



# THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

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### Editorial Board

B. T. Ranadive (Chairman)

P. Ramamurti      Monoranjan Ray

Niren Ghosh      Sudhin Kumar

## CITU Working Committee On Govt.'s Scheme Of "Participative Management"

**T**HE WORKING COMMITTEE OF THE CITU HAS considered the scheme of "Participative Management" through shop councils recently announced by the Government of India and hailed by the AITUC, INTUC and a section of the HMS as a great progressive measure. The title of the scheme, namely, "Participative Management" is a misnomer, for under the scheme the workers have no part in the management. ... ..

The scheme empowers the management to form shop council at departmental level and joint council at the plant level in a factory where 500 or more workers are employed in private, public and co-operative sectors. The management has been given powers to decide the number of shop councils to be formed and the membership of such councils. The management can also decide which union or unions would be associated with the shop council. The workers' nominee would only be from among the employees in the department and a victimised worker would automatically lose the membership. The experience of the workers' participation in management since 1958 has given many examples of such victimisations. In Durgapur, where CITU union is recognised and was associated with joint council is now facing victimisation of large number of leading activists. The Chairman of the shop council and the joint council will always be a representative of the management giving a decisive help to the management in all decisions.

The main objective of the shop councils would be "increasing production, productivity and overall efficiency of the shop/department". In the name of assisting the management in achieving monthly/yearly production targets every attempt is likely to be made by the management to force the workers to work harder without even providing needbased human standard. ... ..

NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS TO READERS

## Contractors Workers in M. P. Fight Retrenchment

The experience in Great Britain, West Germany, France and Italy has shown that the employers have always utilised such schemes of "workers participation in management" to increase productivity of the workers and add to their profitability. They had become instruments of class collaboration and were meant to blunt the edge of workers' struggle. The trade unions in these countries which have participated in such organisations have, out of their experience, come out against those schemes. ....

If workers' rights inside the plants are to be real and effective, and not illusory and deceptive, the CITU demands the withdrawing of the scheme announced by the Govt. and provision should be made for :

1. All the workers' nominees should be elected through secret ballot.

2. The workers' representatives should have the right to challenge the genuineness of the accounts. They should be protected from any disciplinary action for their stand.

3. While agreeing to give accepted norms of production the trade unions have the right to oppose every intensification of workload.

4. The workers' representatives should have the right to attack the inefficiency of the management, misappropriation of funds, bad supply of materials, etc. for the loss of production.

5. Ban on retrenchment, superannuation and lay-off consequent to any rise in production in the plant.

6. Extension of trade union rights at the shop level. ....

About 300 contractors workers in the Bishrampur Colliery, Madhya Pradesh, under the leadership of the Koyla Shramik Sangh (CITU) are demanding reinstatement of victimised workers, better wages and housing facilities.

The workers, most of whom are tribal agricultural labourers, were allowed to build their hutments near the colliery which was an advantage to the colliery management. They were employed by one Baijnath Agarwal, contractor, since September, 1974. So long the workers were being exploited by the contractor and were being paid a daily wage of Rs. 1.50 without any receipt, although they were entitled to get Rs. 11 including D. A. and other allowances. On 7th November, 1975 the contractor suddenly terminated the contract thus throwing these 300 workers out of their livelihood.

The workers, led by the CITU Union, decided to submit a memorandum on their demands to the Chairman of Coal India Ltd., Sri Garewal, who was to visit Bishrampur on 20th November last. However sensing the mood of the workers, the Project Manager ordered the demolition of the hutments of the workers and had some of the Union leaders arrested.....

The situation in the Colliery was tense when Md. Ismail,

M. P., Vice-President and Vimal Ranadive, General Council member of CITU reached Bishrampur. On hearing of the arrival of Md. Ismail, the Project Manager invited him to discuss the problem.

Later, Com. Ismail addressed the contract labourers and..... assured them that he would take up their demands with the Chairman.

It is an established fact that, although the INTUC Union is the recognised one in Bishrampur, the CITU Union commands the respect of the majority of the workers. The union had, a number of times in the past, pointed out to the management cases of corruption and underhand methods being adopted by the contractors. For instance, the workers are deliberately asked to load inferior grades of coal and stones which are rejected. It is also common knowledge at the colliery that tons of coal disappear from the colliery-site and find its way to Ambikapur Road through underhand methods. Surprisingly enough, instead of taking steps to stop this corruption, the Project Manager adopted a revengeful attitude towards the CITU Union and the workers.

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Led by the Koyla Shramik Sangh, the workers in Bishrampur colliery are determined to move unitedly for the realisation of their demands.

# THE TURN ABOUT

Little did I know when I wrote my Legal Notes for February, 1975 that I shall have to write a recantation. I had thought that it was now settled that Civil Courts would have the jurisdiction to entertain suits to enforce rights under the Industrial Disputes Act.

I had my principal reliance on two cases, *Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee v. Commissioners for the Port of Calcutta* (1) and *Premier Automobiles Ltd. v. K. S. Wadke & ors.* (2), the first decided by a single Judge of Calcutta High Court and the second by a Division Bench of the Bombay High Court. The latter case went in Appeal to the Supreme Court which has now reversed the Bombay decision and overruled the Calcutta case (2A).

The Supreme Court was not impressed that there was no adequate machinery to enforce the rights created under the Industrial Disputes Act. The system of Tribunals and Labour Courts is dependent for its functioning on the will of the Executive. Unless the State Government decides at its pleasure that there is an industrial dispute and this dispute should be referred for adjudication, the aggrieved workman can not agitate his grievance before such a Tribunal or Labour Court.

The question that was raised both in the Calcutta case and the Bombay case and answered in favour of the workman was whether rights created by a

statute could remain dormant just because the State Government might not choose to refer it for adjudication, even though there might be competent civil courts to enforce these rights.

It was in accordance with the principles laid down in *Wolverhampton New Waterworks Co. V. Hawkesford* (3) by Willes, J. that both the Calcutta High Court and the Bombay High Court held that, if there are rights and the prescribed remedies are not available at the will of the aggrieved party but contingent on the opinion and pleasure of a third party one could approach the Civil Courts of the land for realising those rights. The principles were laid down in the case of *Wolverhampton New Waterworks Co. (Supra)*, "with the precision which distinguished the utterances of Willes, J. and approved by Halsbury in *Pasmore v. the Oswaldtwistle Urban District Council* (4).

In *Dhulabhai v. State of Madhya Pradesh* (5), The Supreme Court extracted several principles from the aforesaid decisions as to the jurisdiction of the civil court over new rights created by statute and their realisation by the citizen. The relevant among them are as follows :—

"(1) Where the statute gives a finality to the orders of the special tribunals the civil Court's jurisdiction must be held to be excluded if there is adequate remedy to do what the civil cou-

rts would normally do in a suit. Such provision, however, does not exclude those cases where the provisions of the particular Act have not been complied with or the statutory tribunal has not acted in conformity with the fundamental principles of judicial procedure.

"(2) Where there is an express bar of the jurisdiction of the court, an examination of the scheme of the particular Act to find the adequacy or the sufficiency of the remedies provided may be relevant but is not decisive to sustain the jurisdiction of the civil Court. Where there is no express exclusion the examination of the remedies and the scheme of the particular Act to find out the intendment becomes necessary and the result of the inquiry may be decisive. In the latter case it is necessary to see if the statute creates a special right or a liability and provides for the determination of the right or a liability and further lays down that all questions about the said right and liability shall be determined by the tribunals so constituted, and whether remedies normally associated with actions in civil Courts are prescribed by the said statute or not".

There are no doubt certain rights which have been specially granted by the Industrial Disputes Act. Thus agreement entered into between employer and employee under section 18 of the Act with or without the mediation of the Conciliation Officer is binding on the parties

to agreement unless the agreement is terminated in terms of Section 19 of the Act. In the event of mediation by the Conciliation Officer, such agreement is binding on even those workmen who are not members of the Union entering into the agreement as well as past, present and future workers. Likewise it is binding on the heirs, successors-in-interest of the employer.

Similarly, under Chapter VA of the Act, certain other rights are guaranteed to the workers.

The Act does, however, provide only one form for enforcing the aforesaid rights, namely, Tribunal or Labour Court, but Tribunal or Labour Court cannot adjudicate the dispute unless it is referred to it by the Government.

Contrary to the decision of the Calcutta and Bombay High Courts, the Supreme Court held (2A) that it was still an adequate remedy. The court declined to accept the contention that when remedy was an uncertain and contingent one, it was necessarily inadequate. The court also held that if a statute gives some rights those rights can be enjoyed under the terms of the statute. In the actual words of the Court.

“Persons wishing the enjoyment of such rights and wanting its enforcement must rest content to secure the remedy provided by the Act. The possibility that the Government may not ultimately refer an industrial dispute under Section 10 on the ground of expediency is

not a relevant consideration in this regard.

To say the least, the judgement goes back upon the principles laid down in *Dhulabhai V. State of Madhya Pradesh* (supra). It leaves the workmen without any effective remedy except collective agitation. For, as has been held by the Supreme Court itself, only industrial dispute can be referred for adjudication except for certain matters specified in Section 33C of the Act, and nothing is an industrial dispute which does not threaten peace and harmony in the particular establishment or industry.

An anomalous situation is caused by this judgement. The Government insists on saying that workers must not do anything which disturbs tranquillity in the industry and that everything must be done through peaceful negotiation. But the Supreme Court judgement compels all negotiation to be taken to the brink of disruption of production and industrial disharmony for, without such brinkmanship, workers or their Union may not persuade the Government that it is an industrial dispute deserving to be referred.

It is not possible to forecast how the imbalance created by the judgement of the court will be set right. Section 9 of the Civil Procedure Code provides that civil courts can try all suits of civil nature. That should have been thought to be wide enough. But judicial interpretation has excluded jurisdiction of civil courts in disputes relating to rights and liabilities under the

Industrial Disputes Act on the ground that adequate machineries have been set up to deal with those rights and liabilities, even though the Act does not expressly bar the remedy at civil court.

In such a situation, we can only hope that the decision in *Premier Automobiles v. K. S. Wadke* (supra) will be reconsidered and the decision of the Calcutta (1) and Bombay (2) High Courts will be restored.

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(1) 1970 Lab IC 708=(1970) 2 LLJ 148

(2) ILA (1973) Bom. 867=(1974) 76 Bom. LR 47=(1974) 29 FLR 365

(2A) A1975 SC 2238 (*Premier Automobiles Ltd. v. K. S. Wadke & ors.*)

(3) (1859) 6 CB(NS) 336=141 ER 486

(4) 1898 A. C. 387

(5) AIR 1969 SC 78=(1968) 3 SCR 662.

**Arun Prokas Chatterjee**

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## **AIPWF Condemns Execution Of Spanish Patriots**

In a telegram sent to the Government of Spain in Madrid, the All India Plantation Workers Federation has condemned the execution of five urban guerrillas and brutal repression on Spanish workers and people for protesting against these murders. It has also congratulated the Spanish workers for their heroic country-wide strike.

# Employment Of Child Labour In India

## Agriculture

The ILO convention concerning minimum age for admission to employment stipulates that each member country should pursue a national policy designed to ensure the effective abolition of child labour and to raise progressively the minimum age for admission to employment or work to a level consistent with the fullest physical and mental development of young persons.

The convention further specifies that the minimum age for admission to employment shall not be less than the age of compulsory schooling and, in any case, shall not be less than 15 years although it could initially be fixed at 14 years — if the conditions of the economy and the level of educational facilities so necessitate. The Article 24 of the Constitution of India also stipulates that no child below the age of 14 years shall be employed to work in any factory or mine or engaged in any other hazardous employment.

Several important labour legislations of India contain one or more provisions to provide legal protection to children in various occupations. Some of these are : Factories Act, Mines Act, Plantation Labour Act, Motor Transport Works Act, Employment of Children Act. etc. The minimum age for employment of child labour under these legislations varies from 12 years to 15 years.

There is, however, no statutory provision to-date which

regulates the minimum age or other conditions of employment of child labour in agricultural operations. The main agricultural operations in which children participate are sowing, weeding, harvesting and threshing.

### Number of child agricultural workers increasing

The number of children as agricultural workers seems to have increased considerably. According to the Second Agricultural Labour Enquiry, there were about 3 million child agricultural workers in 1956-57. According to the 1971 Census, however, there were a total of 4.58 million ( 3 million boys and 1.58 million girls ) child agricultural workers. Of them 4.47 million lived in villages and 0.11 million lived in cities and towns.

If one takes into account all child workers, their number in 1971 stood at 10.73 million. Out of them as many as 9.96 million were in rural areas. Out of 7.88 million boys who were categorised as workers, 7.24 million lived in rural areas. Likewise, of 2.85 million girl workers, 2.68 million lived in rural sector of India.

The data further reveal that nearly 40 per cent of the rural boys and 58 per cent girls, who worked, were 'agricultural labourers'. Another 42 per cent boys and 28 per cent girls were engaged essentially in 'cultiva-

tion' of the land of their parents or relatives etc.

### Work participation rates of rural child labour

The work participation rates for rural boys and girls according to the 1971 census stand at 11 per cent and 4 per cent respectively. Among the children of small and marginal farmers and landless farm labourers, however, the participation rates are relatively much higher. These households, therefore, supply the bulk of child labour. This is true for all the States for which data are available. In Andhra Pradesh, for instance, the work-participation rates among the boys and girls according to the 1971 census were 20.4 per cent and 12 per cent. Among the small marginal farmers, however, the participation rates work out to 40 per cent and 25 per cent for boys and girls respectively. The other States which show high participation rates among the boys of landless households are Gujarat (33 per cent), Orissa (33 per cent), Karnatak (32 per cent), Madhya Pradesh (29 per cent), and Bihar (28 per cent).

The situation is different in the case of girls in the families of landless labourers. Their participation rate is 31 per cent in Gujarat, 22 per cent in Madhya Pradesh, 19 per cent in Karnataka, 18 per cent in Rajasthan, 17 per cent in Maharashtra and 16 per cent in Andhra Pradesh. The rates stand at only 4.6 per cent for Haryana and 6.6 per cent in Punjab.

### Annual employment of children

The data on average annual days of employment of child labour (up to 14 years) show that children work for the maximum number of days in the backward or less developed States of Orissa (199 days), Karnataka (115 days), Andhra Pradesh (114 days), and Gujarat (109 days). In other words, the landless labour households are dependent to a greater extent on their children in these states. The extent of gainful employment among child labour is the lowest in Kerala (11 days), followed by Tamilnadu (34 days), Assam (41 days), Uttar Pradesh (56 days), Haryana (65 days), Rajasthan (70 days) and Punjab (80 days).

The highest yearly employment among female child workers is observed for Gujarat (99 days), followed by Madhya Pradesh (81 days), Karnataka (70 days), Rajasthan (66 days), Maharashtra (56 days) and Andhra Pradesh (53 days). It is the lowest in Kerala (15 days), followed by Tamilnadu (16 days), Haryana (17 days), Assam (20 days) and Punjab (24 days).

### Wages of Child Labour

An analysis of the wages of child agricultural labourers as compared to adult agricultural labourers shows that the children are getting approximately similar to female adult labourers except in a few states. The proportion of child wages to female wages is particularly low in the states of Orissa (59 per cent), Rajasthan (65 per cent), Assam (74 per

cent), Karnataka (75 per cent), and Kerala (78 per cent). If we consider child wages as per cent. of adult male wages, the proportions are much lower.

The participation of the children in the labour force is found to be inversely associated with the spread of educational facilities. If one considers the level of literacy as an index of

social development, then high labour force participation rate of children is also indicative of social backwardness. Likewise, the extent of child labour is observed to be higher in areas which are economically backward and which, therefore, have higher incidence of rural poverty.

(The Economic Times, November 16, 1975)

## Victory of CITU Union In Andhra Paper Mill Elections

In the elections held in Andhra Paper Mills, Rajahmundry, on November 29th last for ascertaining the majority union for the purpose of recognition by the management, the Andhra Paper Mill Staff & Workers Union (CITU) won a resounding victory by defeating the AITUC and INTUC Unions. Whereas the CITU Union secured 1776 out of 2960 votes polled, the recognised A. P. Paper Mill Workers' Union (A I T U C) secured only 1014 votes and the National Workers Union (INTUC) got only 143 votes.

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The workers rallied solidly behind the union to give a fitting rebuff to the earlier betrayals of the AITUC & INTUC unions. The CITU Union also received solid support from the Staff Union and Employees Union.

In the heroic 46-days strike of April-May, 1975, the AITUC and INTUC unions had played the role of strike-breakers and

agents of the company. Their earlier record is equally murky. In 1970, the recognised AITUC union betrayed the interests of the workers and accepted 6 per cent bonus. Ultimately, a 22-day strike and the resistance of the workers forced the management to pay 12 per cent. Similarly in 1973, the AITUC union agreed for 15 per cent bonus, whereas the workers later on realised 17 per cent after a successful gherao of the management. When the contract labourers were absorbed as permanent workers after the abolition of Contract Labour, the AITUC union signed an agreement for payment of wages at the old rate of Rs. 180 per month, whereas the minimum wage of an unskilled labour in the factory is Rs. 263. By another agreement signed by them in 1972, they accepted a cut of Rs. 43 in the workers' bonus while agreeing to a wage rise of only Rs. 45 per month. No wonder, the workers this time refused to be hoodwinked by them any more.

# Big Victory For Adityapur Engineering Workers

Led by the Adityapur Industrial Mazdoor Union (CITU), the biggest union representing the workers of small scale Engineering units of Adityapur Industrial area, the engineering workers have gained some notable victories in recent period.

After the successful one-day bundh organised by 5000 workers of Adityapur industrial area in November 1973, the State Govt. accepted their demand for reconstitution of the 1970 Tripartite Committee. But in the reconstituted tripartite committee, almost all Trade Unions were included except the CITU.

When the Tripartite Committee declared its decision in July, 1975, after long 20 months, it was found that the minimum monthly wages of workers have been fixed at Rs. 150 for units employing less than 50 workers and Rs. 240 for those employing

more than 50 but less than 250 workers. Even this amount of Rs. 240 will be reached in 1977, increasing from Rs. 200 in 1975 in two stages of Rs. 20 per annum. This fell far short of the workers' demand, since the workers were already getting minimum wages of Rs. 150 and Rs. 250 in 1974 itself.

Led by the CITU union, the workers of Zenith Drop Forgings Ltd. carried on a united struggle and forced the management to declare the minimum wage of Rs. 178.60 including a variable D. A. of Rs. 13.60. The tripar-

tite agreement was signed on October 4 last by the management with the Adityapur Industrial Mazdoor Union, the Asstt Labour Commissioner signing on behalf of the Labour Department.

The workers of Messrs. Taurin Tubes, Adityapur, have also recently achieved a minimum wage of Rs. 170.40, including a variable D. A. of Rs. 10.40. The factory employs only 45 workers. An incentive scheme has also been introduced through an agreement with the union by which a minimum incentive of Rs. 55 to Rs. 130 per month will be paid.

## Four Mine Disasters In 17 Days : 7 Hurt And 7 Killed

In four disastrous mine accidents in the Asansol coal-fields, occurring within a period of 17 days, seven miners were killed and seven seriously injured. The first of these accidents occurred on December 5 last, when a large chunk of coal roof caved in at the Modern Satgram colliery. Three miners, all of them underground wagon-loaders, were killed as a result of the accident. Mining operations remained suspended for the day, as the bodies of the victims were extricated from the debris and sent to hospital.

In another accident, a coal dumper carrying some miners along the Katras-Rajganj Road on December 17 last, hit a stone and turned turtle. As a result, six miners were killed and 25 others sustained injuries. On the very next day, on December 18, three miners were buried alive and three others were injured following the collapse of an underground roof in the Chinakuri colliery, pits 1 and 2. The accident took place about

2000 feet below the surface, where the six miners were erecting supports for the roof which collapsed.

The fourth accident took place on December 21 last, when a miner was killed and two were injured as a portion of a coal roof collapsed in the Sripur Colliery.

So many mine accidents occurring within such a short time and leading to loss of so many lives speaks of the neglect of mine safety measures. The trade unions have demanded immediate enquiry into the causes of these accidents and observance of proper safety measures so that such disastrous accidents may be avoided in future.

As we go to the press, report just came in that more than 372 miners were trapped inside the Chasnala colliery (Dhanbad) and till December 28 none was rescued, nor was there any faint hope of it within the next 7 days.

## CIL To Introduce Electronic Computer

Samar Mukherjee M.P., Secretary CITU in a letter to the Union Minister for Labour has expressed concern at the reported move of the management of the Coal India Ltd (CIL) to introduce electronic computer.

He pointed out that the present work in the offices can be fulfilled even without introduction of the computer. . . . .

Mukherjee requested the Minister to take necessary steps so that the apprehensions of the workers are removed at an early date.

## BENGAL CHATKAL MAZDOOR UNION

The thirty-seventh Annual Conference of the Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union (CITU) was held on 10th December, 1975 at the Muslim Institute Hall, Calcutta. Niren Ghosh, President of the Union presided over the Conference.

In sharp contrast with the 36th Conference of the Union held at Jagatdal in November 1974—a three-day Conference attended by over 800 delegates and held amidst unbounded enthusiasm of the working class and toiling people of the area—this year's Conference was held on a modest scale reflecting the new situation through which the working class and people of the country are passing. Nevertheless, the 500-odd delegates from all the 62 Jute Mills in West Bengal, who attended the Conference, came with a grim determination to review the situation facing the 2.5 lakh Jute workers of the State and evolve a new strategy to meet this challenge.

After the Red Flag was hoisted by Samar Mukherjee, Secretary CITU, Abul Hassan placed the wreath at the martyrs column. One minute's silence was observed by the delegates to pay homage to the martyrs.

Monoranjan Roy, General Secretary of the CITU—West Bengal Committee greeted the Conference. Messages greeting the Conference were also received from various mass organisations.

While presenting his Report, Kamal Sarkar, General Secretary of the Union paid homage to the memory of comrades Samsul Huda, Surendranath Bhatta-

charya, Bamacharan Sani, K. G. Bose, Prodyot Ghosh and other leaders and workers of T. U., Kisan and Democratic movements who passed away during the past one year.

In his report, Kamal Sarkar explained the present situation in the country facing the working class and people in general and the Jute workers in particular. He pointed out in detail how the employers are adopting various means like increase in work-load, lay-off, retrenchment etc. to intensify their exploitation of the workers. Rights and benefits earned by Jute workers through innumerable struggles in the past are being attacked and taken away by the employers taking advantage of the situation. But at the same time, this has opened up new opportunities before the working class to carry forward their struggle. He called upon the delegates to build up and strengthen the organisation on the basis of the CITU's slogan of 'Unity and Struggle' and give it a new orientation to cope with the new situation.

In his presidential address, Niren Ghosh explained the situation facing the working class in the country. He called upon the delegates to realise the economic and political significance of the present critical situation and evolve new strategy and organisation to meet this situation.

The main resolution was moved by Md. Amin, seconded by Sitaram Gupta. The resolution called upon the Jute wor-

kers to maintain and further strengthen their unity, irrespective of affiliations, to realise their demands. The 16-point demands formulated in the resolution include — immediate tripartite negotiations on the termination of the present agreements on 31st December; implementation of the recommendations of the Bhattacharya Committee on Price Index; relief to Budli workers as per recommendation of the Central Government; withdrawal of orders for 7-day work; nationalisation of the Jute industry etc. The resolution was adopted unanimously.

The Conference also adopted resolutions on stoppage of retrenchment and reinstatement of women workers, reopening of closed Jute Mills, against eviction of roadside hawkers etc.

The delegates taking part in discussions related their experiences in different mills about the attacks on workers rights and wages by the employers and the new methods adopted by them to resist this offensive. They expressed their firm determination to fully utilise the opportunities created by the new situation to build up the organisation of the workers on the basis of the broadest possible unity.

While greeting the Conference, Jyoti Basu, Vice-President CITU pointed out that this was the biggest Conference of a CITU Union after the declaration of Emergency. He explained how the rights gained by the working class through years of hard-fought struggles are now being attacked. As the most class-conscious and organised section of the society,

the working class have to bear the brunt of the attack. Attempts are also being made to isolate them from the rural poor and landless peasants. The working class must take up this challenge, champion the cause of the agricultural labourers and poor peasants, unify all sections of the toiling people and give leadership in the struggle for their democratic rights and standard of living.

The Conference unanimously re-elected Niren Ghosh as the President and Kamal Sarkar as the General Secretary of the Union. The other office-bearers of the Union were also re-elected-unanimously. A new Central Executive Committee with one representative from each Mill was also elected.

*Tamil Nadu News Letter*

### Workers for Higher Bonus

The management of Thiruppur Textile Mills, instead of negotiating with the workmen on their bonus demand, have unilaterally declared a lock-out. Led by the CITU, the workers are now continuing struggle against this illegal lock-out.

The workers of Best & Co. were getting only 10% bonus all these years when their Union was affiliated to the AITUC. After the Union came under CITU leadership, they have this year won their demand for 15% bonus. At a meeting held on 29th November the workers handed over a cheque for Rs. 2000/- to Comrade V.P. Chintan for the CITU.

Refusing 4% Bonus and demanding higher Bonus, workers of Jawahar Mills, Salem went on stay-in strike. The management have declared an unjustified lock out

JANUARY 1976

# CONSUMER PRICE INDEX NUMBERS

(Industrial Workers)

Base 1960-100

| State/Centre          | 1975 |       |      | State/Centre         | 1975  |       |      |     |
|-----------------------|------|-------|------|----------------------|-------|-------|------|-----|
|                       | Aug. | Sept. | Oct. |                      | Aug.  | Sept. | Oct. |     |
| <b>Andhra Pradesh</b> |      |       |      | <b>Orissa</b>        |       |       |      |     |
| Gudur                 | 320  | 329   | 327  | Barbil               | 326   | 322   | 299  |     |
| Guntur                | 336  | 337   | 330  | Sambalpur            | 360   | 345   | 327  |     |
| Hyderabad             | 318  | 320   | 320  | <b>Punjab</b>        |       |       |      |     |
| <b>Assam</b>          |      |       |      | Amritsar             | 323   | 329   | 335  |     |
| Digboi                | 324  | 306   | 301  | <b>Rajasthan</b>     |       |       |      |     |
| Doom Dooma            | 284  | 267   | 262  | Ajmer                | 312   | 312   | 305  |     |
| Labac                 | 269  | 260   | 220  | Jaipur               | 325   | 329   | 319  |     |
| Mariani               | 263  | 258   | 258  | <b>Tamilnadu</b>     |       |       |      |     |
| Rangapara             | 264  | 264   | 263  | Coimbatore           | 334   | 333   | 324  |     |
| <b>Bihar</b>          |      |       |      | Coonoor              | 308   | 299   | 298  |     |
| Jamshedpur            | 297  | 299   | 299  | Madras               | 334   | 330   | 320  |     |
| Jharia                | 306  | 306   | 310  | Madurai              | 363   | 363   | 339  |     |
| Kodarma               | 351  | 356   | 348  | <b>U. P.</b>         |       |       |      |     |
| Monghyr               | 328  | 340   | 341  | Kanpur               | 311   | 309   | 310  |     |
| Noamundi              | 329  | 329   | 324  | Saharanpur           | 312   | 311   | 308  |     |
| <b>Gujarat</b>        |      |       |      | Varanasi             | 354   | 351   | 345  |     |
| Ahmedabad             | 298  | 296   | 293  | <b>West Bengal</b>   |       |       |      |     |
| Bhavnagar             | 320  | 314   | 310  | Asansol              | 324   | 324   | 323  |     |
| <b>Haryana</b>        |      |       |      | Calcutta             | 293   | 296   | 301  |     |
| Yamunanagar           | 319  | 319   | 314  | Darjeeling           | 265   | 267   | 269  |     |
| <b>J &amp; K</b>      |      |       |      | Howrah               | 294   | 297   | 298  |     |
| Srinagar              | 281  | 287   | 285  | Jalpaiguri           | 273   | 279   | 266  |     |
| <b>Karnataka</b>      |      |       |      | Raniganj             | 326   | 323   | 316  |     |
| Ammathi               | 361  | 358   | 354  | Delhi                | 332   | 333   | 336  |     |
| Bangalore             | 336  | 338   | 337  | <b>Other Centres</b> |       |       |      |     |
| Chikmagalur           | 333  | 340   | 341  | Berhampur ('49)      | 495   | 486   | 434  |     |
| Kolar G.F.            | 337  | 336   | 341  | Cuttack ('49)        | 386   | 382   | 377  |     |
| <b>Kerala</b>         |      |       |      | Jabalpur (1949)      | 436   | 431   | 418  |     |
| Alleppey              | 383  | 382   | 394  | Beawar ('51 52)      | 348   | 345   | 338  |     |
| Alwaye                | 365  | 353   | 349  | Tripura (1961)       | 274   | 259   | 259  |     |
| Mundakayam            | 344  | 345   | 339  | H.P. (1965)          | 225   | 227   | 226  |     |
| <b>Madhya Pradesh</b> |      |       |      | Goa (1966)           | 220   | 214   | 212  |     |
| Balaghat              | 352  | 335   | 320  | Bhilai (1966)        | 205   | 203   | 203  |     |
| Bhopal                | 314  | 310   | 308  | Bhilwara ('66)       | 212   | 200   | 189  |     |
| Gwalior               | 328  | 331   | 328  | Chhindwara           |       |       |      |     |
| Indore                | 348  | 337   | 330  |                      | ('66) | 180   | 180  | 175 |
| <b>Maharashtra</b>    |      |       |      | Kothagudam           |       |       |      |     |
| Bombay                | 303  | 301   | 305  |                      | ('66) | 204   | 199  | 208 |
| Nagpur                | 342  | 341   | 337  | Rourkella ('66)      | 225   | 215   | 216  |     |
| Sholapur              | 363  | 355   | 356  | All India ('49)      | 390   | 388   | 384  |     |
|                       |      |       |      | —do—('60)            | 321   | 319   | 316  |     |

\*Figures in bracket indicate base year.

(Labour Bureau, Simla)

NINE

THE WORKING CLASS

# Japanese Workers' Struggle For Right To Strike

At the end of 1945, the year Japan came under the occupation of allied powers, a Trade Union Law was enacted guaranteeing workers with the right to form trade unions, to strike and bargain collectively. The law applied to workers employed by private enterprises and public corporations alike, without discrimination. Therefore, national public servants employed in the national railways, telephone, tele-communication and postal services, Government monopoly undertakings, public servants employed in local autonomies, teachers and employees of State and public schools etc. were guaranteed with the right to organise, to bargain collectively and to strike. The guarantee of these fundamental rights brought about a rapid development of the trade union movement. In spite of the occupation, workers in the public sector organised the first general strike on 1st February 1947, in demand for the protection of their living and for democratization of politics. The strike was, however, suppressed on the eve of action by the order of General MacArthur, Supreme Commander of Allied Powers.

## Ordinance prohibiting strike promulgated

On 7th August, 1948, General MacArthur ordered the promulgation of Government Ordinance No. 201, in a letter to the Japanese Govt. The purpose of the ordinance was to deprive Government workers and public servants of their right to strike,

to bargain collectively and impose penal servitude to those that would violate the law. Although, in later years, the right to bargain collectively was admitted to operational employees, the right to strike has been denied to all up till now.

Functioning of suppression against the Government and public workers by way of Government Ordinance 201 was later transformed by the Government of Japan into the National Public Service Law, the Public Corporation and National Enterprise Labor Relations Law, the Local Public Service Law and the Local Public Enterprise Labor Relations Law, whereby all workers in the public sector have been deprived of their right to strike. Those who violate the provisions have been subjected to penal servitude and administrative punishments. This strike ban set-up has been maintained by successive conservative Governments for more than a quarter of a century since then.

Quite naturally, workers offered and developed firm resistance to the setup under Ordinance 201, in defiance of threats for appearance to occupation Forces military tribunal. Fierce struggle was organised against the massive discharge of railwaymen in 1949. Parallel with these oppressive measures against trade unions, particularly against those in the public sector, laws prohibiting strike actions of workers employ-

ed in key industries, such as electric power and coalmining, were formulated, while administrative instructions were given to introduce 'peace clause' to contracts in the private sector. In this way, setup to ban strike actions was steadily expanded in the private industries also.

## Struggle against Strike Ban and Govt. oppression

With the promulgation of Government Ordinance 201 as a starting point, the Government exercised fierce oppression. In the national railways, almost all the workers who took part in walk-outs were placed under arrest on warrants, and 1002 workers were dismissed. A total of 269 postal workers were also discharged. While suppressing the labor movement, the Govt. established a recommendation system by the National Personnel Authority and an arbitration system for public servants and operational employees, respectively, with aims to impose low wages to workers by eliminating participation of the trade unions concerned in the decisions of wages and to force them to accept the Government's intentions, unilaterally. What was worse still was the fact that the Govt. neglected recommendations or arbitrations made by the "third organs". Under these circumstances, workers who were deprived of their right to strike had to apply 'lawful' tactics to protect themselves.

Sohyo (General Council of Trade Unions of Japan), which was formed in 1950, immediately started organising struggles based on 'lawful' tactics. The struggle was originated from a hunger strike of railwaymen in 1951, who were indignant at the insincere attitude of the Government and National Railway authorities not to fulfil arbitration decisions. With the conclusion of allied occupation in 1951, the trade unions began to resort to varied tactics, including workshop rallies during working hours, boycott of overtime work, concentrated leave of absence struggle etc. In 1952, the railway workers staged the so-called law-abiding (or work-to-rule) struggle, which resulted in a delay in the arrival of trains.

In the following year, the National Railway authorities dismissed three officials of the National Railway Workers' Union (Kokuro) on the ground of their being responsible for the struggle. This set the union to carry out more powerful, protracted actions for the withdrawal of the administrative punishments and for the recovery of the right to strike. Trade unions of public corporations and national enterprises strengthened their tactics, organised workshop rallies during working hours and finally won fullfledged execution of the arbitration decision after several years.

The authorities, however,

maintained their rigid attitude and would not admit the presence of the three discharged officials at the table of collective negotiations. They continuously dismissed officials, imposed other types of administrative punishments, or criminal sanction even, to activists. Dissatisfaction among Government workers and public servants due to their wages being lower than those in the private enterprises, set them to act to take back their legitimate right to strike. In 1961, Korokyo (National Council of Public Corporations Employees' Unions) plunged into a strike action after publicly declaring their determination in defiance of unjustifiable punishments that would be imposed. In the upsurge of their movement, they repeated actions in years that followed, hand in hand with workers in the private sector. Attacks by the authorities were extremely severe during these years. For instance, a total of 217 workers were prosecuted and as many as one million fifty thousand workers were subjected to disciplinary punishments including dismissal, reduction of pay, etc.

The struggle of civil servants also has developed since around 1955. Teachers united with Nikkyoso (Japan Teachers' Union) have acted against the reactionary educational policy, which has invited severe criminal oppression from the authorities. A large number of union mem-

bers have been subjected to economic sanctions. Repelling these attacks by the authorities, however, public service workers combined their force by forming their joint struggle organisation in 1965 and waged a powerful action in demand for the complete implementation of recommendations made by the National Personnel Authority.

In 1966, they publicly resorted to a half day strike. With the steady increase in the number of strike participants and repeated actions, Koumin Kyoto (Joint Struggle Council of Civil Servants Unions) won the Government's acknowledgement over full implementation of recommendations of the National Personnel Authority. In the progress of these struggles, criminal punishments on the ground of participation in strike actions or giving such instructions to union members were brought to trial. In one such instance, the Supreme Court had to acquit the accused of their charges, in the upsurge of the movement, by overriding the decisions of the lower courts. This contributed to further developing their movement.

## Workers change to offensive in their Struggle

Since 1948 when Japanese workers in the public sector were deprived of their right to strike, more than 1200 workers have been discharged and some 17,00,000 workers inflicted with some types of criminal or administrative punishments. It

was impossible for the unions to repeal such sanctions. For the first time in autumn of 1972, Kokuro and Doro succeeded in forcing the authorities to alleviate the sanctions officially announced. The Government was compelled to reexamine the setup prohibiting strike actions in order to avoid a vicious cycle of wage strike-punishments-protest strikes and so on.

The trade union movement of Japan, with Korokyo acting as the core, carried out a half-day strike on February 10, 1973, in demand for the abolishment of the policy to punish strike participants, the guarantee of the strike right, compensation for economic loss resulted from punishments etc. From 27th April, they entered a united strike with a firm determination "to continue the action until the Govt. confirmed never to punish workers for the reason of strike participation." The united strike paralyzed the transportation network completely for two days, as a result of which the Govt. had to promise that they would take "fair and cautious attitude concerning punishments.

Although the trade unions were not able to compell the Govt. to end its punishment policy, the struggle had a great significance in that they were able to turn to the offensive and organise mass actions to restore the right with their own strength, instead of fighting defensively in forms of court struggle or presentation of complaints to ILO. During the 1973 spring struggle, civil servants' unions struck for half a day for the first

time in their history, shoulder to shoulder with unions in the private sector.

The goal set for the spring struggle in 1974 (regarding fight for strike right) was never allowing the authorities to impose criminal sanctions, administrative punishments and compelling them to clarify the date to abolish strike ban laws. Sohyo decided to go all out for taking back the right with its own strength. In strict accordance with the policy set by the Sohyo in this regard, Korokyo unions struck concertedly for 100 hours, while Komuin Kyoto repeated half-day and one-day strikes. These actions were largest in scale in their history.

Ultimately agreement was reached between the Government and the trade unions concerned that the Govt. would draw its conclusions by autumn of 1975 in order to settle the issue (right to strike) concerning the operational employees of public corporations and national enterprises. Regarding the fundamental rights of civil servants, however, it was impossible for the trade unions to force the authorities to abandon its reluctance to guarantee the right to civil servants, although they promised to study the question further.

Whatever the Government's conclusion may be, SOHYO is determined to further develop its struggle for the complete restoration of the right to strike with all its strength.

(From SOHYO NEWS,  
November 15, 1975)

## Durgapur Steel Employees Reinstatement Demanded

Hindusthan Steel Employees Union (CITU) Durgapur has demanded reinstatement of three workers of the Alloy Steel Plant. The names of the workers are: Ranen Sen, Abdul Mannan and Mrityunjay Das Gupta.

The Union also has demanded reinstatement of Dilip Mukherjee an activist of INTUC who has been released recently. The management however terminated his services on the ground of 'unauthorised absence'. Though Mukherjee earlier led attacks against CITU activists, the Union demanded his reinstatement.

The CITU has also demanded withdrawal of suspension orders against CITU activists.

## CITU-ILO Seminar on Population Problems Postponed

The CITU ILO Seminar Scheduled to be held in Calcutta on 4th-6th December last had to be postponed due to unavoidable circumstances.

Dr. C. F. Hetata, Sub-Regional Adviser ILO had agreed to participate in the Seminar. Jyoti Basu, Vice President CITU was to inaugurate it. 30 participants from West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Assam and Tripura were invited to participate in the Seminar.

# Increasing Mechanisation In Indian Agriculture

A paper titled "A policy towards Farm Mechanisation: The dilemma in India" was presented by Shri P. S. Mazumdar, Chief of the Agricultural Division of the Planning Commission in the International Seminar on Socio-Economic Consequences of High-yielding Varieties, held in Sri Lanka and organised by the Institute of Development Studies, Sussex, U.K.

The author has made a study of the extent of mechanisation in Agriculture in India. As such a comprehensive study was not published before, some extracts from the study are reproduced here.

India is a country where 70% or more of the population depend on agriculture; it has a low per capita agricultural land of about 0.25 hectares; it has an alarmingly large size of landless peasantry approximating 40 per cent of workers engaged in agriculture, it has overwhelming proportion of very small holdings with 55% of ownership units below one hectare and 17 per cent between 1 to 2 hectares; moreover there is an explosive number of unemployed and under-employed in the countryside. All these facts go against the postulate in favour of farm mechanisation. But still in recent past, machanisation has taken place. The author says that "the most significant and widespread growth in mechanisation in India has been in use of pump sets for lift irrigation." The use

of tractors for land development and various cultivation operations has also been rapid in some parts of the country, and these too are, no doubt, the major components in farm mechanisation. The table below gives the number of pump sets and tractors from 1951 to 1971.

|          | 1951 | 1956 | 1961 | 1966 | 1971 |
|----------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Pumpsets | 108  | 170  | 390  | 940  | 2770 |
| Tractors | 9    | 21   | 31   | 54   | 143  |

It can be found from different statistics that maximum application of mechanisation has been in pump sets. The number of pump sets is about 30 times that of tractors; and in terms of H.P. more than thrice. In terms of capital investments, pump sets may account for more than 8 times that of tractors. In respect of regional distribution, Tamilnadu tops the list with about 24% of total number of pumpsets in the country. Other leading states are-Uttar Pradesh (17%); Maharashtra (15%); Andhra Pradesh (9%); Punjab (8%); Gujarat (7%); Karnataka (6%); Haryana (4%); and M.P. (3%). Pump sets account for the major consumption of electricity in agriculture.

As regards Tractors, the tractor population increased from about 9000 in 1951 to 21000 in 1956 31000 in 1961, 54000 in 1966, 143000 in 1971, and to about 173,000 in 1972.

From the figures given in the paper it is seen that in 1966 the two states of Punjab and Haryana, having 5.4% of the

total net cropped area, had roughly 29% of the tractor population. Next comes Uttar Pradesh with about 19% followed by Rajasthan. Tamilnadu, Maharashtra and Gujarat with about 6.8% each. Orissa had only 1.24% and West Bengal

2.87%. The rate of growth in number was also the highest in Punjab and Haryana—being about 100% between 1956 to 1961 and the similar rate of growth followed during 1961 to 1966 also. The number of tractors per 1000 hectares of net cropped area was 0.5 or less in 1966 in all the states except Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh where it was 2.6, 1.3 and 0.6 respectively. Thus there is a concentration of tractors in wheat belt of northern India. There has been 200% increase in the number of tractors between 1966 and 1972; and the largest portion of this increase has been in this region. The number of tractors in Punjab in 1972 was about 35000 which comes to about 8.5 per thousand hectares.

Tractors have been manufactured in the country as well as imported from other countries. During 1961-62, 800 tractors were manufactured and 1997 were imported; and during 1970-71, 19535 tractors have been manufactured and 16679 imported. It

is worthwhile to note that growth of mechanisation has been uneven in its distribution. There is polarisation around few regions of growth, the major one of which is the wheat belt of north India with Punjab in the forefront.

The author also deals with socio-economic implications of farm mechanisation. It is stated that, in general mechanical energy has advantage over biological energy put by men and animals because of its lower cost, speed, capacity and precision. So, input of "energy" may be more in case of mechanisation. Therefore, the question arises whether *per se* it brings about a higher productivity due to higher input of energy speed or precision. The possible superiority of mechanical energy in some select operations may lead to a higher productivity. But the crucial question is whether the productivity of such a largely or partially mechanised farm as an entity, is likely to be more or not as compared with that of farm of comparable size based entirely on bio-energy.

The main problem in our country is the question of radical agrarian reform, and this is the basic question on which productivity depends. The author also states, "An alternative to mechanisation for raising productivity could, no doubt, be an equitable distribution of land through agrarian reforms. This could lead to a higher productivity in well managed small holdings, with lesser constraint of energy, and more incentive flowing from direct access to one's

own fruits of labour than what is possible in traditional large holdings dependent on hired labour."

The conclusion is, however, inevitable that in whatever form it may be, mechanisation will inevitably lead to direct displacement of labour with a vast number of unemployed and underemployed in the rural areas. Mechanisation, under the present circumstances, will create more unemployment. It will add to poverty and thus bring serious social consequences.

Under the present circumstances, it can only benefit the upper strata of rural areas who own most of the land in the countryside. The urgent need of the hour is to abolish landlordism completely, distribute land to the poor and landless peasantry, abolish rural indebtedness - in short to carry out radical agrarian reforms. When the peasantry own land and can enjoy the fruits of their own labour, then and then only mechanisation in land can benefit the common peasants.

### A Joint Statement On The Bonus Issue

A joint statement to all workers on the Bonus issue has been issued by P. Ramamurti (CITU), Jatin Chakravarty (UTUC), Vasant Gupta (HMS), Venkat Raman (HMP), G. Prabhakar (BMS), Kanai Bhattacharya (TUCC), Kattur Gopal (Progressive Labour Federation), R. Sengaliappan (Tamilnadu Trade Union Congress) and Bagaram Tulpule .....

## Employers Told To Make Use Of Emergency

"A two-day management convention, concluded here on December 14, called upon industrialists to look upon emergency not as a catastrophe but as one of the changes which any way, occur in a dynamic situation.

"In fact, the emergency should be used as an opportunity to take initiative so that the industrial relations are developed on more healthy basis' it felt in a consensus derived from discussions".

(From the Indian Worker, INTUC Journal, December 22, 1975)

## 15.6 Lakh Man-Days Lost After Emergency

According to official reports published in Newspapers the total man-days lost during first 3 months after proclamation of emergency were 15.6 lakhs. The break up of the figures show that while 8.3 lakh man-days were lost in July, 6 lakh were lost in August and 1.3 lakh in September.

The figures include establishments covering central sphere covering mines, ports and docks, airlines, banks, insurance, railways and Central Government undertakings.

The total man-days lost in January to September period in 1975 was one Crore and 70 lakhs.

(Source : Indian Worker, INTUC Journal, 22nd Decembr 1975)

## Industrial Disputes Highest During 1974

The October, 1975 issue of the Indian Labour Journal (published by the Labour Bureau, Simla) gives an analysis of the industrial disputes during 1973 and 1974.

According to this analysis, industrial relations touched a new low in 1974, resulting in the record loss of over 40.26 million man-days—almost double the loss of 20.62 million man-days during 1973.

The maximum number of fresh disputes (290) was reported in the month of April, whereas the maximum loss of man-days (10.85 million) was reported during May, 1974. During 1973 the maximum number of fresh disputes (312) and maximum time loss (2.84 million man-days) were reported during November and December respectively.

Out of 2,938 industrial disputes reported during 1974, 428 cases were lock-outs involving 145,000 workers and resulting in a time loss of 6.62 million man-days. This accounted for 16.4 per cent of the total time loss during the year. The average time loss per lock-out worked out to 15,465 man-days as against 13,404 man-days lost per strike.

The maximum number of lock-outs (182) were reported from West Bengal, which accounted for a loss of 3.1 million man-days or 46.9 per cent of the total man-days lost in lock-outs. This was followed by 61 lock-outs (6.86 lakhs man-days) in Tamilnadu, 59 lock-outs (1.06 million man-days) in Maharashtra and

35 lock-outs (7.22 lakhs man-days) in Bihar. No lock-out was reported from Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Tripura, Andaman & Nicobar and Pondicherry.

Out of the total loss of man-days in 1974, 'Manufacturing' group of industries accounted for 61.4 per cent, followed by 'Transport, Storage and Communications' group (24.2 per cent), 'Agriculture, Hunting, Forestry and Fishing' group (7.1 per cent)

and 'Mining and Quarrying' group (3.7 per cent). Within the 'Manufacturing' group, the highest time loss was recorded by the 'Cotton Textiles' group (31.5 per cent), followed by 'Jute Hemp and Mesta' group (23.1 per cent). Within the 'Transport and Communications' group, Railway transport accounted for the highest time loss (93.2 per cent). In the group of 'Agriculture, Hunting etc.', the highest time loss was recorded by the Plantations (99.7 per cent).

(Contd. on page 18)

The following table shows the State-wise break-up of the total industrial disputes, number of workers involved and man-days lost during 1974.

Industrial Disputes during 1974

| State/Union territory | No. of disputes | No. of workers involved | No. of Mandays lost |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Andhra Pradesh        | 126             | 131,431                 | 646,233             |
| Assam                 | 7               | 90,312                  | 1,714,266           |
| Bihar                 | 278             | 367,165                 | 2,181,339           |
| Gujarat               | 151             | 53,421                  | 943,791             |
| Haryana               | 33              | 11,036                  | 217,672             |
| Himachal Pradesh      | 3               | 186                     | 1,706               |
| Jammu & Kashmir       | 5               | 436                     | 2,789               |
| Karnataka             | 72              | 58,004                  | 422,941             |
| Kerala                | 237             | 264,038                 | 3,646,532           |
| Madhya Pradesh        | 126             | 105,505                 | 429,068             |
| Maharashtra           | 732             | 553,318                 | 10,487,623          |
| Manipur               | 4               | 684                     | 4,630               |
| Orissa                | 59              | 30,335                  | 255,198             |
| Punjab                | 26              | 4,400                   | 56,989              |
| Rajasthan             | 40              | 34,923                  | 723,452             |
| Tamil Nadu            | 332             | 263,443                 | 3,186,142           |
| Tripura               | 5               | 364                     | 11,641              |
| Uttar Pradesh         | 211             | 153,005                 | 1,506,825           |
| West Bengal           | 387             | 664,653                 | 13,126,204          |
| Andaman & Nicobar I   | 11              | 5,035                   | 14,108              |
| Chandigarh            | 4               | 871                     | 2,206               |
| Delhi                 | 37              | 25,443                  | 318,116             |
| Goa                   | 31              | 7,302                   | 39,441              |
| Pondicherry           | 12              | 29,223                  | 323,435             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>          | <b>2,938</b>    | <b>2,854,623</b>        | <b>40,262,417</b>   |

# Workers In Capitalist Countries On Struggle Path

The serious economic crisis, generated by Stagflation, which is currently sweeping over almost the entire capitalist world has brought in its wake massive strike-actions and other forms of struggles by workers and employees of these countries in defence of their wages and living standard.

## Strike by Newspaper Employees in Britain

Employees of almost all big national news dailies in Britain went on strike on November 14 last protesting against the retrenchment of 96 employees by the management of the Daily Express. As a result, no newspaper came out on that day. The strike was called off on the night of November 15 after the management of the Daily Express agreed to take back all the 96 retrenched employees.

## Massive Railway Strike in Japan for Right to Strike

At the call of Japan's Council of Public Corporation and Govt. Enterprises Workers Unions (KOROKYO) and led by the powerful National Railway Workers' Union (KOKURO) and National Railway Locomotive Power Union (DORO), 8.5 lakh workers in the public sector went on strike for eight days, from November 26 to December 3 to press for their demand for restoration of right to strike. Japan's biggest Trade Union Organisation SOHYO also sup-

ported the strike and demanded restoration of the right to strike.

The massive strike, biggest ever in Japan, paralysed the public sector Railway system and other forms of transport. Out of the normal daily service of 207 Shinkansen Trains, 1453 special expresses and express trains, 8950 local trains and 7536 commuter trains, only three express trains and 280 local trains plied on 26th November. 5100 freight trains were also cancelled. Buses, ferries and other forms of public transport also stopped plying. The Post and Telegraph workers also joined the strike from 27th November.

Despite all-out repressive measures by the Government of Japan, the complete success of the strike reflects the firm determination of the working class of Japan to realise their basic Trade Union right of strike which was taken away towards the end of the US occupation of Japan.

## Struggle of Workers & Employees in Canada for Wage rise

In support of their demand for wage rise, 22000 workers and employees of the Post and Telegraph services in Canada are on strike since 21st October last. Almost daily demonstrations of the striking workers are being held in Ottawa, Toronto, Montreal and other big cities.

Struggles of Canada's work-

ing class, employees and teachers against the Government's Anti-inflationary measures and for wage rise are also continuing. 8000 secondary school teachers of Toronto and 3500 school teachers of Montreal went on strike in November to press their demand for pay rise. The school teachers of Toronto are still continuing their strike. In Quebec, 15000 workers, teachers and public sector employees held a big demonstration on 26th November against the anti-inflationary wage-cut policy of the Government. 8000 Government employees of Quebec also went on strike on December 1 on the same demand.

Mean-while, 25000 workers in the Paper Mills of Canada (including 12000 in Ontario alone) are continuing their strike for wage rise.

## Strike in Italy against lay-off and closure

Hit by recession, the monopoly owners of Leyland Immo-centi, Pirelli and Montedison corporations of Milan in Italy have resorted to massive lay-offs and closures. The workers of these corporations are carrying on a long drawn struggle against these lay-offs and closures. On 4th December, over one million workers of Milan observed cease-work to show solidarity support to the struggling workers of these corporations.

Workers and employees of other industries and establishments are also taking to strike actions to press for wage rise and other demands. Drivers of bus,

(Contd. on page 18)

## **Crisis in Textile Industry in Tamil Nadu**

The economy of the textile industry in the South has started bursting at its seams as the crisis engulfing it has deepened. The plea of the Southern India Mill-owners' Association, (which represents the majority of the textile mills in the Southern States) for a voluntary wage cut by the workers in Tamil Nadu is but a symptom of the malady afflicting them.

While requesting the workers to accept a wage cut the mills have asked the Government for freezing of the dearness allowance at the 1974 level—all these for reducing the losses of the mills so that they can maintain their production and employment.

In the last few months some of the mills have not been able to discharge their statutory liabilities like making their contributions to the Provident Fund, ESI, sales tax, power charges etc. During the current month, two of the mills were not able to pay wages and they might be paying and they might be paying them only during the third week. The number of such defaulting mills, it is feared, will become large in the coming months if the situation does not improve.

How did this recession occur? The present crisis had its beginning in September 1974 when cotton yarn prices started declining with the steep fall in demand from the handlooms and powerlooms. The accumulation of yarn stock with the mills increased to an unprecedented level as the demand for cloth

from the organised mill sector also declined with a steep increase in prices. Consumer resistance to high prices and the unwillingness of the trade to bring down the prices to reasonable level precipitated a real crisis and the industrial pipeline was clogged by the halt in the movement of stocks at different levels.

Millowners feel that they are now on the brink of a breakdown and if the present situation continued many mills will have to be closed. In view of the seriousness of the situation, the managements have been thinking in terms of retrenching and laying off workers wherever necessary.

THE HINDU, Saturday, November 22, 1975

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## **Underutilisation of Capacity in Indian Industries**

While speaking recently before the All-India Management Association, Sri Mantosh Sondhi, Secretary of the Ministry of Heavy Industry underlined the extent of loss due to under-utilisation of capacity in Indian industries. Some extracts from his speech is given below.

“Let me mention the extent of possible gains through better utilisation of existing capacity only in the core industries. Our generation of electric power per kw of installed thermal capacity is only about 4000 units per annum as against 7000 units in developed countries. A step-up to, say, 6000 units per kw of capacity, as indeed being aimed at, would mean nearly 24 billion additional units or about Rs. 240 crores worth of additional power. An additional million tonnes of steel, which is not difficult to produce from the existing capacity, would be worth more than Rs. 150 crores. An additional 10 million tonnes of coal as targeted and which is well within our reach would add about Rs. 70 crores. With better availability of power and

other inputs, an additional half a million tonnes of fertilisers worth about Rs. 125 crores and an additional Rs. 250 crores worth of heavy engineering equipment from our existing capacity need not be considered over-ambitious. These additional outputs from the existing investments would add up to over Rs. 800 crores annually.

“If this is the extent of loss in regard to the core sector alone, it can be imagined how colossal is the waste of resources on this account in industry as a whole. Perhaps, in a way, inadequate capacity utilisation was inherent in the process of transforming India rather suddenly from a predominantly feudal and agricultural society into an industrial one. Perhaps also the craze for gigantism in industry in the early phase of planned development of the country had something to do with this. But the price paid for this is too dear for a poor country where incomes and savings are low and capital is scarce.”

(Source : Commerce, October 11, 1975)

## Ludhiana Textile Workers gain wage rise

Of the two main textile centres in Punjab, Amritsar and Ludhiana, the bigger centre is Ludhiana with about 350 big and small textile units employing about 10,000 workers. On the eve of the promulgation of the Emergency, the textile workers of Ludhiana were in the midst of a struggle for revision of wages. The earlier agreement signed in 1970 having expired, they were demanding a new agreement with higher wages. Due to the efforts of the CITU, the three main trade unions CITU, INTUC and AITUC came together to jointly lead the struggle. A week before the emergency, the employers came to an agreement for upward revision of wages. But as soon as the Emergency was declared, taking advantage of the situation a section of the employers refused to implement the agreement and started repressive measures. But the workers remained united despite vacillations of the AITUC and carried on the struggle for about 45 days. Ultimately, the State government had to intervene and enforce the agreement under the Industrial Disputes Act. The minimum gain in earnings under the agreement comes to about Rs. 60 per month. Since then some of the employers have obtained stay order from Courts, but employers in about 75% of the units have been forced to implement the agreement.

## Industrial Disputes Highest During 1974

*(Contd. from page 15)*

In all, there were eight all-India strikes and lock-outs in 1974 in which 841,626 workers were involved and 9.69 million man-days were lost. These accounted for 29.5 per cent of the total workers involved and 24.1 per cent of the total man-days lost during 1974.

The all-India Railway Strike in May 1974 alone accounted for the involvement of 475,092 workers and loss of more than 9 million mandays, which works out to 94.9 per cent of the total time-loss in these all-India strikes and lock-outs. This was followed by the all-India strike of Coal-mine workers during October, 1974 which involved 329,459 workers resulting in loss of 329,378 man-days.

There were 164 political and sympathetic strikes involving 314,000 workers, accounting for a loss of 441,000 man-days. In such cases, the highest time-loss was recorded in Bihar (199,000 mandays), followed by Maharashtra (77,000 mandays).

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### Donation by Union for Flood Relief

The Hindusthan Milkfood Manufacturers Ltd. (Horlicks) Employees' Union (CITU) has sent token donations of Rs. 50 each to the General Secretaries of CITU State Committees in Bihar, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh for the relief of flood-affected persons in their States.

## Workers In Capitalist

*(Contd. from page 16)*

trolley and tube railway transports have gone on strike from 4th December, as also journalists, teachers and students. The engineering workers of Napoli province went on strike in support of the struggling Milan Workers. Two lakh workers and employees of Insurance and Relief Agencies observed a 24-hour strike for the demand for new agreement. The faculty members of Universities in Rome, Milan, Naples, Torino and other Centres, along with secondary and primary teachers went on cease-work on December 2. The workers and technicians of all airports in Italy went on a 24-hour strike on 5th December which almost paralysed the air services of the country.

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### Deepening Crisis In Chile

A report published in Santiago (Chile) by Sarcotec, an advisory body to the ruling junta, shows that production and employment fell sharply in the Chilean capital in the third quarter of the year. Industrial output dropped by 12 per cent. Economics Minister Sergio de Castro admitted in a talk with Venezuelan bankers that Chile is now going through "the worst moment from the standpoint of unemployment and economic recession." According to official data, the inflation rate since the beginning of the year has been 280 per cent. The 'New York Times' reports that nearly one-quarter of all Chilean workers are jobless.

*(New Times, December 1975)*

# 8000 RAILWAYMEN AWAITING REINSTATEMENT

During his budget speech last year, the Railway Minister had assured that all who are not guilty of sabotage or violence will be taken back to their duties. The Minister submitted the latest position in the meeting of the Consultative Committee of M.P.s held on 24.10.75 which show the following position.

Committee was informed by the Railway Minister that as on 15.9.75, prosecution cases against 406 employees on charges of sabotage, violence and intimidation are pending. Zone-Wise position is as follows :—Central-90, Eastern-7, Northern-4, North Eastern-94, N. E. Frontier-36,

| Railway       | Still Out Of Job                   |                              |                     |
|---------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|
|               | Permanent/<br>temporary<br>workers | Casual Labour<br>substitutes | Under<br>suspension |
| Central       | 95                                 | 89                           | 12                  |
| Eastern       | 404                                | 368                          | —                   |
| Northern      | 37                                 | 84                           | 6                   |
| North-eastern | 11                                 | 232                          | 13                  |
| N.E. Frontier | 173                                | 18                           | —                   |
| Southern      | 29                                 | 218                          | —                   |
| South Central | 10                                 | 670                          | —                   |
| South Eastern | 250                                | 1670                         | 24                  |
| Western       | 72                                 | 2891                         | 3                   |
| CLW           | —                                  | —                            | —                   |
| DLW           | 4                                  | —                            | —                   |
| ICF           | 4                                  | —                            | 20                  |
| Total         | 1089                               | 6240                         | 78                  |
|               | Grand Total                        | 7407                         |                     |

Besides there are 936 employees who have been dismissed summarily following conviction.

## Penal transfer for 1367 railwaymen

In an earlier meeting of the Consultative Committee held on 1.7.75, the Minister stated that 1367 employees were transferred to other stations after reinstatement. Zone-wise break-up is as under—Central-60, Eastern-182, Northern-30, North-Eastern-132, Northeast Frontier-204, Southern 103, South Central-37, South Eastern-438, Western-181.

On 24.10.75, the Consultative

Southern-41, South Central Nil, South Eastern-82, Western-52.

In the said meeting it was further stated that during the period from 1.1.75, 30 Gazetted Officers and 1993 Class III and Class IV employees have been retired or given notice of retirement to weed out those who have out-lived their utility or whose integrity is doubtful.

It was further stated that under the Scheme of recruitment of wards of loyal railway staff 8518 persons, including 28 wards of class I officers, have been appointed. This scheme is being withdrawn from 1.1.76.

## Retrenchment of Casual Labour

In the said meeting, figures furnished by the Minister showed that 53839 casual labour have been retrenched in various Zonal railways during 1974-75 and only 18834 could be absorbed against regular vacancies. Zone-wise breakup is given below :—

(See Table Last Page)

## Railway Employees win their Case

Railway Employees removed under Act. 14 (i) of D. A. Rule following conviction in Courts have won a victory. Several High Courts had given decision that even after conviction in Court in criminal cases, the delinquent employee should be heard before they are dismissed from service. The railway authorities went in an appeal to the Supreme Court which, while deciding civil Appeal no : 1664 of 1974, stated that "before taking final action in the matter the delinquent employee should be heard and the circumstances of the case may be objectively considered. This is in keeping with the sense of justice and fair play". The appeals by the authorities have been dismissed.

## Decision affects 14 (ii) cases as well

This decision of the Supreme Court has wider implications. It affects the Cases of dismissal under 14 (ii) as well. Comrade Samar Mukherjee M. P., in his letter dated December 4, 1975, drew the attention of the Deputy Railway Minister and requested reinstatement of all victimised railwaymen.

## Salary Payment By Cheque : How Will It Work ?

The Coal India Ltd. has announced the system of payment of employees' and workers' salary by cheque. It is said that the measure is introduced to prevent the moneylenders from grabbing a portion of the salary of the workers.

We approve every step that would stop the undesirable activities of the moneylenders. We have already published a report highlighting the serious nature of the threat moneylenders posed to the coal mine workers in Dhanbad region.

However, we have doubts whether payment by cheque would stop the depredations of the moneylenders. These unscrupulous elements will continue to harass the workers in their houses and extract money from them. They will only have to wait till the cheque is encashed.

The workers are however faced with several difficulties. Workers will have to wait in banks for hours to deposit the money and get it back. According to

## S. KRISHNAMURTHY

Comrade S. Krishnamurthy, a veteran trade union leader of Tamilnadu and a former Mayor of Madras Corporation breathed his last on 6th December, 1975 at Madras General Hospital.

Comrade Krishnamurthy was associated with the trade union movement for over 4 decades and worked with Chakkaraai Chettiar, V. V. Giri, P. Rammurthi and others. He was a member of the General Council of AITUC for several years. After the split in the AITUC, Comrade Krishnamurthy joined the CITU and was elected on the General Council in the foundation Conference of the CITU at Calcutta in 1970. He was also one of the Vice Presidents of the Tamilnadu State Committee of CITU.

He worked among the slum dwellers and gave every possible assistance to them in the struggle for improvement in their living conditions. He was associated with over 30 unions in Madras at the time of his death.

Thousands of workers in Madras participated in his funeral procession. Earlier leaders of various political parties including K. Karunanidhi, V. P. Chintan, Kuchelar. M. G. Ramachandran, K. Rajaram placed wreath on his body.

Centre of Indian Trade Unions and The Working Class pay homage to the departed leader.

banking rules some amount has to be retained to keep the account running and get the cheque facilities. Those who are already indebted will have to borrow more money to put it in the bank.

Moreover there are no banking facilities in the mining area and workers who are not acquainted with banking system are likely to be cheated on several counts. In cities the banking hours are the same as working hours and employees have to leave the office to deposit the cheque and get it cashed. By opening bank branches near the offices, the problem will not be solved but may create some difficulties for the workers.

Therefore it is necessary to reconsider the scheme of payment by cheque by the authorities so that great inconvenience caused to the workers is avoided.

(From Page 19)

| Railway            | Total number of Casual Labour retrenched | Absorbed in regular vacancies |
|--------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| Central            | 4756                                     | 1240                          |
| Eastern            | 10386                                    | 1999                          |
| Northern           | 1341                                     | 2523                          |
| North Eastern      | .....                                    | 6569                          |
| Northeast Frontier | 239                                      | 375                           |
| Southern           | 7616                                     | 1355                          |
| South Central      | 7473                                     | 1654                          |
| South Eastern      | 7669                                     | 1138                          |
| Western            | 14347                                    | 1983                          |
| Total              | 53839                                    | 18834                         |