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# THE WORKING CLASS

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**25th Anniversary Special Issue**



**CITU—A Movement**

ALL INDIA INDIAN  
EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

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# Contents

1. Let everyone help "The Working Class"	1	14. Engineering and unorganised sector industries workers to go on strike in Delhi and UP on June 24	36
2. CITU surging ahead through struggles — E. Balanandan	3	15. Consumer price index numbers for industrial workers	37
3. Twenty five years of CITU — M.K. Pandhe	5	16. All India convention against telecom privatisation	38
4. Working class unity and role of CITU — Samar Mukherjee	8	17. National platform to launch next phase of agitation against NEP	39
5. CITU-1995—Niren Ghosh	11	18. Decisions of Secretariat Meeting	40
6. Women and political participation — Vimal Ranadive	12	19. Railway News	41
7. CITU and policy of unity and struggle in international arena — Chittabrata Majumdar	16	20. CITU-ILO national workshop on child labour	42
8. Stop amendment of the Indian Patents Act— P.K. Ganguly	19	21. Pioneers of India's working class movement	43
9. Issues before trade union unity — M.K. Pandhe	21	22. May Day celebrations	44
10. Prospect of industrialisation of Assam and new economic policy — Amal Ghosh Dastidar	27	23. CITU refused to sign MOU in coal industry	45
11. ILO in retrospect — Swadesh Dev Roye	29	24. On supreme court judgement regarding and re-location of industries outside Delhi	46
12. Telecom privatisation—A surrender to Multinationals—V.A.N. Namboodiri	32	25. International struggles	47
13. A Time to respond—Cuba calling	35	26. Messages from international trade unions on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the CITU	49

## LET EVERYONE HELP "THE WORKING CLASS"

*(We are publishing hereunder the message of Com.B.T.Ranadive in the first volume of "The Working Class" after the formation of the CITU - Ed.)*

Our monthly paper "The Working Class" will fight for the policy of the CITU which has for its objective the bringing in of socialist society on the basis of the socialisation of the means of production and capture of political power by the working class.

The paper will further fight for the demands of the Trade Union Movement, for the rights of the workers and against repression on the working people and the democratic masses. It will urge the Trade Union movement to work in close co-operation with the movement of the Indian peasantry and other democratic sections against their common oppressor—the bourgeois-Landlord regime.

Above all it will strenuously advocate unity of the trade union movement so that a common front is established against the increasing attacks of the capitalists and the Government. It is clear that in the absence of such unity neither the Trade Union movement nor India's working class has been able to exercise its full strength in the struggle for its economic demands or on the various political questions that face our country and our people. In spite of its

growing numbers, the working class has been unable to use its strength in influencing the political decisions of the Government and has often played the part of a helpless spectator to the adverse decisions taken by the Government attacking its rights and democratic liberties. Even such an outstanding event as the great happenings in the Bangladesh has witnessed a passive attitude on the part of the majority of India's working class.

This disunity and lack of common action is not accidental. It is the direct product of the poisonous growth of reformist and revisionist influences on the Trade Union movement which have corroded the class consciousness of sections of Indian working class. These influences have dimmed the awareness of class-struggle and have prevented the workers from directing their frontal blows against their class enemies. They have also prevented the working class from understanding its responsibility towards the democratic movement especially the peasantry and now threaten to turn the Trade Unions into narrow, sectarian, economic organisations con-

cerned only with trade or factory.

The struggle for unity in the Trade Union movement means also a struggle to overcome these weaknesses and turn the Trade Unions into the most important bastion of the democratic struggle of the Indian masses. "The Working Class" will devote itself to waging this struggle for unity in the Trade Union movement and seek the co-operation of all trade union workers to make it effective.

"The Working Class", besides, will serve as an instrument of education and information for our trade union cadres. The local trade union leaders deeply immersed in the day-to-day work of the unions get very little time to master official legislation or the changing economic situation or the many organizational problems that the trade unions are facing today. It will be the endeavour of the paper to give them broad guidance on these issues so that their day-to-day functioning is rendered more efficient.

Apart from this there are the organisational problems pertaining to the functioning of the trade unions. In many trade unions democratic functioning is absent, the initiative of the workers is discouraged and unions become the concern of the bureaucratic leaders only. Such a state of affairs is completely inimical to the development of the trade union and political invitative of the working class without which all talk of socialism is meaningless.

"The Working Class", besides, stands committed to proletarian internationalism. It will fight chau-

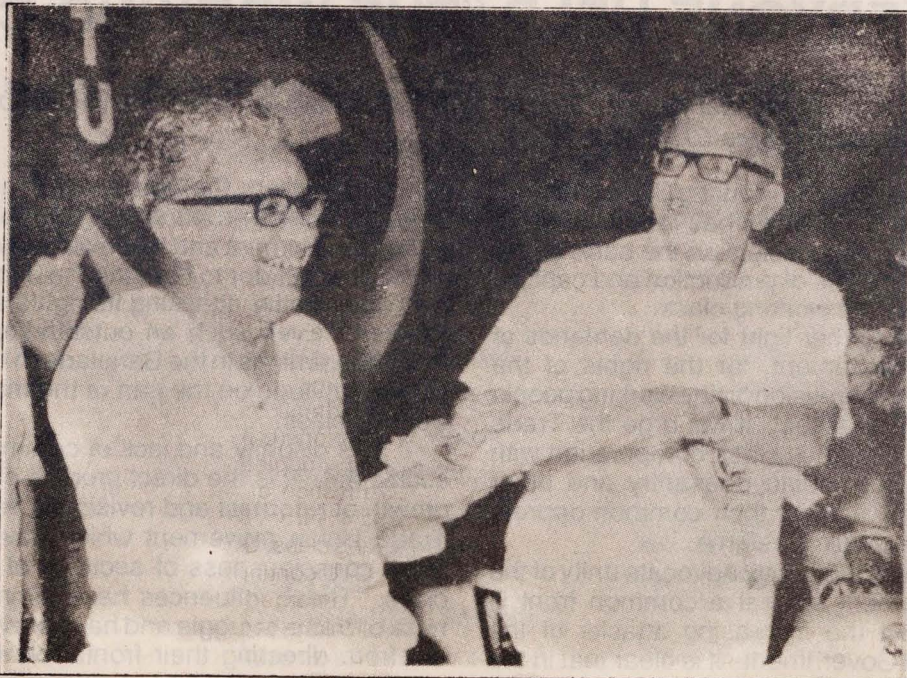
vinism in the trade union movement and assert the solidarity of India's working class with the workers of socialist countries and the working class of the capitalist world. Fighting against the aggressive policies of U.S. imperialism "The Working Class" will support the valiant struggle of the people of Viet Nam and educate the working class of India on its historic role.

"The Working Class", following the line laid down by the CITU will mercilessly expose the danger from US imperialism to our country and raise its voice against our growing dependence on the USA, a dependence which is expressed in enforced exports at the cost of the workers and the people. The trecherous role that US imperialism is playing is seen in the military support it is giving to the Yahya regime of Pakistan which is massacring by thousands, the workers, peasants and intellectuals of Bangladesh.

Let every one help "The Working Class" to discharge its responsibility and help forward the process of creating a unified militant Trade Union movement based on the initiative of the working class and capable of discharging its responsibility to defend the rights of the working class and of helping forward the democratic movement on its road to socialism.

B.T. Ranadive,  
Chairman,  
Editorial Board

The Working Class Vol.1.No.1, September 1971



Com. B.T. Ranadive the Founder President (Right) with Com. P. Ramamurti, the Founder General Secretary (Left) of the CITU

# CITU SURGING AHEAD THROUGH STRUGGLES

□ E Balanandan

## The Birth

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions is celebrating its silver jubilee this year. This organisation was formed as decided by the All India Trade Union Conference held at Calcutta from 27th May to 30th May, 1970. The necessity arose to launch such an organisation since the dominant section of the leadership of AITUC had been persisting to accommodate views and interests of the ruling classes in the matter of politics and on the day-to-day economic issues of the working class. In other words they were drifting away from the path of class struggle. Democratic functioning of the organisation was becoming a casualty. The various proposals put forth from our side to ensure democratic functioning did not find any favourable response but only with contemptuous persistent refusal. Therefore, there was no other alternative left with us other than proceeding to form a new organisation.

When differences developed in the AITUC on policy and organisational practices a resolution was moved by Com.P Ramamurthy AITUC Conference held at Bombay in December, 1966 and it was accepted by the General Council. It said that for achieving unity on the base level and for amalgamation of unions, the elections to the unions' leading bodies should be conducted on the basis of proportionate representation. Besides ensuring democratic functioning, no agreement should be signed without ratification of the Union Executives and General Bodies of the concerned unions. In spite of this the leadership of AITUC did take no step for its implementation, but they went on disrupting the trade unions in many places. Though we were trying to see the united functioning of the trade unions with the maximum restraint in spite of many provocations from the AITUC leadership, they did not care for unity at all and continued the path of class collaboration which eventually made the trade unions ineffective.

In the circumstances we had to walk out from the AITUC working committee held in December 1969 because of their refusal to implement the resolution adopted by the Conference on proportionate representation for trade union elections. We have had to boycott the Guntur Session of the AITUC since hundreds of unions were denied affiliations by the AITUC leadership on the basis of political grounds. Therefore, there was no other way out other than going out of the organisation and form a trade union centre capable of fighting for the interests of the working class.

It is interesting to note that the circular issues by Com.P Ramamurthy contained the following among other things:

"The blatant refusal of Dange and his group to implement minimum norms of democratic functioning of a mass organisation had led to a serious situation in the AITUC. Moreover, Dange's partisan attitude and class collaborationist policies have tarnished the image of AITUC. Dange's arrogant refusal to make the AITUC session a session of unity left us with no alternative but to walkout from the working committee and boycott the AITUC session."

"You are aware of the series of correspondences that took place between myself and Dange in which he categorically rejected all reasonable proposals for united and democratic functioning of AITUC. Even after the AITUC session I wrote to him with view to make a last bid to preserve the organisational unity of AITUC, but the adamant attitude of Dange has ruled out any such possibility."

From the above, one can see that before launching a new organisation all possible steps were taken by us to work inside the AITUC and make it a fighting organisation for the interests of the working class. Since our efforts did not succeed as stated above we had to call the Goa meeting to consider future course of action. After detailed discussion it was decided that an all India trade union conference may be called at Calcutta from 27th to 30th of May 1970. This was the historic conference wherein we have formed the CITU, a fighting organisation of the working class.

Com.B T Ranadive in his summing up speech at the Calcutta conference observed that: "We are starting a new organisation, out of the very needs of the workers' struggles, out of the class struggle, to which we adhere."

"You all have endorsed the proposition of the Goa convention that it is no longer possible to work inside the AITUC dominated by the Dange leadership, for working class unity for class struggle, for defence of the daily interests of the working class. It is not because there was a penchant for a new organisation, but because the very necessity of promoting the unity of the working class demanded that the initiative should no longer be surrendered to the Dange group, to the reformist group in the AITUC but should be taken by the militant unions, by the workers themselves. It is out of this that the necessity for the new organisation arose."

The experience of the last twenty five years conclusively proved that the decision to form this organisation was absolutely correct.

## Unity and Struggle

The foundation Conference of the CITU has pledged itself to uphold the flag of unity and struggle. During the year 1971 the INTUC, AITUC and HMS formed a National Council of Trade Unions at the behest of Govt of India. The CITU took initiative to bring all other trade unions and industrial federations together and formed the United Council of Trade Unions (UCTU). The UCTU launched many movements and struggles on issues affecting the working class—on the question of minimum wage, against reduction of Bonus to 4% from 8.33% and many other attacks against the working class. UCTU strongly opposed the emergency. Since UCTU continued to take up the issues of the working class, this emerged as a reality. While the National Council of Trade Unions became defunct, the HMS left it and joined the UCTU. When the Janata Government introduced a Bill in the Parliament on Industrial Relations during 1978, the CITU took initiative to form a National Campaign Committee against the retrograde Industrial Relations Bill involving

the INTUC, AITUC and BMS, and organise a mass rally of workers before Parliament. This Bill, because of opposition from the working class met its natural death. When the Congress(I) Government came back to power the INTUC deserted the united forum. However, the working class continued to wage many united battle: in which the CITU played a leading role. The united platform was further broadened after the Emergency with the formation of the National Campaign Committee of Trade Unions (NCC) in 1981, bringing together all the Central Trade Unions except the INTUC, alongwith a large number of national industrial federations. The united struggle became further wide-spread and militant. The NCC organised a successful countrywide strike on January 19, 1982, which increased its popularity in a big way.

The CITU took initiative for bringing together the public sector trade unions and for the formation of the CPSTU. The united struggle of the public sector workers developed on a national scale with the formation of the CPSTU, the CITU playing the leading role in the struggle.

Against the new economic policies again the CITU took the initiative for the formation of the Sponsoring Committee of Trade Unions, since the BMS showed reluctance in the fight against NEP. The Sponsoring Committee further broadened and consolidated the trade union unity in the country. The struggles launched by the Sponsoring Committee of Trade Unions against the notorious new economic policies of the government need no elaboration here. In the last four years four national strikes were organised by the trade unions led by the Sponsoring Committee with the support of the mass organisations. These are historic events in the struggle of the Indian working class, in which needless to say that the CITU played decisive roles.

The general strikes of the workers on 29th of November 1991, 16th June 1992, 9th September 1993 and 29th September 1994 increased the sweep of the struggle against the NEP progressively, embracing larger sections of workers in each strike.

During this period the people in general and the working class especially have been targeted for the attack by the Govt of India. The policy of globalisation, liberalisation and restructuring, all went against our national interest. Each of the public sector industries are chosen for special attacks either to transfer the industry to private hands or to make the foreign multinationals and Indian big capitalists to make entry. In the name of restructuring and modernisation and privatisation, reduction in jobs, threat of closures and lock-outs etc came in the agenda in a big way. Special attack has been launched against the basic sectors of the economy like power, telecome, financial sector and other infrastructural facilities which we have developed. Against all these policies, as noted above, not only the nationwide general strikes were organised, but also many united struggles were organised in each sector of the industry and in many factories at many centres. Many of these united battles of the trade unions brought together the INTUC, BMS and the officers too in joint actions with the workers. In short a unified resistance has developed among the working class which CITU played a major role. These united battles had shown the workers the importance of unity more than during any other period. The organisa-

tional, political and status differences melted away, while unity was being cemented in the battle fields.

Introduction of new technology and the so called rationalisation and referring the companies to BIFR for closures, forced the trade unions to go deep into the economies of the industries. They were forced to study the industries in detail not only with the experts from within their own industry but also from outside from many technicians and engineers. Many of them came forward to give voluntary service in the matter of framing alternative proposals for the survival and running the industries profitably. This created a situation by which the ordinary workers and officers who were having many differences have come closure in the fight to protect the industries. The officers' associations and trade unions are increasingly cooperating with each other. This is a new phenomenon by which the workers and the officers are coming closer in organisation and in outlook in many areas which needs further strengthening.

Government's proposals for opening the power sector, telephones, banking insurance, railways, etc, to foreign multinationals and the privatisation of public sector industries have attracted criticism from large chunk of Indian intelligentsia from renowned economists, engineers and scientists in a big way and they in many cases took initiative to bringforth alternative proposals which put the govt in a tight corner.

Because of these struggles on many issues, the government has been forced to go slow and in certain cases they have to retreat. However, under pressure from the IMF and World Bank they are persistently continuing their offensive. In this background the fight launched by the working class and the mass organisations against the new industrial and economic policies and against communalism and corruption etc has to be further strengthened.

In short it can be safely said that for the last 25 years the CITU was consistently upholding the slogan of unity and struggle, which was raised in the foundation conference at Calcutta in 1970 of which the CITU cadres and leaders can legitimately be proud of.

### **Confederation of Trade Unions**

It doesn't mean responsibility of the CITU has been decreased or lessened to any extent. For fighting the offensive of the ruling classes and protecting the rights and privileges of the people many weaknesses still existing in the organisation are to be remedied as quickly as possible. Instead of detailing these things I only wish to say that while celebrating the CITU's 25th anniversary, comrades should take seriously the organisational responsibilities and the directions given in the report on organisation adopted by us for implementation. The possibility of unity of trade unions has also tremendously increased because of the untied fight launched by us and the continued offensive by the ruling classes. Therefore, it is our duty to take up the question of Confederation of Trade Unions seriously.

The urge for organisational cohesion is developing among the working class. Every trade union centre is under pressure from their ranks for unity. Therefore we have to interact seriously with others for the formation of Confederation of Trade Unions.

**(To be continued in the next issue)**

# TWENTY FIVE YEARS OF CITU

□ M K Pandhe

Nearly 3 million members of the CITU who will be celebrating twenty fifth anniversary of its foundation on 30th May 1995 have every reason to be proud of its achievements in uniting the working class in the struggle against the capitalist onslaughts. In the quarter century of its existence, the CITU has made its mark in the history of Indian trade union movement.

In its foundation Conference in Calcutta on 30th May 1970, B T Ranadive, founder President of CITU, summed up the policies of the organisation in two words only: "Unity and Struggle." Without unity the working class will achieve nothing. However the unity must be for struggle against the capitalist exploitation. Unity strengthens working class struggles but the working class has to fight hard even to achieve and preserve the unity of its class, BTR used to say quite often.

## JOINT STRUGGLE UNDER UCTU BANNER

Emergence of a militant trade union organisation based on the concept of class struggle. Naturally within a short time of its foundation the ruling class did its best to isolate the CITU. The formation of the National Council of Trade Unions, under the chairmanship of R K Khadilkar in 1971 was a clear attempt to by-pass the CITU. Unfortunately the leadership of INTUC, AITUC and HMS fell victim to the machinations of the government. To counteract the move the CITU took initiative in mobilising all other trade unions and constituted a United Council of Trade Unions to fight against Government of India's anti-working class policies.

The UCTU organised campaign against Government of India's wage freeze offensive. It campaigned against the proposals of the Third Pay Commission and mobilised Central Govt employees. The UCTU fought against the emergency misrule and the reduction of payment of Bonus from 8.33 to 4.... per cent while UCTU mobilised large sections of workers on common issues, the National council of Trade Unions died a natural death within six months. HMS later walked out of it and joined the UCTU.

During 1973 onwards when NCCRS was formed CITU played an important role in mobilising the railway workers for a nationwide strike action. In the

1974 railway strike the CITU gave every possible assistance to the striking railwaymen. In the post-strike situation CITU helped the railwaymen to fight the large scale victimisation by the authorities and firmly stood by their side till the entire victimisation was withdrawn.

On the question of Family Pension Scheme prepared by the Government of India the CITU alone raised a voice of opposition which was later on accepted by all the Central TU organisations.

When the Janata Party Government brought forward Industrial Relations Bill attacking the trade union rights the CITU took initiative which resulted in bringing together all the trade unions in the country to oppose the Bill. A big national level convention and a massive march to parliament roused nationwide opposition to the Bill which ultimately could not be pursued. The formation of National Campaign Committee of Trade Unions against Industrial Relations Bill unleashed a nationwide campaign to oppose the Bill.

## FORMATION OF NCC

Though the Bill was scuttled due to the powerful opposition of the trade unions the situation in the country changed due to Congress Party coming to power once again at the Centre. The attack on workers' TU rights was on the agenda. MISA, ESMA, DIR was recklessly used against the working class and a new nationwide movement against these attacks was necessary.

A powerful convention was organised in Bombay in 1981 which gave call for nationwide struggle including one day all India strike against the rising attacks on the working class. It was in this convention that a decision to constitute the National Campaign Committee of Trade Unions was taken. It gave a call for demonstration before Parliament wherein the date of one day nationwide strike on 21st January 1982 was announced. The strike was well responded by the workers all over the country and it was the first nationwide strike of the working class of this magnitude. During 80s it organised several nationwide strike actions and demonstrations against rising prices, wage freeze offensive of the govt, anti-working class TU legislation, etc.

The NCC soon became popular among the

working class and it organised series of nationwide mass actions in defence of working class. All the Central TUs except INTUC joined the NCC which became the united voice of the working class on common issues.

When a national trade union committee against apartheid was formed the CITU collected the largest amount of funds in support of the valiant fighters in South Africa against racial discrimination.

### **PUBLIC SECTOR WORKERS STRUGGLES**

The CITU took initiative for the public sector employees movement and it organised all India convention of public sector workers in 1985 at Bangalore. B T Ranadive who presided over the convention called upon all the public sector workers to strengthen it and defeat machinations of the Govt of India to dismantle the public sector. The convention formed an All India Coordination Committee(CITU) to strengthen the activities among the public sector employees.

The CITU published the secret report of the Government of India headed by Dr Arjun Sen Gupta which sought to denigrate the public sector undertakings and pave the way for its gradual privatisation.

The publication of the sinister conspiracy against the public sector created a strong reaction among the public sector workers and a united movement emerged to defend the gains of public sector undertakings.

In 1986 the committee of Public Sector Trade Unions was formed to coordinate the activities of the public sector unions of all affiliations at the national levels. Under the banner of CPSTU several calls for joint actions were given. CPSTU even organised nationwide strikes including one 72 hour strike in 1990.

During wage negotiations this committee played a key role in public sector workers wage negotiation and it coordinated and guided wage negotiations in all the public sector undertakings on the question of DA for public sector workers the CPSTU played a notable role in mobilising all sections of public sector workers. The officers in public sector joined hands with workers and sustained movements were planned all over India. The CITU played a crucial role in making all the CPSTU programmes successful. The CITU's prestige among the public sector workers rose very high during this period.

### **THE STRUGGLE AGAINST NEW ECONOMIC POLICIES**

When the Congress Govt at the Centre an-

nounced the new economic policies in June 1991 the CITU took up the question in right earnest and gave a call for nationwide struggle against these policies. The BMS was not prepared to join the movement which created difficulties in building a powerful movement. It is in this context that the Sponsoring Committee of Trade Unions was formed to lead the movement. The Sponsoring Committee became a wider body than even the NCC since many new organisations including the officers associations joined it. During 1991-1992 and 1993 the Sponsoring Committee gave a call for 3 countrywide strikes which was responded to by larger and larger number of workers.

The CITU took initiative in formation of National Platform of Mass Organisations in which apart from trade unions organisations of peasants, agricultural workers, students, youth women's organisations and cultural groups participated. The Platform chalked out series of programmes of mass actions including one day strike on 29th September 1994. The Platform developed a strong alliance of the working class with other mass organisations in which the working class played a leading role. The CITU has been playing a crucial role in making these programmes successful.

### **INTERNATIONAL OUTLOOK**

Since its foundation, CITU has consistently been expressing firm solidarity with all the liberation movements in the world and defending the achievements of socialist countries. It has been keeping bilateral relations with various international organisations irrespective of ideological affiliations.

After the dismantling of socialism in the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries, the CITU has been keeping fraternal relations with all the newly emerging trade unions who have been defending the interests of the working class and fighting against the inroads in their living standards under the new regime of the so-called market economy. The CITU has been observing with appreciation the remarkable progress these trade unions are making in mobilising the workers against these ruling classes. They are showing growing militancy and CITU is regularly expressing firm solidarity with them.

CITU has developed fraternal relationship with trade unions in over 40 countries in all the continents and new organisations are getting added as the days pass by. These relations are contributing a great deal in common international struggle against imperialist machinations.

Though the CITU is not affiliated to the WFTU it has extremely cordial relations with it. The CITU is regularly participating in all the activities of the WFTU and has developed fraternal relations with many ICFTU affiliated unions. More than 25 organisations have sent fraternal greetings to CITU on the occasion of its silver jubilee celebrations.

### **OVERCOMING THE ORGANISATIONAL WEAKNESS**

The CITU has increased its influence considerably during the recent past but its membership strength has not grown beyond 2.5 million. The CITU has decided to increase its membership strength to 3 million by the time of celebration of its 25th Anniversary. However compared to the size of the working class in the country this strength is extremely small and this weakness has to be overcome at an early date to advance the united struggle of the working class against the new economic policies.

The democratic functioning of trade unions is an important aspect of the TU functioning and there is need to pay special attention to this aspect. Without increasing involvement of rank and file workers in the day to day functioning and policy making apparatus no real TU democracy can come into existence. Introduction of collective functioning at all levels and proper check up of the decisions taken at various level forms an important part of this functioning. The Report on Organisation prepared by the CITU has given special stress to this aspect so that a vibrant organisation can be developed to meet the challenging situation.

The CITU has also given special stress to the work among working women and the unorganised sector. This neglect should be overcome so that their participation in TU movement effectively is ensured.

One of the major weakness in our TU movement is the lack of sufficient emphasis on worker-peasant alliance. With firm alliance with peasantry the participation of the working class in the political struggle cannot be effective. It is necessary that the CITU and Kisan Sabha should work out jointly concrete plan of action so that systematic efforts are made to build a proper worker-peasant alliance.

### **TOWARDS FORMATION OF A CONFEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS**

B T Ranadive had been time and again emphasising the need for the formation of a Confederation of Indian Trade Unions as the need of the hour. Without organisational consolidation of the trade

union movement in India the struggles of the working class will not attain new heights. The CITU had been campaigning for last one and a half decade for forming such a comprehensive body which would ultimately pave the way for organisational unification of the TU movement in India.

Of late, increasing response has been received to the proposal of the CITU. However, strenuous efforts will be necessary to achieve this objective. The positive tone of discussion in a seminar organised on the occasion of 90th Birth Anniversary of B T Ranadive gives us more confidence to pursue the goal with more vigour.

Recently, six trade unions in Pakistan have formed a confederation which has created good enthusiasm among the working class of Pakistan. This should create more confidence in our minds to campaign for such an organisational consolidation of the trade union movement in India. Without such a step the collective bargaining strength of the working class cannot increase effectively.

The task becomes more important due to the menacing growth of communal forces in India. The CITU and other secular trade unions will have to redouble their campaign against these forces who are trying to divide the unity and hit the integrity of the country.

### **THREE MONTH CELEBRATIONS**

The CITU Secretariat has decided to organise 3 month celebration from 30th May onwards by holding series of workshops on the achievements of CITU during the last 25 years. Campaign will also be launched for membership drive, sale of CITU literature and journals and conducting TU classes by all the CITU affiliated unions.

A big celebration will be organised in Indoor Stadium in Calcutta on 30th May 1995 which will be addressed among others by Jyoti Basu, vice president, CITU. Leaders of CITU and other Central Trade Unions will also address the rally.

The CITU will produce some literature to popularise its achievements and highlight the need for strengthening the organisation. The CITU has decided to bring about a short history of the organisation.

The 25th anniversary celebrations of CITU will be an important occasion to prepare the working class for bigger struggles against the capitalist class and also for playing a leading role in the struggle for social transformation.

□

# WORKING CLASS UNITY AND ROLE OF CITU

□ Samar Mukherjee

## Birth of CITU

The CITU emerged as a new Centre of Indian Trade Unions completely, demarcating itself from all other Central Trade Unions particularly from the All India Trade Union Congress. Which was the mother organisation of majority of the unions which rallied behind CITU. CITU was born on 30th of May, 1970 through its foundation conference held at Calcutta attended by 5514 delegates, observers and fraternal delegates representing 1759 unions with a total membership of 8,04,637. This year is the Silver Jubilee year of its birth day. On its foundation day this year the CITU will review its performances of the last 25 years in the light of the historic duty of uniting the Indian working class for bigger struggle to meet the new challenge of the growing offensives from the new ruling classes and imperialist monopolists.

The background of the need for emergence of CITU has been made amply clear in the resolution adopted in the convention held at Goa on the 9th and 10th April participated by those Sections of the members of the Central and State General Councils of the AITUC who were fighting inside against the class collaborationist policies of Dangeite Leadership. The resolution was drafted by Comrade B.T. Ranadive who became the Founder- President of the CITU, when it was founded in the Calcutta conference in next May.

The Goa Resolution States,

"A grave situation faces the militant trade union movement and all class conscious workers in the country. The AITUC which over long years had grown as the rallying Centre for all militant trade unions in the country for carrying forward the united struggle of the working class has ceased to be so due to the class collaborationist policies of the Dangeites and is serving as an instrument in their hands for splitting the trade unions and disrupting the united struggles of the workers.

"These class collaborationist policies were marked out as the official line of the AITUC in the notorious Two Pillar policy." The Government's plans of Capitalist development in collaboration with foreign monopolists and with massive aid from America and other imperialists whose bankruptcy stands completely exposed to-day, were eulogised as plans for

"independent development" and working class asked to support The plans."

"This convention therefore, is of the opinion that a new All India Trade Union Centre should be established to carry on the struggle for unity and to rally the entire working class around consistent policies of class struggle and for unleashing the united struggles of the workers against the offensive of the ruling class."

In his concluding speech in the Foundation Conference Comrade B.T. Ranadive told: "We are now reaching the end of our labours during this historic conference that we have held. ... We are starting a new organisation, out of the very needs of the workers' struggles, out of the class struggle to which we adhere. We are starting a new organisation with a new line. We wish to give a new orientation to the T.U. movement. But for that all the leaders of the T.U. movement, every one of us must change his own consciousness, must be determined to give up the old consciousness and the old practice; then alone will we be able to carry in the concrete a correct struggle against the reformist line of all others."

The Constitution of the CITU which was adopted in the Foundation Conference declares the following Aims and Objects:

"The CITU believes that the exploitation of the working class can be ended only by socialising all means of production, distribution and exchange and establishing a socialist state. Holding fast to the ideal of Socialism, the CITU stands for the complete emancipation of the Society from all exploitation.

"The CITU fights against all encroachments on the economic and social rights of the workers and for enlargement of their rights and liberties including the right to strike, for winning, defending and extending the freedom of the democratic and trade union movements. —

"The CITU promotes relations of solidarity with the peasants and agricultural workers in the fight for land, against usury and rent and high taxation and lend every help to the forces of agrarian revolution, to support in full the struggle of the agricultural workers for higher wages and decent conditions."

"It promotes international solidarity and unity with the workers of other countries in the common

fight for socialism, promote fraternal relations and deep bounds of unity with workers and peoples of Socialist countries."

### **Experiences of Last Twenty-Five Years**

The experiences of the last 25 years have proved beyond doubt that the emergence of CITU is a new landmark in the trade union movement in India. Since its birth the CITU initiated concrete steps for building united trade union movement and develop united working class and mass struggles. Immediately after its formation the CITU observed a programme of "unity week" to emphasise the need and importance of unity to develop broadbased mass actions against the offensives of the ruling classes.

The formation of UCTU, a joint platform to develop joint struggles inspired railwaymen to unite first in their local struggles, next in their categorywise struggles and later on in their historic all India Railway Strike in 1974 May under N.C.C.R.S. Through the CITU was still organisationally a small force particularly in railways, still it played a big role in uniting all sections of railwaymen because of its correct policy. The struggle of the Loco-Running Staff under the leadership of the All-India Loco-Running Staff Association in 1973 created the basis for the All-India Railway strike in 1974. The leadership of AIRSA was in close association with the CITU and was in full agreement with the policy of unity and struggle advocated by CITU. The urge for united struggles was also rapidly spreading not only among the industrial workers but among the railway men.

The successful strike of the locomen on the demand for 8 hrs. duty forced the Railway administration to accept the reduction of hours of duty to 10 hours. Earlier they were forced to do the duty at a stretch for 14 to 16 hours sometime extended upto 32 hours. The success of the struggle lay primarily in their ability to unite quite a large sections of workers through patient efforts. But the amount of solidarity support which they got from others was never seen before. Both comrade Nrisingha Chakravarty and myself were entrusted by Comrade B.T.R. to be associated with the railway trade union movement on behalf of the CITU. Comrade Chakravarty, Secretary, CITU was himself a victimised trade union leader, did his part in influencing the course of the struggle and myself being Member of Parliament did my part in highlighting the demands inside Parliament and putting pressure on the government mobilising opposition forces inside Parliament for accepting the demands.

### **NCCRS AND ALL-INDIA STRIKE**

Comrade Nrisingha Chakravarty in his book "History of the Railway Trade union Movement" has described the developments in the following paras : (p.80, 81).

"Close after the struggle of the Loco Running Staff the annual conference of the All India Railwaymen Federation was held. Shri George Fernandes who was inducted in the Railway trade union movement from the Central Railway: National Railway Mazdoor union gave the slogan of united struggle for achieving the basic demands of the railwaymen. Shri Fernandes was at that time convenor of United Council of Trade Unions (UCTU) which had already been leading some statewide and industrywide strikes and had become popular among the mass of workers. He was also Chairman of the Socialist Party. Shri Peter Alvares, who was a member of the National Executive of the Socialist Party and had been functioning as President of AIRF opposed this slogan. A section of workers who had leaning to AITUC had supported Peter Alvares against George Fernandes. There was a sharp division among delegates and George Fernandes was elected as the President of the AIRF. Which was possible because all pro-unity sections of railwaymen, supporters of CITU and UCTU, supported George Fernandes.

"In this background the AIRF gave a call of holding a convention in Delhi on 27th February, 1974 for considering the steps to be taken for securing justice. The response of the railwaymen was beyond the expectations of the organisers of the convention. More than a hundred organisations of railwaymen responded to the call. The organisers had invited the central trade unions also to participate. The CITU, AITUC and BMS responded to the call. Through this convention a National Co-ordination Committee of Railwaymen's Struggle known by its popular abbreviation NCCRS came into existence". (In this context I mention the content of the discussion which I had with George Fernandes in the previous night when he came to consult Comrade BTR at 4, Ashoka Road. Com. BTR asked him to consult me. On enquiry I came to know that he had an idea to form a committee of 30 members from the convention to guide the railwaymen's struggle. I opposed his idea and explained to him that the involvement of not only all the unions inside railway is essential but also of all Central Trade Unions. Only the formation of Co-ordination Committee consisting of representatives of all unions as well as Central Trade Unions can unify all. George agreed to my proposal and this was reflected

in the decision of the convention next day through the formation of the NCCRS.

"For conducting day to day work a smaller committee known as Action Committee with two representatives each from AIRF, CITU, AITUC, BMRS, AIREC and AILRSA with George Fernandes as Convenor was set up. Comrade Samar Mukherjee had to use all his persuasive skill to bring about acceptance of this formula by all the organisations. The CITU was represented in the Action Committee by Com.Samar Mukherjee and Com. Nrisingha Chakravathy."

The role of CITU was further heightened when the National Campaign Committee was formed on June 4, 1981 consisting of seven Central Trade Unions and about 50 Federation of unions of industrial workers and employees including public sectors and Government employees. The National Campaign Committee strengthened the striking power of the working class to act as a national force. The call for central rally on 23rd November before Parliament and an all India Strike on 19th January next year was responded in a big way. This showed that the growing urge for unity at the lower level had started, getting reflected in the programmes for joint all India actions.

Further growth of united struggles created the necessity for further broadening the joint platform and CITU has played its role in satisfying this requirement by the formation of the Sponsoring Committee of Trade unions.

### **Struggle Against the New Economic Policy**

A new stage has reached in the Indian trade union movement when the united struggles started under the banner of National Platform of Mass Organisations not only for economic demands and trade union rights and other partial demands but also for the change of the new economic policy which is guided by World Bank and IMF not only against the economic interest of the Indian masses and Indian industries, But also against the sovereignty of our country. The battle for new alternative policy is a battle of a higher stage. Through this battle the working class is to emerge as the vanguard to defend the interest of all other exploited classes and sections of people particularly peasants, agricultural labourers, all unemployed, unorganised sections of the workers, village artisans, small scale and medium industrialists etc.

Along with this fight the fight to defend the national sovereignty, the national unity from the of-

fensives of the communal and disruptive forces, to guarantee the democratic rights and for jobs for all, food to all, education and health for all etc.

The success in these struggles are guaranteed if the working class is united on a national scale and the alliance of the working class and peasantry is ensured. But this being a long drawn battle it can not succeed unless it is combined with the struggle for change of the existing economic and social system and ultimately by establishing socialism.

Our trade union struggles though have advanced in a big way, still they are confined within the limits of economism and reformism. In the present context while reviewing the role of the CITU in the last 25 years, I recall the last message which Comrade B.T.R. had sent to the Durgapur Steel Plant workers. "I wish to draw your attention to a basic question which you as advanced guard of modern working class in India can ignore at your own peril. I am referring to the defence of socialism, the defence of Marxist-Leninist scientific socialism now being attacked all over the world. You will realise that the daily struggles, the Parliamentary elections, the Rajib Hatao campaign have not much meaning if we forget the basic objective of socialism and fail to defend it."

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# CITU - 1995

□ NIREN GHOSH

The foundation Conference of CITU was held in Calcutta in May, 1970.

At one time, AITUC comprised all parties, factions and individuals active in the trade union movement in India.

After transfer of power in 1947, persons owing allegiance to National Congress broke away from AITUC and founded INTUC. Initiative for this was then by Sardar Ballavbhai patel. During the fifties UTUC (Bowbazar) was founded with late Shri mrinal Kanti Bose as President. After that AITUC was being led mainly by CPI.

After the communists in India split into two camps i.e. Marxists and revisionists in 1964, the Marxists tried their utmost to keep AITUC as the platform for united trade union movement during 1967-70. But the revisionists entrenched in CPI suck to their policy of Class collaboration. besides, democratic functioning of AITUC and trade unions was completely stifled in AITUC. Our long persists at efforts to keep AITUC as a united organisation proved of no avail. Thus we were compelled to launch CITU. Clearly, it was a correct decision.

After a lapse of 25 years, on the basis of unity and struggle as its watchward, CITU has emerged as a strong trade union centre, taking initiative on all important matters confronting Working Class, leaving AITUC far behind.

The positive achievements and growth of CITU are a matter of deep satisfaction. Still only a fraction of the Working Class is organised under the banner of CITU. Even if all trade union centres, barring INTUC, come together along with their fellow travelers, a comprehensive All-India Strike can not be brought about even against new-economic policy of Narasimha Rao Govt., which foreshadows neo-colonialism in India.

The spread and dept of T.U. movement in India and that of CITU as well is still limited. We have many many tasks to fulfill and many many miles to traverse before CITU and Working Class can emerge as a solid homogenous political force, in all the states of

India.

Perhaps, the CITU centre should concentrate on three or four industrial states, besides West Bengal and Kerala - say Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra with all means available at its disposal to achieve more tangible results in growth and strength and spread of the CITU.

Secondly, the Working Class in India is multi-national not uninalional. Therefore, the Working class in india is fragmented and disparate and not a homogeneous mass. A very big chunk of class is falling under the poisonous spell of national chauvinism, communalism and fissiporous tendencies pre-vailling in their respective states. Shiv Sena smacks of ugly facistic trends even.

In order to counter Congress, BJP, imperialists and also forces like Shiv Sena, the conscious section of the Working Class has no other go but to consistently champion the democratic national urges and aspirations of the nationlistics and their states, symbolised in demand for more power for the states of india and regional autonomy for the ethnic groups within their respective states. Along with class struggle both political and economic, the consistent and non-stop campaign and demand for more power for the states and regional autonomy for the ethnic groups within the respective states are carried on, there only in this way we shall be able to weld together the multi-national Working Class into a conscious, homogenous, political force and become the leader of India in the struggle for peoples Democracy.

□

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# WOMEN AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

□ Vimal Ranadive

The active participation of women in general problems and especially in politics decides how far we have gained in our struggle for emancipation for women and for our country, and how much still we have to educate and prepare our women in urban and rural areas for the final objective.

It is a fact that women in general are very active for raising issues on social problems like the dowry deaths, molestation of women, child rape and so on and so forth, when women belonging to different political views join together to take up these problems, by taking up deputation, demonstrations, etc. These actions raise the consciousness of women against the feudal system and against the non-enforcement of the machinery of the Government.

## Political Participation - an higher form of struggle

The Political Participation of women in the struggles is an higher form of struggle, without which there will be no liberation of women from the present bourgeois-landlord society. This higher consciousness can be noted from the recent elections in Tripura, where women voted for the left front government. This was also seen in West Bengal when the Left Front Government formed for the forth time and from the magnificent results of Panchayat elections when 28,000 women members got elected, the main role played by women in rural areas. Due to literacy and politicalisation, women in Kerala have gone much ahead.

Political awareness does not come automatically. It is through their experience, by correct guidance given by the parties, the guiding role of the women's organisations and other mass organisations, are the main factors for raising this consciousness. It is necessary also to study the historical reasons as to why there was a great political awareness among men and women of all classes including congress in the above mentioned states, and why we are still lagging far behind in other states so that we can draw correct conclusions and the tasks therefrom.

## National Liberation Movement and women

Let us go back to some historical events during

1930-31, 1942, 1956 and others where the participation of women in political struggle was great. During 1930-32 in the national movement, against the British rule, thousands and lakhs of women of all religions all over India, faced lathi charges, jail and sacrificed whatever they had. The quit India movement in 1942, the same phenomenon, though in a lesser scale was noted. The women's participation in the states of Maharashtra and Gujarat in 1956, thousands of men and women went to jail, including the women in Dalit communities for the first time. The simple demand was, the formation of Samyukta Maharashtra and Mahagujarat. Thousands of women came to Delhi to demonstrate in the month of Nov. in 1956 and sat the whole night in the bitter cold. Though, the participation of women in Telungana struggle against Nizam and later on against the Congress rule, and only in one state, the revolutionary political content was very high no doubt, demanding land to the tiller and arming themselves against the enemy. The younger generation does not know much about these struggles which is a proud record of political awareness and participation of women in these struggles.

Working women in Textile fought a bitter battle against the Textile owners and the police in Bombay when all the mills went on strike for 40 days in 1941. Women played a prominent rôle leading the strike. The RIN mutiny, the Bombay, Calcutta and many other places, men and women came on strike, fought battle, hundreds were killed, one among whom our Com. Kamal Dande, active worker of women's organisation and party.

From the various examples given above it can be noted, the urge for Independence for India was gripped from the top to bottom level and women threw themselves en-mass in the national struggles under National bourgeois leadership which also was playing double role to share power at the centre.

A question can be raised here, were there not social problems during that period! There was famine and shortages, Hindu code Bill and inheritance, child marriages and so on, not so intensive as they are today. But the urge for national independence against the British rule was dominant against which other problems secondary for the time being.

## **Difference between social and political awareness**

As it was mentioned earlier, the objective for the political participation of women has to be emancipation of the country as a whole, where emancipation of women from their exploitation too is taken for granted. This requires time, political guidance and urge to move. Social awareness can emerge due to their existing conditions, when they are facing inhuman conditions in their daily life under the present congress Government. The women's organisations do take up their issues, handle them whatever possible way. Here, our organisations have a role to play to make them understand the class nature of the society which has to be changed so that they can be relieved from such feudal attacks, humiliations etc. The politicalisation of women to a higher stage will not be done by Feminist organisations or other organisations, many of whom are not interested to lead them to our common objective to overthrow their bourgeois landlord rule, or to move to socialism.

We should not forget the final objective of ours while taking up the social problems or have illusions that we can solve these problems by legal methods etc. though, we are successful many times, and the various such problems do come up in plenty due to the increasing atrocities on women while the society as a whole remains inactive for a number of times. Many of our comrades from the North, rightly pointed out the absence of the reformist movement which West Bengal, Maharashtra etc. had under Raja Ram Mohan Rai, Anne Karve, Jyotibapkule etc. Which helped the women and the general society to come forward leaving the feudal ideas. This is one of the reasons the democratic movement as such remained weak and child marriages, inheritance etc., still remain the major problems in these states.

## **Womens participation Despite their difficulties**

The experience shows that despite all the difficulties faced by women at home and elsewhere they do come forward to join the mainstream of the struggles on various economic and political issues, though not on the level mentioned earlier period. As mentioned in 40 days strike in Textile in Bombay 1941-42, did they not join wholeheartedly, day in and day out sat at the mill gate, protecting their struggle despite their difficulties at home? In spite of extremist attacks on men and women in Punjab, belonging to CPM and other progressive parties thousands gathered at the

CITU conference, or anganwadi conference? A backward State like Bihar, where feudal tendencies are rampant among women too Thousands gather to demonstrate at the call of their mass organisations? In the semi-fascist period in Bengal in 1971-72 or in Tripura the political role played by women to protest the movement was significant since male workers could not come out as they were arrested. The watch was kept in the night by turn by women and duties were allotted.

The point which is being made here is when the women take up any particular issue and are convinced it is their own also, they place all their personal or home problems and fight to the last. That time, the issue of illiteracy, shyness or feudal bindings do not come in their way. They become the leaders of the movement and guide even the male leaders as to what was to be done. This experience is of course of the women workers in the struggles and strikes and also at other places too. The guiding role of the mass organisation is important here. The main point to be drawn here is they leave back all their feudal ideas and throw themselves in the struggles.

What is the experience of the last 2-3 years about the political participation of women? The different calls given from the sponsoring committee, left parties or platform of mass organisations, the participation of women especially from downtrodden class, was much bigger. Have they not come and join the mass movements in rural and urban areas in the political struggles against the economic and industrial reforms and against the attack on our self-reliance? In many states women are coming out no doubt. The process of their politicalisation has started through their own experiences. It has to be speeded up consciously by our organisations.

## **Indian constitution guarantees equal states**

The constitution of independent India and Directive principles have given women equal status, equal rights, employment, no discrimination etc. The directive principle also has given sacred right to motherhood. Various legislations have given protection to women who are employed such as 3 months maternity leave, provision of creche and so on. As the general elections approach many more promises are given. In actual practice, we note that in almost all cases, there is no enforcement of these laws and the Government machinery is very weak. Wherever the movement is strong, the equal wage is available.

At other places, women continue to suffer inequality.

Therefore, one of the important tasks of women's movement is to make our women conscious that under the present character of the congress govt, womens position will always remain unequal, and majority women will remain under the feudal system and political fight against the rule is eminent.

The womens organisations have raised voice about the less number of women i Parliament, in Assemblies, in Panchayat etc. in all the decision making bodies. The increasing number of atrocities on women sexual harassment dowry deaths and so on in fact should make the congress Govt and the parties also to worry and they should try to make things better. Instead the things are becoming worse and one should feel ashamed of the recent happenings coming in daily press. It is not a question of women's organisation only, but all the progressive minded people should seriously think what to do about this.

The panchayat elections will surely improve a little bit the lot of women. The right to vote is an important thing for all the people. The number of women who vote in the elections is also big. But have they got their own choice to vote? The vote of a woman in general depends on the male member in the family. This position is no doubt changing. But in rural areas, it still continues. What is the percentage of women in Loksabha and Rajyasabha? As per the available statistics the percentage of women in Loksabha members has never exceeded 8.1 and has gone as low as 3.4%. it was slightly better in Rajyasabha, being 11.8% and the lowest 6.9% In 1993, there were 39 or 7.07% in Lok Sabha women MPs and 17 Rajya Sabha members or 7.3%. Naturally with such a small percentage of women, and the feudal outlook of many male members there is bound to be less interest for raising the issues on women. The parties in the elections, I give prominence for the womens issues in their manifestoes, but are easily forgotten them after the election. The Formation of national Commission on women, formation of cells on Dowry etc. did not help much to improve the situation of women. it was a disgrace that National Commission on women even supported the stand of the Government to curtail the maternity benefit of women after 2 children. Women are very few in the decision making bodies. The suggestions made by CITU that women's organisation and trade union wings of women be associated with the enforcement machinery also was not taken seriously. The magnificent work done by women in Panchayat in West

Bengal is a good example to show how if given power to women, they can improve, intervene in the situation, to improve the condition of the people.

### **Establishment of socialist system - the only way for emancipation for women and for the country.**

Whatever serious happenings in erstwhile Soviet Union and East European countries, it was a fact the position of women under socialism was equal, education was free. In parliament, Assemblies, trade unions, women played important role. Wherever socialist system exist at present as in vietnam, North Korea, Cuba, or China, the position of women is better and they are fighting to improve it still further. The women in Russia and other countries are now realising what in capitalism since they have now experiences of unemployment, price rise, shortages etc. The fight has started where women also are participating as per the report. it is a fact because of the set back in Russia and in European country, our task becomes a little difficult. But we have to explain the reasons, while convincing them only socialist system can give them equal status and equality and emancipation from exploitation.

The present political situation in our country once again calls all sections of women to stand unitedly against the social exploitation, against the economic and industrial policies of the Govt. While not forgetting the hundreds of martyrs in jalianwalaBag, the great sacrifices made by Bhagat singh and others. Once again, the political situation is slowly emerging reminding the old days. The recent unprecedented price rise, unemployment, shortages in public distribution system and attack of privatisation on the industries etc. the women folk have to come out politically to stand in the manisteam of the struggle for self reliance.

This is the time, our organisation is to be alert, while making propaganda, independently and jointly wherever possible to convince the people, by raising their national sentiments, patriotism against the USA and IMF and against the compromise by the Govt. The task is difficult no doubt. But the fast changing situation will help us to take up the problems and politicise women. With this background paper, the following programme for the future task which should be discussed and final document be strengthened with experiences of our delegates. The role of the mass organisations and political parties is very important for the emancipation of women and their po-

liticalisation. The mass organisation and parties have to keep this in their minds and keep the agenda on the problems of women, so that they can be a part of the mainstream of the struggle.

## CITU AND WORKING WOMEN

Considering the importance of participation of women and working women in the economic and political struggle while taking up their specific issues at their workplace, the CITU and other trade unions should seriously make efforts to draw them into the struggles. They should consciously try to place their problems on the agenda, elect them as delegates, in the conferences, take them for negotiations with the management so that their class consciousness will increase and they will be ready to fight and join the political calls coming from the left and democratic parties and CITU. This helps them to get release from their feudal outlook and .. It was noted thank, in all the strike calls and courting of arrests programmes given by the National platform of Mass Organisations, the participation of women was magnificent from all the states. This participation against the IMF loan and economic reforms makes them political, class conscious and push them forward in the movement against the congress rule leaving their feudal ideas behind.

With this object the CITU has started the work on this line by holding the All India Conference of working women in 1979 under the guidance of Com. B.T. Ranadive, President of CITU. Almost all states held conferences under CITU, with the leadership attending and guiding. Unfortunately the work could not continue as it should. There is still much to be done in the organised and unorganised sections of women. The CITU has to make more efforts to draw them into committees, encourage to speak. The feudal and backward ideas are prevailing among both the sections, men and women. The responsibility to get over this weakness mainly lies on the CITU leadership, states and centre.

Unless women, who constitute 50% in the country are brought forward to shoulder the responsibility in the political struggle, we will not be able to move ahead. Russian RESolution could not have been successful without full participation of women, this is what Lenin said. Women in China, Vietnam, Korea, Cuba have played a magnificent role in the revolutions and are playing now also, while building socialism,

The importance of politicalisation of women in the final struggle should not be minimised. The CITU should take the task seriously to work by mobilising working women for the future tasks ahead. □

## FMRAI Decides Strike Action Against Amendment of Patent Act

The Federation of Medical and Sales Representatives Associations of India(FMRAI) has decided to observe one day countrywide strike on 20th June, 1995 against the amendment of the Indian Patents Act, 1970.

In a national convention held at Mavalankar Hall, New Delhi on April 20, all pharmaceutical workers were called upon to launch struggle including strike action against the move of the Government to amend the Patent Act in pursuance of the GATT agreement, which the Govt of India signed defying all opposition from the people.

The convention was greeted by a number of fraternal organisations like the CITU, AITUC, HMS, Kisan Sabha, DYFI, National Working Group on Patent Laws, All India People's Science Net Work, etc.

The strike call for 20th June has been given by

the FMRAI Working Committee appealing to all pharmaceutical workers in the plant level and offices to join the strike.

In preparation for the strike, 22nd May was observed as the All India Protest Day. Apart from this, thousands of telegrammes will be sent to the President to withdraw the Patent Act Amendment Bill. A delegation of FMRAI, CITU, AITUC, Kisan Sabha, the National Working Group on Patent Laws, etc also met the Prime Minister and submitted a memorandum to him.

The National Platform of Mass Organisations in its meetings held on 26th April and 16th May, supported the struggle of FMRAI and called upon all its constituents to extend active support to FMRAI all over the country. □

# CITU AND POLICY OF UNITY AND STRUGGLE IN INTERNATIONAL ARENA

□ CHITTABRATA MAJUMDAR

25 years back in 1970 in the month of may (27 to 31st) CITU was formed from an all India Trade Union Conference, held in the then Ranji Stadium (now known as Netaji Indoor Stadium) in Calcutta.

The growing discontent and resentment among the working class and the failure of the then central trade unions to lead then for a struggle as well as the refusal of the then AITUC leadership to democratically run the trade unions and to give recognition to the militant trade unions, led to a situation when 150 leading members of the then AITUC General Council and different State Councils, took the initiative to combine all the genuinely struggling trade unions together. They met in a convention held at Vaso-de-Gama, Goa on 9th and 10th April 1970 and decided to convene an All India Trade Union Conference in Calcutta from 27th to 31st May, 1970 to form a new central trade union organisation.

CITU was formed to organise and unify the ongoing struggles of the working class. Unity and struggle had been the motto of CITU right from its inception. Immediately after its formation, CITU took initiative to organise united movement of the working class and proposed in the conference of central trade unions and national federations, held on 12th July, 1971, a joint campaign against the then Govt.'s policies and an All India Strike for a day. However in spite of all out efforts of CITU, such a joint campaign and movement did not materialised because of non cooperation of some other central trade unions. Subsequently, when NCTU, comprising of INTUC, AITUC and HMS was formed, with the backing of Central Govt., UCTU was formed on the initiative of CITU as a fighting platform. Later HMS also joined this platform. From then onwards CITU gave lead in forming broader platforms for joint struggles during all these years. NCC, Sponsoring Committee of Trade Unions and Platform of Mass Organisations are the results of the efforts in this direction of joint movement and struggles. In other worlds history of joint movement and struggles in our country is the history of CITU.

CITU never intended to keep its motto of building broader working class unity and the principle of

unity and struggle within the confines of national boundary but always desired to extend it to international arena. With this end in view CITU have already established relations with TUs of different countries of the world and in course of last few years there have been many exchanges of delegations between CITU and other international TUs. To further the cause CITU also joined the Second Indian Ocean Region Trade Union Conference in Australia.

To establish and strengthen co-operation amongst genuine democratic unions, to met the practical needs of working class in the face of economic restructuring and financial controls in various countries imposed by multinationals and external financial institutions, the First Indian Ocean Region Trade Union Conference was held in Perth in the month of May, 1991 at the initiative of the Trade and Labour Council of Western Australia, a state unit of ACTU, an affiliate of ICFTU. There was no delegate from India in that Conference as the organisers could not identify the genuine democratic unions operating in India.

The decisions of the First Conference was to carry out a profile of (1) countrywise economic, political and industrial systems including existing union structures in the region, (2) Existing international services, networks and international organisation in the region, (3) Investment trends and the trade linkages in the region and (4) The operations of the IMF/World bank and the financial and development institutions in the region. To consider outcomes of these decisions, it was decided to hold a Second Conference.

The Second Conference was attended by 82 delegates from Australia, Philippine, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Malaysia, South Africa, Zimbabwe, South Korea, Vietnam, Hong Kong and India. Delegate from Pakistan was scheduled to attend, but could not attend as he was arrested in Pakistan. Some of the participating trade unions are affiliated to ICFTU, some to WFTU and the rest are independent.

The Conference discussed at length on the following agenda:

a) Country report on the impact of economic re-

structuring on the Working class and the responses of the labour movement.

b) Country report on the women in the workforce and in the Trade Unions.

c) Culture & /Struggle.

d) Future trends in the global economy and in the global politics and the implications for trade union strategy.

e) Future strategic discussion on Building up of regional solidarity.

f) Revision and publication of prepared research on trade union developments on countries in the regions.

g) Adoption of Resolution.

From the country reports, it has been observed that as a result of opening up of the economy to multinationals and foreign capital without any barriers and restructuring of economy, all the countries in the region are facing varying forms of danger viz, economic stagnation, retrenchment and closer, de-industrialisation, high level of exploitation, high rate of unemployment and impoverishment, massive growth of labour migration, transfer of production from public to private sector, massive growth in foreign debt, threat to economic sovereignty and self-reliance etc. and national governments' so-called austerity programmes including was restraint under the dictates of World Bank, IMF and other financial institutions.

The political conditions in the region are undermining of the struggles for democracy and strengthening the military and authoritarian regimes which dominate some of the countries. These regimes with the sole purpose of suppressing emerging unions. These regimes with the sole purpose of suppressing emerging unions and the right of workers to form and join unions of their own choice, have established state controlled unions. Under the circumstances the conference felt the need to put stress on improvement of effectiveness of the organisations of the region through work more closely with the workers at the grass root level.

The Conference recommended to the National Trade Union centers an exchange programme of workers to be conducted by the participating organisations, to collect more informations on the strategies of the Multi-National Corporations and its impact on the working conditions and wages including the areas where women predominates and to co-ordinate solidarity actions appropriate to the circumstances of each country and development of strong independent unions in countries.

The conference also adopted a Social code of conduct mainly based on the ILO Convention and UN Charter on human rights. The adopted Code covered the issues like Freedom of access to information; Trade Union recognition; Basic organisation rights like the right to free elections organised by the union within the enterprise to determine the worker leadership of the union, the right to negotiate on grievance procedures, health and safety issues, cultural rights and activities, wages and general conditions, the right to allow trade unions to collect dues from workers wages, the right of access of trade union officials to all sections of the workplace, the right to time off for trade union meetings during working hours etc.

The code also asked the companies to remain independent of the state security systems, to conform to acceptable standards of environmental concern, to ensure the right for migrant workers, to abide by the principles of non-discrimination on the basis of sex, race, ethnicity, language, marital status, political beliefs and religion and give due consideration to the specific needs of these specific groups, to allow the right of free expression etc. It has also been decided that the network of organisations attending the Conference will continue to maintain contact.

In the face of the concerted onslaught led by the powerful international finance capital and their backers, coordination and solidarity between the trade union movements of different countries are imperative to resist the same. The second Indian Ocean Region Trade Union Conference is definitely a step forward towards that direction.

Though the status of the delegates participated in the Conference were also not uniform because in some cases, delegates were invited from a national trade union center, while in others from various trade union Organisations, even then the fact remains that the orientation of most of the delegates were towards left.

Despite different levels of ideological position of the delegates from various countries, deliberation in the Conference reflected from various countries, deliberation in the Conference reflected the common phenomenon of increasing assault on the rights and standard of living of the workers and common people in all the countries in the region as a consequence of pursuance of the economic restructuring policies leading to deregulation of labour market and industries by the respective Governments and also a general opinion against the capitalist system as such, although confusion prevails among many of them regarding the alternative.

Outside the Conference, we met with the delegates from Australia, South Africa, Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia and South Korea separately. We also discussed with the delegates from Vietnam and Sri Lanka.

We had a discussion with Com. Rob. Lambart of Australia about their ultimate objective. he said that to start with they have involved the trade unions in the Indian ocean REgion, but they want to extend it further with a definite objective to develop coordinated struggles against globalisation drive of imperialists and drive for restructuring in favour of market economy by the governments in various countries. In Australia they are fighting against that move.

Being asked he replied, they have no reservation in bringing trade union centres in other countries within and outside the region, who are fighting for the same cause.

The South EAst Asian countries are conducting their Trade Union activities under severe repression from the governments and the managements. Lots are being said about the tremendous industrial developments in those countries. But in reality in many of these countries, though with much less population, unemployment and impoverishment among the people are increasing. In none of these countries, basic industries have been set up. The industries in these countries are mostly dependent on the supply of components from the imperialist countries. To have the benefit of cheap labour, shifting of manufacturing activities from one country to other at the will of the MNCs is a common phenomenon in these countries. The situation is more worse in free trade zones, where the workers are practically denied any rights including the trade union rights.

From the deliberations as well as from bipartite talks we observed th presence of strong dominance of left politics in the trade union movement in Philip-pines, South Africa and to some extent in Malaysia and South Korea, and also among many of the Australian delegates including the leadership of TLC of W.A.

The third Indian ocean REgion Trade Union Conference was held in Perth, Western Australia from 18th to 15th November, 1994. 108 delegates were present in perth from 11 countries viz. india, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, South Africa, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam and Australia, was 108. Along with the industrial conference cultural conference was also held in the same premises.

The industrial conference concentrated on the

impact of globalisation of the world trade and investment on the workers in the region and observed that the current ideology and practice of free trade as developed through the IMF, the World Bank and now the WTO is seriously underminig the struggles for workers' rights, national economic sovereignty and indigenous industries.

To come to the decision, based on the country reports the conference discussed thoroughly various aspects of implications of globalisation on the workers like challenges in effectively organising workplace and techniques of organising unions, new technologies and new management techniques, occupational hazards and safety, vocational education, collective bargaining, workers' insurance, retirement benefit schemes, working conditions of women workers, involvement of women workers in T.U. activities, alternatives to globalisation etc. To arrive at consensus, the method of discussing the issues separately in groups involving all the delegates and then again discussion in the plenary was adopted.

The conference also discussed on the role of GATT, APEC, Social Clauses and the role of ICFTU and APRO in the region. As the economic and social condition, problems before the working class, stage of development of trade union organisation and struggles and the ideological position of the trade unions were not identical, sometimes the debate on those issues were very hard, particularly on the question of inclusion of social clause in WTO. Finally, the idea was dropped because of ur firm stand against inclusion and support of majority of Australian delegates. However, the conference ultimately could adopt unanimous resolution.

To build a strong region-wide struggle of the working class for protection of their rights in the face of organised attack the Conference unanimously adopted two resolutions.

Signatures of the workers will be collected nationally on a statement entitled "CHALLENGE TO POLITICAL LEADERS OF COUNTRIES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AND ASIAN REGIONS" and the same will be presented to the leaders around the region towards the end of 1995 asking them to make a declaration of their principled position in support of the basic trade union rights of workers.

In another resolution on "REGIONAL MAY DAY CAMPAIGN" the third conference recommended that unions through-out the region organise a campaign on MAYDAY 1996 to promote the right to work, the right to organise, the right to bargain collectively, the

*(Cont'd On Page 20)*

# Stop Amendement of the Indian Patents Act

□ P K Ganguly

The CITU is celebrating its 25th Anniversary at a time when the Indian working class with all its allies like the peasantry, students, youth and women are in the thick of militant struggles against the policy of so-called liberalisation pursued by the Government of India at the behest of the troika of IMF-World Bank-GATT(now WTO). The policy is nothing but transnationalisation of the Indian economy under the hegemony of the imperialist countries headed by the USA.

Of particular concern in this respect is the recently concluded GATT agreement signed by the Government of India. The three pronged attack launched through the Trade Related Investment Measures(TRIMS), Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) and General Agreement on Trade in Services(GATS) are interlinked and orchestrated to give absolute power to the transnationals to conduct the economic governance of the country in their favour.

It is necessary to recall here that the GATT was originally formed in 1948 to serve as an international forum for agreement on tariff relating to export and import amongst the member countries for the purpose of development of trade. But with the growing crisis in the capitalist world, there started a mad hunt for markets, and new areas other than simple trade were brought under the purview of GATT. The long drawn seven year battle in the Uruguay Round ultimately incorporated the Dunkel proposals to enter the areas of production—both material and intellectual, as well as the vast areas of natural resources.

The TRIPS, particularly, singularly constitute one of the most diabolical and worst forms of neo-colonial exploitation of the country by imperialism through their tentacles—the transnationals. They demanded that India has to amend its Intellectual Property Laws, the most vital being the Indian Patents Act, and join the Paris Convention on Patents. This will directly hit, apart from agriculture and other allied chemical industries, the Drugs and Pharmaceutical industry in the country.

The point to which we are repeatedly drawing attention of the Indian working class that the entire new economic policies are aimed at dragging India to the pre-independence days and undermine its sovereignty and freedom, is proved from their demand to get India surrender its Intellectual Property Rights.

The Paris Convention on Patents was held during the colonial period in 1883. The Convention actually turned Intellectual Property Rights to Industrial Property Rights. The objective behind protecting the Industrial Property Rights was to establish Product Patent Right out of Process Patent Right and not to allow any other country to produce the same product even through a different process.

One of the most nefarious malpractices indulged in by the drug multinationals to exploit the third world countries was only to patent a product in a third world country, but without producing it there, go on importing it from the parent country, and then sell it in the third world country at exorbitant prices—5 to 6 times more than that in the parent country. Thus while garnering huge profits at the expense of the poor people, and causing huge drainage of foreign exchange, they aim at grounding all plans of self-reliance and development of indigenous technology of the country, making it permanently dependent on the MNCs for life saving and essential drugs including raw materials and intermediates.

It should be recalled the Indian Patents Act, 1970 was enacted after independence after a long drawn debate and struggle against the pressure of MNC lobby. On the basis of the recommendations of the Tek Chand Committee (1948) and the Ayyanagar Committee (1957), the Indian Patents Act, although not a panacea in itself, did protect the Indian industries from aggression of the transnationals. Product patenting was not allowed in chemicals, drugs and pharmaceuticals, etc. Drugs included all medicines for internal or external use by human beings and animals; all substances intended to be used for or in the diagnosis, treatment, mitigation or prevention of disease in human beings or animals; all substances intended to be used for or in the maintenance of public health, or for prevention or control of any epidemic disease among human beings or animals; insecticides, germicides, fungicides, weedicides and all other substances intended to be used for the protection or preservation of plants; all chemicals which are ordinarily used as intermediates in the preparation or manufacture of any medicine or substances as above.

In Process Patenting also, the Indian Patents Act provided for compulsory licensing after the expiry

of three years from the date of granting the Patent. Thus the Government had empowered itself to revoke the Patent if it was found that the Patented product had not met the requirement of the public or was not available at reasonable price. Patentee was also not allowed to import at his own price. The amendment of the Indian Patents Act in pursuance of the GATT agreement would mean reversal of all the salient features of the Act. They demand that the Government must shed its authority to revoke a Patent on the ground of its non-working or high price. The working of a Patent must be deemed to have been made on import of the product.

Another audacious point is that the burden of proof of violation of Patents would lie on the accused, which is contrary to the general law that the prosecution has to prove the guilt, and not the defendant. Thus in this case, the accused—an Indian industry will be put on the dock in a foreign country and has to pay the penalty. The entire gamut means that there will be no rule of law, but only the rule of jungles will prevail, i.e. the survival of the fittest under international market economy.

While protectionism by the rich North has been the bane of marginalisation of the poor South, the GATT agreement will further push the third world countries into economic disaster and subversion of their national sovereignties in the name of free trade.

It is thus not difficult to visualise the results of the amendment of the Indian Patents Act.

No new products can be introduced by the Indian sector for 20 years after Product patenting. This virtually means that the country's research activities both in product and process research for new drugs, chemical, pesticides, etc will have to be stopped. So self-reliance and the process of indigenisation will have to be buried, as the country will become entirely dependent on imports of not only patented raw materials, but also on patented finished formulations. The inevitable result will be closure of many national industries, and national laboratories and research institutions. Large scale joblessness will follow.

Prices of drugs and medicines will soar unimaginably, beyond the reach of common people, as there will be no price control. India will be back to the pre-Patent Act days, when the prices of medicines in India were among the highest in the world.

As there will be no control by the Government whatsoever, the Indian market will be flooded by high-priced spurious, banned and irrational formulations instead of life saving and essential drugs. These

drugs, moreover, will have no relation with the disease pattern in the country. The health care programme in the country will be severely undermined.

Above all, export activities of Indian medicines will receive a serious jolt. With the inevitable rise in imports, India's balance of payment position will be further worsened.

Amendment of the Indian Patents Act will therefore sound the death knell for the Indian Drugs and Pharmaceutical Industry. The new Drug Policy came as a precursor to the amendment of the Patent Act.

This has to be fought with broad united front, mobilising all trade unions, industrial federations, mass organisations and democratic and patriotic forces. The Federation of Medical and Sales Representatives Associations of India (FMRAI) has called for a countrywide strike action on June 20 against the amendment of the Patents Act. The National Platform of Mass Organisations has supported the strike. The CITU extends full and active support to the struggle to give it the shape of countrywide mass actions, which only can force the Government to withdraw the amendment. □

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*(From Page 18)*

right to strike, the right to a safe workplace, the right to education and health-care and the right to freedom of expression. The campaign will start from Mayday 1995.

Another document entitled 'PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION IN THE INDIAN OCEAN REGIONAL INITIATIVE' was placed for discussion and adoption. But because of improper drafting, confusing contents and want of sufficient time, the delegates unanimously decided to leave the issue for discussion and finalisation by the newly formed coordinating committee after the conference.

The conference also decided to hold the 4th Indian ocean REGION Trade Union Conference in November 1996 in INDIA. The conference also formed a coordinating committee. The committee will first meet sometimes in September 1995 at Calcutta.

The performance of the CITU delegates in the conference were very much appreciated by the participating countries. In fact we played a big role in decision making. Delegates from Philippines, Malaysia, South Africa and a majority delegate of Australia approached us to take more responsibility of coordination. □

# ISSUES BEFORE TRADE UNION UNITY

□ M K Pandhe

## 1. INTRODUCTORY.

1.1 The trade union movement in India is at the cross roads today. Various challenges are posed before the movement which have far reaching consequences that would determine the future of our TU movement. It is imperative to review the situation in depth so that proper steps are taken to ensure a better future for the trade union movement in India.

1.2 The continued disunity in the TU movement has now come home to roost. The data given by the Registrar of Trade Unions clearly indicate that majority of local trade unions in the country are outside the pale of the central trade union organisations. The statement may be exaggerated in view of the unscientific method of keeping records by the Registrar of TUs offices, but it does indicate that a sizeable chunk of local trade unions prefer to remain independent of any national affiliation.

1.3 Though over a dozen of trade union centres claiming the status of national level central trade union organisations, according to recent verification figures show that only 5 qualify to be having a verified membership of above 5 lakhs to claim the status of the central trade union organisations. Despite faults in the procedure of verification the fact remains that INTUC, CITU, AITUC, HMS and BMS have a sizeable membership at the national level. Yet periodically new centres are being formed claiming the national status. The fragmentation of the trade union movement in the country is adversely affecting the bargaining strength of the working class.

1.4 The importance of the trade union movement in the country is being ignored by the Government of India on several occasions. In several consultative committees at the national level the representatives of the trade unions do not find a place. The recent example is the Constitution of the National Committee on World Development Summit to be held in March 1995 at Copenhagen (Denmark) in which Central TU Organisations have not been given nominations but the "voluntary organisations" have been included in the committee. Similarly in the National Authority on Elimination of Child Labour and Trade Unions have been taken. There are several such committees where trade unions have not been represented and the voice of the working class is not effec-

tively heard. Even in certain cases the trade union leaders are represented on some Boards and Committees the Government of India decides the nomination without consulting the trade unions. This pick and choose policy is allowed to be continued due to different voices spoken within the trade union movement.

1.5 In the Indian Labour Conference and other Tripartite Committees, generally the representatives of the employers speak with one voice, but this does not always happen in case of the trade unions. Though from time to time, the representatives of the trade unions meet prior to the tripartite meetings and take a common stand, in several cases the trade unions differ with each other which reduces their capacity to achieve results in their favour.

1.6 The Sponsoring Committee of Indian Trade Unions has brought together on a common platform seven Central Trade Unions and over 40 industrywise federations. This has no doubt reduced the division in the trade union movement and prepared the ground for nationwide joint actions on common issues facing the working class. However, the INTUC and BMS are still out of this united movement while the Government and the employers are in a position to utilise this division to confuse the working class of India. This puts the united trade union movement to some disadvantage, despite several other advantages it is in a position to enjoy due to unity of the bulk of the trade union movement in India.

## 2. THE PRESENT WORLD SCENARIO

2.1 In the advanced capitalist countries the trade union movement is clearly showing a sign of decline. According to OECD report the trade union membership in all the European countries except the Scandinavian countries has dropped considerably in the last couple of years. The Trade Union Congress, UK has admitted decline of one million membership in the recent past. The same situation is reported in Japan. In USA, the most advanced capitalist country in the world, the rate of unionisation is less than 14 per cent despite having one single trade union centre AFL-CIO. The rate of unionisation was reported to be about 30 per cent a decade ago. The drop of membership is ascribed to the decline in workforce

due to recession and structural adjustment programmes and privatisation leading to closures. One of the reasons for the reduction in membership is considered to be the failure of the unions to protect the workers from job reduction offensive of the employers bringing down the credibility of the trade union movement.

2.2 The absence of the widespread international solidarity action in defence of the working class is also responsible for the decline in the world TU membership and movement. The challenge posed by the World Bank and the IMF is essentially international in character. Yet the trade union action on a worldwide scale is not powerful enough to meet the challenge of the situation and protect the interests of the working class. Despite nationwide resistance in some third world countries, the overall international struggle is not clearly visible with the result that the defence of working class interest becomes weak.

2.3 The worldwide competition among the leading capitalist countries is becoming more and more fierce with the result that there is an intense drive for reduction in the cost of production to increase the profitability as well for getting a large share in the world market. Therefore there is a systematic effort to reduce jobs and curtail existing benefits available to the workers. This has put the TU movement on the defensive and various unfavourable agreements have been signed by some of the trade unions which has a demoralising effect on the working class. Of course in some countries the resistance is also gradually growing and working class have succeeded in halting the offensive of the capitalist class. However, many of these struggles are spontaneous in character and conscious efforts from the side of trade union leadership is lacking which is affecting the international movement of the working class.

2.4 The controversy in the world T.U. movement over the so-called social clause in the world trade agreement has posed some problems in the united movement of the world working class. The trade unions in some advanced capitalist countries support the proposal which would impose sanctions against the third world countries due to conditions created by the advanced capitalist countries themselves. The trade unions in the third world countries have to fight a stiff battle to resist the attack in the name of adopting the so called social clause in the world trade agreement. While fighting for improving the working and living conditions of the workers in the third world countries the trade union movement will have to fight

with all their might the machinations to link the world trade with preconditions on the third world countries.

2.5 The advanced capitalist countries are pressing for this social clause not due to their concern for the working class of the third world countries but due to their protectionist desire to stop the flow of goods from the third world countries to the advanced capitalist countries. This highlights the need for better co-operation among the trade unions in the third world countries. India, being one of the leading third world countries has to play an important role in mobilising the T.U. movement in the third world countries against the depredations of the advanced capitalist countries. This underlines the need for unity within the trade union movement in India which will enable us to play an effective role in the new situation. The forthcoming world development summit being held from 6-12 March at Copenhagen will be an important rallying point for which our T.U. movement must equip itself to play a crucial role in the meet.

### **3. NEW CHALLENGES TO INDIAN T.U. MOVEMENT**

3.1 The new economic policies pursued by the Government of India has posed several new challenges to the T.U. movement in the country. The deregulation of the economy has nullified all the planning existed in the country in a limited form. The unrestricted entry to multinational corporations is seriously affecting our independent economic development. The Exit Policy will further open the floodgates of closures of large undertakings throwing out lakhs of workers out of jobs. The public sector is under serious threat of liquidation with privatisation and disinvestment going on in full swing. The stoppage of subsidy to several units have made them unviable and their reference to BIFR has made their position extremely vulnerable. The proposed labour laws seek to restrict T.U. and democratic rights of workers and their right to strike. The Government of India is making a show of consultation with trade unions but none of the decisions are being implemented in their proper spirit.

3.2 This unprecedented offensive against the working class of our country needs to be counteracted effectively. Fortunately, in several industries all trade unions are coming together to resist the offensive and protect the workers legitimate interests. The magnificent unity build to oppose privatisation of IISCO, the remarkable all in unity achieved in the cotton textile industry against closure of units in

public and private sector and for reopening of the closed units, the all-in unity built in FACT to fight against Government negligence towards the unit, the unity achieved in coal industry against reduction of import duty on coal, against privatisation and dilatory tactics of the management in settling the long pending wage revision are some of the shining example of trade union unity.

3.3 Several strike actions organised by the Sponsoring Committee of Indian Trade Unions and National Platform of Mass Organisations have mobilised millions of workers in direct action against these policies and they have successfully slowed down the process of so called reforms in the country. The privatisation of IISCO could be prevented. The Govt had to arrive at an unanimous agreement with the trade unions in the Special Tripartite Committee to revive the NTC mills by a package of measures. FACT could be saved. Similarly in Scooters India, due to positive co-operation of all the central trade unions, it was possible to stall the attempt to hand-over the unit to the private sector. In several other industrial units trade unions are coming together to protect the interest of the workers. These are no doubt important aspects of the contemporary developments and generate a ray of hope in the minds of workers.

3.4 However, whatever is being done is not enough. We have to remain vigilant to mobilise more and more workers to thwart the attacks on the jobs and working conditions. We cannot ignore the fact that more than 73,000 workers had to leave their jobs in public sector under so called Voluntary Retirement Scheme by accepting compensation from the National Renewal Fund. We have not been able to prevent some of the adverse decisions of the BIFR. There is urgent need to overcome these weaknesses to thwart the Government's attempt to hit the interests of the workers and the common people in the country.

3.5 The new challenges the T.U. movement is facing to-day cannot be effectively met without further consolidation of the movement. Unity built on issue to issue is not enough to meet the challenge. It must be consolidated in an organised form so that our response to the challenges would be more effective. There is no doubt that there are different perceptions between trade unions of various affiliations. Yet the need for coming together is extremely of paramount importance which alone can justify our existence as champions of the working class.

3.6 If the trade union movement rises to the

occassion to-day and shows maturity to achieve organisational consolidation to resist the present onslaughts, the working class and our trade unions will not face the situation faced by the Western T.U. movement. Our movement would continue to grow faster in the forthcoming period if our struggles are better organised and more widespread.

3.7 It is not proposed to discuss in detail the nature of these attacks. However, the challenge of the present situation can be met if all the trade union centres chalk out common approach in organisational consolidation of the trade union movement.

#### **4. WHAT HINDERS TRADE UNION UNITY ?**

4.1 All central trade unions talk about unity and one central trade union organisation to strengthen the working class movement. But still complete organisational unity is a far cry. While paying general lip sympathy to the concept of one national trade union centre we do not discuss the issues that hinder the merger of central T.U. organisations. AITUC and HMS have been discussing the merger of two organisations but admittedly there are some difficulties coming in the way despite 3 years of sincere efforts.

4.2 Any organisational unity without taking into accounts the practical problems may not be a lasting one and cracks in such unity may crop up soon after such merger. Therefore complete understanding on the vexed questions obstructing the organisational unity should be properly thrashed through friendly discussions so that common understanding is evolved on those issues. We are therefore making an effort to identify some of the issues that requires to be tackled before achieving complete organisational unity. An unprincipled or opportunistic merger may appear easy to achieve but it will remain a temporary unity and may not help the working class in the long run. The following issues need to be discussed within the trade union movement dispassionately so that we can clear the desk for further organisational consolidation in the trade union movement.

##### **4.2.1 DEMOCRATIC FUNCTIONING OF TRADE UNIONS**

Many of trade unions in the country do not function democratically. Some of them are pocket unions of some individual leaders. This would be a great stumbling block in merger of local unions. Hence, democratic functioning of trade unions is an essential pre-requisite of unification in the trade unions. How to achieve this, needs evolving common

approach within the trade union movement. Since merger of central trade unions without merger of local unions would be meaningless, this aspect needs proper emphasis if we are serious about unification.

#### **4.2.2. LOYALTY OF TRADE UNIONS TO THE WORKING CLASS:**

Many trade unions are secretly in league with the management and do not protect the interest of the working class. These unions do not participate in trade union struggles and immensely harm the cause of the working class. They sign settlements unfavourable to the workers and do not consult the workers on issues facing the working class. The united movement of the working class has to find out ways and means of ensuring loyalty of trade unions towards the workers.

#### **4.2.3 THE PROBLEM OF ANTI SOCIAL ELEMENTS**

The prevalence of anti-social elements in the trade union movement is a phenomenon which cannot be ignored to-day. Several mafias operating in the coal mining belt are trade union leaders and these mafias are spreading in other industries also. The ghastly murder of V.G. Gopal, Vice president of INTUC is openly being considered as an insider's job. The recent development in RMMS, Bombay clearly indicate the role of anti-social elements to suit the interests of a textile tycoon. How to weed out such elements from the trade union movement will be an important question, which requires working out common understanding within the trade union movement for resolution.

A. Multiplicity of trade unions have reached such a stage that in some cases we find that in a factory or establishment more than one union operate owing allegiance to the same national centre. Sometimes these factions are based on caste considerations or on loyalty to a particular individual leader. This has vitiated atmosphere in the country making a mockery of the trade union movement itself.

#### **4.2.4 COMBATING ERRONEOUS TENDENCIES IN THE T.U. MOVEMENT:**

There are certain erroneous tendencies emerging within the trade unions which need to be combated jointly by the united movement of the working class. The prevalent corruption within the trade union movement, corruption and bureaucratism are eating away the vitals of the movement. These tendencies

will not allow proper unification of the movement in the country.

The CITU has been making sincere efforts to correct its organisational deficiencies. However, there is need for an all India debate on the organisational problems with a view to evolving a common approach to these problems.

#### **4.2.5. EVOLVING COMMON POLITICAL APPROACH:**

An attempt is being made in the country to build a non-political trade union movement. If the working class does not participate in the political struggle, then the capitalist class will have its supremacy in deciding all issues relating to political policies facing the country. The trade union movement therefore cannot be non-political movement. However, when all the political forces come together, then the policy acceptable to all will become the political policy of the trade union movement. The Indian Trade Unions Act since 1926 has provided for political funds by the trade unions which also accept the need for political action by the trade unions.

We cannot therefore accept unification of trade union movement on the understanding of building non-political trade union movement. However, when several political trends work together, it may become possible to evolve common political approach by the trade union movement and hence the trade unions cannot become adjuncts of a political party.

#### **5. THE CONCEPT OF THE CONFEDERATION:**

5.1 B.T. Ranadive, founder President of the CITU, in his address in the Madras session of CITU in 1979 placed before the trade union movement the proposal for the formation of a Confederation of Trade Unions which would strengthen the process of organisational consolidation of the trade union movement. According to him, the Confederation will serve the needs of the situation due to the following factors.

5.1.1. The Confederation of Trade Unions is a voluntary coming together by the Central Trade Unions as well as the national federations who are not affiliated to any central trade union organisation. The National Federations which are affiliated to the Central Trade Unions ipso facto become constituents of the confederation.

5.1.2. The Confederation will evolve common understanding among the constituents on all the issues facing the working class. Therefore the Con-

federation will not take decisions by majority and minority but by unanimity. Whatever is commonly agreed by all will be the policy of the Confederation. On issues where there is no understanding, attempts would be continued to make through discussion and dialogue to arrive at a common approach.

5.1.3 Since the Confederation permits continuation of the individual organisations, the organisations joining the Confederation need not give up its stand unless it is convinced through dialogue. But it gives us a broad spectrum of common approach which forms the basis of joint movement and activity of the united T.U. movement in an organisational structure in the form of Confederation.

5.1.4 The Confederation will immensely increase the collective bargaining strength of the trade union movement since the policy of the Confederation becomes the policy of the entire T.U. movement. Its capacity to launch struggles jointly increases immensely which will further lead to joining of the independent and unaffiliated unions under the umbrella of the Confederation.

5.2 In subsequent meetings B.T. Ranadive reiterated his proposals and appealed to all the Central Trade Union organisations to come forward with such an organisational consolidation which would inspire the working class as a whole. There is a tremendous urge for organisational unity among the rank and file workers of all the unions and the Confederation will meet the aspirations of the working class of all affiliations.

5.3 Periodic meetings of the Confederation will be able to resolve the issues that hinder the T.U. unity to-day and in that respect the Confederation will become an instrument for further consolidation and organisational unity of the trade union movement. In this sense the Confederation is only a transitional phase of the united movement of the working class and its ultimate objective should be to tackle effectively all issues that come in the way of formation of one union in one industry and one national trade union centre in the country. The details of the modalities should be discussed jointly by all and ways and means should be found for further consolidation as and when the situation demands.

5.4 Soon after Ranadive's proposal, A.B. Bardhan in his paper in a Seminar held in Bombay on the occasion of birth centenary of N.M. Joshi suggested various proposals for unification of the trade union movement. One of the steps he proposed was as follows: "The third step which can be taken in the

coming days and which is no longer a distant perspective is to move for setting up a Confederation of as many Central Trade Union Organisations and industrial federations as are willing to come together. The time is ripe for it. Such a step has already been proposed. The point is to carefully prepare the ground for it. Mutual confidence in organisational unity is being achieved through a series of joint mass actions and propagation of commonly accepted views. If the leadership listens to the voice of the masses and pays need to their interests, if it learns to rise above its petty and narrow interests which are in any case rarely served in conditions of disunity, then this is not very difficult. The last vestiges of reservation can be overcome, and the seemingly impassable hurdles can be crossed". (Emphasis added) (National Seminar on N.M. Joshi and the Trade Union Movement, Bombay, 10-12 April, 1980.)

5.5 I am unable to avoid the temptation of quoting this paragraph since I was present in the seminar and I could see the positive impact it created among all the participants in the seminar.

5.6 Without any pre-conceived notions in our mind we should consider all alternatives that can be attempted in the direction of advancing unity in a quantitative form. We have been discussing unity for several years but we are unable to consolidate it in an organised form. We have now reached a stage when we cannot delay it further. Therefore some specific moves must be made to concretise our united moves. Confederation concept gives us a forum to sort out all the issues that comes in the way of organisational consolidation of our unity.

## 6. FROM CONFEDERATION TO MERGER OF ORGANISATIONS

6.1 A question may be asked how the Confederation can be a stepping stone towards organisational unification of the trade union movement in India. The following proposals can be taken by the Confederation to strengthen such a proposition.

6.2 Evolving common understanding on issues facing the TU movement in India will lead to creation of mutual confidence among various trade unions. This will have great impact on the fraternal relations between various organisations. Already it has become a practice to invite Central Trade Unions to each other's conferences. We can even think of calling joint meetings of national level bodies of Central TUs with a view to consider in depth the TU problems so that unified understanding can be evolved

amongst all the constituents. The manner in which common understanding is emerging on various issues there should be no reason why such exercise should not lead to fruitful results. Though there is no need to oversimplify the task, there is no reason for taking a pessimist view in the matter.

6.3 The Confederation can take positive measures to unify the industrywise Federations in existence in several industries. Already in many industries all have combined to fight on pressing issues faced in the particular industry. It may be possible through proper dialogue to merge the industrywise federations wherever possible so that the process of unification can be started. This is an area where imminent action can lead to positive results. Of course we have taken due precaution to ensure that the unified federations observe norms of democratic functions, they respect the minority opinion within the organisation, minority also respect the majority verdict and the united organisation will be true to the interests of the working class employed in the industry. If we achieve success in this exercise the process of unification will surely get momentum bringing together all sections of the working class on a common platform.

6.4 The Confederation also can initiate the merger of local unions in a phased manner. Though local rivalries and individuals style of functioning of some leaders may create some problems but through conscious efforts at the national level steps can be taken to unify the local unions. Already workers are feeling unhappy about the multiplicity of trade unions and a tremendous urge for unity prevails among the workers. The task of ensuring democratic functioning of the united unions and giving more initiative at the hands of rank and file members of the union will strengthen the process of this unification. In some public sector units already there is only one union and workers of all affiliations are working in it, elections are held regularly and democratically. Such unions are functioning well and enjoy the confidence of the workers.

6.5 The organisational unity at the local level and industrial level will set the pace for formation of single national trade union centre in the country. It may be stated that the merger of Central Trade Unions can take place in the beginning and followed by efforts to unify the other levels. This is being talked in several places but there has been no progress on this account. Perhaps instead of helping the process

of real unification it may create new problems and unity of the working class may be undermined. Therefore the concept of "unify from below" is more practicable and I strongly feel that if the attempts can be made in that direction it would strengthen the process of unity in the country.

6.6 Political differences within the trade union movement will not and should not come in the process of trade union unity. Workers may have their own political opinions they should be free to join any political party of their choice. Yet for common issues facing the working class we must learn to work together those who do not agree with us politically. There is a need to create awareness among the general workers, TU activists as well as leadership of trade unions. Those who treat trade unions as adjuncts of political parties will have to give up the concept. This will require big nationwide campaign to reorientate basic thinking about the character of the trade union movement. We have to emphasis that trade unions are independent mass organisations which give due importance to the opinion expressed by the general body of the workers. This idea militates against imposing decisions from above on the TU movement. This approach will put an end to whatever stagnation that has crept in the TU movement today. Millions of more workers will be motivated to join the movement with confidence that united TU movement will give them better results.

6.7 Let the TU leadership come together on a common platform and put before the country their common understanding for strengthening the united movement of the working class and their positive proposals for organisational consolidation of their unity. This will immensely increase the capacity of the unified TU Movement to repulse the attacks of the capitalist class and take positive measures to improve the national well being of the teeming millions in India. It will open new vista for deeper penetration of the TU movement in the unorganised strata, working women and the child labour which are hitherto not adequately attended to by the TU movement. Such an unity will enable the working class to take more effective role in national situation to protect the interest of the working class and the country. Such an unified movement will definitely act as a bulwark against all forms of injustice and exploitation and be a powerful instrument for a social change in our country. So the Confederation should be the first step to start the process of such unity. □

# PROSPECT OF INDUSTRIALISATION OF ASSAM AND NEW ECONOMIC POLICY

□ AMAL GHOSH DASTIDAR

China is the first country to start production of tea as a drink and a tradable commodity. The foreign trade of tea was in the hands of British Traders till the first four decades of the Nineteenth Century. In the beginning of the nineteenth century as the differences cropped up between the British traders and the Chinese Tea producers, the Britishers went out in search of an alternative. The intrepid Britishers discovered improved variety of tea plants in the dense forest of North and North-east Assam by 1823. The first tea garden was founded in 1836 and that tea was exported to England in 1839 A.D. Before that the Britishers found coal and mineral Oil in 1825 beneath the earth of Assam. According to several experts, underneath Assam's earth lies a big reservoir of myriad mineral goods. Besides mineral wealth, Assam is also having vast forest and water resources. Like its exquisite natural beauty Assam's land is also fertile. Yet in spite of being endowed with such vast resources Assam is one of the three poorest states of India. Even today in five districts of the state not a single industrial unit came up other than the tea gardens. Six districts are having one middle-sized industrial unit each. Of the total investments in public sector made by the Central Government Assam's share is only 0.5%. Only fifteen public sector units came up with central aid. 47 industrial units were built up with the capital supplied by the State Govt., the overwhelming majority of which have, in the meantime gone sick due to the New Economic Policy of the Central Govt. Consequently some of these will be closed down in the near future or handed over to the private Sector at throwaway prices. Emboldened by the policies pursued by the Govt., the private owners have also closed down or are closing down some industries. As a result the existing workers and employees are becoming jobless. Even the financial institutions are losing crores and crores of rupees. The number of unemployed in Assam is fifteen lakhs as per Govt.'s version. But the figure has crossed 25 lakhs according to nongovt. sources. Even according to the Vot. the number of people in Assam living below the poverty line is 49% of the total population. By one estimate, till 1991 eleven thousand registered

industrial units of industrially backward Assam, were sick. Between 1990 and 1993 of the 6075 Million cubic metre natural gas reduced in the state only 3725.00 million cubic metre could be utilised. Everyday natural gas worth Rs.45 lakhs at least are being flared away. Every year the devastating flood denudes the peasantry as nothing has been done to tame and regulate the rivers and utilise them in a scientific manner. Despite the propaganda blitz about New Economic policy and the Industrial Policy carried on since 1991 the poverty in Assam has not decreased an iota. On the contrary, the tea industry which was crisis free in real terms for the last one century and a half is today heading towards a big crisis due to the signing of the GATT treaty. According to the news published in the STATESMAN dtd 9th Sept. 1994 the excessive use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers in Indian Tea garden has its own baneful effects on the produced Tea. The German experts, it is told an examining Indian tea, have found such dangerous chemical substances which are harmful to human health. As such Germany would not import the fifty lakhs kg of Tea that they were to import as per agreement. In the last year itself, it is reported, tea exported to many countries were returned to several Tea gardens of the state for the same reason. Yet the Govt of India and a section of tea garden owners continue to propagate even now that the tea exports of Assam will increase due to the GATT treaty. The news item published in the North East Times on 27 March informed us that recently a German team of experts came on a secret tour of tea garden of Assam, the main objective which was to make a field investigation on whether the tea was being produced according to their conditionalities.

But the economic condition of Assam should not have been such in the contest of her vast natural resources. Different oil fields of the state can produce an approximate 90 lakhs tonne of crude oil. Of this five lakhs tonnes are being refined at Digboi Refinery, 8 lakhs 50 thousands tonnes at Guwahati refinery and about 12 lakhs tonnes at Bongaigaon refinery. Over and above Barauni refinery also refines another 30 lakhs tonnes of crude oil.

Clearly on the basis of the remaining crude oil another big petrochemical complex can be built up. Similarly on the basis of unutilized natural gas, a modern Gas cracker project can be built up. Though during the rule of the Janta Govt. at the centre, these two projects were approved, the Cong (I) Govt owing to its new policies could not register any advance in materialising the projects. yet these projects, if implemented would have created different varieties of modern and ancillary industries and 20 textile industrial units could have been built up. The sulphur contents of Assam's Coal is high but ash content is comparatively less. As innumerable coal based related industries can be built up by using modern technological knowhow so also sulphur can be separated by chemical process and utilised elsewhere. In this process improved variety of coal can also be made available.

The reservoir of the piled up lime stone in the state can be utilised to build up at least ten big and small cement factories. The demand of improved quality of plywood and hardboard in indigenous and foreign markets are increasing. The timber necessary for this are available in the forests of Assam, planned utilisation of the available timber and the perspective of creating newer forestry, the future of which industry is very promising. presently despite closure of some factories due to faulty policy of the Govt., this industry provides employment to 20/25 thousand people. There are many a plant, leaves and herbs available in the vast forest areas of Assam which can be utilised to build up medicinal industry in the state.

The prerequisite for building up any modern industry is the adequate and regular supply of power. According to survey made by one expert committee the unending water resources provided by Brahmaputra, barak and their tributaries in Assam can be utilised to generate hydel power in a big way. Taken together with the thermal power the magnitude of such power generation will be about 34920 MW. This, according to them can meet the requirements of entire eastern India and UP also. Yet in contrast the present Govt. has been failing to provide 5 hundred MW of power that the state currently needs. if the rivers are tamed, not only the power generation can be improved but also floods can be controlled. The production of foodgrains can be doubled with the supply of irrigated water and several kinds of juicy fruits can be cultivated which in turn can give rise to several fruit processing industries. The Jute produc-

tion also can excel and a good number of jute Industries can come up. The exquisite scenic beauty of Assam can attract innumerable tourists of our country and abroad. This can help building up Hotel industry. But for all these what is required is adequate capital, a communication and transport system suited to all season, skilled working class, political stability and above all political will and firm policies of the gov't.

All scientific modern industry are capital intensive. Hundreds of tea gardens and rural handicraft industries of the state are only labour intensive. Naturally the question arises; how the huge capital that is required for improving the shattered and backward communication system of Assam, inducting high tech and for providing adequate power supply would be mobilised? The central Govt. is refusing to make any fresh investment of capital and is withdrawing invested capital. The state Govt. is also unable to provide necessary capital. There is also no such big capitalist in the state. Therefore, public opinion should be created and the pressure of the united movement should be mounted to compel the central and state Government to invest capital. Tea garden owners should be forced to invest a part of their acquired profit in the state. Till this is made possible, the private capitalists of our country and abroad and even the multinationals should be invited to invest under certain conditionalities. In framing the conditionalities one should keep in mind that the world capitalism is in midst of severe crisis. Both national and foreign capitals will be interested to explore natural resources of Assam as well as cheap labour of the state to overcome their crisis even for a temporary period. This phenomenon can be utilised to our advantage also protecting the interest of working class and building up industries under Joint sector for a limited period. Otherwise, despite tremendous possibilities modern industrialisation would be an impossibility. it would not be possible then to resist terrorist and secessionist activities that thrives on despair and deprivation. The poverty of the people can not be eliminated and neither the employment problem can be solved.

Every patriotic and right thinking individual of Assam must deeply ponder over the matter. At the same time to defeat the New Economic Policies of the gov't, and for modern industrialisation of the state it is necessary to build up powerful united movement. Working Class must play its due role in building up mighty united and democratic movement in alliance with peasantry middle class, students and youths.

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# ILO IN RETROSPECT

□ SWADESH DEV ROYE

International Labour Organisation (ILO) came into existence on 11th April, 1919 in Paris under the Treaty of Versailles together with the League of Nations.

On 10th May, 1944 the 26th International Labour Conference at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania adopted a declaration reaffirming the major objectives of the organisation and strongly underlining the universal dimension of the struggle for social justice. The Declaration of Philadelphia is termed as the first universal charter of fundamental human rights to have been adopted by an international organisation.

The Declaration of Philadelphia constitutes an Annex to the Constitution of ILO and the very first article of the Constitution states that the ILO has been established to promote the objectives set forth in the Declaration. The fundamental principles proclaimed in the Declaration are as follows :-

“\* labour is not a commodity;  
\* freedom of expression and of association are essential to sustained progress;  
\* poverty anywhere constitutes a danger to prosperity everywhere; and \* all human beings, irrespective of race, creed or sex, have the right to pursue both their material well-being and their spiritual development in conditions of freedom and dignity, of economic security and equal opportunity.”

Thus ILO celebrated last year the 75th anniversary of its foundation and 50th anniversary of the Philadelphia declaration. As per resolution of the 27th session of ILO held at Paris on 3rd November, 1945 ILO entered into an agreement with United Nations whereby the latter has recognized the former as a specialised agency responsible for taking such action as may be appropriate under its basic instrument for the accomplishment of the purposes.

## THE INFLUENCING FACTORS

Right from the period preceding the birth of ILO and the subsequent decades has witnessed important historical events like the two world wars, liberation of many countries from colonial rule, the emergence and set-back of socialist system in USSR and East European countries, the crisis in the capitalist economy erupted from time to time and finally the

ongoing unipolar world polity with the far cry for globalisation of World Economy and the menace of Structural Adjustment Programme imposed on the under developed and developing economies. An in-depth study would reveal that the formation and functioning of the ILO has greatly been influenced by these events.

It may be oversimplification to say that emergence of Socialist regimes contributed the birth of ILO. But the Socialist revolution in Russia in 1917 preceded by the rising tide of working class movements throughout Europe and increasing assertion of the working class as one of the vital force of social development had its own contribution in preparing the background for the formation of the international tripartite body. It is noteworthy that the anniversary issue of the magazine of ILO 'World of Work' in the chronological notes has mentioned inter-alia about the foundation of the first and second Internationals, publication of Marx's Das Kapital, the Haymarket incident, many struggles of the working class, the Zurich, Brussels, Paris and Bern conferences of workers' representatives.

In conformity with the aims and objectives of the capitalist class behind the formation of the international tripartite body in the background of growing struggles of the working class and also emergence of alternative socio-economic system, the forces of capital recognised the necessity to give capitalism a human face with their intention to regulate the rising antagonism of labour and capital.

This position can be testified from the fact that the couple of decades succeeding its birth, ILO has adopted more than three hundred Conventions and Recommendations which have at least formulated appreciable degree of international labour standard. Thus it may not be out of way to say that despite limitations ILO has responded to the various aspects to labour-capital conflicts which in turn have provided with powerful instruments to the working class to fight to protect its rights and attain better living standard.

## ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The organisation of ILO as regulated under article 2 of its Constitution is composed of a General Conference of representatives of the Member States,

a Governing Body and the International Labour Office controlled by the Governing Body. The Member States are entitled to send four representatives to the General Conference of whom two shall be Government-delegates and one each representing the employees and employers. However, each delegate may be accompanied by advisers who shall not exceed two in number for each item on the agenda of the meeting. When questions of woman are to be considered by the conference, at least one woman adviser should be sent. The Governing Body consists of fifty-six persons out of which twenty-eight representing governments and fourteen each from employees and employers.

Starting with 42 member states, today ILO has 170 member states. But it may be mentioned that bulk of the membership has come between 1944 and 1994 and upto 1944 the number was below 50 member states. This means that ILO could attract maximum members after the second world war only. More precisely between 1944 and 1960 the membership went up from 49 to 96.

### **THE CONVENTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

During its 75 years of existence the ILO has adopted 173 CONVENTIONS and 181 RECOMMENDATIONS. The adoption of standards is regulated by article 19 of the Constitution of ILO.

After accepting an item on any issue on the agenda by the conference, it will rest with the conference to determine whether it should be adopted as an international Convention or a Recommendation. In either case a majority of two-thirds of the votes cast by the delegates is necessary for adoption of convention or Recommendation.

Obligations of member states in respect of conventions and Recommendations are regulated under article 19 (5) and 19 (6) of the Constitution respectively. While there is not much of difference in this regard, the basic difference is that the conventions are communicated to all members for ratification while the Recommendations are Communicated to all members for their consideration.

The Conventions so far adopted broadly pertain to freedom of association, employment and training, conditions of work, Social Security. The Conventions on Freedom of Association, Abolition of Forced Labour, Non-discrimination, Equal Remuneration, Employment Policy, Social Security, Migrant Workers, Labour Inspection and Tripartite Consultation have been termed by Mr. Valticos as "generally considered to be the major ILO Conven-

tions".

In standard setting activities the ILO was very fast in its early years and slowed down gradually. Within first two years of its establishment as many as sixteen Conventions were adopted. Thereafter the process started slowing down continuously saving some recovery during 1925 and 1930s. From the record it is seen that more than 50 per cent of the conventions were adopted within 20 years of its existence and less 50 per cent conventions were adopted during next 55 years.

Thus from the consideration of importance of issues covered and number of conventions adopted by ILO, the period between 1919 and 1960 has been termed as "Golden Age of Standards."

### **ABYSMALLY BLEAK RECORD OF RATIFICATION**

According to the figures of adopted conventions and number of member states, the number of ratifications should have been  $(173 \times 170) = 29,410$ . But so far there has been only about 6000 ratifications which constitute only 20% of the total. In an average per member there has been 35 ratifications out of 173 conventions.

The ILO conventions are adopted by its conference, the half of whose participants are from the Governments of respective member countries and the other half is equally distributed to the employees' and employers' organisations of the member countries. For adoption of conventions two-third favorable votes are required from the "tripartite" body. This means that it is the Government and employers' delegates who constitute 3/4 of the total delegation determine the decisive votes for adoption of conventions and again it is they who oppose the ratification in their respective countries. There can be no better glaring instance of double-face! The conventions are binding on a country only after their ratification by the Government. Thus saving a few the whole lot of the adopted conventions are only increasing the beauty and weight of the Convention book.

Article 24 of the ILO Constitution provides that on receipt of representation against any member state for its failure for effective observance within its jurisdiction of any Convention to which it is a party, the Governing Body of ILO may invite that Government to make statement. As per provision of article 25, if no statement is received within a reasonable time or when received is not deemed to be satisfactory, the Governing Body shall have the right to publish the representation and the statement.

Thus it has been observed that "ILO's enforce-

ment machinery is too slow and ponderous. Member states that violate or permit violation of their obligations face only the ultimate penalty of mention at the annual International Labour Conference..."

The advanced capitalist countries are also the leading defaulters in the matter of ratification of ILO Conventions. While the G-7 countries have ratified in an average 77 Conventions, the USA and Japan have individually ratified only 11 and 40 Conventions respectively.

### **SOCIAL CLAUSE' AND ILO**

It is ironical that the highly industrialised countries whose own track record in ratifying the ILO Conventions on international labour standard for the workers of their own countries is abysmally bleak, have arrogated themselves in the role of self-appointed champions for the woes of the workers in the developing countries, while insisting for 'social clause' in international trade and demanding minimum labour standards in trade agreements.

'Social clause' is adequately covered by the labour standard set by the ILO Conventions. True respect to the aspects stated in social clause can be shown by ratifying and implementing the Conventions. Now when the USA has shown utter disrespect to ILO Conventions by ratifying only 11 out of 173 adopted Conventions, is not it nakedly hypo-critical on the part of it in complaining about the third world nations not maintaining international labour standards? Is it necessary to remind USA that third world countries have ratified ILO conventions numbering many multiples of 11? Even small country like Cuba against whom the USA is shamelessly continuing economic blockade has already ratified as many as 86 conventions. Thus it is not difficult to understand the game of USA to practice protectionism in the era of so-called 'globalisation' in the name of social clause! It is unfortunate that even the ILO started sliding away from its earlier apparent unbiased gesture to rallying round the game plan of the advanced industrialised West in the said matter of 'Social clause'.

The position taken by ILO in the 'Social clause' controversy has found clear expression in an article written by the Director General of ILO Mr. Michel Hansenne under the title "The new paths towards social justice". He has noted that, "...an insistent demand has been put forward by certain member states to introduce minimum labour standards in trade agreements." Refusal to accept such demand has been termed in the said article as "tantamount to depriving workers of the benefit from the advantages

obtained from international trade..." Extending open support to the move of 'Social clause' Mr. Hansenne has said that, "the ILO seems naturally placed to contribute to the implementation of such a mechanism." The Business standard dated 23rd January '95 has quoted Mr. Heribert Maier, Deputy Director General of ILO "...there have been demands from certain quarters in the industrialised West for a joint committee between the WTO and ILO to work as a mechanism to link labour standard with international trade."

### **ILO IN THE NEW SITUATION AND ROLE OF WORKING CLASS**

It is unfortunate that the stand of ILO on the 'Social Clause' controversy is completely contradictory to the stand of bulk of its member states belonging to the Third World countries. However the ILO would do well to see the reality from the unanimous declaration adopted at the 5th conference of the Labour Ministers of 82 Non-aligned and developing countries held at New Delhi on 19-23 January 1995. But instead, ILO has demonstrated its bias in favour of the rich North and their game plan of perpetuating North's dominance on South's vast potential market on one hand and also restricting the entry of commodities from South to the recession-ridden market of North. The GATT, WTO and 'Social clause' together is the explicit expression of such evil design of the multinational capital, monitored from the affluent North.

Such bias of ILO gained further prominence when it placed itself in the position of virtual spokesman of the 'Structural Adjustment Programme' (SAP) let loose by the World Bank and IMF on the developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, and an active proponent of so-called globalisation plan monitored by those international financial agencies and multinational. This is in spite of the fact that such SAP has brought the major Latin American and African economies to disaster with sharp decline in the living standard below the humane level in vast part of Asia, Africa and Latin American countries. In fact ILO's stance on 'Social clause' is not without any linkage with its stand on Fund/Bank (and US) led structural adjustment game.

Despite all the limitations and shortcomings the ILO had, in its earlier days, played a significant role in equipping the international working class with valuable instruments in the matter of labour standards in the form of Conventions and Recommendations. It

*(Cont'd On Page 34)*

# TELECOM PRIVATISATION - A SURRENDER TO MULTINATIONALS

□ V.A.N. NAMBOODIRI

The Telecom Services in India which was the monopoly of the Govt. and Department of Telecom so far, are being offered to private companies - MNCs and Indian - in a silver plate. The notice for tenders for operating basic telephones and cellular phones which were called for in the month of January will now be opened on 28th April and 21st April 1995 respectively. The dates which were fixed on 30th and 31st March were extended mainly due to the demand of the private companies on the ground that the clarifications sought for from the DOT have not been furnished to them.

Tenders are called for to provide basic telecom services on Circle basis, in addition to the service reduced by DOT. The telecom circles have been divided into three categories, A, B, & C according to the growth and scope for expansion as shown below:

A	B	C
A.P	Haryana	Andaman & Nicobar Islands
Delhi MTNL	Kerala	Assam
Gujarat	M.P.	Bihar
Karnataka	Punjab	H.P.
Maharashtra	Rajasthan	J & K
	U.P. West	North East
T. Nadu	U.P East	Orissa
	West Bengal	

The cost of application form is Rs. One Lakh. The earnest money on Bank Guarantee is fixed at Rs. 50 Crores for A Category, Rs. 25 crores for B and Rs. 5 Crores for C.

## The eligibility conditions:

The bidder must be an Indian company. At the same time it is also stipulated that the bidder must have experience as a service provider of a public switched telephone network with a minimum subscriber base in terms of DELs (Director Exchange Lines) served of not less than 5 lakh lines. For the

purpose of eligibility with regard to experience, the experience of the promoter company which has an equity of 10% or more in the bidder company will also be added.

Since no Indian company has past experience as telephone service provided as the service was a monopoly of the Department of Telecom, they will not be able to bid unless tagged with a foreign company. How cunningly the condition has been included so that every bidder is compelled to tag with a foreign company!

Surprisingly, govt companies and public sector companies are debarred from bidding for the tenders on flimsy and untenable grounds.

The foreign equity is allowed up to 49%. European countries do not allow foreign equity at all. Even in USA, there is a cap of 20%. With 49% equity, the MNCs will be able to completely control the Indian company.

The above conditions are clear indications of the intentions of the Govt to give red carpet welcome to the MNCs to enter the mega profit area of Telecom. While there will be a rush for the profitable circles which are in A&B category, the govt will have to take the responsibility of providing services in the areas where there is less profit or even loss.

## Period of License:

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) will issue separate license for each service area i.e. circles for ten years. This will be the only license in addition to the DoT to provide telecom services in the area. The license can be extended for a further period of ten years.

## Tariff:

It is stipulated that tariff for the service provided should be more than that of DoT's.

The registration charges for a telephone connection at the present rates are as follows:

### Under OYT

Capacity of 10,000 lines & 100 to 10,000 Below  
Exchanges system above lines 1000 lines  
Registration fee Rs 15,000 Ea. 10,000 Rs 8,000

### General & Special Category

Capacity of Exge. 10,000 lines Upto 10,000  
& above  
Registration fee Rs 1,000 Rs 2,000

The installation expenses for a new telephone connections is Rs 47,000/- according to the National Telecom Policy presented in the Parliament. While the DoT can provide connections at the rate of Rs 15,000/- to Rs 1,000/- due to the huge telecom infrastructure already installed, will the private companies be able to provide telephone at the same rates?

Already pressure has been mounting on the DoT to liberalise the conditions to allow the private licenses to increase or decrease the tariff. On comparison with other countries, the local rates in India are lower. The chances are that the tariffs will increase substantially making the telephone almost out of reach of many.

### Why privatisation?

The New Telecom Policy, announced in May 1994 projects an additional demand of 25 lakhs over and above the 75 lakhs lines already targeted by the VIII Five Year Plan. It has also projected to provide telephone connection to 5.7 lakh villages instead of 3.6 lakhs. Since this will require additional resources, the only remedy according to govt is to allow private companies to set up exchanges, install phones and provide the basic telecome services.

It could be seen through an analysis of the growth of demand for telephones for th least few years that the projected demand of 100 lakhs connections is excessive and has no valid basis. Further, the DoT through its internal resources and by leasing of switching equipments as proposed in the VIII Five Year Plan would be able to provide telephones on demand by 1997, the last year of the Plan. The plea of lack of resources on the puffed up demand of 100 lakhs are projected only to justify the privatisation of telecom.

### Other Countries:

Only very few countries throughout the world

have privatised the basic telecom services. While U.S.A., U.K. and Canada has taken recourse to privatisation, other developed countries like Germany, France, Sweden, Belgium, Italy etc. have retained the services with the Government.

The main reason is that the telecom, 'the second line of defense', as it is called, cannot be entrusted with the MNCs and other big business who are only interested in accruing profits. Can India with its complex internal and external situation take this risk?

### No. of Private Companies:

Even in those few countries where privatisation has taken place, only one or maximum two companies are allowed to operate basic services.

But in India, the number of private operators will be limitless. According to the present decisions 20 or less Companies will be given licence for providing basic services.

About 30 companies are provisionally selected for providing Radio Paging Service. For Cellular phone service another 30 companies may be give licence. For the other value Added services like Video Conference more licencees are expected.

### Plot Project:

The Dot has given letter of Intent to U.S. West India (Ltd), a subsidiary of the telecom major U.S. WEST for Pilot Project in the Secondary Switching Areas (SSAs) of Tamil Nadu Viz. Coimbatore, Erode, Salem and Dharmapuri, at the time of the visit of Mr. Ronald Brown, the U.S. Commercial Secretary.

These four SSAs will virtually be handed over to the US WEST for 5 years which can be extended for another 5 years. Thus a third Operator will be allowed to enter. It is to be noted that these are growth areas where the revenue is far above the average. Other MNCs are also trying to get Pilot Projects in similar growth areas.

### Connectivity:

With so many private operators and various technologies they induct, the inter-connectivity will create a serious problem affecting the efficiency of the services. The sharing of tariff will be another complex issue.

## Loss of Job

In U.K. and other few countries where the Telecom services have been privatised, thousands of employees were rendered jobless. In India with its acute unemployment problem, what will be the fate of the 4.75 lakh telecom workers, about 1 lakh of whom are Casual Mazdors and Unskilled Workers? The assurance of 'No retrenchment' by the Govt. could not be taken in its face value in view of the past experiences.

An examination of the National Telecom policy and the Guidelines issued for private entry in telecom reveals that the same is neither in the interest of the National nor the people. The Vast telecom net work with its growth rate of 17% or more with a profit of about 8 Crores per day can be further developed and expanded. Ways and means of improving the Services also can be done. privatisation is not the panacea.

## NEP AND NTP:

The National Telecom Policy is part and parcel of the New Economic Policy dictated by the IMF - World bank Combine. With the Catchy slogans of globalisation, liberalisation and privatisation the entire infrastucture created in the Govt. and public Sector is being fragrented and handed over to the Multi Nationals Companies.

Committees are appointed and failed reports are obtained justifying privatisation of profit earning sectors. Malhotra Committee has recommended privatisation of Life Insurance and financial sector. Tandon Committee Report justify privatisation of Railways. Power Sector is being privatised. oil is another sector targeted. Even the news media is in the hit list.

## D.K. Gupta Committee:

The Committee headed by Shri D.K. Gupta, a former Member of Telecom Commission has recommended bifurcating the DOT into three organisations - 'INDIA TELECOM' (Service provided), Telecom Commission (Policy Maker) and Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Regulator). The signals are that the Govt. may accept the recommendations.

The DOT is thus going to be dismantled and fragmented.

The ideals and objectives held high by the Independence movement and the leaders of the Independent India are thrown to dustbins by the present rulers. Even the debacle at the recent assembly polls have not chastened the ruling party to resource the wrong policies.

The edifice and infrastructure which have been the base for development and growth of India is being destroyed. The slogan of Self-reliance is abandoned for reliance on MNCs and imperialist countries.

The Working Class can not remain as silent spectators to this grave situation. The magnificent responses of the workers to strikes organised in LIC, Banks, Postal, Telecom etc. shows that the workers are aware of the dangers. The participation of more than 2 1/2 Crores workers in the General Strike on 29th September, 1994, given call by the platform of Mass Organisation and Central TUs was unprecedented. In the Telecom, the entire workers have gone on strike on 23.1.95 against the national telecom policy and privatisation of Telecom Services. Serious, incessant struggles will be required to defeat this anti-nation, anti-people policies and decisions of the Government.

*(From Page 31)*

maintained a some what balanced approach between the two opposing social forces and restrained from a total bias in favour of the capital.

But, with the advent of unipolar world, owing to collapse of socialist regime in former Soviet Union and the East Europe, when capitalism is no more required to compete in respect of having a apparently presentable human face, the earlier equilibrium of forces got seriously altered. It naturally had its ramification on the functioning of ILO being reflected in its sliding towards a 'Northward bias'. And hence the ILO's support to 'Social clause' and structural adjustment game plan of Fund/Bank regime.

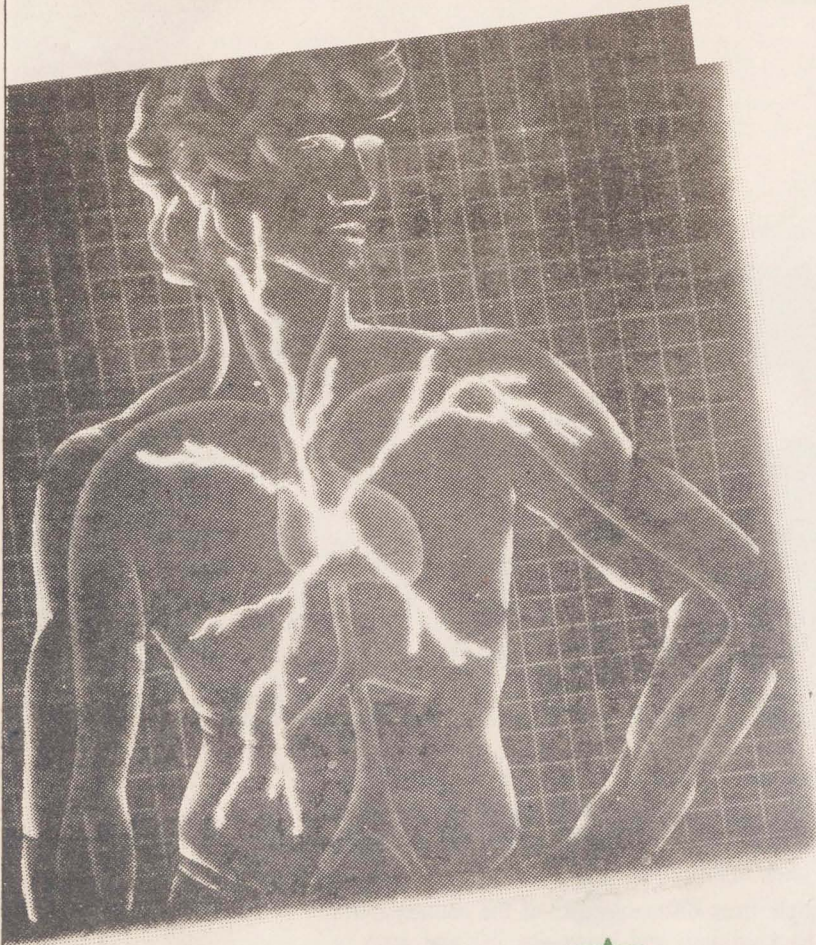
This fact has been admitted by none other than the Director General of ILO himself, "The end of bipolar world dissolved a structure of international relations that took shape in 1945 and generally influenced the work of the Organisation."

In this new situation the working class all over the world and particularly that of third world will have to come together to generate required force to mount pressure to restore the lost equilibrium which alone can prevail upon the ILO from taking a pro-capital stand.

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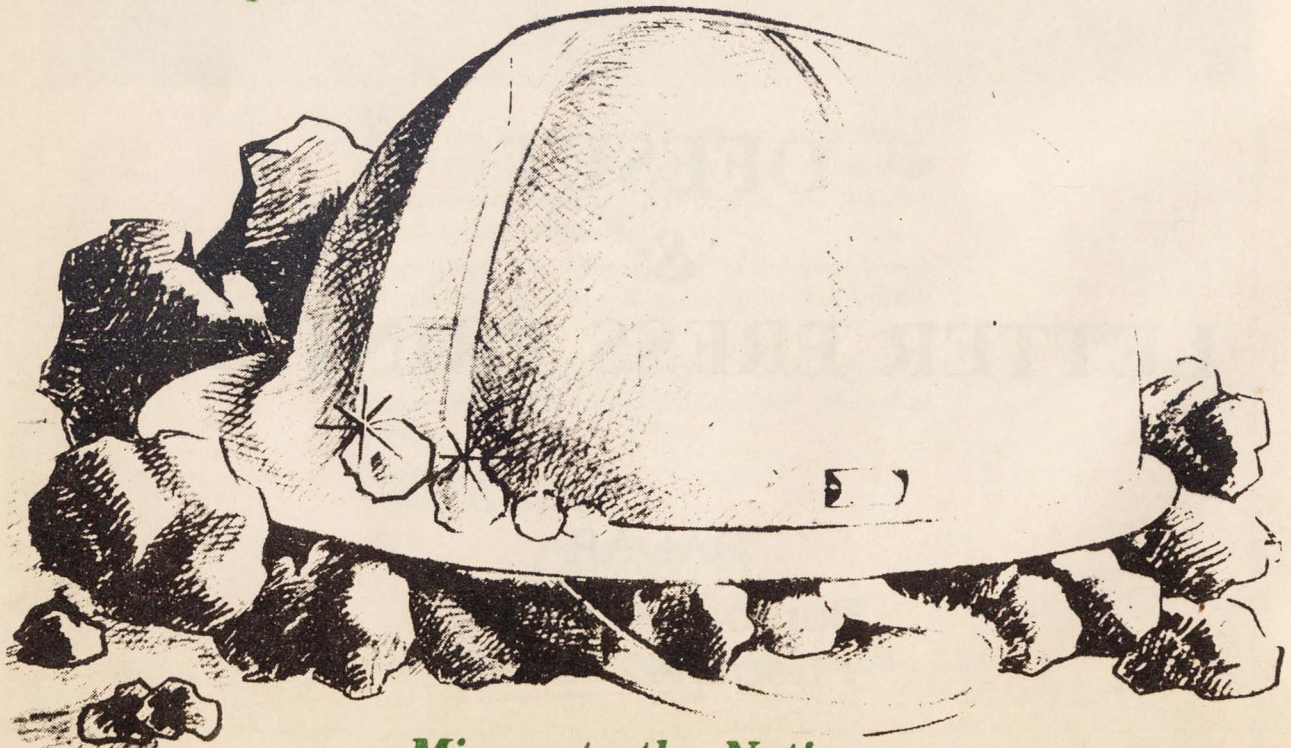
- Overall MoU Rating—"Excellent" and "Joint Top Position" among MoU signing PSU's in the country.
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5. National Award for Pollution Control under Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial National Awards.
6. National Award for Excellence under Indira Gandhi Memorial National Awards.



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# A TIME TO RESPOND—CUBA CALLING

From across the oceans thousands of kilometers away, a call of international solidarity, a call to defend every nation's right to build up a political and economic order chosen by the people and a call to join hands against international brigandage is knocking once again the heart of every patriotic Indian to express practical camaraderie with Cuba. The tiny cluster of islands comprising 15,000 square kilometers—a little larger than our State of West Bengal—with a population of 11 million has today come to symbolise the resolute resistance of a resurgent people against bullying methods and terror tactics of United States government which has remained engaged in the most brutal overt and covert attempts to strangulate a nascent State ever since the Cuban people rose in revolt and founded socialist Cuba under the brilliant leadership of Fidel Castro.

For 36 years, Cuba alongside building up a socialist economy has been successfully resisting US provocations, armed interventions, subversion, an illegal blockade, trade embargo and all else. It is absolutely intolerable for the ruling elites of the mightiest imperialist power that a tiny State just 90 miles away from its shore should steer clear of all conceivable hindrances and triumphantly build up the first bridgehead of socialism so deeply abhorred by the US.

It is just not to the liking of the US government and the all-powerful multinationals that a small speck called Cuba in the Caribbeans should banish illiteracy in 5 years, universal, free primary education should reach every nook and corner and 96 per cent of children should reach secondary stage of education, child mortality should decline to less than 10 per thousand live birth and average longevity should reach 70 years, infant mortality due to malnutrition should slump to zero rate and urban crime should reduce to less than 10 per cent of what it used to be upto 1960. It is just intolerable intransigence of Cuba that its population should be covered by safe drink-water arrangements and comprehensive medical care which has earned international admiration. It is equally impermissible that emancipated womanhood should constitute 40 per cent of workforce with total equality. Such a situation, the US feels, threatens its position in the entire Central and South America.

Despite such spectacular achievements, Cuba has been pushed into a perilous situation in the wake of the illegal blockade by the US, by the retreat of socialism in the erstwhile Soviet Union and its even-

tual disintegration. An obliging Boris Yeltsin stopped supply of petroleum and petroleum products and spare parts under pressure from the US disregarding the bilateral arrangements and barter deals. Quite naturally, this has seriously disrupted industrial production, agricultural and mining operations and transportation as Cuba's own oil resources are limited.

The self-appointed guardian of Human Rights the US, is flagrantly violating the Human Rights of all men women and children of Cuba by foisting the savage blockade for the last 30 years. The same US which pretentiously extolls the values represented by the UN, the General Assembly resolution passed with overwhelming majority disapproving the blockade has been rejected with contempt. The international braggart of free trade blocks Cuba's right to normal trade relations and export-import. The increasing preachings of US leaders against terrorism as a political weapon is no bar for the US government agencies to conspire assassination of Fidel Castro. It is only the vigilance of the Cuban people and world public opinion that stayed the hands of hired assassins. The protagonists of the rule of law in the US government do not find any inconsistency in launching the Radio Free Cuba to beam anti-socialism, anti-Castro and dirty body language programme towards Cuba in air frequencies that violate international arrangements.

Cuba today is waging a grim battle—a battle that encompasses the interests of all third world countries, the non-aligned movement, the right of every nation, big or small, to decide the path of its development and build a society of its choice.

In the recent past, the people of India responded magnificently to a call from Cuba. It is never too much or too frequent to do something for Cuba. This has been a part of anti-imperialist traditions of the Indian working class and the Indian people.

A call has come now again to do our bit for Cuba. The Cuba Solidarity Committee has appealed to all citizens to rise to the occasion and to contribute liberally so that some material help can be extended to our struggling comrades in far away Cuba which though separated by thousands of kilometers is very dear to every patriotic Indian. Let the working class, the peasantry, the intelligentsia and every other section join this noble effort to once again express our camaraderie in a practical way. All must act quickly. It would be in keeping with our noble anti-imperialist traditions to fulfil this task of international solidarity.

# Engineering and Unorganised Sector Industries Workers to go on Strike in Delhi and UP on June 24.

A two-day convention jointly organised by the Delhi and Uttar Pradesh State Committees of the CITU at Gazhaid on March 25 and 26, 1995 decided for strike action in the Engineering and Unorganised Sector of Industries on June 24, 1995 in these two States and the Faridabad which comes under Delhi State Committee of CITU.

On 25th, the convention deliberated on the growing sickness and closures of industries, and on 26th it discussed about the engineering and unorganised sector of industries.

The conventions were attended by about 350 delegates from both the states representing various industries including the sick and closed units, the Engineering industries and the unorganised sector of industries.

The conventions were conducted by a presidium consisting of K N Bhatt, Daulatram(UP) and Mohanlal, Brahmajeet(Delhi.)

The conventions were inaugurated by P K Ganguly, Secretary CITU. In his inaugural address P K Ganguly condemned the govt of India for its adamant pursuit of the economic and industrial policies under commitment to the IMF-World Bank-GATT, while remaining totally insensitive to the rising opposition from the masses. Through the structural adjustment programmes under the policy of globalisation, the govt had embarked upon the path of unbridled privatisation and dismantling of the public sector that resulted in rampant closures and sickness of industries and galloping unemployment and price rise. By signing the GATT agreement the govt had virtually undermined its own economic sovereignty. He severely criticised the BJP govt in Delhi and the Mulayam Singh govt in UP for their stark anti-labour policy and for toeing the policy of the Narasimha Rao govt. Referring to the Engineering Industry, he pointed out that there has been no wage agreement in the industry in Delhi and UP since the last 14 years, whereas in WBengal, Maharashtra, etc regular wage revisions were made by agreements. In the unorganised sector also the wages were below the poverty line. He called for intensification of united struggles including strike actions in the industries demanding wage revisions and withdrawal of the diabolical economic policies.

The resolution on sick and closed units was moved by Vijay Rawat(UP) and seconded by K M Tiwari(Delhi) on 25th, and the resolution on Engi-

neering and unorganised sector Industries was moved by S B Bhardwaj(Delhi) and seconded by Daulatram (UP) on 26th March. The resolutions analysed the situations in each industry, specified the demands and called for action programmes to culminate in one day strike all over the two states including Faridabad on 24th June, 1995. Over 60 delegates participated in the discussion. Delegate after delegate expressed their anger over the deterioration in the situation. The resolutions were unanimously adopted amidst thundering slogans.

## **Demands:**

The resolution on sick and closed units demanded opening of closed units; stoppage of closures, sickness and retrenchment; no privatisation of public sector units and employment to the jobless.

The resolution on Engineering industry demanded wages and other benefits at par with that in Bengal. In the Unorganised sector of Industries it demanded Rs 750/- as basic wage for unskilled workers at December, 1994 Index and VDA at the rate of Rs 2.50 per point of increase.

## **Action Program**

The following action programmes were decided to be implemented jointly in both the States and in Faridabad:1. Regional conventions, gate meetings, street corner meetings, rallies postering in the industrial centres in both the States and Faridabad.

2. One central rally at Lucknow on 19th May and another central rally at Delhi on 13th June to be participated by workers from both the States and Faridabad.3. One day strike on 24th June, 1995 in both States and Faridabad.

The convention appealed to all the trade unions and workers cutting across affiliations to join the strike action and other programmes in full force.

## **Central Rally at Lucknow:**

As per the programme taken in the Conventions, the first Central rally was held at Lucknow on 19th May. The rally was preceded by postering and leaflet distribution in both the States. The procession started from Lucknow Railway Station, Charbagh and reached the State Assembly, where a public meeting was held.

The rally was presided over by a presidium con-

( Cont'd On Page 39)

# CONSUMER PRICE INDEX NUMBERS FOR INDUSTRIAL WORKERS

(BASE 1982 = 100)

Centre	Linking factor for Old Base			Pune	313	314	—
	Feb..95	Mar.95					
				Sholapur	306	308	5.03
				Barbil	277	277	5.00
				Rourkela	254	257	3.59
				Amritsar	269	271	5.19
All India	291	293	4.93	Ludhiana	272	272	—
Gudur	283	283	4.33	Ajmer	293	293	5.01
Guntur	289	292	5.60	Jaipur	281	282	5.17
Hyderabad	271	271	5.23	Coimbatore	291	295	5.35
Visakhapatnam	277	277	—	Coonor	311	314	4.80
Warrangal	284	285	—	Madrass	315	316	5.05
Doom-Dooma Tinsukia	265	267	4.05	Madurai	299	306	5.27
Guwahati	293	296	—	Salem	305	307	—
Labac-Silchar	259	263	3.96	Tiruchirapally	315	315	—
Mariani-Jorhat	280	280	3.95	Agra	275	280	—
Rangapara-Tezpur	284	281	4.29	Ghaziabad	281	283	—
Jamshedpur	266	267	4.68	Kanpur	288	291	4.69
Jharia	247	252	4.63	Saharanpur	286	286	5.06
Kodarma	257	254	5.43	Varanasi	296	300	5.12
Monghyr	276	278	5.29	Asansol	270	271	4.77
Noamundi	269	274	4.58	Calcutta	290	292	4.74
Ranchi-Hatia	277	280	—	Darjeeling	261	259	4.55
Ahmedabad	291	291	4.78	Durgapur	296	295	—
Baroda	286	286	—	Haldia	304	310	—
Bhavanagar	302	302	4.99	Howrah	302	306	4.12
Rajkot	282	282	—	Jalpaiguri	262	264	4.16
Surat	302	301	—	Raniganj	260	260	4.40
Faridabad	282	282	—	Chandigarh	281	280	—
Yamunanagar	281	283	5.53	Delhi	311	313	4.97
Srinagar	293	296	5.47	Pondicherry	324	321	—
Bangalore	295	295	5.66				
Belgaum	306	311	—				
Hubli-Dharwar	302	301	—	<u>Additional series of Labour Bureau</u>			
Mercara	290	288	—	Kothagudem	290	289	3.25
Alwaye	295	299	5.19	Himachal Pradesh	279	284	3.75
Mundakayam	298	300	—	Bhilwara	305	308	3.20
Quilon	313	314	—	Chindwara	296	297	2.59
Trivandrum	319	323	—	Tripura	279	280	4.37
Bhalaghat	279	280	5.24	Goa	327	328	3.40
Bhilai	258	257	3.49				
Bhopal	301	301	5.46				
Indore	298	303	5.18	Note: Figures on old base can be obtained by multiplying the Index Number on New Base by the linking factor given and rounding off the result to nearest whole number.			
Jabalpur	302	304	6.41	—Dash denotes new centres under 1982 series.			
Bombay	324	327	5.12				
Nagpur	298	301	4.99				
Nasik	307	310	—				

# ALL INDIA CONVENTION AGAINST TELECOM PRIVATISATION

About 2000 delegates from all parts of the country attended the All India Convention held at Mavalankar Hall, New Delhi under the auspices of the Door Sanchar Sangharsh Samiti, a forum of the Telecom Employee's organisations. It depicted the anger of Telecom employees against the national Telecom policy of the Central Government.

The Convention was presided over by a presidium consisting of Coms. Moni Bose, M.K. Bagchi, Pabithra Chakraborty, Sisir Bhattacharjee, Salim, manjunathswamy and Naresh Kumar.

Com. V.A.N. Namboodiri, General Secretary, All India Telecom Employees Union class III, while welcoming the Chief Guests and the delegates said that NTP is not in the interest of the people, the workers or the Nation. He stated that the convention should decide about the future programmes of action.

Justice Shri P.NB. Bhagawati, inaugurated the Convention. He wanted better telecom service to be provided. He urged the workers to be more conscious and to oppose corruption.

Shri S.M. Agarwal, former Chairman, P&T Board, in his key note address said that New Telecom policy is an unwarranted policy based on wrong informations. DOT is capable of meeting the demands of the subscribers and the nation. If there is any defeat in the services it is due to the policy and programme of the Govt. DOT has already reached the stage of giving connection on demand. Private entry in telecom network is not necessary. The private parties will be earning more profit by investing less. Rural Telecom network can never improve under private sector as there is less profit or no profit. He appealed to the telecom workers to fight and save the telecom from the clutches of the MNCs.

Shri D.K. Sanghal, former Chairman, Telecom Board said that the telecom network is passing through a delicate phase. Deliberate attempts are made to destabilise the system, which has been built up by the DOT workers. It is one of the largest network in the world. There is no dearth of skill and potential in DOT. The employees are capable of installing and maintaining the network. The ill conceived and ill motivated policy of handing over telecom network to private parties on flimsy meaningless ideas must be

defeated.

Shri P.G. Kumaramangalam, M.P. and former Minister expressed his great concern on the NTP. He also mentioned about the nonparticipation of some unions and leaders. Why? He emphatically opposed the NTP stating that globalisation and liberalisation as an unrealisable ideal as long as different nations keep up their separate identity. He was very much apprehensive of the increase in tariff.

Com. N. Ram, Editor, Frontline, said that globalisation and liberalisation will endanger the economy of the country and the defence of the Nation. The industrial base of the country is being undermined. The interest of the country should be safeguarded, he stated.

Com. E. Balanandan, M.P. President, CITU expressed his vehement opposition to the NEP and NTP. He asked the telecom employees to strengthen the struggle against the privatisation of Telecom.

Com. A.B. Bardhan, General Secretary, CITU ridiculed the position, taken by some leaders by differentiating privatisation and entry of private parties. He expressed his solidarity with the telecom workers in their fight against privatisation.

Com. Neelotpal Basu, M.P., Shri Manunathaswamy (ITI Officers Association), Shri Ram, Director (Mtce.) and Prabir Parkayastha, (Delhi Science Forum) also addressed the convention.

Com. G.L. Joggi (Telecom Engineering Service Association) presented the memorandum to be submitted to the prime Minister. Com. P.S. Ramankutty, General Secretary, All India Telegraph Traffic Employees Union, moved the resolution on programme of action against the NTP and privatisation in Telecom. The house adopted both by thunderous applause. Com. Tomar (Junior Telecom Officers Association) also addressed.

Com. Moni Bose, on behalf of the presidium appealed to all sections of telecom workers to unite under Door Sanchar Sangharsh Samithi and fight against NTP.

## March to Prime Minister's Residence

More than 3,000 employees and officers participated in the March to PM's Residence. The

(Cont'd On Page 39)

# National Platform to Launch Next Phase of Agitation Against NEP

The National Platform of Mass Organisations met at the HMS office t Chalmesford Road, New Delhi on May 16, 1995 under the Presidentship of Veereshwar Tiagi of HMS. The meeting was attended by about 50 representatives of the Central Trade Unions, national Federations, Kisan Sabhas, Agricultural Workers' Unions, organisations of Students, Youth, Women, Scientific workers' associations and of the National Working Group on Patent Laws.

Participants discussed the latest developments and the fallouts of the structural adjustment programme being pursued by the Government of India under the new economic policies at the behest of the IMF-World Bank-GATT (WTO).

The participants pointed to the growing adverse effects of the policies with their progressive implementation, on all the mass organisations and the common people and the undermining of the country's sovereignty.

The meeting decided to focus the following main issues which affected all sections of the people of the country due to the economic policies, namely:

Price rise, unemployment, dismantling of the

public sector and drive towards privatisation, sickness and closure of industries, corruption and communalism.

Participants also suggested several action plans. The meeting also decided to support the struggle waged by the pharmaceutical workers, which included strike action on 20th June against the amendment of the Patents Act, and also support the struggle against the agreement on Enron by the Enron Virodhi Manch. Action programme:

1) National Convention at Delhi in the middle of July, 1995.

2) State Level and District Level Conventions after the national Convention.

The Conventions will be followed by mass direct actions.

A drafting Committee was constituted to draft a Declaration of the National Convention, focusing the six main issues as above.

The National Platform will meet again at Delhi on June 19, 1995, when the concrete action plans will be finalised and incorporated in the draft Declaration.



(From Page 38)

procession was stopped by police blockade, where the processionists sat and a rally was held. Com. M.K. Bagchi presided. Coms. A.K. Koushik, Con-venor, Door Sanchar Sangharsh Samithi. D. Gopalakirshnan A delegation consisting of Coms. V.A.N. Namboodiri, A.K. Koushik, G.L. Loggi and Salim (General Secretary ITI employees Union) went to PM's Residence and handed over the Memorandum.

The Convention has given a call to observe 5th May as Protest Day by organising day long dharna. It also decided to organise 2 days hunger strike on 23rd & 24th of May 1995 and indefinite non-co-operation.

The Convention as well as the March participated by thousands of workers have created a new awareness and enthusiasm. The movement is to be further strengthened by uniting the entire telecom workers against the wrong policies of the Government and defeat the same.



(From Page 36)

sisting of K N Bhatt and Mohanlal, and addressed among others by P K Ganguly, Daulatram, Subhasini Ali, Kamalapati Tripathi, K M Tiwary, etc. A number of delegates also spoke on the occasion. Among those who greeted from the fraternal organisations, were Pre Nath Rai from SFI, Vijay Shant from DYFI, Ambika Mishra from Agricultural Workers' Union, etc.

Later, a delegation met the PA of the Chief Minister, as the Chief Minister was out of station, and submitted a memorandum of the demands. The PA informed that the tripartite meeting on Engineering industry has been called on 3rd June.

The rally expressed the determination to make the 24th June strike total in both the States in the Engineering industry and in the unorganised sector and appealed to all other trade unions to join the strike action. The Delhi based central rally will be held on 13th June.



# Decisions of Secretariat Meeting

The Secretariat meeting held at 15, Talkatora Road, New Delhi was presided over by Com.E Balanandan and attended by the following comrades: E Balanandan, M K Pandhe, Niren Ghosh, R Umanath, Baidyanath Majumdar, Shyamal Chakrabarty, Chitabrata Majumdar, Kali Ghosh, Saroj Chaudhuri, T K Rangarajan, P Satyanarayana, A K Padmanabhan, S Suryanarayana Rao, Jibon Roy, Chandi Prasad, N Prasadarao, P K Ganguly, Tapan Sen, S Dev Roye, C Kannan, V G Bhaskaran Nair, Ranjit Basu, Kanai Banerjee, Sukomal Sen (Invitee), Vimal Ranadive, Md Amin, Samar Mukherjee, K N Ravindranath, P P Sanzgiri, M M Lawrence and Amal Ghosh Dastidar.

Members observed two minutes silence condoling the death of Com. Robin Sen, Vice President of CITU.

**May Day:** May Day will be observed by holding rallies, gate meetings, seminars, etc all over the country. The May Day Manifesto will be despatched by the Centre by the middle of April. 50th Anniversary of Victory over Fascism: All State Committees will observe the 50th Anniversary of victory over fascism on 9th May, 1995 by holding rallies, demonstrations, seminars, etc.

**Working Committee and General Council meetings:** The Working Committee meeting of the CITU will be held at Calcutta on 30th May from 11 AM to 1 PM, followed by the General Council meeting on 31st May, 1st and 2nd June.

## **Observance of 25th Anniversary of the CITU:**

1. The 25th Anniversary (Silver Jubilee) of the CITU will be observed all over the country for three months starting from 30th May, the Foundation Day of the CITU.

2. On 30th May, 1995, a mass meeting will be held at Netaji Indoor Stadium, Calcutta, where all Office Bearers, Working Committee and General Council members will be present. 3. The June, 1995 issue of The Working Class will be published as a Special Issue on the occasion. Articles should be contributed by the office bearers in this issue. State Committees should ensure that advertisements are collected from their states. 4. Apart from the Special Issue of The Working Class, a booklet will be published on the brief history of CITU. 5. During the three

month observance, campaign will be launched and seminars, workshops will be held on some major issues like Trade Union Unity and the formation of a Confederation; Organisation and Drive for Membership; the New Economic Policies; privatisation, Unemployment; price rise, Closures and Sickness; Communalism; Land Reforms and Worker-Peasant Alliance, etc. Small campaign leaflets will be published on the occasion.

## **Struggle against the NEP:**

The meeting discussed about the next phase of action programme against the New Economic Policies. It was noted that the CPSTU had already taken a phasewise action programme, which has been circulated. It may culminate in strike action.

There is possibility of strike in the coal industry. Organisations in the Telecom, Power and the Financial Sectors are also taking struggle programme and planning for strike action.

Other mass organisations are also preparing for struggle programmes.

It was decided to take the move for holding the proposed joint convention with INTUC on sick and closed units without further delay. The meeting of the Sponsoring Committee has already been called on 14th April, which will be followed by the meeting of the National Platform of Mass Organisations. Phase wise action programmes should be launched with the perspective for another countrywide industrial strike and Hartal at the call of the National Platform.

## **50th Anniversary of the Bombing on Hiroshima and Nagasaki:**

The meeting decided to observe jointly with other TU the 50th Anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on 6th August and 9th August, 1995 respectively all over the country. Central rallies are being proposed to be held on the days at Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and Delhi, jointly by the CITU, AITUC, INTUC and HMS. A delegation from Japan is expected to address these rallies.

## **Child Labour Project:**

The meeting decided to go ahead implementing

(Cont'd On Page 41)

## **Seminar on Train Safety through Signal and Telecommunication**

The all India seminar on "Train Safety through Signal and Telecommunication" held at the Speakers' Hall, Constitution Club, New Delhi on 3rd May 1995 under the auspices of the Indian Railway Signal and Telecommunication Staff Association had after long deliberations drawn several conclusions having important bearing on the question of rail safety. Following are the five-point conclusions adopted in the seminar:

1. 82% of the accidents in the Railways due to human failure may be minimised by providing the modern Signal and Telecommunication Systems cutting down dependence on human element.

2. More fund should be allocated in the Railway plan for providing these equipments and systems. This will ultimately save about Rs 560 crores due to loss of Railway property and about Rs 60 crores paid as ex-gratia payment to the deceased and injured in addition to saving the human lives during accidents.

3. An independent member in the Railway Board, the policy making body, should be the in-charge of Signal & Telecommunication affairs to take proper decision.

4. The staff and officers looking after maintenance and installation of equipments should be well trained appropriately paid and not only satisfied with their job, but must have pride in their job.

5. The old and obsolete rules should be amended and old over aged equipments should be replaced by modern equipments.

Held with N S Bangoo, President of the Association in the chair, the Seminar was inaugurated by Somnath Chatterjee MP who is the Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee attached to the Ministry of Railways. While expressing appreciation for the initiative taken by the organisers of the seminar on the vital issue of public safety he complained that as speed of trains was coming up higher and higher, lesser and lesser safety measures were being adopted. This was leading to a serious situation. He

said for proper safety equipments Rs 450-500 crores should be made available against the present provision of only Rs 275 crores.

Basudev Acharya MP, chairman Reception Committee and N S Bhangoo chairman of the Seminar also emphasised the paramount importance of and urgency for providing modern signal and telecommunication system for all trains.

A number of officials attached to signal and Telecommunication wing of Indian Railways and RITES, representatives of telecom industry and other telecom experts participated in the Seminar besides K Hasan, Secretary General, Indian Railways, Promotee Officers Association, J P Chaubey, General Secretary, AIRF and Kanai Banerjee, Secretary, CITU. □

*(From Page 40)*

the Child Labour Project, which is being funded by the ILO. Relevant circulars with the details and time schedule have already been posted. The National Workshop will be held at NLI, NOIDA from May 11 to 14, 1995.

### **Deep Sea Fishing:**

A joint Convention will be organised on deep sea fishing shortly. Comrades proposed Cochin as a suitable venue.

### **Delegations to Foreign Countries:**

The meeting decided the delegations to different countries to attend seminars, etc as per the invitation received.

### **Affiliations:**

The meeting called upon all the State Committees to deposit the affiliation fees for the year 1993 and 1994 to the Centre immediately at the new rates decided by the 8th conference of CITU. □

# CITU-ILO National Workshop on Child Labour

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions organised a National Workshop on Child Labour from May 11 to 14, 1995 at National Labour Institute, NOIDA.

The National Workshop is part of the CITU's project on Child Labour, undertaken on national scale, under an agreement signed with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) under the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC).

The workshop was inaugurated by Ms. Josephine Karavasil, Director of ILO after the welcome address by M.K. Pandhe, General Secretary, CITU.

Ms. Karavasil congratulated the CITU for taking up the project on Child Labour on National scale targeting 9 industries in the unorganised sector and expressed confidence that the activities of the CITU will certainly make valuable contributions in the progressive elimination of Child Labour.

Among those who spoke in the inaugural session, were Mr. A.P. Verma, Director of National Labour Institute; A.B. Bardhan, General Secretary of AITUC and Naresh Singh, Researcher in Child Labour Cell, INTUC.

There were 32 participants from Bengal, Orissa, Tamilnadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, UP, Haryana and Tripura.

## Background Paper:

The background paper was placed by P.K. Ganguly, Secretary, CITU.

Pointing to the growing phenomena of Child Labour, the background paper attributed poverty, unemployment and abysmally low wages - below poverty line, in the vast unorganised sector, where child labour is rampant, and called for implementation of the project for campaign and struggle with the demand for alleviation of poverty, for need based wages and for employment generation programme by the Government.

Mr. M.P. Joseph, Coordinator, IPEC, ILO briefed about the project and explained about its phasewise implementation, to be completed by March, 1996. The project included state level and industry level workshops, publication of industrywise brochures and leaflets, Video films on child labour in several industries, union level training programme etc.,

Dr. Mahaveer Jain, Coordinator of the National Resource Centre on Child Labour of the National

Labour Institute placed a paper on Perspectives on Child Labour in India.

Dr. T.K. Joshi placed a paper on Children and Health and Safety at Work.

Dr. Saheed Ashraff placed a paper on Child Labour in Carpet Industry.

Vimal Ranadive, Secretary, CITU spoke on Girl Child Labour in different industries.

## Discussions

There was lively discussion on each paper.

Thereafter the workshop was divided into groups, according to states and industries. Statewise and industrywise workshop plans were decided.

## Struggle Programme

Apart from implementation of the project as a part of educative campaign, the workshop after another group discussions took the following struggle action programme:

1. 4th June, the International Children's Day to be observed against Child Labour by wearing badges with the slogan - "Abolish Child Labour", all over the country.

2) To observe a week from November 8 to 14, 1995, holding demonstrations, jathas, cycle jathas, cultural functions, essay and drawing competitions among working children, culminating on 14th November as All India Day against Child Labour, by holding processions, jathas, etc, with working children.

3) The week November 8-14 to be preceded by postering, wall writing, hoarding (cut-outs) against child labour.

4) Rallies and deputations to local authorities in December, 1995.

5) State rallies with deputations to State Labour Ministers in January, 1996.

6) Central rally with children at Delhi after March, 1996.

7) Literacy campaign by the states.

It was decided to incorporate the suggestions and the action plans in the background paper and prepare an Approach Paper by the CITU as the guideline by the CITU for struggle for progressive elimination of Child Labour.

M.K. Pandhe, General Secretary, CITU gave the concluding speech.



# Pioneers of India's Working Class Movement

Time was not only stopped but even pushed back—this was what our colonisers, our British imperialist rulers did. Whether 'Time' can actually be stopped or pushed back is a matter for debate among Hawkings, Penroses and others of their clan. But imperialism certainly did stop normal social development and even reversed the process in the vast region now called "Third World" to which India also belongs.

Consequently, as in all former colonies, in India too modern industry started growing much late compared to the metropolis, even that growth has been lopsided, and quantitatively quite limited. Therefore working class also emerged in our country late, so also our labour movement. Because of limited industrial growth the size of the working class in our country is also small and does not constitute a significant proportion of our population. Yet its influence was not that insignificant. It was natural that our labour movement would develop side by side with our national movement. Though the working class could not assume a leading role in the national movement but working class movement it proved, nonetheless, to be an important tributary to the mainstream of freedom struggle.

In Britain, where trade unions originated before anywhere else, voluminous historical and analytical work has been produced on working class and its struggles. In our country though the time span of labour movement is not more than one and half centuries, historical material on our working class movement available in published works is still scanty and we are yet to have a complete picture of labour movement spanning 150 years or so. A lot of work is yet to be done.

A number of scholars, some of them involved in working class movement themselves, have done some good work. Dr Panchanan Saha is one of them, and is well known for his research in labour history. Author of the informative "History of the Working Class Movement in Bengal" and other works, Dr Saha has presented us this May Day his latest work which, as he tells us in the preface, "is intended to provide a brief outline of biographies of the pioneers of working class movement in India in the context of the outline of the working class movement." This

seems to be the first work of its kind. While general dictionary of biography (Dictionary of National Biography) is available, probably some dictionary of biography relating to national movement may also be had, but the dictionary of labour is perhaps compiled for the first time in our country by Dr Saha.

Between the two covers of a rather slim volume, in the span of 240 pages, the author has squeezed a hundred odd outline biographies of personalities connected one way or other with labour movement in the country, some of them being the tallest leaders in the history of our national movement. Biographies presented in the book are therefore bound to be just sketches and that is what they were intended to be. This is not a book of biography, it is only a handy dictionary of Biography. So one certainly cannot blame the author for the sketchiness.

We are rather to thank the author profusely for introducing to us a large number pioneers of working class movement whose life and work, and even names, of whom are unknown to workers and even the trade union activities of today, and also forgotten by older people. The sketches though short are likely to be of considerable interest to all readers. Many unknown facts relating to our trade union movement will be known to our young trade unionists providing answer to some of their unanswered questions and giving them a deeper-than-before understanding of the characteristics of our trade union movement.

The list of the personalities covered in the book (arranged in alphabetical order of surname) is itself quite interesting. The 'dictionary' which starts with the life sketch of Muzaffar Ahmed one of the founders of the communist movement and party in India contains those of C F Andrews Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Chittaranjan Das, Subhas Chandra Bose, Jawaharlal Nehru and Bipin Chandra Pal. These stalwarts of our national history had in their own way been connected with labour movement. The names of N M Joshi, Bankim Mukherjee, V V Giri, S A Dange, B T Ranadive, S S Mirajkar, Mohammad Ismail and others are of course among the most expected even for the younger generation of trade unionist. Role of the leaders of our national movement in trade union fields during the struggle for independence is how-

*(Cont'd On Page 44)*

# May Day Celebrations

The CITU observed the May Day all over the country maintaining its revolutionary traditions. Postering, leaflet distributions, gate meetings, TU classes, processions and rallies were held in different parts of the country. Industrial federations of workers and employees, independent unions and other central trade unions also joined the rallies in several places.

Massive rallies were held at Calcutta and other places in Bengal, in all parts of Kerala, in Tripura, at Bangalore, Hyderabad, Bombay and other places. Besides expressing international solidarity to the working class, the May Day rallies mainly focused the new economic policies of the Govt of India, and called for further intensification of united struggles demanding their withdrawal.

Following are the reports received from some other states:

**Delhi:** A massive rally was organised by the Delhi State CITU at Town Hall crossing, which was preceded by a procession. The rally was addressed among others by M K Pandhe, General Secretary, CITU and S B Bharadwaj, General Secretary, Delhi State CITU.

**Rajasthan:** A big procession was taken out by the CITU in the industrial city of Kota, which culminated in a rally at the Airdrome crossing. A number of other unions and federations joined the rally. Among those who addressed the rally were P K Ganguly, Secretary, CITU; Ravindra Shukla, General Secretary, Rajasthan State CITU; R K Swamy, Secretary, Kota District Committee of CITU and by the leaders of several unions and mass organisations like SFI, DYFI, Kisan Sabha, Janavadi Mahila Samity, etc. May Day was observed in all other places of the state.

**UP:** A big rally was organised by the CITU at the J K Jute gate at Kanpur. The rally was preceded by several processions, which culminated at the JK Jute gate. The rally was addressed by Jibon Roy, MP, Secretary, CITU; Subhasini Ali, Daulatram, Arvind Kumar, Devi Krishna Mishra, Md Safi and others.

**Goa:** A huge rally of about 8,000 workers was organised by the State CITU at Panaji. The rally was preceded by a procession and was joined by the AITUC also. The main speaker was E Balanandan, President, CITU. Among others who addressed were

Anand Betkikar and Sitaram Mandrekar, the State President and General Secretary of CITU.

**Bihar:** The Coordination Committee of Unions and Associations organised a massive rally, which started from Reserve Bank premises and culminated at Dharna Chowk, Baily Road, where a public meeting was held. The meeting was presided over by Sachidanand Singh, Gazanfar Nawab, Ragho Saran Singh, N K Prasad and S Mukherjee. Among those who addressed the rally were JS Majumdar, General Secretary of Bihar State CITU, Chakradhar Prasad Singh of AITUC and others. A cultural function was also held after the rally.

**Tamil Nadu:** Rallies were held all over the State jointly by CITU and AITUC. In Madras a ten thousand strong processin was taken out, in which over one thousand women participated. The Tamil Nadu Government arrested several thousand activists on the eve of May Day. The rally was addressed among others by R Umanath, A K Padmanabhan, A Soundarajan(CITU); S S Thyagarajan, K Desing, Soundarapandian (AITUC).

*(From Page 43)*

ever much less known to them. The book will give them some idea. Apart from leaders of national stature, the author has provided us information about a few provincial level leaders also. In a sense this constitutes the more important part of his work because we tend to easily forget those pioneers whose contribution in development of our labour movement is substantial though not dazzling.

Another praiseworthy aspect of the work is that it has not totally neglected the women pioneers of our trade union movement.

Older people in trade union movement will find the list of persons covered grossly incomplete. But then the author has promised "to publish some other volumes in which biographies of many other stalwarts of the working class movement, past and present, will be included." We shall look forward to greeting them.

—KB

\* Dictionary of Labour Biography by Dr Panchanan Saha, Biswabikash, Calcutta, Price Rs 80.00

## CITU REFUSED TO SIGN MOU IN COAL INDUSTRY

M K Pandhe, General Secretary, CITU and President All India Coal Workers Federation has issued the following statement to the Press:

The Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Coal Managements and the non-CITU unions does not give adequate benefits to the 7 lakhs coal workers all over the country. The CITU unions did not sign the MoU and called upon the coal workers to observe All India Protest Day on 8th May 1995.

The agreement which is effective from 1.7.1991 gives only Rs 85/- as Guaranteed Minimum Benefit in addition to already paid interim relief of 10 per cent of basic plus fixed DA subject to a minimum of Rs 150.

The benefits are much below in comparison with the benefits given in steel, NTPC and Bangalore based industries. During the previous wage settlement the wages of the coal workers were comparable with the major public sector undertakings while as a result of this settlement the coal workers will be lowest among all the major public sector undertakings so far as wages are concerned. The steel MoU provides for Rs 100 to Rs 150 as GMB in addition to

interim relief of Rs 155 to Rs 393 plus one additional increment (Rs 40-140) from 1.1.1995 and another on from 1.1.1996. The NTPC has given a total benefit of 20 percent of the basic plus fixed DA to all workers ranging from Rs 270 to 700 including interim relief.

When coal workers are doing most hazardous work they have been given a raw deal. The CITU deeply regrets to note the attitude taken by the unions affiliated to INTUC, AITUC, HMS and BMS in this regard.

The underground allowance which covers about 60 per cent of the coal workers has been fixed at 20 per cent of the basic wage minus 600 which is on the lower side. The workers will have to forgo two years arrears payment though underground allowance is treated as basic wage for all purposes.

The house rent allowance has been raised from existing Rs 45 to Rs 60 while no assurance of constructin of houses for workers in the next agreement is given. The night shift allowance has been raised from Rs 3.50 per night shift to Rs 5 though in

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# ON SUPREME COURT JUDGEMENT REGARDING SHIFTING AND RE-LOCATION OF INDUSTRIES OUTSIDE DELHI

The recent order of the Supreme Court of India directing the shifting and relocation of around 9 thousand manufacturing units outside the limits of metropolitan territory of Delhi, has created a serious situation in more than one respect. The order covers industrial units located in non-conforming areas of the metropolis as well as of polluting industries falling in conforming areas in the absence of effective anti-pollutant mechanism in the nature of effluent treatment plants or emission control devices. The order of the Supreme Court has given rise to a situation in which more than one hundred thousand workers find themselves face to face with loss of their jobs, since the relocation of industries on such a huge scale, together with their workers appears to be an impossibility under the present circumstances. Similar situation has also arisen in certain other states - West Bengal, Orissa, Gujarat, etc. All together if not tackled properly the situation may result in job losses running into millions.

While there is lot to be said against systematic ecological/environmental degradation with little consideration for human life and with making of profits as the only motivating factor, the respective Governments and their agencies looking after locational aspects of industrial development sans pollution hazards must squarely should the blame for bringing about such a situation. It is a situation in which both industrial development as well as the crucial aspect of employment are likely to become a causality in the process generating social explosion, and dislocation of economies of the affected regions.

The highly reprehensible role of the concerned Governments permitting for decades together the setting up and proliferation of industrial units of every description in totally unplanned and haphazard manner, is illustrated by the circumstances in which the Supreme Court has felt compelled to come out with its order against continuance of polluting units in Delhi.

A great majority of the units ordered to be relocated in Delhi got set up and proliferated in several non-conforming areas all over the city under the very eyes of the authorities expected to administer the provisions of the Master Plan. Nor did the health department of the Municipal Corporation and of the Government of Union Territory lift their little

finger at the location of hazardous and offensive units in the midst of thickly populated residential areas. These units were readily given basic facilities like power, water, and telephone connections. It was money, and not the obligation to administer the provisions of the law that mattered in all these cases. And now instead of dealing with the situation in the manner it should pollution control agency is being brought into the picture to interpret the decision of the Supreme Court in a manner that does violence to public interest and, indeed, to the meaning and content of the orders of the Supreme Court.

Trade unions firmly hold that while protection of ecology and environment constitute an essential part of any sustainable industrial development, in the circumstances with which we are faced today, no hasty or precipitate solution of the problem of existing and established pollutant industries without simultaneously ensuring security of employment to the workers is possible. The situation has to be tackled with utmost caution in close consultation and cooperation with workers' organisations. The process has to be spread over in phases with the most pollutant units to be moved out first to locations earmarked for them. In case of units falling within conforming areas as per the Master Plan, the first priority should be to force them to install suitable emission control devices or effective effluent treatment plants conforming to pollution control norms prescribed under the law.

Reacting to the situation workers' organisations owing allegiance to all the major national Trade Union centres, including, INTUC, CITU, AITUC, HMS and BMS have decided to launch joint actions including staging of demonstration at the official residence of the Environment Minister, Sh Kamal Nath in order to have their voice heard by all the concerned authorities, including, the Central Environment Ministry, which regrettably persists in altogether ignoring the workers' organisations on the key issue of ensuring a pollution free industrial environment. For instance all trade unions have been excluded from the National Council on Environment set by the Environment Ministry.

Central Trade Unions are filing applications for intervening in the case before the Supreme Court.

Sd/- AITUC

Sd/- INTUC

Sd/- HMS

Sd/- CITU

Sd/-BMS

# International Struggles

Japan:

## **ZENROREN Convention Adopts Policy for 1995 People's Spring Struggle**

The 12th Extraordinary National Convention of the National Confederation of Trade Unions (Zenroren), held 15-16 December, discussed and adopted the policy for the 1995 People's Spring Struggle.

In his introductory report, General Secretary Kanemichi Kumagai said that many more workers responded to the questionnaire on demands for the spring struggle. According to this opinion survey, more than 60 per cent of those who responded complained about their more difficult living standards and demanded a wage increase of 40,000 yen on average.

General Secretary Kumagai emphasised the need to launch counter-attack against the arbitrary policy of big business and the financial circles which have stepped up their offensive against workers through restructuring, aiming to maintain and increase profits even if turnover is stagnant.

He pointed out that more and more workers in workplaces dominated by Rengo and even conservative people, were beginning to have doubts about the Murayama Cabinet's policy which pays no attention to people's interests. He told delegates: "Common action can be developed anew if we step forward in unity with these awakening workers and keep pace with the change in the situation.

As part of its spring struggle campaign, Zenroren has published the 1995 edition of its study on the "Internal Reserves of Big Corporations." The study shows that there are sufficient reserves to justify the wage rise demanded by the workers.

The study showed that despite the recession, the top 440 companies increased their internal reserves to a total of 93,018 billion yen (USD 930 billion approx) as of March 1994—an increase of 1,038 billion yen over the previous year.

The 440 companies have a huge latent value of securities as there is a big difference between registered value and the real value, amounting to 64,477 billion yen, i.e. 9,602 billion yen more than the previous year.

The study showed that the rise in reserves was generally linked with the large-scale dismissals of workers. The 440 companies had a total of 3.54 million employees. In 215 companies there was a job

reduction of 68,472, and in 223 companies there was a job increase of 30,984, making for an overall job loss of 37,489.

It was noted that such companies as trust banks, security firms and oil, broadcasting and telecommunications companies which reduced their employees, increased their internal reserves. This was noted most significantly in the case of Nippon Telegraph and Telephone (NTT), which dismissed 16,569 people over the period of the study and 17,744 in the year previous to it. In this company, internal reserves increased by 84,900 million yen and 58,700 million yen in 1992 and 1993.

Zenroren's calculations showed that a minimum wage increase of 35,000 yen would need no more than a 2.4 per cent withdrawal from the huge internal reserves.

It was further pointed out that the demanded wage increase would help raise people's consumption, which accounts for 55% of the GNP, thus serving as a base to overcome the recession in the interests of the people.

Great Britain

## **Two out of five workers affected by unemployment:**

According to the figures released by Ms Harriet Harman, the Labour Party spokesperson on employment, on 28 December, about 10.8 million Britons experienced unemployment during the past five years—nearly two out of every five workers. She was quoting from an unpublished study by the Department of Employment.

The proportion is highest among men. About 6.9 million or 44 per cent of the male labour force had been jobless at some time since 1990. In the case of women, 3.9 million were affected, a third of the female labour force.

Ms Harman said: "These figures explain why people at work continue to feel insecure. They know from their own personal experience that unemployment is a threat which constantly hangs over them."

East Europe

## **WHO reports on Declining Health Standards**

The first major health status report since the fall of the centrally-planned economies issued by the European Office of the World Health Organisation (WHO)

states that average life expectancy has declined to 69.6 years as against 75.6 in the West.

"Health problems in the eastern countries include stagnating life expectancy, more premature deaths from chronic disease, outbreaks of communicable disease (particularly diphtheria) and increasing numbers of accidents," the report said.

The life expectancy of Russian men, which was 65 years in 1987, has plunged since 1991 to 59, before even reaching retirement age.

Vietnam:

### **Strikes and Protest Actions at Foreign-owned Enterprises**

According to Lao Dong newspaper, there have been 32 strike mainly in foreign-owned enterprises this year till October over wage disputes and repressive management methods.

Recently, over 300 workers in a textile mill owned by the South Korean company, Pang Rim, in Tiet Tri City went on strike in a dispute over wages and in protest against physical attacks on a worker by a supervisor.

*(From Page 45)*

steel it has been raised to Rs 10 and NTPC to Rs 15 per night shift workers.

The transport subsidy has been raised from Rs 2.30 per days attendance to Rs 3.50 while in steel it has been raised to Rs 5 per day.

Regarding pensionary benefits the amangement has agreed to give one additional increment (Rs 28-140) with effect from July 1, 1995 while the SAIL mangement has agreed to give Rs 75 to 145 from 1.4.1994. For lowest paid workers the contribution comes to Rs 168 during the entire period of agreement while for the highest paid workers the contribution would be only Rs 840. The pensionary benefits are bound to be extremely low for the coal miners.

The CITU learns that Singareni Colliery workers have rejected the agreement and are continuing their strike since 14th April 1995.

The CITU and the AICWF hopes that the CIL management will improve the benefits so that the final agreement will meet the aspirations of the coal workers.

The office bearers of the All India Coal Workers Federation will meet at Raniganj on 15th May 1995 and decide the future course of action.

## **Who Aids Whom?**

### **Who are the real beneficiaries?**

Economist Melvin Fagen analysing north-south capital flows, has pointed out that:

Third World countries now pay some USD 160 billion a year in interest amortisation and profit remittances to the rich creditor countries on debts of more than USD 1,500 billion;

These Third World payments amount to more than two thirds of the sums granted or being lent to these countries by creditor nations and international agencies. The result: the poor countries are perversely financing the development of the rich countries;

Impoverishment is increasing in the Third World. More than 1.2 billion people in these countries now live in absolute poverty, 100 million suffer from famine, and about 180 million children are undernourished.

He further wrote in the International Herald Tribune (9.11.94) that the IMF bears responsibility for poverty in the Third World: "It has imposed harsh austerity conditions on the poor countries for its aid and for the postponement of debt repayments;

Created inflation due to goods shortages and decontrolled prices; and required governmental budget retrenchment, resulting in reduced spending on public health, education and welfare.

He also pointed out, quoting President Clinton, that 3 million American jobs are being provided through US exports to the Third World. The most recent estimates show that by 2010 exports to Asia (except Japan) are likely to grow by 163 per cent, to USD 248 billion, and to Latin America by a similar percentage to USD 232 billion, while US exports to Japan would rise by only 70 per cent, to USD 88 billion.

# Messages from International Trade Unions on the Occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the CITU

## CGT, France

The French Confederation of Labour—(CGT)—extends its warmest greetings to the CITU on its 25th anniversary. Our organisations, during recent years in particular, have developed their links around often common problems facing the workers of our countries.

In India and in France the last period has been marked by powerful united strikes for wages against dismissals and privatisations, for the defence of the public sector.

More than ever this unity is essential for the winning of those major demands.

The CGT in line with its long tradition of solidarity assures the Indian workers and the CITU of its fraternal support and wishes full success to their present and future struggles for social justice, democratic and freedom to which all workers in the world aspire.

Fraternal greetings,

Sd/-

Alphonse Veronese  
Secretary of the CGT

in-charge of international relations World

## World Federation of Trade Unions, Prague

"We thank you for your letter of 1 March 1995 on the celebrations being planned to observe the 25th anniversary of the CITU.

On behalf of the WFTU, I have great pleasure to convey our fraternal greetings and goodwishes on the occasion of the 25th anniversary and to wish the CITU and all its members all success in their work. The WFTU highly appreciates the fraternal relations and cooperation between our two organisations and your active participation in the 13th World Trade Union Congress, contributing to the promotion of international trade union united action in defence of workers' rights and interests economic and social development, peace and social progress.

Assuring you of our international solidarity and looking forward to further strengthening our cooperation.

With warm greetings,

Yours fraternally,

Sd/- Alexander Zharikov  
General Secretary

## SOLIDARITY MESSAGE OF ZENROREN, JAPAN

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the foundation of Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU), National Confederation of Trade Unions (ZENROREN) wishes to convey its most respectful congratulations and fraternal solidarity greetings to your organisation and all its members.

We are very glad to see more and more consolidating fraternal relations which has been established between both organisations since the foundation of the ZENROREN five years ago.

The ZENROREN delegations were present at the 7th National Conference of CITU in Calcutta in February 1991 and the 8th Conference in Patna in March 1994. When the ZENROREN organised the Asia-Pacific Trade Union Symposium on "Workers' Rights, Human Rights and the Democratic Control of Multinational Corporations" in Japan in June-July 1995, we could receive a representative from your organisation. Both organisations have mutually supported struggles of workers in both countries against the GATT-Uruguay Round agreement and its ratification and against the anti-worker and anti-people policies of the Indian and Japanese governments such as privatisations and deregulation, and strengthened solidarity and cooperation in our struggle for elimination of nuclear arms and for world peace.

This relation originates in the struggles of both organisations for protection of interests and rights of the working class in both countries and for realisation of their demands.

The CITU has fought in protection of the interests of workers, farmers and other working people in India. The ZENROREN hopes that the CITU will play further a big rôle in the struggles for the protection of lives and rights of the workers and people and for national unity and sovereignty.

In the world after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States as the biggest imperialist state has been developing its military and economic strategy of hegemonism. Under the Japan-US military alliance, Japan has been turned to a sortie base of the US Forces as the biggest strategic point of the US in Asia. Murayama coalition cabinet, which was formed as a result of the absorption of Social Demo-

cratic Party into the reactionary politics of Liberal Democratic Party government has intensified the Japan-US military alliance in meeting with the expectation of the US increased military budget and taken various pro-big company measures, on one hand, and forced a series of anti-people policies such as cut in social welfare, increased consumption tax rate, destruction of agriculture, on the other. The ZENROREN is playing an important role as a national centre of trade unions fighting against the reactionary politics in the interests of the people, bearing a wing of progressive forces.

Japan's big monopoly corporations in the country now takes large-scale offensive against workers of wage restraint and dismissals under the name of "company restructuring," on the pretext of its "reduced competitiveness due to highly valued Japanese yen," on one hand, and they are more and more multinationalising their operations to shift their production overseas, saying "Profit-making place is my country" and if it's not profitable, just we leave Japan," on the other, while having inevitably caused the hollowing of industries and serious problems of employment and unemployment.

Multinational corporations have scored high accumulation of their profits by trampling upon workers' rights, human rights and trade union right in both home and host countries in order to place their workers under the circumstances where they cannot claim their own economic interest. Multinationals quite transparently influence for their own ends international institutions such as the IMF, the World Bank, the ADB and so on, and these institutions impose policies of privatisation and deregulation upon governments. These facts emphasise the necessity of the democratic control of multinationals as well as the democratic reformation of international financial institutions, and show that only international activity of trade unions in their solidarity will have any prospect of success.

We know that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, there is some confusion among the world trade union and progressive movements. On the other hand, in the deepening world-wide contradictions of capitalism, struggles of workers and people have newly launched now in Asia, Europe and in other continents of the world against attacks by reactionary governments, big monopoly corporations and multinational corporations such as reduction of living and working conditions, destruction of social security, privatisation of enterprise, unfair liberalization of trade and so on. The present conditions

around workers necessitates strengthening international solidarity and cooperation on common issues, based on the newly developing struggles in respective countries.

For this, the ZENROREN would like to redouble its efforts to promote dialogue, cooperation and solidarity among trade unions the world over and of the Asia and Pacific region, in particular, on the basis of making progress its struggles within the country.

This year, we will meet the 50th anniversary of the end of the World War SEcond and of the atomic-bombing in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We believe that only immediate and total elimination of unclear weapons is the most sound way to attain the world peace. We would sincerely like to take this opportunity to call on your organisation and its all members to promote signatures in support for the Appeal from Hiroshima and Nagasaki for the elimination of nuclear weapons and a campaign demanding the United Nation to conclude an international treaty on total banning on and elimination of nuclear weapons. Let us make a push together against reactionary policies of the governments and highhandedness of multinationals and for a nuclear-free and peaceful world.

The ZENROREN believes every success of the nation-wide grand celebrations of the CITU from 1st May onwards to massive rallies on 30th May throughout the country, and sincerely wishes your activity further advance on this particular occasion of the 25th anniversary of the CITU.

Sd/-  
Kanemichi KUMAGAI  
Secretary-General

### **Malaysian Trade Unions Congress**

On the occasion of the 25th Anniversary celebrations of the CENTRE of Indian Trade Unions we send our congratulations and best wishes on a quarter of a century of progress you can look back in pride on many achievements and march forward with hope and confidence.

Like trade unions all over the world, what you have been doing for the past 25 years has been important. important because your struggle has been about workers, their problems, their needs, their hopes, their aspirations and their dreams.

We wish you success in all your efforts.

Yours fraternally,  
Sd/-  
(G. RAJASEKARAN)  
Secretary General

## TUC, BRITAIN

Congratulations to the Centre of Indian Trade Unions on the Occasion of the 25th Anniversary of its foundation.

Greetings to all members, staff and officers from nearly seven and a half million members of the trade union congress in Britain.

We look forward to a continuing relationship of closer friendship and growing cooperation in the Next 25 Years and for many years after that.

John Monks  
General Secretary

Leif Mills  
President

## GENERAL FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS-IRAQ

"It is an honour to receive your letter of March 1, 1995 which we thank you for. We would like to express our deep gratitude and higher consideration for the continued sustained solidarity the friendly Indian people and working masses voiced in support of Iraqi people and working class who are confronting U.S. imperialism trying to impose their supremacy in all matters infringing the sovereignty and freedom of our people.

The U.S. are keeping their military bases in the region in order to further subjugate the peoples and continue tension in the shadow of espionage, black mailing and the economic blockade which is being continued in spite of the fact that Iraq has abided by all UN. unjust and brutal resolutions.

Allow me, dear comrades to convey to you heartfelt wishes on the occasion of completing 25 years of the friendly CITU existence, the GFTU, IRAQ peasants to you and the friendly Indian Working masses its cordial and fraternal greetings together with all best wishes for further progress and prosperity.

In a spirit of unity and international trade union solidarity everywhere we live and work we kindly request you again to ask the government of India to press on the Indian ambassador at the UN. for acting to alleviate the embargo after the full response by Iraq to the obligation of the UN. Dear Friends, Let us get to that work, let us work together. With highest consideration.

Sd/-  
Fadhil.M.Gharib  
President  
GFTU.IRAQ

## TRADES AND LABOUR COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

I write to express congratulations and solidarity to CITU on the occasion of its 25th Anniversary on 30 May, 1995. Over recent years there has been the emergence of a firm bond of friendship between our organisations. I hope that friendship can continue into the future with the shared ideal of worldwide improvement of living conditions for working people and their families. Never before in the history of working class struggle has there been greater need for existence of truly independent trade union organisations such as CITU. Please express our solidarity and appreciation to your members and activists on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary In Unity

Sd/-  
TONY COOKE,  
Acting Secretary

## COMMONWEALTH TRADE UNION COUNCIL, LONDON

The Commonwealth Trade Union Council takes this opportunity to send to CITU, on the occasion of its 25th Anniversary, fraternal greetings and best wishes. The partnership established between our organisations is based on shared values which aim to promote, defend and build practical solidarity between trade union throughout the Commonwealth. These values are the foundations on which we both commit ourselves:

- \* to equality and collective organisation
  - \* to the common cause of labour throughout the Commonwealth
  - \* to build strong democratic and sustainable trade unions in free societies
- This partnership places a high value on the provision of education for all through training for life. We share the concern for a common future in a Commonwealth that will bring a sustainable world for the benefit of all. We look forward to continuing our partnership in the future with CITU.

Bob White  
Chairperson CTUC  
Yours fraternally  
Sd/-  
Arthur Johnstone  
Director CTUC

## ALL-CHINA FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS, BEIJING

On the occasion of the 25th anniversaries of the

Centre of Indian Trade Unions, I would like to, on behalf of the All-China Federation of Trade Unions and its 103 million members, to extend to you and through you, to your trade union members, our warmest congratulations and cordial greetings.

During its glorious 25 years of existence, the Centre of Indian Trade unions, by uniting with Indian working class, has made unremitting efforts and effective work in a drive to develop Indian national economy and safeguard the rights and interests of Indian workers. What you have done has written a glorious page in the history of Indian Labour movement. We heartedly wish you to gain new and fresh achievements on your way marching forward!

We are very pleased to note that, for a long time, we have enjoyed a close and fraternal relationship between the All-China Federation of Trade Unions and the Centre of Indian Trade Unions. We have shared a very cooperative relations in the arena of the international trade union movements. And we sincerely cherish this deep friendship. We are determined to make continuous efforts to further enhance the mutual understanding and friendship between our two trade union organizations.

Long live the friendship between the peoples and workers of China and India.

Wei Jianxing,  
Sd/-

Chairman All-China Federation of Trade Unions

### CONGRESS OF UNIONS OF EMPLOYEES IN THE PUBLIC AND CIVIL SERVICES

(cuepacs), Kuala Lumpur)

The Congress of Unions in The public And Civil Services (CUEPACS) Malaysia extends its warmest solidarity greetings to the Centre of Indian Trade Unions in conjunction with its Silver Jubilee celebrations.

2. CUEPACS and CITU have all along maintained strong ties and have taken common stand on issues affecting universal labour. It is through such bonded relations we have been able to sustain. CUEPACS hopes that in the century to come we will be even able to work more closely on universal labour matters.

Once again wishing CITU a memorable Silver Jubilee celebrations.

Yours fraternally,  
Sd/-  
(A H Ponnaiah)  
Secretary General

### National Association of Trade Unions, Manila

On behalf of the National Association of Trade Unions (NATU) and its affiliated organisations, please extend our warmest greetings and solidarity to all the members of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions on the occasion of its 25th year founding anniversary.

The 25 years of your organisations existence proved your contribution to the trade union movement. We are re-affirming our continued cooperation and bilateral relations between our two organisations for the upliftment of workers rights and interest and the establishment of an independent and peaceful Asian Region without any foreign domination and subjugation.

Again, our warmest regards on the continued success of your organisation's endeavours.

Fraternally yours,  
Sd/-

Vicente S Bate, President

### Pancyprian Public Employees Trade Union, Nicosia

On the occasion of the completion of 25 years of existence of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions, on the 30th of May 1995, I would like on behalf of my organisation, to convey to you our warmest greetings and solidarity with your Centre and your struggles for improvement of working conditions and benefits of your members and the Indian people in general.

Both our people have suffered a lot in the past and they are entitled for a better life and progress in all fields.

With our best wishes,

Yours sincerely,  
Sd/- A Polyviou  
Gen. Secretary

### JICHIROREN, Japan

The Japan Federation of Prefectural and Municipal Workers' Unions (Jichiroren) offers its respectful congratulations and solidarity greetings on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the foundation of Centre of Indian Trade Unions.

Since its foundation, the CITU has fought to improve the life of workers and other working people in India. The Jichiroren pays its respects to your and expects the CITU to play a much bigger role in the struggle to defend the life and rights of the Indian working people.

In Japan, the Murayama Cabinet was formed after the Social Democratic Party was absorbed into the reactionary politics of the conservative Liberal

Democratic Party. It is carrying out a series of anti-people policies such as welfare cuts, increase in mass taxation called the consumption tax and destruction of agriculture.

It is also promoting "restructuring" of local self-governing bodies, and making an attempt to cut services for their regional residents and reduce the number of municipal workers, so as to make local governments organisations serving for big monopoly corporations. The Jichirooren and its all members are making efforts to extend its struggle against the reactionary policies of the government in cooperation with local people.

We wish both your struggle and ours will further advance and through it, the democratic and class-based workers' movements and their solidarity around the world will be strengthened.

Our sincere organisations to the CITU again. Wishing every success of your nation-wide grade celebrations of the 25th anniversary.

Sd/- Yoji Kobayashi, President

Sd/- Yuzuru Fukushima, Secretary General

### **International Centre for Trade Union Rights, London**

"The International Centre for Trade Union Rights sends warm fraternal greetings to the Centre of Indian Trade Unions on the occasion of its 25th Anniversary.

The CITU is a valued member of the international trade union community and widely respected for its loyalty to militant class policies and for its internationalism.

Long live international working class solidarity!  
Long live the CITU!

With comradely greetings and regards,

Yours sincerely,

Sd/- Tom Sibley, Executive Secretary

### **All Pakistan Federation of Trade Unions**

On behalf of the members of our organisation and myself, I feel it my great privilege to convey sincere felicitation on the eve of 25th anniversary of Centre of Indian Trade Unions. Pakistan being a part of Third World and a close neighbour of India, share many common values and their working class strives for achieving prosperity and fighting out against the evils of ignorance and diseases and promotion of safety and health at work place and abolishing social deprivation of down trodden. These efforts are required to be strengthened by mutual cooperation and

respect of principles of freedom of association by Government of each nation in order to establish peace in accordance with the United Nations Charter so that labour movement can achieve success for solution of their common problems at the earliest. We wish that struggle of Indian working class under your able leadership would be galvanised for achieving these objectives.

With best regards and fraternal greetings

Yours sincerely,

Sd/- Khurshid Ahmed

General Secretary

### **National Union of Mineworkers, Barnsley**

"On behalf of the National Union of Mineworkers I would like to convey warm fraternal greetings on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions.

The British NUM and Indian Trade Union Movement (Particularly mineworkers) have always had close links, particularly in times of crisis and when we have been involved in industrial struggle. We wish you every success in the future and look forward to you celebrating the next 25 years as successfully as you have in the past.

Yours fraternally,

Sd/- A Scargill, President

### **Canadian Labour Congress**

"On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the CITU, the Canadian labour Congress is most pleased to express best wishes and congratulations for your service to the working people of India. We wish you continued success in your efforts to promote the interests of the working men and women of your country.

In solidarity

Sd/- Rober White, President

### **RUM The Railwaymen's Union of Malaya**

The Railwaymen's Union of Malaya (RUM) congratulates the CITU on their 25th Anniversary celebrations and wishes the Centre all the best of success in their endeavours and struggles towards achieving social justice for the workers.

It is sincerely hoped that this historic nationwide celebrations will be productive and in line with your struggle for workers rights.

Wishing a pleasant celebration.

Yours fraternally,

Sd/- S Veerasingam, General Secretary

## Indian Workers' Association Great Britain

IWAGB sends revolutionary greetings on the occasion of 25 years of CITU's struggle to defend and advance workers rights it represents in India and its contributions to international trade unionism. Throughout this period CITU stood in solidarity with international working people struggle against imperialism.

under the dictates of the World Bank and IMF government of India have given in to privatisation of Indian nation's assets causing retrenchment, redundancies and inflationary hype. The cause of working people in India is under severe attack.

IWAGB believes that the might of multinational companies could only be confronted by a united working class movement in India as well as internationally. The unity of trade union movement, we believe is vital to confront imperialist onslaught through IMF World Bank and Multinational Companies.

There are several trade union centres in India. Their members face a common onslaught on jobs, working conditions, living wage/salary and amenities for living. IWAGB will be pleased to see more unity in actions with an aim to organise an umbrella group of all trade union centres on similar line the TUC is organised in the UK.

Since 1938, from the day of its foundation, IWA have consistently supported Indian people struggle for independence until 1947 and the struggle for people democracy since then. In current situation mutual support between British and Indian workers is necessary when multinational are shifting their productions from Britain to India and other countries in Asia and Africa.

IWAGB pledge to continue its solidarity with CITU and working people of India.

Workers of the world unite.

Please send CITU's celebration programme

Yours sincerely,

Sd/- Avtar Singh Jouhl, General Secretary

## Central Council of Afghanistan Trade Unions

Thank you so much indeed for your letter dt march 1, 1995. The Central Council of the Union of Afghanistan Employees CCUAE highly appreciates having and enjoying extensive ties with the organs and peoples of our two countries. We consider the welfare of the friendly Indian nation as a considerable success on your part and pleasingly acknowledge

the performance of your organ therefore we proclaim our solidarity with you.

Allow me, please, to express my sincere greetings and congratulations on behalf of the governing body of our organisation and the entire employees of our country, on the 25th anniversary of the CITU to you and through you to all of your members. We also appreciate the measures which have been adopted to this end.

We are fully confident that our friendship and cooperation shall expand further in the future.

Allowing myself of this opportunity I would like to anew my congratulations to all of you and wish you every success.

Sincerely yours,

Sd/- Abdul Habib Hardamshahid, President,  
CCUAE

## General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions

"On behalf of General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions(GEFONT) we wish our heartiest congratulation and greetings on the occasion of 25th anniversary of the CITU

It is known to us that the reorganisation initiation of seriously split trade union movement in India taken by Com.Ranadive, which ultimately gave birth of the pro worker trade union centre the CITU in 1970s. The emergence of CITU not only encouraged Indian trade unionist but also greatly impressed to gear up to the pro-worker trade unionism particularly in the Third World.

This year CITU has completed successfully 25 years of its formation. We can feel hard labour and continued efforts of its leader to bring CITU at this height. We would like to take opportunity to salute and offer homage to CITU's late founding leader Com. Ranadive whose unique contribution to lead Indian trade union movement is most appreciable. Comrades,

As you know, we Nepalese trade unionist are also trying almost to march forward with the experience gained by trade union movement of neighboring countries and our own kinds of experience our movement, in fact, was inspired by Indian trade union movement in the past. The CITU's performance, too, has deeply influenced to our work.

We greets to CITU and its all member on its 25th ANNIVERSARY. We expect CITU will successful to forward the movement towards progress and benefits of the working people in India furthermore. We are confident that our bilateral relationship will more

strengthen in the days to come.

**MAY DAY 1995 GREETINGS!**

Comradely yours,  
Sd/-Mukunda Neupane  
Chairman  
GEFONT National Committee

### **Bangladesh Agricultural Farm Labour Federation**

I am extremely happy to congratulate you on the occasion of 30th anniversary of your organisation.

I hope and expect that the bondage of friendship between our two organisation will expand in many ways as we are struggling for same cause.

I express my firm solidarity with you.

With best regards,

Sd/- Nurul Anwar  
General Secretary, Bangladesh Agricultural  
Farm Labour Federation

### **Ceylon Federation of Trade Unions**

The Ceylon Federation of Trade Unions has great please in sending its fraternal greetings on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions, which falls on 30th May 1995.

At a time the world trade union movement is facing problems, especially after the collapse of socialism in Europe, due to the offensive of the multinational corporations and the local capitalist class, it is heartening to note that the CITU has been marching forward throughout its journey of 25 years by firmly defending the rights of the Indian working class and TU movement.

Though the CITU is twenty five years old, it has much longer traditions. The CITU was born under the inspiring revolutionary leadership of the Late leader B T Ranadive and since its inception it has dedicated itself for the cause of the working class and exploited people. The CITU also has been campaigning for the unity of the Indian trade union movement so that it could act as a powerful bulwark against exploitation and play vital role for social change.

We are happy to maintain cordial and fraternal relationship with the CITU. We share common ideology and common programme in the struggle against capitalism, imperialism and neo-colonialism.

We wish the CITU great success on the occasion of its twenty fifth anniversary.

Long live the CITU, Long live the relationship between the CFTU and CITU!

OA Ramiah - Vice President, Ceylon Federation of Trade Unions.

### **Ceylon Federation of Trade Unions**

The Ceylon Federation of Trade Unions warmly felicitates the Centre of Indian Trade Unions on the occasion of its 25th anniversary.

Since its establishment, the CITU has been in the forefront of the struggle of the Indian working class, against imperialism, for the defence of workers' rights, and for democracy and world peace. Its outstanding gains and victories in struggles against local and foreign reaction, whenever they attempted to tread on workers' and democratic rights, are well known. CITU has courageously stood against communalism for secularism and for the national unity of India, your victories and experiences have been a source of inspiration to working people of the entire Indian sub-continent and in far off lands as well.

Today, the workers of the whole world, especially of the developing countries, are faced with the disastrous policies of imperialist financial agencies such as the IMF and the World Bank, which lead to greater impoverishment of the working people and make them victims of saveae market forces. The growing foreign debt burden and the neo-liberal policies imposed by imperialism are undermining national independence of our countries. A worldwide onslaught has been let loose against labour to rob them of rights won in years of struggle. While expressing our deep gratitude for the solidarity and cooperation the CITU have always extended to our federation, in our struggles for basic rights, democracy and national unity, we look forward to closer cooperation in our common endeavours in the present grave world situation.

We wish you every success in your future struggles and a glorious future for the Indian working class.

Long live International Working Class Solidarity  
Yours fraternally,

Sd/- D W Subasinghe, General Secretary

### **Ceylon Federation of Labour**

The Ceylon Federation of Labour(CFL) is pleased to send its warm fraternal greetings to the Centre of Indian Trade Unions on the occasion of its 25th anniversary which falls on 30th May 1995.

The CFL values the growing bonds of friendship and solidarity between our two organisations. We believe it has to be so particularly in the present context of continuing attacks on worker rights by the capitalist class both local and foreign. With the internationalisation of capital and the penetration of MNCs the need to forge closer links with organised labour

internationally has become paramount and urgent. The World Bank, the IMF and other multi-lateral aid agencies have successfully inveigled the ruling classes to pursue policies which are primarily aimed at making the rich richer and the poor poorer. They have been successful in this venture due to the collapse of the system that prevailed in the former USSR and Eastern Europe and other countries that emulated them. International capital today stand emboldened and seeks to push its way through repression and intensified exploitation. In this situation, the international working class has to close ranks in defence of its hard won rights.

We are aware that the CITU is in the forefront of this struggle in India. We have closely followed the activities of the CITU and the many campaigns it is leading to mobilise workers to fight back attacks on their rights and to safeguard their interests.

Similarly, in Sri Lanka we are presently engaged in the struggle to win trade union recognition in foreign-funded business ventures. The CFL together with other trade union organisations in the country have launched a campaign to make all the provisions of the workers charter which has been drawn up by a tripartite committee set up by the Government of Sri Lanka.

The Ceylon Federation of Labour extend to your organisation its very best wishes on the occasion of your 25th anniversary. Yours fraternally,

Sd/- S Siriwardene,  
General Secretary

### **Trade Unions Federation of the Republic of Kazakhstan**

Allow me, on behalf of the Trade Unions Federation of the Republic of Kazakhstan, fraternally greet you with the 25th anniversary of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions.

To us, the Indian trade unions are well-known as tireless fighters for the rights and interests of the working people, for a better life and working conditions, democratic freedom and social progress.

Between Indian and Kazakhstan there were established and are developing all-round state, political, economical and cultural relations. The people of our countries are striving to become more close and sincere friends.

The trade unions should make a valuable contribution to this noble deed. We fully agree with your view, that the trade union cooperation gives us a

mutually beneficial use of our and your experience and potentials, thus making it easier to solve mutual problems that are arising before us in this changing world. The trade unions friendship must be for the common cause-well-being of our two countries and peaceful disposition.

As it is known, in Kazakhstan and other republics of the former Soviet Union, fundamental and painful social and political changes are going on.

In this situation the trade unions federation of Kazakhstan which unites over six million members and about 50 branch and regional trade unions centres, on its 16th Congress which took place at the end of March 1995 worked out a common platform, defined the strategy and tactics of its activities. upholding the position of equal social partnership being a constructive opposition to the government the federation resolutely comes out against the mass unemployment, poverty unfair privatisation, against corruption, crimes and bribery. The trade unions choice is immutable: A working man - a worthy life! We are for stable and peaceful relations as in our country, so as in the whole Asia-Pacific region.

The documents adopted on the Congress the speech of the president of the Republic of Kazakhstan N A Nazarbayev on the Congress received a wide positive resonance in the country.

Acting in the new social and conomic situation we are interested in your experience, in the experience of the trade unions of India, where as it is known, a process inculcating in market economy is going on for a number of years. We fully agree with you that privatisation, liberalisation must not be the cause of liquidating the social achievements, guarantees and privileges which are enjoyed by the workers. Together with you we are against such reconstruction of the economy which pull the people into a bigger poverty.

Dear Friends, It is absolutely evident that the workers will not get anything will not obtain anything without a struggle, without a strong and organised trade union movement. Today, on the 25th anniversary we declare our firm solidarity with the Centre of Indian Trade Unions and wish the leaders, to all trade unions active workers, working people all kinds of success in your noble deeds and to great India—prosperity.

Sd/- Srabek Moukachev President of the Trade  
Unions Federation of the Republic of Kazakhstan

□

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TO CITU ON ITS SILVER JUBILEE*

*From*

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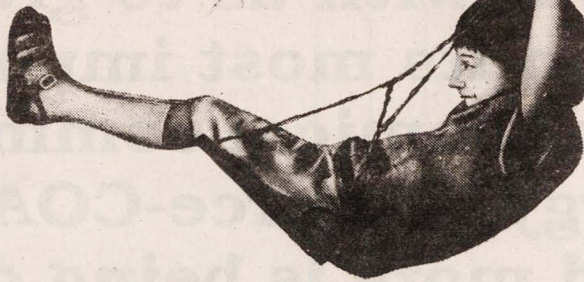
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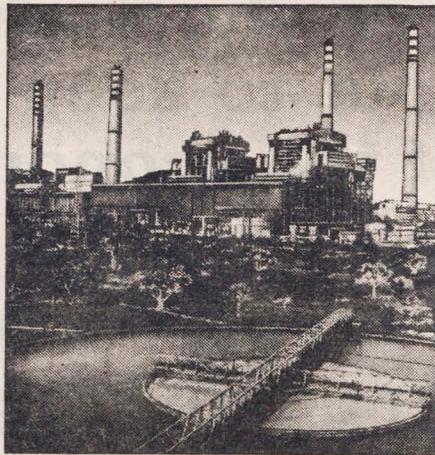
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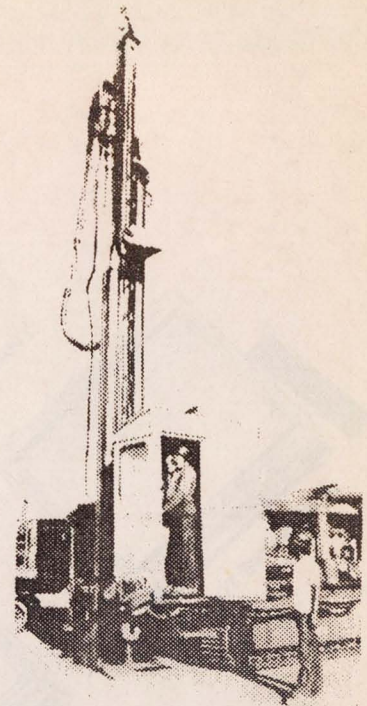
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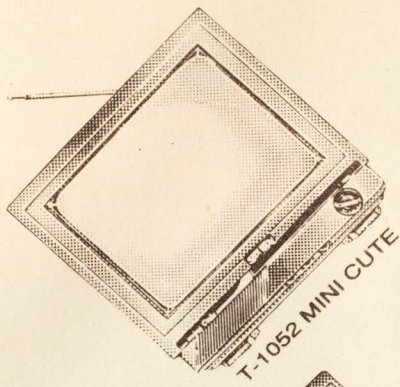
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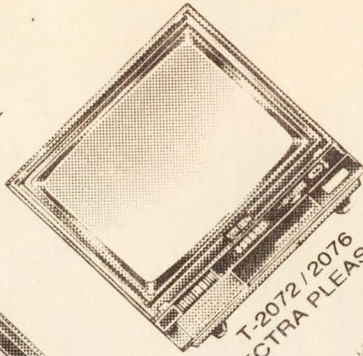


# indian pilots' guild

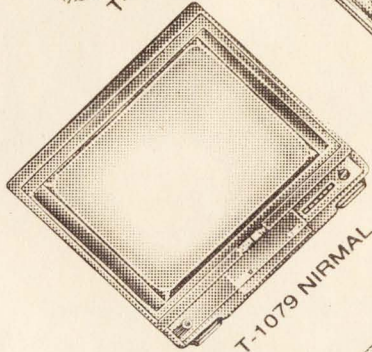
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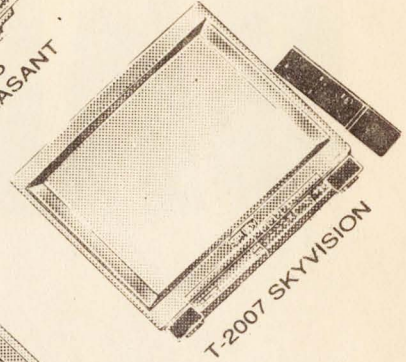
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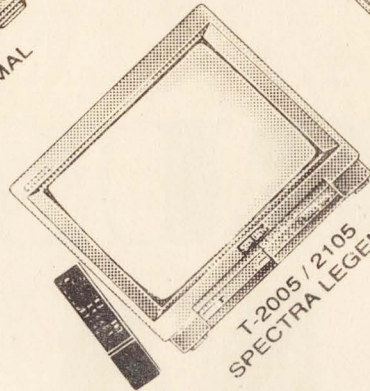
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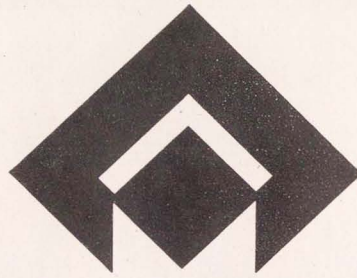
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