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Chittabrata Majumdar

CITU

12th ALL INDIA

CONFERENCE

DOCUMENTS

A CITU PUBLICATION



K Ramani



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FOREWORD

We are bringing out in this CITU publication, a compilation of all the documents of the Twelfth all India Conference of the CITU, which concluded in Bengaluru on January 21, 2007. We are planning to bring out the papers discussed in the six Commissions of the Conference as a separate publication. Similarly, we shall also bring out another publication compiling the documents of the 8th Convention of the All India Coordination Committee of Working Women, held on November 3-5, 2006 in Visakhapatnam.

These Conference Documents have incorporated the outlook and approach of the CITU to the contemporary international and national situation and will serve as a guide to our actions in the forthcoming period. This publication will also be of interest to other trade unions, academics and researchers.

We are saddened by the untimely death of Com. Chittabrata Majumdar, our General Secretary, within a month of his re-election at the Bengaluru Conference. We must, however, record with deep appreciation that despite failing health, he took extraordinary care in incorporating the changes and improvements suggested by the delegates, during the Conference debate on the General Secretary's Report. In fact, he finalised the structure and contents of this publication before he was hospitalised.

We trust that the CITU State Committees, Industrial Federations and affiliate unions will make optimum use of this publication to educate the rank and file of our organisation, in the process helping them in implementing the future tasks mandated by the Twelfth Conference. Many State Committees had taken steps to make available the Conference report and other papers to their respective State wise delegations by translating the same into local languages. We hope that all the State Committees will now also take steps to reach this final version of the Conference Documents to the cadres by bringing out similar publications in the local languages.

March 21, 2007

M K Pandhe
President

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CITU ALL INDIA 12TH CONFERENCE AN OVERVIEW

The meeting of the General Council of the CITU held at Ranchi, Jharkhand on July 15 – 18, 2006, decided to hold the CITU all India Twelfth Conference of the CITU in Bangaluru, Karnataka.

At Bangalore, a Reception Committee for the Twelfth Conference of the CITU was formed at a meeting held at the Bangalore Town Hall on July 3, 2006, with V J K Nair, Vice President, CITU and General Secretary, Karnataka State Committee as President and S. Praśannakumar, Secretary, CITU, Karnataka, as General Secretary. Several sub-committees were entrusted with the work relating to various logistical aspects of hosting the Conference.

In the run up of the Conference, five *jathas* led by CITU leadership started from Amritsar, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai and Triuvananthapuram to travel across the country holding numerous meetings and rallies on the way to converge at the conference venue at Bangalore on 17th January 2007. The meetings and rallies held *enroute* in different States, districts and industrial centres received enthusiastic response from the people of all walks of life. The inaugural session of the Conference commenced with a welcome accorded to the participants of the Jatha.

The Conference was held at the sprawling Palace Grounds on the Bellary Road, Bangalore. The venue was named Suryanarayan Rao Nagar, after the veteran leader of the trade union movement of Karnataka. The entrance gates were named after the deceased leaders C Kannan, K Ramani and Amal Gosh Dastidar. all former members of the CITU Secretariat.

At the outset, M K Pandhe, President, CITU, received a Guard of Honour with a colourful parade of the red-shirt volunteers. He also hoisted the CITU flag, amidst thunderous slogans by the delegates and the large gathering of workers assembled

at the venue. Floral tributes were paid at the Martyrs' Column by the members of the CITU Secretariat and by the leaders of State-wise delegations.

V J K Nair, Chairman of the Reception Committee, welcomed the delegates in the inaugural session. It was followed by the Presidential address by M K Pandhe, which dealt on the international scenario distinctively featured by loud opposition to the policies of neoliberal imperialist globalisation being voiced by the toiling people all over the world, including in India.

George Mavricos, General Secretary, World Federation of Trade Unions and Leyla Tegmo Reddy, Director, Sub-regional Office, ILO conveyed fraternal greetings to the Conference. The leaders of Central Trade Unions who addressed the inaugural session included: R Shankar of AICCTU, Gurudas Dasgupta of AITUC, M Adhyantaya of INTUC, Shivsankar of TUCS and K Radhakrishna of UTUC-LS.

2439 delegates, of whom 297 were women, attended the Conference. The delegates came from all the States in the country and representing the workers from all the sectors of the economy, both organised and unorganised, both public and private sector, from both manufacturing and service segments.

The composition of international delegation to the 12th Conference of CITU reflected a rare expression of international fraternity of workers of the world, irrespective of political affiliations and having wide geographical coverage. Trade Unions, affiliates of both the WFTU and ICFTU and many independent ones, from various parts of the world participated in the Conference. Around 56 representatives of trade unions from 38 organisations and 28 countries attended the Conference. The countries represented were: France, Italy, UK, Hungary, Mexico, Cuba, Japan, Russia, Spain, Greece, USA, Austria, Syria, Egypt, Libya, Australia, Mauritius, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, China, Vietnam, Uzbekistan, Thailand, Cyprus and Venezuela. Besides the Director, ILO, Phong Sul Ahn, Senior Specialist, ILO, also

attended the Conference.

Chittabrata Majumdar, General Secretary, CITU, presented his report in the delegates' session. Ranjit Basu, Treasurer, CITU, placed his report together with the statement of accounts for the years 2003 to 2005.

51 delegates from different States participated in the deliberation on General Secretary's report. Speakers from different States and industries, while narrating their experience of bitter struggle in defence of the rights of the workers in different sectors braving victimisation and brutal atrocities by the employers-administration combine, emphasised the need for intensifying the countrywide united resistance against the onslaughts on labour rights in the days to come.

Representing the fraternal mass organisations, Nurul Huda of All India Kisan Sabha, Sunit Chopra of All India Agricultural Workers' Union, Sudha Sundararaman of AIDWA, Mahesh Tyagi of DYFI and Arun Kumar of SFI addressed the Delegates' session of the Conference. Leaders from fraternal trade union organisations, who greeted the Conference, included: S Muthu Sundaram of All India State Government Employees' Federation, K K N Kutty of the Confederation of the Central Government Employees and Workers, N M Sundaram of All India Insurance Employees' Association, C C Pillai of the National Federation of Postal Employees, Sailo Bhattacharyya of the All India Defence Employees' Federation, Pradip Biswas of the Bank Employees' Federation of India, Samir Ghosh of All India Reserve Bank Employees' Association, Dilip Mukherjee of All India Rural Bank Employees' Association and D P Dubey of Federation of Medical Representatives Associations of India.

The Conference held a separate session on working women. K Hemalata, Secretary, CITU, presented before the conference "The Declaration on Tasks on the Working Women Front", based on the document adopted by the All India Convention of Working Women held at Visakhapatnam on November 3 – 5, 2007. 27 delegates from different States and industries took part in the deliberation.

The fourth day of the Conference was devoted to discussion in Commissions on six different issues of crucial relevance to working class movement in the country. The Subjects were 1) International Trade Union Movement: Some Recent Developments and Strengthening of Unity, 2) Judiciary and the Indian Working Class, 3) Approach Paper of 11th Five Year Plan - A Working Class Perspective, 4) Menace of Contractorisation and Outsourcing, 5) World Trade Organisation- Present Issues and Challenges, 6) Special Economic Zones - Need for Policy Review. A K Padmanabhan, Kali Ghosh, Raghunath Singh, Mercykutty Amma, Deben Bhattacharya and S Veeraiah chaired the Commissions and Swadesh Dev Roye, K Hemalata, Jibon Roy, Tapan Sen, W R Varada Rajan and Dipankar Mukherjee presented and summed up the discussion papers. Around 300 delegates took part in the deliberations in all the commissions and made important suggestions and observations on the concerned subjects. It was decided that the CITU Secretariat would finalise the Commission Documents taking into consideration the points raised in the deliberations.

The Conference unanimously adopted a number of Resolutions on various subjects of relevance. They are 1) Greeting the working class of Karnataka (moved by W R Varada Rajan, Secretary, CITU and seconded by Prasannakumar, General Secretary of Karnataka State CITU) 2) Demanding immediate legislation on Agricultural Workers (moved by K Hemalata, Secretary and seconded by Raghunath Singh, Vice President, CITU), 3) Against Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority Bill (moved by W R Varada Rajan, Secretary, CITU and seconded by Sukomal Sen, General Secretary, All India State Government Employees Federation), 4) In support of the ongoing strike by the Jute workers in West Bengal (moved by S Veeraiah, Secretary, CITU and seconded by Gobinda Guha, General Secretary, Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union) and 5) On Price Rise (moved by K Ravindranath and seconded by K L Bajaj, both Secretaries of CITU), 6) Demanding ban on export of iron ore from the country (moved by Bishnu Mahanty, General

WELCOME ADDRESS

Secretary, Orissa State CITU and seconded by S K Bakshi, Secretary CITU), 7) Demanding expansion of public sector in pharmaceutical industry, measures for price-reduction and availability of essential medicines (moved by P K Ganguly, Working Committee member CITU and seconded by R. Viswanathan, FMRAI, 8) On Agrarian Distress (moved by Jibon Roy, Secretary CITU and seconded by Ravindra Shukla, General Secretary, Rajasthan State CITU). Besides these, the Conference also adopted a number of resolutions dealing with the issues and problems related to different sectors of industries and the economy.

Chittabrata Majumdar, General Secretary, summed up the deliberations, after which the Conference adopted unanimously the General Secretary's report, the declaration on Tasks on Working Women Front and the Statement of Accounts.

The Conference unanimously elected a 35 member Secretariat, 425-member General Council and 125-member Working Committee. M K Pandhe, Chittabrata Majumdar and Ranjit Basu were re-elected President, General Secretary and Treasurer respectively.

Samar Mukherjee, former General Secretary of CITU, released the Special Souvenir brought out by the Reception Committee. R. Umanath, a former Vice President of CITU, received the first copy. Samar Mukherjee, in his brief address, recalled that the CITU has enshrined socialism as its goal in its constitution and urged all comrades to work relentlessly for ending the present exploitative regime.

M. K. Pandhe, President, CITU, concluded the 12th Conference with his inspiring address.

The Conference concluded with a massive public rally at the Government Arts College grounds in the centre of the Bangalore city drawing several thousands workers, including a large gathering of women workers. The leaders who addressed the mass rally included: V J K Nair, S Prasanna Kumar, B Madhava,

Maruti Manpade, G. Sri Rama Reddy and S Varalakshmi, all leaders of Karnataka State CITU and by M K Pandhe and Chittabrata Majumdar, President and General Secretary of CITU respectively.

WELCOME ADDRESS

Dear Comrades, Distinguished Guests, Fraternal Delegates, Delegates from International Fraternity,

I extend a very warm and hearty welcome to you all, on behalf of the Reception Committee and the City of Bangalore, to this important all India CITU Conference that is being held in Bangalore.

Bangalore, from its days of being an important Cantonment in the colonial days has progressed to the present stage of becoming an important destination for Multinational Corporations, witnessing varying phases in its development. In the feudal days the fortifications that developed in the period of Vijayanagar Empire, has changed hands. In the Sultanate period, it exhibited the prowess of technology in using the rudimentary form of 'missiles' against the invading British from where it spread to the West. It developed from the Cantonment to a pensioner's paradise and laid the foundations of being the Garden City. Later it developed as a the textile manufacturing centre famous for the Binny fabrics it produced, simultaneously developing the Sericulture, Silk, the agarbathis with its aroma. Being an airbase, it started servicing the aircrafts during the Second World War, developing in the process as the most important City of the Central Public Sector Units. It became the most important electronic, aerospace industrial base, and later also earned the name of 'Silicon Valley' of India. Bangalore developed to the present day 'Greater Bangalooru' through this process.

In this process many great personalities were associated with this city. Kempe Gowda the Chieftain, who built Bangalore and established the four towers, close to one of which - being the first known - we are meeting here. Shivaji once owned it. Hyder Ali & Tippoo developed it. Later the famous Lal Bag, where the notable event of Flower Show, incidentally which is taking place starting on the last day of this Conference, was developed by them. Among the British soldiers, who worked here, was

Winston Churchill, M.Visweswaraiah, C.V.Raman and very many engineers and scientists lived here and helped to develop it. The Tata Institute, presently known as Indian Institute of Science, was the centre of activity of great men like Homi Bhabha, Vikram Sara Bhai, D.D.Kosambi, Satish Dhawan and many others.

Simultaneously with these industrial developments and process of urbanisation it has attracted the working people from almost every corner of the country. From the period of Kalasipalayam, where the Sultans produced the 'first missiles', through the workers' colonies of HAL/ITI/BEL/HMT etc, where the modern proletariat emerged, it simultaneously produced the HR potential of the present day IT/BT professionals. Further it attracted the youth from all over India and even from many parts of the world.

The development of working class in the process, the struggles they have waged, and the ruling class' response to them shaped the political shape of this Great City. The textile workers were in the forefront of struggles for improving their own terms of employment and simultaneously engaged themselves in the Independence Movement. Many of them became the martyrs during the 1940s. The Central Engineering Public Sector Workers' Struggles developed to the Historic Four Month-Strike in 1980-81 and it paved way for political changes in the State. The MICO & ITC workers' struggles of the same period, the later wave of struggles including those of Garment Workers, BPL Workers, the Hejjala Firing and Toyota Workers' Struggle, which was waged just last year, are notable.

These struggles brought about political polarisations in the early eighties developing an anti-authoritarian and pro-democracy movement in which working class played a very important role. The working class in the State has made steady advance in its organisational strength from the days of internal emergency in 1975-77, through the continued anti-authoritarian movement against the repressive regimes, developing and sustaining the Janata Party regime to the present day opportunistic combination ruling the State. However, the working class is yet to develop as a significant political force capable of strong intervention.

Bangalore remained at the head of these developments and the rest of Karnataka did not lag behind. The series of struggles that were waged in the late seventies all over Karnataka led to the swift change from Karnataka being the safe heaven of collaborators in the trade union movement to being an advancing area of safeguarding the interests of working people. It witnessed very powerful struggles from late seventies to early eighties for recognition of unions through democratic process, which made distinct contributions.

The organisation of working people on a wider scale and sweep became effective in the post liberalisation period. The so called 'voluntary labour' in the ICDS projects, local self-governments, mid-day meal schemes etc. have repeatedly marched from various corners of Karnataka to Bangalore and made its streets sparkle with red banners in the recent period.

These developing struggles enabled the CITU to emerge as the most important trade union centre in Bangalore and Karnataka, emboldening us to extend invitation to hold this most important all India Conference for the first time in our State.

We are aware of the serious limitations we have in hosting such a large conference, our comrades, with the active assistance of democratic segments of the people here, have not only formed the State level Reception Committee but also formed such reception committees in various areas. 33 such reception committees in Bangalore alone have functioned and gone to the people seeking their help to host this conference. Despite being one of the modern cities in the country, Bangalore has had no infrastructure to house these many delegates in a single permanent structure and we had to erect this Conference Hall and the whole area in the Palace Grounds. All these would not have been possible without the unstinted support of the people in Bangalore and all over Karnataka.

We are very happy to play host to the veteran leaders of the trade union movement in the country, who have led militant

struggles, faced the goonda gangs, the police and all sorts of disruptive elements, while defending steadfast the class interests. You have come to Bangalore in such large numbers and we are proud of you. We would have loved to shower you with the best possible hospitality, but please put up with all the inconveniences caused by our limitations in a comradely spirit.

We are happy to welcome especially the delegates from our international fraternity, who have come in such large numbers, travelling long distances, to inspire us all. We pledge our support to the cause of proletarian Internationalism.

We are happy that many fraternal delegates have accepted CITU's invitation and come to attend this Conference. This Conference is taking place immediately after the glorious countrywide general strike on December 14, 2006.

We extend a warm and hearty welcome to you all and assure that we will together leave no stone unturned to achieve unity of the class and make our own distinct contribution to social progress in our country and the world.

Long Live Working Class Unity!

Long Live Proletarian Internationalism!

CITU Zindabad!

Inquilab Zindabad!

V. J. K. Nair

Chairman, Reception Committee

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Dear Comrades,

Since we met last time in the eleventh conference at Chennai in December 2003, the world witnessed several tumultuous developments having long-term impact on the future of our planet. In our country too vast changes in economic and political spheres have taken place affecting the livelihood of the people. I propose to deal mainly with the international developments since the national issues will be dealt at length by our General Secretary. Only the national issues, which have global significance, would be referred briefly in my address.

SLOW DOWN IN US ECONOMY

The short-term boom witnessed in the US economy for the last 3 years has now come to an end with the signs of slowdown being clearly visible. As noted by The Economist, "In the short terms America's economy is certainly slowing as the latest GDP figures are expected to show. But the more worrying data concern the longer term. America's economic speed limit - the pace at which the economy can grow without fuelling inflation - is also dropping. It may soon be as low as 2.5% per cent a year, by some estimates the slowest pace in more than a century." (The Economist, Oct-28-Nov 3, 2006)

The forecast of the GDP growth during 2007 is estimated at the following rate in major capitalist countries:

- Japan 1.2%
- Germany 1.4%
- Britain 2.4%
- France 2%
- Italy 1.2%
- Canada 2.5%
- Spain 2.8%
- Belgium 1.9%
- Netherlands 2.2%

Taking the entire Euro area the average growth rate is estimated to be only 1.9%.

Despite revolutionary changes that have taken place in production technology the economic growth in the developed capitalist countries shows the inability of the system itself. Capitalism is unable to utilise the technology to advance the productive capacity of the society. Due to lower purchasing capacity of the people at large, the products do not find a market in their country. Hence, the thrust is given for exports to countries where purchasing power is available. Industrial production grew in China during 2006 by 14.1% till October, and the growth rate was sustained for more than 25 years because the purchasing power of the people also increased along with the rise in production. This fact itself underlines the superiority of the socialist system.

GLOBAL RISE IN INEQUALITY

According to a study recently conducted by World Institute for Development Economic Research of the United Nations, there has been a phenomenal growth in global inequality. The wealth distribution all over the world clearly indicates that the richest one per cent in the world owns 40 per cent of the planet's wealth.

The total wealth in the world is estimated to be \$125 trillion. The report found that the richest 10% of adults accounted for 85% of the global assets. It further noted that half of the world's adult population owned only 1 per cent of the global wealth. In the study, India comes near the bottom of the list with per capita wealth of only \$1,100 (Rs 49,500).

The report finds that those in the financial services and the internet sectors predominate among the super rich in the world. More than one third of them live in US. Japan accounts for 27% of the total while UK accounts for 6 per cent and France 5 per cent.

As compared to per capita wealth in India, the leading capitalist

countries have extremely higher wealth. In the year 2000 per capita wealth in UK stood at \$1,27,000 while in Japan it was \$1,81,000 and USA \$1,44,000.

Though pontiffs of globalisation are justifying this huge accumulation of assets as a requirement of accelerating economic growth, it is totally unjustified when even according to UN report more than 800 million people in the world are suffering from acute hunger. The talk of elimination of poverty through globalisation is thus a mirage and will never be achieved if these policies continue.

Sixteen years of globalisation has inflicted severe miseries on the working class and the common people all over the world. Downsizing of manpower to cut down cost, on the plea of becoming competitive in the global market, has resulted in increasing workload on the working class. Increase in the hours of work and deterioration in working conditions have become the order of the day. Several lakhs of industrial units all over the world, which could not withstand the competitive environment, have been compelled to close down throwing large number of workers on the streets. While price rise of essential commodities has become a global phenomenon, wages could not keep pace with the rising prices resulting in deterioration in the standard of living of the working class.

Social security benefits are under severe attack. Curtailment of pensionary benefits and welfare measures has become an essential part of what they call labour reform. In the name of labour market flexibility, right to hire and fire has been introduced in most of the countries in the world; women workers have become a special target of attack - they are the first to be terminated in the retrenchment drive.

In Export Processing Zones and Special Economic Zones all over the world, labour laws generally remain non-implemented. Trade union rights of the working class, including the right to strike are systematically undermined which prevailed upon ILO to use the term "marginalisation" of the trade union movement. The call of the Director General of ILO for decent work remain

unimplemented, which compelled him to use the term 'deficit in decent work'!

POLITICS BEHIND EXPANSION OF NATO

Though the cold war is over US imperialists are indulging in the expansion of NATO to strengthen their domination all over the globe. After including East European countries in NATO, attempts are being made to include Ukraine and Georgia in its domain. Moreover, talks of including countries like South Korea, New Zealand, Australia and Israel are going on openly. Pakistan army personnel are going to be trained in NATO military training academies. Thus NATO is going beyond the area earmarked for it. It has already established its presence in Afghanistan and its troop strength has already reached 17000.

Russian President Vladimir Putin had maintained good relations with US imperialists and his government allowed US to control some of the major public sector companies in Russia. Even US troops were stationed in some central Asian Republics.

However, Putin is now worried at US attempt to encircle Russia through NATO network. This has generated conflict between Russia and US. Consequently US imperialists could not control the rich energy resources in CIS countries. US is today extremely worried because Russia has become a major supplier of oil and gas to European countries. This growing dependence on Russian oil supplies is worrying the US administration.

It is also observed that of late Russian leadership has been making strenuous efforts to thwart the US efforts to increase its sphere of influence in the former Soviet Union republics. The steep rise in oil prices has enabled the Russian government to increase its influence in Eastern European countries.

SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANISATION

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation formed in 2001 at the summit of Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan was a significant event in which a strategic

alliance was formed. Four Asian countries, namely, India, Pakistan, Iran and Mongolia had been invited as observers. This has given a big jolt to the very concept of expansion of NATO. The proposal from Iran and Pakistan to obtain full membership of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation has posed serious problem for India. In a recently held meeting on the occasion of fifth anniversary of the organisation of Shanghai Cooperation, Pakistan and Iran sent heads of the state but India sent only its pro-US oil minister.

It is necessary that India should give more importance to this strategic alliance so that the US machinations in the Asian continent can be checked. India should not bow down to the pressure of US imperialists in the matter of deciding its approach towards this new strategic alliance.

FIASCO OF US POLICIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The US policies of controlling huge oil resources in the Middle East have completely failed during the last 3 years, though Middle East occupied the major thrust of Bush administration as a part of its desire to impose its hegemonic designs on the world. The US-led military intervention in Iraq, bypassing the United Nations, had misfired and it failed to subjugate the resistance of Iraqi people. In the case of Palestine, Lebanon, Syria and Iran, the US policies have come home to roost making West Asia a hotbed of anti-US struggles.

The US adventure in Iraq has misfired and President Bush's plan to control oil of Iraq is not likely to be achieved. Despite spending about 300 billion dollars in the war in Iraq, US could not control the oil resources of Iraq. Over 3000 US soldiers lost their lives in this imperialist war of aggression. Despite destroying several historic sites in Iraq, the US army could not establish any puppet regime in the premier Middle Eastern state. Lakhs of innocent men, women, and children were killed by US and puppet troops but the resistance forces continue to grow with each passing day. Back home, the failure in Iraq war led to the defeat of Bush's Republican Party losing control over the US Senate and Congress, where his opponents, the

Democrats got majority in the recently held elections.

The newly appointed Pentagon Chief, Robert Gates had to admit on December 5 that US was not winning the war in Iraq. The inhuman torture of prisoners in Iraq jails and sadistic depredations of US soldiers have shocked the world humanity. The rape of thousands of Iraqi women by US and other soldiers has been condemned all over the world. The allies of US imperialists had to withdraw their armed forces from Iraq and the mass of the people in USA itself have held huge demonstrations demanding withdrawal of troops from Iraq. Even the puppet regime had to come out against US occupation and imperialist machinations in that country.

The Baker Commission, appointed by US Congress on war in Iraq, has admitted, "The situation in Iraq is grave and deteriorating". It further noted that there is risk of a "slide towards chaos that could trigger the collapse of Iraq government and a humanitarian catastrophe." It recommended moving US combat troops out of Iraq.

The resistance forces in Palestine continue to fight for their homeland opposing Israeli atrocities backed by US imperialists. The Oslo accord failed to restore peace between Palestine and Israel due to refusal of Israel to vacate the land of Palestine forcibly occupied by them. Despite vacation of Gaza Strip, Israeli soldiers continue to attack Palestine territory and even the headquarters of the PLO Chief late Yasser Arafat was not spared by them.

After the death of Arafat, Israel thought that the new leadership would be pliable to the imperialists manoeuvres. But the electoral victory of Hamas had angered Israeli Zionists who tried to throttle the economy of Palestine. However, the people of Palestine continue their resistance despite several military interventions by Israeli forces. The worldwide support to the genuine demand of the people of Palestine to have their homeland and making East Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine continues. But the Israeli game of talks without any concrete step to vacate the occupied territory is resulting in no settlement of this long

pending dispute in which US is fully backing Israel.

The most cruel Israeli attack on Lebanon, on the plea of punishing Hizbollah forces for capturing two Israeli soldiers was condemned all over the world. The 34-day war against Lebanon led to colossal destruction and death of thousands of men, women and children in Lebanon. However, Hizbollah forces heroically resisted these attacks and did not surrender before the might of US backed Israeli forces. Continued bombing of residential areas in the name of destroying Hizbollah outfit was a matter of daily occurrence. Several Indian workers in Lebanon were also affected by these inhuman attacks. Ultimately, the UN had to intervene to cease the hostilities and peace was restored in Lebanon. The war only strengthened the hands of Hizbollah forces. The killing of some Lebanese political leaders in Lebanon resulted in creating anti-US feelings among a section of the people.

Support given by the Syrian government to the people of Palestine and Hizbollah forces became a matter of concern to the Bush Administration which contemplated military action against Syria on the plea that it was harbouring terrorists. However, emerging anti-US and anti-imperialist waves in the region prevented US from indulging in such an adventure. Israel continues to occupy the Golan Heights since 1967 and refuses to vacate the illegal settlements there. The Syrian government is asserting its right to regain the lost territory but the US is fully backing Israel in its forcible occupation of the land, which legitimately belonged to Syria.

The US policy towards Iran has also come up for a strong criticism all over the world. As a signatory of Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty, Iran has a legitimate right to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Iran's programme of enrichment of uranium was opposed by Bush administration, which was even considering striking at all nuclear facilities of Iran. Despite US blackmail, Iran expressed her determination to go ahead with its nuclear programme.

SITUATION IN NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

The comprehensive peace agreement signed on November 21, 2006 between the Government of Nepal and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) to end violence and set out a roadmap for the future - after a bitter struggle against autocracy - is a welcome step. The protracted talks between the seven party alliance and the Maoists resulted in the settlement which provided for an interim Parliament in which Maoist will have 73 members while the seven parties will have 209 members of the dissolved Parliament. Including some members who did not join the anti-king agitation the total number will be 330. The Maoist army will be kept under UN supervision and confined to seven cantonments and 21 sub-cantonments. The agreement provides elections to the Constituent Assembly, which will be held in middle of June 2007 and monitored by the UN. The decision about whether or not to retain monarchy will be taken at the first meeting of the Constituent Assembly.

If the agreement is fully implemented, it would ensure durable peace in Nepal which will be governed by a multi-party democracy. Though the emergence of Nepal as a secular state and not as a Hindu kingdom has annoyed BJP and other communal forces in India, the remarkable changes that are taking place in Nepal will have a long term impact on the development in South Asian region.

The relations between India and Pakistan continue to show ups and downs but the people of India and Pakistan want friendly relations between them. Economic cooperation between the two countries will immensely benefit both the countries. The Kashmir issue however, is creating bottlenecks in further improvement of relations while terrorist attacks in India continue to strain the relations.

Recently Pakistan President Musharaf has made a 4 -point proposal, which India has welcomed. The proposals are (1) Kashmir retains its current borders, but people move freely back and forth (2) Region to have self-governance or autonomy but not independence (3) Troops be withdrawn in a staggered

manner (4) Joint supervision mechanism with India, Pakistan and Kashmir. The Prime Minister of India has already given a positive reaction to this proposal as a basis for further negotiations though adverse reactions have come from sections of public in India and Pakistan.

The dialogue between the two great neighbours should continue so that a reasonable settlement acceptable to both the sides could be arrived at without third party intervention. There appears to be a clear shift from the stand taken by Pakistan for an independent Kashmir, which should be welcomed by the people of India. It is possible to find out a workable solution to the problem if both sides are sincere in their approach. BJP is characterising progress in talks as a policy of appeasement since it does not want any solution to the dispute. Under these circumstances a big campaign among the people of India should be launched so that the long pending dispute is settled to the advantage of both India and Pakistan.

The situation in Sri Lanka continues to deteriorate resulting in loss of human life from the side of the government as well as LTTE forces. The peace accord signed with the Norwegian intervention has practically resulted in failure and fighting erupted in several areas. The LTTE is once again insisting for a Tamil statehood while the Sri Lankan government is resolutely opposing it. The hostilities have caused unbearable suffering for the common people with acute food shortage all over the country.

The Sri Lankan problem cannot be solved through armed conflict. A political solution has to be found out to the problem. However, due to hard stands taken by both sides no solution to the problem is emerging and the situation is becoming more and more complex causing serious anxiety among Indian people.

The situation in Bangladesh is becoming critical with the next elections for Jatiya Samsad approaching nearer. The reactionary ruling clique in violation of the constitution appointed their yes-man as the head of the caretaker government, which sparked countrywide protests. The 14 party alliance led by

Awami League organised 3 day strike during which several clashes took place killing 28 and injuring over 2000 persons. The US Ambassador in Dhaka openly intervened in its internal affairs to help the reactionary clique. Now, doubts are openly expressed whether the elections would be free and fair since electoral rolls are also manipulated. Meanwhile there is a split in the ruling combine making opposition forces stronger. Since Bangladesh is heading the SAARC, the developments in that country will affect the functioning of SAARC itself.

RELATIONS WITH CHINA

The visit of Chinese President to India in November last year was an important occasion to strengthen India-China cooperation. During his stay, eleven agreements were signed including increasing bilateral trade from the present level of \$20 billion to \$40 billion by 2010. The border trade would also be strengthened. Consensus could be achieved to settle the border dispute between the two countries at an early date.

Two years ago Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao visited India and had a fruitful discussion with the Indian government for strengthening economic cooperation between the two countries. The Chinese economy is advancing at the rate of 9-10 per cent during the last 25 years increasing the standard of living of the people radically. Today China produces more than 350 million tones of steel, which is more than 3 times the US steel production. It is also the largest coal producer in the world exceeding 1200 million tonnes. Today Chinese economy is fourth in the world next to USA, Japan and Germany. It will soon overtake Germany; US economists are worried that the higher rate of growth may result in China overtaking even USA.

US imperialists are therefore trying to use India as a bulwark against China. India should not fall a victim to these US machinations. As a matter of fact, more cooperation between India and China will strengthen the struggle of the people in the developing countries against the dictates of the advanced capitalist countries.

ANTI-US UPSURGE IN LATIN AMERICA

In spite of decades of inhuman blockade by US imperialists, Cuba continues to march forward in socialist construction. International agencies have rated Cuba's educational and health protection systems as among best in the world. Cuban doctors have done remarkably well in helping other Latin American countries. The GDP grew at the rate of 11.8 per cent during 2005, which showed the US blockade has been torn asunder by revolutionary Cuba. US imperialists however, are deluding themselves by harbouring fond hopes of Fidel Castro going out of the scene due to his intestinal operation but they would be only hunting for a mirage. On his 80th birthday celebrations the working class and the people of Cuba have firmly declared that they would carry forward the policy of building socialism. "Socialism or Death" was the slogan given by lakhs of people who assembled on the occasion. Let us hope for early recovery of Fidel Castro so that he can continue to guide the heroic people of Cuba in the struggle against imperialist globalisation and domination.

The victory of the leftist economist Rafael Correa in the election to Ecuador presidency with 58 per cent majority support defeating banana magnate and yes-man of Bush administration, Alvaro Noboa, was a significant development in Latin America. Correa assured to remove US military base at Manta and not to join the so-called free trade agreement with US, which has generated a new wave of enthusiasm among the 13 million people of Ecuador. Let us congratulate the people of Ecuador for giving a fitting rebuff to Bush for treating Latin America as the backyard of US imperialism.

The resounding victory of Hugo Chavez in the Venezuelan election on December 3 last year in which he got over 61 per cent of the votes, exhibited the support he is enjoying in that oil rich state. The revolutionary changes which Chavez brought in Venezuela led to the introduction of land reform, use of oil taxes to develop country's roads, housing programme and subsidised ration to poor people, increase in literacy and health care for the people, etc. Chavez had taken steps to modernise

collaborationist policies in practice.

Attempts to de-ideologise the working class and blunt its class consciousness has been the chief weapon in the armoury of the capitalist class. It is but natural that at a global level the struggles of the working class are not assuming militant character to hit the crucial interests of the capitalist class.

Today, world capitalism is keenly interested to develop labour aristocracy in trade union movement in advanced capitalist countries. It is due to this that the trade union movement in developing countries does not get adequate solidarity support from the trade union movement of advanced capitalist countries. Despite a long history of over two and half centuries, the working class of U.K. is not prepared to fight for socialist transformation. In Britain, Prime Minister, Tony Blair has become a symbol of a conservative sheep in socialist clothing. Though he was elected twice he did not find time to withdraw anti-working class legislation brought out by Margaret Thatcher. The situation is more or less the same in other major developed capitalist countries.

Working class of the world today needs unity of the world trade union movement irrespective of ideological differences and it should be based on common issues facing the working class. Trade union as an organisation of the working class must strive to end all forms of exploitations. The international trade union movement should oppose all aggressions against any country, economic blockade, economic sanctions and foreign military bases. T.U. movement must oppose neo-colonialism and support all liberation struggles. World T.U. movement must oppose all forms of financial and imperialist globalisation while advocating social globalisation that would improve the conditions of the toiling masses. The united T.U. movement must fight for defending the T.U and democratic rights of the working class including the right to strike. It should advocate ban on nuclear weapons and total destruction of all nuclear stockpile. The ultimate objective of the T.U. movement must be the abolition of exploitation of man by man, which can be achieved only through determined class struggles.

It is in this context that we should view the question of merger of ICFTU and WCL. These two organisations do not have any ideological differences and they together are in a position to control the ILO activities. They are also in a position to utilise the ILO resources to strengthen their T.U.s.

The CITU was invited by CGT (France) for an international meeting to discuss the problems of unity in the trade union movement. I had an occasion to attend the meeting in which I raised the above issues that are crucial for a real unity of the international T.U. movement. The CITU did not agree to join the new world T.U. centre but agreed to carry forward the dialogue for creating a basis for unification of the would T.U. movement. The CITU stressed upon the need for joint movements on common issues facing the working class irrespective of differences in ideology.

The CITU also emphasised the need for involving WFTU and also the All China Federation of Trade unions, the largest T.U. organisation in the world with 16 crore membership.

The meeting held in Vienna, Austria, in the first week of November last year formed the new world federation, ITUC. But its policies remained the same as those of the ICFTU and WCL. The new organisation did not express determination to fight against imperialist designs to control the world. It did not support the revolutionary struggles of the working class in the developing countries. Instead of opposing firmly the role of MNCs, it sought to negotiate and reach agreements with them. The objective of the new organisation was only to participate in economic struggles, that too within the confine of bourgeois frame work. All these indicate that the new organisation negates the class struggle and political action by the working class.

However, we must ponder why the fighting organisations like COSATU (South Africa), CUT (Brazil), GEFONT (Nepal), CGT (France), KCTU (South Korea) and some other left oriented trade unions are feeling the need to join the new organisation. Perhaps they might be thinking, though erroneously, of fighting

for adoption of a militant policy from within the organisation. We have very close relations with them and that would be continued in future also, without compromising our stand on the issue.

The CITU has fraternal ties of friendship with several affiliates of ITUC. We would continue to strengthen those relationships. We participate in meetings when ICFTU affiliates invite us. The dialogue on differences of opinion is necessary to arrive at a correct understanding.

A section of the AFL-CIO (trade union centre of USA) has opposed the policy of the new organisation and they are maintaining fraternal ties with us. We fully co-operate with them and it is proving to be useful to us. Our relation, with Australian Council of Trade Unions in Southern Initiative on Globalisation and T.U Rights (SIGTUR) are going on well. And we continue to strive to strengthen it.

After dismantling of socialism in the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries, the WFTU has been considerably weakened. It had earlier a staff of 650, but later WFTU gave up the polices of class struggle and social transformation. WFTU had several financial difficulties to run the centre itself. The general secretary of TUI Transport misappropriated the entire assets of the organisation.

However, at the initiative of Cuban trade unions, serious efforts to renew the foundation of WFTU began. The Havana Congress held in 2005 was a clear departure from other congresses. The newly elected General Secretary has taken positive steps to revitalise the organisation. The CITU was invited to attend the Presidential Council meeting held at Brussels on 20 – 21 December last year. We explained our views on the question of challenges before the international T.U movement in the 21st century. As per invitation of WFTU General Secretary, the CITU will send a delegation to Athens, the new headquarters of the WFTU, and discuss further steps of co-operation.

The WFTU has no affiliated union in any major developed

capitalist country. Lack of financial resources is still creating bottlenecks in its functioning; yet the new leadership is making attempts to revitalise the organisation.

The CITU believes that though no international unity is possible in the near future, it is possible to develop united actions at the national or regional levels so that unity from below can be developed.

Due to our efforts, an international meeting of the miners' organisations will be held in Kolkata in February 2008, in which unions of all international affiliations as well as unions having no international affiliation will join together to workout commonly agreed policies. Such industry level unity will also pave the way for further broader unity at the global level.

Globalisation has brought together the capitalist class, but the working class is still divided and a clear-cut policy of struggle is yet to be evolved at a global level. The 12th Conference of the CITU may discuss these aspects so that we can play a more effective role in the international T.U. movement.

A large number of fraternal delegates from abroad are attending our conference. It is a great honour for us to welcome them. Let us assure all the delegates the CITU's sincere desire to strengthen the ties of friendship with them in the future. Without worldwide unity, working class cannot realise its objective.

FORWARD TO BIGGER CLASS BATTLES

The performance of the UPA Government during the last two and a half years, is a catalogue of blatant violations of most of the commitments given in its National Common Minimum Programme. The working and living conditions of the toiling masses have deteriorated considerably while the capitalists are enjoying the fruits of the concessions given by the UPA Government. The bursting of sensex index above 14,000 and the super profits achieved by several major private sector undertakings in just one year, is a vivid testimony of this harsh

reality. The globalisation policies pursued by the Manmohan Singh Government has enhanced the rate of exploitation of the working class.

The condition of the peasantry and agricultural labourers has become worse; lakhs of peasants have committed suicide. The prices of essential commodities have gone up sky high hitting hard below the belt the poorer strata of the Indian society.

The unemployment situation in the country has worsened both in urban and rural areas, despite passing of the Rural Employment Guarantee Act. Despair among the young generation entering the employment market is increasing rapidly. The utter collapse of public distribution system has made life miserable for the vast masses of the Indian society. Commercialisation of education system has made higher education a luxury for the ordinary people. Though the number of people below the poverty line is increasing official statistics are fudged through manipulation to show that poverty is declining. Mere growth in GDP does not automatically lead to reduction in poverty but this hard reality is purposefully ignored to bolster the so-called achievements of globalisation.

It is but natural that the discontent among the working class and the toiling masses is increasing rapidly. The massive success of the 14th December strike last year is a testimony of this emerging situation in the country. The urge for unity among the working class in the country has increased phenomenally which was visible when large sections of the workers belonging to the organisations opposing the nation-wide strike joined the strike with enthusiasm.

We must utilise the favourable atmosphere created all over the country. Though there have been grey areas which require more attention, our efforts to build unity from below must be strengthened so that we can march forward in the direction of building all in unity of the working class.

It is also necessary to develop common struggles of the working class and the peasantry so that our resistance becomes much

more powerful and the ruling classes cannot ignore us. The objective conditions in the country are highly favourable for such an approach.

The present situation demands that the working class must champion the vital interests of all the toiling sections, so that it can play a leading role in the struggles to oppose the policies of globalisation. It is from this point of view that we have to strengthen our relations with women's, students' and youth movements as well as with movements of cultural activists and scientists so that our struggles become all pervasive. The National Platform of Mass Organisations has to be strengthened to meet this requirement.

We must take note of the fact that majority of our working class is still under the influence of capitalist and feudal ideologies. A struggle against these ideologies is of paramount importance to draw the working class into political struggles to fight the exploiting classes.

When all over the world struggles against globalisation are coming to the forefront, the UPA Government is surrendering the national sovereignty to serve the global designs of US imperialism. The concessions given to FDI in various forms will only make our country dependent on foreign capital, which is coming to India not for our development, but for making profits.

To meet the challenges of the present national and international situation we must build a powerful CITU organisation that would effectively lead the working class in their day-to-day struggles as well as in the struggle for social transformation.

I am sure this 12th conference will deal with all the aspects of the challenges faced by us and chalk out ways to effectively meet the situation.

The present stage of capitalist development in the form of neoliberal globalisation is not sustainable and working class and the toiling masses all over the world are bound to rise against all the machinations of monopoly capital. We must pass

on this confidence to the working class so that it can play its historic role with firm determination.

Capitalist system is bound to fail; we must prepare the gravediggers of capitalism to discharge their responsibility!

We shall overcome one day!

Long live the unity of the working class!

Down with capitalist globalisation!

Long live CITU!

Workers of the world unite!

M. K. PANDHE

President

REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Dear Comrades,

Since the 11th Conference of the CITU, held at Chennai in December 2003, several important developments in the international and national arena have taken place. These have a long-term impact on the working class and trade union movement in our country. Those developments have brought forth many opportunities as well as challenges. We have to review them dispassionately to evolve our approach to meet the new challenges facing the working class movement.

During the intervening period, many leading comrades in the working class and democratic movement have passed away. They had made immense contribution in developing the movement from its nascent stage in different parts of the country. Many comrades - both from the trade union and the democratic movements - have embraced martyrdom while carrying on struggle against exploitation and braving the attack of the reactionary forces. We remember them with a heavy heart and pay our respectful homage to their memory.

2. INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

The Presidential address to this Conference has dealt in detail the developments in the international arena.

The international scenario during the intervening period witnessed aggressive hegemonic manoeuvres by the imperialist forces led by US Administration on the developing countries, simultaneously on political, economic and military fronts. This period also witnessed:

- People raising louder voice against imperialist aggression by the US and its allies in the Middle East;

- Massive mobilisation in various parts of the world, including those imperialist countries;
- Increasing spate of strike actions, even in the European Union, against the fall out of neoliberal economic order;
- Changes towards left of the centre in the political scenario of the Latin American subcontinent; and lastly;
- The defeat of President Bush's party in US Senate election.

3. NATIONAL SITUATION

The General Secretary's Report adopted by the 11th Conference of CITU underlined that, "while carrying on our untiring effort in organising militant mass struggle against the policies of the Govt, we must also continue organised campaign from our independent platform against communalism and all kinds of divisive virus being spread by the ruling class to weaken the unity of the people and divert the attention of the people. This task is of crucial importance in view of the strategy of aggressive communalism being resorted to by the BJP bandwagon to retain themselves in political power in the face of their gradual isolation from the people owing to their disastrous anti-people policies... We must effectively combat such heinous ploy of the communal forces in power, if we are to successfully unite the working class and toiling masses in the struggle against the capitalist and imperialist offensive and bring about the change in the correlation of forces in the right direction." The direction of the 11th conference had, in essence, been to isolate and defeat the communal forces in power on the one hand and strengthen the assertive edge of the forces of struggle against imperialist neo-liberalism.

We can start with a sense of satisfaction that the post - 11th Conference period witnessed ouster of the NDA combine from power. The working class movement in the country played a big role towards changing the correlation of political forces in the country. This made the UPA regime that assumed office at

the centre dependent on the Left forces, which took and pursued a consistently forthright stand against the policies of neoliberalism.

The Nasik meeting of the CITU General Council in July 2004 while underlining the task before the CITU in the post election scenario stated: "The defeat of NDA government has generated high expectation among the mass of the working people, who fought bitterly against onslaughts on their rights and livelihood during its rule. These expectations must be articulated loudly, through vigorous campaign and mobilisation, demanding pro-people orientation of the economic policies and expansion of democratic rights; otherwise demoralisation is likely to creep in, much to the advantage of the communal forces waiting in the wings. The working class movement has to shoulder the task of mobilising people in that direction, as an integral part of its political task to further isolate the communal forces and at the same time facilitate and strengthen interventions by the Left, to make the government at the centre work for the people. It is the mobilisation by the working class at the ground level, which can make the intervention of the Left on the policy issues more effective; such intervention is crucial and essential to maintain the secular governance and isolate the communal forces."

In the light of the above understanding, we have to review the developments and the effectiveness of our intervention during the period since 11th Conference.

We had no illusion about the class character of UPA regime. The task to strengthen struggle against neoliberal policies through unity and struggle has been uppermost in our mind during this period.

The two and half year old Congress led UPA regime reflects the continuity of the pursuit of almost same policy of NDA regime, especially on economic and foreign policy fronts.

The National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP) incorporated a commitment for pursuit of "an independent

foreign policy, keeping in mind its past traditions" and to "seek to promote multi-polarity in world relations and oppose all attempts at unilateralism". But, in violation thereof, the UPA Government only demonstrated a clear tilt in its foreign policy regime in favour of US imperialists' hegemonistic manoeuvres in the fast changing international political scenario. The Government of India supported the US imperialists against Iran on the nuclear related issues in the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). It has been following in the footsteps of the NDA regime by continuing its 'strategic' cooperation with the USA through a ten-year military framework agreement and made unwarranted compromises in favour of USA in the Indo-US nuclear deal. Such unwarranted tilt away from nonalignment and in favour of imperialist block, if allowed to continue without opposition on the foreign policy front, is bound to have ominous portents for and ramifications on the internal policies as well - both on economic and political fronts.

4. ROLE OF LEFT FRONT & LEFT DEMOCRATIC FRONT GOVERNMENTS

In this context we must note the distinct role of the Left Front and Left & Democratic Front governments in West Bengal, Tripura and Kerala. These governments, it must be remembered, have severe limitations and resultant difficulties in operating within the neoliberal capitalist framework, accompanied by the present pro-imperialist thrust on the economic and political fronts. They, as State governments within the present uni-federal structure, face several compulsions as the central government seeks to tie up its fund-flows to the States with the neoliberal prescriptions in most of the cases. Yet, these Left-led State governments could demarcate themselves both politically and on economic policy matters and assert in favour of the rights of the toiling people. The pro-imperialist tilt in the foreign policy received the loudest protest of the mass of the toiling people from these States; the Left-led governments minced no words in condemning such deviation in the foreign policy. In the economic policy front as well, these Left led governments are making serious efforts to reach the benefits of development to common people and defend their

livelihood in the best possible manner. These governments also opposed the hectic drive by the central Government to curtail labour rights through changes in legislations. While the Central Government indulged in dilatory tactics on bringing up the legislation on unorganised sector workers, the Left Front Government of West Bengal has introduced provident fund/ social security scheme for unorganised sector and agricultural workers; it also provided some relief to the workers of closed factories in the State, when the Central Government and other Congress and BJP run governments chose to leave them in the lurch. Not only that, the very existence of these Left-run Governments constitutes, in a way, a hurdle for the blind pursuit of the neoliberal policies by the Central Government.

We must correctly evaluate the impact of the existence of the Left-run Governments in the country on the working class and democratic movement. It may be recalled that for the first time in India, the West Bengal Left Front Government extended the right to strike for the State Government employees. The Left led governments have also ensured that during industrial disputes police do not intervene on the side of employers. We must also take serious note of the calculated efforts by the media and the adversaries of the Left, not only in our country but also various agencies of abroad, to malign the Left and the Left Front Governments. This malicious campaign is being engineered from the extreme rightist forces, many a times with an apparent leftist camouflage. Working class movement has to combat these offensive anti-left campaigns and close its rank in defence of the Left and Left-Democratic Front Governments in the country.

5. ECONOMIC POLICY ISSUES

The intervening period witnessed the UPA Government continuing the same neoliberal policies of the NDA period; in certain areas it even gained more vigour and momentum. Successive budgets and legislative initiatives during this period reflected the same retrograde trend. No doubt, owing to consistent pressure by the Left parties, in the background of mounting struggles by the working class and other mass

organisations, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act has been enacted. It facilitates 100 days work in a year for one from every rural household; but it has been launched only in 200 districts initially, with a roadmap to cover the entire country in the next five years. The other pro-people commitments laid down in the NCMP, however, remain unimplemented till now. But, the UPA regime has become overactive in their chosen areas of showering concessions to big capitalists, both domestic and foreign, in the name of pushing through reforms.

The continuation of policy of liberalisation, which includes import liberalisation of agricultural products, including food grains, withdrawal of quantitative restrictions, rise in prices of agricultural inputs and adherence to the WTO dictates, have resulted in the agrarian distress getting aggravated. Domestic agricultural products are unable to compete in the market and the food production is being reduced drastically, endangering food security for the entire population and resulting in large-scale poverty and unemployment in the agrarian sector. Recurring suicides of farmers - particularly in Vidharbha in Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh - are the manifestation of the depth of such distress.

Private procurement of grains in the rural economy is allowed in a big way, paving the way for entry of various multinational companies and big domestic corporate houses into the field. Side by side, the role of the Food Corporation of India (FCI) is being undermined by closure of its godowns throughout the country and delayed announcement of minimum support price. As a result of this planned and sequenced arrangement, the private traders have an edge over FCI. This results in sharp decline in the procurement by the FCI. Ground is prepared for marginalising and dismantling the FCI and for giving a free hand to private traders to hoard. At the same time millions of tonnes of wheat is imported at a hefty price, much higher than what has been offered to peasants in domestic procurement process. This policy package of the Government is pursued under the camouflage of ensuring higher returns to peasants! But, it is destined to create a situation where both the peasant producers and consumers would fall victims of the traders' lust

for profit, who would dictate terms in the food grain market.

We have to analyse the situation of continuing rise in prices of all essential commodities in this background. The price situation during last one and half year is no more a cyclical phenomenon of periodical ups and downs. Continuing rise in prices has become an eternal phenomenon. The steep rise in petroleum prices is having its cascading impact on prices of all essential commodities. The rise in the prices of food grains, pulses and other staple eatables is also having its multiplier effect on the general price level, making the conditions of the common people miserable. The liberalisation and corporatisation of grains-trade and procurement, allowing forward trading in most of the essential commodities have all further aggravated the price situation to an almost irreversible extent. The Finance Minister's argument that the inflation is sparked by overheating of the economy, as a result of sustained high growth, is only an attempt to fool the people. The price rise is the result of a conscious drive by the government to ensure big-bang gains to the big traders and intermediaries, at the cost of both the primary producers and consumers down the line.

The Special Economic Zones (SEZ) Act has been passed allowing virtually a no-tax regime with little accountability for both the private sector developers and the establishments operating in the proposed zones. The rules framed under the SEZ Act seek to deny/restrain basic labour rights to the workers within the SEZs; they also deprive the farmers of their agricultural land without proper compensation and rehabilitation. In this manner, the so-called development under the neoliberal framework is synonymous with displacement.

Vigorous drive is afoot to completely deregulate financial sector that too under the dubious plea of 'effective and efficient regulation'. Two Bills are already introduced in Parliament to allow greater control of the foreign capital on private banks and dilute the role of Reserve Bank of India in regulating the financial sector. These Bills, once passed, would have dangerous impact on country's financial autonomy. Vigorous drive is also afoot in weakening public sector's role in defence

production and allowing free entry of foreign and domestic corporate players in this strategically sensitive sector. The sensitive infrastructural areas like telecom, ports, airports etc are targeted for greater doses of privatisation, even though enough technological and financial competence is available within the public sector framework to expand and strengthen these infrastructures.

Since *Navaratna* companies cannot be disinvested as per NCMP stipulations, the UPA Govt. has been making hectic bid to change the definition of *Navaratna* companies. It seeks to link this status with the performance of the respective company share in the stock market making the company's status prone to stock-market manipulations.

The Government is moving fast ahead to implement the Kelkar Committee recommendation on Defence PSUs and the Ordnance Factories leading to corporatisation of Ordnance Factories and pushing through joint venture exercise by other PSUs under the Defence Ministry—all aimed at privatisation and free entry of private sector including foreign companies in the field of defence production. Similar efforts are being made in other areas also in the name of public-private partnership and other dubious routes.

Crucial public utility services like electricity, water supply, health etc are being privatised in the name of public private partnership (PPP). Such PPP route in these public utility services are meant not for making the services available for larger sections of population at affordable rates but for allowing private players to gain a fortune by increasing the 'user charges'. There are many other examples of such disastrous trends.

Following the footsteps of the NDA regime, the present government had promulgated an ordinance to set up the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA). The move is to shift all social security pensions from "defined benefit" concept to "defined contribution" concept. The attempt is to divert the mandatory social security contributions of the workers and employees to the speculative stock market.

This is an ominous move to finally privatise the entire social security.

The danger of FDI entry in retail trade is very much imminent. Already different foreign trading companies are trying to find indirect ways and means to enter into retail trade sector through joint ventures or by proxy through supply agreement to apparently Indian entities. Entry of private traders including foreign giants in grain trading also has the potential of their intervention in the retail market as well.

Much euphoria is being created on the GDP growth rate of 8 per cent plus during the last two years. There is little to rejoice, as such growth remained a jobless one reflecting complete expropriation of the gains of growth by the big capitalists. The rate of employment generation during the so-called 8 per cent plus growth regime has fallen below the rate witnessed during the 1980s, when the average growth rate was around 4 to 5 per cent per annum. This growth rate could not suppress the crisis surfacing in all sectors of the economy manifested by the increasing spate of closures of units, widespread casualisation of workforce, increasing incidents of suicides by peasants - all pointing to the phenomenon of impoverishment of masses and galloping fortunes of handful of rich and affluent. This has proved beyond doubt that the neoliberal economic model pursued during the last 15 years has hastened the pace of transfer of wealth from millions of commoners to just a few in the capitalist camp. This transfer process has picked up greater momentum during the second phase of neoliberal reforms in the new millennium.

According to the UNDP report, India ranks 126 in the human development ranking of 177 countries. Yet, the Government contributes only 0.35% of GDP on health when India represents 17% of the world population. Against this percentage of population, India accounts for 23% of child- deaths all over the world, which in numerical term is 5 million per year; 20% of the maternal deaths, 68% of the leprosy cases, 30% of the tuberculosis cases (10th Plan document vol. II). Government contribution (Central and States together) for clean drinking

water and sanitation is only 0.2% of the GDP. In our country, 30% of the total population is still illiterate and 50% of the school going children drop out before they reach class VIII. With such a pathetic record of human indices, the 11th plan Approach Paper claims that in India, 'average people are benefited' from reform.

Global poverty has declined marginally between 1990 and 2002. This marginal level of improvement is also owing to the contribution made by China, where millions of people have been lifted above the poverty level through an alternative path of development than the one suggested by the World Bank. The UN world Millennium Development Goals Report 2006 says that 31.2% of India's working population lived, at par with Southern Asia, below 1 dollar wage a day in the year 2002. Rate of decline of poverty in China, according to the report was 19% against only 8.2% in India.

The number of unemployed grew more than three times in ten years - from 13.8 million in 1991 to 45.2 million in 2001 according to the census reports. Successive National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) reports reveal alarming picture about unemployment and poverty. All the economic indicators testify to the intensification of poverty and continuing widening of disparity. This renders the ongoing economic order unsustainable. As is elsewhere in the world, the policies of liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation have completely failed to address the problems of poverty and joblessness in India. A fresh bout of crisis for the capitalist order itself is a consequent fallout of this. Despite tall claims, by the advocates of 'reforms' of 'India emerging as big economic power', strong disillusionment over these policies is witnessed among the mass of the people. United struggles of the working class have also contributed immensely to this development. The situation thus warrants further widening and intensification of struggle against these anti-people policies, rallying all sections of people in the same.

6. CHANGES IN BUSINESS STRUCTURE

Here we must also note the changes in business structure brought about by the neo-liberal economic order, where the international finance capital dominates the operation of the economy leading to a fast changing character of the market. These lead to certain drastic changes in the composition and structure of the industrial and service sectors of the economy, which make the situation more critical for the older industries, as well as the workforce in general. The changes are towards more fragility in production relations and regulatory framework of the industry/occupation. The consequential changes are taking various routes having critical implications on the workers and the quality of employment.

The overriding influence of the finance capital is also being witnessed in the type of business restructuring that is taking place in various industries. The production and marketing processes are segregated, with the production process being collapsed into several segments, enabling large-scale outsourcing down the line. The chain of production units, which employ more number of workers are under compulsion to sell the product to the marketing unit of the same establishment at a price much lower than the market price. This results in loss or less earning of the production units, while the profit of the marketing unit is zooming up. The majority of the workers deployed in the manufacturing units are being compelled to sacrifice their earnings and rights in the name of averting a crisis or collapse. Such dubious practices to extract maximum surplus from the productive workforce, and thus mint much higher profits, go on in the name of business process restructuring. As a result of this process, the producers and consumers are getting distanced with the producers losing out to those marketing the final products, who are making a big fortune. Consequently the workers also lose out the maximum. This trend is visible in several industries in the traditional sector like the tea industry and in many industries producing consumer durables. Added to this is the capacity of the international capital to introduce capital-intensive production processes downstream, leading to displacement of labour on a large-scale.

The older industries, which have failed to modernise and continued with a large workforce lose their competitiveness and are edged out eventually. These trends vividly reveal how the finance capital engineers a crisis for the productive workforce despite their high contribution in value addition and thus profit generation. The new jobs are created only in the informal sector with very low wages and sub-standard service conditions. This is the barbaric face of capitalism under neo-liberalism, which we have to confront in India as well.

7. ATTACKS ON LABOUR RIGHTS

Since the onset of the neoliberal policy regime, the onslaught on the working class has increased manifold. With the dawn of the new millennium, the 'second generation' measures of neoliberal policy regime have assumed a more structured fashion administratively, institutionally and ideologically. The entire exercise has been scrupulously designed by the international agencies. The main pillars of such second generation reforms have been total liberalisation of financial sector, complete overhauling of labour laws aimed at casualisation and contractorisation of the labour force, and complete liberalisation and deregulation of trade.

All the three pillars have their grave ramifications on the rights and livelihood of the working people. In particular, the exercise of deregulating the labour market through amendment of labour laws in favour of capital is directly affecting the working class.

Attack on labour right in the post liberalisation period is characterised by two features, one graduating to and overlapping with the other. First one is non-enforcement of labour laws. Post liberalisation, the non-enforcement of labour laws has rather been promoted as a matter of policy by those in governance at the Centre and also in many States on the plea of so called investment-friendliness. The inspection machinery has been dismantled in many States by official orders of the respective Governments. In some States, inspection has been forbidden through internal orders. The grievance settlement machinery of the labour department is also being

tuned in that direction.

Gross violations of labour laws like the Minimum Wages Act, Payment of Wages Act, Industrial Disputes Act, Contract Labour (R&A) Act etc, have become the order of the day. Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act is the highest violated statute and the biggest violators are the Governments themselves.

Side by side with the dismantling of inspection mechanism, many of the Governments, both at the Centre and in several States, have introduced a system of self-certification by the employers on compliance of labour laws. This is a naïve attempt to legalise abetting the crime of non-enforcement of labour laws regarding wages, labour rights, health and safety etc by the employers. The NDA government, overlooking the objections by the trade unions, came out with a notification introducing a new category of 'Fixed Term Employment Workman' in the Industrial Standing Orders. This was designed to institutionalise casualisation of permanent work and to escape the obligations under the Contract Labour Act and ID Act. After change of Government at the centre, the Labour Minister assured on the floor of the in Parliament in 2004 to rescind notification; but the same has not yet been implemented. Now fixed term employment is being rampantly resorted to in various industries including in many PSUs. All these are nothing but legitimising the offence and rewarding the offenders in the capital's camp.

The persisting menace of Government-abetted violation of labour laws is taking two dimensions. One is allowing non-implementation of basic labour laws and curbing trade union right to fight against the same. In general, more than fifty per cent of the workforce, covered by Minimum Wages Act are not getting wages anywhere near the statutory minimum wage in vogue in the respective states. This is the story almost everywhere, at Gurgaon and Faridabad in Haryana, at Firozabad and Moradabad in UP, at Ludhiana and Jullundhar in Punjab, at Baroda, Ahmedabad and Surat in Gujarat, at Talcher in Orissa, Ranchi and Bokaro in Jharkhand,

Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh, only to name a few. In fact, overwhelming majority of the ongoing labour related disputes in our country relate to just implementation of existing labour laws pertaining to working hours, minimum wages, basic rights and nothing more. In such a background allowing self-certification by the employers on labour-law-compliance exposes only the criminal bent of mind of those in governance who grant the same.

The second dimension is of bringing about drastic changes in labour laws in order to legitimise and institutionalise the violations and non-enforcement of existing labour laws. On this the Government of India has already finalised the blue print of changes to be made in labour laws. The Report of the Second National Commission on Labour was designed as the vehicle for preparing this blue print. The Industrial Disputes and Contract Labour Acts have been the main target of this overhauling to usher in 'hire & fire' regime and contractorise the entire workforce. Trade Union Act has already been amended to make formation of trade union and its registration more difficult besides empowering the authority concerned to deregister any union at any time on flimsy grounds.

The aggravation of the process of informalisation and casualisation of workplace is another ominous symptom. During the last 3 – 4 years, deployment of contract workers side by side with the regular workers in the same job and under the same roof, has increased phenomenally both in private and public sectors. The contract worker is paid almost one-tenth of the wages being paid to the regular worker for doing the same work. This practice is indulged in by the administration almost everywhere in the country without any legislative sanction. Such deliberate violation of statute has now become a general phenomenon in private manufacturing everywhere. This is taking place even in many public sector units. Along with this, the incident of wholesale outsourcing of the entire production job to a number of contractors is proliferating. The attempt is to redefine the entire employment relationship at the workplace to inject more and more fragility – only to extract maximum possible surplus from the labour force.

Despite the National Common Minimum Programme of the UPA carrying a clear stipulation against the policy of 'hire and fire', the Economic Survey of 2005-06 advocated a 'policy of entry and exit' in respect of labour. A simultaneous move is initiated to change the labour laws in that direction. The Bill on Special Economic Zones introduced in Parliament contained provisions for giving exemptions in respect of various labour laws to the investors. Due to stout opposition of the trade union movement and the determined opposition by the members of Left political parties inside the Parliament, the Government was forced to withdraw such provisions.

In this context, the changing role of judiciary in favour of deregulating the labour market should be noted. This is not surprising because this has reaffirmed the time tested truth that the judiciary is one of the instruments of "State"; and that all the instruments of "State" ultimately converge in upholding the interest of the ruling class to perpetuate their class rule. Several judgments of the apex court concerning labour during the post liberalisation period are testifying to this plain truth. We have discussed these developments in the Ranchi meeting of our General Council and in this Conference a separate Commission will deliberate this further.

Drastic change in the role of Government in the area of social security is another manifestation of this onslaught on labour rights. At present, only a miniscule section of the workforce in the organised sector are getting some social security benefit in the form of Employees' Provident Fund, ESI, Pension etc. Now the Government is bent upon dismantling even these limited social security arrangements and withdraw itself from any responsibility in respect of these.

Successive reductions in the administered rate of interest have been pushing down the interest rate on Provident Fund and small savings instruments.

The successive governments have been indulging in shedding crocodile tears for the unorganised sector workers, but no

beneficial social security scheme has been worked out as yet. The stark reality that over 93 per cent of workers in the country are deprived of any social security is ironically used to push through the curtailments of the existing benefits under the existing schemes.

While the spiralling price rise and inflation had seriously impacted the livelihood of the people, the government has been working overtime to manipulate the price index mechanism. Despite firm opposition by all the trade unions, the Labour Bureau, Shimla, has published the new series of price index with 2001 as the base year, which is nothing but a fraud on the workers. In the background of protest by all the trade unions, the Prime Minister had to agree for appointing an Index Review Committee with trade unions' representation. But the new series is being continued, leading to huge loss to millions of workers in their DA payment.

All these measures are resorted only to carry out smoothly the design of neoliberalism, to which the ruling elite in the country is committed. This neoliberalism represents the most atrocious face of capitalism at the present stage. This represents a process of reversing the gains the working class had achieved over a century, facilitating the capitalist economic order to carry out its predatory offensives.

The ideologues of neoliberalism and the capitalist media preach that a regressive labour-right-regime will lead to more employment generation, or suppression of trade union activities will ensure greater investment flow in the economy. This is far from truth. Those who advocate such ideas either do not understand how the capitalism works or knowingly plead for this with a philistine desire to legitimise the unjust order. Unfortunately, a section of the progressive and trade union movement and even a part of the traditional Left is falling a prey to such ideological onslaught.

8. STRUGGLES

We are separately presenting a report on activities. Hence, we are not going into the various activities and struggles carried on in the States and sectors here. We are briefly commenting on certain important aspects of the struggles waged during this period.

The opposition to onslaughts of neoliberalism has been mounting worldwide. The developments worldwide have been reasserting the truth that class struggle is the driving force for change and that struggle will advance through many ups and downs, defying all repressions. The intervening period since the last Conference witnessed numerous struggles at the grass root level throughout the country with workers braving the atrocities by administration. Most of these struggles related to implementation of labour laws and nothing else. Thus the policy of promoting labour law violation by the Govt. as a part of their so-called strategy of investor-appeasement nowhere went unchallenged and the CITU always remained in the forefront of such combat. The call given by the CITU in its successive General Council and Working Committee meetings to bring forth the issue of 'state-sponsored violation of labour laws' to the focus of all activities could be implemented to a greater extent through these struggles.

This is borne out by the fact that in the meeting of Central Trade Unions with the Prime Minister held on 19th August 2006, all the central trade unions raised this issue in one voice and the Prime Minister also had to acknowledge the same and assured that the matter would be taken up with the State Governments. This was followed by intervention by the MPs of the Left parties in Parliament on the issue of attack on labour rights and rampant violation of labour laws. Many MPs of non-Left parties also joined in this. The Union Labour Minister had to call meetings with the Central Trade Unions along with Labour Ministers of the State Governments on the issue of labour law violations where governments had to admit the reality of improper implementation of labour laws and commit for corrective action. The issue of attack on labour rights, in the background

of desperate violation of labour laws, could be made a common issue of concern before the entire trade union movement. In this process, despite strong opposition by the employers' organisations and hesitation of the Government, the issue of "strengthening implementation of labour laws to prevent violation" has been included in the agenda of the forthcoming 41st Indian Labour Conference to be held in early 2007.

The intervening period also witnessed three countrywide general strikes on 24th February 2004, 29th September 2005 and 14th December 2006. Each of these general strikes demonstrated a bigger sweep covering wider section of the toiling masses and all the sectors than the previous one. In all these countrywide united actions, CITU had taken pioneering initiative.

There have been many industry wide actions during the period under review. Notable among them has been the coal workers' struggles and agitations culminating in calls for strike action of three days and six days, preceded by intensive preparatory campaign, which finally compelled the Government to shift from its position and concede the demands of the workers for wage revision with five-year tenure with full neutralisation. The struggle against privatisation of airports in Delhi and Mumbai witnessed active intervention by the CITU. The role of the CITU State Committees in organising solidarity actions is another notable episode of this struggle. Among other major struggles were the indefinite strike by the jute and tea workers in West Bengal, transport workers' strike in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Haryana, State-level mobilisations and picketing in Kerala, iron ore mine workers' struggle in Orissa, spinning-mill workers' indefinite strike actions in two spells in Haryana etc.

Another notable event in this period was the anganwadi workers' ten-day long- 24 hours dharna and relay hunger strike before Parliament in July 2006. In this, more than fifteen thousand anganwadi workers and helpers participated from all the States, demanding regularisation, increase in remunerations and introduction of retirement benefit. This has created much enthusiasm within the anganwadi workers' movement and

created visible pressure on the Government to set up a committee to go into the issues raised by our Federation.

The intervening period also witnessed some important united actions which compelled the Government to retreat from their privatisation move in the PSUs, although temporarily. The move to disinvest in Nalco and Neyveli Lignite has to be abandoned by the Govt. following indefinite strike action by the Neyveli workers and similar move by Nalco workers. A notable feature is that the initiative for such militant response against the move of disinvestments was taken by the grass root level organisations of workers and officers, indicating the extent of spontaneity and depth of opposition to disinvestment. There had been similar countrywide united actions in the banking and telecom sectors as well.

During the intervening period several struggles were organised jointly both at the national and industry levels. The CITU took pioneering role in organising such joint actions along with other central trade unions and independent federations.

The main thrust of these joint actions has been the resistance to the neoliberal economic policies and their fall out. At the preparatory level tremendous vacillations were noticed among some constituents of the joint platform of trade unions in deciding the form of struggles, culminating in strike action. Further, even in the joint campaign and agitation, participation of many of the constituent trade unions in the Sponsoring Committee remained formal or virtually nil in many of the States.

Shortcomings are also there in our campaign on the jointly decided programmes such as lack of initiative and failure on our part to approach and reach the followings of other unions in many of the States and industries. Our experience shows that our independent initiatives, side by side with the joint programmes, can create compelling circumstances for other unions to join the joint programmes more effectively.

The experiences of struggles in the intervening period has brought forth another important issue to focus. The employers-

administration combine has subjected the migrant workers all over the country to tremendous repression. To put more appropriately, migrant workers from outside States constitute a major section of the industrial workers - particularly in the northern States - and they have been in the forefront of struggle against desperate labour law violation by the employers-administration caucus in those areas. The statutes on migrant workers are also being violated with impunity. At the same time, the vested interests are seeking to create antagonism by including the employers' organisations in some places against these struggling migrant workers by way of spreading parochial sentiments. The trade union movement has to handle this situation cautiously and fight for proper implementation of migrant workers related statutes, while unifying the entire workforce in the struggle against the brutality of the employers' class.

9. NATIONAL PLATFORM OF MASS ORGANISATIONS

We failed to activate the National Platform of Mass Organisations (NPMO) as planned in our last conference. There was resistance from some of the constituents of the Sponsoring Committee to activate NPMO. Nonetheless, in successive sessions of the General Council and Working Committee the CITU conceived the idea of organising joint activities and mobilisations along with the mass organisations, associated with and friendly to us, on the burning issues of the people. This also could not be given effect to and as such we failed to sense the priority of such initiative. Planning concerted actions along with our friendly and associate mass organisations did not find its due place in our agenda both at the CITU Centre and in the States, barring one or two. This reflects the weakness of our understanding regarding the importance and potential of a platform like the NPMO. This also manifests a formal and ritualistic approach towards our prime task of rallying the mass of the people from all walks of life around the working class and building a powerful movement against the exploitative regime. We have to overcome this serious weakness in the days to come.

10. WORK IN THE UNORGANISED SECTOR

We have already noted that the organised sector has been shrinking and the unorganised sector has been expanding in the era of neo liberal policies. According to the Economic Survey, 2004-2005, around 92-93% of the total workforce in our country is engaged in the unorganised sector. The organised sector's share in employment has fallen from 9 per cent in 1981 to 7-8 per cent in 2004.

Our work among the unorganised sector workers has improved to some extent and today, the unorganised sector workers constitute more than half the total membership of CITU. The participation of the unorganised sector workers in various campaigns and struggles of CITU, including strike actions, have increased. In several States like Karnataka, Haryana, Bihar etc, membership of CITU from unorganised sector constitutes around 70% to 80% or even more. Unorganised sector workers have played an important role in organising road blocks and rail blocks during all India strikes, which helped in the visibility of the strike actions. Strike by workers in mandis, head load workers, auto drivers etc created much impact at the time of such strikes.

During the period under review, efforts have been made to reactivate our work among the unorganised sector. The second national convention of the Unorganised Sector Workers Coordination Committee was organised on 3-4 October 2005 in Ferozabad in Uttar Pradesh. 345 delegates from 17 States participated in the Convention. A new coordination committee was formed in the Convention with PK Ganguly as the Convener. A sub committee consisting of PK Ganguly, WR Varada Rajan, Ranjit Basu and Hemalata was formed at the CITU Centre to monitor the work of the All India Coordination Committee of Unorganised Sector Workers.

The Convention adopted a charter of demands, on which a massive rally of unorganised sector workers was organised on 8th December 2005 at Jantar Mantar in Delhi. A subsequent meeting of the Coordination Committee decided to organise

all India campaign on the charter of demands, particularly focussing on equal wages, minimum wages and immediate enactment of a comprehensive legislation for unorganised sector workers, culminating with a countrywide strike in December 2006. However, it had to be deferred due to the all India strike call by the Sponsoring Committee of Trade Unions on 14th December, in which unorganised sector workers participated in large numbers. In some states like Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Tripura etc State level campaigns, *jathas*, rallies, etc were organised on the major demands of the unorganised sector workers with very good response, which indicates that workers in this sector are ready to fight for their rights, if we approach them with suitable forms of organisation and struggle.

Many struggles, including strikes were organised in brick-kiln, spinning mills, mandi-workers, beedi, construction, private transport, FCI-palldars, etc in several States.

In West Bengal, initiative has been taken by CITU to organise the vast section of unorganised sector workers working in various non-agricultural occupations in the rural areas, in cooperation with the Kisan Sabha. A joint meeting of the leadership of CITU and Kisan Sabha, followed by massive joint convention of the unorganised sector workers was organised.

Though we have been discussing our work among the unorganised sector workers repeatedly in the General Council & Working Committee meetings and Conferences, many of the tasks we have taken up remain unimplemented. Still in many States sub committee and coordination committee of the unorganised sector workers have not been formed.

To strengthen the work among the unorganised sector, it is necessary to identify the different sectors/ trades where large number of workers are employed, prioritise the sectors keeping in mind the available cadres and financial resources and work according to a proper plan. We have to overcome the weakness of reacting to spontaneous demands only. Giving priority to such industries/ sectors having State wide presence may help

in expansion.

Conducting surveys and studies in the prioritised industries/trades etc to identify the serious problems of the unorganised sector workers, and formulating concrete demands and organising state wide campaigns on these will give better results. The existing statutory welfare provisions, if any, (e.g. the welfare funds/ boards etc as in the case of beedi workers, construction workers etc) may also be utilised to approach the workers.

Besides, a large number of women workers are employed in the unorganised sector like in beedi, anganwadi, construction, etc. Allotting women CITU cadres for work among these women workers will yield better results.

As most of the unorganised sector workers come from socially oppressed sections and live in slums, where basic facilities are not available, it is also necessary for the unions and CITU to address their social issues, gender issues, literacy, residential problems etc, besides work-place issues, to gain their confidence. Intermediary forms of organisation like self-help groups, savings groups/ credit groups etc should also be considered to create confidence in the strength of unity among the workers in the unorganised sector.

11. WORKING WOMEN

The 8th Convention of AICCWW was held on 3-5 November 2006 in Visakhapatnam. 418 delegates from 16 States participated in the Convention. Bihar, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh were not represented. The Convenor's report and the paper on 'Working Women in the Unorganised Sector' that were unanimously adopted are being circulated along with this Conference documents. The AICCWW with 45 members was reconstituted. A Declaration on CITU Tasks on the Working Women Front is placed before this Conference for adoption.

Many State Committees of CITU, particularly those in the Hindi

speaking States, have either not formed coordination committees of working women or they are not functioning. Repeated decisions in the CITU Conferences, General Council and Working Committee meetings could not make any difference in the situation.

The replies to the questionnaire sent to the State Committees of CITU and the State CCWW before the 8th Convention of AICWW indicate that there have been some efforts, in the States with functioning State CCWWs for forming women's sub committees in the CITU affiliated unions. But most of these sub committees were not functioning. Proper functioning of the women's sub committees helps in developing and training women activists of the unions in trade union work so that they can be promoted to leadership positions. All the State Committees of CITU should make efforts to form such sub committees at the earliest.

Some CITU committees and unions are observing the International Women's Day on 8th March, though the number continues to be nominal. Vimal Ranadive Memorial Day is being observed on 10th April every year by holding meetings, seminars, round table discussions etc, instead of a lecture. We may consider some other form of observing the day instead of organising lectures.

In general, the participation of women in the activities of CITU during this period has shown definite improvement in almost all the States. In several States women workers, have faced police repression and victimisation by the employers. The enthusiastic participation of anganwadi workers and helpers in large numbers during the unique programme of mass relay hunger strike organised in Delhi deserves special mention.

The proportion of women in the membership of CITU has also increased from around 20%, at the time of the last Conference, to more than 22.7% in 2005, as per the annual returns. In Karnataka it is more than 57%, while in Assam, Bihar and Himachal Pradesh it is around 45%.

It is also observed that several unions with large number of women members do not mention the number of women members in their annual returns, either intentionally or unintentionally, as a result of which the actual women membership is not reflected in the records. For example, some beedi workers' unions and domestic workers' unions show that all their members are men, which is definitely not the fact. The State Committees need to ensure that this practice is stopped.

In spite of some progress, on the whole, it cannot be claimed that proper attention is being paid to the work among working women. It is also debatable whether the increase in women membership in CITU is the result of conscious and planned efforts by the concerned State CCWWs. The increase in several States seems to be mostly because of the efforts in the unorganised sector including the anganwadi employees, beedi workers etc. While this indicates our weakness, it also points to the possibilities that exist today of bringing large number of workingwomen by making the CCWW functional.

Most of the tasks adopted in the 11th Conference of CITU to strengthen our work among working women remain unfulfilled or only partly fulfilled. The number of women in the office bearers and committees of CITU at different levels and the affiliated unions has considerably increased. The problem of not providing financial assistance to women for attending CITU or CCWW meetings still continues in some States. The resistance to elect women to the Conferences and including them in the committees also continues in different levels. Difficulties like meeting travel expenses, taking leave from their work etc are being cited. Giving a short notice for the meetings makes it difficult for women to make the necessary alternative arrangements for their domestic responsibilities. These issues need to be addressed.

Even after more than 27 years of the formation of AICCCWW, we are yet to develop a unified understanding on its objectives, structure and functions. In some States, the CCWWs have women employees representing non-CITU unions like teachers, State Government employees etc. Some State CCWWs

continue to have office bearers. The practice of naming the conventions as 'Conferences' and the Convenor as 'Secretary' might also have contributed to the confusion on the status of the CCWW to some extent. The impression that the CCWW is a forum of middle class women employees still persists among many of our comrades, even after the 10th Conference of CITU has dealt the issue in great detail in the Commission Paper on 'Working Women – A Class Perspective'. At the same time, there is also a tendency among women members of CCWWs to function the CCWWs as organisations independent of the CITU. Both these tendencies have to be rectified.

12. FIGHT AGAINST COMMUNALISM

Our Eleventh Conference was held under the dark shadow of NDA rule. The NDA, an unprincipled and opportunistic coalition of disparate parties and groups, was only the façade; behind which it was the BJP, the political outfit of RSS, which was actually running the Government and pursuing with determination the communal-fascist ideology and policy of the RSS. The Gujarat genocide, perpetrated under the direct leadership of the Chief Minister Narendra Modi, was the high point of this aggressive communalism.

The Eleventh Conference called upon the working class and the trade unions to resolutely oppose the communal forces, which sought to divide the people on communal lines, and posed serious threat to unity and integrity of the nation. It gave a clarion call to the working class to be in the forefront of the struggle to defend the unity of the people, to carry forward resistance against communal fascism and safe guard secular principles.

With three years having elapsed since the Eleventh Conference, can we claim that the CITU itself had discharged its responsibility properly and adequately? No, we cannot. From the very inception the CITU has declared its resolve to fight communalism. We had adopted resolutions in our Foundation Conference and the subsequent Conferences and meetings of the General Council and the Working Committee of the CITU.

We have discussed the matter in the commissions during our Conferences on two occasions. We also organised a special discussion in a General Council meeting and developed the strategy and tactics for struggle against communalism and communal forces. But we have largely failed to put these into practice.

However, the experience of several years of BJP rule itself ranged many sections of the people against this regime. Evidently the aggressive *hindutva* campaign and action of the *sangh parivar* did not pay them the expected dividend. Moreover, pursuit of the IMF-World Bank dictated policies of economic liberalisation, more vigorously than the Congress, further antagonised vast sections of the people. These factors, reinforced by the organised popular resistance movement, in which CITU played an important part, brought about the defeat of the BJP-led NDA.

While assessing the situation following the installation of the UPA regime, the General Council meeting at Nasik noted that the communal forces were down but not out. They were no doubt defeated at the political level, but not all who opposed them did so for their communal role. As stated, their economic policy also played an important role in alienating people from them. Their defeat was due to the play of complex forces; but the influence of communal ideology persists in the consciousness of large sections of the people even today. The communal outfits can convert this false consciousness to whip up communal tensions under favourable conditions. Therefore, the fight against communalism is as important today as it was three years back.

It is true that today the communal forces, the *sangh parivar*, are somewhat in disarray. They are yet to recover from the shock of electoral defeat. Various pushes and pulls are being witnessed within the *sangh parivar* itself. But as long as communal ideology lingers in the consciousness of people, there will always remain the possibility of its inevitable political crystallisation. It is only a question of time. The desperate efforts on the part of the *sangh parivar* are very much in

evidence already.

Every day the BJP and other outfits of the *sangh parivar* are picking up one issue or another, which can be given a communal twist. They are using even the issue of terrorism for communal purposes. Be it the Kashmir issue or that of the death sentence to Afzal Guru, they try to communally vitiate the minds of the people against any process of normalisation of relations with Pakistan. They are up in arms against the Sachar Committee report, which has given an objective picture of the condition of Muslim minorities in the country. They constantly harp on a dubious theory of 'appeasement' and accuse the secular parties of practising 'vote bank' policies. The fact is the BJP seeks to step up its potential to disrupt communal harmony and unity of the people. Our entire organisation needs to undertake the task of combating communalism seriously not only at the political level, more importantly at the ideological level.

At the same time, we should also not lose sight of the fact that several Islamic fundamental outfits are trying to misguide minority community – particularly the youth – and seek to create tensions and conflicts in different parts of the country. This again is disrupting class unity and communal harmony.

The working class, because of its class position and its role in the production system is naturally the most effective force in fighting communalism and therefore it has the greatest potentiality to be at the forefront of the struggle against communalism. It is the task of the trade unions, of the CITU in particular, to ensure that the working class actually plays its due role.

Today, considerable sections of the working class and the middle class are more or less under the influence of the *hindutva* forces. To fight communalism, special steps are necessary for eradication of communal influence from the minds of the working class. This should be the foremost long-term task of the trade unions and for the CITU for that matter. It is not easy to eradicate ideas deep-rooted in human mind. This task has to

be carried out as a part of the day-to-day trade union work. To be effective, the effort for secularising the workers must have to be blended with the class struggle of the working class.

Fight against terrorism is another important task before us. This fight is crucial for defending the democratic fabric of the society and strengthening the democratic path of struggle. We have to counter terrorism of all hues – one fanned by the religious fanatics and parochial forces and another camouflaged by so called leftwing extremism and ultimately playing in the hands of extreme rightist forces. We have noted as to how the communal forces play communal cards in the garb of so called anti-terrorism. We have also noticed how the terrorist outfits of various brands pose themselves as champions against exploitation and deprivation of the common people or a particular segment among them in support of their terrorist activities. In fact, terrorism seeks to flourish and sustain itself on resentment and anguish among the people owing to injustice, oppression, exploitation and deprivation let loose by the exploitative regime but finally acts in hampering and weakening the peoples' struggle against exploitation, injustice and deprivation. The terrorist forces also play into the hands of imperialism and help the imperialist forces in their vulgar ploy of legitimising imperialist aggression in the garb of combating terrorism. The working class movement have to firmly oppose terrorism of all hues, campaign among the people to expose the damaging impact of terrorist path on the democratic movement which ultimately abets exploiters and imperialists.

The CITU must undertake these overdue tasks with due seriousness and urgency in the forthcoming period.

13. SOCIAL ISSUES

Yet another threat that looms large before the working class of India is the ever-increasing attempts by the casteist forces to divide the working people on caste lines, seeking to achieve political clout through caste appeals.

The present phase of disastrous pursuit of liberalisation-globalisation policies has only served to complicate the situation further. The jobless - rather job-loss - growth pattern has given rise to acute discontent among the youth, which the casteist forces are seeking to utilise for their own ends.

The UPA Government in its NCMP made a commitment for introducing job reservation in private sector. The employer-class has strongly come out against any reservation in private sector; instead they are talking of 'affirmative action', which is a vague concept.

We should take a positive view on the reservation issue. The provision for reservation (for education and jobs) is aimed at compensating the so-called lower castes for the centuries-long deprivation that they have undergone. These communities have suffered discrimination and been denied equal opportunities in the past. Hence, the reservations are a sort of compensatory discrimination in their favour. We must, therefore, resolutely counter the 'anti-reservation' moves, as they reflect the machinations of vested interests to maintain the *status quo*. We must come out strongly in favour of a legislation to ensure reservation for SC/ST and OBC communities in private sector.

Yet another feature of casteism is the resort to violence as a tool to sustain the caste domination and its practices of several forms of social oppression, which is the most pernicious manifestation of casteism. The worst forms of untouchability practiced against the Scheduled Castes, which is among the lowest rung in the caste order, is the most cruel and flagrant violation of human rights. We must resolutely raise our voice against social oppression.

Sachar Committee's report depicts the sorry state of affairs on employment front for the minority muslim community. Similar is the situation with other minorities. Suitable space has to be provided for them to ensure that the development process is inclusive.

Women in India have been the worst victims of both the

communal and economic offensives. Atrocities and discrimination against women have increased alarmingly. Sexual abuse and vulgar commercialisation of women, as part of fast spreading consumerist culture, have all added to their agonies. The women workers face job losses, suffer inequality in wages and service conditions and work in most unsafe environments. The working class must take up the issues of women's empowerment and fight against the manifold oppression and atrocities they are subjected to. We have also to continue our fight for realising the long pending demand for 33 per cent reservation for women in all legislative bodies.

It is, therefore, necessary for us in the CITU to address these social issues, apart from addressing the economic issues of the working class.

14. TRADE UNION EDUCATION

Intensive trade union education has always been recognised as an important means to strengthen the trade union organisation and movement. The Bhubaneswar document laid great emphasis on education and training of cadres. The document also noted that in the context of the growing ideological offensive of world capitalism, trade union education assumed greater importance. But in subsequent reviews it has been revealed that our performance in this regard is poor. The largest share of failure is, of course, on the part of the CITU Centre itself. Only in the recent years, the CITU Centre has made some serious efforts to organise a regular programme of trade union education. Comrade BTR's birth centenary year was chosen to start the process. Three central trade union schools were organised. One at Thiruvananthapuram for the southern region, was conducted in English. The Hindi region school was held at Delhi and was conducted in Hindi. The Eastern regional school, held in Kolkata, was conducted in Bengali. The subjects were: (1) Revolutionary trade unionism and reformist trade unionism (2) Communalism and Casteism (3) Present day capitalism and New Economic Policies (4) Organisation (5) Present situation and our tasks.

This was the first attempt by the CITU Centre to organise a central trade union school. Due to lack of adequate preparation and other shortcomings, the schools did not attain the desired success and drew some criticism from the comrades who attended. But it was hailed as a good beginning and there was a demand that the effort should continue.

The CITU has the proud privilege of founding a permanent trade union school and a research centre in memory of our founder General Secretary late Comrade P. Ramamurti. Attempt is on to get a plot of land for a building to house the school. Collection of fund for the purpose is also in progress. However, it was later decided to start trade union classes early under the auspices of the school instead of waiting for the building to come up. Accordingly it was planned to start another series of central trade union classes in the three regions. Already three-day trade union classes have been held for the Hindi region at the CITU Centre. Drawing on the earlier experience, this time the classes were much better organised and conducted in all respects and the participants expressed satisfaction.

Due to elections and other important programmes, it has not been possible to organise classes in the other two regions. It may reasonably be expected that it will be possible to organise classes for the remaining regions soon after this Conference.

It is heartening that some State Committees have, from time to time, organised classes for the State, district or union level cadres. The CITU Centre has provided teachers' whenever required. While it is the responsibility of the CITU Centre to conduct classes at central level, it is equally the responsibility of the State Committees to organise classes at other levels. While some State Committees are discharging this responsibility, many are defaulting in this important task. The sooner such State Committees become conscious of this responsibility, the better. The CITU Centre will always be ready to assist them.

It was also conceived by the CITU Working Committee meeting at Bhopal and subsequently decided by the General Council in its last meeting held at Ranchi in July 2006 that our initiative

for the P Ramamurti Memorial Trade Union School should also associate our fraternal trade union movements viz. Banks, Insurance, State and Central Govt Employees, Telecom etc. in setting up and running the school. Governing Council will be constituted with the representatives of the fraternal trade union organisations. Meanwhile, we are pursuing our quest for securing a plot of land. What is not progressing much is the collections for the P Ramamurti Memorial Fund and many State Committees are in default in fulfilling their quota. The State Committees should take expeditious steps to fulfil their quota of contributions for this fund, detailed information in respect of which is furnished separately.

15. COMRADE P RAMAMURTI CENTENARY

The birth centenary year of our Founder General Secretary Comrade P. Ramamurti begins on September 20, 2007.

The life of Com. P R, as he was affectionately called, is one of incessant struggle, full of sacrifices, incarceration and imprisonment, a life of confrontation not only with the ruling classes but also with the anti-democratic and feudal traditions.

Comrade P R was a man of exceptional quality and ability, He was a mass leader, builder of the trade union movement, powerful mass speaker and a brilliant parliamentarian, effective journalist, writer of agitational pamphlets and polemical ideological documents, able organiser and educator.

Paying his tributes to 'The Indomitable P R', Com. B T Ranadive recounted his contribution in the following words; "When the CITU was formed in 1970, PR was the obvious choice for the strategic and leading post of the General Secretary. His ripe experience, his all India prestige as a trade union leader and leader of the CPI(M) were bound to be helpful to the organisation. And they did help in rapidly spreading the appeal of CITU and enabling it to emerge as a leading centre of the trade union movement. He was quick to understand the trend of discussions at the foundation conference of the CITU. The delegates were bursting with anger at the reformist leadership

of Dange and others. There was danger that the new organisation would lose its bearings and embroil itself only in disputes and wordy battles with the AITUC. PR proposed that within a month of the inaugural session, the unions and State Committees should undertake a week's campaign for trade union unity. This was done and the organisation was set on correct rails".

We must decide at this Conference to observe the centenary year of Com. P Ramamurti by way of organising seminars, memorial lectures, bringing out publications, organising trade union classes and many other ways. The CITU Secretariat will chalk out a comprehensive plan in this regard immediately after this Conference.

16. ON ORGANISATION

Organisation continues to be a major concern for us. There has been some improvement but it is hardly more than marginal and uneven in coverage.

Membership is an important index of health and strength of an organisation. We have not reached our target of 40 lakhs membership even today though the target was fixed in the 10th Conference, to be reached before the 11th Conference. Though the membership is below the target, the membership for 2005 is close to the target: from 33,31,474 in 2003 it has increased to nearly 39 lakhs, an increase of about 5 lakhs during the three years since the Eleventh Conference. But this figure conceals a number of serious shortcomings. Four States, Gujarat, Goa, Madhya Pradesh and J&K reported no new affiliation and membership. Of the total membership of around 39 lakhs, West Bengal and Kerala together account for 24 lakhs, with the share of all other states remaining 15 lakhs. Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh showed a membership of around 3 lakhs each; Karnataka accounts for around 119000; Tripura has around 134000; all other States have below 1 lakh membership only. The scenario is certainly not very encouraging.

We have noted that Hindi speaking States have to work in difficult conditions and their weaknesses are persisting. The CITU Centre has been regularly organising meetings of leadership of Hindi speaking States, to guide and help them in organisational consolidation. In consultation with the leadership of the Hindi speaking States, a detailed questionnaire outlining the organisational tasks was prepared, based on which the concerned State Committees were to discuss and chalk out their plan for organisational advance. Very few State Committees responded to the same in a structured manner, thereby reflecting the very unorganised and directionless state of thinking in the matter of organisation. This is getting reflected in the stagnation and decline in some areas.

In this connection, one aspect should be taken note of. Since the last conference, the activities of CITU, in both nationwide programmes and State level movements, have increased considerably. There have been numerous movements and struggles covering all the States, including the weaker ones. Unfortunately, such successful actions could not always be converted into our organisational strength. For example, the successful continuous strike action by around 20,000 spinning mill workers of Panipat in Haryana in two spells in 2004 and 2006, singularly under the leadership of CITU, compelled the employers and the State administration to concede some of the major demands. But only a small segment of these workers could be enrolled in the CITU union. Similar instances can be cited elsewhere as well. The root of this failure lies in our inability to handle the struggles with a proper organisational approach, ineffective organisational machinery and lack of consciousness to address the post-struggle organisational tasks. The Bhubaneswar document has specifically laid down the guidelines to handle such tasks but we failed to keep them in view, not to speak of putting into practice.

Our industry-level federations are also important instruments of struggles and expansion. The functioning of our federations also requires a lot of improvement, if they are to discharge their organisational tasks effectively. The CITU leads ten such federations in coal, steel, construction, road transport,

plantation, water-front, anganwadi, electricity, beedi, FCI, medical representatives etc, besides having a leading role in the federations of petroleum and defence-production. Besides, we have coordination committees in many industries, having its units all over the country. Most of the federations, barring one or two, remained functional during the intervening period and in certain sectors—such as coal, steel, anganwadi, petroleum, road transport, construction, medical representatives and electricity our federations took initiative to build up all India campaigns and struggles. In other sectors, though many struggles were organised at the State level, the role of all India federations in building up an all India movement with common demands was not that visible. Such weakness resulted in our failure to expand our influence and membership in the concerned industries in the weaker states. Yet another weakness of most of the federations is the failure to develop an effective functional team of all India leadership.

17. ORGANISATION: CERTAIN ISSUES OF CONCERN

The present organisational profile of CITU in the background of fast changes in the composition and character of the industrial economy is becoming a matter of concern.

The unevenness in the organisational situation is one of the major problem. Unevenness persists not only between the States, but also between the industries, within the industry and also within the State.

Beyond our traditional stronghold States, our presence in the organised sector, particularly in major industries, is minimal in other States. Side by side, we could yet reach only a very small segment of the vast unorganised sector workforce even in those States, where we have little presence in the major organised sector industries. There is no such State where we are very weak in organised sector but decisively strong in unorganised sector. Our weakness in organising the major section of the unorganised sector workers is very much prevalent in our stronghold States also.

CHANGES IN COMPOSITION

Further, trade union presence in the industrial units and establishments that have come up in the organised sector, particularly in the post liberalisation period, is yet to be visible.

We are thus faced with a peculiar situation. One, under neoliberal policy regime, organised sector is shrinking fast and within the organised sector a big section of workforce is developing with the service conditions similar to that of unorganised sector through the process of contractorisation and outsourcing. Micro, tiny or very small manufacturing units are employing this new section of unorganised sector workers, which operate within the boundary of organised sector framework and are dependent on the bigger organised sector units. In this situation our already weak position in the organised sector is getting further weakened owing to our failure to organise this unorganised workforce operating within the organised sector industries.

The unorganised sector is expanding fast and it is no longer confined to manual and low skill occupations. Highly mechanised production processes and skilled occupations are also coming within this unorganised sector framework. Simultaneously, owing to technological advance and also crisis in agriculture, agricultural employment is declining and a new section of non-agricultural workforce is emerging in miscellaneous occupations in the rural areas. This can become a potential force in the trade union movement, if organised. But our work in the unorganised sector remained mostly limited to a very small segment of the traditionally unorganised sector. Even in the traditionally unorganised sector occupations, we could reach out to only a small segment both in terms of workers and type of occupations/trades.

18. PERSPECTIVE FOR ORGANISATIONAL INITIATIVE

The expansion of CITU activities has to be planned in the backdrop of above scenario. We have to consolidate our position in the organised sector with a well thought-out

institutions consciously encourage them. The NGOs deliberately create confusion amongst trade union cadres as if they are acting in concert with the trade unions in the concerned area of activities. These NGOs usually get heavy foreign funding from different sources and their source of funding also depends on as to how many trade unions they could associate with their activities.

19.2 The Government, media, and even the ILO are trying to create a wrong impression that the trade unions are neglecting the workers in the unorganised sector and only the NGOs are working among them. This is nothing but a ploy to malign the trade unions and wean the workers away from their influence. We have to counter such malicious campaign against the trade union movement. Trade unions are organisations of workers and accountable to them. The NGOs, on the other hand, are not membership-based organisations of workers and hence not accountable to them; they are accountable only to their donors. The NGOs cannot, therefore, replace the trade unions.

An NGO, however good it may be, is not a class organisation; nor its programmes envisage confrontation or conflict with the capitalist class. The ruling class and the Governments are making conscious efforts to give the NGOs a larger space than for the trade unions and sometimes replace the trade unions by the NGOs. This has now become an international phenomenon. This is advantageous for the ruling class since the advocacy process by NGOs remains confined to reconciliation with the capitalist system; it never questions or challenges the efficacy of the capitalist system as such.

The trade union movement is an instrument of class struggle and thus the TUs have to defend as well as expand their space within the working class to carry on and sharpen the struggle as their prime task. Thus, we must have a clear approach towards the activities and our relationship with the NGOs. We must also note that many a times trade unions' weakness and failure to work with continuity among - and effectively intervene on the issues of - the unorganised sector workers allow the NGOs to occupy a larger space among them. We have to over

Mass Rally





Cultural group singing



Homage at Martyrs' column



Chittoda addressing



Foreign delegations



Rally-Participants



come this weakness. At the same time, we have to make cautious judgment of the activities of the NGOs. We cannot allow ourselves to be dependent on them or driven by their agenda, nor should we allow the NGOs to usurp the role of trade unions.

20. THE TASK AHEAD

Comrades, the present situation facing us poses formidable challenges but it offers tremendous opportunity as well. The neo-liberal economic model is incapable of offering even a minimum solace to the mass of the people, facing a profound crisis in their lives. The economy has never before witnessed this perverse development of increasing growth rate in GDP being accompanied by unmitigated sufferings of the people. This is reflected in the increasing protests from all corners of the country and from all segments of the population. The working class movement, as the most organised segment of the common populace, has to convert this rising disillusionment against the neoliberal policies into countrywide organised struggle for change in the policy regime.

The political scenario facing us is of a complex character. The ruling polity is not strong enough to retain itself in power on its own and thus cannot pursue their anti-people policies without hurdles. But in the face of opposition to their policies by the working class and democratic movement, the ruling polity is becoming increasingly desperate to push through their neoliberal agenda at any cost. They are focusing on curbing labour rights, both through administration and legislative channels, as they perceive the working class movement to be the most potential threat and obstacle in their path. In this backdrop, the country has witnessed bitter struggles by the working people in defence of labour rights and against aggressive violation of all labour laws by the employer-class, with the help of the State administration.

In this background, the concerted intervention by the working class movement against the anti-people policy regime is of crucial importance. It has the potential to turn the events and

force the ruling class to make a retreat. In fact, the dependence of the present ruling combine at the Centre on the Left parties signals the weakening of the grip of ideology of the ruling class on the people. The working class movement has made a formidable contribution to this phenomenon. The working class movement must take vigorous initiative to mobilise all sections of the people in the resistance struggle against the retrograde economic policies. In the process, it can pave the way for developing the objective conditions for emergence of the third force with a common pro-people policy approach and a clear anti-imperialist content. The CITU has to take initiative in rallying the entire working class movement in that direction.

With this task before us, the CITU must prepare itself organisationally to develop and lead a broad-based peoples' movement and ensure broadest mobilisation of people countrywide. Our immediate task is to build up joint activities and mobilisations along with like-minded unions and mass organisations of our own stream, to create objective conditions for the re-emergence of the NPMO. This initiative must continue side by side with other joint action programmes on the trade union front.

This initiative should be unleashed at the grass-root level as well. Our State Committees, district committees and enterprise level unions have to make conscious efforts to rally other sections of the people and their mass organisations in the struggle ahead. Our experience is that wherever serious efforts are made, the trade union movement could effectively enlist active support of the peasantry, students, youth etc in the common struggle.

We must set our own house in order, strengthen and consolidate our organisation at all levels, to be able to rally others. Without a strong CITU, there cannot be an effective united trade union struggle, nor a broader people's action is possible. We must realise this potential of ours in unleashing powerful mass actions and make serious drive to take the CITU organisation to further heights in order to meet the forthcoming challenges.

A bigger struggle awaits us. Anti-privatisation struggle has already gained momentum with the action programmes unleashed by the workers of NALCO, Neyvelli Lignite and NMDC, with a loud and clear message that 'privatisation drive shall not pass'. The massive success of the General Strike of 14th December is a pointer to the readiness of the people to resist forcefully the neoliberal policies.

With this perspective, this 12th CONFERENCE of CITU should formulate its immediate tasks as under:

- Wage a sustained and relentless struggle to reverse the neo-liberal economic policies.
- Carry forward the fight against the dangers of communalism and terrorism.
- Make the demand for "Right to Work as fundamental right" a central slogan in all our campaigns and struggle against the neoliberal economic polices
- Intensify and widen solidarity actions in support of bitter struggles going on at various parts of the country against repression and onslaught on labour rights and violation of labour laws.
- Demand for implementation of labour laws and resistance against violations to be taken up as the central issue of the trade union campaign and actions countrywide
- Intensify campaign on immediate enactment of comprehensive and separate legislations for unorganised sector workers and agricultural workers.
- Intensify activities among unorganised sector workers to focus on immediate legislation statutory coverage and enforcement of Minimum Wages Act and 'equal pay for men and women workers'
- Mainstream the emerging struggles of the workers and employees in various sectors and industries.
- Integrate the struggles of organised and unorganised sector workers. Unions of organised sector workers

must take initiative in raising the issues of unorganised sector workers

- Organise campaigns and struggles against attacks on existing social security benefits and fight for comprehensive social security for all.
- Intervene to ensure proper implementation of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act and campaign for its extension to the whole of the country and for including urban households as well.
- Make serious efforts to revitalise the Sponsoring Committee of Trade Unions and the National Platform of Mass Organisations to launch massive mobilisations throughout the country
- Strive to achieve the target of 50-lakh membership at the earliest, through consistent and vigorous membership drive.
- Establish the P. Ramamurti Institute of Trade Union Education and Research in the near future.
- Organise trade union education at regular intervals as an integral part of the CITU activities at all levels of organisation.
- Organise intensive and structured discussion on the document on “ Cadre Development and Trade Union Movement” finalised by CITU Working Committee meeting held at Bhopal in last December 2005 at all levels of organisation.

We must take up these tasks with all seriousness to effectively enable ourselves to play our destined role. Our independent initiative must be heightened considerably to create ground for broader and meaningful unity of the toiling people in the struggle against the exploitative system.

The opposition to onslaughts of neoliberalism has been mounting worldwide. The worldwide resistance movements are reasserting the truth that class struggle is the driving force for change and that struggle will advance through many ups and downs, defying all repressions and attempts at unprincipled

compromises.

The inhuman face of the present capitalist order - the imperialist globalisation – stands thoroughly exposed. It can in no way be camouflaged by any talk of giving it a human face. History will move in the direction it is destined to, and its driving force – the class struggle - will grow in strength and spread, transcending the roadblocks that the ruling classes may attempt to place in its path. The working class must imbibe this dynamics of socio-economic development and direct its energy towards replacing this inhuman social order, defeating all adversaries and those who advocate capitulation and compromise.

We must have confidence in the ultimate triumph of the people all over the world. Nuclear weapons and militarism will not be allowed to exercise hegemony over the world! It is the people who will decide their own destiny!

Let all the unions of the CITU rise to the occasion in achieving these objectives! Shed all lethargy wherever it exists; streamline our organisation so that we can emerge victorious!

- Long live the unity of working class and the toiling people in the struggle to defeat the policies of globalisation!
- Down with imperialist machinations to subjugate the world!
- Long live the struggle to achieve Socialism!
- Long live CITU!
- Workers of the World Unite!

Chittabrata Majumdar
General Secretary

DEBATE ON GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

SUMMING UP

Chittabrata Majumdar

Fifty-one comrades took part in the deliberate on General Secretary's Report and made many constructive criticisms and suggestions. Various shortcomings and weaknesses have been pointed out by the comrades at various level of organisation including the CITU Centre in building up appropriate response to the various crucial developments in the intervening period, in addressing the issues and problems facing the working class movement, in building up struggles and mobilizations, and in organisational activities. As for example, CITU Centre's failure to respond to Nithari killings in UP, inadequate emphasis on women's reservation issue, failure to activate the NPMO, failure to maintain continuity in our initiative on "right to work" movement etc have been pointed out. But concrete suggestions for action to overcome those shortcomings did not come up much in the deliberations. Nevertheless, most of those are valid criticisms and we have to overcome those shortcomings in the days to come through conscious organisational effort at all level.

CONSTRUCTIVE DELIBERATION

But amidst all criticisms and pointers, certain important points must not escape our attention. The deliberations in the conference broadly endorsed the political-organisational formulations and the basic direction of our activities outlined in the General Secretary's report; rather strengthened the formulations on many counts. Secondly, criticisms basically reflected the concerns among the comrades over making the intervention by the working class movement more effective on all political, economic and social developments and CITU's

frontline role in the same, to be in tune with the historic responsibility of the working class to mobilise entire people in the struggle against exploitation and injustice. We must welcome such expression of concern at all levels of organisation which, as such, is reflective of a constant urge for more effectiveness in all our activities. And this urge must constantly drive us in overcoming our weaknesses and shortcomings.

COMBATING THE ONSLAUGHTS

Many comrades raised the issue of continuing repression and atrocities on the trade unions with active patronage of the Govt and rightly pointed out that such repression and onslaught cannot be combated merely within the confines of the trade union movement. Some comrades suggested that the situation warrants more effective intervention at the political level to prevent demoralisation. But to make such intervention at the political level effective and deliver some results at least, the struggle against repression must take the character of a broader peoples' mobilisation and cannot remain confined within just the periphery of workplace. Widespread solidarity action has to be organised to combat such repression. Wherever we could organise such solidarity actions involving mass of the people we have been able to confront and tackle the situation more effectively. Our recent experiences of struggle against repression in Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Karnataka, Punjab and UP etc corroborate such understanding. Political intervention, if it means taking up the issue at the ministerial level or raising the matter in Parliament, may deliver some result only when it is backed by militant and widespread solidarity mobilisations at least at the State level, which can generate some pressure on the administration. Nevertheless, these struggles, whether they could finally succeed or not, contributed immensely in brightening the fighting image of CITU among the workers in the States and what is required in this context is our conscious follow up effort to consolidate the same in terms of concrete organisation. We must admit, we have serious lacunae in this regard.

We must note that the ongoing attacks on labour rights and

repression on the trade union movement under the neoliberal economic policy framework are being promoted by the Govt. as a matter of policy drive. When the Economic Survey (2005-06) published by the Govt. of India makes such formulation that the States in which labour administration is more protective to labour lose out in employment generating investments, it becomes clear that the Governance itself seeks to indulge in violation of all basic labour rights on the plea of so called investment friendliness. Such formulation exposes the evil design of most of the Govt.s in the matter of basic labour rights and we have to fight the battle both at political and workplace level in an integrated manner, giving more thrust on organising more and more solidarity mobilisations and expanding linkage with the peoples' movement.

PRICE RISE – THE REAL FACE

It has been rightly pointed out that the phenomenon of continuing price rise has not been adequately analysed in the Report. Although the Report dealt with the issue, what is lacking is the emphasis it deserves. This aspect affects the entire populace and the trade union movement must campaign and build united struggle against the menacing price rise exposing the anti-people character of the economic policy framework. It is by no way the inflation sparked by a growing economy as being shamelessly argued by the Finance Minister to befool the people; it is the result of conscious policy-drive by the Govt. Working class intervention on the issue of price rise must also expose this evil design of the kulak and corporate friendly Govt. in fuelling the prices while building up united peoples' agitation against such policies.

FIGHTING TERRORISM

It has also been pointed out that the Report while dealing exhaustively on the danger of communalism and the attendant tasks of the TU movement, ignored the problems of terrorist activities. This is a right criticism. The issue has been missed owing to inadvertence. Fight against terrorism is another important task before us and this is crucial for defending the

democratic fabric of the society and strengthening the democratic path of struggle. We have to counter terrorism of all hues – one fanned by the religious fanatics and parochial forces and another camouflaged by so called leftwing extremism and ultimately playing in the hands of extreme rightist and reactionary forces. We have noted as to how the communal forces play communal cards in the garb of so called anti-terrorism. We have also noticed how the terrorist outfits of various brands pose themselves as champions against exploitation and deprivation of the common people or a particular segment among them in support of their terrorist activities. In fact terrorism seeks to flare and sustain itself on resentment and anguish among the people owing to injustice, oppression, exploitation and deprivation let loose by the exploitative regime but finally acts in hurdling and weakening the peoples' struggle against the exploitation, injustice and deprivation. The terrorist forces also play in the hands of imperialism and help the imperialist forces in their vulgar ploy of legitimising imperialist aggression in the garb of combating terrorism. The working class movement has to firmly oppose terrorism of all hues, campaign among the people to expose the damaging impact of terrorist path on the democratic movement which ultimately abets exploiters and imperialists.

UNORGANISED SECTOR – THE REAL CHALLENGE!

Some comrades, while dealing on the issues of unorganised sector counterposed the problem to our over-involvement with organised sector. It must be understood that the matter is not one of organized sector versus unorganized sector, as we sometime pose by mistake. The Report has dealt on this aspect in detail and formulated the tasks for both the sectors. Is their a single case of a State, where we could not make much headway in the organised sector but are in a dominant position in the unorganised sector either in terms of membership or in terms of our intervening capacity? I think none. We may rather find some states, where we are reasonably strong in the organised sector but take very little initiative for organizing the unorganised sector workers. What does this observation suggest? As the report has already pointed out in concrete

terms, we have to make headway in the organized sector and we can ignore this task only at our peril since struggle by the workers of all the strategic industries and establishments like transport, mining, telecommunication, energy including coal, electricity and petroleum etc have the potential of shaking the ruling class. At the same time we have to expand ourselves in the unorganised sector with vigorous effort since this sector employs the overwhelming majority of the workforce in the country. And again, the entire unorganised sector is not a homogeneous entity and we have to draw segment and occupation specific strategy to organise various segments of unorganised sector workers. On this also the Report has dealt in required details. Counter posing one against another will only result in blurring our vision to identify our own shortcomings, thereby hurdling the much required remedial measures. Better, we should try to avoid it.

NGO, SELF-HELP GROUPS ETC

The issue of self-help groups (SHG) and cooperatives also came up in the discussion. It appears, there are illusions among the comrades about their efficacy. No doubt, self help groups may be an effective instrument of organising the people particularly from the poorest strata of the society in the democratic movement. But even that aspect also depends on as to who are leading those self-help groups. Dominance by NGOs in the SHGs will not help making the SHGs a component of the democratic movement. Rather, it may push them in the opposite direction. Same dichotomy exists in the cooperative movement as well. Both SHGs and cooperatives are effective instruments of organising people provided they are led by the movement of the toiling people with a clear perception of advancing the struggle as the main task. They are all instruments or intermediary stage of bringing the people together and not an end by itself.

In this context, the concrete observation and formulation made on the NGOs in the General Secretary's report warrants particular attention. The mushrooming of NGOs in the era of neoliberalism is not a phenomenon in our country alone, it is

an international phenomenon. Most of them are foreign funded and are driven by the donors' agenda to occupy the space of the mass and class organizations and weaken the democratic movement.

DIRECTION OF STRUGGLES

Comrades, the deliberations of the conference have broadly endorsed the formulation and direction set by the General Secretary's Report. And the direction is to carry the united struggle of the working class against the exploitative regime to further heights and convert the same to a peoples' struggle. It is because of consistent struggle by the working class against neoliberal economic policies since 1991, which led to broadening of platform of struggles over the years and its political fall out, the country has reached to the point of being governed by a political combine which is dependent on the Left Parties.

We have to set our organisation in this perspective. CITU has to expand its base to command the capacity of mobilising others in the struggle. We have also to take initiative to activise NPMO and to begin with, we have to start effectively mobilising our own stream of mass organisations in action, breaking the barrier of being limited merely making joint statements. We have already decided this and reiterated our decisions in successive meeting of the General Councils and Working Committees but did precious little. We cannot afford to continue with this inaction of our own segment of NPMO at the central level.

We have already started spadework in that direction with an optimism to advance in this direction. We have had a round of talk with All India Kisan Sabha. To start with we propose to observe an ALL INDIA CAMPAIGN DAY jointly with All India Kisan Sabha and All India Agricultural Workers' Union in 1st week of March 2007 through countrywide mobilisation in all districts and industrial centres on the following demands/issues:

1. Against price rise
2. Strengthening Public Distribution System

3. Universalisation of the Employment Guarantee Act to include urban unemployed also
4. Comprehensive legislation on service conditions and social security for Unorganised Sector Workers and Agricultural Workers separately
5. Regularisation of Anganwadi workers and helpers
6. On SEZ related issues

We have also to go in for vigorous struggle from independent platform of CITU for immediate enactment of comprehensive legislation on Unorganised Sector Workers. All India Coordination Committee of Unorganised Sector Workers has already decided to go in for countrywide strike action on this demand. We have to draw a detailed programme of phased campaign and agitations to culminate into countrywide strike action on this demand involving the entire working class. The CITU Secretariat will finalise the date of strike. It is possible to draw other trade unions into this struggle and condition for the same can be created by our independent campaign and agitation.

This conference is taking place in the backdrop of massive countrywide united general strike of 14th December 2006 on 16-point demands against the anti-people economic policy of the Govt. We have to carry forward this united struggle to further height through militant mobilisation of the entire working class in the forthcoming period. To draw further course of actions by the united platform of struggle, we have to hold consultations with other trade unions and it is expected that at the time of budget session of Parliament next phase of joint campaign and agitation on the same 16 - point demands would commence. We have to keep ourselves prepared for the same.

The initiative for next phase of united struggle would be accompanied by various sectoral actions for which the process has already been initiated. The Committee of Public Sector Trade Unions (CPSTU) has already decided in its extended session held in November 2006 at Bangalore to hold an all india convention of public sector unions against the anti-worker guidelines of Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) on the

7th round wage revision for PSU workers during the initial phase of budget session of Parliament. On the day following the convention, a massive demonstration will be organised before Parliament on the same issue. The All India Joint Convention will also chalk out phased programme of campaign and agitation, including direct actions demanding scrapping of the DPE guideline. One day before the All India Convention, the All India Coordination Committee of Public Sector Unions (CITU) will meet at Delhi.

As conceived by the successive Working Committee and General Council meetings of CITU, and reiterated by the Commission discussion on 'Menace of Contractorisation and Outsourcing', we have to organise an All India Convention of Contractor Workers to launch countrywide campaign and agitation demanding concrete legislative and administrative action against unlawful contractorisation of regular and permanent work and for proper wages and social security benefits for contract workers pending regularisation of contract workers deployed in permanent and perennial jobs.

ORGANISATION

Side by side with the agitational activities and also to make such activities more effective and all embracing, we have to take up the organisational tasks as well with all seriousness. The most important aspect of this aspect is strengthen democratic functioning of the organization at all levels to unleash all round organizational initiative and develop more equipped cadres from among the workers. We require large number of cadres to spread the organisation to vast section of workers yet unorganised. For that we have to develop leading cadres from among the workers themselves to act as CITU organisers in all the workplaces. Towards this end, we have to equip our cadres ideologically and organisationally if we are to discharge our crucial task of politicalising the mass of the workers.

We have to continue with the educational programmes with regular frequency along with other activities. And the current

year – the Centenary year of our founder General Secretary P Ramamurti, should be specially observed by all our affiliate units and associate organizations through intense educational activities, through organising trade union schools, seminars and symposia on ideological and movemental issues. At the same time, we have to vigorously pursue the task of building the P Ramamurti Memorial Trade Union School and Research Centre to accomplish the target at the earliest. I also take this opportunity to remind the defaulting State Committees of their commitment to fulfill the quota of P Ramamurti Memorial Fund.

To conclude, CITU pledges to fight for change of the exploitative order towards the socialist alternative. All our activities thus must aim at politicalising the mass of the workers through experience of day-to-day struggle, simultaneous drive to imbibe class outlook among them and equip them ideologically. Ideological struggle against the offensive of the de-ideologisation by the capitalist class is thus a crucial task before us and we must pursue the same with all seriousness.

(This summing speech was the last contribution of Comrade Chittabrata Majumdar and as such it will be a treasure for the CITU)

TASKS ON THE WORKING WOMEN FRONT

The 12th Conference of CITU endorses the reports adopted in the 8th Convention of the All India Coordination Committee of Working Women held on 3-5 November 2006 in Visakhapatnam and calls upon the State committees and affiliated unions to ensure proper implementation of the tasks adopted in that Convention.

CITU believes that achieving working class unity requires bringing the large section of women workers into the mainstream trade union movement. It is the firm opinion of CITU that issues of working women are not the concern of women alone but form part of the concerns of the working class and need to be addressed by the trade union movement. It is with this understanding and with the objective of organising women workers and ensuring that they occupy their due place in the trade union movement, that the CITU has formed the All India Coordination Committee of Working Women (CITU) in 1979.

Today women workers constitute 22.72% of the membership of CITU, as per the annual returns. But considering that several unions do not show women membership while filing annual returns, the actual proportion of women members in the CITU membership would be around 25%. The number of women participating in the campaigns and struggles led by the CITU has also increased considerably. Many women workers, particularly the anganwadi workers, have been active not only in their unions but also help in organising other sections of workers as well. It is necessary to train and develop them further to take up more responsibilities in the CITU.

Today CITU has more women members in its decision-making bodies compared to a few years ago. While this is a welcome feature, we also have to note that this does not reflect the increasing proportion of women members in CITU. This 12th Conference of CITU declares that the CITU will continue with

its endeavour to ensure more women in its leadership. Given the chance, women can and have proved themselves capable of leading not only unions with only women members but also other unions.

The 12th Conference of CITU endorses the following organisational tasks recommended by the 8th Convention of the AICCWW:

1. Organise a workshop at the national level with the central and State leadership of CITU and the CCWW to develop a clearer understanding of the role of the CCWWs at different levels.
2. Form State CCWWs in all states and district CCWWs wherever possible and ensure their effective functioning under the guidance of the respective committees of CITU.
3. Form women's sub committees in all the CITU affiliated unions with considerable number of women members; discuss their functioning in State CCWW meetings and make efforts to ensure that they function regularly
4. Organise wide campaigns on the demands of working women and make efforts to ensure that the State Committees of CITU discuss and plan campaigns and mobilisations of working women on their specific demands, at local/ district/ State level as possible
5. Make serious efforts to organise different sections of women workers in the unorganised sector including home based workers. Identify areas/ sectors where women work in large numbers and decide priorities after discussing in the State Committees of CITU and prepare objective and concrete plans to organise them
6. Make efforts to increase the representation of women in the decision making bodies of CITU and its affiliated unions at various levels
7. Hold regular trade union classes separately for working women; ensure adequate participation of women trade union activists in the regular classes of CITU.

CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS

ON GREETINGS TO WORKING CLASS OF KARNATAKA

This Twelfth Conference of CITU, being held at Bangalore (Karnataka) on January 17 - 21, 2007 conveys warm greetings to the working class of the Karnataka State for their frontline role in the united struggle of the toiling people against the onslaughts on the national economy as well as on their rights and livelihood.

This Conference expresses gratitude to the working people of the State whose mighty support - physical, material and financial - to the CITU could make such spectacular arrangement of this mammoth five-day conference of 2500 delegates a reality.

This Conference noted with pride last eventful three years of trade union activities in the state since our 11th conference, both in the organised and unorganised sectors which reflected the assertive role of the working class in defence of the rights of the toiling people and also in building up resistance against the anti-people and anti-national economic policies of both the Central and State Govt. On social issues like advancing the rights of the dalits and downtrodden, against communalism etc, the working people had always been in the frontline of all peoples' actions in the State.

Karnataka is the hub of many public sector units and PSU workers' have been the most active and vocal segment of the working class movement in the State. The PSU workers in the State played a crucial role in unitedly asserting themselves through united strikes and other actions against the nefarious game of selling out the PSUs being pursued by successive Governments.

The struggle of the workers of Toyota against the union-busting heinous ploy of the Japanese management with the active patronage of the State administration had been a notable event,

which broadly brought almost the entire trade union movement in the State in Statewide solidarity agitation. The formation of Bangalore United Trade Union Forum in the wake of that struggle is a noteworthy step in uniting the entire trade union movement on the issue of basic labour rights and that Forum must be strengthened in the days to come.

In the organised sector, many struggles were conducted in MICO Audugodi Plant, Geotze Federal Moghul, Vikrant Tyre, Mysore, INDAL (Belgaum), Ralashree Cement, West Coast Paper Mills etc. Among the medium scale industries, a series of struggles was organised at Bangalore, Mysore, Tumkur etc, which secured many achievements for the workers. Agitations were also organised by the Textile Workers at Nanjangud and in and around Bangalore. The struggle put up by the workers of Metal Caps at Bangalore was a heroic one.

In the unorganised sector as well, the toiling people had been on consistent struggle. On the demand for a comprehensive legislation on social security and labour rights, campaigns and mobilisations were organised among various sections of unorganised sector workers separately, such as Panchayat workers, construction workers, hamalis, beedi workers and anganwadi workers. In the process of campaign, the mid-day meal workers in the State have been organised in unions at CITU's initiative. State wide campaign amongst construction workers and agitations thereon led to formation of Construction Workers' Welfare Board and notification of the central scheme by the State Govt. after ten years of its enactment. Similarly, the Anganwadi Union at State level has conducted a series of struggles and made substantial gains. The Gram Panchayat Employees' Union has conducted determined struggles and won several achievements from the Government. The Mid Day Meals workers all over the State have also conducted similar struggles and succeeded in protecting their jobs and in winning further concessions. The Hamali Federation is growing through frequent struggles, campaigns and mobilisation during this period. Our Beedi Workers' Federation had also organised a number of agitations and campaigns. The Tile Workers at Kundapur have consolidated the organisation there and the

influence in Uttara Kannada is being maintained as well. The auto-rickshaw drivers' union of Bangalore has made a mark and is advancing further.

The working class of Karnataka magnificently responded to all the three countrywide General Strike calls since 2004, resulting in a bandh-like situation in the industrial areas and in six-seven districts of the state. The response to the 14th December 2006 General Strike has been even bigger. In fact, riding on the wave of the preparatory campaign for the 14th December strike, the working class of the State generously responded to the preparatory exercise for this historic 12th Conference of CITU, making it a glorious success. This conference once again greets the working class movement of Karnataka!

ON CENTRAL LEGISLATION FOR AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

This Twelfth Conference of CITU, being held at Bangalore (Karnataka) on January 17 - 21, 2007 demands of the UPA Government to immediately enact a comprehensive legislation for agricultural workers, as promised in its National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP), protecting their working conditions and providing social security.

The 8 crore agricultural workers in the country, mostly belonging to the socially oppressed sections of the society like the SC, ST, MBC etc and comprising large proportion of women, are the worst effected by the neo liberal policies of globalisation, being pursued by successive Governments at the Centre.

The organisations of agricultural workers, the trade unions and the democratic movements have been demanding a comprehensive legislation for the agricultural workers since several years. Though a bill was introduced during the Dave Gowda Government, that Government did not last till it was passed. The BJP led NDA Government kept it in the backburner. Though more than half of its tenure is over, the Congress led UPA did not even consider introducing it, though the NCMP clearly committed to enact the legislation.

The capitalist path of development pursued by the ruling classes in India has never seriously addressed the genuine problems and demands of the agricultural workers, the poorest of the poor in our country. The agrarian policies of the Government have so far helped only the landlord sections to accumulate wealth through unscrupulous exploitation of the agricultural workers and the poor peasants. Lack of comprehensive land reforms has resulted in retaining the feudal system in rural India. The age-old caste system and backward social structures, which keep alive the social exclusion and oppression, continue even today, nearly 60 years after we have attained political independence. Whenever the Dalits try to assert themselves, they are attacked and their women raped, as demonstrated in the recent Khairlanji incident.

The neo-liberal policies of globalisation, which have ruined our agriculture, have led to the destitution of a large section of rural masses who depend on agriculture. The shift in cropping patterns from food grains to commercial crops and the introduction of labour displacing machines in various agricultural operations have led to a drastic reduction in the working days for the agricultural workers. Today agricultural workers get work for only around 70 days in a year. These policies have resulted in large-scale migration of agricultural workers to the cities and towns in search of work, leading to a downward push of wages of the unorganised sector workers there. In most of the States no minimum wages have been notified for the agricultural workers; the minimum wages are rarely implemented even in the States where they have been notified. The withdrawal of the State from its responsibility of providing free health and educational facilities for the poor and the dismantling of the Public Distribution System have led to the destitution of the agricultural workers. Around 20,000 agricultural workers have succumbed to starvation deaths in the last 8 years.

Women who constitute around half of the agricultural workers do not get equal wages; they do not have any maternity benefits nor are there any crèche facilities for their children. The

Government has not responded positively to the demand to convert the anganwadi centres under the Integrated Child Development Services Scheme, into day care centres cum crèches, which can provide childcare facilities for the women agricultural workers. The Government has till now not taken serious steps to follow the Supreme Court direction to universalise the ICDS. The demand to provide the service through the anganwadi centres on a permanent basis has also not been conceded by the government.

Though the UPA government has enacted the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, under pressure from the Left, till now it is confined to only 200 rural districts in the country. Contrary to the specific direction in the NREGA rules to avoid contractors, in many districts contractors are involved; job cards are not being given to all the eligible workers; the stipulated minimum wages are not being paid; even the paltry wages are not paid regularly.

This Conference reiterates the firm belief of CITU that agricultural workers are the most reliable allies of the working class not only in its fight to reverse the anti working class and anti people policies of the Government, but also in its struggle to end all exploitation in the society.

This Conference, while extending solidarity to all the struggles of the agricultural workers on their genuine demands, calls upon all the State Committees and affiliated unions to support the agricultural workers in their efforts to organise and launch struggles against the retrograde policies of the Government.

AGAINST PENSION FUND REGULATORY AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BILL

This Twelfth Conference of CITU, being held at Bangalore (Karnataka) on January 17 - 21, 2007 reiterates its firm opposition to the move of the UPA Government to enact the contentious Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority Bill, to push through its dubious New Pension System.

In this, the UPA regime is in fact continuing the measure brought in by the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) Government to shift to a new defined contribution pension scheme for employees recruited since January 2004. The Government employees and trade unions at all levels have been opposing this measure right from the time it was announced by the NDA Government.

The opposition of the trade unions to the New pension System and the PFRDA Bill is on four core issues:

1. Changing the very concept of social security pension from 'Defined benefit' to 'Defined Contribution', thereby imposing deduction from employees' salary in the name of contribution.
2. Privatisation of pension scheme by way of entrusting the pension contribution of the employees to Pension Fund Managers, who are in reality Mutual Fund entities and at the same time making the actual pension quantum dependent on the accruals to be decided by the market forces.
3. Diversion of the social security contributions to the speculative share market.
4. This move is coupled with the proposal to allow Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the pension sector.

Moreover, the New Pension System makes the privatised pension scheme mandatory for the government employees while the General Provident Fund has been made an optional scheme. This is not contemplated even in the Bhattacharya Committee, which went into the question.

While the UPA's Bill states, "the New Pension Scheme is mandatory for new recruits to the Central Government services," it has ominous portents since the Government has been talking of migrating the existing (pre-2004) employees to the New Pension System.

Despite the National Common Minimum Programme commitment that "labour-management relations in our country must be marked by consultations, cooperation and consensus,"

not confrontation”, the PFRDA Bill has been resorted to without any consultations with trade unions, in a blatant violation of this commitment.

The present fiscal-related problem cited by the Government for the unsustainability of the present “Pay As You Go” pension scheme is of its own making. The present pension scheme was introduced in the past as a substitute to the then Contributory Provident Fund Scheme, to which the Central Government had been making a matching contribution. It was replaced by the General Provident Fund with only the contribution by the employees and in lieu of its matching contribution, the Central Government brought in place the present pension scheme. Even the Fifth Pay Commission had recommended retention of the present pension scheme.

The Government, over the past years, merrily used up the funds that were due on the former contributory provident fund scheme and failed to make any provision for an appropriate funding arrangement in place for meeting the pension liability towards its employees. For this, the employees cannot be penalised as is being resorted to now.

This Conference calls upon the UPA Government to rescind the New Pension System introduced by the NDA regime and withdraw the PFRDA Bill. This Conference calls upon all sections of the trade union movement to unitedly resist and defeat the dangerous move of privatising the social security. This Conference also calls for a united struggle to demand formulation and implementation of a comprehensive national policy on social security covering all sections of the population.

SUPPORT TO THE STRUGGLE OF JUTE MILL WORKERS IN WEST BENGAL

This Twelfth Conference of CITU, being held at Bangalore (Karnataka) on January 17 - 21, 2007 notes with grave concern that 2 lakhs jute mill workers of West Bengal have been compelled to go for another indefinite strike from 5th January 2007 led by Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union and other unions.

Prior to this strike several mass conventions were held in the jute mill areas in the State. Token strike was unitedly observed on 4.9.2006 and a mass deputation of 10,000 workers raised their charter of demand before the jute mill owners' association in Kolkata. Another mass convention and a rally of workers to consolidate the workers' unity were held on 15.11.2006 and 7.12.2006 respectively in Kolkata.

The Conference notes that Government of West Bengal took serious efforts to avoid the strike through an amicable settlement. But due to the rigid stand of the mill owners the strike could not be avoided. In fact, the jute mill owners flatly refused to implement the previous tripartite agreements made on 5.1.2002, 8.1.2004, and 27.11.2004. Earlier, the workers had to make various sacrifices to protect the industry and the jute growing farmers from the attack of synthetic lobby and their patrons in the then NDA government who tried to finish the agro based, eco-friendly jute industry through diluting compulsory use of jute under Jute Packaging Act. But the jute mill owners violated the agreement and adopted various unfair labour practices in the jute mills. They refuse to pay the agreed minimum wages, introduced abnormal low wages and have frozen DA since November 2005 resulting in a monthly loss of Rs 488. The conference condemns the blatant violation of labour laws by mill owners like default in payment of PF and ESI, which is more than Rs 321 crores. Besides, retirement benefits of workers amounting to Rs 400 crores have not yet been paid.

The jute industry, located in several States, is controlled by the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India. But the Central Government remains a passive onlooker when the workers are being severely exploited and agreements are being violated, leading to serious damage to the industrial peace and harmony. CITU demands that the Central Government must assert their position to prevail upon the errant jute mill owners to implement the tripartite agreements and restrain them from violating labour laws pertaining to wages, PF and ESI so that jute workers get

justice and an amicable settlement is arrived at immediately.

ON PRICE RISE

This Twelfth Conference of CITU, being held at Bangalore (Karnataka) on January 17 - 21, 2007 expresses its grave concern over the spiraling price rise of essential commodities in the country.

The common people are experiencing a continuing trend of rise in prices of essential commodities, specially in the case of food grains and food articles, during the past several months, causing them tremendous hardship. The prices of pulses have risen by 33% between January and November 2006.

The annual rate of inflation on Wholesale Price Index (WPI) stood at 5.30 per cent for week ended November 25, 2006 compared with 4.48 per cent a year ago. This rate was contributed by an increase of 6.68 per cent in primary articles, 5.32 per cent increase in fuel, power, lights and lubricants and 4.82 per cent increase in manufactured products as against an increase of 5.12 per cent, 7.77 per cent and 2.93 per cent respectively on the corresponding date of last year. The major factors for the price rise have been the forward and futures trading in food grains and abnormal rise in prices of petroleum products during last two years. The price rise can be checked if there are curbs on forward and futures trading in essential commodities and ban on entry of private players in grain trade. The CITU considers the reduction in prices of petrol and diesel by Rs 2 and 1 per litre to be totally inadequate. CITU reiterates that tax/duty/cess on crude and petroleum products should be restructured as recommended by the Parliamentary Committee which stated: (1) the taxes/duty should be specific and not of *ad valorem* nature as at present and (ii) price stabilisation fund should be created out of cess collected on crude to take care of the fluctuation in global crude oil price.

Dismantling of Public Distribution System during the previous NDA regime has further aggravated the crisis. The UPA Government, instead of taking concrete step to revive the public

distribution system, had given a free hand to hoarders and corporates, who are making super profits through speculative trading.

The CITU calls upon the Government to (i) stop forward and futures trading in food grain and essential commodities; (ii) strengthen Public Distribution System; and (iii) restructure the taxes of petroleum products, which has cascading effect on the price front.

ON DEMANDING BAN ON IRON ORE EXPORT

This Twelfth Conference of CITU, being held at Bangalore (Karnataka) on January 17 - 21, 2007 expresses its grave concern on unrestricted export of iron ore, which is going to have serious adverse impact on the indigenous steel industry.

CITU notes that there are two types of iron ore viz Haematite and Magnetite. India has roughly 11 billion tonnes of Haematite iron ore mainly in Jharkhand, Orissa, Andhra and Chhattisgarh. Indian steel industry consumes only Haematite iron ore. Globally also this variety is most sought after. Magnetite, the other variety is of poor quality and is much more costly for use. However, the reserve of this magnetite iron ore which at present is about 12 billion tones is also being shown as a huge reserve by the Government to justify unrestricted export of Haematite iron ore, the reserve of which has been fast depleting.

As per National Steel policy, which envisages compounded annual rate of growth at 7.3% for steel production, the total quantity of iron ore to be consumed domestically by 2019-20 is 1.54 billion tonnes and 20.18 billion tones by 2051-52.

In the background of present pace of export along with increasing domestic consumption at the level mentioned above, the present reserves of Haematite ore will not last more than 25/30 years, taking into account of actual usable quality of iron ore. After that, India will have to import iron ore to keep the steel plants running.

CITU, therefore, demands total ban on export of Haematite variety of iron ore. Magnetite variety can be exported subject to environmental clearance in mining activities.

CITU further urges the Government of India to ensure, in the national interests, that:

- Existing steel plants should retain their mines and *status quo* should not be disturbed.
- Existing steel plants without captive mines and those coming with big steel projects will be interested and can be allowed to develop captive mines in virgin areas keeping a balance between supply and demand.
- Delinking of iron ore mining from steel sector should not be allowed.

ON EXPANSION OF PUBLIC SECTOR IN PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY, PRICE REDUCTION AND AVAILABILITY OF ESSENTIAL MEDICINES

This Twelfth Conference of CITU, being held at Bangalore (Karnataka) on January 17 - 21, 2007 demands the Central Government to ensure production, price control and availability of essential medicines and revival of public sector units of drugs and pharmaceutical industry.

In the National Common Minimum Programme of the UPA Government, it was assured to take effective measures to bring down the prices of essential medicines for the benefit of poorer section of the people of our country. Because of constant persuasion by the trade unions in the pharmaceuticals industry, Chemical and Fertilisers Ministry proposed price control on 354 medicines in the national list of essential medicines in addition to the existing 74 medicines already under price control.

However, this Conference notes with concern that attempts are

being made to stall any pro-people measures under the dictates of multinational and big Indian pharmaceutical companies. A committee was constituted by the Union Cabinet, where 11 out of 14 members are from the private sector. This committee is preventing the Chemical and Fertilisers Ministry in taking such important move for the benefit of the people. Therefore, this Conference demands of the Central Government the following:

- Reduction of prices of all medicines, control of prices of all medicines, particularly of medicines in the national list of essential medicines.
- To monitor production of all essential bulk drugs from basic stage in our country ensuring their availability.
- Public sector units should be revived for production of essential medicines, including the medicines required for treating cancer, HIV/AIDS, etc.
- Stern measures against fake drug producers and sellers.

In pursuance of above demands, the CITU proposes to launch campaign throughout the country and calls upon all the State units to initiate the movement in this area also.

ON RURAL DISTRESS

This Twelfth Conference of CITU, being held at Bangalore (Karnataka) on January 17 - 21, 2007 expresses its concern at the agricultural crisis that has been sweeping the country since a decade, which has now culminated into a deep rooted peasant crisis bringing unprecedented miseries in rural India. This Conference takes serious note of the fact that the UPA Government is continuing with the same neoliberal policies of the NDA period and failing to curb imports and restore quantitative restrictions etc, which would have brought the agrarian sector on rail and given relief to the peasants. This Conference conveys warm greetings to the peasant masses for their fighting spirit and resistance against the Government inaction. It calls upon the working class to come forward in solidarity actions in support of the peasantry.

This Conference observes that even when the agricultural growth has been declining in successive years since mid-nineties and gross capital formation has slipped to 1997 level, Government refused to take note of the development and push up public investment in irrigation and other allied areas. On the contrary, it had put all its weight in curtailing subsidies, hitherto being offered to agriculture even when our agriculture was facing an unequal competition from the heavily subsidised products of developed countries and landed the most important segment of the economy to the present crisis, displacing peasants from cultivation, coupled with suicides of more than 2 lakh farmers in the country. As a consequence, growth of agricultural GDP, including forestry and fishing, was only 1% per annum in the first three years of 10th Plan. Contribution from agriculture to GDP has gone down at an accelerated pace from 61% in 1950 to 21% currently. When the crisis has been brewing, the level of public investment was pegged down to only 1.3% of the GDP in agriculture, the sector which provides 50% employment. Consequence has been disastrous, which has brought 74.5% of the rural population to poverty according to Government's own estimation.

In Maharashtra, the number of such suicides has crossed 2,000 in Vidharba region alone during the last two years, the area which prospered all through the years after Independence on cotton farming. Policy makers in India are shy to accept the fact that the Indian cotton growers are not capable of facing the onslaught of both technology and subsidy power of US cotton growers. USA, being the second largest cotton growing country in the world, gives subsidies worth \$ 4.7 billion a year to its farmers

This Conference is concerned to note that the Government of India, though recognising the existence of a crisis, maintained that it has nothing to do with the globalisation and presented some short-term proposals in the 11th Plan approach document.

This Conference is of the firm opinion that the Government

should formulate a firm agricultural policy keeping in mind the world economic perspective when developed countries are ploughing their best to maintain international price of primary articles pegged below the production cost. Unmindful implementation of Special Economic Zone or the proposal for corporatisation of agriculture and marketing are likely to aggravate rural engagements and employment situation.

The CITU calls upon the Government to infuse massive public investment in the areas of irrigation and technological support and ensure dependable seeds, timely supply of fertilisers and also agricultural credit on easy term. Government should maintain the existing level of subsidies. CITU reiterates that no amount of reform can ameliorate agriculture without land reform.

CITU demands that the Government should ensure speedy implementation of NREGA in all parts of the country and universalisation of PDS to ensure food security to the rural poor.

This Twelfth Conference calls upon the working class to express solidarity with peasantry through campaigns and mobilise mass of workers and other sections of people to force the Government for taking immediate steps to address the rural crisis.

ON THE STRUGGLE OF PEASANTS IN RAJASTHAN

This Twelfth Conference of CITU being held at Bangalore (Karnataka) on January 17-21, 2007 extends its full support to the historic struggle of farmers of Sri Ganganagar and Ghadsana in Rajasthan, led by Kisan-Ma. door-Vyapari Sangharsha Samiti demanding water supply, which is continuing since 2004.

The conference strongly condemns the brutality let loose by the BJP led State Government on the struggling farmers. The State Government refused to honour the settlement signed by them with the Sangharsh Samiti leaders in Central Jail on 11-12-2004. The farmers have been demanding the

implementation of the settlement. However, a reign of terror and brutal repressions is being let loose by the state administration to suppress the mass movement.

During the struggle six peasants have been killed in the police firing and two more, including women, died later due to serious injuries caused in the brutal police lathi-charge. Hundreds of leaders and activists of CITU and Sangharsh Samiti are being implicated in false cases and kept in jail under inhuman conditions. Even the army was called to suppress the movement.

This Conference notes with serious concern that the State President of CITU Com. Het Ram Beniwal and other prominent leaders are being kept in jail since last four months. Com. Beniwal was brutally manhandled and tortured by the police and a tense situation is prevailing in the State.

This is a good example of worker-peasant alliance, in which CITU leaders and cadres are actively involved in the struggle of peasants and also continuously helping the struggle by funding and all other means.

This Conference demands immediate release of Com. Het Ram Beniwal and all other arrested leaders and urges the State Government to implement the settlement in letter and spirit to end the struggle.

ON INDIA-US NUCLEAR DEAL

This Twelfth Conference of CITU being held at Bangalore (Karnataka) on January 17-21, 2007 expresses its grave concern over the legislation passed by the US Congress in December 2006, on Indo-US nuclear deal.

The CITU is of the view that the legislation concerning bilateral civil nuclear cooperation with India is a clear departure from what the Government of India assured the Parliament in August 2006. The Government's stand that the country should wait for the final bilateral agreement is specious. Obviously, the US

administration is bound by the provisions of its Act while negotiating this agreement. India has to assert that it is also bound by the assurances in Parliament to protect its national interest and sovereignty in nuclear area..

The US legislation forbids India building a stockpile of nuclear fuel so vital in ensuring a sustained energy supply. It also obligates the US administration to work with other Nuclear Suppliers Group countries to get them suspend supplies to India. Continued fuel supply for nuclear power cannot be ensured within the boundaries set by the US legislation. Indian understanding that reprocessing of spent fuel, enrichment of uranium and production of heavy water also formed part of the "full civilian nuclear cooperation" has also got a serious jolt as these have been construed by the US to be in the military activities and not civilian. India's future plans for thorium utilisation for nuclear power depends crucially on reprocessing. As matter of fact, the US legislation makes it explicitly clear that Indo-US nuclear deal is aimed at serving the interest of US companies in selling nuclear power equipment, technology and fuel worth billions of dollars, apart from its intention to bind India as a junior ally in its strategic objective. It appears there is a move to dilute the Atomic Energy Act, 1962 to facilitate entry of the American multinational companies as well as Indian private corporates.

CITU asserts that India's sovereign right to reprocess nuclear fuel, whether enriched or natural uranium imported from any country, should not be compromised at any cost. CITU cautions the Government that by making the civil nuclear energy programme dependent on imported uranium, there is not only a threat to India's self reliance but the growing dependence of imported uranium will further escalate cost of power generation, as the global price of uranium is already rising. Besides, the US legislation undermines our independent nuclear research and development.

The CITU will oppose any move to dilute the Atomic Energy Act 1962, which specifically stipulates the sensitive strategic sector of nuclear energy to be under the domain of Government only.

The CITU calls upon the people of this country to mobilise public opinion against the US legislation and resist any move to undermine our sovereignty in the field of nuclear energy.

ON RIGHT TO WORK

This Twelfth Conference of CITU being held at Bangalore (Karnataka) on January 17-21, 2007 calls upon the Indian working class to carry forward the struggle for incorporating the Right to Work as fundamental right in the Constitution. This has assumed importance as an instrument of struggle not alone for providing jobs, but as a powerful anti-dote to the present economic regime, which has imposed jobless growth in post globalisation era.

This Conference takes note of the fact that the successive regimes in India had withdrawn from the basic commitment of equity as the directive principle and the trickling down principle has occupied the centre stage in the matter of wealth distribution. As a consequence, employment situation has declined both in quantity and quality. Between 2000 and 2004 there had been further decline in the labour force in primary area. The male unemployment in rural areas shot up from 5.06% in 1993-94 to 9% by 2004 and from 6.7% to 8.1% in urban areas and female unemployment increased from 5.6% to 9.3% in urban areas and in rural areas from 10.5% to 11.7%. More dangerously, according to 10th Plan report, youth unemployment had been 13% at the end of 9th Plan. The Tenth Plan document has further estimated that unemployment amongst youth would touch the figure of 15% by the end of 10th Plan. Recent ILO report too predicted the danger of unprecedented increase in unemployment amongst youth.

This Conference demands that the Government should introduce a bill before Parliament for the enshrinement of the right to work in the Constitution and adopt an economic line compatible to the same. The right to work is viewed as synonymous to a productive job with a proper work content, which is called a job with dignity. Indignity heaped over the Indian labour is exposed in recent reports of UNDP and ILO ,

which is corroborated by the NSSO study. This Conference refuses to buy the argument that jobs created on emergency basis for addressing the poverty, as in the case of NREGA, is substitutable for right to work. According to the UN Millennium Report 33% of Indian labour live below 1 US dollar wage per day.

This Conference demands that for the purpose of faithful implementation of right to work to be enshrined, the Government has to work out an economic line with pro-poor, labour, peasants and pro-middle class moorings, which should address the need based economic demands of the people and the issues related to overall human development.

This Conference calls upon the working class to recall the spirit of the Conventions on right to work held in Durgapur and Kolkata and mobilise the masses on this cardinal issue of the working class.

AGAINST HIKE IN INSURANCE PREMIUM OF TRANSPORT VEHICLES

The Twelfth Conference of CITU being held at Bangalore (Karnataka) on January 17 - 21, 2007 demands the UPA Government to withdraw the drastic hike of Third Party Insurance premium of public transport motor vehicles imposed since January 1, 2007.

According to the revised rates of premium, the auto rikshaws will have to pay Rs 2,160 instead of the existing rate of Rs 982. Similarly, the rate of premium in respect of taxies with a seating capacity of 5 persons will be increased from Rs 2,135 to Rs 7,127. Like wise, the rate for buses, having 50 seating capacity, will be increased from Rs 11,195 to Rs 25,001. Similar enhancement is also effected to the goods vehicles having a laden weight of 12000 kg from Rs 4,158 to Rs 10,242.

This is a heavy blow to the entire motor transport industry and millions of workers engaged in the industry throughout the country. The motor transport workers in India are already facing

unmitigated sufferings due to price hikes of petroleum products. This will further aggravate the situation. As a result of the revision of premium, there is every possibility for escalation of the prices of essential commodities.

This Conference notes that a considerable section of workers in motor transport industry are self employed. They will be compelled to leave the industry due to this drastic hike in the insurance premium rate.

This Conference calls upon the Government to withdraw the new hike of Third Party Insurance premium of public transport motor vehicles immediately. This Conference also calls upon the trade union movement to unitedly resist this unjustified hike.

ON DISINVESTMENT AND CREEPING PRIVATISATION

This Twelfth Conference of CITU being held at Bangalore (Karnataka) on January 17-21, 2007 expresses its deep concern over the UPA Government's consistent attempts to pursue "creeping privatisation in Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs), through disinvestment and lately through changing the evaluation parameters of CPSUs.

CITU notes that the decision of disinvestment or dilution of Govt. stake through the IPO route is being taken by the Finance Ministry and then imposed upon the concerned PSU through its nodal ministry, which clearly shows that Government perceives disinvestment or sale of Government shares as source of mobilisation of resources. This is bad economics to say the least. When thousands of crores of tax arrears and Non Performing Assets (NPAs) are being written off on the ground of being non-recoverable, sale of Government assets is no substitute for resource mobilisation.

CITU deplores the Government's recent manouevers to change the evaluation parameters of PSUs to deprive them of the status of '*Navaratna*' and '*Miniratna*'. CITU apprehends that this is aimed at attempting another round of disinvestment in PSUs by terming them as '*non-navaratnas*' and '*non-mini ratnas*'.

The proposed change in evaluation parameters makes the stock market image of a PSU dominant over the physical/performance parameters like capacity utilization, profitability etc. Additions of parameters pertaining to market capitalisation of the company and substitution of existing parameter of "Earning Per Share (EPS) by Price Earning (P/E) ratio will make the evaluation of PSUs status and ranking wholly dependent on stock market, which is susceptible to manipulations-prone sensex-oriented bubble economy.

CITU also deplores the surreptitious efforts of the Government to give backdoor entry to private sector in strategic sector of Defence including Ordnance factories, Defence PSUs and Defence R&D units. The corporatisation of defence ordnance factories and dilution of Government defence PSUs and R&D institutes are being initiated through implementation of recommendation of Kelkar Committee in stages. This Conference extends full support to the employees in defence sector in their fight against such retrograde step of the Government to weaken the strategic sector of defence in the interest of foreign and Indian corporates.

This Conference notes with appreciation that during the period under review, struggle against disinvestment in Neyvelli Lignite and NALCO had forced the Government to defer its decision on disinvestment in profit making PSUs for the time being. But this is a temporary lull and Government is already renewing its efforts to restart the process. The struggle of NLC and NALCO which involved democratic people from different sections, apart from the employees, clearly shows that the people of the country do not perceive the public enterprises as only a finance resource for revenue purpose but as source of industrial, technological and human resources assets, which had been built over long period of time, as a symbol of self reliance and self pride.

CITU reiterates its pledge to protect these national assets against all machinations of Government through relentless

struggle and calls upon all patriotic, democratic people and political parties to join the struggle as a national issue rather than an issue limited to employees/TUs only.

ON RESERVATION IN PRIVATE SECTOR

This Twelfth Conference of CITU being held at Bangalore (Karnataka) on January 17-21, 2007 demands legislation for providing reservation to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in private sector undertakings.

The inclusion of the concept of reservation in the private sector undertakings in the National Common Minimum Programme has evoked strong displeasure among the captains of industry all over India. They have come out against the idea of reservation, which according to them would adversely affect the efficiency in the private sector.

CITU notes that with privatisation of public sector undertakings, the job reservation was not binding on the new private owners. In these undertakings downsizing has severely affected the SC and ST workers. The ban on recruitment announced in Government service and public undertakings has further hit the employment of these sections. Thousands of vacant posts remain unfilled which included posts held by SC/ST employees. The situation became more compounded by abolition of thousands of posts arbitrarily by the Government. Abolition of Government departments and closure of public sector undertakings have hit hard the employment of SC & ST workers in Government services and public undertakings.

Under these circumstances, CITU firmly rejects the report of a Task Force constituted by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Associated Chamber of Commerce (ASSOCHAM), the representative body of big business houses. The Task Force was formed to find out ways and means of avoiding legislation on this question. The report of Task Force titled "Proposed Concrete Steps by Indian Industry on Affirmative Action for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes," was submitted to the Prime Minister. The report is full of evasive verbiage, which

does not guarantee more jobs to SC&ST workers in the private sector. For instance, it argues that inclusiveness would ultimately be achieved through universal access to quality education.

The fact remains that even after nearly six decades after independence the private sector has done precious little for the SC/ST workers, who are denied opportunity for quality education. The memorandum purposefully ignores the harsh reality that the most downtrodden section of our society is denied elementary needs of human existence. As long as this situation continues, any access to quality education cannot be expected for them. The Task Force could not even ascertain how many regular employees are working in large manufacturing industry in the private sector, even though a debate about reservation in private sector is going on for over two years.

CITU considers that the so-called affirmative action is only a device to avoid any legislation to ensure reservation in the private sector. The report further states, 'recognising that small-scale industries have limited resource, we appreciate that they may have a problem in implementing the concrete steps'. As a matter of fact, according to the experience of the trade unions, there is more proportion of SC&ST workers in small and unorganised sector industry than the large manufacturing and service sector establishments.

CITU, therefore, demands that the Government should bring a legislation to ensure reservation in the private sector undertakings, taking into consideration the proportion of SC & ST in the States. The CITU believes without such a statutory provision the organised private sector employers will not give any job opportunities to the SC & ST workers. The CITU calls upon the working class to unitedly campaign for concrete legislation to ensure reservation to these backward strata of our society.

ON FINANCIAL SECTOR REFORMS

This Twelfth Conference of CITU being held at Bangalore

(Karnataka) on January 17-21, 2007 strongly oppose the moves of the Government of India to amend the banking laws, as well as to weaken nationalised banking and insurance sectors.

In the name of reform of the banking sector as many as four bills have been placed before Parliament. These are to amend (i) Banking Regulation Act 1949 (2) Banking Companies (Transfer and Acquisition) Act 1970 (3) State Bank of India Act, 1955 and (4) State Bank of India subsidiary Bank Act, 1959. While the motive behind amending the Banking Regulation Act 1949 is to allow proportionate voting rights to foreign investors in private banks as against the existing cap of 10%, the purpose of amending Banking Companies Act, 1970 is to bring the public sector banks under the ambit of company law to pave way for their corporatisation. Furthermore, in case ceiling in voting rights is removed for private banks, same will also be extended to public sector banks in future. Motives behind the amendment of SBI Act and SBI Subsidiary Bank Act are (1) in case of SBI, RBIs equity holding to be brought down to 51% as against present holding of 55% and (2) SBI's equity holding in subsidiary banks to be reduced to 56% instead of present holding of 100% in the case of a number of subsidiary banks.

All these bills tabled before Parliament, if allowed to pass, will have disastrous consequences for the economy of the country. This Conference urges the Government of India to refrain from such anti-national moves and save public sector banks and their continuance to serve peoples interests.

This Conference further notes with concern the Reserve Bank of India's gradual abdication of assigned developmental role and other important activities as per regulatory and supervisory authority of the banking system. RBI has singularly failed in proper allocation of bank credit to rural sector and SME, which is now skewed towards the big corporates. The proposed withdrawal of RBI from management of public debt would put more strain on financially weaker States and widen regional disparities. This Conference urges the RBI to make its regulatory and supervisory functions more stringent, perform its developmental role without any dilution and demands of the

GOI to reject any notion of independence or autonomy of RBI.

This Conference notes with great alarm that the Government of India is making all attempts to weaken the nationalised insurance sector in the name of liberalisation. The LIC has performed admirably in mobilising the savings of the people for national development. It is capable of meeting a substantial requirement of funds for infrastructure development. The Government, instead of strengthening the LIC, is proposing to hike the FDI in private insurance from 26% to 49%. Such a measure will enable the multinational corporations to gain greater access to domestic savings. Alongside the Government is proposing to increase the capital base of LIC, which would be a prelude to future privatisation of this institution. The IRDA is also joining in the conspiracy by insisting on 'solvency margin' to be provided by the shareholders rather than from the surplus generated when no solvency margin is required. This means that the regulator is instigating the Government to resort to disinvestment of LIC.

In general insurance, the four public sector companies are being weakened by forcing them to underwrite loss making motor insurance business, which the private companies are refusing to underwrite. The de-tariffing of profitable business now will result in unethical practices like undercutting of premium. This Conference demands the merger of the four public sector companies to strengthen them and meet both the competition and the needs of the national economy. It is strange that the Government which is insisting of consolidation of public sector banks is against consolidation of public sector general insurance companies:

This Conference strongly opposes these moves of the Government of India and supports the struggles of bank and insurance employees against the same.

ON EXTREMIST VIOLENCE IN ASSAM

This Twelfth Conference of CITU being held at Bangalore (Karnataka) on January 17-21, 2007, strongly condemns the

recent killings of innocent Hindi speaking poor labourers in Assam by the extremist organisation, ULFA.

More than 70 labourers were killed and hundreds injured in the violent attack on these people by ULFA on 5th and 6th January 2007 and a reign of terror has been unleashed throughout the State. Several thousand poor Hindi speaking people have been forced to take shelter in refugee camps. Such ghastly incidents can endanger the unity of the people of Assam and the country as a whole.

The CITU, however, finds it heartening to note that all sections of the people, the Assamese community in particular, have expressed their protest against such killings, by organising protest rally throughout the State. The State CITU, along with other democratic mass organisations, have also organised rallies through out the State.

This Conference also condemns the failure of the State Government to protect the lives and property of the people. This Conference appeals to all peace loving democratic people to mobilise public opinion against the extremist forces for preserving the unity of the people of Assam and country as a whole.

ON REVIVAL OF BHARAT GOLD MINES AT KOLAR GOLD MINES

This Twelfth Conference of CITU, being held at Bangalore (Karnataka) on January 17th to 21st January 2007, condemns the lackadaisical approach of the Government of India to the proposal to revive the mines at KGF by the Global Gold Mines Co-operative Society Ltd.

The mine workers are denied the opportunity to revive the mines by the Global Gold Mines Co-operative Society Ltd., which is formed by vast majority of the workers. The workers were assured by the Global Gold Mines Co-operative Society that they will be paid Rs 52 Crores in addition to the Rs 72.45 crores VRS benefit being the difference in the workers' claim.

However, instead of supporting the efforts of workers cooperative society to revive the mines, the Government is backing illegally a small group with the involvement of a Central Minister from the area and trying to sell away the property at a throw away price behind the back of workers. It is with such an interest the cabinet decided to effect a smooth closure of the mines. However the workers are resisting this move for closure and keeping alive the effort for revival.

This Conference demands the Government of India to:

1. stop backing the minority group with purchase preference for them
2. ensure that the claim of the Global Gold Mines Industry Co-operative Society is recognised as it represents the majority of workers.
3. allow Global Gold Mines Co-operative Society to pay additional 52 crores of rupees as compensation to the workers and to allow them to revive the mines.

This Conference assures full support to the workers to get the compensation, to get revival of the mines and re-employment to all the workers.

ON INTEGRATED CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES (ICDS)

This Twelfth Conference of CITU being held at Bangalore (Karnataka) on 17- 21 January 2007, demands of the UPA Government to immediately take steps to universalise the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), as committed in its National Common Minimum Programme. It also demands that the Government should make the services rendered through ICDS permanent and regularise the anganwadi workers and helpers, the key functionaries of ICDS at grass root level, as Grade III and Grade IV employees. This Conference fully supports the most genuine demands of the anganwadi employees and urges the UPA government to immediately take positive measures to fulfil them.

The ICDS, which was started experimentally more than 30 years ago, has established itself as the most comprehensive service that addresses the problems of malnutrition among the pregnant women, lactating mothers and children below 6 years in our country. While the Government and a section of the media gloat over the growth rate and carries an orchestrated campaign of the country marching ahead as a global power in the 21st century, India's position in the Human Development Index remains one among the lowest in the world, worse than some of our neighbouring countries in the subcontinent. Infant Mortality Rate and Maternal Mortality Rate continue to be among the highest in the world; around one third of infants are born with low birth weight; India has the highest number of malnourished children in the world, more than that in Sub Saharan Africa. With its comprehensive approach to help in the physical, mental and social development of the children, who are the most precious future human resources of our country, the ICDS contributes in ensuring their Right to Food, Health and Education. Besides allocating more funds on Education and Health as committed in the NCMP, the Government must allocate the necessary funds for the universalisation of ICDS and improving the quality of services by ensuring decent working and living conditions for the anganwadi employees. The anganwadi centres should also be upgraded as anganwadi cum day care centres for the children of the unorganised sector women workers including the agricultural workers.

This Conference condemns the insensitivity of the Government to the problems of around 16 lakhs anganwadi employees, all of them women, mostly from the socially oppressed and economically backward communities. In spite of the increasing responsibilities thrust on them by the Central and State Governments, they are paid only a paltry 'honorarium'; they have no social security, no DA nor any promotional avenues. The repeated representations by the organisations of anganwadi employees to recognise them as Government employees have fell on deaf ears.

This Conference also expresses its deep concern about the recent SC judgement, not acknowledging the employer employee relationship between the Government and the anganwadi employees, confining itself to technicalities and ruling that the employees could not be regularised. This Conference notes that the Supreme Court had earlier given strong verdicts on immediate universalisation of ICDS. The present judgement reflects the attitude of the judiciary towards the rights of the working class. This judgement will strengthen the Government's policy of withdrawing from its responsibility of rendering social security to the people. This Conference calls upon the anganwadi employees as well as crores of beneficiaries to join the struggles for regularisation of ICDS as well as anganwadi employees.

This 12th Conference congratulates the anganwadi employees who have launched several heroic struggles, including the historic mass relay hunger strike in Delhi last year under the leadership of the All India Federation of Anganwadi Workers and Helpers and assures them all support in their struggles. It calls upon all the State Committees and affiliated unions to extend full support to the anganwadi employees not only in their struggles but also in their efforts to strengthen their organisation. It also calls upon the anganwadi employees to participate in large numbers in the struggles of the working class of India against the anti worker and anti people policies of the Governments at the Centre and in several States, as this alone will help in realising their genuine demands.

INTERNATIONAL DELEGATIONS

The all India 12th Conference of CITU has witnessed a new dimension in the matter of participation of fraternal delegates from abroad. The composition of the international delegation clearly depicts several notable aspects. The most significant one is the participation of delegates from Cuba, Venezuela, China and Vietnam. Our neighbouring countries were represented in full strength at the Conference. A significant number of countries from Africa and Arab world were represented. The presence of delegates from the newly emerged TU centre of USA, following a split in the AFL-CIO, was a notable feature. Similarly the delegation from Europe was extensive and many developed industrialised countries were also represented. In fact, the British TUC participated in our Conference for the first time. The presence of the newly elected General Secretary of the WFTU was a matter of great encouragement to the delegates of the Conference. The ILO contingent included the Director and Senior Specialist from the Sub-Regional Office of South Asia, New Delhi and two Worker Members on the Governing Body of ILO.

The other important aspect was that a number of bilateral discussions with the individual delegations from different countries was undertaken on the sidelines of the Conference. Of course the official dinner, hosted in honour of the international delegates, was preceded by a full-fledged interactive session, participated by the President and other members of the CITU Secretariat. Initiating the session, M. K. Pandhe elaborated the understanding of CITU on matters pertaining to the issues and struggles in our country and our perception on the question of international unity of the working class. It was clearly pointed out to the international delegates that without compromising our basic political position, CITU would continue to support broad-based united struggles on specific issues.

The composition of the international delegation was a true

reflection of the current approach of the CITU to achieve broader international unity of the working class on the basis of struggles against the US imperialism and the policies of imperialist globalisation. The presence of such a big size international delegation was also an indication of the fact that the onslaught of the neo-liberal economic policies is increasingly victimising the workers of both the developed and developing countries, thereby maturing the situation for worldwide broad-based united struggles against such policies.

Given below are the names and particulars of the international delegates, who attended our Conference:

Country	Name of the Delegate	Organisation
AUSTRALIA	IAN THOMPSON	Australian Council of Trade Unions Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union
	THOMAS WAYNE ROBERTS	
AUSTRIA	OLIVER JONISCHKEIT	Austrian Trade Union Federation – LEFT BLOCK
BANGLADESH	MAHABABUR RAHAMAN MAZNU	Bangladesh Trade Union Kendra
CHINA	CHEN RONGSHU	All China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU)
	HUANG FEI	
	YAOLI	
CUBA	RAYMUNDO M NAVARRO FERNANDEZ	Central de Trabajadores de Cuba (CTC)
CYPRUS	SOTIRAKIS FELLAS	Pancyprian Federation of Labour (PEO)

Country	Name of the Delegate	Organisation
EGYPT	MOHAMED ABD RABOH	Egyptian Trade Union Federation
	MOHAMED HASSAN KHALIFA	- " -
	SAMY ABDEL FATTAH ALY SAKR	The General Trade Union of Petroleum Workers
	AHMED MOHAMED MAHMOUD ALY	- " -
FRANCE	ALAIN SIMON	I.E.M.O
	SERGE TERRIER	FNME - CGT
	JEAN-MICHEL JOUBIER	C.G.T.
	JEAN-MICHEL PETIT	FNIC - CGT
	DOUNIA HAMET	- " -
	ROBERT IPPOLITI	- " -
	Mrs. CASTE IPPOLITI	- " -
	JEAN PEIRRE PAGE	TRADE UNIONIST
GREECE	MAVRIKOS GEORGIOS	The World Federation of Trade Unions
	Mrs. ANASTASAKI	- " -
HUNGARY	ERIKA TAMAS	Democratic Confederation of Free Trade Unions
	PETER KONYA	- " -
ITALY	LEOPOLDO TARTAGLIA	C.G.I.L
	Mrs. IOLANDA CASARI	- " -
JAPAN	MIYAGAKI TADASHI	National Confederation of Trade Unions
	KATO MASUO	- " -
LIBYA	KHALIFA ELMABRUK EL - GTEWI	General Union Professional Conference of Oil

MAURITIUS	PURMANANSINGH JHOOMUCK	Artisans and General Workers Union
	SOODESH CHENTAMUN	- " -
MEXICO	SANCHEZ ORTIZ JUAN	C R O C
	SALGADO S R ORIOL	- " -
	FERNANDO AMEZCUA CASTILLO	UIS-Temqpia & Sindicato Mexicano de Electricistas
	LAURO LOPEZ GARCIA	- " -
NEPAL	BISHNU RIMAL	General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions
PAKISTAN	PIRZADA SYED IMTIAZ ALI	All Pakistan Federatopm of United Trade Unions
RUSSIA	MIRONOV LEV	ROGWU
	LUKIYANOVALARISA	- " -
SPAIN	ORTEGA FUENTES ALEJANDRA	Comisiones Obreras (CC.OO)
	RUNKLA DELAVEGA ISABEL	- " -
ŞRI LANKA	ARUMUGAM RAMIAH	Ceylon Federation of Trade Unions
SYRIA	GHAZE DWEAR	GFTUSAR
	ADNAN AZZOUZ	- " -
THAILAND	AROKIA DASS	SIGTUR
U.K.	SIMON BENEDIKT STEYNE	TUC and Worker Member, ILO Governing Body
USA	CARL LEINONEN	SEIU

UZBEKISTAN	NIETULLAEV SAGINDIK DJALILOVAMALIKA	Karakalpak Republik Union of Trade Unions Central Council of Culture Workers Trade Union
VIETNAM	VUONG VAN VIET VO VAN NHAT	Vietnam General Confederation of Labour(VGCL) - " -
VENIZEULLA	PEDRO EUSSE	CUTV
ILO	Ms. LEYLA TEGMO REDDY PONG SULAHN	ILO, NEW DELHI - " -

This apart, the Conference was attended and guided by leaders representing 17 National Federations and Organisations.

Out of a total of 2451 completed forms received, the Committee has not received back the forms from 50 delegates. 242 delegates are attending the CITI Conference for the first time while 3 comrades have attended at the 12 conferences of CITI.

Maximum number (1243) of delegates fall within the age group of 45-50 and only 134 out of the delegates are aged below 30. It is also interesting to note that 109 delegates are above 71 and we are proud to record the eldest comrade attending this Conference is Com. Samrat Mukherjee, former General Secretary of CITI.

The delegates' profile reveals that 894 comrades attached to District Committees as well others are attending, along with 238 who belong to the union level, 47 comrades working in the all India Federation Centres and 243 at the State Centres.

REPORT OF THE CREDENTIAL COMMITTEE

Comrades,

On behalf of the Credential Committee, I am placing this report before you.

This XII Conference of CITU is being attended by 2,439 delegates, including 32 office bearers and 297 (12.4%) women delegates. It is significant to note that this Conference is also being attended by 55 fraternal delegates representing TU organisations from Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, China, Cuba, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Libya, Mauritius, Mexico, Nepal, Pakistan, Russia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Syria, Thailand, UK, USA, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Venizeulla and the ILO.

This apart, this Conference was attended and greeted by leaders representing 17 National Federations and Organisations.

Out of a total of 2451 credential forms issued, the Committee has not received back the forms from 36 delegates. 343 delegates are attending the CITU Conference for the first time while 8 comrades have attended all the 12 conferences of CITU.

Maximum number (1243) of delegates fall within the age group of 46-60 and only 134 out of the delegates are aged below 35. It is also interesting to note that 109 delegates are above 71 and we are proud to record the eldest comrade attending this Conference is Com.Samar Mukherjee, former General Secretary of CITU.

The delegates' profile reveals that 694 comrades attached to District Committees as wholetimers are attending, alongwith 288 wholetimers at the union level. 47 comrades working in the all India Federation Centres and 243 at the State Centre

are whole-timers. Out of them, 32 are all India office bearers while 161 are office bearers at the State level.

It is interesting to record that 1032 of the attending delegates joined the TU movement during 1977-1990 period, while 17 delegates had joined the TU movement before independence.

Education wise, 1095 delegates are matriculates, while 764 are graduates and professional degree holders. Profession wise, 332 are office employees and 304 are factory workers, while 1053 are wholetimers at different levels. Out of the delegates attending, 497 are working in the private sector while 519 work in the public sector. All of them are either office bearers or committee members at the union level.

438 comrades are victimised - either dismissed, suspended or punished in some or the other way.

Lastly, out of the total delegates, 612 comrades have served jail sentences and amongst them Com.Dilip Biswas from West Bengal had been in jail for a total of over 7 years. Some comrades had to remain underground during different periods for some reason or the other and amongst them Com.Samar Mukherjee had to remain underground for 8 years in all.

The Credential Committee records that quite a large number of forms have been submitted blank without filing up the required information asked for. The State Committees must ensure that all the forms are properly filled. Only then a total and correct profile can be presented to the Conference.

The Credential Committee also received 150 applications for affiliation to CITU, covering a total membership of 71,999 . On scrutiny the Committee found that the applications were more

or less in order and hence recommends granting of affiliation to the new unions. The State wise break up is given below:

STATE	NO OF UNION APPLIED	MEMBERSHIP
Andhra Pradesh	25	4473
Assam	4	1173
Delhi	3	302
Gujrat	4	1520
H.P.	1	227
Jharkhand	4	25689
Karnataka	4	466
Kerala	27	12867
M.P.	7	1484
Maharashtra	15	9709
Orissa	3	650
Punjab	5	837
Rajasthan	6	136
U.P.	2	155
W.B.	40	12311
Total	150	71999

The Credential Committee records with satisfaction that the State Committees are taking care to forward the new applications, but some shortcomings have still been observed.

Finally, if the report of the Credential Committee is adopted, then you will be happy to note that CITU's total membership today is just 10,000 short of 40 lakhs.

For Credential Committee

Ranjit Basu
(Convenor)

Somen Kundu, Lalaji Babu,
R Singaravelu, Ravindra Shukla (Members)

CONCLUDING ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT

We are at the end of our successful Conference. We have been able to conclude the Conference in time to due to the co-operation of all delegates.

The Reception Committee had made excellent preparations for the Conference, which contributed a great deal in fruitful culmination of the Conference. Despite facing several difficulties, Karnataka CITU State Committee and all active cadres have toiled day and night to make the Conference a grand success. At the outset, we must express our gratitude towards the remarkable work done by the Reception Committee and all affiliated unions in Karnataka.

The well-drafted Report of the General Secretary reviewed the developments during the last three years and highlighted the challenges faced by the trade unions in India and how the united movement is organising effective resistance to the attacks launched by the capitalist class. The discussion on the report underlined the common understanding evolved during the Conference. Though some speakers confined themselves only to reporting of local activities, by and large the comrades participating in the discussion dealt with the issues raised by the General Secretary in his Report.

With growing attacks on working and living conditions of the workers and on trade union rights the united movements of the trade unions must be strengthened manifold to put an end to these attacks. With the Central Government surrendering more and more to the dictates of World Bank and the IMF the CITU has to play an important role in the forthcoming class battles.

UPA SUBSERVIENT TO US IMPERIALISM

The UPA Government is becoming subservient to U.S.

imperialism, which was clearly seen in the recent nuclear deal with USA. The nuclear slavery will adversely affect the independent development of our nuclear energy, which has to be opposed by us resolutely.

Our united movement must popularise all over the country the need for strengthening Shanghai Co-operation in which Russia, China and India can play a major role. This will be a powerful weapon to check the U.S. imperialist machinations to impose a unipolar world on our planet. Without a concerted action by the working class and the toiling people in a sustained manner, the UPA Government will not agree to effectively participate in Shanghai Co-operation.

Without preparing the working class ideologically its participation in forthcoming struggles cannot be ensured. Therefore, CITU has to intensify its ideological campaign among the working class so that all the false propaganda unleashed by the capitalist class and its hirelings can be exposed before the mass of workers. Without defeating the illusions sought to be created by the capitalist class to blunt the edge of the class struggles, the trade union movement cannot be advanced in today's situation. The Conference, has therefore, rightly emphasised the need for such a struggle all over the country to equip the working class ideologically to fight against the policies of globalisation.

The Six Commission papers on which we have concluded our in depth discussion will be instruments to make extensive campaign among the workers to popularise the correct policies of the CITU. We have to strive to build unity of the working class on these issues, which can guide them in the class battles that would be launched by us after the Conference.

I attended all Commission meetings and found that our rank and file comrades participated in the discussion dispassionately and taking their grass root level experience it was possible for the leaders guiding the discussion to work out common understanding on these issues, which are uppermost in the minds of our working class. The Secretariat of the CITU will

finalise the commission papers in the light of the discussion in the meetings. We must popularise these papers extensively among the workers so that proper policy orientation is evolved among the working class of our country.

ACTIVITIES AMONG WORKING WOMEN

The 12th Conference correctly emphasised the need for strengthening our activities among working women in the light of conclusions we arrived at the Special Convention of Working Women held at Visakhapatnam. Though we are making good progress in our activities among the working women, we have yet to make advance in bringing them in leading positions at all levels. Many women activists belonging to our fraternal organisation come enthusiastically in our activities. While welcoming them, we must strengthen participation of our own women workers in the activities of the co-ordination committee. We must take note of the fact that the participation of women delegates in the Conference is much less than what we decided in the General Council meeting prior to the Conference.

We have adopted important resolutions in our Conference, which are meant to be acted upon in the forthcoming period. We should not allow them to remain in our files but act on them so that our activities should reflect the resolve we have made in this Conference. The resolution on Pension clearly pointed out how the Government of India is making systematic attempt to curtail our social security benefits and how the united movement should strive its best to defeat the vile designs of the ruling classes to reduce the benefits that the working class had achieved through bitter struggles in the past.

The Jute workers in West Bengal are fighting a grim battle against the non-implementation of the commitments given by the jute barons and against their attempts to deny the legitimate standard of living for the jute workers. Our unions must campaign to express solidarity with jute workers, so that they in the end achieve success in their united struggle.

We must seriously take note of the resolution on the

unorganised workers who are the worst victims of the economic policies of the UPA Government. The draft Bill proposed by the Government does not give any worth while benefit to the vast multitude of our working class and CITU should mobilise the organized working class in support of the unorganised working class. We must work hard to prepare for one day strike of the unorganised workers all over India so that their problems are properly focused. All CITU unions and committees should give top priority to this task so that the unorganised workers are given necessary solidarity support.

We have adopted resolution on expression of solidarity with working class of Cuba, Palestine, Iraq, Lebanon and other countries, who are engaged in fighting against U.S. imperialism. We must continue organise solidarity with the fighting working class all over the world.

We have been discussing the question of strengthening our organisation and movement in Hindi speaking heartland. We have been holding periodic meetings of leaders of Hindi speaking region and taken some steps to improve the organisational network. Though some progress has been made, it is far from adequate. Unless the T.U. movement is properly developed there, our All India movement cannot take the required shape. The CITU Centre will have to pay more attention to this area so that this vast region is brought into the mainstream of our nationwide movement. The potential for developing our activities in the region is quite assuring.

The birth centenary of our founder General Secretary Com. P. Ramamurti commences from September this year. We must organise properly an intensive education programme all over the country and take steps to strengthen the CITU organisation. The CITU will chalk out a detailed programme of activities in the next meeting of the General Council and all of us must take steps to ensure full implementation of the programme. Our decision to start a permanent school in memory of Com. Ramamurti must be given a concrete shape during the centenary celebrations.

Com. P.R's contribution in strengthening the CITU is immense. The centenary celebration should highlight his contribution, which alone can be a suitable homage to his revered memory.

I am happy to note that several speakers have emphasised the full implementation of the Bhubaneshwar Resolution on organization. It is true that the implementation has been extremely tardy though it has been discussed on several occasions. Even the CITU Centre has not been able to implement all the directives given in the Resolution. Reluctance to give up the old style of functioning is the root cause of this slow progress, while individual style of working is creating serious bottlenecks. We have to make further progress in ensuring democratic functioning of trade unions and check the tendency of bureaucratic methods of functioning. Collective efforts at all levels will alone give us more results in improving the matters. General Secretary's call to increase the CITU membership to 50 lakhs by the next Conference must be given due importance. During Com. P.R's centenary celebration we should make attempts in that direction, so that we can attempt to over fulfill our target by the time of the next Conference.

WORKER-PEASANT ALLIANCE

We have always been stressing the need for worker-peasant alliance in the democratic movement. After discussing with the leadership of the AIKS and AIAWU, it has been decided to launch a joint campaign all over the country on common issues facing the workers and the peasants viz. price rise of essential commodities, adoption of comprehensive Bills for unorganised workers and agricultural labourers, strengthening of the public distribution system, withdrawal of cut in custom duties that adversely affect our agriculture and traditional industry, opposition to land grab by corporation sector in SEZ and other demands.

I am happy to note that our Conference has welcomed this step. We will discuss with the leadership of AIKS and AIAWU to workout details of the joint struggle. All our unions must work seriously to make this programme a grand success.

The CITU's initiative in focusing attention of the Government to the conditions in the IT sector has been well received all over the country. A study conducted by the National Labour Institute has strengthened our contentions. The employees work for 12 hours a day, and the working conditions require a lot of improvement in this new sector of employment. At present about 10 lakhs workers are working in this industry and the number is likely to exceed 20 lakhs in 3 year time. The CITU stands for T.U. rights for these employees, who should be empowered to have collective bargaining right as well as right to strike.

The profitability is extremely high in this industry but the labour laws of the land are not implemented in it. We should campaign for an all India legislation to govern the working and living condition of the employees in the IT sector.

Seventeen fraternal organisations have expressed their warm greetings to our Conference, which is indicative of growing unity of the working class and the toiling masses of India in the struggle against globalisation. We must strengthen our ties of friendship with them so that the unity in action will be strengthened in the days to come.

GROWING INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

We have a proud privilege to receive a large number of foreign delegates, who have come from far away places to express their fraternal solidarity with our struggles. For the first time, a delegation also came from USA to strengthen our relations with the working class of America. The CITU has developed ties of friendship with over 45 countries and we are developing relations with all organisation irrespective of affiliations and ideological stand points. This will pave the way for the unity of the world working class in the common struggle against capitalist exploitation.

We welcome the upsurge of the Latin American working class against US imperialism. Latin America, which was considered

to be backyard of US imperialism, has now become a bulwork of anti-imperialist struggle. We must try to develop more and more relations with them so that we can express firm solidarity with their just struggles.

The world trade union movement is at crossroads today. While the struggle against globalisation are looming large, attempts to keep the struggle at a low key are being made to day. In this regard we must view the merger of ICFTU and WCL at Vienna recently. The new organisation ITUC does not appeal for unity irrespective of ideological differences, but talks of negotiating with MNCs and World Bank for a new understanding with them. We must fight against MNCs and their supporters so that their depredations can be checked in time. The growing inequality in the world is today adding to the number of people below the poverty line, while the rich has amassed huge wealth.

The new technology emerged recently has the capacity to provide shelter, education, medical facilities, jobs and social security for all the people in the world. However, it does not take place since the technology is used only for the benefits of the profit hungry MNCs. The process of globalisation is therefore unsustainable in the long run and the people of the world are bound to rise against it.

The World Federation of Trade Unions has made some sincere efforts to build a trade union movement on the basis of class struggle and anti-imperialism. A new central headquarters from Athens has started functioning. However, WFTU has no affiliated unions in all major capitalist countries. It is also facing shortage of resources to carry forward its international activities effectively. It is, however, trying overcome the challenges by relying on the strength of the working class.

We must also find out how the fighting organisation like COSATU (S. Africa), CUT (Brazil), CGT (France), GEFONT (Nepal), ZENROREN (Japan), CGIL (Italy) are considering the need to associate with ITUC. We have good fraternal relations with these organisations and we want to further strengthen them.

The delegates to this Conference have correctly stressed the need for CITU to play more attention to the international TU movement. We take note of their feelings and assure to take steps to strengthen our international relations.

We have elected a new leadership of CITU unanimously in this Conference. The new leadership has a stupendous task lying ahead. We have to improve our central functioning and functioning of national committees so that we can discharge the responsibilities bestowed upon us by this Conference.

Let us take the pledge to carry forward the tasks laid down by this historic Conference. If we are determined to fulfill our responsibility with revolutionary fervour, we can give a good account of ourselves when we meet next time in the Thirteenth Conference of CITU.

We shall overcome!

We are bound to win because we are right !

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8. Arati Dasgupta
9. K L Bajaj
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13. K O Habib
14. Raghunath Singh
15. Mercykutty Amma
16. Sudha Bhaskar

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8. Dipankar Mukherjee
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10. A K Padmanabhan
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Rathin Sen *	Pradip Chakraborty, (24 prgs-N)
Badal Kar *	Dipak Mitra
Md. Nijamuddin *	Ajit Sarkar
Narayan Saha *	Kanak Das
Mantu Bose *	Debi Pathak
Jiaul Alam *	Barun Ghatak
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