



THE WORKING CLASS

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Denounce U.S. Provocation

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ON the 1st of September the working class of the world organised huge demonstrations to defend peace and avoid the calamities of nuclear war.

In India at the call of CITU, AITUC, and other Central Trade Unions, and the CPI (M) and CPI, the workers held rallies, organised demonstrations and protested against the U.S. imperialist plans to unleash a nuclear war.

The voice of Indian workers joined with the voice of the peace fighters and workers in other countries to denounce war and protect peace. There were gigantic demonstrations in Calcutta, West Bengal and huge rallies in Andhra Pradesh, all over Kerala, apart from innumerable rallies and meetings in Bombay, Madras, and several industrial centres. But precisely because the workers all over the world are succeeding in organising peace struggle everywhere, in all centres including the USA, the American imperialists are resorting to deliberate and crude provocation to side-track attention and befuddle the minds of the people.

The deliberate violation of the Soviet air space by a South Korean airliner which continued to fly over Soviet territory for 2½ hours, and which refused to heed to the warning signals to land down were all part of a U.S. plot to put the blame on the Soviet and launch an anti-Soviet drive. The loss of 269 lives is now blamed on the Soviet Government. People's regret and sorrow for loss of so many lives is exploited to slander the Soviet Union and fan fires of war.

But what is the truth? The Soviet had to shoot down the plane when its espionage mission had become clear. After violating Soviet air space for two hours the plane made an effort to sneak into a strategic area for espionage photography. All the while it was in contact with the Japanese and U.S. ground station who knew that the plane was in Soviet air space. They did not warn it because they had sent it. The plane was also accompanied for a time by a U.S. spy plane. The story gets complete

when it is realised that the South Korean Government is puppet of the USA and on earlier occasion also South Korean plane was used for espionage purposes. The U.S. authorities knew that no Government can tolerate a foreign plane to carry on espionage and photograph its military installations. And yet they deliberately sent the Korean plane to do the job. The responsibility for the death of more than 200 people lies with the Reagan war gang.

But the USA and its racist imperialist allies Britain, West Germany and Japan, having organised the provocation, are now using this nefarious affair to justify their arms drive.

But the world is not fooled so easily. Bit by bit the press in these countries has put the pieces together, and challenged the U.S. version. The world now realises that it was a crude provocation organised by the CIA.

The U.S. efforts to isolate the USSR are failing. The non-aligned countries like India and others have refused to accept the U.S. story, though they regretted the loss of lives. All the imperialist Governments joined hands to slander the Soviet. They enacted the farce of a Security Council meeting to condemn the Soviet Union to conceal their own crime. Only by applying pressure on certain reactionary regimes of Third World countries, they could get the requisite majority. It is no surprise that Martial Dictator Zia's government supported the U.S. resolution in the Security Council. He requires U.S. help to crush his own people. Peoples' China refused to support the resolution.

All these imperialist countries further decided to cancel Soviet air flights to their countries. But here also all did not follow the U.S. lead with equal zeal. Some cancelled flights only for a few days. All this was meant to fix the guilt on the Soviet Union. Not satisfied with this the USA struck on a new provocation to ban the flight of Soviet Plane carrying Soviet Foreign Minister Gromykov to New York to attend

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the U.N. meeting. This was open violation of the agreement entered with the U.N. But what does Reagan care? He requires diversion of the people — the U.S. people from peace movement to finance his war programme and deployment of missiles in Europe.

But this time the U.S. imperialists perhaps over-shot the mark. The entire world — the third world countries and progressive masses in all countries are shocked by this banning of Gromykov's plane. The provocation became clear. The U.S. imperialists knew that the authoritative voice of Gromykov will reach the people through the UNO and the truth will be known to millions. It also knows that this provocation will create further tension helping a war atmosphere.

The full significance of these developments must be properly understood. All the major imperialist powers — the USA, Britain, West Germany, Japan are rallying together to form a coalition to oppose the Soviet Union and go ahead openly with the programme of deploying cruise and Pershing missiles in Europe. This rally of imperialist countries to stem peace and increase armaments constitutes a menacing development in world politics — a development threatening the lives, freedom and independence of millions.

This unscrupulous combination is prepared to use any provocation to achieve its aims. It had no compunction in sending 250 Korean passengers to death to achieve its nefarious game. The fact that it is in need of such inhuman provocation on the one hand shows the dangerous international situation and on the other that the imperialists realise that without diverting the attention of the people they cannot achieve their aims.

The provocation is intended not only to slander and isolate the USSR, it is a move against the forces of peace to mislead and divide them, a move to alienate their sympathy from the Soviet Union whose concrete proposals for peace, for reduction of armaments have been welcomed by the peace movement. Fear of peace forces, fear of the people is the main reason behind this provocation.

What do the imperialists seek to achieve through this slander campaign? They want freedom to deploy missiles in Europe. They demand arms and missiles superiority over the Soviet Union so that they can any day launch a nuclear attack against it. And for this purpose in the coming months they want the peace movement to be disrupted. The Soviet Union while replying to the crude slanders has correctly placed the responsibility for the Korean airliner incident on the CIA and said that the compensation for loss of lives should be secured from the U.S. authorities.

The Soviet Union has also made it clear that while it stands for reduction of nuclear armaments and wants all nuclear weapons be destroyed, it will never

accept arms superiority for the imperialist countries. To accept such a position is to let down the defence of the Socialist countries. All must welcome the Soviet stand and its refusal to yield to Western blackmail.

In their preparation for the drive for war the U.S. and other imperialists are starving their own people by millions; throwing them out of jobs, driving them to suicide and murder. In the USA 10 millions are unemployed, in the U.K. 3½ millions, in the advanced capitalist countries 30 millions are unemployed. Instead of spending money to give relief to the unemployed, to restructure the economy to create new jobs, the imperialists are spending billions on nuclear arms, missiles, satellites and what not. This is what imperialism is.

At the same time these imperialists have started a war against the liberty and freedom of smaller nations. The U.S. has sent armed forces to Lebanon to crush the people there and help Israel to swallow part of Lebanon. The USA is openly intervening in Nicaragua, Salvador and conspiring against Cuba. It is at the same time pouring armaments in Pakistan, F-16 planes, Harpoon missiles to be used against Indian people — India's workers and peasants. The plot of enslavement is quite clear. Arming of the USA and its allies is not only to fight the USSR, but to enslave the whole world.

Such is the world situation. The imperialist powers led by the USA are combining to isolate the Soviet Union, to secure arms superiority over her and prepare for an aggressive attack against her. They seek to destroy the achievements of Socialist revolution — a system without unemployment, poverty and crisis. They thereby want to make the world safe for capitalist exploitation and finally for imperialist enslavement. It is the armed strength of the Soviet Union that stands as the biggest obstacle to enslavement of third world countries. To destroy this strength is the imperialist plot to unleash a nuclear world war and sacrifice the lives of tens of millions.

But their plans cannot succeed so easily. Already their provocation and the crude methods adopted by them have exposed them before the world. The lie did not take much time to be detected. Their attempt to divert the attention of the people are failing. The peace forces, seeing the provocation are bound to redouble their endeavours to defeat plans for deployment of missiles in Europe and press for disarmament. Inside the USA itself the people are getting angry over huge war expenditure, unemployment and economic conditions. The voice of peace forces is getting stronger.

To bring success to the struggle for peace, to frustrate the war plan and deployment of missiles in Europe it is necessary that people of all countries raise their voice in protest. Weakness in any one

country only helps the warmongers.

But this grim danger of war is not seen in India and not understood by the people. On September 1 no doubt the CITU, AITUC and others organised big rallies of workers in defence of peace, in protest of war.

But compared with the vast multitude who have not heard of the war danger, they were a small force. Even the major part of the working class is not seized of the danger. The Congress (I) party leaders sometimes talk of the war danger but care is taken by them not to mention the USA as the war plotter.

The bourgeois opposition parties act as if there is no danger to world peace. They ignore the piling up of nuclear armaments, the aggressive nuclear stand of the USA and the peace stand of the USSR. Nuclear war which threatens to kill millions over the world, which will affect millions of Indian people, is no concern of theirs. All of them glibly talk of non-violence. But they will not open their mouths to speak against nuclear war and mobilise Indian opinion against it. These parties besides do not accept that nuclear war is an instrument of U.S. imperialism out to establish its global domination — domination of the world including India. In fact some of them openly talk about two super powers equating Socialist Soviet Union with imperialist USA.

This is a dangerous situation which leaves our people unaware of the war danger and paralyses Indian intervention for world peace. It prevents the working class and people of India from doing their duty to themselves and to the peoples of the world faced with the massacre of millions. It is clear that the bourgeois parties will not mobilise the mass of Indian people against the war drive of the imperialists. But the organised working class can do it using its own strength to rouse and mobilise the people. The good work done on September 1 must be carried further and vigorously pursued. All our State Committees and unions in cooperation with other trade union organisations must wage a relentless campaign against the war danger and uphold the peace proposals and efforts of the USSR. The entire working class, the entire strength of the organised trade union movement must be rallied in support of peace and Soviet peace proposals. Our unions must also expose the provocation started by the U.S. and its imperialist allies and assure the world working class that Indian workers have understood the deceitful game and are exposing the enemies of peace. If the trade unions carry on unremitted struggle and use their full mobilising capacity, the entire country will soon learn about the war danger and come out as an active force in defence of world peace. The cry "Workers of the World Unite" means today unite for peace, unite against war, unite to defeat the attack of the imperialists against the socialist world.

Massive Preparation for Bengal Bundh

MASSIVE preparations have been launched in the state for the success of the Bengal Bundh on September 28. The call for the bundh was given jointly by the CITU, AITUC, UTUC, TUCC and HMS along with different federations and the Left Front. The call for the bundh has acquired a special significance in view of the demands raised before the Government of India by the trade unions, breaking the barriers of "trade union exclusiveness" and extending them to the cause of the people as a whole. The specific demands are: more powers to the state — Constitutional and financial; stop the move for denotification and for the take over and nationalisation of the closed and locked out units, remunerative price to the peasants' produce and fixation of minimum wage for the agricultural workers, repeal of all anti-democratic and anti-trade union draconian legislations, nationalisation of the jute industry, etc.

Innumerable processions, rallies and meetings are going on in all the nook and corners of the state — right from the foot of the Himalayas down to the borders of the Bay of Bengal. A huge central public rally was held at the Brigade Parade ground, Calcutta on September 20. People from all walks of life — workers, peasants, agricultural labourers, share croppers, women, teachers, students, artists, youth, rickshaw pullers, small shop owners and adivasis converged at the Parade Ground from all corners of the state with placards, banners and red flags. The meeting was addressed by Jyoti Basu, Vice-President of CITU and Chief Minister of W. Bengal and leaders of the Central Trade Unions.

A press conference on the issue was held at the Central Office of CITU in New Delhi on September 15, which was addressed by Manoranjan Roy, General Secretary of the W. Bengal State CITU, Krishnapada Ghosh, Working Committee Member of CITU and Labour Minister of W. Bengal and Samar Mukherjee, M.P., General Secretary of CITU. Explaining the demands, Manoranjan Roy said that Bengal Bundh was invested with far reaching consequences since the demand for more powers to the states was a fight for all the states in India for equal development, for the unity and integrity of the Country. A strong Centre is certainly desired for, but that cannot be visualised without strengthening the states as well. He placed various data to show the uneven development since independence and how the Centre was perpetrating a policy of political discrimination particularly against W. Bengal.

A pamphlet has been published by Manoranjan Roy with a foreword by Jyoti Basu in this regard.

(Stop Press: As per reports, the bundh was total throughout the state despite organised opposition by the Congress(I)).

Coal Miners' Protest Day — Oct. 5

ALL unions in Coal industry including INTUC have united to observe an All India Protest Day on October 5 to record their protest against the postponement of the JBCCI meeting scheduled to be held at Calcutta on September 20 for signing the NCWA-III agreement, as the Government of India did not give clearance to the draft agreement.

The following joint press communique was issued from Calcutta on September 22, signed by Kanti Mehta, President, Indian National Mine Workers' Federation (INTUC); Kalyan Roy, General Secretary, Indian Mine Workers' Federation (AITUC), M.K. Pandhe, President, All India Coal Workers' Federation (CITU); Jayanta Poddar, Convenor, Hind Khadan Mazdoor Federation (HMS); T.C. Jumde, General Secretary, Akhil Bharatiya Khadan Mazdoor Mahasangh (BMS); and Mahesh Desai, General Secretary, All India Khan Mazdoor Federation:

The meeting of the Joint Bipartite Committee for Coal Industry convened on 20th September 1983 specifically to sign the NCWA-III agreement had to be postponed in view of the lack of clearance from the Government of India. Since the draft was finalised jointly by the Drafting Committee as early as on 5th September 1983, this development has created strong resentment among 7 lakh coal mine workers all over the Country.

We record our protest at the inordinate delay in the signing of the agreement since it hits at the root of the concept of collective bargaining in the Public Sector undertakings. Different Federations of coal unions have given different programmes of action in the coal industry. We however strongly feel that the programme of action should be organised unitedly so that the Government of India will realise the strong feelings of the coal mine workers.

We therefore call upon the coal mine workers in all the coal companies to observe All India Coal Miners' Protest Day on 5th October 1983 to press for the demand for immediate signing and implementation of the agreement.

Commonwealth T.U. Director Visits CITU

Carl Wright, Director, Commonwealth Trade Union Council, London visited the Central Office of CITU on September 23. Discussions were held on national and international struggles and views were exchanged. P.K. Ganguly, Secretary and Vimala Ranadive, Working Committee member of CITU held the discussions on behalf of CITU.

We urge upon the Government of India not to further delay the signing of the settlement failing which the coal mine workers will be left with no other alternative but to resort to further joint direct action.

Govt's Apathy Towards Mines Accidents

M.K. Pandhe, President All India Coal Workers Federation and Secretary, CITU issued the following statement to the Press on September 15 on the Coal Mine Accident in Dhanbad:

THE All India Coal Workers Federation strongly condemns the Coal Mine disaster on 14th September at Hurriladih Colliery under Bharat Coaking Coal Corporation resulting in drowning of 19 workers due to sudden fall of roof and gushing of water in the mine.

Though overwhelming majority of the accidents in underground mines are taking place due the fall of sides and roofs, the managements have totally failed to take adequate precautionary measures. Even the decisions of the 5th Conference on Safety in Mines have not been implemented by the management.

The Director General of Mines Safety has not even 25 per cent of the staff required to implement the statutory obligations of inspections of mines. The Government of India is callously refusing to provide sufficient funds for the purpose on the plea of budgetary constraint. The Government therefore cannot escape responsibility for such loss of human life.

Despite repeated demands of trade unions in Coal industry, Government is not prepared to convene the Conference on Mines Safety. The AICWF demands that the Conference should be convened without any further delay so that the safety in our mines is properly ensured.

The AICWF demands that the guilty officers involved in the accident should be immediately suspended so that the attempts to suppress evidence are not made by them.

Mere appointment of a judicial enquiry will not help in reducing the accidents in mines since by and large the recommendations of such commissions are not implemented by the managements. Therefore while demanding immediate constitution of a judicial enquiry and adequate compensation to the families of the deceased workers, the AICWF urges upon the Government to immediately take steps to ensure full implementation of safety provisions in mines in cooperation with the trade unions.

Government Wavering on Upward Revision

THE third meeting of the Tripartite Committee on D.A. for the public sector employees, held at New Delhi on September 15 and 16 also could not reach any conclusions on the quantum of rise in the D.A. of the public sector employees. While the clause (iii) of the terms of reference regarding the repercussion of any enhancement on various other sectors was set aside, the Government made some paltry offers in the rate of increase in D.A. Conveniently forgetting that it had already conceded that the existing rate did not neutralise the cost of living even at the lowest level of pay and the D.A. Committee was set up only to decide the quantum of increase that would neutralise the cost of living at all levels of pay, the Government offered a mere Rs. 1.35 i.e. an increase of only five paise per point over the existing rates and that also to be implemented from October 1, 1983. The workers' group including the INTUC unanimously rejected the offer and demanded Rs. 2.50 per point rise in index. They also demanded that if the slab system of D.A. was to be introduced, then the rate of D.A. for the higher categories should be above this.

M.K. Pandhe, Secretary CITU said that the W. Bengal Engineering agreement which covers even small units having only 50 workers has provided Rs. 1.50 per point. The public sector units have to pay much more than that.

The Government, reluctant to give cent per cent neutralisation, however kept on wavering on its stand. On 16th the Director General of the B.P.E gave a new proposal. He offered Rs. 1.45 as the single rate of D.A. In the alternative he suggested that if there are two slabs of D.A. then they can be Rs. 1.40 for the workers drawing less than Rs. 800 as basic pay and Rs. 1.50 for those drawing more than Rs. 800. He proposed to implement the rates with retrospective effect from June 1, 1983. The workers' representatives however rejected this proposal also. They suggested that if the slab system was introduced then it should not be less than Rs. 2.00, Rs. 2.15 and Rs. 2.30 per point rise in index. They also demanded that the new rates of D.A. should be applicable from January 1, 1983. The manner in which it can be fixed should be discussed at the plant level.

The proposal of CITU that uniform rate of neutralisation should be on the basis of average wage and not on the minimum wage, was also not acceptable to the Government.

However at the suggestion of the Labour Minister, it was decided to have another meeting on October 6. The representatives of the Central Trade Unions pointed out that three months would be over on September 20 and the workers in the public sectors who have shown utmost tolerance, would not like to have further delay in the matter.

The meeting thus ended without any decision for the third time because of the Government's stance to escape its responsibilities to honour the commit-

ments. Only a mass pressurisation from below — an united and militant movement by the workers can break the stalemate and force the Government to accede to their justified demands. The CITU in its Secretariat meeting held on September 17, has called upon the public sector workers to prepare for further struggles. The issue will be discussed in the meeting of the National Campaign Committee with the federations to be held at New Delhi on October 4.

Prosecution of Coal Companies

Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 236 (Answered on 9th August, 1983) by Mohd. Ismail, M.P.

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to lay a statement showing:

(a) How many coal companies were prosecuted during 1980-83 for violation of the provisions of the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act 1970; and

(b) The results of the prosecution?

Answer: The Minister of Labour and Rehabilitation

A Statement showing the names of the Coal Companies, the number of prosecutions launched against these companies for violation of the provisions of the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970, and the Rules framed thereunder during the period 1.1.80 to 31.7.83 and the results of these prosecutions is laid on the Table of the House.

<i>Name of the Coal Companies</i>	<i>No. of prosecution cases filed during the period only</i>	<i>No. of cases resulting in convictions</i>	<i>No. of cases resulting in acquittals</i>	<i>No. of cases in which writ petitions have been filed</i>	<i>No of posecution cases which are pending with the Courts at the end of the period</i>
2	3	4	5	6	7
BCCL	58	6	5	6	47
CCL	21	1	1	6	19
ECL	72	27	3	13	42
WCL	25	—	—	—	25
IISCO	4	—	—	4	4
Singareni Collieries Co. Ltd.	1	—	—	—	1
TISCO	4	—	—	4	4
Total:	185	34	9	32	142

Convention Against Lock-outs, Closures

IN pursuance of the decisions of the Second National Convention, the National Campaign Committee in its meeting held at New Delhi on September 13 decided to hold a national convention against closures, lock-outs, retrenchments, lay-offs and against denotifications, at New Delhi on December 4.

The meeting made in-depth discussions of the programmes chalked out by the August 21 Second National Convention and noted with serious concern the growing incidence of closures, lock-outs, industrial sickness and the move of the Government of India towards denotification of the units which have been already taken over. To face this burning problem which confronted all sections of the workers, aggravating the already a alarming situation of unemployment, the meeting decided to mobilise the entire working class and all sections of the working people, irrespective of whether they were affected by the closures and lock-outs or not, to wage united struggles to defeat the Government's policies and force it to take over and nationalise the closed units. With this aim in view, the meeting decided to convene a meeting of the N.C.C. with the federations on October 4 at New Delhi. All the Central Trade Unions and the national federations have been requested to furnish the details of the closures, lock-outs, retrenchments, etc. so that a comprehensive report can be prepared on the question and placed before the Convention for discussion and adoption of a Country-wide programme of action. In the mean time, the statewide, industrywise and unitwise movements against closures and lockouts which are already continuing, should be intensified.

Casualty of Lock-outs (Further Datas)

All India Year	Mandays Lost	Percentage
1980	99 Lakhs	45%
1981	1 Crore 54 Lakhs	42%
1982	1 Crore 77 Lakhs	53%
1983 (January to May)	53 Lakhs	52%

Statewise Loss in Mandays from 1982 to 1983 (May)

West Bengal	85%
Kerala	52%
Gujarat	58.5%
Uttar Pradesh	53%

Similarly more mandays losses due to lock-outs have been recorded in Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu, and Karnataka also. All over India, the deteriorating industrial situations are due to the growing incidence of lockouts.

(Source: Department of Industries, Government of India).

As already decided in the Second National Convention, the meeting called upon all the constituents to hold statewide, districtwise and regionwise Conventions by November to carryforward the spirit of the main resolution to the grassroot levels of the workers to fight the anti-labour policies of the Government of India.

The meeting also called upon the constituents to heighten up united movements against price rise and unemployment as per the programmes of the Second National Convention.

The meeting decided to hold the other two special conventions, i.e., of working women and of unorganised labour at a later date, but before the Central March to Parliament which is scheduled to be held during the Budget Session.

In a circular issued on September 13, the National Campaign Committee called upon all the constituents to gear up all round preparations through the Conventions and movements, focussing at the Central March to Parliament to make this demonstration still bigger than that of the November 23, 1981.

Karnataka TU school at Bangalore

A four day T.U. class was organised for the leading activists in Karnataka at the Legislatures Home in Bangalore from 27th to 30th August 1983. Fifty leaders and activists participated in the class.

M.K. Pandhe, Secretary, CITU took the classes on 27th and 28th August covering the topics such as wages in India, Consumer Price Index Numbers, Law and the Trade Unions and organisation and functions of trade unions. Sukomal Sen M.P. spoke on the History of the Trade Union Movement in India on 29th August, while P. Ramamurti, Vice President CITU explained the tasks of the Trade Union Movements in the present period.

The participants were divided into 3 groups and every evening they were discussing in details the topics covered in the day. One representative used to give a report on the discussion seeking clarifications on the points covered in the classes.

The Karnataka State Committee of CITU is proposing to hold district level classes to educate the activists of the unions at the local levels.

A meeting of the activists in the public sector was held on 29th August which was addressed by M.K. Pandhe. He explained the main issue involved in the current wage negotiations in public sector and the developments in the tripartite D.A. Committee.

On 30th August a meeting of the workers was held in N.G.O's Hall in which P. Ramamurti explained in details the significance of the Second National T. U. Convention held in New Delhi on 21st August and highlighted the need for strengthening the united movement of the working class of India against the anti-labour policies of the Government of India.

CITU Secretariat's Call

- * **Make the N.C.C. programmes a success.**
- * **Intensify Struggles Against Closures, Lock-outs.**
- * **Prepare for Struggle on D.A. Issue.**

THE Secretariat of CITU which met on September 17 under the Chairmanship of B.T. Ranadive, President-CITU, heard reports about the Second National Convention of Trade Unions held in New Delhi on August 21, 1983.

Other members present in the meeting were Samar Mukherjee, M.P., General Secretary, Manoranjan Roy, Sushila Gopalan, M.P., P. Ramamurti, Harshay Singh, Vice Presidents, M.K. Pandhe, Nrisingha Chakrabarty, and P.K. Ganguly, Secretaries.

The Secretariat noted that the Second National Convention of Trade Unions has created good enthusiasm amongst the workers. It also noted that the National Campaign Committee from its meeting held on September 13, had correctly emphasised the necessity of taking up urgent steps against closures, lock-outs, retrenchments and denotification on a national plane and holding of a Convention on December 4, 1983. The Secretariat also welcomed the decision of the N.C.C. to hold a meeting on 4.10.1983 of all the constituents including the Federations to draw up further programmes on the subject. The Secretariat directed all the Federations and the State Committees to make this Convention a grand success in view of the fact that the offensive has now been intensified through closures, lock-outs and retrenchment affecting thousands and thousands of workmen. All units were directed to send detailed reports on the subjects immediately for preparation of a consolidated report.

The Secretariat heard reports, that state level conventions have already been held in West Bengal and Gujarat. The Convention in West Bengal has given a call for one day's general strike on September 28. The State level convention in U.P. has already been fixed on October 30. The Secretariat felt that successful state level conventions are very important for successful implementation of the whole programme. Hence it directed the State Committees to take initiative for holding of State Level Conventions within 30 November as scheduled.

The Secretariat also heard reports on the tentative decision of the N.C.C. about holding the National Convention of Working Women in January 1983 at some place other than Delhi. The Secretariat felt that the question of Working Women has assumed great importance and hence final decision on the subject should be taken in consultation with the Federations on October 4, when the National Campaign Committee with the constituent Federations is scheduled to meet. This would give sufficient time for organising such a Convention. All the State Committees are requested to keep their vigilance and start preparations from now on so that the Convention of Working Women becomes a grand success.

The Secretariat heard reports about the tardy progress in the matter of upward revision in the D.A. formula. The Secretariat felt that the offer of an increase of five paise by the BPE in face of some public sector undertakings having accepted even Rs. 2.50 per point in revision of D.A., was aimed at freezing the formula keeping the increase as low as possible without reflecting the rise in prices between the period when this formula was introduced and today. The Secretariat noted that a welcome feature is that the INTUC also has taken a common stand now with the Central Trade Unions who have been fighting for such revision from 1977 onwards. The Secretariat warned all unions in the Public Sector to keep in readiness for a struggle if the justified demand of the trade unions is not accepted by the Government. They should immediately start a campaign on this issue in order to pressurise the Government to accept the just demand.

The Secretariat nominated Hari Sadhan Mitra and V.P. Chintan, both members of the Working Committee as its representatives in the Industrial Committee on Engineering Industry.

The Secretariat deprecated the action of the Government in denying representation to the CITU in several statutory bodies including important Committees like ESI, EPF and Employment of Women etc. and urged upon the Government to review the matter.

The Secretariat also nominated Comrades P. Ramamurti and M.K. Pandhe to participate in the National Seminar on Productivity and Trade Unions to be held at New Delhi on October 19-20, 1983 at the instance of National Productivity Council.

The Secretariat also decided to hold the Working Committee meeting of CITU sometime in November in Bihar. The date and venue of the meeting will be fixed up in consultation with the Bihar State Committee of CITU.

Finance Minister And Monopoly Houses

In the meeting of the Consultative Committee for Finance Ministry, held on August 25, information about the extent of loan given by various financial institutions to monopoly houses was not given. All Members from Nirmal Chatterjee (CPI-M) to Brahmananda Reddy (Cong-I) insisted that such information should be given as per custom. Pranab Mukherjee, thus cornered, left the meeting in a huff and the proposed meeting could not take place. Even the usual speech by the Minister also could not be delivered.

This shows that the Govt. of Indira Gandhi is determined to keep the transactions out of the purview of Parliament and public knowledge so that her service to monopoly is not expressed.

Magnificent Strike by Bank Employees

OVER eighty five thousand bank employees all over India went on a successful strike on September 6. The call for the strike was given by the Bank Employees' Federation of India (BEFI) opposing victimisations, curb on trade union rights, against mechanisation and computerisation and demanding negotiated settlement of the Charter of Demands.

Success of Strike

The strike was complete in all the affiliated units in the country. The significant fact of the strike was that it fully materialised even in the places where BEFI has no state level bodies. The bank employees in general, irrespective of their affiliations to other organisations, participated in the strike despite opposition from their leadership. At Calcutta the INTUC leadership even brought outside elements to force the employees inside. But the workers remained unprovoked and observed the strike peacefully. The strike breakers had to beat retreat.

As per reports, the strike was total in W. Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Tripura etc. Successful strike was reported from Bombay, Delhi and other places also. In general the strike paralysed works in majority of the nationalised banks, rural banks, the Co-operative banks, Land Development Banks, Overseas banks, etc., not only in the metropolises, but also in the districts and the rural areas. Work was totally paralysed in the Reserve Banks excepting in one centre. Massive gate meetings, processions and rallies were held in all the affiliated units in preparation for the success of the strike. CITU and other mass organisations and various trade unions extended full support to the demands of the bank employees.

The Anti-Labour Agreement

In the background of this magnificent strike by the struggling employees, the height of reformism and the collaborationist attitude of a coterie of leaders and the anti-labour policies of the Indian Banks Association and the Government were laid bare when they hurriedly arrived at a settlement on September 8 at New Delhi permitting the use of computers in banks. The parties to such a black agreement were the All India Bank Employees Association and the National Confederation of Bank Employees. Apart from the introduction of automation and computerisation which itself will attack the the job potentials and job security, the settlement also permits virtual termination of jobs in the name of voluntary abandonment of service. It was an open stabbing of the workers' cause, when it has been the experience in all industries including in Banks that computerisation and automation in a capitalist structure kill the jobs of the workers. The monstrosity of these coteries of leaders has done an irreparable damage to the bank employees. The hypocrisy of their much trumpeted continuous agitation in

September and indefinite strike thereafter stands fully exposed.

Finance Minister's Motivated Statement

Perturbed by the growing influence of BEFI and the impending success of the strike the Union Finance Minister made a politically motivated statement at Calcutta to confuse the workers just prior to the strike. He said that the Government had never declined to negotiate the charter of demands submitted by the BEFI and he would have asked the IBA to negotiate; but BEFI had not submitted any demands and the call for the strike was sudden. It is surprising that the Honourable Finance Minister of India can make such a statement when the documented facts prove it to be a false one. In its letter to the Finance Minister on September 12, the BEFI laid the facts bare. It did submit the demands to the IBA on November 15, 1982 and followed up with two reminders in May and June, 1983. Then a delegation met the Union Labour Minister on July 10, 1983 and submitted a memorandum with a copy of the demands. On August 4 the Ministry of Labour wrote to BEFI that the charter of demands had been forwarded to the Ministry of Finance and on August 19 the Deputy Finance Minister acknowledged in Lok Sabha that along with AIBEA, NCBE, etc. BEFI have submitted charter of demands to the IBA. The Finance Minister has no answer to these realities.

BEFI Rejects the Agreement

So, it is to be noted that in spite of repeated representations made by the BEFI, it was not invited for the negotiations. Coming close to the heels of the successful strike, the parties to the black agreement sought the capitulation to be complete and be made a fait accompli before the struggle could spread further.

Rightly therefore the BEFI has rejected the agreement and made it clear to the Indian Banks Association in its letter of September 9 that they are not bound by the provisions of the agreement and are free to launch actions to effectively oppose the agreement. It has rightly asserted that the federation representing 85,000 bank employees must have its say in all the forums wherever subjects concerning them are considered, discussed and negotiated.

Struggle to be Intensified

The strike of the bank employees however is bound to make a good impact on the bank employees as well as on other sections of workers. Not only that the hypocrisy of the authorities and the opportunist leaders has been further exposed, but the danger of computerisation as an eventual culmination of the agreement have also been laid bare. The BEFI has called upon the workers to intensify the struggle in all units all over the country.

New Phase of Struggle of J.K. Synthetics Workers

WITH the ruthless suppression of the struggle of the workers of J.K. Synthetics at Kota, a new phase has arisen because on August 28, the Govt. of Rajasthan has issued a special order under section 10 (K) (1) of Industrial Dispute Act (Rajasthan) referring the dispute to a Tribunal. The Govt. has ordered that the "management shall not victimise any workman for his participation in the alleged strike or agitation with effect from 17.2.83" and "the workmen shall not resort to go slow or strike or any kind of agitation or cause loss of production in any manner whatever during the period the order remains in force".

Issue of such an order became necessary because though the workers could not face the brutal terror regime which did not spare their families including children and had to join their duties, they refused to be cowed down. In a mass meeting held on August 26, over two thousand workers attended the rally and heard the union leaders including Hariram Chowhan, Secretary, Rajasthan State Committee of CPI (M). This showed that workers did not lose their heart. They contributed each Rs. 5/- from the advance which was paid to them by the authorities to the Union so that the activities of the union continue and those retrenched could be kept together. The management has also suspended over 100 leading activists of the CITU union in gross violation of the special order. They are afraid that their entry in the factory would crystallise the anger and this they want to prevent. The CITU Centre has intervened and the Union Labour Minister has been informed that failure to take action against the management will reduce the workers to bonded labour.

Those workers who have joined their work describe that police pickets have been inside the factory. Indiscriminate retrenchment has already increased the workload. In many cases one worker has to do the job of two. It is but natural that resentment is growing among them.

Kota Bundh

It was to forestall the bursting out of anger of the workers that this special order dated 28th August '83 has been issued so that any agitation by them can be declared illegal. The collusion between the Govt. and the management becomes clear when one learns that apart from suspension of these leading union workers, Rajiv Gandhi, M.P. and General Secretary of Congress (I) paid a visit to Kota to assure the Singhania's. The reaction of the people of Kota was demonstrated by a total Bundh on September 2, jointly called by CITU and other organisations. Massive processions and rallies were held on the day.

I.L.O. Registers the Case

The I.L.O. in a communication dated August 25,

has informed the CITU that the complaint sent on August 12 has been registered vide Case no: 1227 and requested that further information be sent to them within a month as per I.L.O. Rules. CITU Centre has also furnished these developments to I.L.O. on September 20, 1983.

Relief to J.K. Synthetics Workers

From CITU Organisations

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| 1. Secretary, General Employees Union
Bhakhthawar Building
2, Station Road Andheri West
Bombay-400058 | Rs.
1000.00 |
| 2. General Secretary
MSK Mills Workers Union
Station Bazar, Behind Old Bus Stand
Gulbarga-585102 | 100.00 |
| 3. All India Plantation Workers Federation
6, Talkatora Road, New Delhi-110001 | 100.00 |
| 4. Secretary
Dharmapuri Distt. (CITU)
39, Perumal General Colony, Nadumaram
Nagar, Dharmapuri, Tamilnadu | 50.00 |
| 5. The General Secretary,
I.D.P.L. Kamgar Union, Rishikesh, U.P. | 20.00 |
| 6. Secretary
BEL, Ghazhiabad | 100.00 |
| 7. Sudhir Patra
Jharsuguda Industrial Mazdoor
Union (Orissa) | 15.00 |
| 8. Govinda Singh
Dugda Coal Washery
Giridih (Pisal) | 70.00 |
| 9. P.R. Krishnan, Secretary
Engineering Workers Union
Janashakti Golob Mill Passage,
Bombay-13 | 300.00 |
| 10. A.B.K. Metal & Engineering
Workers Union | 500.00 |
| 11. C.L.W. Labour Union | 500.00 |
| 12. Hindustan Steel Employees Union
(Alloy Steel Union)
2/5 Tilak Road, Durgapur-5 | 300.00 |
| 13. W.B. State Committee of CITU
53, Acharya J. Ch, Bose Road,
Calcutta-700016. | 2000.00 |

Government Parries Off Questions

THE first meeting of the reconstituted Tripartite Industrial Committee on Chemical Industry was held at Shram Shakti Bhawan, New Delhi on September 13 under the Chairmanship of Shri Veerendra Patil the Union Labour Minister. The meeting was attended by ten representatives of the Central Trade Unions: CITU-1, AITUC-1, BMS-1, HMS (Vashist)-2 HMS (Kulkarni)-1 and INTUC-4. As is usual in all other committees, the representation was heavily loaded in favour of INTUC. There were also ten representations from the various organisations of the employers in the Chemical Industry. On behalf of the Central Government, officials from the Ministries of Labour, Industry, Energy (Deptt. of Petroleum) and Chemical & Fertilisers attended the meeting. The State Government representatives invited were from Maharashtra, Bihar, West Bengal, Tamilnadu, Kerala and Gujarat, of which representatives from Maharashtra, Gujarat and Kerala attended. One representative from ILO also attended the meeting. CITU was represented by P.K. Ganguly, Secretary. CITU had sent a number of items as agenda for discussions.

In the items of agenda for discussions CITU raised the point of discrimination against the workers and the recognised AOC Labour Union representing them in the Assam Oil Division of the Indian Oil Corpn, in so far as the union was not associated during the last negotiations in the oil industry. The Government's explanation was that in Indian Oil Corporation negotiations are held separately for each division, viz, the Refineries & Pipelines Division, and the Marketing Division, while separate negotiations are going on in AOD. Some of the employers' organisations tried to confuse the issue by pointing out that it was a local problem and cannot be discussed in the meeting. P.K. Ganguly however maintained that the point did concern the policy of the Government since the Assam Oil Division of IOC was also involved in the same refinery, pipeline and marketing functions. He questioned the rationale of keeping a separate Assam Oil Division since the entire Indian Oil Corpn. was a nationalised concern. He also pointed out that AOD has refused to extend the same parity of wages to the workers. The contention of CITU was supported by other Central Trade Unions. The representatives of the Chemical and Fertilisers Ministry as well as the Labour Secretary however agreed that it was a matter concerning the policy of the Government and that efforts are being made for integration of the AOD with IOC.

Regarding the Rayon & Staple Fibre industry, CITU's question was how far the Government policy of import of man made fibre under O.G.L. has affected the lockouts and closures in the industry. CITU also wanted to know the number of mandays

lost due to the closures and lockouts and raised the question of nationalisation of these units. The Government however parried the question by trying to establish that the lockouts and closures were largely due to industrial disputes and not for import of man-made fibres. In its comments sent to CITU the Government said that imports have been reduced and are being maintained at an average of only 2000 tonnes per month. It also pointed out, as spokesman of the monopolists, that J.K. Synthetics at Kota, J.K. Rayons at Kanpur have been affected because of "financial loss due to reduced profitability". P.K. Ganguly, however, rejected both the pleas and pointed out from the Government's note itself that the imports in May and June have crossed the average claimed by the Government by a big margin. Regarding the plea of loss in profitability of the J.K. industries he said that it was totally untenable. The Government itself hold equity shares to the extent of 35.31 per cent, while the Singhanias are having only 0.65 per cent of the total assets of the company. Even today when the management is claiming declining profits, they have declared 10 per cent dividends. Moreover, they were diverting the funds advanced by the Government to other channels like in cement industry. The detailed letter written by CITU in this respect to the Labour Minister has not been replied as yet. He also pointed out that the Government in fact was serving the Singhanias and let loose a reign of repression on the workers.

CITU also drew the attention of the Government towards the problem of the contract workers and the violation of agreement and repression let loose on the contract workers of National Fertilisers Ltd., Panipat and refusal of the management of IOC (AOD) to settle the demands of the contract workers of Digboi.

Discussions ensued on pollution and safety in the chemical industry in which all the Central Trade Unions participated. P.K. Ganguly mentioned of reports where workmen have been affected by Tuberculosis and Cancer in Phosphate companies. There is no system of routine check up of health. Even the representatives of the State Governments opined that safety was not being observed strictly, dangerous operations are being carried out in the factories without routine medical examinations. The Labour Minister however had no proper answer to the points raised excepting commenting that the Workmen's Compensation Act may be amended to give more compensation to the affected workers.

In the concluding discussions it was pointed out by all the Central Trade Unions that all matters concerning the workers were related to the policy of the Government and for continuity of discussions and necessary actions thereof regular meetings of the Committee was necessary.

Meeting of Minimum Wages Advisory Board

THE 13th meeting of the Minimum Wages Advisory Board (Fixation Committee) was held at New Delhi on September 17. CITU was represented by Chandi Prasad, Working Committee member and General Secretary of the Bihar State Committee of CITU.

The main agenda of discussions was the proposals made by the Govt. of India, through its notifications made in June, for revision of minimum wages in various mines in construction and maintenance of roads, buildings and runways, in stone breaking and crushing and in agriculture.

It is to be noted that a total chaos is prevailing in the minimum wages in all the spheres. Despite a number of representations made by CITU and other organisations and agitations launched by the workers, the Government has not fixed any criteria for determining the minimum wages although it is committed to the need based minimum wages as per the 15th Labour Conference. The notifications sent by the Government in June again reflected this anomaly. There was anomaly in fixation of V.D.A. even. The categorisation of miners in several mines has also not been finalised as yet.

On behalf of CITU, Chandi Prasad raised objection to the minimum wages proposed by the Government on the following grounds:

1. The proposed rates were too low and did not conform to the norms of the need based minimum wage as unanimously accepted in the 15th Labour Conference.

2. The rates were even below the poverty line wages as propounded by the then Planning Minister, Mohan Dharia, on the basis of per capita consumption worth Rs. 20/- per head per month on 100 points, 1960 base.

3. The rates were even lower than those fixed by some states and tribunals.

4. They were lower than the minimum wages suggested by the Seminar conducted by the Hyderabad Staff College in 1981, the notes of which were circulated in the meeting of the Central Minimum Wages Advisory Board.

5. The rates were also lower than those in terms of per capita expenditure on convicts in different states.

Pending sanction of need based minimum wage, CITU suggested that Rs. 500/- per month or Rs. 17/- per day be fixed for all schedule of employments including those working above the grounds in the mines. For those working below ground, CITU suggested Rs. 625/- per month or Rs. 21.25 per day for unskilled workers. The weightage and differential between unskilled, semi-skilled and highly skilled be fixed at 1:1.5:2.0:2.5 as was recommended by the First Pay Commission. Similarly the weightage between the class of cities, i.e., D, C, B2, B1 and A should be fixed at 1:1.25:1.50:1.75:2.0.

Apart from above, CITU also suggested for introduction of V.D.A. at the rate of 0.05 paisa per day per point rise in the C.P.I. numbers (1960-100) as was already decided by the Board but yet to be

notified by the Government, as a result of which the workers have been incurring loss in wages.

After deliberations, however, it was decided that another meeting of the Board will be held in January, 1984, when the criterion of minimum wage and the norm for V.D.A. will be decided.

Modinagar Workers Fight Gangsterism

A well attended meeting of textile workers of Modinagar held on 9th September pledged to carry forward the struggle despite continued murderous attacks on the CITU activists by some gangster elements parading in the name of HMS.

The meeting had to be held outside the town limits due to imposition of section 144 by the local administration. The Pradhan of Gram Panchayat also attended the meeting and expressed his support to the struggle of the workers.

The meeting was held exactly two months after the ghastly murder of 5 CITU workers to pay homage to the martyrs. Ilam Chand presided over the meeting which was addressed by S.B. Bhardwaj, Suresh Chand, Harendra Lal, Kiran Singh, Indrapal and Beant Singh.

The speakers narrated the developments in Modinagar leading to the murderous attacks on the workers and their family members. They observed that the attacks continued even afterwards but the workers have been resisting courageously.

M.K. Pandhe, Secretary CITU speaking on the occasion, congratulated the Modinagar workers for their valiant struggle and warned them against the conspiracies of Modis to disrupt the united T.U. movements.

Subhash and Naresh Tyagi, the President and Secretary of CITU affiliated textile mill Mazdoor Sangh have still been kept under detention under NSA. In a meeting held at the D.L.C's office at Ghaziabad on August 22, CITU demanded of the authorities to take measures so that about 200 workers of CITU who were forcibly barred from entering the factory, are allowed to join their duties. With the support of the struggling workers and public sympathy veering round CITU more and more workers have now been able to join their duties.

Deliberately trying to confuse the people, nine M.P.s supporting the gangsters elements made a slanderous statement to the Chief Minister of U.P. that workers were being confined in the mill and forced to work. In a statement issued to the press on August 30, Prakash Karat, Secretary, Delhi State Committee of CPI(M) and Sushil Bhattacharya, M.P., General Secretary of Delhi State CITU condemned this statement and demanded of the authorities to immediately release Subhash and Naresh Tyagi.

Collapse of All Labour Legislations

Nrisingha Chakrabarty

THE deep crisis in our country's economy is manifested among others in over growing unemployment, sky rocketting of prices and collapse of all labour legislations. Over fifty per cent of our population as admitted by the planners, have now been pushed below poverty line. The workers in unorganised sector are very hard hit and many of them have virtually become "Forced Labour".

Smt. Indira Gandhi sheds crocodile tears for the unorganised workers, whenever there is an opportunity to do so. But the records nail down her Govt. as the biggest culprit in the matter — at least the Supreme Court says so.

Definition of Forced Labour

In a judgement delivered on September 18, 1982, the Supreme Court said, "Any factor which deprives a person of a choice of alternatives and compels him to adopt one particular course of action may properly be regarded as "force", it would be "forced labour". Where a person is suffering from hunger and starvation, when he has no resources at all to fight disease or to feed his wife and children or even to hide their nakedness, where utter grinding poverty has broken his back and reduced him to a state of helplessness and despair and where no other employment is available to alleviate the rigour of his poverty, he would have no choice but to accept any work that comes his way even if the remuneration offered to him is less than the minimum wage. He would be in no position to bargain with the employer; he would have to accept what is offered to him. And in doing so he would be acting not as a free agent with a choice of alternatives but under the compulsion of economic circumstances and the labour or services provided by him would be clearly "forced labour".

The judgement went further to formulate clearly that "where a person provides labour or service to another for remuneration which is less than the minimum wage, the labour or service provided by him clearly falls within the scope and ambit of the words "forced labour" under Article 23".

A Warning to the Government

The concluding part of the judgement contained the following warning that "the Government or any other Governmental authority including a public sector corporation which is carrying out such work *must take great care to see that the provisions of the labour laws are being strictly observed and they should not wait for any complaint to be received from the workmen in regard to non-observance of any such provision before proceeding to take action against the erring officers or contractors, but they should institute an effective system of periodic inspection to ensure that*

there are no violations of the provisions of labour laws and the workmen are not denied their rights and benefits to which they are entitled under such provisions and if any such violations are found, immediate action should be taken against defaulting officers or contractors" (emphasis added).

The judgement was delivered in connection with the conditions of service of construction workers. But the principles were clearly laid down and it has general applicability in all cases. The Ministry of Labour after sometime circulated gist of the judgement to all State Labour Secretaries in a routine manner and absolved itself from all responsibilities of implementing the labour laws or the Supreme Court judgement.

Appaling Conditions in Madhya Pradesh

The Government of Madhya Pradesh has several animal breeding projects under the Department of Animal Husbandry for breeding cows of high-breed. Many of these farms are named as Dairy Farms, in which the workers are forced to work in appaling service conditions. P.K. Maitra, Advocate, General Secretary, Madhya Pradesh State Committee of CITU filed a court case when the authorities refused to implement the labour laws. The authorities are contesting the case with sumptuous fees to the Government Pleader.

On cross-examination J.D. Deshmukh, Deputy Director, Animal Husbandry Services, State Animal Breeding Project, Anjora, admitted that he is paying Rs. 7 as wages to the workers from 1st June, 1983 because Inspector under Minimum Wages Act on 13.3.1982 told me that minimum wages at the rate of Rs. 7 per day should be given from 1.1.82. He however, started paying Rs. 7 from 1st June.

Duty hours of these workers stretch from 3 A.M. to 6 P.M. or 7 A.M. to till they are released. No paid weekly off no national holiday, no festival holiday, no earned leave, no permanency even though working for 5 to 10 years, no maternity benefit for the working women, no ESI, no Gratuity, no social security — absolutely nothing. Workers are supposed to be housed in the Farm. No one has inspected these residential quarters, and there is a possibility that these wonderful housing arrangements must be shanties erected by these workmen only to have a cover over themselves. And the Madhya Pradesh Government have no qualms, no guilty conscious, about the wholesale violation and massacre of labour laws.

CITU Intervenes

The CITU Centre has intervened. In a letter to the Union Labour Minister on September 1, a demand has been raised to bring an end to this shameful state of affairs not only in Anjora Dairy Farm but all other such Farms in Madhya Pradesh.

The workers engaged must be made permanent as they are working in jobs of perennial nature. Their duty hours, wages etc. should be properly defined and compensation should be calculated for all these years in which they have been systematically cheated out of their legal dues and payment made in presence of a representative of CITU. It was pointed out that in the process of such employment, the Government of Madhya Pradesh has violated several conventions of I.L.O. which the Government of India has ratified. The Government would have no face in the international community if a complaint on these scores are sent to the Committee of Experts on Conventions I.L.O. to whom periodical report has become due.

Samar Mukherjee, M.P. Leader of the CPI(M) Group in Lok Sabha and General Secretary of CITU has taken up the matter with Smt. Indira Gandhi so that succour could be given to these workmen very early.

The Central Govt. — The Worst offender

The Madhya Pradesh Govt. has fixed perhaps the lowest wage and D.A. neutralisation formula under the Minimum Wages Act and many workers are not getting the same. But it is the Central Govt. which is the biggest offender in this case. From 1981 it was being pointed by the CITU and other trade union centres that the minimum wages fixed by the Central Govt. are lower than Kerala, West Bengal, Punjab, Haryana, Delhi etc. The officers in the Labour Ministry say that it should not be a problem because under the rules the higher wages fixed by the States should apply. But how many people know this? Mostly it is not known to them and they are deprived of the appropriate wages. For example the workers in the seed farms in Haryana owned by the Central Govt. get less wages than the workers in Agricultural operation under Haryana Govt.

Violation Backed By Repression

Being in the unorganised sector with a huge army of unemployed outside, these workers are unable to defend themselves. Whenever these workers organise themselves and courageously demand implementation of labour laws, they find that the offenders go scot free but their services are terminated. Struggles against these are ruthlessly suppressed. The warning given by the Supreme Court remains on paper only.

For example let us take the case of contract workers in Cold Pig Iron Yard in Bhilai Steel Plant, or for that matter the workers in any steel plant. Loading and unloading is a perennial job and the production and despatch also is done according to targets fixed. The Contractors employ the workmen throughout the year. Many of these workmen have been working for 10 to 15 years and saw many contractors come and go. As soon as they demanded that they should be treated as permanent labour in terms of the Contract Labour Act, the Contractor is changed and the workers are dismissed.

About 350 workers, many women with children

were lathicharged and thrown behind the bars for demanding implementation of labours laws. The situation in TISCO is still more serious. Workers were made permanent but with new recruitment, so that they could be kept under the influence of INTUC and the management who recruited them, while thousands who have been serving for years have been thrown to the streets. Leaders of the CITU union have been victimised for espousing the cause of these workmen.

It is the same story with the Coal Khalasis of Rampurhat and New Bongaingaon locosheds. In the cases of coal khalasis or transhipment mazdoor another principle i.e., equal work-equal pay is being violated. There are permanent labour doing the very same job which these workers are doing. They are neither being made permanent nor they are granted equal pay and all benefits as due under section 25 (2) (v) (a) of Central Rules framed under the Contract Labour Act.

Thus another judgement of the Supreme Court delivered on February 24, 1982 in the case of Randhir Singh for equal benefits and wages stand violated.

Monopolies and Multi Nationals are Encouraged

When the Govt. takes up this position, the private sector is happy. The incidence of use of contract labour in perennial nature of job is growing apace. The permanent workmen who were doing the jobs earlier are either retrenched or absorbed elsewhere while contract labour are deployed in their place at one fourth or one fifth of the wages with no other benefits. It would be enough to cite one instance. The HMM Ltd (Horlicks) have their own packaging plant at Howrah and Bangalore. But since then they are employing Contract labour. As soon as the workers in their packaging plant at Faridabad started an agitation, the plant was closed down and a new plant started at Gurgaon. The Govt. remains transfixed before the management and an industrial dispute raised in this regard is pending for over 2/3 years.

Safety Legislations Violated

The case of Bhatti mines (stone quarries) near Delhi would provide an example as to how the safety legislations are ignored even after the Supreme Court direct the owners. They retaliate by closure and the workmen, with starvations facing them, are forced to start work without any safety measure being observed.

Unbounded Hypocrisy

Hence when one hears about new 20 point programme aimed at alleviating the conditions of unorganised labour, one is shocked at the extent of hypocrisy that goes with it. The case of Brick Kiln workers is known to all. They are virtually kept as "bonded labour". The Left Front Govt. in Tripura, when its attention was drawn to it, immediately took steps by declaring the Kilns as factories under the Factory Act. and ensuring proper supervision over
(Contd. on p. 22)

HARYANA

Mass Rally Against Retrenchments, Closures And Lockouts

A massive rally was organised by the State CITU at Panipat on August 31 against the brutal suppression of trade union rights by the Haryana Government and against the illegal retrenchments, closures and lay-offs resorted to by the industrial units in the State. Over 5000 workers drawn from the major industrial centres of the state, viz, Faridabad, Sonapat, Bhiwani, Ambala, Jind, Gurgaon, Rohtak, Hissar and Panipat alongwith the peasants, agricultural workers and students joined the procession taken out in the city. The procession which converged into the rally was led by Samar Mukherjee, M.P., General Secretary of CITU. Mohanlal, President, Haryana State Committee of CITU presided over the rally.

Santokh Singh District President of CITU and S.S. Dhama, General Secretary of National Fertilisers Ltd. Employees' Union narrated the barbarous repression let loose by the police and the CISF on the workers of NFL, Panipat and at other places. The residential colony of Panipat has been turned into a police camp. The police made deliberate attempts to flame up communal passions to disrupt the militant struggles of the workers, which was however frustrated by the unity of the workers. Samar Mukherjee cautioned the workers and all other toiling sections of the people against the evil designs of the Congress (I) Government which through its blatantly anti-labour and fissiparous policies have brought danger to the national integrity and unity of the people. In the context of the worsening socio-economic crises he emphasised on the key role of the CITU in organising the working class and all sections of the unorganised labour and carry forward the united struggle forging an alliance with the peasantry. Among others who spoke were S.N. Solanki, General Secretary of the State CITU and R.S. Hoda, Secretary, Haryana State Committee of CPI (M).

The rally adopted resolutions denouncing the repressive policy of the NFL management and demanding stern action against the police authorities and return of the properties looted by the police and the gangsters hired by them, immediate reinstatement of all the 500 contract workers by the NFL management, withdrawal of the lockout of Kinsfolk at Sonapat and against retrenchment in Hissar Textile Mill and at Faridabad, Rohtak, etc.

CITU has decided to hold another mass rally at Hissar on October 2.

Indefinite Strike by Municipal Workers

The workers of Patna Municipal Corporation are on indefinite strike since August 8. The strike was jointly called by the Joint Action Committee comprising of CITU, AITUC and other unions demanding implementation of the previous agreement. Despite two previous strikes the Government has remained adamant and refused to implement the recommendations of the fourth pay commission, on gratuity and provident fund, to regularise the casual workers etc. On the contrary, it has let loose the Govt. machinery to unleash a severe repression on the workers resorting to brutal lathi charge and beating up the workers and their families by dragging them out from their residential quarters. The workers however have remained determined to carry forward the struggle. The Joint Action Committee is now preparing for a Jail Bharo Programme.

Karl Marx Death Centenary

A Karl Marx Death Centenary programme was organised at Dhanbad on August 27 and 28 by the Dhanbad District Coordination Committee. The programme was inaugurated by Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, Secretary of Bihar State Committee of CPI(M). About one thousand workers from the various parts of the district attended the two-day programme. U.S. Chanda, Joint Convenor, welcomed the delegates and G.K. Bakshi and Sushil Chakrabarty conducted the programme on both days. Speaking on the occasion, Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi and Ajodhya Singh, Editor of Swadhinata highlighted the various aspects of the teaching of Karl Marx and called upon the workers to assimilate the teachings and carry forward their struggles on that basis. On 28th, the main speaker was Samar Mukherjee, M.P., General Secretary of CITU. Samar Mukherjee elaborately discussed the different aspects of Marxism, further developed by Lenin in the era of imperialism and establish socialism. He emphasised that the teachings of Karl Marx were not for confining within the four walls of a class room. They have to be propagated continuously amongst the working class and all sections of the toiling people and continuously practised in the day today struggles to march forward for a new social order under the leadership of the working class. In the context he drew the attention of the workers to the danger of nuclear war and urged upon them to join the struggle for peace.

Cultural programmes and people's songs were presented on both the days by B.S.S.R. Union, Dhanbad Cultural Association, Janabani of Bokaro and D.Y.F.I. of Jharia.

Messages of greetings and articles were sent by E.M.S. Namboodiripad, B.T. Ranadive, Nrisingha Chakrabarty and H.H. Bethge, Third Secretary, Embassy of the German Democratic Republic.

*The Katihar unit of B.S.S.R. Union observed Karl Marx Death Centenary on September 10. The

programme was marked by a poster exhibition depicting the development of human society from the primitive stage to socialism and a huge portrait of Karl Marx drawn by a member of the union. The programme was attended by more than 200 delegates representing various sections of workers, Kishan Sabha members, women, lawyers, etc. Among others who spoke were J.S. Majumdar, General Secretary, FMRAI and AICAPEF, S. Sengupta, Advocate, Prof. Bharat Sharma and Rajendra Mandal, Distt. Secretary of CPI(M). The programme was concluded with people's songs and the International presented by the Katihar unit.

MADHYA PRADESH

Hira Mill Workers' Struggle

Organised under Hira Mill Mazdoor Union (CITU), the workers of Hira Mills, an unit of N.T.C. Ltd, went on continuous relay hunger strike from August 5. In a statement, Narayan Bharati, Vice-President of the Union pointed out that the management of mill has been flouting all labour laws and established an arbitrary regime in the mill. The factory laws and safety measures were ignored with impunity and heavy work loads were being imposed on workers.

It suspended ten workers including the leaders when the union demanded observance of the factory laws. The workers went on a continuous strike in March, but withdrew it after five days on assurances given by the District Magistrate. But the management dismissed about 100 workers and unleashed a severe repression on the workers. Fighting back, the workers have launched the continuous relay hunger strike at the mill gate. In the Annual General Conference of the union, held on August 15, the union resolved to carryforward the struggle till all the worker are reinstated into service.

UTTAR PRADESH

State Committee Meeting

Jail Bharo Movement

The U.P. State Committee of CITU in its meeting held at Lucknow on August 27 and 28 decided to mobilise volunteer forces to participate in the Jail Bharo programme, jointly called by CPI(M), CPI Congress(J) and Loktantrik Smamajwadi Party to be launched throughout the state from September 26 to October 1. The call has been given to protest against price rise, growing unemployment, lockouts, closures, retrenchments growing exploitation of the peasants and agricultural labourers and demanding Rs. 500/- as an minimum wage. Campaign has been launched throughout the state and the industrial centres by demonstrations, rallies, gate meetings, postering and leaflet distribution.

State Convention

The meeting also decided to begin preparatory campaign for the implementation of the programmes

decided in the Second National Convention of August 21 at Delhi. The campaign will be launched through meetings of the unions, gate meetings, etc. 5000 copies of the resolution and the programmes will be printed and distributed in all the districts and industrial centres of the state. The campaign was launched for a fortnight from September 4 to 18. The meeting decided to approach the other Central Trade Unions for holding the state convention by the end of October. Before the state conference the State Committee will conduct meetings with the unions in the various industries like jute, cotton, textile, engineering, sugar, electricity, etc.

Industrial Struggles

The meeting also decided to approach the other Central Trade Unions so that a joint move can be taken in the bipartite committee in Sugar industry with regard to the wage board, standing order and for revision of wages.

A joint meeting of the jute unions has been convened to chalk out preparatory plans for successful participation of the jute workers in the countrywide indefinite strike action to be launched by the All India Jute Workers Federation by November.

The meeting also decided to organise the electricity workers in all the districts of the state in order to participate in the foundation conference of the federation to be held at Kerala in December.

The meeting decided to make preparations to host the all India meeting of the J.K. Group of workers at Kanpur on October 9.

The meeting directed all the affiliated unions to send their contributions for the affected CITU workers in the Modinagar carnage to the Delhi State Committee.

Lockout in Ansal Paper Mill

The management of Ansal Paper Mill, Bulandshar has illegally locked out the mill from July 3 when the workers protested against the deductions in overtime rates by the management. The management hired anti-social thugs to force the workers to do overtime without payment, failing which it locked out the mill, affecting 500 workers. In a statement Daulat Ram, General Secretary and K.N. Bhatt, Vice-President of the state CITU have urged upon the State Government to intervene to lift the lock out and withdraw all false cases against the workers.

Indefinite Strike by Strawboard Workers

At the call of CITU the workers of U.P. Strawboard went on indefinite strike from August 12. The call was given in pursuance of several long pending demands of the workers like revision of wages, D.A., permancy, promotion policy and other benefits. Refusal of the management to negotiate the demands forced the workers to go on strike. Addressing a mass meeting, Harsahay Singh called upon the workers to carry forward the struggle till the management is compelled to accede to the demands. In a statement, Daulatram urged upon the State Labour Department to intervene for a negotiated settlement.

WEST BENGAL

Strike by Cotton Textile and Hosiery Workers

Fifty five thousand workers of 44 cotton textile mills of W. Bengal observed one day's strike on Aug. 27 demanding immediate settlement of their 15 point charter of demands and implementation of the recommendations of the State Labour Minister in respect of grades and scales of pay. The strike was jointly called by all the federations in cotton textiles organised under CITU, AITUC, UTUC, TUCC and INTUC.

Over forty thousand workers employed in the various Hosiery factories in the State went on one day's token strike on August 29 in pursuance of their 7 point charter of demands which include minimum wage of Rs. 500/- p.m., D.A. neutralisation rate at Rs. 1.50 per point, house rent allowance, etc. The call for the strike was given by the joint Action Committee comprising of CITU and four other Central Trade Unions.

TAMILNADU

Transport Workers on Struggle

Workers of the State Transport Corporation and five Engineering Corporations are on struggle in the state in pursuance of their fresh charter of demands. Joint Conventions gate meetings and rallies are being held throughout the state organised by CITU, AITUC, and LPF (DMK) unions.

Openly patronising the ruling party's AIADMK Union, the State Transport Minister called the unions in a fake conciliation meeting on August 18 and offered a meagre amount which all other unions excepting the AIADMK rejected. The Government made an announcement that new settlement was arrived at. A massive demonstration was staged before the Labour Commissioner's Office in protest against the attempt of the Government to impose the "Agreement" on others. In a state level convention held at Madras on September 3, plans for continuous struggles were chalked out. Massive demonstrations are being held in the Head Office of all the Transport Corporations. Among these who addressed the Convention were V.P. Chintan, A. Sundarajan (CITU), C. Kuppaswamy (LPF) and K.M. Sundaran (AITUC).

Water Board Workers' Struggle

The employees of Tamilnadu Water and Drainage Board staged day long dharnas before the Board offices in the state on September 3 in pursuance of their 15 point charter of demands and in protest against victimisations. The Co-ordination Committee of the CITU Unions gave the call for the dharna.

The workers of the Central workshop of TWAD Board at Trichy went on continuous strike from August 17 demanding annual increments. Defying the State leadership, the local AIADMK union also

joined the strike with CITU. After 9 days of successful strike the management had to come down and sanction the annual increments.

Tannery Workers Strike

Tannery workers all over the state went on strike on August 11 demanding settlement of their demands for wage increase. The strike call was jointly given by CITU, AITUC, INTUC and DMK unions after the industrywise settlement expired in April and the managements refused to negotiate on fresh demands. The special Deputy Labour Commissioner was compelled to take up conciliation proceedings.

Struggle Against Closures, Lockouts

As decided by the State CITU, massive Conventions and demonstrations are being held in different centres of the states. The Madras District Committee organised a special Convention on September 8 in this matter. Hundreds of workers participated in the Convention, which was addressed among others by V.P. Chintan, D. Janakiraman, P.G.K. Krishnan, etc.

Over 5000 workers including hundreds of women marched through the streets of Nagarcoil on September 3 demonstrating their protest against the increasing lockouts, closures and retrenchments. The procession culminated in a mass rally which was addressed among others by R. Umanath, General Secretary of the State CITU. The rally also demanded proper distribution of foodgrains from the fair price shops and condemned the police atrocities against the plantation workers, auto-rickshaw drivers and other sections of the workers. The auto-rickshaw drivers of the town went on strike on the day and joined the rally.

Victory of CITU

V.P. Chintan of CITU was elected President of Ashoke Leyland Employees' Union defeating R. Kutcheler by a huge margin of about 3000 votes. Last year also Chintan won, but by a margin of only 83 votes. This year CITU won all the posts of office bearers and majority of the executive members. In Wimco also Chintan defeated Kutcheler. CITU candidates won all other posts also. In K.C.P. Workers' Union and Hindusthan Motor Workers Union also CITU candidates won the elections.

DELHI

CITU Workers Arrested

About 200 CITU activists, including 14 women were arrested on September 21, when a massive demonstration was organised at Krishi Bhawan against price rise, cut in ration quota and the steep hike in price of milk by the Delhi Milk Scheme. The police made brutal lathi charge injuring a number of demonstrators including women.

Almost the entire leadership of the state CPI(M) and CITU were taken into custody and remanded in jail. Even bail is being refused by the authorities. Prominent among those arrested were Prakash
(Contd. on page 22)

Industrial Meetings

[Reports of the industrial meetings held at New Delhi during the Second National Convention are being published hereunder.]

Beedi & Cigar Workers' Committee

THE meeting of the Beedi & Cigar Workers' Committee was held on August 22. The meeting was attended by 13 members: West Bengal-4, Bihar-3, Tamilnadu-3, Kerala-2 and Karnataka-1. Nrisingha Chakrabarty, secretary, CITU also attended the meeting. C. Kannan, Secretary of the Committee and Vice-President of CITU placed the organisational report.

Reports were also placed by Tamilnadu, Bihar, West Bengal and Kerala. The reports revealed that state federations were functioning at Tamilnadu, Kerala and Karnataka. In other states the organisational functioning required to be geared up. Preparations are being made to form a federation in West Bengal shortly.

Nrisingha Chakrabarty suggested that movements should be built up for amendment of the law so as to cover up all the lacunae in it. Simultaneously a campaign for changing the system of levy of excise duty should be conducted. Along with this, demands have to be raised for equal wages for men and women workers.

Report of C. Kannan

The report pointed out that Beedi industry is one of the most unorganised and scattered industries in the country employing more than 35 lakh workers, out of which only about 10 per cent are organised in unions. The vast majority of the workers remain isolated from the political and trade union activities. The activities in the industry are concentrated mainly in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamilnadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

There are a number of systems under which production works are carried on by the employers, like factory system, home work systems, contract system, sales and purchase system etc. There are self-employed workers also. Generally, the home work system is prevalent in almost all the states and carried on not only in towns and cities, but also in the remote corners of the villages.

Conditions of work of the workers are deplorable. Long hours of work ranging from 12 to 16 hours a day, child labour, unhygienic work places, etc. are the usual conditions of work. There is no legal protection, nor any facilities are extended to the workers under the Beedi & Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act of 1966 which is not

being implemented at all. More than 80 per cent of the workers are women and they are the main victims of exploitation by the employers and the contractors.

The report emphasised the need for organising the beedi workers on an all India plane on the demands for the implementation of the Act, for proper functions of the Beedi Workers' Welfare Fund Scheme, for fixation of national minimum wages and abolition of all the systems of exploitation like the contract system, leaf cutting average system, sale and purchase system, home work system, etc. The report suggested to form region-wise committees as a precursor to an all India organisation.

Charter of Demands

The meeting prepared the following Charter of Demands on the basis of which the beedi and cigar workers should be organised on all India level:

1. Fixation of National Minimum wages and demand for Rs. 15/- per 1000 beedies and Rs. 20 per 1000 cigars.
2. Dearness Allowance linked with cost of living index should be fixed.
3. 6 days work in a week shall be guaranteed. When there is no work, fall back wages at 50 per cent of the average earnings, should also be guaranteed.
4. Abolition of all forms of contract systems.
5. Reduction of wages in the name of leaf cutting average should be stopped.
6. Employees Provident Fund, Bonus Act and ESI Scheme should be implemented for all beedi and cigar workers who are working in factories and houses.
7. Beedi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1966 should be brought into force effectively in all the States.
8. Beedi and Cigar shall be manufactured, whether individually or collectively, only from the licensed premises and the same should be regulated by framing rules under the Act.
9. Licence for manufacturing Beedi and Cigar should be given only to trade mark holders.
10. Equal remuneration for equal work for men and women.
11. Log books shall be given in the names of actual workers.

12. Issue of identity cards must be enforced.
13. Weekly off with wages should be extended to home workers also.
14. Central Excise duty shall be collected on Tobacco only and remove tax on labelled beedis.
15. Welfare facilities to be extended to all beedi workers.
16. Minimum Wages Act, 1948 to be brought under the 9th Schedule of the Indian Constitution.

It was decided that an all India Demands Day would be observed in pursuance of the demands in near future.

Construction Workers' Convention

The first All India Construction Workers' Convention was held on August 22. B.T. Ranadive, President-CITU inaugurated the convention which was attended by seventy five delegates from eleven states. In his inaugural speech, B.T. Ranadive said that there is no law to safeguard the interests of the construction workers who are mostly unorganised. He mentioned about the problem of the son of soil slogan which created a barrier against the continuity of the employment of the construction workers. He linked the problems of the construction workers to the anti-labour policies of the Government and urged upon the workers to wage united fight against these policies.

A presidium consisting of Sunil Das, Balkar Singh and P. Marimuthu conducted the proceedings of the convention.

Debanjan Chakrabarty, Convenor of the All India Preparatory Committee of Construction Workers placed his report. He pointed to the anarchy prevailing in the construction industry. He mentioned that there was no law, no job security or no social security for the construction workers. He placed a programme for future movement to be pursued through a broad-based platform of the construction workers. Delegates from the different states participated in the discussions and narrated their experiences.

The Preparatory Committee was turned into a Co-ordination Committee of Indian Construction Workers' Unions comprising of 23 members with Debanjan Chakrabarty as its Convenor.

The convention adopted the following resolutions on the demands of the construction workers: on abolition of contract system; on the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970 Amendment Bill; on formation of National Wage Committee for Construction Workers; on demands of women construction workers; in support of the indefinite strike of the construction workers of Thein Dam of Punjab, etc. Apart from these, the convention also adopted

resolutions against the danger of war and struggle for peace and for implementation of the programmes of the National Campaign Committee.

The following programmes were chalked out by the Convention: Regional Conventions and formation of Regional Committees in the Western and Southern regions; State Level Conventions; All India Demands Day on October 5 and submission of memoranda to the State Chief Ministers by holding mass rallies and submission of a memorandum to the Union Labour Minister. It was also suggested that CITU should publish a booklet on the conditions and demands of the construction workers. M.K. Pandhe, Secretary-CITU summed up the deliberations and called upon the workers to build up determined struggles for the achievement of the demands.

Electricity Workers' Meeting

The Adhoc Committee of the Electricity Workers' Unions met on August 19 and 20 under the Presidentship of E. Balanandan, M.P., Treasurer of CITU. B.T. Ranadive, President CITU addressed the meeting. Nrisingha Chakrabarty, Secretary-CITU also attended the meeting. 26 comrades from Tamilnadu, Kerala, Pondicherry, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana, West Bengal, Assam, Rajasthan, Punjab, Delhi and DVC attended the meeting.

E. Balanandan stressed the necessity to form an all India federation of the electricity workers' unions for properly projecting the problems of the electricity workers and mobilising them to build up movements in pursuance of their demands. Representatives from the different states placed their reports concerning the state of power industry and the organisational matters. B.T. Ranadive emphasised that the power industry was an essential sector where trade union activities have to be built up with all seriousness. Nrisingha Chakrabarty said that the development technological changes have to be taken note of and the organisational machineries have to be geared up accordingly.

After deliberations the meeting decided to form an all India federation. The name of the federation would be Electricity Employees' Federation of India (EEFI) with headquarters at New Delhi. The inaugural conference of the federation would be held at Trivandrum in the month of December, followed by a seminar in the power industry.

Plantation Workers' Federation

The Working Committee meeting of the All India Plantation Workers' Federation was held on August 20. Twelve members from Kerala, Tamilnadu, Karnataka, Assam and the Centre attended the meeting. B.T. Ranadive, President-CITU addressed the meeting. Vimala Ranadive, Secretary of AIPWF placed the report. Statewise reports were also placed by the members. Asit Dutta from Assam

reported about the serious situation in the state and the problems faced by the CITU workers because of physical attacks unleashed by the INTUC hoodlums. Sukumaran briefed about the drought situation in Karnataka which have badly affected the Coffee-plantation, resulting in fall in prices. There is no work for the workers. P. Perumal reported about the heavy work load inflicted on the workers in the rubber industry in Kanyakumari District. Kunhi Kannan, P. Ayyapan, Gopalkrishnan and J. Hemachandran reported about the problems of the rubber plantations in Kerala and Tamilnadu and suggested for joint actions.

After discussing the reports the meeting took the following decisions:

(1) The Kerala and Tamilnadu Comrades should meet at Ernakulam in September to chalkout a joint programme of movement; (ii) An All India Demands Day to be observed on October 5. Efforts should be made to get the support of other Central Trade Unions also in the programme. The Centre should publish a pamphlet on the demands of the plantation workers specifically mentioning about the plantation labour amendments; (iii) A mass deputation to meet the Union Labour Minister during the March to Parliament programme by the National Campaign Committee during the Budget Session. Besides these, the meeting also decided to publish a pamphlet on Monopoly and Foreign Capital in plantation industry. The meeting adopted resolutions on the repression on the Tamilnadu Plantation Workers, on the successful strike of the Kerala Plantation Workers, on the holocaust in Ceylon, etc.

Pharmaceutical Workers' Federation

The Working Committee meeting of the All India Chemical and Pharmaceutical Employees Federation was held on August 22 under the presidentship of B.S. Chitre, President of the federation. Members and special invitees from West Bengal, Bihar, Bombay, Delhi, Kerala, Hyderabad and Jaipur attended the meeting. P.K. Ganguly, Secretary-CITU also attended the meeting. J.S. Majumdar, General Secretary of the Federation placed the organisational report. He also placed a draft charter of demands which dealt with issues like automation and mechanisation, speeding of machines, loan licensing system, temporary, casual and contract labour, need-based minimum wage, closures and lockouts, need-based production of drugs, hazardous and banned drugs, reduction of drug prices and nationalisation of the multinational and Indian monopoly houses in the drug industry.

After discussions, the meeting decided to finalise the demands in the next Working Committee meeting to be held at Bombay in December and then place the same for approval by the general body in the All-India Conference of the Federation which was decided to be held in West Bengal tentatively by March

1984. Campaign movements would be launched on an all India level with the demands thereafter.

Conference of Road Transport Workers' Federation

An extended meeting of the All India Road Transport Workers' Federation (the only all-India Federation in this sector) was held on August 23, which was attended by 26 members (West Bengal-9, Punjab-4, Gujarat-4, Tamilnadu-4, Tripura-2, Kerala-1, Andhra-1, and Orissa-1) under the presidentship of Rajdeo Goala. Nrisingha Chakrabarty Secretary-CITU was present in the meeting and B.T. Ranadive, President-CITU addressed the meeting at the end. Sujit Das, General Secretary of the Federation reported that after the meeting at Kanpur, he has received reports from 3 or 4 units and affiliation fees from about 40,000 members. All members present agreed to send their reports and affiliation fees within a fortnight.

From reports from different unions it was estimated that the Federation would have about one lakh members at the time of the conference. Hence the delegation was fixed at one per three hundred members or part thereof. Any union not affiliated to the Federation may also take part as an observer.

The reports also revealed that the unions have conducted a series of struggles. To enable the General Secretary to include the same in the report it was decided that all unions would send their reports and suggestions on Charter of Demands by 15th September 1983 latest.

Mangatram Pasla, General Secretary, Punjab State Committee of CITU reported about the preparations already made in regard to the Second Conference. It was finally decided that the Second Conference would be held at Sangrur (Punjab) on October 21-23, 1983. It was also decided that invitations shall be extended to TUI-Transport (WFTU), AUCCTU-USSR and ACFTU-China to send delegations to the Conference.

The Federation invited B.T. Ranadive to inaugurate the Second Conference which he accepted.

Before the close of the meeting, Com. B.T.R. addressed the meeting. He stated that transport is what is known as a priority sector. If transport of any country collapses for seven days, all economic activity is likely to collapse. Hence all comrades must address themselves to build up the strength of the Federation.

ITC Workers' Federation

An extended meeting of the Working Committee of the ITC Workers' Federation met, on August 22, under the presidentship of Somnath

Chatterjee, M.P. Nrisingha Chakrabarty. Secretary-CITU attended the meeting on invitation.

The meeting decided to affiliate the unions of Saharanpur and Monghyr and Somnath Chatterjee expressed happiness that with these unions, the Federation now covers all units of this monopoly company. But at the same time, it was seen that the units more or less function independently and there is communication gap between the union, and the Federation.

The meeting heard reports from various units about wage negotiations, on the attacks launched by the management and the struggles which are continuing in Andhra Pradesh, Saharanpur and Monghyr.

Members reported that the Company is now reducing the workmen in a big way. At Monghyr they have increased work-load in such a fashion that the emoluments have how been reduced. Since the Federation was not posted with full reports, it was decided that all units should send their reports by September 15 along with copies of agreements, so that a comprehensive report could be prepared.

It was decided that the next meeting of the Working Committee will be held at Monghyr on October 22-23.

Book Review

The Danger of Multinationals

Com. Jyoti Basu, Vice-President CITU and Chief Minister, Govt. of W. Bengal in the foreword of a book titled, 'Multinational Corporation and the Nations' by Com Ashoke Kumar Bose said 'A masterly narration combined with skilfully marshalled facts makes this a truly informative book'. 208 pages of facts and figures in innumerable tables and 8 graphs would convince anyone interested in the world-wide operation of the transnational corporations that Com. Ashoke Bose has dealt with a very difficult subject in lucid terms laying bare the octopus like grip which they have imposed on all countries outside the socialist system. The special attraction of the book is a few chapters dealing with the economy of South Africa, which will give every one an insight into the patronage which the racist regime receives from the imperialist countries despite world-wide condemnation against apartheid. Another important aspect of the book can be seen in the chapters dealing with I.M.F. loan and the experience of other recipient countries.

Citing the report prepared by U.N., Com. Bose informs us that "altogether about 11,000 companies located in the advanced capitalist countries had 82,000 foreign subsidiaries and affiliates of which 21,000 were located in third world countries! (P. 9). He further informs us that the top 15 MNCs had a sale of 153.7 billion dollars in 1971, which is the latest published data. Quoting UNCTAD Sectt. estimates, Com. Bose informs us that 15 largest transnationals control 50 to 95 per cent exports of Food

(Cocoa, Bananas, Tobacco, Tea, Coffee, Sugar, Rice, Wheat, etc) Agricultural Raw materials (Natural Rubber, Cotton, Jute, Forest Product) Ores, Minerals & Metals (Crude Petroleum, Copper, Iron ore, Bauxite, Tin. Phosphates etc).

To elucidate how the grip of the MNCs is growing every passing day, Com. Bose compiling figures in 4 tables shows that direct investments of 11 countries in foreign countries has risen from 108,200 million dollars in 1967 to 165,000 million dollars in 1971, the USA alone having more than 50 per cent i.e., 86,001 million dollars. In the same period foreign capital in India has increased from Rs. 1002 Crores to Rs. 1730 Crores i.e. at a faster rate than world average.

He also points out how the MNCs operate through an integrated production system as a result of which a strike in UK may and did cause lay-off in Belgium.

The MNCs respect no law. Quoting the reports of the Public Accounts Committee, Com. Bose points out that the number of foreign companies who did not file any return for income tax assessment rose from 38 out of 382 in 1971-72 to 180 out of 1136 in 1975-76. Despite this foreign collaboration is growing in India. The Govt. have approved 1182 proposals during the three years ending 1981.

Com Bose, through facts and figures point out the nefarious role of the MNCs in the political affairs of the 4 third world countries and sounds a warning that the presence of the multi-national corporations pose a potential danger to the national independence of a country.

We commend this book to all of our readers.

CITU Delegations Abroad

1. The following members left Calcutta on September 13 on a goodwill delegation to China at the invitation from the All China Federation of Trade Unions: Dilip Majumdar, K.K. Tripathi, P.K. Mukherjee (Steel Workers' Federation of India) and Bama-pada Mukherjee, S.K. Bakshi (All India Coal Workers' Federation).
2. Chittabrata Majumdar left Delhi on September 17 to attend the I.L.O. Industrial Committee meeting on Metal Trades to be held at Geneva from September 20 to 29.
3. Parimal Mitra left Delhi on September 29 to attend the T.U.I. Conference for Agricultural, Forestry and Plantation Workers to be held at Budapest from October 3 to 6.
4. Rabin Sen and S. Sudevan represented the All India Coal Workers' Federation in the International Trade Union Conference of the Mines, Oil and Power Industry Workers, held at Moscow at the end of August.

CITU Condemns Kandla

Firing

B. T. RANADIVE, President and Samar Mukherjee, M.P., General Secretary, Centre of Indian Trade Unions have issued the following statement on September 16:

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions strongly condemns the shooting down of two young factory workers, Suresh Pandya and Vasu Maria and arrest and torture of 42 workers of Adi Apex Factory in Kandla Free Trade Zone on September 13. The incident highlights how the repressive State Machinery unleashes barbarous repression in defence of the owners even when they violate the labour laws in force in the country.

Shri Ahuja, owner of the factory had signed an agreement with the union in July '83 agreeing to increasing wages of the workmen and giving them some benefits, in presence of the Labour Deptt officials. But after bringing some workers from the other garment factories of Haryana and Punjab which were also owned by him, he declared that he would not abide by the agreement claiming that his signature was obtained under duress. When the workers started agitation he unilaterally retrenched a large number of workmen including 42 women workers, without paying their wages. The agitation continued and the owner called the victimised workers to the factory for payment of wages. But when the workers went to the factory they found a large police party present. They were asked to sign a letter stating that they were resigning voluntarily. On their refusal, the police led by one P.S.I. Chaudhury, threatened and beat them up. When other workers rushed to the spot hearing their cries, the Police party opened fire and shot dead two workers and injuring many. 42 workers have been arrested and tortured in police lock-up in order to obtain admission from them.

The CITU warns the working class that the increasing incidence of violation of agreements and extending police help to the owners who violate these laws, and repression to the extent of shooting down of workers in cold-blood indicates a new retrograde turn in the labour policy, against which resistance should be developed. It congratulates the Kandla workers who expressed their condemnation through a Bandh.

The CITU demands that the Govt. should punish the guilty police official for shooting down workers, and the owner for violating the agreement, arrange release of the workers and restoration of normalcy by the reinstatement of workers and settlement of their grievances.

Protest Day by State Govt. Employees

The State Government employees all over India observed Protest Day on September 7. The call was given by the All India State Government Employees Federation as decided in the meeting of the National Executive Committee, held at Delhi on July 23 and 24. The Protest Day was observed as the second phase of movement after the Demands Day of April 29, demanding full D.A. at the Central rate without impounding; interim relief as the Central Government employees; one month's pay as ex-gratia in lieu of bonus; pay parity with public sector employees; withdrawal of all victimisation; more funds to the States and repeal of ESMA, NSA and the anti-trade union Bills.

As per reports, demonstrations and rallies were held in all the State capitals and districts. At Calcutta a huge rally was held which was presided over by Arabindo Ghosh, M.P., the Vice-President and addressed among other by Sukomal Sen, M.P., the General Secretary of the federation. Sukomal Sen said that the left front Government of W. Bengal has not only declared their decision to pay D.A. at the Central Government rate but also have paid some instalments. But the Government is already strained because of lack of funds. In this respect, he explained the justification of the demand for more financial powers for the States.

As per decisions of the National Executive Committee, the State Government employees have launched preparations for strike actions in pursuance of their demands.

Joint Movement by Port and Dock Workers

The representatives of the four federations of Port and Dock Workers met at New Delhi in September to finalise the common charter of demands for the workers in the major ports. K.K. Roy Ganguly and K.P.S. Menon represented the Water Transport Workers' Federation of India in the meeting.

The Federations demanded Rs. 1000/- as minimum wage at the CPI Index No. 500 (base 1960 = 100) and proper gradation thereafter, based on proper classification and categorisation. Apart from the claim for revision of special pay and allowances and extension of the same to the equivalent categories, the federations have demanded payment of house rent, city compensatory allowance and transport allowance at comparable rates with the other public sectors functioning around the port cities. The federations have also demanded departmentalisation of all permanent and perennial nature of jobs and absorption of the existing workers. They have also made demands for decasualisation of the cargo handling workers at Tuticorin, Paradeep, Mangalore and Haldia Dock Complex.

As per decisions of the meeting, the charter of demands were submitted to the Port and Dock authorities in all the major ports on September 19 by holding mass rallies and demonstrations.

Valiant Struggle by Women Workers in Kanak Industries

ABOUT 1000 women employed in the garment manufacturing Kanak Industries in Bombay, belonging to the Amersey Group, are on a valiant struggle against lockout. The service conditions in the factory are deplorable and the workers were being paid extremely low wages. The workers threw out the reformist leaders of the previous union and formed a CITU union in the factory. Angered by this, the management dismissed 175 temporary women workers and unleashed a reign of repression on the permanent women workers who were about 850 in number.

They were even subjected to filthy behaviour by the management personnel. But the workers remained unprovoked and stuck to their demands for minimum wages as prescribed by law. On June 6, the management hired some outside hoodlums to cause rampage in the factory premises carrying red flags and locked out the factory putting the blame of rowdism on the union for the incident. A number of workers has been involved in fabricated cases. The management tried to take out the machines at dead of night by bringing trucks at the factory premises. But a large number of women blocked the passage of the trucks and frustrated the management's game.

Consumer Price Index Numbers

Base 1960

State/Centre	May 1983	June 1983	July 1983	State Centre	May 1983	June 1983	July 1983
Andhra Pradesh				Orissa			
Gudur	450	451	454	Barbil	507	540	542
Guntur	542	551	566	Sambalpur	590	602	623
Hyderabad	527	539	544	Punjab			
Assam				Amritsar	519	511	536
Digboi	494	503	521	Rajasthan			
Doom Dooma	401	439	442	Ajmer	530	528	534
Labac	436	459	443	Jaipur	542	546	553
Mariani	418	440	454	Tamil Nadu			
Rangapara	432	440	448	Coimbatore	550	571	576
Bihar				Madras	525	550	561
Jamshedpur	489	506	513	Coonoor	550	564	573
Jharia	493	505	517	Madurai	558	578	586
Kodarma	573	588	595	U.P.			
Monghyr	555	556	575	Kanpur	495	517	522
Noamundi	529	546	539	Saharanpur	531	536	536
Gujarat				Varanasi	568	577	609
Ahmedabad	525	535	541	West Bengal			
Bhavanagar	534	538	552	Asansol	509	513	518
Haryana				Calcutta	483	489	501
Yamunanagar	530	535	543	Darjeeling	434	438	449
J. & K.				Howrah	462	472	483
Srinagar	556	558	563	Jalpaiguri	425	431	428
Karnataka				Raniganj	497	501	509
Ammathi	535	559	568	Delhi Territory	533	536	543
Bangalore	578	591	589	Other Centres			
Chikamagalur	530	532	549	Berhampur ('49)	751	770	793
Kolar G.F.	503	514	512	Cuttack ('49)	678	696	705
Kerala				Jabalpur ('49)	687	697	714
Alleppey	577	599	596	Beawar ('51-52)	609	609	619
Alway	551	575	581	Tripura ('61)	471	468	462
Mundakayam	518	546	542	Goa ('66)	371	376	386
Madhya Pradesh				H.P. ('65)	380	383	386
Balaghat	544	544	563	Bhilai ('66)	342	356	362
Bhopal	552	562	578	Bhilwara ('66)	330	334	342
Gwalior	528	530	537	Chhindawara ('66)	276	280	284
Indore	556	567	566	Kothagudem ('66)	325	338	346
Maharashtra				Rourkela ('66)	359	371	376
Bombay	547	559	566	All India ('49)	633	648	658
Nagpur	530	548	550	All India ('60)	521	533	541
Sholapur	546	554	565				

(Figures in bracket indicate base year)

Batches of women are guarding the factory premises day and night even under torrential rains.

CITU and other trade unions have extended full support to the struggle.

(From p. 13)

implementation of the labour laws. But efforts from May 1982 with the Central Govt. have yielded one circular asking the State Govts to identify if there are any bonded labour and consider application of Factories Act in the Brick Kilns and this is as far as the 20 point programme goes.

Convention of the Unorganised Workers

The decision of the Second National Convention of Trade Unions held in New Delhi on August 21, to hold a Convention of Unorganised Workers is an important step. It is only by organising them and championing their demands, that the Working Class can stop to some extent the rot that has started. By

forcing the Govt. to change its policy and attacking the rapacious monopolies and multinationals that some relief could be given to this most exploited section of our society and the organised working class movement would have to take serious steps in this regard.

(from page 16)

Karat, Secretary of the State CPI(M), Chacha Shadiram, President and Jogendra Sharma, Secretary of the State CITU, Rita Karat, Ranjana, etc. In a statement on September 23, Sushil Bhattacharya, M.P. General Secretary of the State CITU condemned the police action and demanded immediate release of the arrested workers.

September 1 Observed Around the World

For the second successive year the working class & the peace loving people of the world demonstrated their wrath on Sept. 1 against the war monger—the U.S. imperialist and its NATO allies and raised their voice for peace. The demonstrations against war and for peace this year achieved a special significance in view of the Reagan administration's rejection of all Soviet peace proposals and the mad adamancy to deploy the cruise and pershing missiles in Europe in December and thereby bringing the world on the brink of a nuclear holocaust, and the ever growing struggles for peace and condemnation of the USA's policies to dominate the world by vanquishing the Soviet Union and the socialist camp. This was reflected in the series of international peace conferences during the past year. Naturally, larger sections of the people and more number of countries came under the vortex of peace struggle to observe the September 1 this year, responding to the appeal by the WFTU and the World Assembly for Peace held at Prague in June.

In India the working class geared up the organisational machineries to join the mainstream of the international working class struggle for peace on the day. The State Committees of CITU and the affiliated unions made full efforts to mobilise the workers to observe the day. Following are the reports received so far:

West Bengal: Right from the early morning streams of people started pouring in Calcutta from all parts of the state. The call was jointly given by CITU, AITUC, UTUC, TUCC & other mass organisations. Hundreds of thousands of them marched through the streets with flags and banners towards the Brigade Parade Ground, shouting slogans denouncing the war preparations by the US imperialism and for the defence of peace. From the Parade Ground started the mighty peace march, joined by people from aspects of life—workers and peasants, teachers and students, youth and women, lawyers and doctors, cine and stage artists, sportsmen and journalists. The march culminated at Kanu-Sidhu-Dahar (Esplanade) in a huge rally presided over by Manoranjan Roy, General Secretary of the State CITU. Addressing the rally, Jyoti Basu, the Chief Minister, and Vice President of CITU pointed out the alarming world situation brought about by the desperation of US led imperialism to wriggle themselves out of the deep crises by foisting a nuclear holocaust on humanity. He urged upon the people to intensify the peace struggle and demand of the Government of India to follow a truly anti-imperialist policy to strengthen the non-aligned movement.

This was followed by a huge peace convention at the Calcutta University Institute auditorium on September 4. The convention unanimously adopted

a resolution demanding an end to the arms race and dismantling of all military bases including in the Indian Ocean. It appealed to all to unite for peace against the war conspiracies of the U.S.A.

Delhi: At the call of CITU, AITUC, UTUC, TUCC and INTUC (Dara) a procession of thousands of workers including a large number of women marched from Ramlila Ground to Chandni Chowk, led by Samar Mukherjee, M.P., General Secretary of CITU and others and held a massive rally. The rally was addressed among others, by Samar Mukherjee, B.D. Joshi (AITUC) and Sushil Bhattacharjee (UTUC).

Orissa: Organised by CITU, AITUC and the Co-ordination Committee of Unions, Bhubaneswar, the capital of Orissa for the first time witnessed a huge peace march which started from the Electricity Board Chowk and culminated in a rally at Rajmahal Chowk. The rally was presided over by N.K. Mohanty of CITU and addressed by Shivaji Patnaik, President of the State CITU, Lok Nath Chowdhury and Durga Charan Mohanty of AITUC and representatives of the Co-ordination Committee. A similar rally was held at Cuttack.

Tamilnadu: Thousands of men and women participated in peace rallies in the districts and industrial centres organised by CITU, AITUC and other mass organisations alongwith CPI (M), CPI, Kamraj Congress, Gandhi Kamraj Congress and the Democratic Socialist Party. In Madras a big procession culminated at the U.S. Consulate at Mount Road and held a demonstration, which was addressed by V.P. Chintan (CITU), K.M. Sundaram (AITUC) and others. In Madurai over two thousand men and women marched through the streets carrying the models of the U.S. MX missiles and a cartoon of Reagan—the horrors of the world, which culminated in a public meeting. In Coimbatore, about 5000 persons joined the procession jointly organised by various political parties and mass organisations like

CITU's Telegramme to Sri Lanka

CITU has sent the following telegramme to J.R. Jayewardene, President of Sri Lanka on August 31:

“Protest against barbarous violence on ethnic minorities Tamils of Indian Origin, suppression of Democratic Trade Union Rights and detention without trial in Sri Lanka stop demand lifting emergency, restoration of basic Trade Union Rights, release L.W. Panditha and other detained leaders and solution of problems of ethnic minorities Tamils of Indian origin.”

CITU, AITUC etc. The procession culminated in a public meeting. Similar processions and rallies were also held at Erode, Thirunelveli, Trichy, Tanjore, Tuticorin, Virudhu Nagar and other places.

Uttar Pradesh: Rallies and meetings were held at Kanpur, Lucknow and other parts of the state. At varanasi a largely attended convention was held at Bengali Tola Inter College hall which was addressed by teachers and leaders of CPI (M), DSP, AISF, DYFI and others. Lal Jhanda Shramik Union, Bijour and various other unions held gate meetings at the factory gates. At Meerut, a well attended meeting was held, organised by the District Committee of CITU,

Kerala: Under the joint call of CITU, AITUC, UTUC, INTUC(S) and the service organisations, the day was observed throughout the state through huge processions and rallies. At Trivandrum, a jatha started from the Martyr's memorial at Palayam and culminated at the Gandhi Park in a public meeting. A similar jatha and public meeting was held at Idduki. Demonstrations and public meetings were held at 14 centres in Trichur District. At Kottayam the public meeting was inaugurated by Dr. Poulse Mar Greorius and presided over by K.K. Joseph, the District Secretary of CPI(M). Thousands of workers, students, youth and women participated in the rally at Ernakulam which was addressed among others by M.M. Lawrence, M.P., Secretary of CITU. In Alleppey public meetings and demonstrations were held at all the Taluks Head Quarters. A big public meeting was held at Kozhokode. Workers attended their duties wearing peace badges. In Cannanore District 25 thousand workers participated in the peace rallies held at eight centres. Similar rallies were held in Malappuram District also. In Kasargode the public meeting held at the CITU corner was addressed by M. Ramanna Rai, M.P. (CPI-M). In Tellicherry, over 3000 workers participated in the rally.

Tripura: A massive convention was held at Agartala organised by CITU, AITUC and other trade unions. Workers and people of all walks of life including a large number of women attended the Convention which condemned the U.S. war policy and resolved to intensify the struggle for peace.

Punjab: Jointly organised by CPI(M), CITU, Kishan Sabha, Dehati Mazdoor Sabha, Janawadi Istri Sabha, SFI, DYFI and other trade unions, the peace day was observed at Amritsar, Ludhiana, Sangrur, Rajpura and all other parts of the state by holding processions and rallies.

Gujarat: A Convention was held at Bhavnagar participated by a large number of workers from various industries. Presided over by Subodh Mehta (CITU), the Convention adopted a resolution denouncing the Reagan Administration and demanding disarmament. Similar meetings were held in other parts of the state also.

Maharashtra: Meetings and processions were held at different parts of the state. A day long dharna was staged by workers and students at Nagpur. In the evening a huge procession was taken, out, culminating in a rally, which was addressed by leaders of CITU and AITUC. At Bombay, the police

lathicharged the peace demonstrators in front of the American Consulate.

Bihar: Big processions and rallies were held at Patna, Jamshepur, Dhanbad, Hazaribagh, Ranchi, Darbhanga, Katihar, Purnea, Saharsa and in other centres of the state. Workers, peasants, students, women and other sections of the people participated in the demonstrations.

Andhra Pradesh: Huge rallies were jointly organised by CITU and AITUC at Hyderabad, Vijayawada, Nellore, Guntur and other parts of the state.

Madhya Pradesh: CITU and AITUC held joint rallies at Jabalpur, Bhopal, Indore, Nagda and other places in the state. In the industrial centres like Bhillai also demonstrations were held by the workers.

Goa: The workers held demonstrations in front of the factories, mills, mines and other work places and adopted resolutions demanding to make Indian Ocean a nuclear free Zone.

September 1 thus embraced larger sections of workers in all parts of the country. The role of the trade unions in the peace struggle demonstrated better understanding of the close link between the workers' social and economic interests and the halting of the arms race spiralled by the USA. In United States, Great Britain and other European Countries the workers raised the slogan—"Jobs and not Bombs". The lack of understanding and unity of the trade union movement will only strengthen the hands of the militarists — the US imperialists, who have already further boosted up the military budget provoking the South Korean espionage plane incident. The present events demand intensification of the peace struggles and pressurise the Government for pinpointing the U.S. imperialists in furtherance of the Non-Aligned Movement and security of the country.

Delhi CITU Condemns Police Action

Sushil Bhattacharya, M.P., General Secretary, Delhi State Committee of CITU has issued the following statement on September 25:

The Delhi State Committee of CITU condemns the high-handed action of the police in dealing with the situation cropped up in Okhla as a result of beating and illegal confinement of Ashok Kumar, a machine operator, by the factory owners — Jagmohan Singh and Gurbinder Singh.

It has become a practice in the industrial complex to terrorise the workers with the help of hired goondas and police in order to deprive the workers even of the meagre minimum wage fixed by the Delhi Administration and other legal facilities.

CITU warns the Delhi Administration and the management that such brutal attacks on the workers cannot cow them down. They will continue to fight for their legitimate rights. CITU congratulates the workers for observing two-day successful protest strike and calls upon them to organise further protest actions.