented only in a very few unions in the country and even where they have been formed, mostly they are not functioning. There are several industries like beedi, textiles, garments, electronics, construction, plantation, agarbatti, food processing etc and many services like municipal and panchayats, shops, private schools and hospitals etc, where large numbers of women are employed. There is a vast scope to organise these sections and also develop women cadres where we have unions, by forming women's subcommittees in our unions.

129. One of the main reasons for the non-implementation of the various decisions on our work among working women, taken in the Conferences, Working Committees, General Council meetings of the CITU and the meetings of the All India Coordination Committees is that the State Committees of CITU do not take these decisions seriously. The AICCWW members also need to take more initiative in ensuring discussion of these decisions and their implementation, in the respective CITU State Committees. Unless this is done the meetings of the AICCWW become superfluous and the decisions of CITU on our work among working women will not carry any meaning.

130. The CITU Centre issued a circular directing the State Committees and the affiliated unions to observe the International Women's Day on March 8th, by holding gate meetings, lunch hour meetings at the factory, office level. Only 1-2 reports have been received on observing the Day by some unions in Andhra Pradesh. Comrades should report on the observance of this programme.

131. Com. Vimal Ranadive's birth anniversary on April 10th is being observed by organising a memorial lecture, since last year. This year Com. N.M. Sundaram, General Secretary, AIIEA, was invited to deliver the Lecture at the CITU Centre, on 'Labour Market Reforms and Working Women'. A large number of women participated in this meeting. The subject has been informed to the States well in advance, so that Lectures on the same subject could be organised in all the States. Comrades should also report how this programme has been observed in the States.

## **VOICE OF THE WORKING WOMAN**

132. The Voice of the Working Woman is now being published as a monthly, both to update our subscribers with our activities and views more frequently as well as to avail concessional postal rates. The number of annual subscribers has increased though we have not yet reached our target to enrol 5,000 subscribers by January 2002. At present we are printing around 4,200 copies. Efforts are made

to renew the subscriptions regularly.

## **ALL INDIA FEDERATION OF ANGANWADI WORKERS AND HELPERS**

133. The All India Federation of Anganwadi Workers and Helpers (AIFAWH) has two meetings of the working committee, on 27- 28 December 2001 at Kolkata and on 11th March 2002 at New Delhi. The attendance in both these meetings was satisfactory. A national workshop on organisation was held on the 9-10 March at BTR Bhawan, New Delhi. 55 selected activists from 15 States participated in the workshop. Some States like Assam, Maharashtra and Rajasthan have been regular absentees to the working committee meetings, in spite of pointing this out repeatedly.

134. The workshop discussed the present strength of the organisation in different States, and the measures required to be taken to expand and consolidate the organisation, particularly in the Hindi States. The basic issues of expansion, democratic functioning, cadre development and education and planned activity were discussed. It recommended holding of such Workshops in all States at State and district level to self critically examine the organisational position and decide steps to expand the organisation and develop a strong all India movement of the Anganwadi employees in the country.

135. As per the decision of the Federation, massive rallies were held in most of th States on April 8th on the demands of regularisation, implementation of the Government's announcement of enhanced honorarium with immediate effect, and to stop privatisation of the anganwadi centres, besides their State level demands.

136. The Federation took initiative for giving a call for 16th April Strike by the Samyukta Sangharsha Samiti. But as NFTU was not ready for participation in the strike, a call was given on behalf of the federations affiliated to AITUC, CITU, HMS and HMKP. According to the reports received by the Centre, preparations were made for the success of the strike through distribution of leaflets, project level general body meetings, posters, press statements etc.

137. The Orissa State Committee of CITU and the recently formed Orissa Anganwadi Employees' Union have agreed to host the 4th Conference of the Federation in the last week of September 2002. A membership target of 1,91,850 was fixed for the year 2002.

## **CHILD LABOUR PROJECT**

138. The second CITU- ILO Project on Child Labour was initiated in July 2001. This was intended to provide some educational opportunities to the child labour and to mainstream them in to regular schools, and also to educate the parents of the child labour on the relationship between poverty, non-implementation of minimum wages, and bad working conditions and the child labour. We have also to utilise this to organise the informal sector workers in the selected industries.

139. According to the project proposal, we must start 20 Non Formal Education Centres in 10 States. Till now, we have started 19 NFECs in 10 States. One Centre in Haryana could not be started as the CITU State Committee in Haryana is engaged in some serious struggles. It has been reported that all the NFECs are functioning regularly. In Bhopal and Jalna in Maharashtra, a few Self Help Groups of the women in the families of the Child Labour have also been started. In Bhopal, several activities of interest to the local women are also being taken up. These can help in developing contacts with the local women informal sector workers and in organising them. Some States are not prompt in sending the reports and accounts, which needs improvement.

## ORGANISING WORKERS IN EXPORT PROCESSING ZONES

140. The work among the Export Processing Zone (EPZ) workers is engaging the attention of CITU, since they are the worst victims of the policies of globalisation. Recently, we conducted a struggle in Visakhapatnam, where the workers fought with determination braving brutal repression.

141. There are 7 Export Processing Zones in our country at present they are:

Kandla Free Trade Zone, [KFTZ] in Gujarat.

Santa Cruz Electronic Export Processing Zone [SEEPZ], Maharashtra.

Cochin Export Processing Zone [CEPZ], Kerala.

Madras Export Processing Zone [MEPZ], Tamil Nadu.

Falta Export Processing Zone [FEPZ], West Bengal.

NOIDA Export Processing Zone [NEPZ], Uttar Pradesh.

Visakhapatnam Export Processing Zone [VEPZ], Andhra Pradesh.

142. Recently the Commerce Ministry has decided to establish another 8 EPZs in the country. The Government of India has now permitted the development of EPZs in the private, state or joint sector and has already approved 5 proposals for setting up private EPZs in Mumbai, Surat, Greater Noida, Kancheepuram and Nanguneri.

143. The total operational units in all EPZs in the country are 553 as on November 99. As per government figures, the number of persons directly employed in all the EPZs is almost 80,000. But this includes only the permanent workers and those in the record books of the companies. If the contract workers and the thousands of others who are not entered in the record books are also included, the number will be far more.

144. Trade Unions are not banned in the EPZs. But in practice, any attempt of the workers to get organised are not tolerated by the investors and discouraged by the zone authorities.

145. There is an atmosphere of fear among the EPZ workers as the investors resort to any means to crush any attempt of organising the workers. Zones are walled enclaves and outsiders are not allowed inside. Workers of different units inside the zone are even prevented from interacting with each other. Many factories take their workers in a bus directly between the factory door and the main gate of the zone. This makes it difficult for trade unions to organise the workers in the EPZs and form unions.

146. The CITU at present has affiliated unions in five - MEPZ, SEEPZ, NEPZ, CEPZ and VEPZ, - out of the seven zones in the country, but there is no coordination between these unions. INTUC, Shiv Sena and AICCTU are also reported to be having unions in a few units in one or two EPZs but they do not function regularly.

147. The CITU should take the initiative to develop a strong coordinated trade union movement among the workers in all the Export Processing Zones in the country. We may seek the support of other trade unions and also try to develop a joint movement. This task has to be addressed immediately.

For this, it is proposed that:

\* A meeting of the activists of our unions in all the EPZs should be held, to discuss coordination of our activities and plan our future work among the EPZ workers.

\* This can be followed by a Convention of the EPZ workers in the country, where the representatives of other Central Trade Unions may also be invited. The Visakhapatnam District Committee of CITU has offered to host the Convention, to be held in the third week of June 2002.

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

148. Our international relations have witnessed a marked upswing since the last Working Committee Meeting held in Bangalore. Our delegates have participated in a number of programmes organised during the period under review by fraternal TU organisations in various countries. We have exchanged experiences gained in the course of ongoing struggles against globalisation, liberalisation and privatisation which has, indeed, strengthened the surging worldwide working class movement against the evils of imperialism-sponsored globalisation.

1. The Sixth Congress of Southern Initiative on Globalisation and for TU Rights (SIGTUR) was held in Seoul (South Korea) from the 5th to 9th November 2001 and participated by about 200 delegates from 14 countries. Of the 30 delegates from Indian trade unions largest contingent was from CITU led by M K Pandhe.

2. CITU General Secretary, M.K. Pandhe visited London in the 3rd week of February 2002 to meet the International Transport Federation (ITF) General Secretary David Cockraft and discussed with him issues relating to Indian seamen. From London he travelled to Paris to meet International Energy and Mines Organisation (IEMO) General Secretary Alain Simon and discussed with him the possibility of holding the next IEMO Congress in India.

3. CITU Secretary W.R. Varada Rajan attended the Fourth Congress of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia (FNPR) held in Moscow from 28-30 November, 2001.

4. S. Dev Roye, CITU Secretary, attended the XIV Congress of Confederazione Generale Italiana Del Lavors (CGIL) held at the coastal city of Rimini (Italy) from Feb. 6-9, 2002, as a fraternal delegate. On his way to Italy, S Dev Roye also held talks with the leadership of CGT National Union of Chemical Industries to discuss details of the Oil and Refinery International Trade Union Conference proposed to be held in India in 2003.

5. In order to promote and strengthen fraternal relations between the CITU and the Confederation of Trade Unions (Burma) a "Workshop on Trade and Labour Issues" was held in New Delhi on 9th and 10th November 2001 with the Cooperation of CITU. 27 activists from the CTU(B) participated in the workshop. CITU Secretary, Kanai Banerjee and Working Committee Member J. Ballabh attended the workshop on both days as resource persons.

6. An 8- member delegation from the Communist Party of China (CPC) while visiting India, called on the CITU headquarters on January 28, 2002. The delegation, which was led by Li Junru, Vice-President, Central Party School of CPC, was received by M.K. Pandhe, S. Dev Roye and J. Ballabh.

7. CITU Vice-President T.K. Rengarajan represented the CITU at the 50th Anniversary and 50th National Ordinary Congress of the Confederation Revolucionari de Obreros Y Campesinos (CROC) at Mexico city on April 12-14, 2002. He availed this opportunity to meet and develop fraternal relations with the trade union functionaries of Mexico and other Latin American countries.

8. A 3- member delegation from the Construction Workers Federation of India (CWFI) consisting of Debanjan Chakraborti, General Secretary CWFI, Nogen Chandra Chutia and Ramasamy Singaravelu visited Cyprus from April 4-6, 2002 to attend the 13th Congress of UITBB at Larnaka (Cyprus).

9. A two-member delegation from the Japanese Trade Union centre ZENROREN, consisting of Sister Momoko Izutsu, Deputy Head of Organization Bureau and Masuo Kato of the International Bureau visited the CITU headquarters on Dec. 18, 2001 and held friendly discussions on TU- related matters

in both countries.

10. A joint delegation of five central trade unions - CITU, BMS, AITUC, INTUC and HMS - has been invited by the All China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) to pay a friendly visit to China some time in the second half of this year. The itinerary and the dates of the visit will be finalised in due course after mutual consultations.

11. The Construction Workers Federation of India (CWFI) is going to send its two senior leaders to Manila (Philippines) to represent CITU in the 18th International Solidarity Affair (ISA) organized by the Philippine TU Centre Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) from April 30 - May 9, 2002. The theme for the 18th ISA this year calls for heightening the struggle against imperialist war and plunder.

## **INTERNATIONAL TU CONFERENCE IN OIL AND ENERGY SECTORS**

149. CITU has been offered to host two international Trade Union Conferences/meetings in India in the coming year. The Secretariat and the Working Committee have discussed the matter and decided to accept the offers and preparation for the same has already started.

150. The International Conference of oil and refineries trade unions will be held Kolkata in the month of February or March 2003. The last conference was held in October 1999 in Paris. The Kolkata conference next year is expected to draw wider participation of around 100 outstation delegates from the oil sector trade unions from about 40 countries, besides the delegates from Indian oil sector. The meeting of the Coordination Committee of Oil & Petroleum Workers(CITU) held on 12-13 April 2002 at Kolkata has discussed on the preparatory steps and also fund raising programmes. For the first time such conference is going to be held outside Europe, particularly in Asia.

151. The Conference of the International Energy and Mines Organisation (IEMO), the biggest international trade union centre of the energy & mines workers, will also be held around October/November early next year at Cochin for which also preparatory steps are being planned. Both the international meets are slated to discuss various burning issues related to oil, energy and mining sector and the trade union movement in the face of mounting offensives of globalisation policies.

## **ON ORGANISATION**

152. In our report to the meeting of the CITU Working Committee held at Bangalore on 24-26 August, 2001, it was stated:

“Strengthening of the CITU organisation at all levels, its expansion in new areas and new industries, not only continue to be a priority task for us but in the wake of growing popular opposition to the policy of liberalisation, privatisation this task assumes greater importance with every passing day. Although, speaking generally, the membership of CITU has recorded some increase over the past years and the CITU organisation has achieved some improvement in its functioning, there is absolutely no place for self satisfaction, there are still many grey areas which demand serious attention and such gray areas are to be found at all levels of our organisation. Many of the tasks laid down in our Bhubaneswar document for overcoming our various weaknesses still remains to be implemented. Without a strong organisation with solid foundation among the workers, even the joint movement all over India against policies of globalisation is not likely to be achieved. Our inadequate emphasis on our organisational tasks is adversely affecting our organisational growth as well as strengthening of the united movement of the working class”.

153. The same statement is as much true today as it was about a year ago. The sweep as well as intensity of the attack on the working class and the common people is growing tremendously. The

discontent of the people is also growing. In the wake of these developments, inadequacy of our organisation, both quantitative and qualitative, to carry forward the struggle as effectively as the situation demands and simultaneously to ensure organisational growth is coming more and more to the surface. Most of the tasks laid down in the Bhubaneswar document still remain unimplemented or at best have only been partially implemented.

154. The All India Workshop on Organisation marked a new phase in our endeavour to strengthen the organisation. It was organised to investigate the cause of our failure to implement the tasks laid down in the Bhubaneswar document and to work out ways and means to implement them. In the light of the discussion in the workshop, further enriched by the discussion in the general council meeting at Kozhikode, a brief document on immediate minimum tasks was adopted by the 10th Conference of the CITU at Hyderabad. The tasks laid down in the document related to the CITU Centre, to the State committees as well as to the Federations. It directed the State Committees and Federations to organise State and Federation level workshops, to work out a plan and programme for implementing the minimum tasks.

155. The report to the Bangalore Working Committee gave a brief account of the steps taken at different levels, particularly at the CITU Centre, in terms of the document on immediate minimum tasks as well the discussion of the 10th Conference. Apart from the initiative taken to improve the functioning of the CITU Centre, the report noted: "As for the State Committees, some of them have already held their workshop on implementation of the document. Some others have fixed dates for their workshop" The report expressed the hope: "After the completion of the process, there will be substantial improvement in the organisational position of the CITU".

156. The State Committees have to play the major role in strengthening the organisation. Therefore properly organising State level workshop is a task of paramount importance for the whole organisation. But, though many of the State Committees have already held their workshop, some of the major States are yet to hold their workshop. It is a matter of some satisfaction that the State Committees in two of the three newly formed States viz., Chhatisgarh and Uttaranchal have been able to organise workshops. It is disappointing that major States like Maharashtra, Bihar (including Jharkhand), Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka etc., have not yet organised State-level workshops. Bihar State Committee has fixed date for its workshop in May. Even after closely pursuing the matter with the UP State Committee for about a year, the CITU Centre has till now not succeeded in getting the State workshop organised. Majority of the Federations are also defaulting in this matter. On the other hand, some State Committees held their workshops quite some time back. The workshops are intended to initiate the process of strengthening the organisation in a planned manner. It is not yet known as to what extent have the State Committees succeeded, in making progress in implementation of the tasks, following the workshops.

157. In the background of a rising wave of popular struggles, which demands a strong CITU for its sustenance and further advance, the major task of the CITU in the sphere of organisation is first to ensure that workshops are completed in all the States within a time frame and then to carry out a fresh review of the progress in overcoming our weaknesses and shortcomings and strengthen the organisation.

## **EXPANSION OF MEMBERSHIP AND RELATED MATTERS**

158. Membership is rightly regarded as a fairly reliable index of the strength of a trade union. Extent of influence of the trade union over the working class and its mobilising capacities that indicate its strength are generally speaking proportional to the membership. The Bhubaneswar document, therefore, rightly stressed the importance of growth of membership. The document correctly emphasised the need for expanding to new areas and new industries, besides growth of membership in the existing field of

operation. We targeted an aggregate membership of 40 lakh. But even after the lapse of several years, we are still far short of the target. In 1999 we reached the peak of nearly 33 lakhs. For the year 2000, we have so far got only 17 lakh members on our record. From the detailed analysis of the membership position circulated to the State Committees, it must have been noticed that in terms of membership, there is a decline in some States. In the workshops, both at the all India and in the States, considerable attention has been paid to the question of increasing aggregate membership and also to the question of expansion to new areas and new industries. In the absence of reports, the CITU Centre does not have any clear idea whether in the past years we have been able to spread to new areas and to new industries. At least, there is no indication that barring our traditionally strong States there has been any serious efforts in this direction. We must give priority for holding workshops where it has not yet been held. While reviewing the growth of the organisation, proper assessment should be made in concrete terms and further activities must be planned for growth of aggregate membership as well as area wise and industry wise expansion. Discussions in the all India and some State level workshops have thrown light on the problems encountered and on a number of effective steps that have emerged.

### **DEMOCRATIC FUNCTIONING**

159. We have earlier noted that there has been some improvement in the functioning at the State level - in some instances at lower levels also. Some of the State Committees have started meeting more regularly, Secretariat functioning improved in some of them, written reports are placed in the State Committee, and so on. Possibly, there has also been some improvement in the matter regularity in holding conferences. It is, of course, not known whether improved practices have been sustained. It seems such improvements, however marginal, have not taken place in many States.

160. Again, this is only one aspect of the democratic functioning of trade unions. The other aspect is of regular involvement of ordinary members in decision-making and in day-to-day activity, which alone can ensure broadening of the base of the trade union. The CITU Centre does not find any indication of any serious efforts made or being made to introduce this practice.

161. All these show that even after eight years of adoption of the Bhubaneswar document, our achievement in the efforts to strengthen the organisation is far from substantial in many respects. Of course, it is not to say that we have not achieved anything, but the CITU is not just another Central trade union; it was born with the historic mission of uniting not only the working class but also the entire toiling people in the struggle to deepen and advance their legitimate interests and rights with the ultimate perspective of their emancipation. While we shall not underestimate our achievements, we must not also forget that history demands much more from us.

### **EDUCATION, TRAINING AND IDEOLOGICAL WORK**

162. This is another very important task to be properly addressed for improving the organisation and enhance its capacity to lead the masses of workers in the ongoing struggle. But, this also has so far failed to receive our due attention. The responsibility rests primarily with the CITU Centre. A complete set of lecture notes, in accordance with the syllabus circulated, is yet to be prepared. Even the syllabus itself has to be improved. Our proposal for a permanent central school for education and a research centre still remains to be planned for want of adequate financial resources.

163. However, the CITU Centre has succeeded in issuing a fairly large number of pamphlets in the past years, which have served as effective weapon in agitational activities and ideological struggle. So also are the commission papers of the last and previous conferences. Besides, the quality of the journals has been improved, providing more material useful in day-to-day and long-term activity. But, the CITU Centre is conscious that this does not condone its failures.

## **FEDERATIONS**

164. A separate note on the functioning of the federations was prepared and was adopted by the Working Committee at its Bangalore session after thorough discussion. But, there is not much progress in implementation.

## **WORKING WOMEN**

165. The CITU Centre is making strenuous efforts for organising the working women under the banner of CITU and to draw them into day to day activities of trade unions in larger numbers. The CITU Centre is also helping other fraternal organisations to educate and activate the women workers in their fold and in their industry. It is a matter of regret that many of the States have failed to form coordination committee/subcommittees at State/industry level and in major unions. The paramount importance of this work has repeatedly been discussed in different forums. Serious attention needs to be paid to this work as insisted upon in the Bhubaneswar document.

166. In the light of the above, this General Council meeting should consider whether to organise another follow-up workshop to study our experience in implementing the Bhubaneswar document and to chalk out fresh tasks in this regard. We already have enough written material, reports and documents. The point, however, is to implement the tasks confronting us.

## **ON MEMBERSHIP**

167. You will recall that in my last report a special emphasis was laid on proper monitoring and timely submission of Annual Returns and remittance of affiliation fees by our unions. Increase in membership, it was emphasised, was an important task to be taken up on priority basis. A quota of raising the CITU membership to 40 lakhs was also fixed and Statewise targets were also given. It is unfortunate that our State Committees have not taken the task seriously which can be seen from the table of membership in Annexure I. The State Committees are yet to submit the Returns and collections of year 2000 whereas at least half the collection of 2001 should have come by this time. Leave aside the target of 40 lakhs, if we compare the collections of 1999 (above 32 lakhs) with that of 2000, our State Committees so far has collected only a little over 50% of their last year's membership for the year 2000. This is a very serious state of affairs, which should be corrected immediately.

168. Another important point to be considered is the issue of disaffiliation of such unions which inspite of several efforts have not yet paid the affiliation fee of 1999 even. You will recall, when in 1998, fresh round of verification of membership of the central trade unions based on 1997 membership was initiated by the Central Govt, we had formed State level committees to monitor collection of returns and affiliation fees and maintenance of records and thereby records could be updated and streamlined to a great extent. Again at the time of last CITU Conference, submission of returns and affiliation fees and updating of records till 1999 could be streamlined. Despite all such efforts, some affiliated unions still did not pay the affiliation fees of 1999 and a list of such unions were sent to State Committees for appropriate recommendation for disaffiliation of such defaulting unions. We are yet to get a response on the same. You will appreciate that if an affiliate union does not fulfil the minimum commitment as per CITU constitution and continue to default year after year despite repeated persuasion, it should not remain affiliated to CITU and we have to take a clear position in this respect.

## **BTR MEMORIAL FUND**

169. Similar weakness is reflected in the collections of BTR Memorial Fund. In my appeal last time I stated: "I want to make an earnest appeal to our State Committees to ensure that the commitments

made are fulfilled by 19th December 2001, the next birthday of Com. BTR, so that we can fulfil all other commitments". The statement is given in Annexure II, I regret to say, indicates a contribution of little over 3 lakhs during the intervening period since Bangalore Working Committee meeting and that too over 2 lakhs are the individual contributions made by comrades participating in various training programmes and the remaining 1,60,000 is the contribution of insurance employees. I again reiterate that we had set ourselves a task of establishing a well equipped library, a research centre and a permanent TU school as also to cope up with the manifold increase in other expenses for which mobilisation of resources is a must. This issue, therefore, is of utmost importance and needs a serious consideration.

## **GUJARAT EARTHQUAKE RELIEF**

170. In the report placed in the Working Committee meeting at Bangalore, I had informed you in detail about the collections made by CITU for Gujarat Earthquake victims. I had also informed you that CITU had decided to construct a school in a village in Maliya Taluk in Rajkot District (120 km. from Rajkot). I am happy to inform you that we have been able to not only build a school but also a community centre with the contributions received. The construction, I am informed, is almost complete and is likely to be handed over to the people sometime in July next. I have personally visited the site to see the progress of construction and found that it has been done well.

## **UNITED STRUGGLE: PRESENT PERSPECTIVE**

171. The last Working Committee directed the CITU organisation to intensify our effort to bring other trade unions into united action. The need for intensifying our independent campaign against the policies was also stressed by the Working Committee.

172. The period following the last Working Committee meeting witnessed active initiative of CITU both at Central level and also in many States to enlist the support of all the trade unions in the call for observance of global protest day against globalisation on 9th November given by all the international trade union organisations. The programme was widely observed throughout the country as reported earlier.

173. Besides the above, CITU carried on continuous dialogue with the other Central trade unions including INTUC and BMS for united actions against the economic policies. In that process, all the Central Trade Unions except INTUC met in the CITU office on 10th January 2002 to decide on the common line to be taken by the trade unions in the pre budget discussion to be held on the same day. In the pre budget discussion with the Finance Minister all the central trade unions except INTUC submitted joint memorandum, which unequivocally denounced the ongoing policy of liberalisation, privatization and globalisation and the increasing the tax burden on the common people while awarding huge concessions to richer class. On 11th January, again, all the central trade unions met and decided to observe countrywide "National Protest Day" on 14th March against the anti-people policies to be preceded by State level joint conventions and also gave a call to prepare for countrywide strike action. Although INTUC representative did not finally consent for the said programme in the said meeting, INTUC subsequently decided to join the 14th March demonstration as a result of our active persuasion. The 11th January meeting also conceived a countrywide strike in public sector in the second half of the budget session of Parliament. The Central trade unions again met on 11th February in BMS office to discuss about further course of action. There had been some vacillation about the public sector strike as well, but ultimately such vacillations could be overcome owing to firm position taken by others on the issue of public sector strike on 16th April. All the trade unions in the financial sector also joined the 16th April strike.

174. Above development clearly signify that in the background of widespread resentment among the mass of workers about the anti-people policies along with our campaign through State level conventions etc and the firm stand taken by the CPSTU constituents about the strike call in PSUs on 16th April, BMS leadership joined with other Central trade unions in the strike call and many INTUC unions in the industry level also decided to join the strike.

175. Not only that, although our effort at the Central level for a general strike covering the workers in the private sector and others on 16th April could not fructify, our persuasions and campaign at the State level could bring round other trade unions outside the Sponsoring Committee for general industrial strike in West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and in some other States. Also four all India Federations of Anganwadi Workers and the All India State Govt Employees Federation representing overwhelming majority of State Govt employees decided to join the strike action on 16th April. The canvas of united strike in PSUs got further expanded beyond the boundaries of public sector.

176. The above experience of ours points to certain distinct features of the changing situation and also the urgent task before us.

177. The deepening crisis of the economy and the blind pursuit of the policies of LPG by the ruling polity has created such widespread resentment among the mass of the workers that it is becoming increasingly impossible for the leadership of the most reformist trade unions to stay away from united struggle as they did during the last decade. In such a situation, constant pursuit of our line of united action only can unify the entire working class against the anti-people policies and expose those preaching such policies in the polity. The assertion of united struggle will also go a long way in defeating the forces of disruption. Without such conscious initiative of ours, and maintenance of its continuity, the crisis and resentment will create desperation and demoralisation.

178. Secondly, since the beginning of the new decade, the policies of LPG started creating visible impact also on the other sections of the people in the society, particularly among the agricultural workers and peasants and the voice of dissent against the policies has started becoming louder and widespread. The working class movement and - the CITU activists in particular must - comprehend the changing and spreading dimension of dissent against the policies. We must take more initiative to activate NPMO and to ensure greater and broader participation from other sections of society, in the united struggle. For that, trade union movement has to rise and agitate on the demands of the agricultural workers, poor peasants, women, students, youth and others. CITU committees both at the Centre and the States and major industrial centres have to plan their activities to have concerted joint campaign and actions with the like minded mass organisations to start with, to create ground for more active participation of the people from other sections of society in the struggle. We had discussed about this urgent necessity on earlier occasions also but could not make much headway. We can't afford to have repetition of the same experience any more.

179. Thirdly, maintaining continuity of the united struggles is of tremendous importance in the present situation. Without that, we will not be able to carry the struggle to a higher pitch which is the urgent need of the hour. Without that, we will not be able to break the barrier of ritualism. Our independent initiative in the campaign and agitation at all levels, our conscious effort to expose the policies as well as the politics of the ruling class in our campaign can create the atmosphere for maintaining the continuity in united agitation and struggle.

180. To take care of the urgent tasks before us, which happen to be more challenging, we must have to take our organisation to a different height. The organisational aspects have already been dealt in detail in earlier paragraphs. For that we must plan at all levels of our organization to go with our campaign beyond our known limited peripheries. We have already identified this shortcoming as a

major hurdle for our organisational breakthrough. We must take concrete steps to overcome this hurdle.

181. The observation made in the General Secretary's report to the Tenth Conference of CITU places before us the perspective of our future struggle: " The developments in the national arena, during the period since our last conference, point to the frequent changes in the correlation of the political forces in the country. These changes are occurring in the background of deepening economic crisis and its grievous impact on the common people. This situation`also enjoins upon the working class and the forces fighting against the economic policies and communal offensives to present a viable pro-people alternative before the people. Such an alternative can only emerge through sharpening of the struggle against the capitulationist economic policies and the forces of communalism, and not by any other means....We must take up this challenges and convert them into an opportunity to channelise the spontaneous expression of discontent into organized countrywide mass actions..."

**Comrades,**

182. The coming period is bound to witness further deterioration in the economic situation in the country leading to more and more attacks on the working class and common people. The fast growing opposition to BJP led NDA Govt's economic policy is being ignored with arrogance by the Govt. despite their increasing isolation from the people. In this background, the *BJP-Sangh Parivar* bandwagon has been resorting to ugly communal tactics in their bid to overcome the situation. Never before the country faced such ugly disastrous design costing the humanity so dearly. The situation enjoins upon the working class movement to expose these worst enemies of the humanity sitting in country's governance.

183. The political situation in the country is also becoming more complex exposing rank opportunism of a major section of the political parties. The NDA allies despite expressing dissents in public on many aspects of the governance and particularly against the communal exercise by BJP, are clinging to BJP bandwagon. Only through powerful mass struggles, the contradiction within the NDA camp can be intensified towards further change in correlation of forces.

184. The Congress Party with 15 State Govts under its control is waiting in the wings to capture power at the Centre. Though being a secular party despite all vacillations, the Congress is also in favour of the World Bank dictated policy of imperialist globalisation, which has already caused immense damage to the national economy and the mass of the people. There is, therefore, urgent need for adoption of a pro-working class, pro-people policies at the Centre, quite different from the LPG brand followed over the last one decade.

185. We have already emphasised the need for a countrywide struggle for such a popular alternative policies. Surging opposition and struggles against the policies of LPG among the working class and other sections of the society must be consciously directed towards developing militant countrywide struggle.

186. Let the CITU take the initiative in unifying and preparing the working class for such bigger struggles in active cooperation with other toiling sections of the society.

187. The tasks before us are immense! The possibilities of building a powerful movement are great! Let us prepare ourselves and rise to the occasion so that the working class can play its historic role to change situation in favour of the toiling millions of our country.

**With greetings,  
M. K. Pandhe  
General Secretary**

**ANNEXURE: I**

**STATEMENT SHOWING STATEWISE MEMBERSHIP  
AS PER ANNUAL RETURNS RECEIVED TILL 15/04/2002**

State	Unions Submitting Return			Position of membership according to annual returns					
	1998	1999	2000	19 98		19 99		2000	
				TOTAL	FEMALE	TOTAL	FEMALE	TOTAL	FEMALE
A & N	6	7	2	1426	0	1863	0	378	0
A.P.	461	670	595	123574	31417	184500	34995	154874	28989
ASSAM	74	83	82	37309	11080	45450	13642	53914	21878
BIHAR	19	17	8	14486	212	20374	71	12792	55
DELHI	49	69	63	40775	2295	48634	2611	29203	1275
GOA	7	7	5	2141	13	1319	30	1216	140
GUJRAT	18	20	6	12535	1057	13704	1454	2586	90
HARYANA	19	18	10	33030	12099	34951	7161	3993	10
H.P.	19	30	21	6419	2534	9213	3572	7989	4273
J & K	1	1	1	469	12	581	19	533	12
KARNATAKA	93	117	76	72637	33724	85322	32269	68935	36339
KERALA	871	887	628	852287	255686	976041	255956	754043	201503
M.P.	54	66	6	14411	4635	19582	5099	3307	210
MAHARASHTRA	50	58	35	46506	5141	59734	5795	54029	2608
ORISSA	33	51	34	19812	2785	21816	2847	16390	2557
PUNJAB	68	83	51	58430	344	78566	1019	55816	6812
RAJASTHAN	73	74	22	30072	323	34168	529	11475	6
T.N.	384	410	329	232558	26060	266501	31391	230898	39006
TRIPURA	29	32	23	44639	2875	59735	1972	53894	12988
U.P.	77	76	60	18892	158	18691	195	12755	267
W.B.	954	936	450	1143900	68885	1206221	142560	298402	53507
UTTARANCHAL	28	32	1	7173	324	8677	401	243	0
CHHATISHGARH	17	13	11	21676	760	20952	483	16489	558
JHARKHAND	15	14	7	31200	4252	54720	4957	23449	3402
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>3419</b>	<b>3771</b>	<b>2526</b>	<b>2866357</b>	<b>466671</b>	<b>3271315</b>	<b>549028</b>	<b>1867603</b>	<b>416485</b>

YEAR	NO. OF	TOTAL	FEMALE
	UNIONS	MEMBER	MEMBER
1983	1854	1890993	
1984	2005	1575655	
1985	1717	1716457	132536
1986	2412	1844273	209348
1987	2350	1680884	206482
1988	2618	1919280	264507
1989	3114	2425000	247388
1990	2934	2095550	245060
1991	2783	2088218	291228
1992	3343	2381012	321620
1993	3156	2371405	306344
1994	3198	2470131	261980
1995	3512	2784050	358188
1996	3645	2805127	435285
1997	3770	2914267	505949

# CONDOLENCE RESOLUTION

## COM. SUSHEELA GOPALAN

This General Council Meeting held at Siliguri from 22-25 April 2002 deeply regrets the passing away of Com. Susheela Gopalan, Vice-President of CITU and a veteran leader of the democratic and left movement in India on 19th December 2001. Com. Susheela has been in the forefront of several struggles and made an invaluable contribution to the growth of the TU movement in the country. She was also a tall leader of the women's movement and till recently was the President of All India Democratic Women's Association. She was also a member of the Central Committee of CPI(M), former Minister in LDF Government of Kerala and a former member of the Lok Sabha. The Working Class will always cherish her long association with the working class movement at the National level. The CITU dips its red flag in memory of Com. Susheela Gopalan and conveys condolences to the bereaved family members.

## COM. N. PRASADA RAO

This CITU meeting records with profound grief the passing away of Com. N. Prasada Rao, a veteran freedom fighter, one of the pioneers of communist movement and leader of the heroic Telengana Struggle. Com. Prasad Rao was one of the architects of the workers and peasants movement in Andhra Pradesh since nascent stage. The All India Kisan Sabha and CITU which worked under his guidance for decades and till his last breath, will long bear the deep imprint of his personality and contribution.

Com. Prasada Rao who was one of the founding leaders of CITU in Andhra Pradesh served as its General Secretary for long 29 years. He also remained a central office bearer of CITU till a few months before his death. His ardent advocacy for consistent effort for revolutionising the consciousness of the cadres and developing young leadership will ever be cherished. His revolutionary dedication and his strictly disciplined active life will be an eternal source of inspiration for many generations to come.

The General Council Meeting pays its respectful homage to the departed leader and conveys its heartfelt condolences to the bereaved members of his family.

## ON CONDOLENCES

This General Council Meeting of CITU held at Siliguri on 22-25 April 2002 pays its respectful homage to all the leaders cadres and activists of the Working Class and democratic movement who died during this intervening period since Bangalore Working Committee meeting.

The meeting records with deep grief the passing away of Com. Biren Roy, a veteran freedom fighter and Working Committee Member of CITU since its foundation. The meeting also condoles with a heavy heart the sudden demise of Com D Janakiraman, a senior trade union leader of Tamil Nadu, member of the CITU Working Committee and Working President of Electricity Employees Federation of India. The meeting also mourns the death of another front ranking leader of CITU Com. Ravi Sinha who had made immense contribution to growth and development of CITU in Uttar Pradesh. The meeting pays its respectful homage to the departed leaders.

The meeting also condoles the death of veteran TU leader and former secretary of AITUC Com. K.T.K. Thangamani and pays its respectful homage.

## ON HOMAGE TO MARTYRS

This General Council Meeting pays respectful homage to all those leaders, cadres and activists of the trade union, peasant, agricultural labour, youth, student and women's movement who laid down their lives in the struggle championing the cause of the toiling people as well as against separatist, divisive and communal forces safeguarding the unity of the people and integrity of the nation.

The Conference most respectfully remembers the courageous sacrifice of these martyrs who have left an indelible impression on the democratic movement as a whole and will remain a constant source of inspiration in our fight against exploitation and against casteist and communal forces.

# TREASURER'S REPORT

**Comrade President & Comrades,**

The Audited statement of accounts for the years 2000 & 2001 has already been circulated along with the Report of the General Secretary. While formally placing the report, I would like to draw your attention to some of the points, which warrant your serious consideration.

You are aware that the only source of regular income of CITU is the affiliation fees. You will observe that for the year 2000 we have received around Rs. 12.5 lakhs as against 25 lakhs received the earlier year(1999). Of course, the earlier year (1999) was the CITU conference year. We had cautioned our State Committees not to allow our unions to default and ensure submission of Annual Returns and affiliation fees regularly, yearwise. Our State Committees were also requested not to hold back the collections and deposit it with the CITU Centre in time, as functioning of the Centre depends solely on this collection. But, inspite of our constant reminders the collection received reflects our non-seriousness on the issue.

Apart from increase in overall routine expenses like wages, postage, telephone, water & electricity, conveyance, travelling, meetings, repair and maintenance and several other expenses, in the coming days the series of programmes, both joint and independent, will increase our expenses manifold. It is precisely for this reason that serious efforts are needed to mobilise our resources. Collection of affiliation dues urgently, therefore, is the most important task.

Similarly, outstandings in respect of journals and CITU publications is also a chronic weakness, which needs to be attended to. Huge amounts are due, which adds to the pressure on the funds. Information from time to time is being sent to our State Committees and it is important that serious efforts should be put in to recover the dues.

BTR Memorial Fund is another important area which remains neglected inspite of series of discussions. It is sad that the fund had to take loan from CITU to meet its expenditure. Certain commitments remain unfulfilled due to paucity of fund. We had set ourselves a task of establishing a well equipped library, a research centre and a permanent TU school. I would like to again request the State Committees to take up a special campaign for collection of BTR fund.

With these words, I place the report for your consideration.

**Ranjit Basu**  
Treasurer

**CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS**  
**13-A, ROUSE AVENUE, NEW DELHI-110002**  
**Receipts & Payments Account As on 31st.December, 2000**

RECEIPTS		PAYMENTS	
OPENING CASH AND CHEQUES IN HAND	Rs. 41,403.41	ADDITION OF FIXED ASSETS	Rs. 545,826.00
CASH AT BANK	Rs. 858,901.05	B.T.R. TRUST	Rs. 554,171.00
CITU MAZDOOR INCOME	Rs. 181,164.00	LOANS & ADV.	Rs. 61,575.00
VWW INCOME	Rs. 135,003.00	9TH MARCH RALLY	Rs. 493,597.00
WORKING CLASS INCOME	Rs. 241,310.00	DEPOSIT TO FDR	Rs. 481,204.00
INTEREST ON FDR	Rs. 481,204.00	CITU MAZDOOR EXP.	Rs. 193,580.00
AFFILIATION	Rs. 2,511,569.50	VWW EXP.	Rs. 120,481.00
BANK INTEREST	Rs. 29,606.00	WORKING CLASS EXP.	Rs. 213,195.00
BTR BOOKS	Rs. 1,825.00	AUDIT EXP.	Rs. 14,572.00
DONATION	Rs. 99,417.00	BANK CHARGES	Rs. 5,812.00
DROUGHT RELIEF FUND	Rs. 44,661.00	CITU MEETING EXP.	Rs. 56,042.50
MISC.RECEIPTS	Rs. 1,430.00	CITU WORKSHOP	Rs. 38,524.00
NPMO	Rs. 5,150.00	CONVEYANCE EXP.	Rs. 52,292.00
ORISSA RELIEF FUND	Rs. 7,200.00	ELEC. & WATER BILL	Rs. 54,169.00
PUBLICATION SALE	Rs. 48,950.00	G.C.MEETING EXP.	Rs. 27,947.50
TRANSPORT SEMINAR	Rs. 30,000.00	MEDICAL EXP.	Rs. 20,951.20
BTR TRUST	Rs.364,527.00	MISC. EXP.	Rs. 20,898.00
LOAN RECOVER	Rs. 31,460.00	NP.PERIO & BOOKS	Rs. 22,342.40
9 TH MARCH RALLY	Rs. 143,857.00	OTHER EXP.	Rs. 14,177.00
W.B. STATE COMMITTEE	Rs. 97.50	PHONE BILL	Rs. 138,547.00
U.P.STATE COMMITTEE	Rs. 397.00	P & T EXP.	Rs. 44,242.50
		RENT & TAX	Rs. 30,043.00
		SERVICE & MAIN. EXP.	Rs. 41,710.00
		STAT & PRINT EXP.	Rs. 84,090.00
		TEA & TIFFIN EXP.	Rs. 19,583.50
		TRAVELLING EXP.	Rs. 33,722.00
		VECHILE MAIN. EXP.	Rs. 70,236.00
		WAGES	Rs. 515,200.00
		W.F.T.U. CONF. EXP.	Rs. 70,280.00
		PUBLICATION EXP.	Rs. 59,450.00
		BAD DEBT	Rs. 500.00
		RELIEF & SUBSIDY	Rs. 25,000.00
		XTH CONFERENCE	Rs. 32,862.00
		CLOSING CASH AND ADVANCES	Rs. 70,250.81
		CLOSING CASH AT BANK	Rs. 1,032,059.05
	<b>Rs. 5,259,132.46</b>		<b>Rs. 5,259,132.46</b>

Report

As per our report of even date attached.  
for R.M. SHARMA & ASSOCIATES  
Chartered Accountants

(B.M.SHARMA)  
Partner

Place:New Delhi  
Dated:9th April 2002

**CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS**  
**13-A, ROUSE AVENUE, NEW DELHI-110002**  
**Income & Expenditure Account As on 31st.December, 2000**

EXPENDITURE		INCOME	
CITU MAZDOOR EXP.	Rs. 193,580.00	CITU MAZDOOR INCOME	Rs. 181,164.00
VWW EXP.	Rs. 120,481.00	VWW INCOME	Rs. 135,003.00
WORKING CLASS EXP.	Rs. 213,195.00	WORKING CLASS INCOME	Rs. 241,310.00
AUDIT EXP.	Rs. 14,572.00	AFFILIATION A/C	Rs. 2,511,569.50
BAD DEBT A/C	Rs. 500.00	BANK INTEREST A/C	Rs. 29,606.00
BANK CHARGES	Rs. 5,812.00	BTR BOOKS A/C	Rs. 1,825.00
CITU MEETING EXP.	Rs. 56,042.50	DONATION A/C	Rs. 99,417.00
CITU WORKSHOP A/C	Rs. 38,524.00	MISC. RECEIPTS A/C	Rs. 1,430.00
CONVEYANCE EXP.	Rs. 52,292.00	NPMO A/C	Rs. 5,150.00
ELEC. & WATER BILL	Rs. 54,169.00	PUBLICATION A/C	Rs. 48,950.00
GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING A/C	Rs. 27,947.50	INTEREST ON FDR A/C	Rs. 481,204.00
MEDICAL EXP.	Rs. 20,951.20		
MISC. EXP.	Rs. 20,898.00		
NP.PERIO & BOOKS	Rs. 22,342.40		
OTHER EXP.	Rs. 14,177.00		
PHONE BILL	Rs. 138,547.00		
P & T EXP.	Rs. 44,242.50		
PUBLICATION EXP.	Rs. 59,450.00		
RELIEF & SUBSIDY	Rs. 25,000.00		
RENT & TAX	Rs. 30,043.00		
SERVICE & MAIN. EXP.	Rs. 41,710.00		
STAT & PRINT EXP.	Rs. 84,090.00		
TEA & TIFFIN EXP.	Rs. 19,583.50		
TRAVELLING EXP.	Rs. 33,722.00		
VECHILE MAIN. EXP.	Rs. 70,236.00		
WAGES	Rs. 515,200.00		
XTH CONFERENCE	Rs. 32,862.00		
WFTU CONF. EXP.	Rs. 70,280.00		
9 TH MARCH RALLY A/C	Rs. 349,740.00		
EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE TRANSFERRED TO GENERAL FUND	Rs. 1,366,438.90		
	<b>Rs. 3,736,628.50</b>		<b>Rs. 3,736,628.50</b>

Report

As per our report of even date attached.  
for R.M. SHARMA & ASSOCIATES  
Chartered Accountants

Place: New Delhi  
Dated: 9th April 2002

(B.M.SHARMA)  
Partner

**CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS**  
**13-A, ROUSE AVENUE, NEW DELHI-110002**  
**Balance Sheet As on 31st.December, 2000**

<b>Liabilities</b>	<b>Assets</b>
<p><b><u>GENERAL FUND ACCOUNT</u></b></p> <p>As per last Balance                      Rs.5,900,063.41</p> <p>Add: Surplus during the year                                      Rs.1,366,438.90                      Rs.7,266,502.31</p> <p><b><u>CURRENT LIABILITIES</u></b></p> <p>Drought Relief Fund                      Rs.44,661.00</p> <p>Orissa Relief Fund                         Rs.8,200.00</p> <p>Transport Seminar a/c                      Rs.30,000.00</p> <p>U.P. State Committee                      Rs.397.00</p> <p>W.B. State Committee                      Rs.97.50                                      Rs.83,355.50</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Rs.7,349,857.81</b></p>	<p><b><u>FIXED ASSETS</u></b></p> <p>Opening Balance                          Rs.1,387,215.95</p> <p>Addition this year                         Rs.545,826.00                              Rs.1,933,041.95</p> <p><b><u>INVESTMENTS</u></b></p> <p>Opening Balance                          Rs.3,116,534.00</p> <p>Addition this year                         Rs.481,204.00                              Rs.3,597,738.00</p> <p><b><u>CURRENT ASSETS</u></b></p> <p>B.T.R.TRUST                                  Rs.632,644.00</p> <p>Loans &amp; Advances                         Rs.84,124.00</p> <p>Cash in Hand                                 Rs.70,250.81</p> <p>Cash at Bank                                 Rs.1,032,059.05                              Rs.1,819,077.86</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Rs.7,349,857.81</b></p>

Report

As per our report of even date attached.  
for R.M. SHARMA & ASSOCIATES  
Chartered Accountants

Place: New Delhi  
Dated: 9th April 2002

(B.M.SHARMA)  
Partner



**CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS**  
**13-A, ROUSE AVENUE, NEW DELHI-110002**  
**Income & Expenditure Account As on 31st.December, 2001**

EXPENDITURE		INCOME	
CITU MAZDOOR EXP.	Rs. 162,335.50	CITU MAZDOOR INCOME	Rs. 163,839.00
VWW EXP.	Rs. 118,821.50	VWW INCOME	Rs. 109,870.50
WORKING CLASS EXP.	Rs. 167,628.50	WORKING CLASS INCOME	Rs. 125,138.00
AUDIT EXP.	Rs. 6,632.00	PATRIKA INCOME	Rs. 4,750.00
BANK CHARGES	Rs. 3,268.00	AFFILIATION	Rs. 1,243,840.50
CITU MEETING EXP.	Rs. 7,843.00	BANK INTEREST	Rs. 32,089.00
CONVEYANCE EXP.	Rs. 88,264.00	BTR BOOKS	Rs. 1,670.00
ELEC. & WATER BILL	Rs. 44,790.00	DONATION	Rs. 145,736.00
DELEGATION EXP.	Rs. 8,353.50	MISC.RECEIPTS	Rs. 4,740.19
BUILDING MAIN.	Rs. 8,958.00	NPMO	Rs. 8,640.00
MEDICAL EXP.	Rs. 34,062.50	PUBLICATION SALE	Rs. 36,298.50
MISC. EXP.	Rs. 18,664.50	9 TH MARCH RALLY	Rs. 10,000.00
NP.PERIO & BOOKS	Rs. 28,088.00	INTEREST ON FDR	Rs. 306,355.00
OTHER EXP.	Rs. 9,162.00		
PHONE BILL	Rs. 133,810.00		
P & T EXP.	Rs. 34,086.00		
RENT & TAX	Rs. 60,251.00		
SERVICE & MAIN. EXP.	Rs. 42,475.00		
STAT & PRINT EXP.	Rs. 79,010.00		
TEA & TIFFIN EXP.	Rs. 28,642.00		
TRAVELLING EXP.	Rs. 17,401.00		
VECHILE MAIN. EXP.	Rs. 108,358.00		
WAGES	Rs. 588,750.00		
PUBLICATION EXP.	Rs. 36,675.50		
W.C.MEETING EXP.	Rs. 15,255.00		
RELIEF & SUBSIDY	Rs. 10,000.00		
XTH CONFERENCE	Rs. 56,512.00		
EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE TRANSFERRED TO GENERAL FUND	Rs. 274,870.19		
	<b>Rs. 2,192,966.69</b>		<b>Rs. 2,192,966.69</b>

Report

As per our report of even date attached.  
for R.M. SHARMA & ASSOCIATES  
Chartered Accountants

Place: New Delhi  
Dated: 9th April 2002

(B.M.SHARMA)  
Partner

SPECIAL DISCUSSION

**CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS**  
13-A, ROUSE AVENUE, NEW DELHI-110002  
**Balance Sheet As on 31st.December, 2001**

<b>Liabilities</b>	<b>Assets</b>
<p><b><u>GENERAL FUND ACCOUNT</u></b></p> <p>As per last Balance                      Rs.7,266,502.31</p> <p>Add: Surplus during the year    <u>Rs.274,870.19</u>                      Rs.7,541,372.50</p> <p><b><u>CURRENT LIABILITIES</u></b></p> <p>GUJRAT EARTH QUAKE RELIEF FUND                                      Rs.2,505,898.12</p> <p>T.N.STATE COMMITTEE                              Rs.2,073.00</p> <p>Transport Seminar a/c                              Rs.30,000.00</p> <p>U.P. State Committee                                      Rs.397.00</p> <p>W.B. State Committee                                      <u>Rs.97.50</u>                                      Rs.2,538,465.62</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Rs.10,079,838.12</b></p>	<p><b><u>FIXED ASSETS</u></b></p> <p>Opening Balance                                      Rs.1,933,041.95</p> <p>Addition this year                                      <u>Rs.13,800.00</u>                                      Rs.1,946,841.95</p> <p><b><u>INVESTMENTS</u></b></p> <p>Opening Balance                                      Rs.3,597,738.00</p> <p>LESS:    <u>Rs.1,410,441.00</u>                                      Rs.2,187,297.00</p> <p><b><u>ENCASHMENT</u></b></p> <p><b><u>CURRENT ASSETS</u></b></p> <p>B.T.R.TRUST    Rs.694,605.00</p> <p>Loans &amp; Advances    Rs.67,474.00</p> <p>Cash in Hand    Rs.172,069.00</p> <p>Cash at Bank    <u>Rs.5,011,551.17</u>                                      Rs.5,945,699.17</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Rs.10,079,838.12</b></p>

Report

As per our report of even date attached.  
for R.M. SHARMA & ASSOCIATES  
Chartered Accountants

Place:New Delhi  
Dated:9th April 2002

(B.M.SHARMA)  
Partner

# SPECIAL DISCUSSION

## ON

# UNITED STRUGGLES AND ORGANISATIONAL CONSOLIDATION OF TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

"Since the emergence of CITU in the trade union scene of India twenty three years ago, it has played an important role in building a united movement on common issues facing the working class. During this period the CITU came in the limelight as the foremost champion of the working class interest.

"The CITU consistently upheld the principle of class struggle and socialism and fought against ideologies inimical to these lofty ideals. Even at times, it was alone in taking certain positions, but it never gave up the struggles to protect the class interest of the workers."

The Report on Organisation adopted by the CITU Working Committee meeting held at Bhubaneswar on 4-6 June 1993, popularly known as the Bhubaneswar document outlining the organisational approach of CITU, opened up with the foregoing paragraphs.

### **UNITED MOVEMENT: VARIOUS PHASES**

The exercise on uniting the trade union movement since the birth of CITU passed through various distinct phases. The first one had been in the form of United Council of Trade Unions (UCTU) in the face of pro-Govt. combine of some major trade unions under the leadership of the INTUC. Then came the phase of National Campaign Committee Against Industrial Relations Bill, which for a certain period could bring all the central trade unions in the united platform to fight against the Industrial Relations Bill during the Janata Party regime. Thereafter National Campaign Committee of Trade unions was formed with all the central trade unions and industrial federations except INTUC in 1981. The subsequent period also saw the consolidation of the countrywide united platform of the public sector workers' movement. Then came the formation of Sponsoring Committee of Trade Unions in the nineties to fight against liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation. And the current phase is witnessing a bigger unity at the industry level actions involving the INTUC and BMS as well. At the national level also, these two central trade unions are occasionally joining the united programmes with other trade unions, despite vacillations.

The CITU emerged from its foundation conference with the slogan "Towards Unity and Struggle" and emphasised the urgent need of building unity of the working class in the struggle against exploitation and for defending the trade union and democratic rights of the workers and the people.

But, immediately after the foundation of CITU, the ruling classes made hectic efforts to isolate the CITU within the trade union movement itself. The INTUC, AITUC and HMS joined to form the National Council of Trade Unions (NCTU)-in 1971, with the blessings of the Govt. of India and its Labour Minister, R. K. Khadilkar. The NCTU took a line supportive of the anti-worker policies of the then Congress Govt. at the Centre. The CITU took initiative to bring all other trade unions and industrial federations to form a common platform - the United Council of Trade Unions (UCTU) - to defend the working class. The UCTU launched united countrywide struggles on various issues facing the working class and later against the emergency rule. In the process, the pro-Govt. NCTU formation became

defunct. Later, the HMS formally disassociated from the NCTU.

## **SUCCESSIVE PHASES**

Since then, the exercise for unity and united actions of the working class had gone through various phases, with the platform of united struggle getting widened in every successive phase. The Industrial Relations Bill, introduced by the Janata Party Govt. in 1978, witnessed countrywide united resistance by all the central trade unions, including the AITUC, INTUC and BMS, on a wider platform of unity. This phase saw the atrocious bill being pushed to natural death.

The INTUC deserted the united movement after the Congress came back to power at the Centre. But, the efforts to forge a united platform of struggle of the working class continued even thereafter. The National Campaign Committee of Trade Unions (NCC) was formed from a massive all India convention at Mumbai in June 1981, which could draw all the central trade unions in the country except INTUC in its fold, besides numerous major industrial federations. It succeeded in repulsing a number of attacks on the rights of the workers till 'ate eighties. Notable was the historic countrywide general strike on 19th January 1982, at the call of NCC. This was the first powerful nationwide industrial action of the working class in the annals of the Indian Trade Union movement. On that occasion, the joint statement issued by B. T. Ranadive and P. Ramamurthy, President and General Secretary of CITU, congratulated the workers for the successful united strike action and noted: "Braving the barbarous repression let loose by various Congress (I) ruled States through arrest of our 50000 workers under NSA, police lathi-charge, firing and the attacks by Congress (I) hoodlums, in which several workers died, millions of workers have come out in the strike and thus had created a history in the annals of the trade union movement in the country."

## **THE CPSTU MOVEMENT**

During this period, the Committee of Public Sector Trade Unions (CPSTU) was also formed in mid-eighties. The CITU played an important role through countrywide independent campaign against the conspiracy to denigrate the public sector by the Central Government. This created the necessary condition for the formation of CPSTU. All the public sector trade unions affiliated to various central trade unions, except INTUC, besides unions not affiliated to any central TUs joined the CPSTU to fight against the anti-PSU conspiracy of the then Congress Govt. led by Indira Gandhi. The CPSTU, through various united struggles, became the united platform of public sector workers and was recognised as the consistent champion of the public sector and the rights of its workers..

Subsequently, towards the end of eighties, the BMS disassociated itself from the CPSTU. Despite that, CPSTU could successfully rally the mass of the public sector workers - including many of those having allegiance to INTUC and BMS - in countrywide strike actions. In fact, the united campaign launched by the CPSTU in the recent months created such a situation at the grassroots level that BMS had to join the countrywide strike in all the PSUs on 16th April 2002.

## **SPONSORING COMMITTEE OF TUs**

Following the introduction of the economic policy of liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation (LPG) at the dictates of the World Bank and IMF in 1991, the united movement of trade unions entered in an altogether new phase. As the INTUC and BMS preferred to stay away from the united movement against the LPG policies, all other trade unions joined in the countrywide strike action on 29th November 1991. This paved the way for the formation of the Sponsoring Committee of Trade Unions. Except the INTUC and BMS, all the Central Trade Unions joined the Sponsoring Committee along with other major independent all India federations of the employees in Central and State Govt.s, defence, pharmaceuticals, fertilisers, bank, insurance and other industries, representing an overwhelming majority

of the employees of those sectors. This was a further widening of the united platform of struggle.

During Nineties, the Sponsoring Committee played an important role in unleashing a series of countrywide actions, including strike actions, against the LPG policies. With the initiative of the Sponsoring Committee, the mass organisations of the people from other walks of life - the peasants, agricultural workers, students, youth, women, lawyers and other professionals - were drawn to the united struggle against the disastrous economic policies. The National Platform of Mass Organisations (NPMO) was formed at a massively attended all India Convention in New Delhi in 1993. The NPMO did play an important role in activating all the mass organisations, covering all segments of society, in unleashing campaign and agitation. Thus, the entire decade of nineties witnessed not only a number of general strikes and bandhs, but also numerous sectoral strike actions in banks, insurance and other financial institutions, by the State and Central Govt. employees and also by the unorganised sector workers as well, besides other mass fronts. Moreover the struggles for revival of sick industrial units like NTC, IISCO and many others saw almost total unity of all the unions in the concerned sector. The atmosphere created throughout the country by the campaign and agitation from the platform of Sponsoring Committee and NPMO was such that even the leadership of INTUC and BMS, though staying away from the united movement at the national level, could not come out publicly in support of the LPG policies. Neither they could restrain a major section of their followings from joining the united countrywide struggle. This was instrumental to a considerable slowing down of the pace of implementation of the policies of liberalisation during Congress and United Front regimes.

## **UNDER NDA REGIME**

The BJP, after coming to power at the Centre, embarked on a more vigorous and desperate pursuit of the LPG policies, paying no heed to the public opinion reflected by the united trade union movement and other mass organisations. The onslaught of privatisation and attacks on the working people assumed new dimensions. This set the backdrop to more vigorous forms of resistance by the toiling masses from 2000 onwards.

The year 2000 started with a five-day strike in port & docks, more than a month long strike by the State Govt. employees in Rajasthan, Jammu & Kashmir, and Bihar and a ten-day long united strike by the electricity workers and engineers of UP. The subsequent period also witnessed a number of continuous strike actions by the workers of BALCO, transport workers in AP and Tamilnadu and the State Govt. employees of Kerala. There had also been a number of all India strike actions by the postal, telecom, bank and insurance sector employees and coal miners.

All these sectoral strike actions from 2000 onwards revealed a common feature. Almost all the workers of all affiliations have joined them. All the trade unions in these sectors, including those affiliated to INTUC and BMS, had sponsored most of these strikes, thus reflecting the all in unity of the workers.

For the first time in the post-liberalisation regime, this situation also forced the central leadership of the INTUC and BMS to join others, who are already in the struggle to against the LPG policies, with a call for countrywide joint demonstrations on 24th July 2001 and to prepare for countrywide strike. Massive successful bandhs were observed in Gujarat and Maharashtra on 16th and 25th April, 2001, respectively. The joint conventions held in all the States of the country, preceding the 24th July joint demonstrations, were massively attended, where the countrywide general strike proposal was unanimously endorsed.

Despite such overwhelming response, the strike call by all the trade unions could not materialise in 2001, due to opposition from the INTUC and BMS. While the INTUC leadership backed out from their commitment to strike call, the BMS adopted a dilatory tactics under one pretext or other. It is only after clear cut position taken by the constituents of CPSTU and Sponsoring Committee to go ahead with the public sector strike on 16th April 2002, the BMS agreed to join the countrywide strike in the PSUs.

Despite opposition of the INTUC leadership to the strike call, the INTUC unions in Port & Dock and some other industries came forward openly in support of the strike. Not only that, in some of the oil companies like the BPCL and HPCL, all the unions - including Shiv Sena and INTUC unions - have jointly decided to go in for a three-day countrywide strike commencing from 16th April 2002.

Another important feature of the developments in the recent period is that in solidarity with the public sector strike against privatisation, in many States viz., AP, West Bengal, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, etc, all the trade unions had jointly called for a general strike, which was responded to by the workers of both the public and private sectors in a big way.

## **EXPERIENCE, LESSONS AND TASKS**

The three decades long exercise of united trade union movement throws up certain concrete experiences.

During the period following emergence of CITU, our efforts for rallying the workers in the struggle against the policies of the ruling classes could draw the major sections of the trade union movement, away from the clutches of class collaborationist pro-Govt. approach inside the trade union movement.

In the subsequent period also, firm assertion of the line of united trade union action against the policies led to widening of the united platform. The anti-liberalisation struggle also could take-off only after a sustained campaign from early 1991 by the CITU exposing the real face of the policy of liberalisation itself. Still, there was serious reluctance even among many left trade unions for giving a strike call. The CITU took a firm stand of going ahead with the strike single handedly, even if other left trade unions did not come forward to join. Only after this, the first countrywide united strike against the liberalisation policies could be called on 29th November 1991. This strike resulted in the formation of Sponsoring Committee of Trade Unions, as noted earlier. The decade-long campaign and movement by the Sponsoring Committee succeeded in creating conditions compelling the INTUC and BMS to join the anti-liberalisation struggle from 2000 onwards, notwithstanding their vacillations.

This experience underlines the fact that for achieving broader unity for action, it is always essential to pursue the line of united struggle and to insist firmly on "unity for struggle only". By compromising on struggle, such unity cannot be achieved. Unity, without a vision of struggle, is futile and has no meaning.

It is true that more grievous manifestation of the impact of the LPG policies from 2000 onwards created a favourable situation for all in unity in the trade union movement. But, favourable conditions alone cannot lead to united actions, unless there is proactive effort to canalise the resentment and the spontaneous urge for resistance in the appropriate direction. In the absence of such efforts, onslaughts and manifestations of the crisis can lead to demoralisation and frustration. Here lies the importance of conscious efforts for developing united countrywide trade union action.

## **CITU INTERVENTION AND INITIATIVE**

Secondly, intervention by the CITU had played an almost decisive role in deciding the united programmes of action at the national level during mid-seventies onwards. But, during the post liberalisation period, when the united struggle had to focus much more on basic policy issues, rather than on economic demands, we had to confront with more vacillations even among our allies in the Sponsoring Committee, not to speak of INTUC and BMS. At a later stage, particularly during 2001, the issue of involving BMS and INTUC was often used by many of our allies for not going in for militant countrywide actions, even in the face of the aggravating situation. This illustrates the depth of the influence of economism and reformism on the trade union movement, particularly when the basic class issues are coming to the fore. The vacillation was also due to the ideological offensive carried on through media and other

means to generate a kind of fait accompli or the TINA (There Is No Alternative) syndrome among the ranks within the trade union movement.

Moreover, the rise of communal and divisive forces in the socio-political scenario in the late eighties has posed a serious challenge to our efforts for unifying the working class and the toiling people in general. We have seen how the tempo of countrywide militant struggle against the LPG policies, built up through a million strong mobilisation of workers in Delhi on 26th November 1992, could severely be damaged by the situation created by demolition of Babri Masjid by the sangh parivar outfits. At regular intervals, particularly when the ruling BJP combine is facing electoral rout in different parts of the country, owing to its anti-worker, anti-people policies, the communal forces led by the sangh parivar outfits raise their heads to disrupt the developing unity of not only the workers but also the society as a whole. We have to fight against these evil forces as well, while striving for class unity.

Herein lies the crucial importance of the independent ideological campaign and organisational initiative by CITU. This is of utmost importance to create widest possible awareness about the policies and to popularise the need for united struggles. This process will expose the forces of disruption, both at the top and at the grass-root level, and also effectively facilitate united actions. Such grass root level independent campaign is crucial to create conditions from below, with the common workers mounting pressure on the reformist trade union leadership to join the united platform of action. Equally important is the independent initiative by the CITU to ensure widest mobilisation for effectively implementing the united action programmes in the respective sectors.

## **REACHING OUT TO ALL WORKERS**

Thirdly, it is noticed that despite many successful united countrywide actions, where the initiating role of CITU was widely recognised, the CITU's base could not be expanded noticeably in many areas. Rather, many States witnessed a stagnation or decline, particularly during the last decade. Why this is so?

It must be noted that the pursuit of the line of unity and struggle gave our organisation tremendous benefit during the seventies and eighties. During this period, CITU expanded in almost all the key industries and all the major all India industry wise federations under CITU - in Steel, Coal, Construction, Transport, Waterfront, Electricity etc. - were formed, bringing the CITU to the forefront of the working class movement. Our consistent initiative in developing united struggles and forthright stand in defense of the rights and interests of the workers, clearly manifested in all the joint forums, was key to such developments.

Often there has been a complaint that the central leadership of the other constituent organisations of the united platform do not intimate or seriously pursue the united action programmes among their constituent units at the grass root level. This may be true on most occasions. But this also unfolds an opportunity before us to carry the message of united action to all the workers - including the followers of other organisations. This, in many places, we refuse to appreciate. In fact, we should utilise the united call for action as a passport to approach the workers belonging to other unions. We must establish ourselves as champions of united working class action, which will simultaneously bring out the contrast of the lack of seriousness of other organisations. Our work suffers from serious shortcomings in this respect.

Capacity of our activists to approach the ranks of other organisations and involve them in united action is extremely limited. In many demonstrations, we find that some of the constituents do not bring their following, which is resulting in weaker mobilisation of united strength. Hence, we have to train our cadres to approach the ranks of other organisations to participate more actively in joint programmes. This helps in further organisational consolidation of the trade union movement itself.

Our cadres should be in a position to reply to the points raised by rank and file workers of other organisations so that confusion prevalent in their minds can be cleared through discussions. The ranks of other trade unions have great potential to pressurise the leadership to take a positive attitude towards united struggles of the working class.

Building a powerful unity of the workers is also a process of struggle. To intensify the class struggle, we have to launch a powerful struggle within the trade union movement. Sustained campaign against anti-struggle policies within the trade union movement is an integral part of our struggle to build a united movement of the working class.

Our rank and file and 'cadres are often passive in their approach. We have to make them active so that they can build bridges with the ranks of other organisations and unity is built from below. How to make our cadres more effective in playing their role in building united movement is a crucial question that we have to deal with today.

The Tenth Conference of the CITU has clearly identified the weakness - rather reluctance - on the part of our organisations at industry level to plan and fully reach the entire workforce in the concerned industry, both during our independent campaigns and joint programmes, as one of the major defects in our functioning. In many places, we fail even to reach our membership in entirety. Many unions in major industries prefer to communicate with the workers through circulars/press statements instead of reaching them directly. Such a shortcoming frustrates the very purpose of our initiative in united trade union activities and deprives us of the organisational gains from our initiative towards achieving unity. Without conscious efforts on our part to reach the mass of the workers, irrespective of affiliations, with our campaign, neither effective unity of the class can be built up, nor gains of united struggle be consolidated organisationally.

## **THE MOVE FOR CONFEDERATION**

While working for the unity of the trade union movement, we must constantly keep in view our objective of building a Confederation of Trade Unions to further consolidate trade union unity, achieved through various struggles. In the scenario of prevailing multiplicity of trade unions and mounting onslaughts against the working people, a tremendous urge for unity is developing among the workers, which must be taken note of. It further got reflected in the all in unity developed in many industries in the struggle against sickness and for survival of the industry and formation of numerous "Save Committees" in several industrial units. Differences in perception still persist among the central leadership of various central trade unions towards all India struggles. In spite of this, more and more coordinated and concerted action among the industry wise federations of different affiliations is becoming a reality in many important industries, like Port & Dock, Coal, Electricity, Oil etc. All these reflect the increasing urge among the common workers for a single united platform for the entire workforce.

Formation of a confederation at a national level cannot be achieved unless all participants accept it. There are still differences on the proposal for a confederation among the central trade unions, from both extremes. Therefore, we may have to work out various intermediate forms of organisational consolidation to bring trade union movement closer. In such a situation, our effort for unifying the working class through various united formations, both at the national and industry levels, should be directed gradually towards popularising the idea of formation of a platform of a more consolidated character encompassing the entire trade union movement.

We must keep in mind that the exercise for unity of the trade union movement has passed through various phases. It has led to gradual widening and broad basing of the united platform of action in successive stages from the UCTU to the present Sponsoring Committee of Trade Unions. It has

further matured to the stage where, occasionally though, INTUC and BMS have joined in some actions in the current phase.

## **TOWARDS TANGIBLE MOVES FOR UNITY**

The AITUC and HMS have also been coming forth with the talk of a united trade union platform of a more 'permanent nature'. There is little reason to be over enthusiastic about such a possibility in the near future, due to various constraints in the prevailing atmosphere. But, the possibility of common debate on this issue between the CITU, AITUC and HMS does assume special importance. These talks reflect the growing urge for working together among the rank and file workers of these organisations. The experience of talks on merger held between AITUC and HMS has shown that there are several hurdles in the way of merger of central trade unions at the top. There are objective realities, which are to be taken into account when we consider the formation of a single national trade union centre in India. The effort for organisational consolidation should begin from below to achieve a long lasting result. Moreover, formation of a single trade union centre can be thought of only after and through the process of several united struggles of nationwide character, which will create condition and generate confidence in the minds of activists of different organisations and area of apprehensions and differences is reduced to the minimum in the course of powerful struggles.

Our experience has shown that lower level unity is more easily realisable. Such united actions and coming together will strengthen the regional and state level united actions and the need for coming closer organisationally.

But, one thing is becoming increasingly evident. The urge for unity has to be generated more forcefully from down below to create the condition for a more tangible unity at the national level. The Bhubaneswar document has already laid down the guideline for our work in that direction: "The effort for unification of unions and federations at plant or industry level in many places...would ultimately create ground for formation of confederation at national level. Again confederation of trade unions at national level would also pave the way for one union in one industry in a wider scale in the long run."

The CITU should thus consciously explore possibilities of combining multiple unions at unit level into one union to make it more effective. By developing closer coordination with other unions at unit level on common issues, ground may gradually be created for such possibilities. Conscious effort to develop joint working arrangements with other industry-wise federations in various industries is also an important task in this direction. Wherever possible, we should take initiative in formation of one single industry-wise federation, which would ensure democratic functioning of the organisation and maintain its loyalty to defend the interests of the working class in the struggle against capitalists.

The post-liberalisation regime, with the unleashing of severe attacks on the working people, has created a favourable situation for unity in the trade union movement. Identification of common issues, around which unity can be built up, has become much easier now. The CITU unions must redouble their independent initiative to take full advantage of the situation to reach out to the common workers. They must expose the real face of the policies and the ultimate source of the onslaughts along with the appeal for unity and struggle. The exact form the unity exercise may take may vary from place to place, depending on the composition, level of consciousness and the concrete situation obtaining. The concerned CITU committees will have to decide on it, in consultation with the State Committees. But the exercise must continue at all levels for further organisational consolidation of the unity achieved through struggles.

Side by side, independent ideological campaign among the mass of the workers should also be continuously undertaken from the CITU platform. It must concentrate on the urgent need for all in unity and on defeating various trends antagonistic to unity, spearheaded by the communal and divisive

forces.

## **STRENGTHENING OF CITU**

Our efforts to build a powerful unity and consolidation of the organisational unity of the working class cannot materialise unless we build a strong CITU. Our membership strength is extremely small, compared to the size of the working class in India. Its growth is slow in several States, while it is stagnating in others. The hectic drive for downsizing the workforce has also resulted in some erosion in our membership base. Our expansion in newer areas is much below the mark. The scope for enhancing the membership of the existing unions is also not fully utilised.

Our target of increasing membership to 40 lakhs has not yet progressed much. Unless we make strenuous efforts to enhance our own organised strength, our capacity to intensify the united movement of the working class will be greatly affected.

There is urgent need to improve the level of consciousness and improve the capability of our cadres and members, which can be achieved only through intensive programme of education at all levels.

## **OUR ROLE IN UNITED STRUGGLES**

The role of the State Committees, District Committees and industry wise federations assumes greater importance in strengthening the united movement and consolidating the organisation of the working class.

Though some of the State Committees have played an important role in State level movements, bringing all trade unions together for common actions, we cannot claim this to be true in the case of all the State committees. The same is the case with our industry wise federations and District Committees.

We have not been able to prepare a detailed review of our activities in this respect. There is need to do so in the interest of further advancement of our movement and its organisational consolidation.

This question assumes special importance since objective conditions in India is becoming more and more favourable. We are unable to fully utilise it to meet the challenges of the situation more effectively. Though the united movement is advancing on the whole and our activities are improving at all levels, the sweep and widespread character of the struggle requires to be strengthened qualitatively to defeat the capitalist offensives. We have to pool our experience gained in the struggle so that we will be able to play our role more effectively in the present situation.

If the growing responsibility of the CITU Centre in the organisational consolidation of the TU movement were to be tackled effectively, the resources and personnel of the CITU need to be strengthened. The improvement of the existing functioning also assumes importance. Without the effective cooperation of the State Committees and Secretariat Members this cannot be achieved in the near future. We should seriously consider means of achieving these tasks, in order that we can play our role more effectively.