



THE WORKING CLASS

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Massive Trade Union Convention Against Communalism

P. K. Ganguly

As decided in the joint meeting of the major Central Trade Unions held at the CITU Central office on July 12, a massive all India convention against communalism and divisive forces was organised at V. P. House Lawns, New Delhi on September 19 jointly by the CITU, AITUC, INTUC, HMS, UTUC, UTUC (LS) and TUCC. The NLO also extended support to the convention, although it could not attend it.

About 3,000 workers including a large number of women attended the convention. The overwhelming majority of the participants were from the CITU. They came almost from all the States. The maximum participants were of course from North Indian States like the Punjab, where the workers are engaged in a grim struggle against the Khalistani secessionists, and UP, where they have launched an unprecedented and continuous campaign against the nefarious game of the VHP-RSS-BJP combine to erupt a communal conflagration through their bid to start construction of the Ram temple at the disputed spot from October 30, followed by Rajasthan, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh. Bengal, Bihar, Maharashtra, Kerala, Tamilnadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and other states sent optimum number of workers, giving the convention a true national shape.

The participation of workers from the organised sector and the unorganised sector of various industries, from the public and private sectors, by Government employees, representing various national federations and unions, other middle class employees and the capacity contribution made by the other trade unions demonstrated the common concern of all sections of the workers irrespective of political affiliations over the depredations perpetrated by the divisive forces, and their united will to clearly identify and isolate divisive forces of all sorts from the mainstream of the people and safeguard the unity and integrity of the country. And, the Declaration, unanimously adopted by the convention did identify the communal, secessionist and other divisive forces as

the RSS, VHP, BJP, Bajarang Dal, Jamaite Islami, the Khalistanis, ULFA, etc.

It is to be noted that the only Central Trade Union which refused to participate in the convention was the BMS. It objected to the identification of the RSS as a communal force. Obviously so, because its base in RSS, one of the most notorious communal outfits of the country trying to infiltrate into the trade unions to disrupt the class unity of the workers. It tried to sabotage the convention by desperately trying to wean away some other trade unions from this joint effort. But the RSS had long before thoroughly exposed itself to the skin and marked itself as a detestable organisation of rabid Hindu communalism before the eyes of the secular and democratic forces of the country. The BMS laid bare its direct link with the RSS by refusing to identify it as a communal force and to participate in the convention and further by trying to sabotage it. The urge of all the participating trade unions to establish a new unity to contain the communal forces frustrated the designs of the BMS.

The convention was conducted by a presidium consisting of M. K. Pandhe (CITU), B. D. Joshi (AITUC), S. N. Rao (INTUC), A. D. Nagpal (HMS), Sushil Bhattacharjee (UTUC); Gyan Singh (UTUC-LS) and D. D. Shastri (TUCC). The speakers from the Central Trade Unions were Md. Amin (CITU), K. L. Mahendra (AITUC), M. N. Joshi (INTUC), Brij Mohan Toofan (HMS), Nani Bhattacharjee (UTUC), Chitta Basu (TUCC) and Pritish Chanda (UTUC-LS). The other speakers included the leaders of several national Federations, viz Suryanarayan Rao, Amarnath (CITU), M. N. Joshi (INTUC), Veereshwar Tiyyagi (HMS), Sri Krishna (AITUC), Bhagwan Singh (UTUC), R. K. Sharma (UTUC-LS), D. D. Shastri (TUCC), etc.

In an unambiguous manner the speakers pinpointed to the communal and secessionist forces as above and called for broad based unity of the trade

unions to come to the forefront to carry forward a countrywide campaign to isolate those forces to defend the unity and integrity of the country. In keeping with the current volatile situation created on the question of Ramjanam Bhoomi, the RSS, BJP and the VHP came, in particular, under scathing criticism.

Md. Amin precisely pointed to the four main areas which acted as the hotbeds of the activities of the divisive forces which were aided and abetted by imperialism to destabilise the entire country. He pointed to the secessionist role of the Islamic fundamentalist force Jamaite Islami and the J. K. Liberation Front in Kashmir which under direct help from the USA, based its activities from Pakistan and were being trained there to dismember India. The same game was open with respect to the secessionist activities of the Khalistanis in Punjab. A similar secessionist danger loomed large with the growing activities of the ULFA in Assam. When the workers in these areas were martyred while defending the unity and integrity of the country, the BJP-RSS-VHP combine jumped into the fray with their Hindu communalism to engulf the country with a communal holocaust by floating a fictitious story of Ram Janam Bhoomi and audaciously going ahead to build a Ram temple at the disputed spot at Ayodhya by demolishing the Babri Masjid. This BJP again wanted to further fuel up the situation in Kashmir also by demanding to abrogate the Article 370 of the Constitution and thereby alienating the people of Kashmir from the mainstream of the Indian population. He expressed serious concern over the communal riots which entered even the industrial cities like, Kanpur, Jamshedpur, Kota, Ahmedabad, etc. He expressed satisfaction that despite the desperate bid of the VHP-RSS-BJP, the people of UP refused to be affected by their communal virus and voted the left candidates of CPI and CPI (M) as the MP and MLA from these areas. He warmly congratulated the working class and the people of UP for waging a relentless campaign and organising massive rallies in all the districts of the State which are to culminate in a massive central rally at Lucknow on October 12. He attributed the coming together of the trade unions to fight the menace of the divisive forces as a great achievement of the trade union movement in the country. It was the biggest congregation of the workers uniting all the major trade union centres on a vital national question to defend the unity of the working class and integrity of the country leaving aside for the time being their day to day struggle on the economic demands. He called upon the workers to consolidate the unity and come forward as the greatest force against the communal and secessionist forces. He also warned those forces that made compromise with the communal and divisive forces.

K. L. Mahendra of AITUC made a scathing criticism of the RSS-BJP-VHP for their preparation to construct the Ram temple declining to accept the verdict of the court and called upon the workers to frustrate their attempt. Brij Mohan Toofan of HMS lambasted the three organisations and dissected their

role tearing apart the veil separating them. He warned the trade union movement of the trade union wing of the RSS which tended to vitiate the working class unity by playing their Hindu communal card. M. N. Joshi of INTUC who came from UP, extended full support to the convention and promised INTUC's participation in the joint trade union movement to isolate the divisive forces. All other speakers kept up the same tempo and expressed active support of their trade unions in the struggle against the divisive forces. They condemned the programme of Parikrama at Ayodhya planned by the VHP, Bajarang Dal, etc and the Ratha Yatra programme made by L. K. Advani from Somanath to Ayodhya which were deliberate plans to stoke up communal polarisation in the entire country. The workers demonstrated their anger against these parasitic forces and their resolve for joint action, by raising repeated slogans after each speech.

The Declaration of the Convention was adopted with deafening slogans. The Declaration called upon all the participating unions to organise statewide, districtwise, region wise and local base joint conventions mobilising maximum number of workers culminating in the observance of a week of demonstrations and rallies all over the country and in all industrial cities and places from October 24 to 30, 1990 to frustrate the move of the VHP-BJP-RSS to start construction of the temple at the disputed spot. The convention further called upon the workers to carry forward the struggle thereafter to isolate these divisive forces completely from the people.

As planned earlier, a procession was taken out from the convention place thereafter. Large sections of workers particularly from the adjoining states and areas had come to join the rally. The procession swelled to several thousands and with large number of banners and flags it took a mammoth shape. It was a unique scene. Even a heavy downpour could not dampen the spirit of the workers. Drenched through and through the procession reached the Jantar Mantar crossing and dispersed as per the programme fixed earlier.

CITU Secretariat's Call for Implementation of Programme

The Secretariat of the CITU met on September 22 to review the Convention against Communalism and endorsed the programme. All State Committees, federations and unions are to take initiative to organise joint conventions at State and District Levels and in all industrial centres. Massive posterings should be made in all places. The Declaration of the Convention should be printed in regional congress and distributed among the workers and employees in thousands. Joint rallies, demonstrations, etc. should be organised in a massive way during the week from October 24 to 30, 1990.

Declaration adopted at the National Convention Against Communalism

This National Trade Union Convention, being held on September 19, 1990 under the joint sponsorship of the INTUC, HMS, AITUC, CITU, UTUC-LS, TUCC, UTUC and NLO to mark the launching of a nation-wide campaign against communalism, is gravely concerned over the alarming threat to the unity and integrity of the country arising out of the activities of various shades of divisive forces.

This Trade Union Convention against Communalism warns the country's working class against the dangers posed by religious, fundamentalist and communal forces who have intensified their divisive activities at the instigation of both internal and external forces who are out to destabilise the country. Bigoted fundamentalist organisations like the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and Babri Masjid Action Committee are systematically whipping up the communal emotions of the people at large, thus bringing the country's unity and integrity into jeopardy. The decision of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad to commence the construction of the temple on the disputed spot at Ayodhya on October 30, 1990 and demolition of the Babri Masjid is a deliberate move to stoke the religious frenzy of the gullible people as to create an explosive situation in the country.

Organisations and parties like the R.S.S., B.J.P., Bajarang Dal, Muslim League, Jamaite Islami, etc. are spreading communalism in a sustained manner to get their own narrow ends served. Added to these is the unabated terrorism of the secessionist forces in Jammu and Kashmir as well as of the Khalistanis in Punjab who are receiving all active support including finance, training and equipment from the Pakistani rulers. There is also the organised destruction of life and property by the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA).

These communal elements derive support and inspiration from dictatorial, sectarian and parochial organisations like the Shiv Sena in Maharashtra, who never let go any opportunity to aggravate dissensions and foment violence. This convention reaffirms its total opposition to the grant of any concessions that will undermine the supremacy of the Indian Constitution. The country's secular character should be preserved and promoted at all cost.

The country's trade union movement, which has been free from religious, fundamentalist, communal, casteist, linguistic and other obscurantist influences, can ill afford to remain a mute witness to the recent outbreak of communal violence in industrial centres

like Jamshedpur, Ranchi, Bhagalpur, Meerut, Hyderabad, Kanpur, Kota, Ahmedabad and Baroda engineered by these chauvinistic elements in a bid to drive a wedge in the solidarity of the working class.

This Convention emphasises the importance of the role of trade unions as the most effective instrument to combat these divisive forces by forging the solidarity of the working class for maintaining the country's unity and integrity.

This Convention exhorts the people in general and the working class in particular to identify and isolate the communal, divisive, disruptive, secessionist, terrorist and other such fissiparous elements and frustrate their sinister designs without hurting the religious susceptibilities of any community.

This convention calls, upon all the unions affiliated to various trade union centres, who are united in this campaign against communalism, to foil all attempts of forming trade unions based on community, caste, religion or on any such sectarian lines and also refuse to have any truck with such forces.

This convention further calls on all the unions affiliated to different centres gathered on this platform to extend the scope of this campaign by organising such anti-communal conventions at important industrial centres in various states. There is the imperative need to build a continuing awareness movement for national integration. This convention calls upon all workers and their trade union, irrespective of their affiliation, to effectively demonstrate their solidarity and firm determination to defend the secular character and integrity of our country by holding joint rallies, demonstrations, etc. against communalism and other divisive forces during the week from October 24 to 30, 1990.

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Com: E. Padmanabhan

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions expresses deep sorrow at the untimely passing away of Com. E. Padmanabhan, Working Committee member of the CITU, on September 18 at Delhi. Com. Padmanabhan had reached Delhi on the day to attend the All India Trade Union Convention Against Communalism and Divisive Forces, held at Delhi on September 19. Shortly after his arrival in the evening, he had a massive heart attack. He was immediately taken to the Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital. But he died on the way itself.

Com. Padmanabhan was only 58. He was also a member of the Kerala State Committee of CPI (M), Secretary of the Palghat District Committee of CITU, General Secretary of the All India Road Transport Workers Federation, Working Committee member of Sugar Workers' Federation of India and Vice President of the All India State Govt. Employees Federation.

Com. Padmanabhan was an employee of the Kerala State Government. By dint of his hard and dedicated work he came to leading positions in various mass organisations of the Government and industrial workers. He resigned from his service to devote whole time work in the CITU and the party.

He worked wholeheartedly for the development of the Communist movement in Kerala fighting in a steadfast manner against the casteist and communal forces in the State, as well as against both the left and right deviations, strictly adhering to the principles of Marxism-Leninism. In a natural process he became a leader of the working class movement in Kerala and in the country.

The CITU dips its red banner paying homage to Com. Padmanabhan and sends its heartfelt condolences to the bereaved members of his Family.

Road Transport Workers' Federation Pays Homage

The following statement has been issued by All India Road Transport Workers' Federation:

The Working Committee meeting of the All India Road Transport Workers Federation held on 20th September at New Delhi under the Presidentship of Com. Sujit Das expresses its deep sense of grief at the passing away of Com. E. Padmanabhan, General Secretary of this Federation following a massive heart attack at night on 18th September in Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital, New Delhi. He came to Delhi to participate in the All India T.U. Convention Against Communalism and a meeting of the Working Committee of the All India Road Transport Workers Federation.

Com. Padmanabhan was elected General Secretary of the All India Road Transport Federation in its 3rd Conference, held at Palghat, Kerala from 28th to 30th September 1989.

Com. Padmanabhan was a State Government Employee of Kerala. He resigned from his service to become full time functionary in the T.U. movement. He was a Vice-President of the All India State Government Employees' Federation, Secretary Palghat Dist. Committee of CITU, Working Committee member of Kerala State Committee of CITU and Working Committee member of CITU. He was a member of the Kerala State Committee of the CPI-(M). He was a prominent working class leader of Kerala including Railway workers. This meeting pledges to carry forward his work left by him.

The Working Committee of the All India Road Transport Workers Federation condoles with a heavy heart the passing away of Com. E. Padmanabhan and pays homage to his memory and conveys its condolence to his family members.

Steel Minister Assures Early Clearance of IISCO (Burnpur) Modernisation Programme

Shri Dinesh Goswami, Minister of Steel & Mines reiterated on the 24th August 1990 in New Delhi his earlier declaration saying that there will be no going back on IISCO modernisation. It was given out that the whole matter has been cleared by him and would be in the hands of Project Investment Board (PIB) in a week. The time needed to get PIB clearance and Cabinet approval will be about two months. The union leaders wanted a deadline for all the formalities to complete and Shri Goswami declared in categorical terms that the clearance would be obtained before December 1990 in any case.

As for Kulti Works of IISCO Shri Goswami clar-

ified that there was a proposal for converting Kulti Works into a central workshop of engineering and foundry of SAIL and this proposal was under active consideration. So far as anciliarisation is concerned, the minister assured that the Chief Minister, West Bengal was in touch in this respect. The Govt. is fully conscious about the prospects of extensive anciliarisation of Durgapur and Burnpur area. Shri Goswami agreed to examine a proposal to construct a bridge over the river Damodar.

The delegation comprised representatives of

(Cont'd on page 21)

Public Sector Workers' Strike on October 12

* Immediate Settlement on DA Rates

* Clearance of Pension Schemes

* Withdrawal of Bonus Ceiling

The CPSTU in its New Delhi meeting of 23rd September decided for one day's countrywide strike in Central Public Sector Enterprises on 12th October 1990. The Committee of Public Sector Trade Unions through a press release issued on the same evening expressed that the failure of the Government to fulfil its commitments in settling the disputes concerning DA rates, withdrawal of ceiling on eligibility and entitlement of bonus payment, and finalisation of pension schemes in Public Sector has compelled the Committee for taking the strike decision. The Committee has through separate letters to the Union Finance Minister and the Labour Minister requested for their intervention in resolving the disputes at the earliest.

The CPSTU has called upon the Public Sector unions to make massive preparations of the strike and to observe 5th October as Demand Day by organising joint rallies, demonstrations and conventions.

The CITU Secretariat endorsed the strike decision and called upon all affiliates and the friendly unions to step up massive preparations for the strike involving the local affiliates of the other trade union centres. CITU called upon all the unions to send reports about the campaign to its Central Office. Reports have reached that the Joint Action Front, Bangalore and the Hyderabad Co-ordination Committee and other Centres have also endorsed the strike call.

Observance of Protest Day on 14th September.

In the meantime reports on the observation of Protest Day on 14th September are reaching the Central Office of the CITU. The Co-ordination Committee of Public Sector Unions had given the call earlier. In major areas of the Steel and Coal industries the day was observed through demonstrations and meetings. Dissatisfaction amongst the coal workers is so deep that all the trade unions, including the INTUC, have called for strike in the Coal industry through a joint statement. In BHEL and other sectors of industries also the response was good. In Gaziabad unit of Central Electronics Ltd., workers observed the day through badge wearing and dharna. In the mass meeting organised by the CEL Employees Union, supporters of other unions also participated. In many units of Hyderabad the day was observed. The Bangalore Co-ordination Committee of Public Sector Unions had decided for Dharna in front of the Governors'

House. But due to the coercive measures adopted by the state administration the programme could not be materialised. All the leaders including Com. Suryanarayana Rao, the State President of CITU were arrested from the spot. Police action was severely criticised by the workers and also by local press.

All Public Sector Unions should take the following steps to make the Public Sector Workers strike on 12th October a success.

1. Serve strike notice to the respective managements.
2. Make out programme of joint campaign.
3. Observe 5th October as protest day jointly with all unions.

CPSTU Communique

The following Communique has been issued by the Committee of Public Sector Trade Unions (CPSTU) :

1. The inordinate delay in settling the DA question of the Public Sector workers on industrial DA pattern is causing strong resentment among lakhs of employees. Despite repeated assurances given by the Government the work of the tripartite committee on DA has reached a bottleneck due to the recalcitrant attitude of the Govt. representatives on the Committee. The trade union movement in public sector has shown great patience to settle the matter amicably but it failed to yield any results.

2. The refusal of the Govt of India to remove the ceilings in the payment of Bonus Act is depriving lakhs of public sector workers their right to bonus. Demand of the trade unions to remove the ceiling on eligibility and entitlement is falling on deaf ears. When the festival is advancing very near this delay is responsible for acute discontent among the public sector workers alongwith the general working class.

3. The question of pension schemes in several public sector undertakings is hanging fire for a long time. In some industries the deduction from wages of workers has started since 1989 but the pension schemes are not being implemented so far. More than 2 years have passed since signing of settlements, the dilatory tactics adopted by the Government is only evoking bitter feelings among the large sections of public sector workers.

4. The representatives of Central Trade Unions met the Union Finance Minister on 7th September 1990 who assured that he would take early steps. However, the Central Govt has not moved in the matter so far.

5. In view of these developments we have been left with no other alternative but to resort to direct action to prevail upon the Govt of India to settle all these problems without any further delay. We, therefore, call upon all the public sector workers to observe **STRIKE ON FRIDAY 12TH OCTOBER 1990** to protest against the attitude of the Govt of India on these pressing issues.

5. A meeting of representatives of public sector unions will be held in New Delhi on 2nd October 1990 to plan effective steps to make the strike successful.

7. We call upon all the public sector unions to observe **5th October 1990 as Demands Day** by holding Conventions, meetings, demonstrations, etc to mobilise the workers for strike.

8. We further appeal to the workers of all affiliations to rally behind the public sector workers in this struggle so that they can achieve their longstanding demands.

sd/-

(K. L. Mahendra)
All India Trade
Union Congress

sd/-

(M. K. Pandhe)
Centre of Indian Trade
Unions

sd/-

(R. K. Bhakta)
Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh

sd/-

(R. K. Samant Rai)
Hind Mazdoor Sabha

sd/-

(O.P. Aghi)
Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh

sd/-

(Jibon Roy)
Centre of Indian Trade
Unions

sd/-

(S.K. Sanyal)
All India Trade Union
Congress

sd/-

(Michael Fernandez)
Joint Action Front,
Bangalore

sd/-

(Narasimha Reddy)

Co-ordination Committee of Hyderabad Public
Sector Unions.

Public Sector Officers to Join Strike

The Coordination Committee of the Public Sector Officers' Associations issued the following statement on September 24 :

In a co-ordinated move the Officers, Supervisors and Workers will simultaneously be on strike on the 12th October 1990. The Central Public Sector Trade Unions consisting of CITU, AITUC, HMS, BMS and independent unions have through a separate statement given a call for a one day strike by the workers on the 12th October. The Coordination Committee had earlier given a call for a 48 hour strike by the Officers of the Public Sector. The Officers of the Central Public Sector (IDA stream) will be on strike from the morning of 11th October, 1990.

All sectors of the economy—Oil, Coal, Steel, Power, Heavy & Light engineering, Fertilizer, Electronics, Ship Building, Drugs and Chemicals, Defence Production etc would be fully paralysed.

The Officers would be on strike on the 11th and 12th October and the workers will join the strike on the 12th.

The vexatious problem of pay and DA for the Officers of the Central Public Sector Undertakings and DA for workers has been pending before the Government since 1986. In spite of four years of dithering the Government has not taken any decision on the subject. The patience of the Officers and Workers is completely exhausted.

Finally the Co-ordination Committee warns the Govt of India that if the Government continues to show the same degree of indifference and callousness towards the Officers and Workers of the Public Sector, a situation would arise that would result in a call for an indefinite strike.

Question Raised in Parliament :

Sukomal Sen, MP (CPI-M) raised the matter in the Rajya Sabha on August 31. The following is his speech :

Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Government to a very serious matter regarding the working class. Twenty-two lakhs of public sector employees and officers are greatly restive over the issue of Dearness Allowance. Two months back the Government unilaterally declared DA at the rate Rs. 1.90 per point rise of price index instead of previous figure of Rs. 1.65. This was an arbitrary decision and thereafter the Public Sector D.A. Committee was dissolved by the Government.

All the trade unions took serious objection to it and the employees and officers of public sector strongly opposed the Government decision and demanded cent per cent neutralisation of price rise by way of DA. The DA Committee was revived and the Government assured that by the month of August 1990 the issue would be settled. Sir, today is 31st of August. The Finance Minister assured the representatives of Trade Unions and Officers' Association that by 31st August the issue would be amicably

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CITU Demands Deletion of Articles 310, 311 (2) (A) (B) (C) of Constitution and Abolition of Ceilings from Bonus Act

The Secretariat of the CITU discussed the ongoing struggle of the Central and State Government employees, public sector employees and all other sections of workers in pursuance of the demands for deletion of Articles 310 and 311(2)(A)(B)(C) of the Constitution so as to stop dismissals under the "Pleasure Doctrine", and removal of ceilings from the Bonus Act with respect to eligibility and entitlement of Bonus, and adopted the following resolutions on the subjects, calling upon all sections of the Central and State Government employees and other sections of workers to initiate united struggles in pursuance of the demands.

On Deletion of Articles 310 and 311(2) (A)(B)(C) of the Constitution

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions and the organisations of the Central Government employees have been since long demanding abrogation of the Articles 310 and 311(2)(A)(B)(C) of the Constitution, which provide arbitrary powers to the Central and State Government to dismiss their employees without any enquiry or without assigning any reason, in gross violation of the principles of natural justice.

Article 310 of the Constitution embodies the notorious "Pleasure Doctrine" according to which the Government employees "hold office during the pleasure" of the prescribed authorities, implying that the employees can be thrown out of office any time if it so pleases the authorities. This abominable doctrine which is the worst manifestation of master-servant relation, had its origin in imperialist Britain. It was discarded by the British people when they asserted their rights and established the rule of law in the country. But the doctrine got a lease of life only in colonial India, in the laws and rules framed by the imperialist rulers to keep the people of the country under perpetual subjugation.

Article 311(2)(A)(B)(C) which is just a corollary of Article 310 makes explicit provisions for arbitrary powers for the Governments and the officers to dismiss or remove from service any employee entirely at their discretion in pursuance of the "Pleasure Doctrine" as embodied in Article 310.

It is reprehensible that the framers of the Indian Constitution incorporated this notorious doctrine in the Constitution of free India.

Since then, the Congress regime during its long tenure applied the provisions of these Articles indi-

scriminately to suppress the struggles of the Government employees and dismiss them. Central Government employees were penalised during their historic strikes of 1960 and 1968. Similarly, thousands of railway workers were summarily dismissed by the Indira Gandhi Government during the historic railway strike of 1974. With growing authoritarianism on the part of Congress(I), both the Indira Government and the Rajiv Government utilised the provisions of the Constitution and dismissed yet another one thousand railway workers and other Government employees and trade union activists during the past decade, who are still fighting for reinstatement.

In this background, with the growing demand for deletion of the Articles and the refusal of the Congress(I) Government to concede the demand, various sections of the Central and State Government employees, by and large, joined the massive movements in the country for dethroning the Rajiv Government.

Great expectations were writ large in the workers in general and the Government employees in particular that these draconian Articles will be deleted when the Congress(I) was defeated and the National Front Government was installed, as the National Front Manifesto unequivocally declared that its Government will function on the basis of alternate policies by restoring and extension of the democratic rights of the people. It gave categorical assurance that the Constitution will be amended to stop arbitrary dismissals of Government employees.

However, although certain steps have been taken by the National Front Government to restore the democratic process, yet despite several representations made to the Government by the CITU, other organisations and a number of Members of Parliament, the Government has not yet taken any steps to delete these abominable Articles from the Constitution. These Articles alongwith the equally abominable Civil Service Conduct Rules are hanging like the Damocle's Sword over more than a crore of Central and State Government employees and relegated them to the status of bonded workers without any democratic and trade union rights.

The CITU asserts that restoration and extension of democratic rights must necessarily be accompanied by greater respect for trade union rights and a guarantee for job security. Abrogation of these Articles and the concept of "Pleasure Doctrine" must be a pre-condition for this, which the authoritarian Congress(I) denied.

The CITU therefore emphatically demands that the National Front Government should take immediate steps for abrogation of these undemocratic Articles from the Constitution alongwith all other draconian Service Rules in redemption of its election pledge. The CITU appeals to all the trade unions and the working class and all sections of the people to raise their voice unitedly and build up a massive united movement for the removal of this scourge from the Constitution.

On Removal of Ceilings From the Bonus Act

Despite repeated demands made by the Central Trade Union organisations the N.F. Government has not yet amended the Payment of Bonus Act removing the ceilings relating to eligibility and entitlement of bonus payment. This has deprived large sections of employees from the purview of the Bonus Act. Moreover, the ceilings were fixed when the price level was much lower. As a result of the failure of the Govt. to amend the payment of Bonus Act, lakhs of workers are denied even minimum bonus.

The Central Government still continues the practice of calling bonus as ex-gratia payment for several undertakings which are not covered by the Act. The CITU has demanded on a number of occasions that the coverage of the Bonus Act should be extended to all the employees so that the concept of bonus as a deferred wage is implemented in practice.

The CITU urges upon the Central Govt to amend the payment of Bonus Act in the light of above proposals so that the workers are given their legitimate right to bonus.

The CITU appeals to the trade unions of all affiliations to launch a countrywide movement so that the Govt. of India is forced to amend the Act without any further delay.

National Seminar on Wage Policy and Deletion of Article 311

Two National Seminars were held on 6th and 7th September, 1990 at Constitution Club, New Delhi under the auspices of All India State Government Employees' Federation, on 'National Wage Policy' and Deletion of Article 310 and 311 (2) A, B & C of the Constitution of India.

On 6th September, 1990 different Central Trade Unions like CITU, AITUC and BMS and a number of National Trade Union Federations like Confederation of Railway Employees and Workers, All India Defence Employees' Federation, National Federation of Postal Employees', All India Insurance Employees'

Association, CSIR Employees' Federation and a number of other organisations took part in the Seminar and highlighted the need for evolving a National Wage Policy.

Sukomal Sen, M.P and General Secretary, All India State Government Employees' Federation briefly introduced the subject. M K Pandhe of CITU K. L. Mahendra of AITUC, S. K. Vyas from the Central Government Employees, S. S. Wagle from AISGEF discussed the subject from different view points. All speakers were, however, unanimous that the Government should evolve a National Wage Policy both for the employees and workers of organised and unorganised sectors. Speakers felt that the question of guaranteeing right to work is also linked with the evolution of a National Wage Policy.

On 7th September, 1990, besides the Central Trade Unions and National Trade Union Federations, eminent personalities and jurists participated in the discussion.

Sukomal Sen explained how the Pleasure Doctrine provided in Article 310 and the arbitrary powers of dismissal vested with the Government are being used to weed out the trade union activists from Government Service. He emphasised the immediate need of deleting these undemocratic Articles from Constitution.

Somnath Chatterjee MP, Mandhata Singh MP, Justice (Rtd) Subramaniam Potti, Prof. Upendra Bakshi, Vice Chancellor, Delhi University, Dipen Ghosh MP and several other trade union leaders spoke on the subject and highlighted the pernicious effects of these Articles. They considered these undemocratic and hoped that the National Front Government would take steps to delete or suitably modify these Articles.

The Seminars were presided over by R G Karnth, Chairman and K A Keshavamurthy, Hony. President of the All India State Government Employees' Federation and S K Vyas, Secretary-General, Confederation of Central Government Employees' and Workers Associations and Unions.

R G Karnth while concluding the discussion of the Seminar thanked all participants and speakers and expressed the hope that the Govt. would see reason and soon introduce a Constitutional (Amendment) Act for deletion of these anachronistic Articles.

Call to Accept Court Verdict on Ram Janam Bhoomi

The National Integration Council meeting held at Madras on September 22 unanimously resolved to expedite the court proceedings with regard to the vexed issue of Ramjanam Bhoomi-Babri Masjid and to abide by the decision of the court.

In this respect, the meeting unanimously accepted the unanimous recommendations made by the Committee on Promotion of Communal Harmony, which held its meeting earlier at Delhi on September 18 under the Chairmanship of Atal Bihari Bajpai of BJP. This Committee made the following recommendations to the National Integration Council:

(a) There should be a continuing dialogue and discussion to consider and decide the site of the temple at Ayodhya and allied problems to the satisfaction of all concerned with a view to reaching an amicable settlement.

(b) The Government should be urged to try and expedite the decision of the court in this matter and that the decision of the court should be respected.

(c) In the meantime no attempt should be made to aggravate the communal tension which already exists. An appeal may be made to all political parties and other organisations to make attempts to keep the peace and maintain communal harmony.

As it is known, the BJP although is a Party to the above unanimous recommendations, with one of its senior most leaders presiding over the Committee meeting, and another, the President of the Party himself attending it, boycotted the National Integration Council meeting along with its three Chief Ministers of Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan on the Plea that the recommendations of the Committee were leaked to the press. This 'leak' of course instantly guided the BJP to make the much sought for *Volte Face*, as it is committed to fan up communalism guided by its perverse concept of secularism. While the common people of the country expressed satisfaction at the unanimous decision of the National Integration Council, L. K. Advani, ignoring the appeal made by NIC not to take out his 'Ratha Yatra', nipped this satisfaction in the bud and followed up his boycott of the meeting by launching the 'Ratha Yatra' from Somnath to Ayodhya, spreading the communal virus throughout the country in the name of 'National unity'.

However, the boycott by the BJP did not deter the National Integration Council to take the unanimous decision and thereby reiterate the stand of the secular and democratic forces of country that the Ram temple shall not be allowed to be constructed on the disputed spot by demolishing the Babri Masjid.

The meeting was attended by all others, which

included the Prime Minister himself along with the Home Minister and other Ministers, the Chief Ministers of all other States, including Com. Jyoti Basu, Com. E. K. Nayanar of West Bengal and Kerala, leaders of all other Political parties including Rajiv Gandhi, the Congress(I) President and Com. E.M.S. Namboodiripad Com. H.K.S. Surjeet from CPI(M), and leaders of the Central Trade Unions. Com. Samar Mukherjee, General Secretary, CITU attended the meeting on behalf of the CITU.

Apart from the political parties, Central Trade Unions and Chief Ministers, several distinguished personalities, women's representatives, Chairmen of the Minorities Commission, UGC and SC/ST and Media people attended the meeting. Subhasini Ali, MP, CPI(M) attended the meeting representing women.

It is to be noted that among the Central Trade Unions the BMS did not attend the meeting. While a few days back they refused to participate in the Trade Union Convention against Communalism held at Delhi on September 9 because they refused to identify the RSS as a communal organisation, they boycotted the NIC meeting also following the BJP's boycott, laying bare the nexus between the RSS-BJP-BMS.

Major time was taken in the meeting on the issue of Ramjanam Bhoomi. The Prime Minister and the Home Minister reiterated the stand that the court verdict has to be abided by all and the dispute has to be settled through talks

On the question of Punjab, J&K and ULFA in Assam there was no positive deliberation. The Prime Minister referred to the 'feeling' that the situation was not ripe for elections. However he said that there was no other alternative than to restore the democratic process. Com. H.K.S. Surjeet reiterated for the implementation of the Rajiv-Longowal Accord to resolve the problems of the people of Punjab.

In a significant speech, Mulayam Singh Yadav, the Chief Minister of UP accepted the challenge thrown by the VHP-BJP-RSS combine and reiterated the stand of the UP Government not to allow demolition of temples and mosques in secular India. He referred to the massive rallies being held in the State to mobilise the people against the communal frenzy attempted to be created by the combine. He wanted clear cut support and mandate by the National Integration Council to the stand taken by the UP Government. All the participating leaders cutting across party affiliations including Rajiv Gandhi assured the UP Chief Minister of their unstinted support. Rajiv Gandhi further added that he had asked all the Chief Ministers of the Congress(I) ruled states to oppose the BJP-sponsored 'Ratha Yatra' tooth and nail.

Anti-Price Rise Day Observed

In pursuance of the decision taken in the General Council meeting, anti-price rise day was observed by different states and unions on August 23. The following are some reports :

Bihar : In Bihar the day was observed by the unions in different districts and industrial centres. At Patna a big rally was held before the District Magistrate's office. Workers and employees from various industries like bank, insurance, pharmaceuticals, engineering, rickshaw pullers, electricity, plywood, Government employees, etc came in processions from their respective work places and union offices and joined the rally. Thousands of leaflets were distributed among the workers. The rally criticised the National Front Government for following the same policy and the budget as the Congress (I), which was responsible for the steep rise in the prices of all commodities. The rally demanded immediate check on price rise, strengthening the public distribution system and fixing the prices of fourteen essential commodities which are to be made available through the public distribution system. A delegation led by Chandi Prasad, General Secretary of the State CITU submitted a memorandum to the District Magistrate. Chandi Prasad and other leaders addressed the rally.

Gujarat : In Gujarat the day was observed at several places. A mass dharna was staged at Bhagat Singh Chowk in Bhavanagar. Workers from various industrial units like Machine Tools, Alcock Ashdown, Rubber workers, textile workers, ports, Unity Steel, municipal corporation employees, ASRM Mini Steel, Sharp Ball Pen, Dairy Workers, Vipro etc participated in the dharna despite pouring rains. All the leaders from the CITU, DYFI, Mahila Sangh, SFI and others joined the dharna.

Karnataka: In Karnataka the day was observed at various places and industrial centres by holding dharnas, demonstrations and rallies. The State Council meeting held at Kundapur from September 11 to 13 called upon the workers to carry forward the agitation against price rise as a regular programme.

Madhya Pradesh : Various industrial unions in Madhya Pradesh observed the day. Workers organised under the Cement Mazdoor Union (CITU), Jawad staged a demonstration and submitted a memorandum to the Mandisar District authority and also the management demanding reduction of prices of essential commodities and supply of them at reduced prices from the co-operative. The Koyla Shramik Sangh (CITU) Bilaspur also submitted a similar memorandum to the authorities.

Haryana : At Rohtak and other places in Haryana the workers staged dharnas and demonstrations demanding check on price rise.

Tripura : At Tripura mass rallies and demonstrations were held at Agartala and other places. A week was observed in the State against price rise despite threats and intimidations from the Congress (I) terrorists.

Delhi : At Delhi street corner meetings were arranged by the CITU State Committee at various places and industrial centres including at Ghaziabad drawing the attention of the people against price rise.

UP : The day was observed at various places by the unions. The Engineering Mazdoor Sangh took out a procession at Meerut demanding reduction of prices of essential commodities by 25 percent and ensuring their availability through the public distribution system. In Moradabad the District CITU in co-operation with the CPI (M) observed a week against price rise from August 18 to 25. On August 23 a mass public meeting was organised by the District CITU near the Railway Station which was joined by large number of workers and activists from the Kisan Sabha, SFI, DYFI, Mahila Samity and other trade unions.

Punjab : The State CITU organised a massive state level convention against price rise at Ludhiana on August 23. Preparation for the Convention was launched for three weeks with a campaign against price rise all over the state. The convention was attended by over 3,000 workers. The AITUC initially agreed to launch joint movement with the CITU, but later did not join the convention. The convention was presided over by Balwant Singh, the State CITU President and addressed by Chandra Sekhar, the State General Secretary among others. The Convention decided to carry forward the campaign demanding reduction of prices of all essential commodities and make preparations for a one day strike. (*Report of the observance in W. Bengal was published in the September issue-Ed.*)

Colliery Accident Kills Three Workers

Sunil Basu Roy, MP, and Secretary of the All India Coal Workers' Federation informed the CITU Centre by a telegramme that due to the negligence of the ECL management, rain water gushed into the pit of Bejdih Colliery at Kulti, killing three miners and injuring 18 others. Several miners were missing. The workers in a spontaneous anger demonstrated against the callous attitude of the management. M.K. Pandhe, Secretary CITU and President of the Federation has lodged a protest demanding enquiry into the incident and punishment to the guilty.

Tripura Day Observed

In pursuance of the call given by the General Council, the State Committees and unions observed Tripura Day on September 10 in different parts of the country condemning the semi-fascist terror unleashed by the Congress(I)-TUJS Government and demanding its resignation. Following are some reports of observance :

Punjab : Meetings, and demonstrations were organised by the State CITU at different places. Resolutions were adopted extending greetings to the valiant workers of the CITU at Tripura who like their comrades in Punjab were fighting the terrorists and were martyred to hold high the red banner of the CITU and to safeguard the unity of the people and integrity of the country. At Dhuri in a mass convention of unorganised workers a collection of over Rs. 3000 was made on the spot and handed over to P.K. Ganguly, Secretary CITU as the Tripura Struggle Fund. A large number of telegrams were sent by the industrial unions demanding immediate resignation of the Congress(I)-TUJS Government of Tripura.

Bihar : A mass dharna was organised by the Bihar State CITU at Azam Bhagat Singh Park, Patna. Apart from workers, the dharna was participated by Kisans, agricultural labourers, students, youth and women. Thousands of leaflets were distributed drawing the attention of the people towards the semi-fascist terror unleashed by the Congress(I)-TUJS regime of Tripura, which killed a large number of workers and activists of the CITU, CPI(M) and other left forces. The leaflets called upon all sections of workers and the people to raise their voice demanding immediate resignation of the State Government. Among those who addressed the dharna were Chandi Prasad, Srikant Verma, Girija Shankar Pandey (CITU); Sarangdhar Paswan (Agricultural Workers); Prakash Viplabi (DYFI); Arun Kumar (SFI) and Prem Pradip, CPI(M) M.P.

W. Bengal : A massive democratic convention was jointly organised at the Netaji Indoor Stadium by the CITU alongwith the other left trade unions. The vast stadium was fully jammed. The convention was presided over by Manoranjan Roy, General Secretary of the State CITU. Among the speakers was Yaswant Sinha of Janata Dal who led a delegation of MPs to probe and assess the semi-fascist terror created by the Congress(I)-TUJS at Tripura. Yaswant Sinha said that the barbarism let loose by the Congress(I) was a shame for the whole country and was undecipherable. The report of murders, rape, burning of houses of left cadres and capture of unions that he got in two days were sufficient to establish that the entire democratic process and trade union activities were ravaged in the State and a jungle rule was prevailing there. He called for mass

protest actions demanding an end to the barbarous regime and restoration of democracy in the State. Niren Ghosh, Secretary CITU, moved the resolution demanding immediate resignation of the Congress(I)-TUJS Government. Among others who spoke were Anil Sarkar, former CPI(M) Minister of Tripura; Sunil Sengupta of TUCC; Dipen Ghosh of 12th July Committee, etc.

Somen Kundu, Treasurer of the W. Bengal State CITU donated an amount of one lakh rupees on behalf of the State Committee to Anil Sarkar as the Tripura Struggle Fund. Another sum of twenty five thousand rupees was donated by Maya Chakrabarty on behalf of All Bengal Teachers' Association and yet another sum of twenty five thousand rupees was donated by Naresh Dasgupta on behalf of Howrah District Committee of CPI(M).

Tripura : Braving all semi-fascist terror, the day was observed all over the state by holding big processions and rallies. At Agartala, despite rains, large number of workers assembled at Ravindra Bhawan premises and took out a big procession. Marching through the streets, which were thronged by large number of people on both sides, the procession culminated in a big rally at Motor Stand, where a public meeting was held. The rally was addressed among others by Chitta Chanda, the Vice President of the State CITU, who presided over the meeting, the State CITU Secretaries Sudarshan Das, Manik De, etc. The meeting ended with deafening slogans demanding immediate resignation of the Congress(I)-TUJS Government.

A similar procession and rally was held at Kalia-shahar. The public meeting was presided over by the CITU leader Shakti Prasanna Bhattacharjee and addressed among others by Baidyanath Majumdar, the State CITU President and Ananta Pal. Funds were also collected from various places.

Victory of CITU in B.I. Provident Fund Election

All the three candidates of the CITU, viz. Bankim Chandra Mitra, Nitya Shankar De and Rajib Rajan Pal won the election for the Provident Fund Trustee Board in the public sector undertaking, Bengal Immunity Ltd. Earlier, the members of the Board were selected by the management. The CITU demanded elections. The INTUC launched a slander campaign against the CITU. But the CITU candidates won the election held on September 7, defeating the INTUC candidates by big margins, despite the fact that about 75 percent of the CITU workers had retired this year.

General Council Resolutions

(We are publishing hereunder the last set of resolutions which the General Council meeting held at Kanpur from July 21-23 authorised the Secretariat to adopt. The Secretariat adopted the resolutions accordingly.—Ed.)

On NF Govt's Policy Towards Public Sector

The meeting of the General Council of CITU expresses its concern at the systematic campaign launched against public sector by several official sopkesmen of NF Govt which denigrates the public sector and paves the way for its privatisation.

The members of Dr. Arjun Sen Gupta Committee who openly advocated closing down the so called uneconomic units are occupying key economic portfolios of the NF Government. They have doggedly put forth the plea of privatisation of these units in a big way. The Union Minister of Industry Shri Ajit Singh by making the announcement that no more sick units would be taken over by the Central Govt, was only voicing the opinion of the privatisation lobby in the government.

In the name of increasing efficiency in the public sector through competition with Indian monopoly houses and foreign multinational companies the government has given free rein to vested interests to penetrate into the domain of the public sector undertakings. The fantastic concessions given to these vested interests during the current budget have made them more affluent. The NRI have been given further facilities to enter into sectors which were earlier reserved for the public sector.

In Energy sector, the Govt of India has invited private sector to allow free rein and concessions have been offered to them. Though BHEL has developed huge capacity to manufacture thermal and hydel power stations, bulk of the orders for the Eighth Plan period have been cornered by the multinational companies at the behest of the World Bank and the IMF.

In Steel industry, the Govt of India has announced further concessions to private sector as per recommendations of World Bank Report. Now the private sector can start a steel plant with one million tonne capacity while mini steel plants can modernise their production capacities. Since liberal concessions have been given to import scrap for the mini steel plants they are in a position to compete with the public sector integrated steel plants in the country.

The Indian Airlines will be faced with stiff competition as the Govt. of India has decided to permit private sector to introduce upto 90 seater aircraft to operate on domestic lines without paying wages at par with Indian Airlines.

The privatisation of Scooters India and BEL, Taloja unit though has been deferred due to pressure of united TU movement, the Govt of India has not given up the idea of privatising them and the workers in these undertakings have still to fight hard against privatisation.

The off-loading of jobs by the public sector units all over the country has already allowed large part of work being done through persons in connivance with public sector officials. The reckless use of contract labour system in permanent and perennial nature of jobs has also greatly reduced the work for regular employees in public sector units.

The public sector has grown over a period of years and now the total investment has exceeded Rs. 80,000 crores with over 22 lakhs employees in these units. Due to bureaucratic bungling the performance of these undertakings is much below the mark. Without introducing genuine scheme of workers' participation in management the involvement of workers in improving the performance cannot be ensured.

However, the industrial policy announced by the NF Government go against further advance of the public sector undertakings despite the commitment given in the NF Election Manifesto that public sector would be strengthened. The promise of preparing a white paper on public sector by the government still remained on paper. The NF gov't. has yet not made any departure from the policies of the Rajiv Gandhi Gov't. so far as the public sector is concerned.

The role of public sector in building a self-reliant economy has been given a big jolt as a result of these developments and the country's economy is being subjected to continuous pressure by the multinational companies and Indian big business houses. It is naturally adversely affecting the rate of economic growth in the country and increase in the standard of living of the people of India.

It is, therefore, the duty of the working class and TU movement to fight against the policies of denigration of the public sector by the NF Gov't. so that through sustained movement the working class can defend the interest of the public sector.

The General Council of the CITU therefore calls upon the public sector workers to campaign against privatisation and denigration of public sector undertakings so that the Gov't. of India is forced to reverse the present drift in its policy and allow public sector to play a major role in India's march towards building a self-reliant economy.

On Mohini Mills

The meeting of the General Council of CITU expresses its serious concern about the deteriorating conditions of the Mohini Mills, the NTC mills which was taken-over alongwith 15 other units of cotton mills under IDR throughout the country. Out of them all have been running except the Mohini Mills which has been denotified by the then Congress(I) Govt. The act of denotification was politically motivated and was clearly discriminatory against Mohini Mills and its workers.

The meeting therefore urges upon the National Front Government of India to withdraw the denotification order on the Mohini Mills and undo the discriminatory treatment against this mill by the erstwhile authoritarian Congress(I) Government. It wholeheartedly supports the struggle carried forward by the Mohini Mill workers against the unjust denotification of the mill.

On the struggle of contract workers of MFL Madras

The General Council of CITU Meeting at Kanpur from 21st to 23rd July, 1990 extends its warm greetings to the 1300 contract workers of Madras Fertilisers Ltd. at Manali, Madras, for their long drawn struggle against retrenchment.

The central public sector unit has defied a High Court order directing the unit not to engage outsiders in place of these 1300 contract workers and staying the interviews. The recalcitrant management having non-chalantly defied the court order, is illegally throwing out these workers on street.

The CITU General Council urges the Govts at the Centre and in Tamil Nadu to take immediate steps for re-employment of these contract workers, and end the plight of 1300 families languishing for over two years, by directing the MFL management to engage these workers without any further delay.

On Recognition of IOC Shramik Union, Eastern Region

The meeting of the General Council held in Kanpur from 21-23rd July, 1990 condemns the management of Indian Oil Corporation for its refusal to include IOC Shramik Union in wage negotiations and recognise it despite enjoying the clear support of the substantial number of workers/employees, though in similar cases in other regions unions are recognised and invited to participate in wage negotiations.

The IOC management is taking a biased, vindictive and politically motivated attitude towards this union and lets lose repressions on the members of CITU led union which organises movement for the

just and genuine demands of workers. The members of CITU led unions joined duties and maintained fuel, gas and kerosine supply for days together in W. Bengal while the protege union went for a politically motivated strike. Instead of appreciating the gesture of CITU led union, the IOC management unleashed their attack on them, chargesheeting and suspending the leading activists of the union.

The General Council meeting while congratulating the workers of IOC Eastern Region for their relentless struggle, condemns the vindictive attitude of the IOC management and urges upon the Ministry of Petroleum to intervene in the matter and accord recognition to the IOC Shramik Union Eastern Region so that normal industrial relations are developed in the industry.

On the Situation in the Waterfront Industry

This meeting of the General Council of CITU held at Kanpur on 21-23rd July expresses deep concern at the prevailing situation in the waterfront, when the economic state of the country is fast deteriorating.

This meeting notes with regret that in sharp contrast with the declaration in the Election Manifesto, the National Front Govt is indulging in dilatory tactics in implementing the terms of the settlement reached on 12.6.89, resulting in serious discontentment amongst the port and dock workers on the issue of raising the ceiling limit of bonus, arbitrary implementation of VDA @ Rs. 1.90, pension on the line of the recommendations of the IVth Pay Commission, liberalisation of promotional opportunities etc. This attitude is maintained even after the fact that the performance of the Port and Dock Workers has registered a remarkable improvement.

In spite of solemn promise made by the Union Surface Transport Minister, the penal measures taken by the previous Government for participating in the Bharat Bandh on 30.8.89 by the port and dock workers, has not yet been revoked. The Dock Workers had to forego their minimum guarantee of earnings for participating in Bharat Bandh and 8-10 days wages were deducted for just one day strike.

While assuring recognition of union through secret ballot of the workers and undoing the practice of patronising union of choice, CITU affiliated union in Calcutta even after coming as the first union in the last verification has not been recognised and denied membership in the Board of Trustees.

With the participation of CITU affiliated union in the National Maritime Board, this time the Indian seamen achieved a good wage settlement but the National Front Govt has not yet taken any step to

stop the problem of unemployment of Calcutta seamen, uneven ratio of employment opportunity in Bombay and Calcutta, vindictive attitude of D.G. shipping towards FSUI, etc.

The National Front Govt assured the people to extend 'Right to Work' as a fundamental right but vacancies in thousands are left unfulfilled in the waterfront. A national policy for the development of the shipping industry as a whole is yet to be given any shape. Meagre amount has been extended in the 8th plan for modernisation of the ports without any provision for the development of the ports as a whole. In spite of tall promises the large area of operation in the shipping industry has been left in the hands of private sector. The single agency system by ousting parasitic stevedores is yet to introduce. Import, export and clearing and forwarding business are still basically in the hands of the private sector.

While this is the situation, the cadres of CITU are becoming the victims of the port authorities. Four comrades of CITU led union in Goa have been removed from services arbitrarily.

The meeting reminds the Government about the pledges it made before the last parliamentary election and urges for immediate redressal on the just demands of the workers in the water front.

This General Council meeting of CITU strongly feels that only an united determined struggle of the workers in the waterfront can bring a basic change in the situation for the welfare of the country and the workers as well. This meeting appeals to the workers in the waterfront of all affiliations to build up the unity and prepare for the struggle to achieve these objectives.

Cement Workers to Observe Campaign Week

A joint meeting of representatives of CITU and AITUC unions in cement industry held in Delhi on 21st September, 1990 reviewed the situation prevailing in industry and decided to observe campaign week from 5th November to 10th November 1990 on the following demands :

1. Wages and benefits in mini cement plants at par with major cement plants.
2. Abolition of casual and contract system and their absorption.
3. Immediate steps against pollution and safety of cement workers.
4. Against reduction of manpower as a result

of modernisation.

5. No arbitration, set up bipartite negotiating machinery.
6. No closure or privatisation of cement unit.

The HMS and BMS representatives could not participate in the meeting because the date did not suit them. However, they are agreeable to the idea of joint movement in cement industry. As such the meeting decided to form an All India Co-ordination Committee with 2 members from each of Central Trade Union organisations including HMS & BMS. The Co-ordination Committee will finalise a new charter of demands and decide on future programme of action.

The meeting was inaugurated by Com. T.N. Siddhanta, Secretary AITUC. It was addressed among others by Com. H.N. Narendra Prasad, General Secretary Cement Workers Federation (AITUC), Com. Kanai Banerjee, Secretary, CITU and Com. Dilip Majumdar (CITU). Com. M.K. Pandhe, Secretary, CITU presided over the meeting.

Co-ordination Committee of CITU Unions

Earlier on 20th Sept. 1990, a meeting of the CITU Unions in cement industry was held at the CITU central office. Com. M.K. Pandhe who conducted the proceedings of the meeting, explained in detail the situation obtaining in the cement industry. He emphasised that Ramanujam award was nothing short of betrayal. He said we should study and explain to the workers that the management has taken back through increased workload and reduction of workers in the name of modernisation. Ramanujam has gifted this to management. So the cement monopolists insist on the monopoly of INTUC in representing workers. CITU unions will have to take initiative to bring about a change in the situation and try to launch a movement unitedly with other central trade unions on legitimate demands of the cement workers. All India and regional conventions and other joint programmes should be organised. He insisted on initiative being taken by CITU unions and suggested that a committee should be formed to coordinate CITU unions in the industry with Com. Kanai Banerjee as Convenor. The suggestion was accepted by the meeting. When the meeting resumed next day after the joint meeting, Com. Pandhe requested all comrades to make proper effort for successful implementation of the programme adopted in the joint meeting. Joint appeals may be issued, badges and posters may be printed locally. Apart from affiliates of Central Trade Unions, independent unions should also be drawn into the common movement, he suggested.

Workers' Struggles in Punjab

Unorganised Workers:

About one thousand and three hundred delegates hailing from 17 industries and fields of activities as, Forests, brick kilns, grain markets, road and building construction etc. participated in a state level convention of unorganised workers called by Punjab State CITU at Dhuri on September 10. The convention was presided over by Coms. Sat Pal Bharti and Ram Singh. The convention was not only the first of this type but was also held in the background when the roads were blocked by flood water and bandh call on the same day by anti-reservationists.

Com. P.K. Ganguly, Secretary CITU while addressing the convention dealt on the indifferent attitude of Govt towards unorganised workers who constitute 90 percent of the workforce, despite its own pronouncements from time to time, and rising struggles of the unorganised workers all over the country. He said that only an united militant struggle of these workers can help to improve their deplorable conditions. He appreciated the Punjab CITU for its efforts in this regard while simultaneously fighting against the odds created by the Khalistani extremists and the curbs on trade union movement imposed in the state.

Com. Chandra Shekar, State General Secretary of CITU said that 10 lakhs unorganised workers in the state were living in wretched conditions. He called on the representatives to work hard so that these unorganised workers could be organised and their fighting capacity demonstrated.

14 comrades participated in the discussion and the decision to organise workers in forestry, the loading and unloading workers and constructions and to launch agitational programme.

A 21 member state level co-ordination committee was formed with Com. Tarsem Jockanas convenor to organise and lead the unorganised workers.

Since the day coincided with the observance of Tripura Day, the Convention adopted a resolution condemning the semi-fascist terror unleashed in Tripura. The workers on the spot donated an amount of over Rs. 3000/- to Com. P K Ganguly as the Tripura Struggle Fund.

EPF Workers

About 400 workers from all over Punjab staged a day long dharna before the Regional Commissioner EPF, Chandigarh against non-implementation of EPF to workers of Theri Dam Project, FCI and other food agencies and brick kiln workers despite the clearcut statutory provisions. The dharna was addressed by the State CITU President Com. Balwant Singh and Secretary, Chandigarh Dist, apart from others.

The Regional Commissioner received the memo-

randum in dharna and assured that implementation will be started, action will be taken against the managements for non-deposit of the deducted amount and special aid programme will be launched in brick kiln industry.

Transport Workers

Four major organisations of employees namely CITU, AITUC, INTUC and Karmachari Dal, representing more than twenty two thousand workers of Punjab Roadways and PRTC held a joint state level convention at Jalandhar on 13th August 1990 attended by more than one thousand representatives. The main and long pending demands were discussed and the programme of agitation was finalised. It was decided that if the demands already agreed were not implemented, concrete decision on remaining demands was not taken and the ESMA was not withdrawn, the workers will go on one day strike on 24th August and at least one day strike in every month till the demands were accepted and implemented. Com. Amar Singh, President of the CITU led union thanked the delegates on behalf of the presidium and placed resolutions against price rise, for immediate political solution of Punjab problems, which were passed unanimously.

On August 24, 1990 all the buses of Punjab Roadways and Pepsu Road Corporation numbering 3,500 went off the roads as the talks on 22nd August with the Advisor of the Governor of Punjab regarding the demands failed.

Private buses also went off the roads due to the co-operation extended by the workers. The main demands of the workers were purchase of new buses, adequate facilities at bus stands for workers pension for Pepsu workers, nationalisation of transport in the state, enhancement of uniform rates etc.

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Beedi Workers Submit Memorandum of Demands to Government

The CITU convened an all India meeting of the CITU unions in the Beedi industry, at Delhi on September 20. This meeting was called in pursuance of the decisions taken at the Kanpur meeting held on 23rd July.

The meeting was presided over by P.K. Ganguly, Secretary CITU and attended by twenty comrades from Kerala, Tamilnadu, Karnataka, West Bengal and Bihar. The meeting discussed the problems of the Beedi workers and the industry, particularly on the issues of minimum wage, women workers, the Beedi and Cigar Act, the Welfare Fund Scheme, availability and prices of Tendu leaves and other matters.

The meeting concretised the demands of the Beedi workers on an all India level. On September 21, a delegation consisting of P.K. Ganguly (Centre), Md. Nizamuddin (W. Bengal), Abdul Sattar (Bihar), Md. Dastagir (Karnataka), C. Kannan (Kerala) and V. Kannan and V. K. Kothandaman (Tamilnadu) met the Labour Secretary, Government of India and submitted the memorandum of demands.

The meeting also decided to suggest concrete amendments to the Beedi and Cigar Act and the Welfare Fund Scheme and submit the same to the Government at a later date.

The meeting also formed an All India Co-ordination Committee of Beedi Workers with P.K. Ganguly, Secretary CITU as its Convenor. It also formed an Eastern Zone Co-ordination Committee with Md. Nizamuddin as its Convenor.

The meeting decided to launch campaign to popularise the demands by observing a Demands Week from November 1 to 7, 1990.

On the last day the memorandum of demands will be submitted to the State Labour Ministers.

Memorandum of Demands

1. National Minimum Wage : In view of the extremely low wages and the chaotic situation prevailing in the sphere of wages, a national minimum wage of Rs. 25/- as basic should be fixed for all Beedi workers per 1000 beedis.

2. Dearness Allowance at the rate of 5 paise per point over and above 680 points of the Consumer Price Index (1960 series) per 1000 Beedis

3. Bonus : 20 percent of wages as Bonus.

4. Guaranteed work for six days in a week. 50 percent wages should be given if there is no work any day.

5. Contract and sub-contract system should be abolished and the contract/sub-contract workers should be brought directly under the principal employers.

6. Amendment to Central Excise 1944 under section 174 and 178 in such a way as to incorporate certain conditions before issuing L4 Licenses to beedi manufacturers to abide by the beedi and cigar workers (Conditions of Employment) Act 1966 and Minimum Wages Act and other labour laws etc., after consulting state labour department. This amendment is necessary as the trade mark employer

is evading sections 3 and 4 license provision under Beedi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act 1966. L4 licenses should be granted only in the name of all principal beedi employers.

7. All Beedis branded or non-branded should be subject to Excise Duty without any exemption.

8. All Beedi workers whether industrial or homestead workers, should be granted one day weekly off wages, and the Beedi & Cigar Act and the Minimum Wages Act should be suitably amended and brought under the purview of the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution.

9. The system of Leaf Cutting Average should be abolished and there should be no deduction of wages on this basis. The workers must get full wages earned by them. Sufficient quantity of leaves and raw materials ensuring good quality must be supplied to ensure rolling of the required number of Beedis according to their sizes.

10. Provident Fund Account Codes should be given in the name of the principal employers and the Account Numbers should be in the name of the actual workers, whether men or women. The facility should be extended to all workers connected with the Beedi manufacturing process. All Code Numbers so far given in the name of contractors should be brought back in the name of the principal employers.

11. All PF arrears from 1977 to 1985 due from the employers should be recovered and credited to the workers.

12. All workers should be given Identity Cards and Log Books. The Identity Cards should be signed by the Trade Mark and other employers to enable the workers to get the benefits of the Welfare Fund Scheme. The Log Books should contain all the relevant entries.

13. The Welfare Fund Scheme should be reviewed by the Government so as to remove the bottlenecks that prevent the workers from enjoying the benefits of the Scheme. The rules should be amended and liberalised so that all workers get benefit of the Scheme.

14. There should be provision for Pension Scheme and a monthly pension of Rs 300/- should be provided to workers attaining the age of 58 years. Other workers attaining the age of 50 years should be given a monthly subsidy of Rs 150/- from the Welfare Fund Scheme as they loose speed of rolling beedis due to growing age.

15. An amount of Rs 5,000/- should be paid from the Welfare Fund to the family of a worker who dies while in service.

16. All Central Trade Unions should be represented in the State Advisory Committees of the Beedi Workers' Welfare Fund Scheme.

17. Tendu Leaves: There should be no export of Tendu leaves. The Tendu leaves supplied to the manufacturers should be on the basis of actual requirement at reasonable prices without involving middlemen and wholesale dealers.

18. For Women Workers: Equal wage for women workers at par with men and maternity benefit, chreche, etc for them.

Dharna by Ticket Checking Staff

A Dharna was staged by about 500 ticket checking staff on August 29, 1990 in front of the Railway Minister's residence in support of their long pending demands. It was held under the auspices of the Indian Railways Ticket Checking Staff Association. After introductory speech by D. B. Roy, the General Secretary of the Association the gathering was addressed among others, by Basudev Acharya M. P. N. S. Bhangoo, Secretary General, All India Railway Employees Confederation, S. K. Dhar, General Secretary, All India Loco Running Staff Association, Jamaluddin, All India Railway Ministerial Staff Association. Towards evening a delegation led by D. B. Roy and accompanied by N. S. Bhangoo met the Railway Minister and submitted a memorandum highlighting the demands of ticket checking staff. The demands highlighted were: Running allowance and cooking facilities, accommodation in all mail/express trains; one sleeper-coach-one TTE, filling up of vacancies, enhancement of staff strength, vacation of victimisation etc.

The proceedings were conducted by the President of the association Mahendra Kaushal.

LRSA Conference: S. E. Rly

The biennial conference of the S. E. Rly unit of all India Loco Running Staff Association was held at Tatanagar on September 14-15 1990. About 250 delegates attended. After flag hoisting by G. Y. Rajlu, Working President of the Zonal unit and garlanding of the martyrs' column, revolutionary songs were presented by the cultural unit of Jamshedpur. The conference was inaugurated by Basudev Acharya MP following the welcome address by Jwala Singh, Chairman, Reception Committee. The open session was greeted by the leaders of local trade unions and other Zonal units of AIREC. The Conference was also addressed by C. M. Singh, President, AIREC. In all 15 delegates took part in the discussion on the report presented by the Zonal general secretary M.N. Prasad, which was adopted unanimously. All the delegates expressed serious resentment for delay in vacation of victimisation. As regards programme of action, the AIREC programme of dharna before all divisional offices of Indian Railways on 29th October and serious preparation for massive dharna before Prime Minister's residence in November had been emphasised. Besides campaign week would be observed from October 8th to 15th. The concluding speech was delivered by S. K. Dhar, Secretary General AILRSA. The conference elected H.H. Roy as president, G.Y. Rajlu as working president, M.N. Prasad as general secretary, N.B Datta and A. Anand Rao as joint secretaries and M.C. Shaha as treasurer. The proceedings were conducted by a 3 member presidium.

A mass meeting held near Tatanagar station was addressed, among others by C.M. Singh, S.K. Dhar, M.N. Prasad and Jwala Singh.

Convention on Workers' Participation

S. E. Railway Zonal Convention on Workers' Participation in Management and proposed Industrial Relations Law was held at Tatanagar on 13th September. This was organised by the S. E. Rly unit of the AIREC in terms of the decision of all India Convention held in Delhi on 6th May. The convention commenced after observing silence to pay respect to the memory of Com. BTR and the martyrs' of trade union and democratic movement. Uday Chatterjee, zonal secretary AIREC, S.E. Rly explained the issues involved. M. N. Prasad, zonal President, AIREC, SE Rly also addressed the delegates. The convention was inaugurated by S. K. Dhar. He discussed in details all relevant points pertaining to workers participation and industrial relations question. The convention was also addressed by Basudev Acharya M.P. along with the representatives of CITU and AITUC. Among the participants in discussion were the representatives Union, IEAJD, BSGIEA, JDIEA, Bihar Mahila Samaj, Janvadi Mahila Samity, Steel Workers Federation of India, Tinsplate Kamgar Union, S. E. Railwaymen's Union, DYFI, and veteran trade union leader Tikkaram Majhi. The resolution adopted in the convention pointed out some shortcomings of the participation Bill and urged the Govt. to remove them in consultation with trade unions. It demanded that the scheme should be introduced in departmental establishment also.

Seminar at Bilaspur: S.E. Rly

A seminar was also organised at Bilaspur jointly by the Divisional unit of the AIREC and the Council of Trade Unions on 8th September 1990 on Workers Participation and Industrial Relations legislation. A large number of representatives of different organisations of the area took part in the seminar. A three-member presidium consisting of V. G. Khankhoji, Rabi Banerjee and Mohan Singh conducted the proceedings. The seminar was inaugurated by the Janata Dal MLA Ashok Rao who was the Chief Guest. R. C. Sah, Divisional Secretary of AIREC presented a paper providing basis for discussion. Many eminent persons, leaders of different organisations took part in discussion. The resolution embodying the conclusions of the Seminar made important suggestions for improvement of the Participation Bill and Industrial Relations Law.

N. F. Rly: Joint Demonstration

A joint demonstration was staged at the N. F. Rly H. Q at Maligaon on 31st August at the joint

auspices of the AIREC, N. F. Rly unit, N. F. Rly Mazdoor Union, N. F. Rly Employees Union and N. F. Rly Workers Union to press the demand for special duty allowance which is due to the Govt employees of the North Eastern Region. In this region employees of more than 60 Central Govt organisations are getting the allowance (12½%). Even on Railways the Class I officers are getting it. But others are being deprived. After the demonstration a memorandum was handed over to the General Manager who along with CPO and Chief Engineer came before the demonstrators, assured them of necessary action in this regard.

E. Rly: Stoppage of Work at Gomoh

Work at Gomoh junction, Eastern Railway was paralysed for five hours on 31st August as the workers of all categories stopped working in protest against the murder of Ram Sovit an Assistant Electric Driver on duty by wagon breakers and against the indifference and callousness of the Divisional Rly Administration. The DRM later came to the spot and signed an agreement assuring proper security arrangement for the running staff, quick payment of compensation, no victimisation for stoppage of work, Rs 5000/- was paid by DRM as ex-gratia and the workers collected Rs 2000/- to meet funeral expenses.

The Guards of Gomoh junction succeeded in getting penal transfer order on two of their colleagues cancelled for which, however, they had to issue notice of withdrawal of labour.

N. Railway: Train Movement Stopped

On 8th September the Railway workers at Ludhiana held all trains at stand still for 7 hours in protest against the collousness of the Railway authorities. Due to illegal constructions, vast areas in railway colonies were inundated and water entered staff quarters after torrential rains. In spite of repeated request by the unions the authorities took no step. At this stage the local units of Northern Railwaymen's union and AIREC gave a call for stoppage of all trains. Only after this the local administration arranged to drain out the water and assured of permanent solution of the problem.

Shaheedi Conference

"Shaheedi Conference" was held at Pathankot on 19th September with due solemnity in memory of the martyrs of the one-day all India token strike of 19th September 1968. More than 5 thousand railwaymen joined. The conference was addressed by J. P. Chaubey, General Secretary AIRF, Mangatram Pasla, Vice President CITU Punjab and others.

UCTU Conference

The first conference of the United Council of Trade Unions, Ludhiana was held at the Rly Institute Hall, Ludhiana, on 2nd September. 170 delegates attended. 13 delegates representing different

unions addressed the conference. The conference adopted resolution demanding abrogation of Article 311 (2) (a) (b) (c) and reinstatement of all victimised employees.

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settled. But unfortunately, the D.A. Committee meetings are being postponed one by one. In this month of August, three such meetings have been postponed at short notice.

As a result, there has been a total stalemate in the matter and the employees have become very much resentful. There is every possibility that there may be an industrial action in the country over the matter unless the Government settles the matter immediately.

The term of the DA. Committee expires today. So, the Government should settle the matter by discussing it with the representatives of the Trade Unions and Officers' Association without any further delay. The employees demand 4 slab rates of DA with full neutralisation. I would request that the Finance Ministry and the other concerned Ministries make up their mind and settle the issue immediately to avoid a serious labour unrest.

I would like to warn the Government that any delay and hesitation in the matter will lead to unprecedented united struggle of the public sector employees and officers. Thank you, Sir.

Shri N E Balaram (CPI) : Sir, I associate myself with the Special Mention made by Shri Sukomal Sen. I request the Government that they should take immediate steps and talk to the employees so that they can avoid a clash.

CITU Condemns Lockout in Patriot

M.K. Pandhey, Secretary, CITU issued the following statement on Sept '23 :

The CITU strongly condemns the lockout in Patriot from Sept '21 by forcing the employees to vacate the premises with the help of police. This illegal action of the Patriot and Link management is to cover up its intention to close down the unit and sell it to other industrialists without the consent of the workers. Instead of taking action against the management for violation of the provisions of the Industrial Disputes Act, the Delhi Administration gave protection to it and threw out about 500 workers on the street.

The CITU urges upon the Delhi Administration to withdraw all repressive measures against the Patriot employees who are resisting the attempt of the management to attack their job security.

The CITU supports the struggle of the Patriot employees for lifting the illegal lockout and appeals to all unions irrespective of affiliations to express solidarity with the fighting Patriot employees.

Conference on Participation of Trade Unions in Promoting Collective Bargaining for Women

The conference was called by Department of Women & Child Development and the Labour Ministry on 20.9.90 at Shastri Bhavan. In the conference, the NLO was represented by Barot, AITUC by Sanyal, BMS by Prabhakar, HMS by Kamala Sinha, TUCC by D.D. Shastri and CITU by Vimala Ranadive. Besides these central trade union organisations, voluntary organisations such as SEWA, Child Welfare, CWDS and Indira Jaisingh also attended.

The meeting was chaired by Ram Vilas Paswan, the Labour Minister, who heard all the view points in the conference. After the introductory remarks made by the Secretary Meera Seth, Paswan spoke on the working conditions of women in the organised and unorganised sector. He mentioned that the percentage of women in trade unions was much less and therefore the bargaining capacity of working women remained poor. There are thousands of women in construction and agriculture getting less wages than their male counterparts. With regard to legislation concerning women like Maternity Benefit and Equal Remuneration, these are not properly implemented. He admitted the double role of women in the workplace and at home. But he wanted to know as to why there is less percentage of women in the trade unions. He ended his introductory remarks by saying that both the Ministries for "Kalyan and Labour" are trying to listen to the trade unions to give justice to working women.

Kamla Sinha President of HMS was a strong critic of the present Govt. She said unequal remuneration is existing there in Beedi, Plantation, Construction, etc. She pointed out the effect of mechanisation in the employment of women such as in mines where thousands have been thrown out of employment. She asked Shri Paswan as to why the National Front Govt is not doing anything about it.

Mrs. Indira Jaisingh wanted to have a share for women in the participative fora in the management. She also demanded that there should be watchdog committees to look into the implementation of various laws. Ms Kumud Sharma from CWDS spoke on the unequal remuneration in different industries.

Smt. Meera Paul (SEWA) strongly placed her points regarding women in unorganised sector and their conditions as brought out by Ela Bhatt in "Shram Shakti" and told that she herself was the victim of feudal tendencies in TLA in Ahmedabad.

Com. Vimal Ranadive, Secretary CITU while

submitting her paper spoke at length on the present conditions of working women. The lengthy document submitted by the Government for discussion contained many paragraphs from the CITU documents in 1979 and 1987, which were presented by her in the working women's conference. The document also showed the meagre representation of women in trade unions—a mere 6% of the total membership. While pointing to number of instances of unequal remuneration, inadequacy of creches etc, she cited the poor performance of the Govt enforcement machinery. All the laws concerning women were just in the paper. There were committees like "Equal Remuneration" "Employment for Women", which held only one meeting during last 2-3 years. After the formation of the AICCW in 1979 there were certain changes. The trade unions affiliated to CITU took up issues concerning women and special sessions of women were held alongwith the union conferences. But still we are unable to increase the membership of women in the unions.

Speaking on the deep rooted feudal tendencies in the society, as well as in the trade unions, she said it is the job of the trade unions also to protect the interest of working women, while the main responsibility of implementation of the legislation is on the shoulders of the Govt. In this context she suggested that the present cell set up by the Govt. is not enough. The trade unions and women's organisations should be associated with the machinery so that implementation of the laws are done effectively.

The Govt. document mentioned about the special bulletins for women by INTUC, CITU etc. It said on page 19 (para 40) that "the CITU brings out a separate journal on women workers entitled "Voice of the Working Women" the CITU's official journal "Working Class" however, does not reflect this powerful political activity so that in effect "Working Class" is the journal of CITU male workers and Voice of the Working Women is the journal of the women...". In her document Vimal Ranadive has refuted this saying that "CITU has two journals, one in Hindi and one in English solely dedicated to the problems and struggles of working class of which the working women are an important part. There fore the 'Working Class' and all journals of the CITU federations always keep few pages specifically for womens' struggles and their problems.

The document submitted by the Govt. emphasised the role of technology and its effects on womens' employment. Vimal Ranadive gave an example that a small leaf threshing plant introduced in tobacco resulted in throwing out of all women who were

employed in the sector. She warned against such moves.

She demanded a legislation for women in the unorganised sector as well as for the export processing zones where no legislation is applicable. S.K. Sanyal of AITUC also spoke a few words on the problems of working women.

Barot spoke about the women who are employed in lakhs in the textile mills in Ahmedabad and NLO tried to protect their interest. BMS said that women should be "good directors, good engineers, but at the same time let us try to see them as the best

mothers in the whole world..." which was resented by women trade unionists in general.

One point was made clear by all in the discussion that the ideas of separate unions for women to fight for their problems was not acceptable to them. The establishment of womens' wings under trade unions to launch struggles and to bring them in the main struggle of the working class should be the goal, that is the sentiment expressed by all the trade unions which attended the meeting.

Shri Paswan answered most of the questions raised by the speakers and promised to call such meetings often in future.

Consumer Price Index Numbers for Industrial Workers

(Base 1982 = 100)

Centre	May	June	Linking factor for Old base									
	1990	1990										
ALL-INDIA	182	185	4.93	Belgaum	177	181	—	Varanasi	191	197	5.12	
Gudur	168	175	4.33	Hubli-Dharwar	184	186	—	Asansol	180	181	4.77	
Guntur	177	177	5.60	Mercara	170	173	—	Calcutta	191	192	4.74	
Hyderabad	173	178	5.23	Alwaye	169	174	5.19	Darjeeling	166	168	4.55	
Visakhapatnam	187	189	—	Mundakayam	173	180	4.67	Durgapur	188	189	—	
Warrangal	176	182	—	Quilon	177	180	—	Haldia	194	194	—	
Doom-Dooma-				Trivandrum	183	186	—	Howrah	198	200	4.12	
Tinsukia	170	173	4.05	Bhalghat	185	188	5.24	Jalpaiguri	170	173	4.16	
Gauhati	189	191	—	Bhilai	170	171	3.49	Raniganj	171	172	4.40	
Labac-Silchar	168	170	3.96	Bhopal	185	187	5.46	Chandigarh	177	180	—	
Mariani-Jorhat	177	179	3.95	Indore	195	197	5.18	Delhi	191	194	4.97	
Rangapara-Tezpur	172	174	4.29	Jabalpur	201	204	6.41	Pondicherry	188	194	—	
Jamshedpur	175	177	4.68	Bombay	193	196	5.12					
Jharia	173	173	4.63	Nagpur	188	193	4.99	Additional Series of Labour Bureau				
Kodarma	163	166	5.43	Nasik	188	191	—	Kothagudem	192	198	3.25	
Monghyr	174	176	5.29	Pune	189	192	—	Himachal Pradesh	177	179	3.75	
Noamundi	179	176	4.58	Sholapur	186	188	5.03	Bhilwara	180	186	3.20	
Ranchi-Hatia	192	192	—	Barbil	177	178	5.00	Chindwara	187	190	2.59	
Ahmedabad	183	185	4.78	Rourkela	170	170	3.59	Tripura	196	197	4.37	
Baroda	183	187	—	Amritsar	181	182	5.19	Goa	193	196	3.40	
Bhavnagar	186	188	4.99	Ludhiana	180	185	—	Other Series of Labour Bureau				
Rajkot	187	188	—	Ajmer	186	190	5.01					
Surat	192	196	—	Jaipur	181	182	5.17	Centre	Base	May	June	
Faridabad	175	181	—	Coimbatore	173	174	5.35		1990	1990		
Yamunanagar	171	174	5.53	Coonoor	190	194	4.80	Ammathi	1960	854	877	
Srinagar	177	177	5.47	Madras	179	182	5.05	Chickmagalur	1960	884	891	
Bangalore	173	175	5.66	Maduri	184	185	5.27	Kolar Gold Field	1960	883	894	
				Salem	172	172	—	Gwalior	1960	945	954	
				Tiruchirapall	194	191	—	Sambalpur	—	—	—	
				Agra	174	182	—	Berhampur	—	—	—	
				Ghaziabad	184	191	—	Cuttack	—	—	—	
				Kanpur	188	193	4.69					
				Saharanpur	185	186	5.06					

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.

—Dash denotes new centres under 1982 series.

Joint Statement of ACEU & AIHA on The Death of Lina Thakker, Air Hostess

Ms Lina Thakker, Air Hostess joined Indian Airlines on 26th June 1989. The 24 year old Lina hails from a respectable family and was an M.Se. She loved flying as she told her relatives and was quite popular among her colleagues.

Ms. Lina Thakker operated flt No. IC-434 Bombay-Delhi on 19/8 alongwith her colleagues. She was in night halt at Delhi's Kanishka Hotel. on 20th August 90 around 1700 hrs she allegedly jumped from her 6th floor room and died on way to hospital. But there are unknown facts and jumping from the sixth floor is shrouded with mystery. Enquiries by the union reveal that this hostess was in her usual self and was cheerful throughout. She had no love affair with anyone as far as the knowledge of the IA employees goes and hence the story circulated by vested interests that her 'suicide' is due to failure of love is to be rejected outright. On the day of the incident her close colleagues had gone out of the Kanishka room to see their parents/relatives for sometime. At this time, a certain criminal entered her room and there are enough evidences to show that there was a bitter struggle as could be seen from the nature of injuries on her body. The trauma left behind by this crime was the one and only reason for her to take the extreme step of ending her life.

We have come to know that powerful vested interests are at work to hush up the whole affair and pass it on as an unfortunate accident. Their argument is that hundreds of such cases are taking place in the country and so why after all take it so seriously. The story of stigma is there to be used any way, call it social stigma, stigma to the family or use the much talked about term 'image of the Corporation' or 'image of the community' etc. We as a union are also not in favour of tarnishing the image of anyone, but at the same time the perpetrator of this crime shall not be allowed to go unpunished. The Delhi police though is aware who the criminal is, so far has not arrested him.

On behalf of the Air Hostesses/cabin crew, a delegation of the ACEU met the Offg. Regional Director Capt. B. C. Khadtale. He assured us that our strong feelings on this subject would be immediately conveyed to Hqrs. We had told in this case, the Indian Airlines did not move an inch to initiate departmental action/investigation, and was sitting pretty tight on the alibi of police investigation. Ms. Lina Thakker was on duty. There are instances that even though criminal proceedings were pending, the management had initiated departmental action and had even terminated the services of the employees. But in this case, strangely, the Indian Airlines had declined to move. Our demand to the Regional

Director was that Indian Airlines should at once move into departmental investigation and based on the preliminary findings hand over the case to the CBI. We want a CBI investigation and immediate arrest of the culprit. We do not want any more such incidents to occur.

The undersigned is due to meet the concerned officials in Delhi shortly. We are seeking the help of the Parliamentarians in general and particularly the women MPs to raise the matter further at appropriate levels. We had already moved in this direction and shall let you know the outcome shortly.

We have decided to hold a mass rally on Tuesday, 28th August at 10 am. in front of the Operations Department building at NTB to focus the attention of the authorities to the crime committed against the Air Hostess, which in reality is a crime against women. No society should tolerate such crimes against women. We want to tell all those who matter that Air Hostesses are not sex objects. We in the ACEU & AIHA had jointly fought in the past for ending the discriminations against Air Hostesses based on sex and our fight in fact continues. We have to fight for upholding the dignity of women. We therefore appeal to employees, both male and female, both ground staff and crew to join this fight and take part in the demonstration. A morcha will be taken out from NEC on 28th August (Tuesday) at around 10 am and shall cover outer perimeter road of Airport passing through the GSD gate and reach movement control. Staff at NTB, GSD, Cargo/Catering/PSU/Movement etc would join the morcha and assemble in front of the operations. We appeal to all Air Hostesses/Flight Purser to reach the Morcha in time and take part in large numbers.

sd/-
(Ruheen Khambatta &
Asha Mulgaokar)
Air India Hostesses Association

sd/-
(R. Ramanathan &
Hemant Kumar)
ACEU

(From page 4)

unions viz., CITU, INTUC, AITUC, BMS and HMS of Burnpur, met Shri Goswami in his office at Udyog Bhawan, New Delhi. The delegation was represented by Haradhan Roy, MP. Purna Chandra Malik MP, Sudhir Roy, MP; and M. K. Pandhe, Chandra Sekhar Mukherjee, J.N. Kar Chowdhury, Mrinal Banerjee, A. Dakshi, from CITU; Krishna Prasad and Mani Sarkar from INTUC, Nemai Routh and Himangshree Chattarjee of AITUC Viswanath Kapoor of BMS.

COSATU Launches Campaign Programme of Action

The Central Executive Committee of the Congress of South African Trade Unions in its meeting held on July 21 discussed the current condition of workers in South Africa and decided to launch a programme of actions for campaign throughout the country.

With the continuing struggles and talks for building up a new non-racial democratic South Africa, which would dismantle apartheid in its entirety, the struggle of the workers led by the COSATU has been gaining momentum without any relent.

Strike actions have been taking place in various industries. Recently the workers and employees went on strike in retail, catering and food sectors, in mines, hospitals and municipalities in the country. For the first time, the workers were striking in public sectors, municipalities and hospitals. The workers in Bantustans like in Qwa Qwa are also preparing for strike actions. In the Coal and Diamond mines 1,50,000 workers have decided to go in for strike ballot.

Over 50 percent of the strikes are for higher wages. The wages the workers get even in big Corporations are mostly starvation wages. They make racial discrimination also. The other strikes are against mass dismissals, retrenchments and for workers' basic rights.

National Minimum Wage : The COSATU has demanded for a policy of National Minimum Wage, that has provided for a rallying point for all unions and unorganised workers. The COSATU Living Wage Committee said that the National Minimum Wage should be set at R 700 per month for 1990-91. The level of National Minimum Wage will be finalised in the National Campaigns Conference of the COSATU being held in September, 1990.

The founding conference of the COSATU had pointed out that there must be a campaign for a legally enforced National Minimum Wage, and there should be a distinction between Living Wage and National Minimum Wage. The Living Wage was estimated at between R 1140 and R 1,500 per month. The COSATU's demand is that National Minimum Wage should assure workers of a reasonable living standard and should not be lower than the poverty datum line, which stood at R 550 per month. According to COSATU, the National Minimum Wage would be a stepping stone to reach the Living Wage and should be a campaign tool to mobilise workers to organise for better wages and would be a basis to build working class unity. While a National Minimum Wage would benefit a large number of low

paid workers and particularly the unorganised workers, it would not prevent the higher paid workers from demanding the Living Wage. The COSATU said that the National Minimum Wage was needed to survive and the Living Wage was needed to climb out of poverty. Poverty cannot be ended without ending low wages. The National Minimum Wage would give the workers' movement the tool it needed to mobilise organised and unorganised workers together to strike a blow at poverty.

Against Privatisation : Simultaneously, the COSATU has launched a campaign against privatisation. The State has taken a number of steps to privatise the institutions and enterprises. It has completed identifying and investigating the enterprises that are going to be privatised. The steps taken for this include "commercialisation" and "marketisation". In the face of opposition launched by COSATU, ANC and the South African Communist Party, the State has resorted to what COSATU termed as "back door privatisation". The COSATU pointed out that privatisation in any form would mean ending service to the society and providing profits to the monopolists. At the same time it would mean increased workload to workers for higher productivity, increased attack on basic rights of workers and increased prices of the products hitting hard the consumers. The COSATU called upon all sections of workers to intensify campaign against privatisation. It called upon the public sector workers in particular to be on the look out for signs of "commercialisation", "marketisation" and "backdoor privatisation".

New Labour Legislation : The COSATU has also intensified struggle against the new Labour Relations Act (LRA) which was imposed on the workers more than two years back. The COSATU, NACTU and Saccola had jointly launched a movement against the new legislation which curbed the basic rights of the workers. The apartheid Government was compelled to sign an agreement which scrapped most of the anti-worker provisions and committed to make this agreement a law. But then the Government went back against the agreement and refused to legislate it. The COSATU has decided to launch action programmes including strike actions from October 8 to 10 demanding to legislate the agreement, to extend the basic organisational rights to public sector workers and all other workers including farm and domestic workers and demanding that all labour legislations must have the support of workers before they go to the Parliament. It has called for mass actions in pursuance of the demands even if the Government starts negotiations.

Child Care : The COSATU discussed the problem of Child Care in its Women's Sub-Committee. Because of the fact that the parents have to spend long hours

at work, and they are refused leave or wages are deducted when their children fall ill, the Child Care has become a vital problem for the workers. The COSATU has decided to launch a campaign culminating in the observance of a Child Care Day on September 20, demanding Child Care to be discussed as a part of union demand in the negotiations, Chreche facilities and additional twenty days paid leave to take care of children.

Against Unemployment: The COSATU discussed the issue of unemployment and the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) and decided to launch campaign to promote job generation and job security. It identified the problems in the UIF and noted that the fund was extremely meagre to serve any purpose. It was only 45 percent of workers' last wages for six months only. It did not provide any relief to those who are seeking employment. Domestic workers, public sector workers were not covered by the UIF. The workers in the Bantustans did not get the money in South Africa. People have to wait for years to get this meagre amount. Although the workers contributed to the fund, yet the UIF Board did not have any workers' representative in it. Over and above, racial discrimination was rampant in disbursement of the money.

The COSATU therefore demanded workers' control over the fund, increase in the benefit money, an end to racism and administrative delay, workers to receive the benefit as long as they remain unemployed and including those who are seeking employment, offices for disbursement of money to be near the residential areas of the workers and public sector, farm and domestic workers also to be benefited from the fund.

Economic Policy, Collective Bargaining, Women's Demands : Apart from above, the COSATU Central Executive Committee also discussed the state of economy. It called for dismantling the apartheid economy and reorientation of an economy that would provide self-reliance, employment generation and workers' participation in it.

Regarding collective bargaining, it emphasised on bargaining at industrial level and not at company level or at local level. This according to COSATU would help to build up consciousness of the workers for the whole industry. Thus they can begin to influence the whole industry and its management, ensure democratic functioning and take under the purview of bargaining the wages and working conditions of the unorganised workers also in the industry. The COSATU advocated the inclusion of observers also in the negotiations.

On the question of working women vis-vis the re-orientation of economic policy, the COSATU called for special attention to women workers' problems demanding an end to all discriminations, against sexual harassments and assistance to women at the work place and in the community in the areas of child care, pregnancy and maternity benefits.

Workers' Charter : On all the above issues, the COSATU prepared a draft of Workers' Charter. It called for a countrywide debate and campaign by the unions on the Workers' Charter. It emphasised that the Workers' Charter must include all the demands of the workers. Some of the basic demands like the right to strike, right to collective bargaining, right to work, housing and food, etc. should be included in the new Constitution. The Constitution being the basic law of the country, the vital basic demands and rights of the workers cannot be changed so easily. All other demands in the Workers' Charter would go into the other laws like the Labour Relations Act, which would all be based on the basic law, viz the Constitution.

Violence in Natal : The COSATU also discussed the violence in Natal and other places and expressed serious concern over it. It held the apartheid regime responsible for it. It decided for a broad conference on the issue.

Action Programme

With all the above demands the COSATU formulated the following set of action programmes throughout the country by all unions for implementation :

Consultative Conference on Peace and Reconstruction in Natal : This conference was jointly called by COSATU, ANC, Sayco and UDF at Natal on August 4 and 5 to discuss concrete ways of ending the violence and helping to rebuild community life in Natal by carrying forward the campaign.

National Campaign Committee Meeting : The meeting was held on August 15 to discuss retrenchments and steps to defend jobs, solidarity actions by all workers during strikes by others and violence against workers by the State, vigilantes and rival unions.

Workers' Charter Day : August 28 to be observed as Workers' Charter Day in all factories and work places by wearing red head bands and T-Shirts with the demands written on them.

Campaigns Conference : This conference has been called at Johannesburg from September 7 to 9 to discuss mass action programme on the issue of Labour Relations Act, the question of National Minimum Wage and collective bargaining at Industrial level. The conference would also discuss to establish the right to strike in "essential services" and the definition and listing of the "essential services." It will further discuss to pressurise the Bantustan Governments to pass labour legislation to give workers' basic rights.

Regional Meetings : Special Regional Council meetings will be held to hear reports from Campaigns Conference.

Child Care Day : Child Care Day to be observed on September 20 in pursuance of the demands formulated by the COSATU as stated earlier.

Mass Marches in all Towns and Cities : Mass workers' marches are to be held on September 29, throughout South Africa in pursuance of the demands regarding Labour Relations Act, National Minimum Wage, Living Wage, against privatisation and on the Unemployment Insurance Fund for all.

Mass Countrywide Strike : Mass countrywide strike to be observed by all unions and workers from October 8 to 10. This decision will be finalised in the Campaigns Conference on September 7 to 9.

Workers' Charter Conference : The Conference will be held on November 17 and 18 to finalise the Workers' Charter, which will then be adopted in the next year's COSATU Congress. It will also discuss COSATU's economic programme and a housing policy.

THE 'PRETORIA MINUTE'

The ANC is 'suspending all armed actions with immediate effect', thus accelerating the pace of negotiations by several months. The dramatic decision was announced on August 7 in a joint statement by the government and the ANC after marathon 15-hour talks in Pretoria. 'No further armed actions and related activities by the ANC and its military wing Umkhonto we Sizwe will take place' the statement said.

The two parties also announced that ANC political prisoners would be released and exiles granted indemnity from arrest in a phased process beginning from September 1. The agreement is to be known as the Pretoria Minute. The ANC and the Government said that as a result of the agreement, 'the way is now open to proceed to negotiations on a new Constitution. Exploratory talks in this regard will be held before the next meeting, which will be held soon.

'We are convinced that what we have agreed on today can become a milestone on the road to true peace and prosperity for our country'. The meeting accepted the final report of a working group dealing with political prisoners and exiles 'who committed offences on the assumption that a particular cause was being served.'

The working group is to draw up a plan for the release of ANC prisoners and the granting of indemnity to ANC exiles and will report before the end of August.

On security legislation, seen by the ANC as an obstacle to negotiations, the Government announced

it would give immediate consideration to repealing all provisions of the Internal Security Act that :

- referred to communism or the furthering of communism
- provided for a consolidated list;
- provided for a prohibition on the publication of statements or writings of certain persons;
- provided for a deposit before a newspaper may be registered.

The Government also promised to continue reviewing security legislation to ensure free political activity with a view to introducing amending legislation at the next session of parliament, and undertook to consider the lifting of the state of emergency in Natal in the light of positive consequences from this accord.

On suspending the armed struggle, Nelson Mandela said the ANC had made a 'very significant concession.' Dealing with the release of prisoners and return of exiles, the meeting agreed on certain target dates, most of which should have been achieved by the end of this year.

Natal Violence Discussed in Pretoria : The violence which has hit the country and how to end it was a central topic in the 15-hour talks between the ANC and Government in Pretoria in August. Both parties resolved to take steps to stop the violence as well as to curb protest marches and boycott actions which reached a climax with the July 2 national stayaway. The ANC's support of the stayaway apparently caused the Government delegation to discuss the issue at length with the ANC. The talks identified a power struggle as the main cause of violence in Natal, and agreed the violence would not stop until a political solution was found.

After the meeting, SA Communist Party chief Joe Slovo said the issue of police siding with 'Inkatha thugs' against the ANC was brought up. Slovo described the police as an over powerful 'Frankenstein' created by SA's racist system, and said one of President De Klerk's most urgent tasks was to take control of the police force.

Alfred Nzo said ANC monitoring groups set up all over the country would establish whether the Government was conniving with the police to undermine the ANC, or whether the Government had in fact lost control of the police force. The Government also promised to consider the proposal that De Klerk meet members of the ANC, UDF and COSATU before the end of August to discuss ways of ending the Natal war.