



# THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

## On Other Pages

- *CITU's Note On Social Status Of Women In India*
- *DIR And Right To Strike/Legal Note*
- *Ruthless Suppression Of T.U. Rights Of Spanish Workers*
- *Protest Week Against Wage Freeze Ordinance*
- *Infringement Of T. U. Rights In Japan/ Complaint Lodged With I.L.O.*
- *CITU Condemns Firing On Bharatpur Workers*
- *A.I. Road Transport Workers' Federation Formed*
- *Country-wide Protest Actions Against Wage Freeze*
- *CITU—Andhra Pradesh Committee Meets*
- *CITU—Maharashtra Committee Executive Meets*
- *Newsletters/Kerala, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan*
- *Other Regular Features*

### Editorial Board

B. T. Ranadive (Chairman)

P. Ramanurti Monoranjan Ray

Niren Ghosh Sudhin Kumar

M. K. Pandhe (Editor)

## Sinister Move For More Attacks On Workers' Wages

**T**HE CONFIDENTIAL INTERIM REPORT OF THE Committee on Wage Policy headed by Dr. S. Chakravarty, Member, Planning Commission which was laid on the table of Lok Sabha recently is a shameless document seeking to impose further inroads into the living standards of our working class. If the policy framework suggested in the Report is allowed to be implemented by the Government the Wage-freeze Ordinance could be considered as a precursor of series of measures to depress the real wages of workers.

Strangely enough the document though submitted to the Government over a year ago was considered as a confidential document by the Union Labour Minister. The copies of the document were made freely available to the employers and detailed extracts were also supplied to the press; it was not supplied to trade unions even after repeated requests to the Labour Ministry.

The Congress Government, knowing fully well that its anti-working class wage policy will not be acceptable to the trade union movement, did not feel the necessity of usual show of consultation with the Central trade unions. The Ministry constituted a wage cell to work out details of the wage policy which also clearly indicates that the Government wants to go ahead with its Wage policy at whatever cost.

The objectives of the Wage Policy mentioned in the Report do not contain any new objective than what was being repeated all these years. It does not mention the "Living Wage" which has been included in the Directive Principles in the Indian Constitution. It has given a good-bye even to the concept of the need-based minimum wage as per norms laid down by the Fifteenth Session of the Indian Labour Conference. It only talks of "minimum wages not less than the poverty line".

**SEPT. 11 : OBSERVE "SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLE OF CHILE DAY"**

On the plea of eliminating "progressively unjustified wage differentials between the organised and unorganised sectors" the Report seeks to peg the wages of organised sector. The Report virtually opposes every wage rise on the plea of avoiding "pushing up wages to a level as would encourage substitution of capital or reduce the demand for labour". Moreover, it seeks to link wages with productivity which means for every rise in wages, workers must ensure additional profit to the employer. All this is being done in the name of evolving a national Wage Policy.

The Report has made a false claim that by and large the organised labour is already getting wage above the poverty line which has been arbitrarily fixed by the Planning Commission. It states that at 1960 prices the per capita consumption should be Rs. 20 to keep a family above the poverty line. At October 1972 price it was Rs. 40 per Capita and at present prices to keep a family just above the poverty line, according to the official calculation, the amount works out to be Rs. 240.

Most of the unorganised workers are drawing wages below this minimum and even if all the workers in the unorganised sector are paid Rs 240 it would give them some relief. But the Govt. does not propose to do so. The Interim Report visualises this should be implemented for the organised sector. Thus the Committee despite shedding crocodile tears for the workers in unorganised sector for

their low wages proposes to keep them on starvation wages.

While talking about "Unreasonable Wage Claims" of workers in the organised sector the Report speaks the voice of the unscrupulous employers. It says, "In industries where wages are a small component of the total cost, or the additional cost can be passed on to the consumers the employer may have a weak motivation to offer resistance to unreasonable wage claims. In such conditions free bargaining between employers and workers may lead to the emergence of areas of high wages inconsistent with the basic objectives of Wage policy"

On the plea of reducing wage disparity the Report has made sinister attempt to stop every rise for the workers who have been able to gain more concessions through struggles. Similarly the concept of fixing rational wage differential is being used to keep the wages of skilled workers to lower level.

The Committee also has recommended that the full neutralisation should be granted at the minimum wage level. With the fraudulent price indices the actual neutralisation will be even lower than 100 per cent for the minimum wages. Naturally the skilled and highly skilled workers will face drastic reduction in their real wages.

The Committee suggests a National Wage Board consisting of bureaucrats only. There will be no representative of trade unions on the Board. Later on, it visualises the constitution of National Wage Commission with

wide powers. But it also will have no nominee of the trade unions. Thus the question of Wage determination will be left at the mercy of officials appointed by the Labour Minister.

The Interim Report is thus an attempt to introduce authoritarianism in the field of wage fixation. It seeks to suppress the collective bargaining in wages which amounts to further cut in real wages of workers.

The trade union movement will have to mobilise the working class against the dangerous proposals of the Committee so that the Government is prevented from attacking the wage standards of the workers. The unity that has been achieved in the struggle against Wage Freeze Ordinance must be further strengthened to resist the new all round inroads into the already prevailing miserable living conditions of the workers.

*JUST OUT*  
**Against Inflation And  
Wage Freeze**

by  
B. T. RANADIVE  
President, CITU  
(A CITU Publication)

Price : 60 Paise

*Available with :*

The Centre of Indian Trade  
Unions

172, Lenin Sarani,  
Calcutta-700013

National Book Agency (P) Ltd.,  
12, Bankim Chatterjee Street,  
Calcutta-700012

# National Convention Against Wage Freeze

The National Convention of working people against wage freeze held in New Delhi on 28th August was a unique manifestation of new urge of unity among the working class to resist the Wage Freeze offensive of the Congress Government. 1444 delegates belonging to several central Trade Unions and National Federations unanimously acclaimed the decision of the Convention to mobilise the entire working class in the struggle against the Wage Freeze policies of the Government.

The decision to hold the Convention was taken at a meeting of Central Trade Unions and National Federations held in New Delhi on 21st July last.

The AITUC leadership decided not to join the Convention though earlier their Delhi leaders in public meeting called upon the working class to join the Convention. The AITUC units in Maharashtra and Karnataka were also party to the decision to implement the directives of the Convention. In his discussions with George Fernandes, Convener Preparatory Committee of the Convention, Dange agreed to join the Convention. However, later on, the AITUC leadership resorted to the tactics of raising technical grounds for their non-participation in the Convention.

The leadership of HMS which earlier decided to sponsor a meeting of Central Trade Unions in August refused to make the

Convention united and preferred to remain aloof from the Convention. Seeing the suicidal path followed by the dominant leadership, a large section of HMS unions including prominent leaders joined the Convention. The news of their participation was received with great ovation by the entire Convention.

The All India Insurance Employees Association played an important role in making the Convention a grand success. The trade unions in Delhi organised joint campaign throughout the city to popularise the Convention. Their joint campaign generated enthusiasm even in adjoining areas of Haryana and Western U.P.

The Convention was held in Mavalankar Hall which was overflowing with delegates throughout. The Presidium elected by the Convention represented major sections of the trade union movement in the Convention. The members of the Presidium included among others Jyoti Basu (CITU), Sadashiv Bagaitkar (HMS), Bhau Phatak (HMS), Durga Bagchi (UTUC), J. B. Dhote M.P. (TUCC), S. K. Vyas (Confederation of Central Government Employees), Arabindo Ghosh (All India State Government Employees Federation), Saroj Chaudhuri (All India Insurance Employees Association).

George Fernandes Convener, Preparatory Committee in his

introductory speech welcomed the unity achieved in the Convention and expressed his confidence that the unity will be further strengthened in the fight against Wage Freeze.

Jyoti Basu, Vice-President, CITU, held Government fully responsible for the price rise and called for a struggle against these policies which alone would halt the offensive against common people. He criticised the machination of the Government to pit organised sections of workers against unorganised and called upon both the sections to unitedly resist the attacks on their standard of life.

Priya Gupta, and Dhote attacked the pro-monopolist policies of the Government and appealed for unity of the entire working class.

Sadashiv Bagaitkar and Bhau Phatak criticised the AITUC and HMS leaders for their non-participation in the Convention and stressed that such attitude only helped the Government in carrying out their anti-working class policies.

S. K. Vyas expressed his confidence that the Central Government employees would not lag behind in the joint campaign that would be launched after the Convention. Arabindo Ghosh stated that the 40 lakh State Government employees, along with other sections of T. U. movement, will join the sustaine movement against the black Ordinance. Durga Bagchi expressed his hope that the Convention would give proper direction in the united resistance

struggle against the Wage Freeze.

After the introductory remarks of the members of the Presidium the Convention took up the two resolutions drafted by the Preparatory Committee.

M. K. Pandhe (CITU) moved the resolution on Wage Freeze and National Campaign. The resolution rejected the plea of the Government that the prices were increasing due to wage rise. It held the policies of the Government fully responsible for the price rise. "The recent imposts, deficit financing, refusal to compensate fully the working class and salaried employees for the rise in prices are all attempts of the Government to transform the burdens of the crisis to the working class and the common people. The Ordinance freezing wages and D. A. is a further diabolical attempt in the same direction of shifting the burdens of the crisis to the working people".

The resolution suggested alternative measures to check the price rise and called upon the working class to fight for these measures. It also welcomed the united movements developing in Kerala, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamilnadu against Wage Freeze. It condemned the police firing against workers of Bharatpur who resisted the Wage Freeze.

The Convention called upon the entire working class to build powerful movement all over the country and organise local, regional and State-wide Conventions to prepare for further struggle.

Jatin Chakravarty (UTUC) seconded the resolution. Twenty-five delegates representing various organisations participated in the discussion on the resolution. Prominent among those : P. N. Sukul, Chairman All India State Government Employees Federation, A. S. Rajan, Secretary, General, NFPTE, Bhabani S. Hota, Secretary All India University Employees Confederation, Madan Phadnis, Secretary All India Newspaper Employees Federation, S. K. Dhar, Organising Secretary, All India Loco Running Staff Association, Md. Ismail, Vice-President CITU, K. Adinarayana, General Secretary, All India Postal Employees Union, Mathew Kurian, President All India Progressive P. F. Employees Association, Monoranjan Roy, General Secretary, All India Plantation Workers Federation, A. C. Lahiri, All India Station Masters Association, Kishore

Pawar, President All India Sugar Workers' Federation (HMS), Tara Chand Sethi, Chandra Shekhar Azad (HMS), Bhakti Bhusan Mandal (TUCC), and Naresh Dass, All India Reserve Bank Employees Association. The resolution was passed unanimously.

Sunil Maitra (AIIEA) moved a resolution condemning repression against Central and State Govt. Employees and Railway men which was seconded by Venkataraman (HMP) and passed unanimously.

P. Ramamurti, General Secretary, CITU, while summing up the deliberations of the Convention called upon all the delegates to carry forward the message of the Convention to all corners of the country so that a powerful struggle is launched against wage freeze so that the Government of India is compelled to withdraw the Wage Freeze Law 'lock, stock and barrel'.

---

#### **Employees of Mercury Travels Fight Against Retrenchment.**

Led by the Employees' Union, the employees and workmen of Mercury Travels (I) Ltd., Calcutta took 'mass leave' on August 2 in protest against the illegal retrenchment of 25 permanent employees on July 1. They are also observing a programme of 'pen-down' strike from August 16 to force the management to come to a settlement. Employees' unions of different organisations, led by the Federation of Mercantile Employees unions, demonstrated before the office of the Mercury Travels in support of their struggle.

---

#### **Bihar Cinema Employees on Struggle Path**

Led by the Bihar Cinema Employees' Union (CITU), the cinema employees of Ranchi town submitted their Charter of Demands on April 20 to the cinema managements, but so far they have refused to negotiate with the Union and settle the demands. The union decided to serve 15 days' strike notice, to observe a Demands Week from August 11 and to observe a token strike on August 18. If these fail to move the managements, the employees will go on indefinite strike. Meanwhile they are continuing other forms of struggle including demonstrations etc.

# Country-Wide Protest Actions Against Wage Freeze

**T**HE call given by the Central Trade Unions and National Federations for all-out protest actions against the wage-freeze Ordinance promulgated by the Government and for observance of August 13 as Protest Day has received massive response from workers and employees throughout the country.

The first blood was drawn when, on August 11, the grounds of Birla's CIMCO factory at Bharatpur were drenched with the blood of the workers when they were heroically resisting wage-cut imposed by the black Ordinance.

In New Delhi, thousands of power workers from all over the country staged a massive demonstration on August 13 to protest against the Ordinance. They have also decided to boycott pay in September and to observe a one-day protest strike on September 18.

In West Bengal, protest demonstrations, rallies and gate meetings are being held in almost all factories and offices, with thousands of workers and employees participating.

On August 13, workers and employees throughout West Bengal observed Protest Day through mass deputations to the authorities to protest against the wage-freeze ordinance, power crisis etc. Gate rallies were held in a large number of industrial establishments in and around Calcutta.

The West Bengal State Electricity Board Workmen's Union (CITU) organised a big demonstration in Calcutta on August 13 to observe Protest Day in response to the call given by the CITU, AITUC and HMS.

Tea garden workers in North Bengal observed Protest Day on August 13 through protest rallies and demonstrations and by handing over memorandums to their respective managements.

Protest Day was also observed through gate meetings, rallies, demonstrations and mass deputations in the industrial belts of Howrah, Hooghly, 24 Parganas and other districts of the State.

In Kerala, where a State-wide general strike has been called by the Left parties and Trade Unions on September 10, two Jeep jathas started on August 16—one from Cannanore and another from Trivandrum—and

are covering the entire State to mobilise the working people for the struggle against the black Ordinance and the General Strike of September 10.

Electricity workers of Kerala, along with power workers in other States, observed Protest Day in Trivandrum on August 13 under the joint auspices of the CITU and AITUC.

The Federation of State Employees and Teachers' Organisations protested against the Ordinance on August 7 through demonstrations, rallies and dharnas.

In Kozhikode, workers of Puthiyara Tiles and the Commonwealth Tiles Factory successfully resisted wage-cut imposed by the Ordinance by gheraoing their managements and forcing them to refund the deducted money.

In Rajasthan, a Protest Week from 9th to 16th August was observed in different centres of the State at the call of the Central Trade Unions and the Rajasthan State CITU.

---

## T. U. & Other Organisations Demand Withdrawal of Wage-freeze Ordinance

A meeting of various Trade Unions and Employees' Organisations, was held in Hyderabad (Andhra) on July 15 to consider ways and means to fight the Black Ordinance on Wage freeze. Besides CITU, the meeting was attended by representatives of Andhra NGO Association, AIIEA, NFPTE, Confederation of Central Government Employees, Reserve Bank Employees' Association and several other Trade Unions. Comrade P.

Rangarao (AIIEU) presided.

Comrade N. Prasada Rao (CITU) convener of the meeting, explained the danger posed by the Wage-freeze Ordinance and urged all Trade Unions to unitedly fight this offensive. The meeting was also addressed by representatives of NGO Association, Confederation of CGE, AIIEU etc. The meeting adopted a resolution condemning the Ordinance and demanding its immediate withdrawal.

## Workers Massively Protest Against Bharatpur Killings

**T**EN workers were killed and more than 30 workers were seriously injured when the Police, RAC and the management opened fire on workers of Birla's CIMCO factory in Bharatpur on August 11. The workers were protesting against the wage-cut imposed by the management in accordance with the black wage freeze Ordinance.

The CIMCO workers had made a total gain of Rs. 69 as a result of an agreement signed on July 1 last after bitter struggles. Although the agreement was signed before the promulgation of the Ordinance, the management wanted to deduct Rs. 53 out of the wages for July as compulsory deposit under the Ordinance. The CITU and two INTUC unions protested against this but without any result. The workers en mass refused to accept the wages and on August 10 assembled inside the factory to protest against this. The management called the Police and Rajasthan Armed Police and locked all the factory gates virtually imprisoning the workers inside the factory.

On the 11th morning, a Vice-President of the company opened fire with a revolver, followed by the police who suddenly started firing tear-gas shells and bullets at the workers without any warning, killing 3 workers on the spot and injuring many others.

This brutal killing evoked a spontaneous reaction from all

sections of workers. The State CITU gave a call for Statewide protest actions on 12th. The Jaipur city CITU gave a general Strike call on 13th and held demonstrations before the Vidhan Sabha. In Bharatpur itself, a spontaneous bundh was observed for 2 days in protest against this barbarous act.

The demonstration of 13th August in Jaipur, in which more than 25 thousand workers participated, was the biggest working class action in Jaipur. The workers' procession converged on the Vidhan Sabha where they were addressed by Com. Punamia, President and Durgadas Shirali, General Secretary of Rajasthan CITU, MLA's of CPI (M), S. P. and Jan Sangh and other trade union leaders.

The bodies of the martyrs were taken in a huge procession throughout the city and cremated in front of the workers' gate of the factory.

Com. Punamia and Com. Shirali, accompanied by hundreds of workers, went round the

factory on the same day. Their investigation proved beyond doubt that, the management and Police claims that there was provocation from the workers' side, were entirely false and concocted. Later, on the same evening a huge public meeting was held in Bharatpur addressed by Mohan Punamia and others.

The Rajasthan State CITU has demanded immediate arrest and punishment of two officers of the factory as well as a Police officer responsible for this brutal firing.

### Protest Week Observed

In response to the decision of the Central Trade Unions and National Federations, the Rajasthan State CITU gave a call for State-wide observance of a Protest Week from 9th to 16th August against the wage-freeze Ordinance. Moreover, the Rajasthan Workers & Employees Organisations Co-ordination Committee also had given call to observe 16th August as Protest Day throughout the State.

The protest week as well as the protest day, were observed in different centres throughout Rajasthan through gate meetings, demonstrations etc.

---

### One-day Strike by Times of India Employees

Led by the Times of India Allied Publications Employees' Union, 5000 employees including working journalists of the Times of India Group of Publications all over India went on a day's strike on August 22 to press for an early settlement of their Charter of Demands submitted a long time back. The

strike was completely successful and totally paralysed work.

The present service conditions of the employees was fixed by the Wage Board recommendations of 1966. Since then the profits of the company have increased three-fold, but the management is unwilling to settle the demands of the employees.

## D. I. R. & Right To Strike

**U**NDER Rule 118 of the Defence of India Rules, 1971, the Central or the State Government may prohibit strike in connection with any industrial dispute. Actually that was done in regard to Railway Strike by a Notification issued on or about 28th November, 1973 prohibiting Strike in Railways for six months till about 27th May, 1974.

Thousands of Railway employees who went on strike from 8th May, 1974 for about three weeks to have their grievances redressed are being prosecuted in different Courts in India for violating the order purported to have been issued under Rule 118 of the Defence of India Rules prohibiting Railway Strike.

The Prohibitory Notification is evidently contrary to Chapter V of Industrial Disputes Act 1947 in which the only restriction imposed by Section 22 of the Act is that in a public utility service, no person shall go on a strike without giving notice of a specified period. Section 23 of the Act imposes a further restriction that no workman in any Industrial Establishment shall go on strike during the pendency of conciliation proceedings or of any proceeding before a Labour Court, Tribunal or a National Tribunal or an Arbitrator or during the period of operation of a settlement or award.

As has now been held in the

Calcutta High Court by Mr Justice Basak, Railway employees are industrial workers and therefore obviously the Industrial Disputes Act applies to Railwaymen.

The question is two fold. First, whether the employees have any right to go on strike. Secondly, whether a statutory Notification or Rule can have the effect or result of abrogating a statutory provision in the Industrial Disputes Act.

On the first point, one should have thought from Clause (c) of Article 19 (1) of the Constitution which guarantees right to form Associations or Unions, that a Union or an Association has therefore a guaranteed right of collective bargaining or to strike. Naturally, a Union or an Association is formed for the purpose of achieving some objectives unless it were for pure entertainment as in a Club. Therefore, formation of a Union or an Association must necessarily be integrated with the objects for which it is formed. A Union of workmen should therefore have the fundamental right to advance its objective of welfare of workers by collective bargaining or by going on strike.

This logic of Article 19 (1) (c) of the Constitution has not been accepted by the Supreme Court which has, in the cases of All India Bank Employees Association v. N. I. Tribunal (1)

Kameswar v. State of Bihar (2), held that such right of collective bargaining or of strike does not follow from the right to assemble.

On the second question, however, we can legitimately contend that a subordinate legislation like the Defence of India Rules cannot repeal a statute enacted by Parliament. It is true that Section 3 of the Defence of India Act empowers the Central Government to make rules for securing the Defence of India, public safety and for maintaining supplies and services essential to the life of the community. Sub-Section 2 of Section 3 specifies the subjects of rule-making without prejudice to the general power to make rules just indicated. Such wide power of making rules does not however empower the Central Government to frame a rule which in effect and impliedly abrogates or repeals a statute in operation. More specific words should be needed in order to bring about that result.

Thus, Section 1 (2) (d) of the Emergency Powers (Defence) Act of 1939 (now repealed) of United Kingdom specifically authorised amendment, suspension and application of other enactments, despite the width of the objects (public safety, defence of the realm etc.), specified in Section 1 (1) of that Act. It was further enacted in Section 1 (4) of that Act that the validity of any provision made in exercise of powers conferred by the Act shall not be affected by its inconsistency with any statute.

Obviously, like provisions are notably absent in the Defence of

India Act. We can argue from that that the rules framed under the Defence of India Act or any Notification or Notifications made under those rules would not operate to cause any implied repeal of the provisions of the Industrial Disputes Act.

In the case of *Wandsworth D. B. W. v. Pretty* (3), it was held by the queen's Bench in England that certain Police regulations made under the Metropolitan Streets Act Amendment Act of 1867 did not impliedly repeal Section 60 (7) of the Metropolitan Police Act of 1839 as to nuisance caused by exposing goods on the foot way of Streets.

In case of *King v. Henderson* (4), the Judicial Committee quashed as ultravires a rule purporting to be made under the N. S. Wales Bankruptcy Acts of 1887 and 1888, though it was a judge-made rule. The Judicial Committee held that a rule must be declared ultravires if it is in no sense a regulation either proved or calculated to carry out the objects of the Act.

As stated by Halsbury, where legislative powers are conferred Parliament on a subordinate body, the limits set upon them by the enabling statute must be scrupulously observed and any provision the making of which is held not to be authorised will be declared by the Courts to be ultravires and void (5).

It has, therefore, to be carefully scrutinised whether rule 118 is authorised by section 3 of the Defence of India Act 1971. Or, in other words, it has to be found out whether that Section does set

any limits upon the legislative powers conferred upon the Central or State Government and, if so, whether this rule 118 transgress those limits or not. It cannot be contended that, as far as the powers of legislation given under Section 3 are concerned, the sky is the limit, and anything can be done under the rule making power.

It is for the progressive lawyers to relentlessly press forward the contention that the

powers under Section 3 of the Defence of India Act are not without limitations and rule 118 of the Defence of India Rules has overstepped the limits.

---

(1) *A.I.R. 1962 SC 171*

(2) *A.I.R. 1962 SC 1166*

(3) *(1899) 1 QB 1*

(4) *1898 A.C. 720*

(5) *Halsbury, Laws of England, Volume 36, Statutes, Paragraph 708.*

—Arun Prokash Chatterjee

---

## Ruthless Suppression of T. U. Rights of Spanish Workers

**T**HE delegates of the General Workers' Union in Spain (U. G. T.) and the United Workers Union (U. S. O)—the true representatives of the Spanish working class, who were invited to participate in the first plenary meeting of the workers' Group of the International Labour Conference held at the UNO buildings on June 5, 1974, made a joint declaration. Though the representative of Franco's Spain objected to their participation, 101 participating countries welcomed their participation in the said meeting.

The declaration stated that since Fascist Coup in Spain by General Franco in 1939, the rights of association and expression have been remain suppressed in Spain. All labour organisations were broken up and persecuted, its leaders and many militants were killed, those remaining were imprisoned. Between 1969 and 1973 alone, no less than 17

workers have died in the whole peninsula, shot by the police. Spain still refuses to ratify ILO Conventions 87 and 98 on trade union freedom and collective bargaining. Right to strike remains suppressed for 35 years. The Franco Government has sought to suppress by decree the class struggle; normal trade union activities are punished as crimes under the legislature of Spain. In the police commissariats torture is a common practice applied to labour militants. The political and trade union rights are suppressed by violent measure, the rights of the separate group of population—Basque, Catalonian, Galician are suppressed with blood shed.

Under these inhuman and barbaric conditions, the Spanish working class have been continuing their battle for elementary trade union and democratic rights.

## Railwaymen

# Railwaymen Carry Out Programme of NCCRS

**R**EPORTS from various corners of the country show that despite severe victimisation and further attacks of various types by the authorities, railwaymen observed the week from July 22, in a big way. Both in Eastern and South Eastern Railways, black badges were worn on July 22-23 and on July 26, a protest demonstration came to Esplanade East for submission of a memorandum to the Governor. The railway colonies are still under section 144. In spite of this a demonstration was led before the Divisional Superintendent on July 26. In Chittaranjan Locomotive works, there was a democratic convention on July 24 in which representatives of various organisations of Rupnarayanpur area expressed their support to railwaymen and on July 28, there was a mass rally. At Dibrugarh and various other centres of N. F. Railway, the week was observed. In Southern Railway there was a relay hunger-strike for 3 days from July 12. In Vijayawada Division of S.C. Rly., ten thousand badges were worn by employees and meetings were conducted throughout the division culminating in a mass dharna before the D.S. Office on July 27 and a big mass rally. In Central Railway, Dharna was organised during the week. There was a huge demonstration at Samastipur (N.E.R.).

Comrade Samar Mukherjee, M. P., Member NCCRS Action Committee toured Gauhati, Lumding, Siliguri, Jamalpur and

Samastipur and addressed meetings attended by large sections of railwaymen. He also met the General Manager of N. F. Railway about withdrawal of penal measures.

On August 9, impressive demonstration of railwaymen and other workers of various trade unions were held at Calcutta, Madurai, Madras and various other centres.

In S. E. Railway, the Zonal NCCRS had drawn up detailed programmes of divisional conferences and also a hunger strike programme from August 12. But these programmes were subsequently cancelled by the Conventor without consulting others, which has created misgivings amongst various organisations.

### **Strike-breakers expelled by LRSA.**

The Workings Committee of the Loco Running Staff Association met at Delhi in July 29 and 30. Besides the members, quite a large number of office-bearers of various zones attended this meeting. After taking stock of the strike position, the Committee firmly opined that because of refusal by a section of Office-bearers of various zonal organisations to implement the decision of joining strike from May 8, there was a set-back in the situation. It was therefore decided that all units should take action against strike-breakers. The Working Committee directed Mewa Lal and R.P. Sharma to tender their resignation within 24 hours

failing which they were to be suspended. The Delhi Divisional Committee had however expelled R.P. Sharma and M.P. Chauhan for their blacklegging activities. All units of LRSA were directed to activate the NCCRS bodies and ensure relief to victimised workers. The meeting also decided to recommend to the NCCRS to decide on direct action and draw up a phased programme for winning the demands and for fighting against victimisation. It was also decided to hold special conventions at all levels to be completed before the extended meeting of the CEC scheduled to be held on Oct. 7-8 at Bombay. The zonal Convention of Northern Railway was scheduled to be held within a month.

### **Railway authorities obstruct NCCRS Functioning**

While the Railway Minister, contrary to his assurances, has refused to negotiate with NCCRS, the authorities at lower levels have gone further ahead in obstructing the functioning of NCCRS. In Eastern Railway, notice has been issued to the AIRF unions that the facility of space for union office will be withdrawn if the said offices continue to function as NCCRS Office. In view of the brisk activities of the NCCRS to provide relief to the victimised workers and good response from railwaymen, the authorities find that their aim to starve the workers into submission is being foiled. Hence they have issued instructions to all concerned to take steps so that collections in the name of NCCRS cannot be made in railway premises. Some over zealous supervisors are threatening the staff that they would be transferred if they contribute to the NCCRS fund.

# CITU'S NOTE ON SOCIAL STATUS OF WOMEN IN INDIA

THE Committee on Social Status of women, formed by the Government of India with Dr. Phulrenu Guha as Chairman, invited the CITU to place its views on this question before the Committee. Accordingly, a note embodying the views of the CITU was submitted before the Committee on July 31 last. Comrade Vimal Ranadive, who represented the CITU before the Committee, submitted the note and also replied to the questions.

The full text of the note is given below.

Notwithstanding the provisions in the Constitution about equality of sexes providing guarantee against discrimination, there has been hardly any change in the position and status of women in our country. The Constitutional guarantees have remained formal declarations ready at hand to be invoked to cover up the reality.

Not that nothing has changed since independence. There has been some progress in education; women are entering various professions; entering public life; participating in Parliament and legislatures. But these developments concern only a very narrow section of women coming from the educated middle class or better placed sections leaving the vast multitude of women more or less where they were before independence.

The progress in education and other spheres, if at all it could be progress, has been minimal and has neither changed the status of women, nor the outlook of the people towards them. The overwhelming majority of

women, continue to be illiterate, completely dependent on their husbands and pass through life without being aware of the developments taking place in the country or outside.

Traditions, customs, religious superstition prescribe their fate and course of life, notwithstanding the formal provisions in the Constitution. Traditions demands of most of them that they should look after the kitchen, bring up children, in fact do domestic drudgery without any time left for educational, cultural self-development. This hold of tradition is so strong that even earning and working women have to bear the exclusive responsibility of the kitchen, their husbands would not condescend to share it with them. Whether the earning woman is from the educated middle class, for the peasants' or workers' family,—this pattern is the common pattern with rare exceptions.

This hold of tradition, caste, custom continues to be strong and all-pervasive because of the failure of the Government to change the socio-economic order drastically, because of the economic stagnation obtaining in country.

These traditions and the prevalent status are a product of backward society where women's labour is mainly devoted to domestic affairs and does not participate effectively in productive activities of society. The main important production operations are all done by male labour. The inferior status of

women is based on this division of labour whereby women have ceased to play an effective role in social production.

Tradition and religion combine to sanction and strengthen this economic oppression and obstruct a change in outlook.

The solution is a quick development of the country's resources, widespread economic activity, involving the direct participation of millions of women in social labour. That a country gifted with so much labour power in men and women can advance its economy rapidly is shown by the example of People's China which has succeeded in unleashing the activity of its people and drawing women in it.

The women in the rural areas are the worst sufferers in our country. They have perhaps experienced the least change in their status. That is because of the failure of the Government to introduce drastic land reforms, smash the concentration of land create conditions for labour enthusiasm both among men and women.

Both in cities and villages alike private ownership of the means of production and the corrupt management of the public sector which in reality serves the interests of the private sector, hamper production clog avenues of increased employment and contribute to the growth of massive unemployment. With massive unemployment for men in villages and towns alike, there is no chance for women being drawn into participating in social labour.

This freezes the existing conditions, the existing family relations in which the husband dominates and the wife is an economic dependent. It is this that produces the social status of women, notwithstanding the Constitutional declarations.

The failure of the Govt. to change the economic pattern and release women from exclusively domestic activities makes a farce of all declarations of equality.

It should be realised that securing women's participation in society's productive labour fully and completely is not possible unless a fully socialist economy, abolishing all exploitation of man by man is achieved. That is why we find that there are movements for women's equality in advanced capitalist countries today.

All this however does not mean that nothing can be done to day or the existing laws should not be strengthened. It means that for a thorough-going basic change, a basic change in the social order is required.

Today, traditions, customs, religious obscurantism come in the way of steps for immediate advance, like rapid progress in education, assertion of women's rights. Notwithstanding legal right to divorce, and separation, divorce is still looked upon as a social stigma and very few women are prepared to avail themselves of it to free themselves from unwanted wifehood. This is because of the existing social atmosphere.

Similarly, right is claimed to

have more than one wife in the name of religious injunction; law prescribing monogamy is opposed by orthodox Muslim circles as interference with freedom of religion.

Hindu and Muslim orthodoxy both come in the way of asserting the rights of women.

Here the need of governmental and public interference is the utmost. Mere passing of laws does not lead to much improvement unless they are continually backed by a fight against orthodoxy and a campaign of enlightenment. The implementation of laws is rendered difficult because those who have to implement them show a hostile outlook.

One of the failures of the Govt., the public and the democratic movement in general consists in shying away from the struggle against the feudal outlook.

On the contrary, by uncritically glorifying the past, by presenting as if it contained no basic evils—the Govt. and some political parties strengthen orthodoxy and with it, a hostile outlook towards equality for women. This must change.

Spread of education among girls and women; making them aware of their capabilities and rights through women's organisations is essential today. The education must teach them to rebel against their present status, not to accommodate themselves to it. Present education trains them to be satisfied with the existing states of affairs.

Encouragement to take independent jobs, earn their way and training for that purpose is essential. Provision for more employment must be made. Above all it is necessary to educate the men—educated as well as uneducated—about the role of women, their independence and rights. It cannot be said that the present-day curriculum touches even a fringe of this problem. Only after such education motherhood will be properly respected and will not be relegated to the kitchen.

The All India Radio and other media can be effectively used to fight orthodoxy and male chauvinism. But it is too much to expect this from the present Govt, wedded to compromise with the forces of orthodoxy.

It is essential to put on the Statute Book law for equal pay for equal work to end the discrimination against women. It should be rigorously implemented with the assistance of women supervisors. The present trend to decrease women's employment in factories, etc. should be halted.

While discussing women's status in general, the gruesome reality that obtains in connection with particular sections of women should not be forgotten. The women of the untouchables are assaulted, raped, their private parts branded in the presence of the police. They are paraded naked with none from the upper castes daring to intervene; nor the police and the rulers do anything. This is their status—status of India's womenhood under a Constitution which proclaims equality of sexes and rights of citizenship.

# Protest Week Against Wage-Freeze Ordinance Observed

The movement against wage-freeze Ordinance is gaining momentum and is spreading in different parts of the country. The meeting of the Central Trade unions and National Federation held at Delhi on 21 July gave a call for observing protest week against the ordinance from August 9th to 15th.

**Kerala :** The Kerala Committee of the United Council of Trade Unions organised an Anti-Wage Freeze Convention in Cochin on July 28th. The Convention decided to organise a one-day General strike throughout the State on September 10 against the ordinance. The Convention also has decided to organise an intensive campaign which includes a one-day wage boycott in August; Protest Week on Panchayet-Taluk basis from August 8 to 14; jathas of trade union leaders to cover the entire State from August 16 to 24; mass dharnas in front of Central Government offices in district head-quarters and towns; and demonstrations and rallies on August 25. Over a thousand delegates from all over the State joined the Convention. It is regrettable that AITUC and UTUC, though invited, did not join the Convention but a few delegates from AITUC unions were present in the Convention.

**West Bengal :** A Convention was held in Calcutta on July 31 convened by six Central Trade unions—CITU, UTUC, TUCG, UTUC (Lenin Sarani) and HMP.

Comrade Monoranjan Roy, General Secretary of the West Bengal Committee of CITU moved the main resolution against wage-freeze Ordinance which was adopted unanimously. The Convention decided to observe a protest day on 13th August, which was observed through rallies and demonstrations in different industrial areas of the State. The Convention also decided to build up a powerful campaign through leaflets, posters, meetings and demonstrations. The Convention decided to organise instantaneous protest actions in the event of pay cut under the ordinance through all possible forms including pay boycott, strikes etc. The Convention was attended by more than 1500 delegates.

Another Convention was organised in Calcutta by the 12th July Committee on 4th August. It was attended by the representatives of Central and State Government and LIC employees and teachers. The Convention unanimously adopted a resolution against wage freeze ordinance and decided to organise intensive campaign among different sections of employees and teachers and decided to observe 13th August as protest day through demonstrations, meetings and rallies. It also decided to organise pay-boycott in the event of pay-cut under the Ordinance. Besides these conventions, many other local Conventions were organised in West Bengal.

**Maharashtra :** Convention under the auspices of the Trade Unions' Joint Action Committee, consisting of CITU, AITUC, HMP, HMS, and BMS—was held in Bombay on 28th July. Over 1000 delegates representing workers from textiles, port and docks, B.E.S.T., Municipal, Railways, Banks, L.I.C., Central and State Government etc. attended the Convention which decided to organise State-wide Conventions in different parts of the State and to observe a protest week against the wage-freeze ordinance and anti-labour policies of the Government. P. Ramamurti, General Secretary CITU was one of the main speakers in the Convention and also the rally held the same afternoon.

**Karnataka :** A Trade union Anti-wage freeze Committee was formed at a meeting held at Bangalore City on July 14. The Committee organised a Convention in Bangalore on August 4 where more than 550 delegates from various trade unions attended. The Convention adopted a declaration giving a call to the working class of Karnataka to be prepared for united and long drawn struggle against the wage-freeze ordinance and anti-labour policies of the Congress Government. The Convention was attended by representatives of CITU, AITUC, HMS, Central and State Government employees bank, Insurance, Electricity Board employees, public sector industries' employees, railway men's unions etc. The Convention decided to organise protest week from August 19 to August

24, through meetings, rallies and demonstrations.

An all India Convention of Central Trade Unions and National Federations against wage-freeze ordinance would be held in Delhi on August 28, to decide about programmes on national plane.

As the battle against wage freeze is gaining tempo and intensity; the Government is mounting its repressive measures. On August 11, when the workers of a wagon factory in Bharatpur were demonstrating in protest against the management paying wages on the basis of wage-freeze ordinance, the police opened fire on the peaceful demonstrators killing ten workers (the Press reported only two killed).

Thus first blood was shed in the battle of the worker against wage-freeze ordinance. The workers are determined to shed more blood, if necessary, to resist the implimentation of wage-freeze ordinance.

## Consumer Price Index Numbers

(Industrial Workers/Base 1960-100)

State/Centre	1974			State/Centre	1974		
	April	May	June		April	May	June
<b>Andhra Pradesh</b>				<b>Orissa</b>			
Gudur	269	298	308	Barbil	280	284	284
Guntur	286	298	315	Sambalpur	276	287	286
Hyderabad	273	277	284	<b>Punjab</b>			
<b>Assam</b>				Amritsar	292	306	316
Digboi	260	273	282	<b>Rajasthan</b>			
Doom Dooma	265	280	269	Ajmer	289	304	311
Labac	260	257	281	Jaipur	297	309	317
Mariani	245	250	258	<b>Tamilnadu</b>			
Rangapara	265	276	282	Coimbatore	258	269	272
<b>Bihar</b>				Coonoor	276	301	307
Jamshedpur	293	307	311	Madras	261	268	271
Jharia	308	323	330	Madurai	266	282	298
Kodarma	362	371	398	<b>U. P.</b>			
Monghyr	344	337	360	Kanpur	287	296	305
Noamundi	304	332	341	Saharanpur	294	311	318
<b>Gujarat</b>				Varanasi	320	333	345
Ahmedabad	272	284	290	<b>West Bengal</b>			
Bhavnagar	297	306	302	Asansol	286	298	301
<b>Haryana</b>				Calcutta	264	272	276
Yamunanagar	297	309	316	Darjeeling	266	267	269
<b>J &amp; K</b>				Howrah	274	280	285
Srinagar	231	234	236	Jalpaiguri	271	280	279
<b>Karnataka</b>				Raniganj	306	322	325
Ammathi	295	300	313	<b>Delhi</b>	309	325	330
Bangalore	286	292	299	<b>Other Centres</b>			
Chikmagalur	290	301	309	Berhampur ('49)	358	365	368
Kolar G. F.	292	296	301	Cuttack (1949)	317	329	331
<b>Kerala</b>				Jabalpur (1949)	362	377	402
Alleppey	337	363	372	Beawar ('51-'52)	313	324	343
Alwaye	298	312	322	Tripura (1961)	250	260	257
Mundakayam	291	309	323	H. P. (1965)	208	217	222
<b>M. P.</b>				Goa (1966)	185	198	201
Balaghat	286	305	318	Bhilai (1966)	178	180	186
Bhopal	281	289	295	Kothagudam ('66)	173	179	186
Gwalior	316	329	339	<b>All India</b> ('60)	283	294	301
Indore	316	326	344	do ('49)	344	357	366
<b>Maharashtra</b>							
Bombay	259	269	277	* Figures in bracket indicate			
Nagpur	277	295	299	base year.			
Sholapur	288	295	302	(Labour Bureau, Simla)			

FOR  
SOUVENIRS & MAGAZINES

CONTACT

**PRESSMAN**

9, Nabin Paul Lane,  
Calcutta-9

Phone : 35-5771

# INFRINGEMENT OF T.U. RIGHTS IN JAPAN

## COMPLAINT LODGED WITH I.L.O.

IN April this year 8.3 million workers and employees of Japan i.e. not only all the industrial, transport workers but also all Government, municipal employees and teachers etc. went on a general strike paralysing the entire life of Japan. Their general demand was for improvement of the condition of the lowly paid workers, pensions to be raised with the rise in prices, introduction of rational, industrial uniform minimum wage system, reduction of working hours without loss of pay, large scale wage increases and above all the right to strike for public workers, which is denied by Japanese Constitution. As a result of the massive strike action the Japanese workers made substantial gains and secured on an average 30% rise in wages, and other valuable gains.

While the Japanese Government was compelled to settle some of the major demands of the strike, they refused to concede the right to strike of the public workers. What is of greater importance, is that while negotiations were in progress, a diabolical plan was carried out by the Japanese Government. They single out one of the constituents, the participants of the general strike, viz. NIKKYOSO (The organisation of all teachers of Japan) for severe punitive action all over Japan. It is to be particularly noted that while all other trade unions of public workers had decided to go on strike for one

day and a half the teachers' union i.e. NIKKYOSO struck work for only two hours on 11th April, admittedly a much milder protest than any other sections of the strikers.

For this 2 hours' strike undertaken by the NIKKYOSO on 11th April the police and the public procurator's office of Japan conducted a planned and co-ordinated wave of searches and seizures on a massive scale. They raided 964 places all over Japan including NIKKYOSO headquarters, 12 prefectural Teacher's Union headquarters, and private houses of union leaders. The police seized 26000 documents, ordered more than 17000 to appear before the police for interrogation. By 1 June, 20 union leaders were arrested. Ultimately action was taken against 128605 teachers, 165 teachers were suspended, wages of 440 teachers were reduced, 51513 were cautioned and 75487 were warned.

In order to make an example of four top leaders, Chairman Makieda of the NIKKYOSO, Tokyo to Teacher's Union Chairman Masuda, Saitama Prefecture Teachers' Union Chairman Inon and Iwata Prefecture Teachers' Union Chairman Sato, were arrested and indicted for penal crime on the ground of their violation of Article 37 of the Local Public Service Law which prohibits "instigating" strike actions.

The demands of the strike which invited such massive re-

pressive measures against the NIKKYOSO are as follows :—

1. To stop inflation and assure the standard of living of the low wage earners and the aged,
2. Wage increase of not less than 30,000 and establishment of substantial minimum wage system,
3. Stabilisation of employment and prevention of unemployment,
4. Restoration of right to strike,
5. Shortening of working hours,
6. Drastic improvement of pension system.

To these above demands Kumin-Kyoto, a constituent of the strike, added the following :

7. Improvement in compensation for accidents in course of duty,  
To these above, NIKKYOSO added the following demands :
8. Wage increase of not less than 40,000.
9. Discontinuing disciplinary sanctions against strike participants.
10. Improvement of conditions of work for teachers, including lowering of text-book and other charges.

It is obvious that there is nothing subversive in the general demands or in the special demands made by NIKKYOSO which induced the Japan Government to take such drastic measures. The demand that enraged the Japanese Government most is that of Right to Strike. Yet NIKKYOSO is not the only organisation of public

sector employees who raised the demands and went on strike for its realisation. Yet NIKKYOSO was singled out for penal action.

It is true that the Japanese constitution did contain provisions which made strike by public sector employees illegal. But for long public opinion was building up against this provision of the Constitution. Even the Japanese Government in deference to the strong public opinion, sparingly used this law for penal action since 1966, though the law was not altered. In 1965 the Government set up a Committee for consideration of repeal of the law. But nothing was actually done about repeal. In 1973 the question again came up for reconsideration in a Committee. But since then there has been a change for worse. The Supreme Court of Japan gave a ruling that the existing law of prohibition of strikes in public sector is valid and does not constitute any violation of trade union rights.

The Supreme Court based this judgement on a curious sophistry. In its opinion the act of strike is not prohibited but all preparations are illegal and punishable. The penal actions

against the NIKKYOSO is based on this judicial sleight of hand. Even then there is tacit admission that outright banning of strike is an infringement of trade union rights ; and the so called distinction between preparation for a strike and the actual strike is just petty fogging.

On this basis the Japan Teachers' Association (NIKKYOSO) and the Sohyo jointly with other International Organisations of the teachers filed a complaint to

the ILO against the Government of Japan.

The Complaint charges the Government of Japan with maintaining anti-labour laws and punishing employees for carrying on legitimate trade union activities as if these are criminal activities.

The complaint demands that the Governing Body of the ILO take appropriate measures to ensure full trade union rights to the public sector workers of Japan.

---

### CITU Condemns Firing On Bharatpur Workers

A meeting of the CITU Secretariat was held in Calcutta on August 14. Com. Jyoti Basu, Vice-President CITU presided.

The meeting strongly condemned the police firing on 11th August on the wagon factory workers of Bharatpur (Rajasthan) who were opposing the wage cut imposed by the Black Ordinance on wage freeze.

Though the Rajasthan Government claimed that only 2 workers were killed in police firing, according to the CITU State Committee 10 workers have lost their lives. The CITU demanded immediate appointment of judicial enquiry into the firing and punishment to guilty officers responsible for the murderous firing.

The Secretariat further condemned the action of the Central Government banning strike of engineers in Neyveli Thermal Power Station and arresting several engineers under DIR who were on work-to-rule agitation demanding higher emoluments.

The CITU demanded release of all arrested persons and immediate acceptance of the demands of the power engineers.

The Secretariat congratulated 3 lakh State Government employees of Bihar who went on strike from 13th August in support of their longstanding demands. The Government of Bihar instead of accepting the demands of the workers threatened them with disciplinary actions and loss of pay. The CITU demanded that the Government of Bihar should immediately withdraw all the punitive measures and settle the demands by direct negotiations with the representatives of the State Govt. employees.

The Secretariat called upon all the CITU unions to observe 11th September as "Solidarity with the people of Chile Day" the first anniversary of the overthrow of the Government led by Dr Allende by the fascist military junta and condemn the mass killing and brutalities perpetrated against the T. U. and the democratic movement in Chile.

**In Marathi**

## WARG YUDDHA

(Monthly Journal of Maharashtra State Committee of CITU)

**Single Copy 25 paise**

*Available at :*

Janashakti, Globe Mill Passage,  
Worli, Bombay-13

# NEWSLETTERS

## Kerala

Protesting against the policy of the Kerala Coalition Govt. refusing to distribute the surplus land to deserving agricultural labourers and poor peasants, refusal to revise the minimum wages of Agricultural labourers even after six years and perpetuating the harmful clauses in the Kerala Agricultural Labour Act, agricultural labourers throughout the State resorted to a day's strike on July 23 and conducted dharnas and demonstrations before village-taluk offices and land tribunals.

In Kottayam Dist. 33,000 agricultural workers; in Quilon Dist. 25,000; in Ernakulam Dist. 20,000, Trichur Dist. 7,000; Trivandrum Dist. 15,000, Alleppey Dist. 125,000 and Wynad Dist. 5,000 struck work on that day.

Postal line staff of Calicut went on strike on 1st August in protest against the police beating and arrest of a telephone sub-inspector of Calicut.

Workers of Giovanola-Binny Company of Palluruthy started an indefinite strike from 30th July, protesting against the non-payment of wage arrears on the pretext of wage-freeze ordinance. The strike was called under the joint auspices of the CITU Union and the INTUC Union under the leadership of Congress leaders A. C. Jose and T. P. Peethambaran.

About 3 lakh plantation workers of Kerala started an indefinite strike from 1st August demanding implementation of minimum wage and D. A. This

strike was being conducted under the auspices of the Joint Strike Committee composed of all trade unions working in the plantation industry. Entire workers in tea, rubber, cardamom and coffee plantations participated in this strike. The All India Plantation Workers' Federation has sent greetings to the workers for their united struggle.

Entire shop employees of Trichur Town resorted to one-day token strike on 2nd August paralysing trading activities. This strike was in support of their demands for salary increase, reasonable bonus, job permanency, regulation of working hours, etc.

At the call of the Quilon Dist. Coir workers' Union, about 75,000 coir workers of the Dist. went on an indefinite strike from the 5th August. The total complement of coir workers in this Dist. is 1 lakh. Their demands include increased wages and Onam bonus.

The "Wage Freeze Resistance Convention" convened by the Kerala State Committee of the CITU at Cochin on July 28th has decided to organise a one-day protest strike on September 10 in protest against the Central Ordinance freezing wages, bonus and D.A. Preceding this strike, in the month of August, the Convention decided to organise the following programmes: One-day pay boycott from August 8 to August 14; observation of Protest Week on Panchayat-Taluk basis from 16th to 24th August; conducting of jeep jathas throughout the State

## Kerala CITU Conference

The Kerala State Committee of the CITU will hold its State Conference from 20th to 22nd September next. Com. B. T. Ranadive, President CITU will inaugurate the Conference.

under the leadership of T.U. leaders on 25th August; mass dharnas before Central Government offices in the Dist. Centres; and demonstrations and meetings.

To give leadership to this struggle, an "Anti-Ordinance Struggle Committee" has been formed with S.C.S. Menon as the Convenor.

Over 1,000 delegates participated in this Convention including some from the AITUC. Although the AITUC and UTUC were invited to participate in this Convention, they did not attend. However, the Committee decided to associate them with this Committee.

4,000 Tile workers of Feroke industrial area resorted to one-hour protest strike on 12th August in protest against the Central ordinances freezing wages. This strike was conducted at the call of the Tile Workers' Co-Ordination Committee.

At the call of the Kerala Municipal Workers' Federation, Municipal workers throughout the State went on a one-day strike on August 13th, in support of their demand for pensions, etc.

850 contingency employees of the Calicut Corpn. went on a one-day strike on 13th August under the leadership of the Corpn. Municipal Workers' Union demanding full implementation of the wage board report.

## Maharashtra

### Engineering Factory Workers Continue Struggle

The management of Surendra Engineering Factory discharged 107 out of 127 workers, their only fault being that they chose to join the CITU. The workers are continuing their struggle against this victimisation, in the face of threats of murder and assault. The union leader, Bajaj, has been prevented from meeting the workers through an injunction.

### Blind Workers Locked-out

About 116 blind workers are employed in the Blind-Workshop at Worli, making furniture etc. Their monthly wage is a paltry Rs. 62/-. After deduction for food and rent they get only Rs. 28/- for other expenses. Although the workshop is registered under the Factories Act, no provision of the Act is observed. To fight against this injustice and to better their working conditions, the workers formed their union under CITU flag. In retaliation, the management declared a lock-out which is continuing for the last 10 months. The workers' appeals to the President and Prime Minister of India and others have produced no result whatsoever.

### United Struggle against Wage-Freeze, Shortages and for Kerosene

At a meeting of the "Sangharsha Samity" held on August 10, attended by representatives of opposition political parties CPI(M), CPI, Peasants & Workers' Party, S.P. and Lal

Nishan, it was decided to organise demonstrations and marches against shortages of essential commodities, including Kerosene.

Accordingly, a huge demonstration with empty Kerosene tins was organised on the eve of 15th August and a morcha was taken out to the houses of Congress MLA's on 18th.

On August 21, more than 1000 opposition party leaders and workers, backed by a 10,000 strong procession, staged a 12-hour 'Dharna' demanding Kerosene and other essential commodities at fair prices. A similar morcha of several thousands workers belonging to Left Trade Unions was taken out in South Bombay on the same day demanding withdrawal of the Wage-freeze ordinance.

Earlier, on August 6, more than 10,000 workers and employees, including Banks, LIC Pharmaceutical and Government employees organised a huge procession demanding withdrawal of the Wage-freeze Ordinance, which ended in a meeting addressed by P. K. Kurane (CITU), S. Rao (HMP), K. Pawar (HMS), Bhalerao (AITUC) and others.

A similar procession, led by A. B. Savant and Ahilya Rangnekar, paraded working class areas on August 14 demanding withdrawal of wage-freeze Ordinance and supply of Kerosene.

## Madhya Pradesh

A meeting of the Madhya Pradesh Co-ordination Committee of CITU held in Nagda on 21st August reviewed

the activities in the State since the State Convention held at Bhilai in December last year and chalked out programme of activities.

Comrade B. T. Ranadive, President and Comrade M. K. Pandhe, Secretary CITU participated in the meeting on behalf of the Centre.

The meeting expressed heartfelt condolences at the untimely death of Comrade H. K. Konar, General Secretary AIKS and Comrade John, Vice-President Hindustan Steel Employees Union, Bhilai.

The meeting decided to launch a membership drive in the State and raise the membership to 25 thousand by the end of March next year.

The Committee called upon all the unions to observe 11th September as "Solidarity with the People of Chile Day"—the day when the counter revolutionary coup by military junta in Chile overthrew the democratic Government led by Dr. Allende last year.

The meeting further decided to organise local and regional Conventions in the State against Wage-Freeze Ordinance in co-operation with other trade unions and raise united voice of protest of the working class in the State against the black Ordinance.

Comrade Ranadive, while addressing the meeting, appreciated the solidarity support organised by the CITU unions in M. P. with the fighting railwaymen and stressed the need for further solidarity support in view of continued repression and victimisation measures

against railwaymen. He emphasised the task of building united actions on common issues facing the working class.

Earlier, on 19th and 20th August, a Convention of CITU activists of Indore region was held at Nagda in which 137 active workers from Mandasor, Ratlam, Ujjain and Nagda participated. Comrade Md. Ismail Vice-President CITU inaugurated the Convention.

Comrade B. T. Ranadive and Comrade M. K. Pandhe took classes on different aspects of trade union movement and replied to the questions raised by the participants.

The Convention also discussed the activities of the CITU unions in the region. 22 workers participated in the discussion and gave reports on the activities of unions and the treacherous role played by the AITUC and INTUC leadership during the struggles of workers.

Com. Ranadive while concluding the Convention emphasised the need for linking up the day to day struggles of the workers with the final goal of Socialism. He also stressed the task of forging a worker-peasant alliance to meet the challenge of the ruling classes.

## Tamilnadu

In the election of office-bearers of the Simpson Workers' Union held on June 21, Com. V. P. Chintan (CITU) was elected Vice-President. CITU nominees also won in the elections to the Co-operative Stores elections at the Rajapalayam Sudarsanam Spinning Mills,

Nagercoil Nagamal Mills, Sangagiri India Cement Mills and Kattur Kothari Sugar Mills.

Led by the CITU Union, workers of the Pandiyan Roadways Corporation went on hunger strike in batches from June 24, demanding immediate settlement of their 12-point charter of demands including Bonus, wages, Union recognition and D.A. etc.

The month-long strike by Powerloom and Handloom workers of Coimbatore, led by CITU, was called off when a tripartite settlement was arrived at on 25th June conceding 20 per cent wage rise for the workers.

Agricultural labourers throughout Tamilnadu were on strike on July 6, condemning rise in Fertiliser prices and demanding land for the landless farmers, irrigation facilities, etc.

For quite some time, it was the practice of the Tamilnadu State Electricity Board authorities to frequently transfer CITU activists from one place to another to disrupt trade union activities. Workers went on strike and the authorities had to agree to revise this vindictive policy.

Led by the CITU and AITUC Unions in Madurai City, an All Trade Union's rally of 5000 workers paraded the streets of the city on July 30 in a mile long procession protesting against the wage-freeze Ordinance, demanding reinstatement of victimised Railway workers, and demanding supply of essential commodities at fair prices. Unions belonging to CITU and

AITUC, NCCRS-Madurai division, NGO's Union, Bank employees, NFPTE and also independent unions participated in the rally. After the rally a public meeting was held where representatives of CITU, AITUC and DMK unions and other organisations spoke.

In a mammoth public meeting held in Madurai on July 28 under the auspices of CITU-Tamilnadu State Committee, a purse of Rs. 15000 collected by CITU unions, CPI(M) Committees, Kisan Sabha, Bank and Insurance employees, Railway workers etc., was presented to the family of martyr Ramaswamy, who gave his life during the Railway strike. Comrade V. Karmegam, Treasurer, Tamilnadu State CITU Presided.

NGO's of Madurai, working in the Judicial department wore black badges on August 8 to protest against the wage-freeze Ordinance and delay in payment of Dearness Allowance.

Workers of Rajeswari Mill, Madurai struck work for half an hour in each shift on August 7 to protest against the wage-freeze ordinance and cut made in July salary.

State Transport workers in Trichy went on a hunger strike from August 8 protesting against the vindictive transfers and other victimisation measures adopted by the Director to force them to break their loyalty to CITU. All other unions in Trichy supported their struggle in response to a call given by R. Umanath, General Secretary, Tamilnadu State CITU.

# CITU Maharashtra Committee

## Executive Meets

**T**HE Executive Committee of the Maharashtra State Committee of CITU meet in Bombay on August 17 under the Chairmanship of D. S. Vaidya, Vice-President of the Committee. Comrade B. T. Ranadive, President CITU was present and addressed the members. S. F. X. Pereira, an Executive member is in jail falsely implicated in a murder case in connection with Calco Chemical strike.

At the outset, the Committee adopted a resolution condoling the death of Comrade Harekrishna Konar.

The Committee reviewed the general situation and the activities of the CITU since October 1973. In particular, it noted with satisfaction the efforts of the CITU to build up unity of the Left Trade Union Centres in Maharashtra which laid the foundation of several big united struggles, including the indefinite strike by Municipal and B.E.S.T employees, the State-wide struggle of State Transport employees, the Maharashtra Bundh of January 2, the glorious strike by Bombay Textile workers and solidarity actions in support of the Railway strike.

The Committee also endorsed the plan chalked out by the Action Committee of Central Trade Unions to organise District T. U. Conferences on the issue of Wage-freeze Ordinance to culminate in a State Conference in Bombay in the third week of September.

The Executive Committee, while reviewing its activities, emphasised the need for extending the working class unity to the factory levels and help the working class to build up broad united front at the grass roots level.

The Committee adopted resolution on Railway strike, Wage Freeze Ordinance, agricultural labour, employment security, against atrocities on Adivasis in Khandesh and

## CITU Andhra Pradesh Committee Meets

A meeting of the CITU Andhra Pradesh Committee was held in Vijayawada on July 9-10 last. Com. Parasa Satyanarayana presided. 27 members attended the meeting.

Com. N. Prasada Rao, General Secretary of the Committee submitted a report dealing with national and international developments, the offensive launched by the Congress Govt. on the working class and other sections of the people and activities and tasks of the CITU. After discussions, the report was adopted.

The Committee paid homage to the memory of the three Railway workers who died during the strike and Com. S. Sunkanna, a member of the Committee.

The Committee adopted a resolution condemning the wage-freeze ordinance and calling upon all Trade unions to unitedly fight against this.

Thana and on release of Com. Pereira and Bashir.

The Committee also decided to hold its Second Annual Conference in Bombay before 31 December, 1974.

While addressing the Committee members Com. Ranadive drew their attention to the international situation. He stressed on the need for educating the working class for international solidarity of the working class, about Socialist countries and workers' role in their economic developments, and about the task of the working class towards the peasantry.

In another resolution, it demanded an amendment in the Workmen's Compensation Act, to make it applicable to all workers and employees drawing a monthly wage of Rs. 1000 and below.

In another resolution, the Committee demanded thorough overhaul of the Minimum Wages Act in keeping with the rising cost of living and to introduce a dearness system to the minimum wages. It demanded immediate upward revision of minimum wages fixed a few years back.

The Committee also demanded fixation of minimum wages of Rs. 7 per day for agricultural labour and equal pay for men and women workers.

Other resolutions on issues facing Highways employees, transport workers etc. were also adopted.

# All India Road Transport Workers Federation Formed

## Report of the Convention

**T**HE All India Road Transport Workers' Convention was held at the A.B.T.A. Hall, Calcutta from July 28 to 30 last. About 300 delegates and observers from Unions representing more than one lakh road transport workers all over India attended the Convention. Some unions not affiliated to the CITU also participated.

Comrade B. T. Ranadive, President CITU inaugurated the Convention and greeted the delegates on behalf of the CITU (see August 1974 issue of **The Working Class** for the inaugural address by Comrade B. T. Ranadive).

A presidium consisting of N. Prasada Rao (Andhra), O. J. Joseph (Kerala) and Asoke Dutta (West Bengal) was elected to conduct the work of the Convention.

At the outset delegates paid homage to the memory of Comrade Muzaffar Ahmed, Comrade Harekrishna Konar, Comrade Azhikodan Raghavan and other martyrs.

Md. Ismail, M.P. welcomed the delegates on behalf of the Reception Committee after which Comrade Ranadive delivered his inaugural address.

Sujit Das, Convener of the Preparatory Committee placed a general report on the conditions and struggles of workers in

different road transport undertakings in West Bengal and other States. 20 delegates and observers participated in the discussion on the report, after which it was adopted.

The Convention adopted resolutions on important issues related to the Road Transport Workers and also on Vietnam, semi-fascist terror in West Bengal, unemployment, struggles of the peasantry, repression in Bihar, Gujarat and other States, repression on Railwaymen, the struggles of Road Transport workers in M.P., Kerala and West Bengal and on increased bus fare and freight charges.

After three days of deliberations, the Convention unanimously decided to form an All India Road Transport Workers' Federation, to co-ordinate the struggles in different States.

A 41-member Working Committee, with power to co-opt some other members, was elected with Vishwanath Menon, M.P. as President, Md. Ismail, Shanti Ghatak, O.J. Joseph and G. S. Balajidas as Vice Presidents and Sujit Das as General Secretary.

The Convention also adopted a Charter of demands and decided to observe a "Demands week" all over India from 24th to 30th September next, with meetings, demonstrations and submission of memoranda to the employers.

## Vietnam T.U. Organisation Sympathises with Flood Victims

The Trade Union Organisation of North Vietnam (TOCODO) has sent a telegram to the CITU Central on August 22 expressing deep sympathy for the Indian workers and people affected by the recent flood.

The text of the telegram is given below :

"WE ARE DEEPLY IMPRESSED BY DAMAGES CAUSED TO INDIAN WORKERS AND PEOPLE BY BIGGEST EVER FLOOD (STOP) WE SEND YOU AND THROUGH YOU TO WORKERS AND PEOPLE OUR DEEP SYMPATHY AND WISH YOU QUICK RECOVERY (STOP) FRATERNAL GREETINGS —TOCODO"

The Convention created great enthusiasm among the Road Transport workers. The road transport workers of West Bengal, who have been made special targets of semi-fascist terror, contributed their mite to meet the expenses of the Convention. The peasants of Bongaon and Gaighata (24-Parganas District) donated vegetables.

### Open Session

The open session of the Convention, held on July 30, was presided over by the newly elected President of the Federation, Com. Menon and was addressed by Comrades B. T. Ranadive, Md. Ismail, Sujit Das and Vishwanath Menon.