



THE WORKING CLASS

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New Dangers!

THE LIC employees, under the leadership of AIEA have recently won a resounding legal victory against the authorities. The Supreme Court has rejected the arbitrary charges introduced by the authorities and given a verdict in favour of the employees upholding the old bonus agreement for the year 1978 and 1979. It seems the authorities are intend on prolonging the legal battle and the employees may have to come out in the arena to defend their legal gains.

The LIC employees' experience shows how the authorities can introduce illegal changes this was done under the Janata rule and involved the workers in protracted litigation undermining the faith in settlement through negotiations and understanding.

Similar is the experience of the RBI workers. The RBI workers, led by their organisation AIRBEA went on a prolonged strike to enforce their demands. A bilateral settlement was reached to the satisfaction of the employees but it was not implemented for nearly a year. In other industries also disputes get prolonged, extend over months or years. the authorities stepping from one court to another to avoid a final settlement. The crassest instance relate to the wage settlement of the working journalists and newspaper workers, whose emoluments have not been raised for a period of ten years. The employees and workers may protest against this situation. But the fact is that it is going to the worsoning in the near future. The LIC employees congratulating themselves on their legal victory, should realise that in future they may not have any access to the courts or that if there is such access, it will be formal and with the courts deprived of the last vestiges of their independence and acting as the rubber stamp of an unscrupulous executives.

Realise the dangers

It is doubtful if the LIC and other employees realise the danger that they and the country are facing. They perhaps donot realise that the present favourable verdict is not exactly and entirely due either to their own strength or the justness of their cause. If the emergency had lasted till now, if powerful democratic forces had not toppled the authoritarian regime in 1977 this verdict would not have been possible. Because the authoritarian regime was making every effort to revamp the Supreme Court with its 'committed' minions.

The thousands who faced jail and imprisonment in the fight against the emergency rule, the

B. T. Ranadive

thousands who faced lathi charges and firings during the course of the forcible sterilisation campaign prepared the way for the electoral rout of the authoritarian party and succeeded in re-establishing parliamentary norms and the role of the judiciary.

Search for committed judiciary

There is every need for the LIC employees to remember this, because new attacks are being planned by the ruling party against peoples' rights including attacks against the judiciary. For months the ruling party has held up the filling in of vacancies in High Courts and Supreme Court obviously because it is looking for firmly 'committed' judges whose loyalty to the ruling party is beyond doubt. In Indian conditions there are various ways in which the courts can be vamped. Hypocritical concern for Harijans, minorities, backward and weaker sections enables the authorities to justify the selection of their own nominees.

To tame the judiciary, the executive is claiming the right to transfer High Court judges from one State to another.

These developments form part of the grim political situation that has developed since the victory of the Indira Congress in the Parliamentary elections in the beginning of the 1980.

Damocles sword

What are the counter steps taken by the Government to control the political situation? The steps regarding the control of the judiciary are already mentioned. The most unimportant step towards uncontrolled rule, denigration of the rule of law is the National Security Act with wide powers to

the bureaucracy to detain people without trial, while enacting the measure the Government tried to hook-wink the announcing that it was directed to curb the activities of the anti-socials only. It is really meant to attack the democratic movement and remind one of the notorious MISA. Under it strike leaders have been arrested, and leaders of political movement imprisoned and detained. This damocles sword now hangs on the entire people and the democratic movement.

But all this is enough in the context of the rapidly worsening situation. The authoritarian party wants to change the constitution and secure dictatorial powers for itself. During the Emergency a conspiracy was afoot to scuttle the existing Constitution and replace it by a Presidential one. The efforts aborted at a time for several reasons.

Notorious proposal

Now the notorious proposal is again being revived slyly. The ruling party some time supporting it brazenly and some time repudiating all responsibility for it. A conference of lawyers was arranged by the ruling party to advocate a change in the Constitution and several speeches were made in favour of a Presidential form of Government. Indira Gandhi addressed the conference and the people to debate the issue, giving an indication of her mind. But finding extremely adverse reaction of the proposal her Law Minister had to announce in Parliament that the Central Government had no intention of changing the present form of Government and the Constitution.

But it will be suicidal to think that these quarters have given up all plans to institute dictatorship utilising their majority in the Parliament. They are forced to wait for some time because they haven't got the requisite strength in the Rajya Sabha. The employees and workers must realise what the sponsors of the Presidential Form of Government are aiming at; otherwise they will be caught napping,

It should be clear in the first place that both the Parliamentary form of Government as exists in Britain and the Presidential form of Government as it exists in the USA are forms of class rule of the vested interests, the big bourgeoisie and the monopolists etc. By themselves they do not represent any fundamental change in the position of the masses with respect to political power or control over State.

Growing rebellious spirit

In India the question is raised by the ruling party because the present Constitution with its Parliamentary form, is bound to be too inconvenient to

practice open dictatorship on the people. The need for such dictatorship arises from the growing rebellious spirit of the masses against a government, a party which has failed to deliver them from the bondage of poverty and impoverishment. The executive now wants all restrictions on its power to be removed and it calls this a presidential form of government.

Cry for presidential system

Indira Gandhi's main propagandist Shri Antulay, Chief Minister of Maharashtra, makes it quite clear that the first objective is to transform the judiciary into an appendage of the executive, a sychophantic crowd who will deliver judgement according to the dictates of the President. He complains "But in India our Constitution envisage that any ordinary law enacted by Parliament can be struck down as un-constitutional by the Supreme Court. Besides, not only ordinary laws but even constitution amendments passed by a two-third majority can be declared invalid by our courts. I firmly believe that Parliament must be vested with supreme power in order to uplift the lot of the poor and the down-trodden. But under the present Constitution as interpreted by our Supreme Court, this can not be done." It does not strike this crusador of the presidential system that if there is a conflict between the Parliament and the judiciary on vital question affecting the life of the people, the democratic method is to seek a popular referendum. No he wants a solution by concentrating all power in the hands of one person—the President. He says, "Now in the presidential system, the President within his ambit has powers where even the Supreme Court can not interfere. And he is not removable by the Senate, nor the Congress, nor even the two put together". An irremovable President, who can back the Courts with his nominees, and cannot be removed by either house, this is the gist of the demand for the presidential form of government. Imagine the havoc that will be done to the country if Indira Gandhi is installed as President without any fear of removal by the Parliament.

The people of America themselves have had lot of trouble with their President Nixon who abused his presidential position, violated the privacy and rights of other parties could not be easily removed. Besides the American Presidents have involved their country into external wars, expeditions and murderous conspiracies—Vietnam, Pig's bey without consulting the people, often by deceiving them. Antulay seems to be obsessed with the idea of hunting down the judiciary, for in the interview quoted

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An important decision on Industrial Law

AN important decision on Industrial Law has been handed down by the Supreme Court in the case between Gujarat Steel Tubes Ltd. versus its Mazdoor Sabha, reported in 1980 Labour Industrial Classes at page 1004.

The facts of the case in brief are that the Workmen of the said company were involved in a strike which is alleged to have been sponsored by the Mazdoor Sabha. The strike appears to have ultimately failed and the management issued a notice discharging from services the entire lot of 853 workmen of the company by a notice dated 15th February, 1973 on grounds which were set forth in a separate Memorandum, namely, that the workmen had gone on illegal and unjustified strike since 27th January, 1973.

In spite of the fact, that along with the Notice of Discharge, there was an option to the employees to seek new employment by fresh application which it was said by the company would be considered on their merits, the factory remained closed until 28th April, 1973 when production recommenced with new recruits. But a good number of discharged workmen reported of re-employment and ultimately 419 of them were re-employed.

With the Sabha now expressing willingness to negotiate, the company first said that they would re-employ all the workmen provided they reported for work on or before 4th June, 1973. But in spite of the Sabha accepting the offer, the company went back upon it and said that it was prepared to take only 250 more workers including those to be in the casual list. As a result an

industrial dispute was raised by the Sabha and, through the intercession of the Commissioner of Labour, both sides agreed that the dispute among them be referred to Arbitration under section 10A of the Industrial Disputes Act.

The Arbitrator held against the workers that the action of the company in discharging or dismissing 400 workmen was

Legal Note

legal and proper on the ground that the Sabha had perversely called the strike on 27th January, 1973.

There was an appeal to the High Court and that Court held the discharge to be wrongful and directed re-instatement of the workers with appropriate back wages.

The company came to the Supreme Court. In the background of the aforesaid facts the majority judgement of the Supreme Court has made certain formulations which are important from the point of view of Industrial Law.

The Supreme Court considered the discharge to be punitive, even though the form of the order of discharge showed otherwise. Citing a number of earlier decisions, the Court held that Writ Court was entitled to look into other proceedings or documents connected with the formal order of termination of service to find out what the real ground of termination was. In this connection, the Court referred to the Memorandum of Reasons which was a separate document in which the company referred to the strike as illegal and unjustified, the alleged assault by workmen on officers, their go-slow tactics etc. and the

Memorandum concluded that it was decided to terminate the services of all the workmen who were on illegal and unjustified strike since 27th June, 1973.

The Court concluded, from the aforesaid document, that there was thus a live nexus between the impugned discharged from service and misconduct. It was held that the discharge ought to have been proceeded by an enquiry.

The decision of the Supreme Court in this regard not only reiterated the earlier decisions to the effect that the form of the order was not conclusive but, Mr. Justice Krishna Iyer, who delivered the judgement went a little further than the earlier decision and said that the Court might look at other documents to find out what was the real reason for the discharge.

The other important point that has been highlighted in the judgment is that, once discharge is found to be for misconduct and, therefore to be preceded by an enquiry, that enquiry must be an individual enquiry.

As Mr. Justice Iyer holds, the theory of community guilt and collective punishment has not been accepted in this country. The principle is that no man shall be punished except for his own guilt and no worker shall be dismissed save on proof of his individual delinquency. In the instant case the Supreme Court found that there was no enquiry into the conduct of individual workmen. He held that refusal to report for work does not lead to an irrefutable presumption of active participation in the strike. The questions according to Justice Iyer, were, what did worker A do? Did he join the strike or remain at home for fear of vengeance against blacklegs in a para-violent situation? Therefore, enquiry for individual

workmen was obligatory.

The next point that was decided in the judgement was that an Arbitrator is a Tribunal, the High Court is enabled under Article 226 to interfere with the Award of an Arbitrator if that is based on a complete misconception of law, if it is based on no evidence or if no reasonable man would come to the conclusion to which the Arbitrator arrived.

Finally the court has set right a misconception that arise from a misreading of some earlier decisions of that Court. The Court has held that, if the discharge is ultimately found to be wrong, reinstatement ought to be the rule, particularly after enactment of Article 43 A. According to the Court this Article has brought about a new equation in the Industrial Relations and the discretion to deny

reinstatement or pare down the quantum of back wages is not absolute save for exceptional reasons. Of course, saying all this, Mr. Justice Iyer has not failed to caution that, though the normal rule on reinstatement is full back wages, even so, the Industrial Court may slice off a part thereof if the workmen were not wholly blameless or if the strike was illegal and

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New dangers ...

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above he again observes that the American President is all powerful and says "There the President could say as Roosevelt did—I shall pack the Supreme Court with judges of my choice if these will not approve of my New Deal Legislation. I do not think any Prime Minister in this country can say so." Presidential form is openly equated here with packing of the Supreme Court and that is what the sponsors of this form desire.

A call for open dictatorship

This is a call for open dictatorship of an individual for concentrating all powers in one hand. It is ridiculous to say that under our Constitution power is not concentrated in the hands of the ruling party and its leaders. Those who could impose emergency on the country and enslave a nation of sixty crores can not make this ridiculous plea. Neither the USA President nor the French President could claim such powers even during war time. Experience shows that it is necessary to provide built in defence in the constitution against the dictatorial ambitions of the leaders of the ruling party.

It is quite clear that the attack is not only against the judiciary, but the entire Parliamentary system with the fundamental rights of the people placed at the mercy of an irremovable executive till his term expires. And the executive may entirely change the Constitution of the country as Zias of Pakistan and other countries have done, establishing open dictatorship.

Actually this is a quest for the personal dictatorship of Mrs Gandhi who is rapidly losing her support among the people and whose party is cracking under the pressure of economic events in the country. And what is the ridiculous excuse for

this advocacy of this dictatorship. It is hypocritically asserted that the change is necessary in the interest of the common suffering people of our country. The Parliamentary system and the judiciary are made scapegoat for the failures of the Congress Governments to bring any relief to the masses. The Congress has been ruling the country three decades and it has ruled in the interest of the monopolists, big bourgeoisie and the landlords cheating the peasants and the workers. Was it the judiciary and the Parliamentary system that stalled the progress of India? Or, the subservance of the Congress to the vested interests? Once again the people are being cheated so that they could be betrayed again.

And finally one may ask has the presidential system brought relief to the masses and solved any problem. In the USA under the presidential system a military industrial complex rules the people. More than seven million are permanently unemployed while tycoons and multinationals thrive all the times. Billions of dollars are spent on military expenditure to intimidate other nations.

Expose the conspiracy

It will be a mistake for the employees and the working class to ignore this challenge of personal dictatorship. Once again Indira's ruling party is conspiring to impose dictatorship on the country. Let not the employees be caught napping as they were last time. Let there be full debate and information on what is at stake and let there be clear understanding of the issue involved. This will enable the employees and the workers to rouse public opinion against the new proposals and expose the conspiracy. The LIC and other employees owe this much to their country and their people. If the advance elements in the country—the employees and the workers show indifference to the impending danger, it will be an act bordering on treachery to the people. □

LIC employees' historic victory in Supreme Court

AS back as 1974, All India Insurance Employees Association had reached an agreement with the Life Insurance Corporation of India laying the service conditions of the employees. The then Union Finance Minister and Union Labour Minister were a party to the discussions and at their intervention, the agreement could be concluded. It was a package deal and Life Insurance Corporation had agreed to pay 15 per cent bonus to its employees by way of bonus. This amounted to yearly wage though the nomenclature used for the purpose was bonus. The agreement was attacked during emergency and Calcutta High Court characterise it as money due and declared it to be property right of the employees. Subsequent to that, an Act was passed in the Parliament during the emergency whereby the agreement in LIC was modified unilaterally. The matter went to Supreme Court and as back as 21 February, 1978, a Constitution Bench comprising of seven judges of Supreme Court gave a verdict in favour of the employees and annulled the Act passed by the Parliament and declared it as void *ab-initio*.

After the judgement, the provisions under LIC Act were used to deny the employees of their rightful claim to bonus. The matter was filed in the Calcutta High Court and Lucknow High Court. The Calcutta High Court issued an order restraining the LIC and the Government from taking any steps to alter the service conditions unilaterally and the Lucknow High Court gave a judgement in favour of the employees.

The matter went to the Supreme Court as the LIC filed an appeal against the order of the Lucknow Bench of Allahabad High Court and the Writ Petition filed by All India Insurance Employees Association were heard together and the hearing concluded on 1 November, 1979, the judgement of which was delivered after more than a year, that is on 10 November, 1980.

The Court passed an order directing the Life Insurance Corporation through a Writ of Mandamus to give effect to the terms of settlement of 1974 relating to bonus until superseded by a fresh settlement, an industrial award or relevant legislation. The Writ Petition was accepted with costs. After the judgement, All India Insurance Employees Association submitted a letter to the Chairman, Life Insurance Corporation alongwith the copy of the judgement and order and urged upon the LIC to honour the command of the court and to release bonus for the past two years alongwith the interest at the rate of 12 per cent as per the orders of the Supreme Court and to continue paying the same till a fresh settlement is reached through bilateral negotiations.

The Supreme Court rescinded all orders passed by the LIC and the Government and declared them as ultra vires of the Constitution and void. The Chairman, Life Insurance Corporation replied to the delegation of the All India Insurance Employees Association that he was under direction from the Ministry of Finance not to release the bonus till they heard from the government. The matter was represented to the Finance Minister,

R. Venkataraman, by All India Insurance Employees Association through a memorandum and the matters were also raised in the Lok Sabha. The Minister of Finance evaded the replies stating that the legal and other implications were being studied by the LIC. Sunil Maitra, MP, who is the Joint Secretary of All India Insurance Employees Association raised the matter in the Lok Sabha and made a statement on the subject. The matter was also raised by Promila Dandavate, MP, and some others. In the meantime, a Review Petition has been filed by the LIC against the order of the Supreme Court, petition of which has been finalised in consultation with the Attorney General of India, who is the Chief Law officer of the government. On 19 December, 1980, the matter was again raised by some other MPs including members of Parliament belonging to the ruling party at the Centre. The contention of the members of Parliament was that the Supreme Court judgement should be honoured by the LIC and the government.

In the meantime, the All India Insurance Employees Association gave a call for two hours walk out strike on 5 December, 1980 demanding of the government implementation of the judgement of the Supreme Court and and release of bonus with an interest of 12 per cent.

The working class hails the principled victory of the insurance employees under the leadership of All India Insurance Employees Association and expressed its disapproval about the manner in which the payment is being delayed by the LIC at the instance of the government and calls upon the Central Government to honour the judgement of the Supreme Court with grace and not to indulge in unfair labour practices. □

All India indefinite strike from Jan.5

THE Government of India, in the wake of the firm determination of the port and dock workers to resort to all India indefinite strike from the night of November 28, 1980, arrived at an agreement with the representatives of the four federations championing the cause of workers. The conclusions of this agreement were published in the last issue the journal. In view of the conclusions of the negotiations with the authorities the proposed strike was withdrawn.

But the Government of India and the Ministry of Shipping and Transport now, has gone back from its commitments mistakenly thinking that the workers may not press hard. In the wake of the sheer betrayal by the Government and the concerned authorities the Water Transport Workers Federation of India (CITU), All India Port and Dock Workers Federation, Indian National Port and Dock Workers Federation and Port, Dock and Waterfront Workers Federation of India have decided to go on all India indefinite strike from January 5, 1981 and called upon the workers to make it a complete success for immediate implementation of the demands earlier conceded by the Government and settle the outstanding issues. The port and dock workers of the entire country are determined to fight back any offensive of the Government on their economic and trade union rights.

CITU's support

B. T. Ranadive, President, CITU, has issued the following statement on 22 December, 1980 :

The CITU views with grave

concern the manner in which the Union Ministry of Shipping and Transport is refusing to implement an agreement in respect of port and dock workers which was reached on November 28 last after a good deal of negotiations. While working out the details of the agreement, the officials have come up with new points which virtually repudiate the agreement. Shamefully, the officials have gone back on commitments about the rate of increments, the stages to which the pay scales would be modified, fitment, special pay,

CITU demands acceptance of public sector employees' demands

B. T. Ranadive, President, CITU, has issued the following statement on 29 December, 1980 :

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions congratulates the seventy thousand employees of Bangalore based public sector employees all over the country for their determined struggle since 26 December in support of their demand for total emoluments at par with Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd.

The Bangalore agreement in 1978 provided that if any engineering unit in public sector undertaking would grant higher wages than the Bangalore based units the higher wages will be paid to the Bangalore based employees also. Though the BHEL agreement was signed nearly an year ago the Central Government has not raised the total wages of Bangalore based units to take them at par with BHEL. The CITU therefore considers that the entire responsi-

etc. They have also refused to consider other points of the charter of demands though it was so stipulated in the agreement. No wonder that all the federations have unanimously decided to go into strike from the midnight of January 5, 1981.

The CITU extends full support to the just struggle of the port and dock workers and warns the Government that any attempt to sabotage the agreement will be seriously resisted by the workers. The CITU appeals to all the port and dock workers to preserve and strengthen the unity which they have forged and fight determinedly to win their just demands.

bility of the strike and loss of production lies with the Central Government.

Instead of accepting the just demands of the workers the Government has resorted to lathi-charge and bursting of tear gas shells on the striking workers at Hyderabad on the first day of the strike. While strongly condemning the action the CITU warns that the other workers in public sector will not be silent spectators when such repressive measures are taken against the striking employees.

The CITU demands that the Central Government should accept the demands of the strikers without any delay so that the strike is settled as soon as possible.

The CITU appeals to all the Central trade unions and their affiliates to rally behind the Bangalore based public sector workers so that the Government is forced to accept the just demands of the workers.

Long March of Maharashtra peasants braves police repression

“ONE of the tightest security build-up notwithstanding, the opposition left and democratic front put on a massive show here today” wrote correspondent of Hindu on 26 December from Nagpur, “giving a national dimension to what had started on December 7 as a ‘Long March’ of Maharashtra farmers for remunerative prices for their produce”.

Scared by the powerful movement of the peasants for their just demands, the Antulay Government decided to close the Maharashtra Assembly session on 26 instead of 29 December as planned earlier. However,

the marchers reached Nagpur where the Assembly Session was being held in time.

The Maharashtra Government closed all routs to Nagpur from adjoining areas with clear instructions not to allow persons to enter the city even before the day of March. Several leaders in Nagpur were arrested under Bombay Police Act and even Members of Parliament were not spared. 12 MPs were arrested on the eve of the March.

On the day of March, about 15,000 peasants and their leaders were arrested in Nagpur. Among those who were arrested in connection with the agitation were

Godavari Parulekar, P. K. Kurane, Ahilya Ranganekar and Chattuni Master.

Madhu Dandavate, MP, who was to lead the march at Nagpur was arrested earlier.

The anti-peasant attitude of the Maharashtra Government has only made them determined in their struggle. The government has clearly emerged as the champion of traders and profiteers who exploit the peasant by paying them uneconomic prices and the consumers by selling them the commodities at much higher price cornering the stocks.

The CITU has extended full support to the demands of the peasants and condemned the repressive measures of the Antulay Government.

5th Conference of Punjab CITU

THE fifth conference of the Punjab State Committee of CITU was held at Amritsar from 8 to 10 November, 1980. P. Ramamurti, General Secretary of CITU, inaugurated the Conference. 165 delegates from 57 unions representing 24,121 membership participated in it. Kishori Lal presided over.

Jagjit Singh Loyalpuri presented the work report which was adopted after amendments. More than 30 delegates participated in the debate on the report.

P. Ramamurti spoke at length about the political and economic situation in India and abroad. He warned against the dictatorial policies of the ruling classes. He emphasised on the need of united struggles and stressed on strengthening the CITU and raising the political consciousness of the workers.

The conference adopted 20 resolutions on the pressing issues

of the workers and people like against police repression, price rise, on minimum wage, on political and economic situation, on fare prices to the farmers for agricultural products, etc.

The conference elected a 30-member Working Committee

Rise of agricultural workers membership of AIKS

THE All India Kisan Sabha registered a substantial growth of membership of Agricultural workers during 1979.

In West Bengal, 15 lakh agricultural workers enrolled their membership with West Bengal Kisan Sabha while Krishak Thezhilai Union, Kerala, had a membership of 2.70 lakhs during 1979.

The following membership was registered by agricultural workers organisations in other States. Andhra Pradesh agri-

with Jagjit Singh Loyalpuri as President and Mangat Ram Pasla as General Secretary.

On 10 December a procession was taken out which culminated in a rally which was addressed by P. Ramamurti, MP, H.S. Surjeet, MP, J. S. Loyalpuri, Mangat Ram Pasla and others.

cultural Labour Union 1.35 lakhs. Tripura Agricultural Labour Union : 10,000. Tanjaur Agricultural Labour Union, Tamilnadu ; 60,000. U. P. Khet Mazdoor Sabha : 5,500. Punjab Dehati Mazdoor Sabha : 29,702.

Agricultural workers organisations are being formed in rest of the States also.

**New Year
Greetings
to our readers.**

Crisis of capitalism and the working class

CAPITALISM today, is in very deep crisis. To shift the burden of the crisis the capitalists are resorting to ever bigger offensive against the working class and the trade union movement.

Capitalist-controlled mass media propagates, day in and day out, their ideological and political battle, and expect believe that today's profits are tomorrow's investments and day-after-tomorrow's employments. According to them, only the capitalists are patriotic, not the workers. They accuse that the trade unions are responsible for the crisis in economy and for the lack of progress, because that union make high wage demands. This is a blatant lie!

The hard truth is that in capitalist world, the workers suffer from loss of jobs and their means of livelihood. And those who continue in jobs suffer from the continuous erosion in wages due to inflation and rise in cost of living.

All Pervasive

After the World War II, the imperialism has changed its track, but all the same it is trying to continue the colonial exploitation in various different forms.

One of these weapons is multinational corporations. These corporations dominate almost every sector of economic activity in the capitalist world. While they profess to help solve economic and developmental problems of the under-developed countries, they, in reality, resort to more and more loot and over-exploitation of the people of these countries.

The multinational corporations are fundamentally anti-worker and anti-trade unions. Their offensive against the trade union rights, liberties and the standard

of living of the workers which they secure through long and bitter struggles, are all pervasive. In the field of employment and labour, they refuse implementation of the international standards as defined by ILO.

To be successful in their such offensives, the multinational corporations establish themselves in countries which trample under foot the most elementary and fundamental rights of the workers and citizens.

Anarchic Operations

In the race of their profits, they redeploy their activities. They abandon, partially or altogether, manufacturing industries in favour of those which are more profitable. They transfer some industries from one area to another, one country to another for cheap labour and greater exploitation of workers. All these operations take place anarchically, and thus instead of solving the problems of under-developed countries, they aggravate them still further, rendering thousands upon thousands of workers jobless.

The multinational corporations make these countries permanently dependent economically, technologically and politically. They siphon off a huge portion of the national income leaving behind miseries to the people and big obstacles in the development of the under-developed countries. In this process, they rely and/or compromise with the local bourgeoisie and reactionary forces.

Not only this. Crime pays in the capitalist world!

Most heinous crime

The most heinous crime of the multinational corporations is that they sell those food, drug and cloth products at abnormally

high prices in the under-developed countries which are banned in their home states, because they are harmful to the human beings. For example, the pesticide 'DVSr', one of the hundreds of chemicals whose use is banned in USA is exported to the developing countries for spraying on plantations. DVSr is dangerous to the lives and health of workers who are not warned of the risks involved. Similar is the case of pesticides Aldrine and Leptophos. Several years ago in Iraq 400 persons died and 5,000 were hospitalised as a result of the use of such products. In 1975, 15 children died and numerous affected due to concentration of Aldrine in their blood. In 1974, the Cairo government did not disclose the number of peasants who became victim of Leptophos. They merely announced that 1,000 buffalo died as a result of this product.

The flame-proof fabrics made in United States was declared by their government as banned as it cause cancer of the kidneys. But the same was hurriedly exported to the countries of Latin America and Europe. A large number of food multinationals, including Nestle, sell their very substandard and harmful products to the under-developed countries. Numerous examples can be cited here with data.

Dual Loot

The loot organised by the multinationals is dual in nature. They import raw material from the developing countries at very low prices and after further processing they commercialise them at monopoly prices thus robbing producers and the consumers at the same time.

A United Nations document prepared for the UNIDO con-

ference held in Delhi in early 1980 says that altogether 11,000 companies located in the advanced capitalist countries have 82,000 foreign subsidiaries, 21,000 of which are in under-developed countries. These companies have a common slogan 'more and more loot'.

A few examples will be sufficient for the purpose of exposing their loot and the result of over-exploitation of the workers.

The profits of U.S. corporations coming from their subsidiaries abroad reached more than 24 billion dollars in 1978 which is three times the 1970 level. While their rate of profit in advanced capitalist countries was 14 per cent, it reached over 65 per cent in the under-developed countries of Latin America, Asia and Africa. That is five times increase in percentage profit!

A May 1979 U.N. document states that between 1974 and 1978 in all the under-developed countries including those exporting oil, the deterioration in the terms of trade reached the level of 15 per cent. This represented in foreign exchange is a huge loss of more than 30 billion dollars in 1978.

According to another study, the actual profits of 500 of the biggest industrial enterprises of the capitalist world, most of which are multinationals, increased by 27 per cent in 1979 as compared to 1978. Already fabulous profits of the oil multinationals reached new records in the same year. From 1972 to 1978, the global turnover of seven oil multinationals passed from 70.0 to 318.4 billion dollars and their clear profits from 4.62 to 21.45 billion dollars. While hundreds of millions of human beings suffer from starvation in the capitalist world, one hundred food monopolies controlled about

50 per cent of the food production in 1976.

The total outstanding debt of non-OPEC countries increased from 77 billion dollars in 1973 to 250 million dollars in 1979. The external debt of India in 1979-80 was Rs. 99,779 millions. The Reserve Bank of India survey for six years between 1964-65 and 1969-70 on the basis of information collected from 877 companies which are subsidiaries to multinational corporations shows a net outflow of Rs. 10,929 millions during this period.

Another U.N. report published in 1978 exposes that the primary products, except oil exported by the under-developed countries cost the final consumers after further processing more than 200 billion dollars without taxes while these developing countries receive only 30 billion dollars.

Imagine the loot!

The exploitation by the multinationals, as stated earlier, leads to large scale unemployment and under-employment which is expressed in poverty and destitution. According to ILO figures, there are one billion two hundred and fifteen million people in the world who are able to work. Two thirds of them live in the under-developed countries where some 455 million people are unemployed or under-employed, and their number continues to increase.

Workers' Struggles

The working class, of course is not silent against the attacks of the multinationals. There have been a number of long and bitter struggles of the workers in the capitalist world. Experience of these struggles shows that even if the workers have not always won complete satisfaction in these actions, the struggles did bring some results.

Some of the struggles that took place in 1980 can be briefly mentioned here.

Against the planned dismissal of 15,000 employees by the FIAT management, the workers in Italy staged a strike in August. In France, 30,000 workers of multinational Rhone Poulenc went on strike in June against dismantling of the textile sector and redeployment. In Great Britain, 1,20,000 workers of British Steel Corporation went on strike for better wages which lasted 13 weeks in early 1980. In United States, during the same period, first time in 11 years, 60,000 refinery workers went on strike in support of their demands.

The strike struggles of 40,000 workers of North American copper plants, of 3,500 workers of Goodyear Tyres in South African racist regime, 41-day strike of metal workers of Ford, General Motors, etc., in Brazil, of 20,000 workers of Standard Fruits in Costa Rica and of many other places are very important.

In India, a number of strike struggles have been carried out against multinationals. Among them the noted struggles are of the workers of drug and pharmaceutical industry like Pfizer, Glaxo, etc., of food industry like Horlicks and Lipton, of metal industry like MICO, etc. A number of comrades involved in these struggles have been victimised. In these struggles, too, some demands have been won by the workers. The struggles in Horlicks, Pfizer and India Duplicators are still continuing.

Fight must continue: The working class must realise the danger of multinational corporations from the fact that it had actively collaborated in out-throwing the government of Chile led by Allende. And, as such, the fight against multinationals must continue not only to save from economic exploitation but also to save our independence. □

[From Page Four]

unjustifiable.

Justice Iyer quoted from an earlier decision in Hindustan Tin Works versus its employees, reported in AIR 1979 SC at page 75 (1978 Lab. I.C. 1667) certain observations which are as follows :—

“.....The relief of reinstatement with continuity of service can be granted where termination of service is found to be invalid. It would mean that the employer has taken away illegally the right to work of the workman contrary to the relevant law or in breach of contract and simultaneously deprived the workman of his earnings. If thus the employer is found to be in the wrong as a result of which the workman is directed to be reinstated, the employer could not shirk his responsibility of paying the wages which the workman has been deprived of by the illegal or invalid action of the employer.Any other view would be a premium on the unwarranted litigative activity of the employer.

.....In such circumstances reinstatement being the normal rule it should be followed with full back wages. Articles 41 and 43 of the Constitution would assist us in reaching a just conclusion in this respect.”

-Arun Prokash Chatterjee

All India Coal Workers Convention at Raniganj

THE All India Coordination Committee of Coal Unions in its meeting at Asansol on 8 December decided to hold All India Coal Workers Convention at Raniganj in the first week of April. About 250 delegates from all the coalfields and office employees will participate in the

OVER 200 delegates attended the convention organised by the Andaman and Nicobar Government Employees and Workers Federation at Tamizhar Sangam Hall, Port Blair on 19-21 December, 1980. This was the first convention of its kind in these far away islands from the mainland. Some of the delegates had to travel for three days to cross a distance of only 150 kilometres, while many could not reach in time due to acute transport difficulties in the islands.

A Presidium of Comrades P.K.S. Prasad, H.N. Parial and S. Abdus Saffer was elected to conduct the deliberations of the convention.

C.S. Roy, leader of the Civil Aviation employees inaugurated the convention.

M.K. Pandhe, Secretary, CITU, who was the Chief Guest, explained the problems faced by the trade union movement in India and reviewed the recent struggles by the workers.

Several delegates who spoke in the convention on various resolutions dwelt at the harrowing conditions of the workers and absence of any amenities in the islands. They criticised the role of the officials who are totally callous at the grievances of the workers. The delegates narrated their experiences of struggle conducted by the unions in Wimco factory, port and docks, rubber

Convention. B.T. Ranadive, President, CITU, will inaugurate the convention.

This is the first convention being held of the unions in coal industry with the initiative of the CITU. Several unions not affiliated to the CITU are likely to participate in the convention.

plantations, PWD, forest department, electricity department and transport undertakings. The government employees played an important role in supporting these struggles. All speakers stressed the need for joint movement on common demands.

The prices of essential commodities are extremely high and life of common man is becoming unbearable, the delegates emphasised.

Sardar Prithvi Singh Azad, a freedom fighter who was in Andamans in connection with the celebration of 50th Anniversary of the Chittagong Armoury Raid of 1930 addressed the convention and supported the demands of workers.

A colourful procession wended its way on the main thoroughfares of the city. The processionists marched past the pandal where two workers of MES, S.K. Chitrakar and R. Chakravarty were on indefinite hunger strike since 12 December in support of the demands for union recognition and other pressing issues. All the 1,200 workers went on tool down strike on 22 December to press their demands.

A meeting of CITU unions was held during the convention and it was decided to form a Co-ordination Committee of CITU unions in Andaman and Nicobar islands with P.K.S. Prasad and Chandrachudhan as Joint Convenors.

A public meeting was held on 22 December which was addressed among others by M.K. Pandhe, P.K.S. Prasad and C.S. Roy.

Fifth Conference on Safety in Mines

THE fifth conference on Safety in Mines held in New Delhi on 26 and 27 December highlighted the callousness of the administration and the managements towards the safe working conditions in mines.

N.D. Tiwari, Union Labour Minister, presided over the conference.

Ghani Khan Chowdhury, Union Minister for Energy, was conspicuous by his absence in the conference, though it was fixed much in advance. The Minister of State for Energy, Vikram Mahajan, attended only the inaugural session but left immediately after his speech was over. The Minister of Steel and Mines also did not attend the Conference. The disregard shown by the employing ministers was strongly criticised by the trade union representatives.

The Select Committee of both the Houses of Parliament on Mines (Amendment) Bill submitted its reports in 1974 but so far no Bill was brought before Parliament. The trade union representatives demanded early introduction of the Amended Bill in next Session of Parliament after consulting the trade unions.

The trade union representatives criticised the non-implementation of the decisions of the earlier conferences on Mines' Safety. Similarly the recommendations of various courts of enquiries of mines accidents remain unimplemented as a result of which the accidents continue to occur from time to time.

They also pointed out that minimum requirement of safety such as lighting and ventilation, installation of devices to detect gases, safeguard against inada-

tion, clearing of coal dust, stone and lime dusting, roof support and timbering, water spraying, stowing, sanitation, etc. are normally not adequately provided in the mines.

Despite lot of advertisements pit-safety committees exist on paper. The system of worker inspector has not been introduced in right earnest. Consultation with workers in the matter of safety is merely a farce.

Though several years have passed after nationalisation, workers have to agitate for safety helmets, belts, gas cylinders, gas masks, etc. was noted by trade union representatives.

The shortcomings of the office of the Director General of Mines Safety was pointed out by several speakers. Shortage of personnel; absence of adequate facilities and working conditions has resulted in leaving in several mines without proper inspection for years.

The mines Rescue Stations are inadequately manned. The wages and working conditions of the employees are extremely poor. The trade union representatives demanded that the employees should be paid wages at par with CIL employees.

The welfare measures agreed to by the managements have not yet been fully implemented. The report of the Union Labour ministry on the work of Coal Mine Welfare Organisation is shocking but no action has been taken so far. The medical facilities are in extremely bad conditions. The housing facilities are totally inadequate.

The fatigue of the workers due to distance inside the mines was highlighted in the conference.

The attempt of the management to get approval to their mechanisation measures was foiled due to the joint opposition of the trade unions.

The conference decided that each mine should prepare a safety policy and adequate machinery at bipartite level should be evolved to supervise the implementation of these measures.

It also decided to introduce the pit-safety committee and the workers safety inspectors as recommended by a committee constituted by the government earlier.

The conference emphasised the need for an internal safety organisation independent of the production unit at all levels.

The accuracy of the mine plans was stressed in the conference and it was decided to develop a proper trained personnel for the purpose.

The necessity of enquiring into all the accidents was underlined by the conference along with the recommendation for strengthening of the DGMS organisations to ensure two inspection of each mine every year.

To what extent the decisions of this conference will be implemented in future depends on the joint efforts the trade unions will make to ensure their implementation.

M.K. Pandhe represented CITU in the conference. Md. Ismail participated in the conference as a member of the Labour Consultative Committee of Parliament. □

Editorial Board

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Railwaymen intensify struggle

MORE than 150 railway workers under the leadership of South Central Railway Employees' Union organised a dharna in front of divisional railway manager office at Vijayawada on 26 November, 1980 demanding confirmation of casual labourers who have been granted temporary status. Out of a total of 1298 such workers, 573 have completed five years service. A memorandum was submitted to the Chairman, Railway Board, through Divisional Railway Manager. Later in the evening a mass rally was organised which was addressed by M.V. Subbaiah and others.

At the call of AIRF, railwaymen observed a 'Demands Day' on 28 November, 1980 on ten point charter of demands adopted in Bikaner convention. Massive rallies were organised outside headquarters of eastern, south eastern and MTP railways at Calcutta which were addressed by various leaders of AIRF.

At the call of the twelve category-wise associations, a 'Demands Day' was observed on December 8, 1980 by holding demonstrations in front of the divisional railway managers offices, in all railways except in southern railway where the demonstration took place on December 18. At many places 16 to 18 organisations jointly submitted the 16-point charter of demands which was finalised in the meeting held in September at New Delhi.

Contract labourers' struggle

A DELEGATION of eight office-bearers of Indian

Railways Coal and Ash Transshipment Handling Mazdoor Union (CITU) led by Samar Mukherjee, MP, met the Railway Minister on December 9 and submitted a memorandum urging implementation of the decision of the Central Advisory Contract Labour Board to prohibit use of contract labour in loading and unloading of coal in locosheds and yards including cinder-picking. It was pointed out that already three years have passed since the decision was taken and the workers are becoming restive. They also urged that the job of transshipment also was of perennial nature and hence contract labour system should be abolished.

Closely following this, a dispute arose at Alipurdnar junction in NF railway on December 16 while the new contractor was taking over. He refused to employ those who have been serving for 10 to 15 years or to grant them any increase in pay though prices have risen over 20 per cent during the past year. As a result, the train services in NF railway were seriously affected.

Samar Mukherjee visits Golden Rock Workshop

ON the occasion of the CEC meeting of the Dakshin Railway Employees Union on November 30 and December 1, Samar Mukherjee, MP, visited Golden Rock Workshop on December 1. He was awarded warm reception at every shop he visited and memoranda on the grievances of staff were handed over to him. On his return, he sent these memoranda to the Minister for Railway with the observation that a look at the

piled up grievances would show that the Personal Branch in Southern Railway has not been functioning properly and the policy of not attending to the grievances referred to by the so-called unrecognised unions including DREU, has led to this state of affairs. CEC meeting of the DREU has finalised a plan of campaign and movement.

Petition to Lok Sabha Speaker by ticket checking staff

OVER three thousand ticket checking staff organised a rally at the Boat Club on December 3 and submitted a mass petition to the Lok Sabha Speaker demanding among others running allowance for them. The Minister for Railways addressed the staff at the Boat Club. Various union leaders including CITU Secretary Nrisingha Chakrabarty addressed the rally. □

Comrade Alexei Kosygin

THE Centre of Indian Trade Unions mourns the passing away of Comrade Alexei Kosygin on the night of December 18-19 after prolonged illness at the age of 76.

As a leader of the CPSU and the Premier of the Soviet Union, Comrade Kosygin made important contributions during the anti-fascist war and in the period of post reconstruction. He played a crucial role in building Indo-Soviet friendship.

The CITU conveys its heartfelt condolence to the All Union Central Council of Trade Unions, to the working class, the people of USSR and bereaved members of his family.

Over half world's working women are in Asia but they have a long road to equality

MORE than half the world's working women are in Asia—some 322 million, or 56 per cent of the world's entire economically active female population.

Their numbers are even more striking as a percentage of the working women of all developing countries: in this category, Asia accounts for no less than 87 per cent of the female labour force.

These figures—which would be even greater if housework and women's role in economic activity in its broadest sense were included—emerge from a study by the International Labour Organisation, part of a series at this mid-point of the United Nations Decade for Women to help promote equality of opportunity and treatment for the world's women.

The study found wide variations in the participation of women in economic activity from country to country in Asia, ranging from 2 to 3 per cent in Iraq, Jordan and Saudi Arabia to over 40 per cent in Japan and Thailand. In the most populous countries, China and India, the proportion of economically active women to total female population was 36 per cent and 26 per cent respectively.

These variations, apart from differences in definitions and methods used in national statistics, reflect the great diversity of social, political and cultural patterns and differences in the levels of economic development of the countries covered. An additional factor is that the line between economic activity and non-economic activity cannot always be drawn clearly and this hampers statistical comparisons. In the case of India, for instance, as many as 20.5 million female

agricultural workers are excluded in tabulating the distribution of labour force among those engaged in work on their own account, unpaid family workers and salaried employees and wage earners, presumably because their status could not be precisely defined and determined. This evidently resulted in heavy underestimation of female labour force in India whereas in most Asian countries, the majority of women are engaged in Agriculture.

The female labour force in Asia increased by 123 million between 1950-1970. It increased by another 26 million in the next



five years. This shows that there was a certain declaration of the rate of growth in the participation of women in gainful activity in the seventies. The ILO study also finds that in both absolute and relative terms the increase was the largest of any region in the world—agriculture as well as in industry and services. But the agricultural sector was still predominant, by far, in the distribution of women workers in major economic sectors in Asia.

Agriculture, in 1970, accounted for 73 per cent of the female labour force as against 14 per cent in industry and 13 per cent in services. However, the general trend away from agriculture towards industrial and services sector is apparent in Asia as well, both for male and female workers. The ratio of women employed in agriculture to the total labour force declined by

13 per cent between 1950 and 1970 while it rose by 8 per cent in industry and 5 per cent in services. This trend should be expected to persist as the total female workforce also increases rapidly in the coming decades. According to the ILO projections, the number of women workers in the world will rise during the last quarter of the century by 52 per cent and in Asia by 57 per cent.

It is not only the relative or absolute increase in numbers and changes in the pattern of distribution by sectors, however, that should attract attention. Important for economically active women struggling for equal opportunity and treatment is their status and occupation.

A large proportion of economically active women in Asia—60 per cent and more work on their own account or as unpaid family workers, largely in the agricultural sector and to a lesser extent in trade, catering and small-scale, artisan-type production. Among them are a large number of girls in the age group 10 to 14. According to the latest ILO estimates, a little over 22 million girls from 10 to 14 years of age were working throughout the world in 1975 and over 17 million of them or 80 per cent were in Asia. A great majority of these girls are unpaid family workers, mainly helping in agriculture. The proportion of women in Asia working on salary or wage is far less, except in some selected countries, than in the industrialised countries.

These characteristics have their own implications and hinder the struggle of Asian women for equality of treatment and fair remuneration for work. Working in the agricultural sector and also in the shift that is taking place to occupation out-

the agriculture, women workers have tended to be turned into pools of cheap labour or lose the opportunity for remunerative work. The ILO study also notes that certain occupations, among them administrative and managerial tasks, are reserved for women.

There is thus a long way to go for women workers in Asia and special and concerted steps are needed for them to achieve equality of opportunity and treatment

—ILO Release

Fraternal TU leaders visit CITU office

THE member of the Presidency of the Confederation of Trade Unions of Yugoslavia, Tonci Legaz, visited the CITU office on December 3, 1980. P. Ramamurti, Niren Ghosh, Nrisingha Chakrabarty, N. Prasad Rao and Vimala Ranadive received him. Legaz presented a book published by the CTUY on the general debate and declaration adopted in the World Conference on Development held at Belgrade in April 1980.

Replying to his question about further programme on development, P. Ramamurti assured him that the CITU's views would be communicated after consultations in the Secretariat. Tonci Legaz said that the CTUY was busy in finalising the next five-year plan and was preparing for next Congress on workers Self Management. The CITU representatives apprised him of the efforts that are being made in India to unite the working class against price rise, for democracy and against communalism.

A representative of the Confederation of Free Trade Unions (FDGB) of German Democratic Republic, Hans Lorenz, paid a

Consumer Price Index Numbers

Base 1960

State/Centre	1980			State/Centre	1980		
	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.		Aug.	Sep.	Oct.
Andhra Pradesh				Orissa			
Gudur	396	385	388	Barbil	360	362	369
Guntur	420	423	429	Sambalpur	448	449	443
Hyderabad	399	403	409	Punjab			
Assam				Amritsar	416	424	437
Digboi	411	421	421	Rajasthan			
Doom Dooma	348	356	359	Ajmer	422	422	423
Labac	331	337	344	Jaipur	438	445	445
Mariani	342	345	346	Tamil Nadu			
Rangapara	367	370	370	Coimbatore	411	413	420
Bihar				Coonoor	403	405	408
Jamshedpur	388	394	379	Madras	384	381	388
Jharia	374	382	386	Madurai	409	410	413
Kodarma	421	422	427	U.P.			
Monghyr	440	443	448	Kanpur	398	407	405
Noamundi	379	385	389	Saharanpur	405	411	419
Gujarat				Varanasi	457	461	467
Ahmedabad	372	374	379	West Bengal			
Bhavnagar	409	410	418	Asansol	402	412	421
Haryana				Calcutta	387	396	393
Yamunanagar	430	429	436	Darjeeling	331	337	350
J. & K.				Howrah	370	374	385
Srinagar	405	410	415	Jalpaiguri	339	348	353
Karnataka				Raniganj	390	400	408
Ammathi	417	421	426	Delhi	428	430	438
Bangalore	421	430	439	Other Centres*			
Chikamagalur	394	405	410	Berhampur ('49)	571	580	583
Kolar G.F.	396	406	415	Cuttack ('49)	505	505	505
Kerala				Jabalpur ('49)	521	526	532
Alleppey	396	408	413	Beawar ('51-52)	511	512	511
Alwaye	397	404	404	Tripura (1961)	346	349	355
Mundakayam	361	393	408	H.P. (1965)	291	293	299
Madhya Pradesh				Goa (1966)	291	287	292
Balaghat	429	417	414	Bhilai (1966)	272	273	275
Bhopal	396	406	410	Bhilwara ('66)	265	264	262
Gwalior	425	427	432	Chhindwara ('66)	232	232	232
Indore	416	428	422	Kothagudem ('66)	266	267	268
Maharashtra				Rourkela ('66)	285	289	289
Bombay	396	391	400	All India ('49)	483	489	493
Nagpur	393	395	401	-do- ('60)	397	402	406
Shoapur	403	407	408				

Figures in bracket indicate base year.

visit to the CITU office on December 4. He was received by Nrisingha Chakrabarty and others. Communicating the fraternal greetings, Lorenz informed that FDGB was busy in trade union elections and in finalisation of the next five year plan in order to ensure that there is no unemployment and no inflation.

Both the sides expressed hopes that the fraternal relations bet-

ween FDGB and CITU would grow in future. Views were also exchanged on the international situation and the increased danger of war.

Nrisingha Chakrabarty explained how the CITU is striving hard for united struggle of the working class in the country against inflation, rising prices and unemployment. □

News in Brief

Convention for trade union rights : A convention was organised at Jajmau in Kanpur on November 30, 1980 by J.K. Rayon Workers (CITU), CPI(M) and Janavadi Navajavan Sabha against rising prices, unemployment, artificial scarcity of essential commodities, atrocities on women and weaker sections, communalism, National Security Ordinance and for unity and for defence of democratic and trade union rights. The convention was addressed among others by Daulat Ram, General Secretary of the U.P. State Committee of the CITU.

Struggle of Raja Textile workers : The workers of Raja Textile and Jwala Fabrics, Rampur, U.P., are on indefinite strike from November 24 in support of their demands which include revision of pay scales and dearness allowance and other demands. The workers also organised hunger strikes and a day's token strike on November 14 which was followed by a tripartite meeting with the State Labour Minister who did not take effective steps to settle the issue. In a statement on November 27, General Secretary of the State CITU, Daulat Ram, condemned the management and police for attacking the workers and for arresting 12 workers including State CITU President Harsahaya Singh. He has called upon all unions to fight against such anti-worker policies.

Fight against firing : The Bokaro Steel Mazdoor Union (CITU) is actively participating in the movement against police firing that took place on November 30, 1980 on the spectators of the match between football teams of BSF and USSR

in Mohan Kumarmangalam Stadium in Dhanbad. In the incident two persons were killed and several injured. Several demonstrations and meetings have also been organised.

Demonstration by Delhi municipal workers : The Municipal Workers Lal Zhanda Union (CITU) organised a protest demonstration on December 18, 1980 in front of the office of the water supply department headquarter. The workers have been struggling in support of their 22-point charter of demands, which includes the demands like bonus, medical allowance, promotion based on seniority, regularisation of all muster role employees, time-scale promotion and revision of wages, etc. About 500 workers participated in the action. Earlier the Union had organised a demonstration on December 12 outside the residence of Corporation Engineer.

Indefinite strike] by HCL workers : The Hindustan Computers Employees Union (CITU), Delhi, has decided to go on indefinite strike in all its units from January 3 to press for their demand of reinstatement of 21 employees of one of the units retrenched in last July and against victimisation of five office bearers of the Union. Earlier, the workers had observed one day token strike on November 13 which was a complete success.

Workers arrested in Purnapani : The mine workers of Purnapani in Orissa are struggling in support of their demands including that of 10 per cent bonus. Instead of arriving at settlement, a mine has been closed down illegally. More than 500 workers demonstrated on December 1 in front of the mine office but the police in connivance with the management

resorted to attack on the workers and arrested several workers including some women.

Strike call by Amritsar workers : In a meeting on December 12 at Amritsar the local units of CITU, AITUC, HMS, BMS, INTUC and PMD called upon the workers of the area to observe token strike on December 26 in support of their demands as outlined by the Ludhiana convention held on December 7. The demands are Rs. 500 as minimum wage to unskilled workers, increased dearness allowance, bonus to all, implementation of labour laws, withdrawal of bus-fare-hike, etc. The strike was a complete success especially in big centres like Amritsar, Ludhiana, Rajpura, Mehali, Abohar, etc.

Coal workers fight against repression : Koyla Shramik Sangh (CITU), Banki, Bilaspur, M. P., observed a 'Demands Week, from November 11 to 16 in protest against increasing repression on the workers by the management. During the week, demonstrations and mass meetings were organised.

Police and Milk plant managment condemned : The Executive Committee of the Lal Jhanda Kapra Mazdoor Ekta Union (CITU) in its meeting held at Hissar on December 14 condemned the police for raiding the local CITU office and implicating several workers in false cases. It demanded the suspension of the concerned ASI who led the raid.

The Executive while supporting the demands of the Milk Plant workers demanded of the Government for the early settlement of charter of demands with the Plant workers who are on indefinite strike for over two months.

Bihar bandh : Massive response

IN response to a call by the six party coordination committee consisting of CPI(M), CPI, Lok Dal, Congress (U), Forward Block and RSP to observe statewide bandh on November 27, all sections of the people. Working people, working class, peasantry, students, employees, etc. showed a massive response against price, increasing unemployment, against communalism, against National Security Ordinance and increasing attacks on the civil liberties of the people. In spite of the widespread repression and imposition of the Section 144 at various places in the State, the Bihar bandh was a success.

The CITU supported the bandh ball and worked resolutely to make it a big success. In Jamshedpur, the bandh was supported by the workers belonging to the TISCO Karmachari Union, Industrial Mazdoor Union, Tube Employees Union and Dukan Pratisthan Karmachari Union. It is significant that the workers in all the small-scale industries also participated in the bandh. Over 300 establishments in an area of 40 km were completely paralysed. Over a thousand workers were arrested, including about 200 women workers.

In Sindri, the bandh was total with even small corner panshops closed. The student boycotted their schools and colleges. In Bokaro, there was a total bandh.

In Murlitola and Beelhat, a large number of people received injuries in a wanton attack by the CRP. The CRP men entered the houses and not even spared women and children. In Begu Sarai also, the workers of the Opposition parties had to face

a brutal lathi-charge. In Kundra, a large number of people were arrested and many students received injuries when police resorted to a lathi charge. Despite the attempts of the Congress(I) workers to create a law and order problem, the bandh was complete in Dehath, Kowath and Gobra. In the Rajgir area, shopkeepers, transport and government employees and the rickshaw-pullers all participated in the bandh.

Over 75 workers of the Opposition parties were arrested in the State Gapitai Patna wherein all major markets were closed and the entire transport

system was paralysed due to bandh. In Muzaffarpur, over 90 per cent of the shops downed their shutters and 25 persons were arrested.

From other parts of the State of Bihar, reports of the successful bandh have been received. In Maheshkhant 60 and in Darbhanga 10 persons were arrested.

Earlier successful bandhs were organised in all the States of the country except with a few exceptions. This growing trend is clear indication that the common mass of the people of the country reject the anti-democratic, anti-working class policies of the Congress(I) Government.

Indian seamen demand end of discriminatory wages

PRamamurti, MP, General Secretary, CITU, has issued the following statement on 20 December.

The statement made by Shri Virendra Patil, Union Minister for Shipping and Transport, in reply to a question on 18 December, 1980 in Lok Sabha that Indian seamen aboard British vessels were not willing to fight against discriminatory wages to them and hence Government of India was unable to do any thing to end this racial discrimination is contrary to the facts.

Actually Indian seamen on board British vessels had gone on strike struggles in foreign ports and with the active support of port and dock workers in those ports forced the British Companies to pay them then and there British wages or International Transport Federation Wages and remitted the wages thus paid to their families in India. To quote only a few

example, this happened in British ships which have the name 'Menkar', 'Global', 'Medsouth', 'Rainbow', 'Hibiscus' and 'Pacemaker'.

But as soon these seamen returned to India after sea voyages, the Government of India, through the Director of Shipping, cancelled their certificates, asked the company to settle the dues of these seamen according to the discriminatory rate of wages they had fixed and rendered these seamen unemployed.

The Government of India has thus been an active abettor in this racial discrimination. The Minister is ignorant of the facts and obviously been misinformed by the officer of his ministry.

The CITU demands that the Government should refrain from this pernicious practice. The Indian seamen are quite capable, with fraternal support of their brothers in other countries, of putting an end to racial discrimination. □