Vol. 35 No. 5 January 2005 Price: Rupees Four

THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU



Mass Rally at Agartala on December 5, 2004 on the Occasion of CITU Working Committee

COAL WORKERS' WAGE NEGOTIATION

The Coal India management dragged the 7th coal wage agreement for nearly 3 years but in the face of rising unrest among coal workers and the strike notice by most of the trade unions, the management finally had to concede to some major demands. But the negotiation remains still inconclusive.

On 30th November and 1st December 2004 at Kolkata in the meeting of JBCCI-VII consensus was reached on certain points while on some issues differences still remain. The consensus was on the following points:

1. Minimum wage to be increased from Rs 3300/- to Rs 5500/- per month. 68.18 per cent increase will be there at higher levels.
2. Special DA shall be increased from 59.23 to 99.62
3. Minimum Guaranteed benefit shall be 15% or Rs 1185.00 whichever is higher.
4. Increment rates have been increased to 2.5% to 3% of basic wage
5. Underground allowances have been increased to @10% upto Rs 9000.00 and @12% beyond that.

Among other gains - washing allowance increased by Rs 10/-, transport allowance by Rs 2/- more per day additional transport subsidy by Rs 3/- more per day conveyance reimbursement by Rs 3/- more per day

Earned Leave accumulation has been increased from 100 to 120 days, sick leave from 90 to 100 days. Life cover scheme payment will be now Rs 40,000 and accident benefit will be Rs 30,000.

All these were incorporated in the form of minutes of the meeting but there was no memorandum of understanding because the crucial issues like full neutralization of cost of living through suitable DA formulae and coverage of the workers of ECL, BCCL and CCL by the new wage agreement are yet to be settled before a full agreement is signed. This is the firm stand of CITU, despite vacillation by some unions.

The management demanded 20% increase in productivity and strict rules for attendance. They also proposed to withdraw provisions of employment on compassionate ground other than accident deaths while on work. The workers representatives rejected these counter demands by management.

Many other issues like special grade for VI or excavation special grade and one more higher scales to be created etc surfaced during the negotiation. The demand for reviewing gratuity amounts, increase in pension amounts, re-introduction of welfare cess, medical facilities for retired employees and house building schemes for workers were placed before the management. The meeting of All India Coal Workers' Federation presided over by M K Pandhe decided to strengthen the unity and intensify the struggles to achieve the unsettled demands.

The meeting for coal wage negotiation was slated to be held on 30th November 2004. After the date of meeting was fixed, the BMS suddenly declared a three-day strike in coal industry from 29th November to 1st December. The CITU appealed in writing to BMS to reconsider their unilateral strike decision as it was agreed by all the unions in coal industry that in the event of failure of the negotiations on 30th November 2004, all the unions would jointly serve the notice for industry wide strike action. The BMS did not respond to the same, as it was keen on showing its one-upmanship. But on the days of strike announced by the BMS, even their leaders did not take part in strike. On those days, total absence in the coalmines throughout the country was not more than 1.5 per cent. The BMS leadership was more eager to pursue their game of disrupting the total unity emerging among the coal workers than going in for strike action.

THE WORKING CLASS

CITU MONTHLY

JANUARY 2005

YOU SAID IT by Laxman



Sorry to interrupt you, sir. Whatever instructions and orders you are giving are of no use, sir. You are talking on your spectacle case, not on your cell phone!

Courtesy: The Times of India

EDITORIAL BOARD
M K Pandhe
(Chairman)
W R Varada Rajan
(Working Editor)
Chittabrata Majumdar
Tapan Sen
K Hemalata
Ardhendu Dakshi

EDITORIAL

THE TASK AHEAD

The CITU working Committee just concluded its session. The meeting reviewed the post UPA situation in the country and found no reason to be jubilant, not even to take a respite, quite contrary to the expectation roused among the people following much sought after defeat of the NDA combine. Rather danger is looming large in many fronts which the trade union movement can ignore only at their peril.

The fate of the pro-people commitments made by the UPA combine in CMP is under cloud. The draft Employment Guarantee Bill tabled today in Parliament in a much diluted form as has taken away the very essence of both "guarantee" of employment and "universal coverage" of all rural unemployeds and made the commitment of CMP simply meaningless. The draft bill on the service Condition and Social Security for the unorganized sector workers circulated by the Labour Ministry among the trade unions suffers from the same dilutions deliberately incorporated to render the whole exercise simply making sounds with little or no substance.

The assurance to reconsider the interest rate on Employees Provident Fund is yet to deliver result; rather the substantive issue is being sought to be clouded through statements and counter statements in the media.

While issues pertaining to mass of the people and workers are being delayed, diluted and confused deliberately, the issues to be clinched for the rich, capitalists and landlords are getting quick clearance from the Govt. desks. The Govt. is going ahead with increasing FDI cap in civil aviation, telecom and other fields, while actively pursuing the line of diluting Govt. stake in profitable PSUs to the borderline of privatization at 51%. In telecom sector, the biased and discriminatory role of the Govt. against the PSUs crossed the limit of sensibility.

Many more examples are there which clearly show that the UPA Govt. is buying time in the matter of implementing the pro-people commitments in CMP, may be to torpedo them ultimately. On the other, the Govt. is moving fast in pushing through its neoliberal economic agenda, much to the detriment of the interests of the people and the country's economy.

We must put a brake in such process. The Working Committee therefore decided to intensify campaign and build up massive and aggressive mobilisation to crack on the deliberate dilutions and dilatory tactics in translating pro-people commitments of the Govt. in reality and at the same time erect towering resistance to the unscrupulous ploy to fast-forward the neoliberal designs in the strategic areas of the economy in tranches.

We must redouble our initiative in that direction instead of resting on illusion.

CITU Working Committee

Strengthen Working Class Unity: Bring Masses into Struggles

Hemalata

The Working Committee of CITU called upon the working class to intensify the struggles against the attacks on the living and working conditions of the toiling masses in the country. The report adopted by the Working Committee observed 'The present political reality is that the communal and divisive forces that have been ousted from power at the Centre are eagerly waiting in the wings greedily looking for the earliest opportunity to stage a come back. The working class keenly desires that the UPA government should take measures, which would frustrate these attempts. But, the working class and the trade union movement cannot remain silent onlookers to such actions of the government, which negate the peoples' verdict and cause serious discontent among them. Under these circumstances, resistance to the anti people and anti worker measures of the UPA government, which are more in tune with the retrograde policies of economic liberalisation has to mature from protest actions to more and more strong, united and sustained struggles of the working class.'

The Working Committee of CITU met at Rabindra Bhawan in Agartala, the capital city of Tripura on 3- 5 December 2004. This was the first time that an all India meeting of CITU was held in the landlocked North Eastern state which has been long neglected by the successive governments at the Centre. Around 100 members of the Working Committee from all over the country participated in the meeting, which looked at the international and national situation from the working class view point, discussed the implementation of the decisions of the Nasik general council held in July 2004, and formulated the future activities.

The meeting started at 10.00AM on the 3rd December, with the hoisting of the Red Flag of CITU by its President, M K Pandhe, and paying floral homage to the martyrs who laid down their lives in the struggle. This was followed by the inaugural session in which the Chairman of the reception committee, Khagen Das, MP, welcomed the delegates. He informed the members that with its rich natural resources like gas, rubber, tea, pine apple etc Tripura had immense potential for development, but these could not be tapped due to the lack of infrastructure, which has been neglected by the Government of India. He pointed out that the root cause of insurgency in the state was unemployment and poverty, which was being utilised by the anti national elements. The Left Front, which has been ruling the country for twenty one years, in two spells, has been trying its best to improve the living conditions of the people and has been successful in protecting the unity of the tribal and non tribal population of the state. There has been significant improvement in the social indicators in the state, like literacy, education and health during the tenure of the Left Front government.

M K Pandhe delivered the Presidential address which dealt at length on the international situation. He referred to the increasing aggressiveness of American imperialism, particularly after the re election of Bush for the second term as President. Pandhe noted that the recent developments in world economy showed some signs of partial recovery of capitalism, but the economy in the developed countries was slower than the world average. The spectacular rate of growth of the Chinese economy significantly contributed to the higher rate of growth of the world economy as a whole and that of the developing countries. He observed that the international trade under the regime of globalisation has not helped the developing countries anywhere in the world, which was evident even from the data trotted out by the World Bank. The number of poor in the world has increased. While twenty five years ago, 500 million people in the world were starving, this figure has swelled to 800 million today. 325 million children in the

world have no chance of going to school and most of them are forced to work. As per the WHO figures, 33 thousand children die everyday in developing countries due to curable diseases, while the prices of essential medicines are hiked by the profit hungry MNCs.

Quoting the message of Fidel Castro to the UNCTAD conference, Pandhe concluded, 'The imperialist system that prevails today, towards which the developed capitalist society unavoidably evolved, has already come to such a ruthlessly irrational and unfair world economic and neo liberal order that is unsustainable. Many people will rebel against it. In fact, they have already begun to rebel. For the first time in the history, man has created the technical capacity for its own destruction. However, it has not been capable of creating a minimum guarantee for the safety and integrity of every country on equal footing... The people will become ungovernable, and no repression, torture, disappearances or massive murders will stop them. Not only will the hungry of the Third World be in the struggle for their own survival and that of their children, but also the conscious people from the rich world, both manual and intellectual workers.'

Shyamal Chakravarty, Secretary of CITU introduced a resolution congratulating the working class and the people of Tripura for preserving the unity of the tribal and non tribal people in the state and for their role in the struggle against the anti worker policies of the Government of India. The resolution also greeted the Left Front government of Tripura, which was doing a commendable job to up lift the living conditions of the people in the state while resisting the pressure from the successive governments at the Centre to implement the anti people policies of globalisation. Ravindranath seconded the resolution. The meeting also unanimously passed a resolution introduced by Balanandan, Vice President of CITU and supported by Habeeb, Secretary, demanding that the Electricity Bill 2003 should be reviewed and the harmful clauses withdrawn.

Chittabrata Majumdar presented the General Secretary's report, which outlined the national situation under the UPA rule. He explained that the NCMP formulated by the UPA government maintained the main paradigm of the economic policies pursued since 1991, but had to incorporate some positive pro peasant, pro worker and pro poor promises due to the pressure from the Left forces. At the same time, the government was trying to implement the Fund Bank dictated policies of liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation through the back door, by utilising some cleverly worded assertions in the NCMP. While there was no initiative to implement the pro people promises, the government was all too keen to oblige the national and multinational corporations. The recent decisions of the government to hike the FDI cap in civil aviation from 40 to 49%, its repeated assertions to privatise the profit making Delhi and Mumbai airports, the non serious attitude in formulating the revival plans for the sick PSUs, the decision of the Group of Ministers to sell the equities in the profitable PSUs through IPO etc were all indications of the negative swing in the policies.

The report made it clear that what has changed with the change in regime at the Centre was that the NCMP has only given some space for the trade union movement to move forward and intensify the struggle. Working class has to be vigilant and alert towards the policies of the government and should mobilise the workers and other sections of the society to bring pressure on the government at least to implement the pro worker and pro people promises made in the NCMP. The struggle against 'religious fundamentalism' and 'market fanaticism' should be fought with equal vigour. The trade union movement must prepare itself for a long drawn united struggle and there should not be any illusion that the advocates of the so called 'economic reforms' will lose their zeal because the government has to depend on the support of the Left Parties in the Parliament.

Nearly 29 members participated in the discussion on the General Secretary's report, after which it was unanimously adopted. While supporting the report they strengthened it by narrating their

own experiences in the states. Member after member reported about the increasing repression and police intervention in the struggles of the working class to protect their existing rights. The incidences in Visakhapatnam Port Trust, in the New Allen Berry Factory in Faridabad, in the glass bangle industry in Ferozabad in Uttar Pradesh were some examples. In Banihal in Jammu and Kashmir, where the construction workers in the Udhampur - Baramulla Railway Project were on strike since the last four months, the Army was deployed at the instance of the contractor, to terrorise the workers. In many states, unions were not even registered under the Trade Unions Act. Workers and their leaders were being victimised for joining unions. Workers had to launch prolonged struggles even for the implementation of such basic rights like 8 hours work, attendance register, appointment letter, minimum wages and the right to form unions.

The Working Committee noted with grave concern the increasing contractorisation and casualisation of the work place and observed that neglecting the most important task of organising the contract workers would be suicidal for the entire trade union movement. The regular workers' unions must take the responsibility of organising the contract workers. It emphasised that drawing appropriate strategy both at the work place as well as at the national level was necessary to voice forcefully the demands of the contract workers. It was decided to hold conventions at the all India, state and industry level to bring the problems of the contract workers into focus. The Working Committee also decided to undertake a deeper study of the IT and ITES and adopt an appropriate strategy to organise the workers in this sector, which has started playing a crucial role in the economy.

The Working Committee criticised the Draft Bill for the Unorganised Sector workers of the UPA government, which envisaged social security for the unorganised sector workers based on their contributions with just a token contribution from the central government. The bill seeks to impose a heavy burden on the state governments, which raises doubts on whether the bill can ever take off in its present form. Similarly the bill on Rural Employment Guarantee also suffers from many anomalies. The CITU Working Committee called upon all the CITU units to undertake a vigorous campaign among the workers at the grass root level and develop a countrywide movement focusing the demands of CITU on these issues.

The Working Committee also endorsed the recommendations of the national workshop of the All India Coordination Committee of Working Women (AICCWW) held on the 18- 19 November , which included continuing the signature campaign and submit memoranda to the governors in all states on 8th March 2005, make serious efforts to organise the home based workers, domestic workers and fishers and fisheries workers, develop an all India movement of nurses and collect all the available data on the participation of working women in the trade union movement in the last 25 years. It was noted that the mobilisation in the convention and the rally reflected the functioning of the state level coordination committees of working women as well as the attention paid by the CITU state committees to the work among working women.

The CITU Working Committee noted that the rising unemployment is of serious concern not only to the working class but also the millions of youth who were entering the job market every year. Even internationally, as a result of the 'jobless growth' due to the globalisation policies, unemployment was increasing and the issue was becoming a focal point in the political developments also. Hence, it was imperative on the part of the CITU to take up the issue with due seriousness and it was decided to start the efforts by organising a two day workshop in March - May 2005.

A Resolution demanding immediate review of the Electricity Act 2003 by changing the retrograde clauses was unanimously passed by the Working Committee.

Emphasising the importance of united struggles the Working Committee observed that unless the unity of the working class is strengthened, the task of bringing broader masses

besides the working class in to struggles cannot be effective. This envisages strengthening the CITU, expanding its independent activities and taking a dominant role in building struggles which would help the working class and the trade unions to overcome vacillations and join to strengthen the struggles in proper directions.

Manik Sarkar, Chief Minister of Tripura greeted the Working Committee on the evening of the 4th December. He mentioned about the frontline role of CITU and the working class movement in Tripura in combating the onslaughts of the extremist forces while carrying on united struggle against the neoliberal policies and in defence of the democratic rights. The role of the working class movement and CITU in particular had always been crucial in shaping and elevating the democratic movement in the state in its present height, Manik Sarkar asserted. Several cultural troupes in the state presented brilliant performances, including tribal songs and dances. All the Working Committee members who attended the meeting had first hand knowledge on the difficult conditions in which the activists of the CITU and other mass organisations were working and were inspired by their hard work. The last day witnessed a massive rally of workers in the Astabal Maidan, who marched in small streams from different corners of the city to converge to the venue. The public meeting was addressed by Manik Sarkar, MK Pandhe, Chittabrata Majumdar and Pijush Nag, the General Secretary of the Tripura State Committee of CITU.

Decisions of the Working Committee of CITU:

1. Countrywide independent campaign on the demands of the working class, focusing specifically on issues like legislation for the agricultural workers, legislation for the unorganised sector workers with a meaningful state funded benefit defined social security scheme, national employment guarantee scheme, revival of sick PSUs, reviewing of the Electricity Act 2003 and welfare schemes for women as incorporated in the NCMP.
2. Campaign demanding change in the direction of the economic policies; build up resistance against the unwarranted dilution of government stakes in the PSUs, privatisation of airports and allowing higher foreign participation in telecom, civil aviation, insurance, banks and other strategic sectors of the economy; oppose de reservation of the items reserved for small scale units; campaign demanding roll back of the price hike in petrol, diesel and cooking gas.
3. Countrywide campaign focussing on general non-enforcement of basic labour laws in most of the states in respect of minimum wages, social security and safety with direct patronage of the concerned administration and against repression on the trade union movement demanding implementation of basic labour laws.
4. Organise joint trade union campaign and struggle against reduction in the interest rate on provident fund and other savings and perpetuation of the new defined-contribution pension scheme for new central government employees, besides imposition of tax on the terminal benefits under the scheme.
5. Pay more attention to organise the unorganised sector workers and form sub committees and coordination committees at the state and district level.
6. Take up the issues of working women and build struggles at the trade union level.
7. Take initiative to encourage and develop industry wise struggles of various industrial federations.
8. Organise independent campaign against communalism and other divisive trends and link them with day to day trade union struggles at all levels
9. Prepare for holding a massive all India convention on 'Right to Work' in March - May 2005.
10. Organise trade union schools in the states to cover all working committee members of the affiliated unions.
11. Redouble efforts to reach the membership target of 40 lakhs
12. Make serious efforts to activate the Sponsoring Committee of Trade Unions and the National Platform of Mass Organisations for effective mobilisation throughout the country.

40TH SESSION OF STANDING LABOUR COMMITTEE

Sudhir Kumar

The 40th session of Standing Labour Committee was held on 29th November 2004 in the conference hall at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi. The new Union Minister of Labour and Employment, K. Chandrashekar Rao chaired the session. Representatives of the workers, employers and of state and central labour departments participated in the meeting in full strength.

The CITU was represented by M. K. Pandhe (President) and Chittabrata Majumdar (General Secretary) as delegates and V.J.K. Nair (General Secretary, Karnataka State) and Sudhir Kumar (President, Delhi State CITU) as advisers.

The SLC meeting had two items on its agenda viz. the review of the action on the conclusions/ recommendations of the 39th session of ILC (held on 16th-18th October 2003), and finalisation of the dates for holding the 40th session of Indian Labour Conference and items to be included in the agenda for it.

M.K. Pandhe, intervening at the commencement of the proceedings, complained that reducing the main purpose of the SLC to only fixing the agenda for the Indian Labour Conference (ILC) amounted to dilution of the importance of the SLC and demanded that henceforth such practice should stop and the SLC should seriously discuss issues and policies affecting labour relations and workers in particular.

Welcoming the participants, the Labour Minister declared that employment promotion was the central theme of the government's Common Minimum Programme. 'We intend to enact a law to provide employment for 100 days in a year to one person in every family', he said. Rights and benefits earned by workers will not be curtailed and ways and means will be worked out to provide social protection to a huge 370 million work force in the informal sector, he added. He assured the meeting that the Government will actively pursue tripartite consultation on important issues concerning all.

M.K. Pandhe, in his initial remarks, strongly rebutted the Minister's claims and pointed out that the government was continuously diluting the tripartite forum. Although the government has constituted about 35 tripartite committees, most of them do not meet. He demanded that the tripartite forums should not be overlooked.

How does the government intend to generate funds for providing jobs for two crore families in the villages, he wanted to know. Should industry not come over and play its role? He said that big industry must contribute at least 2% of its huge profit for employment generation. But the industry will not support any such concrete suggestion, he said. Labour laws are not implemented and inspectors are a bare minimum. At least five times more the number are required and stringent laws are not the issues. Flexibility in laws, as demanded by the employers means non-implementation of laws. He criticised the functioning of the private sector. "Making industry sick is a profitable business", he said. Swindling by managements and siphoning of funds are a common practice.

Even if more than 20 workers are employed, the employers attempt to overcome provisions of the Factory Act by showing less than 20 workers. Reacting to the claim of a spokesman of the industry that China was able to attract more investment and grow faster due to flexible labour laws, he said that per capita growth in China was greater than India's. India's growth was jobless growth. There was no commitment to provide employment. Concluding his remarks, he said that labour laws must be changed in favour of the workers and ethos of bipartism must be restored.

The employers' representatives repeatedly emphasised that labour laws as they currently exist, had to be rewritten. That labour laws should be separately formulated for employers employing less than 50 persons and for employers employing more than 50 persons, they demanded at the outset. While shedding crocodile tears for the growing unemployment in the country, and supporting the need to strengthen the small industries, they said that stringent labour laws are causing crisis in the small scale units. Intervening

in the debate, Chittabrata Majumdar demolished the claim and said that everybody knows that it was the government policies resulting in flooding of the Indian market with cheap foreign goods, difficulties in marketing and mobilisation of funds etc. which was the real cause of the crisis in the industry and employers should recognise this fact and call a spade a spade, instead of attempting to pass on the crisis on to the workers.

In the afternoon session the meeting discussed the agenda for the 40th meeting of the ILC and decided that ILC will take up the issue of comprehensive bill for unorganised sector workers, including agricultural sector workers covering their service conditions, social security and other benefits and upward revision in the ceilings and coverage in various labour laws. These issues will be discussed in the ILC meeting scheduled to take place on 29th and 30th December 2004.

On the issue of employment generation and guarantee, the SLC recommended to the Government of India to convene a special session of ILC to be attended by the Prime Minister and other Ministers of various employing ministries to discuss the issue in depth.

(The Ministry of Labour had convened the 40th session of the Indian Labour Conference on 29-30 December, 2004 with the following as the item of agenda:

"Social Security for unorganised sector workers including agricultural sector workers governing their service conditions, social security and other benefits; and Amendment of Labour Laws". But, the Prime Minister who is expected to inaugurate the session has not confirmed his participation till the time of this issue going to print. It is likely that the ILC session may be postponed.)

SAHIB SINGH VERMA'S LARGESSE - EPFO DILEMMA!

The EPF Organisation had incurred an expenditure of Rs. 7.55 crore during 2002-03 and Rs. 10.08 crore during 2003-04. These were the years when huge expenditure was incurred in the name of golden jubilee of EPFO. For 2004-05, the budget provision is Rs. 2.53 crore. It is proposed to further hike in the revised estimates. The reason: the largesse indulged in by Sahib Singh Verma, the Labour Minister in the NDA regime, by way of advertisements through private advertising agencies directly released from the Ministry and directing the EPFO (as well as the ESI Corporation) to foot the bills!

The two handpicked agencies chosen by Sahib Singh Verma for release of advertisements running into several lakhs of rupees were: M/s. Rashtriya Advertising Agency, M/s. Ankur Advertising Agency.

These agencies have submitted bills for a total sum of Rs. 24,40,360.50, which are pending.

The occasions for which the release of advertisements relate to are:

1. 39th Session of Indian Labour Conference 2. Best Employer Award for the year 2003 3. Stone laying ceremony for Samajik Suraksha Bhawan at Dwarka in Delhi 4. Five years Achievements of EPFO 5. Unorganised Sector Workers Social Security Scheme

Excepting 3 & 4 of the above, other occasions do not relate to the EPFO.

There is a directive that all advertisements need to be issued through DAVP only. The Ministry issued the order for release of advertisement on the '39th Session of Indian Labour Conference' first through the DAVP on 13.10.2003. But, Sahib Singh Verma got the order cancelled on 15.10.2003 and got it issued to the two private agencies, which were the recipients of further orders on the other four occasions also. Sahib Singh Verma first released these orders through his Ministry. Later, he in his capacity as Chairman of CBT granted relaxation regularising the release of advertisements through private agencies.

To push through this game plan, Sahib Singh Verma also pressurised the CBT, EPF to delegate powers to him as the Chairman of CBT and to the CPFC for sanctioning advertisements through private agencies up to certain specified limits. But, there was a catch in that too, which perhaps he did not notice. The delegation of power was subject to concurrence of internal finance of EPFO.

The internal finance had observed that the administrative fund of EPF can be utilised only for expenses in connection with the EPF Act and the three schemes framed there under. The EPF Scheme also does not provide for incurring expenditure to items of work not related to the administration of the EPF fund.

Now, EPFO has approached the CBT, EPF to sanction an expenditure of Rs. 16,03,652.00, besides sending out a request to ESIC to cough up Rs. 8.03.981.00 towards these advertisements. This has obviously placed the EPFO in a dilemma.

Globalisation & New Form of Recruitment

Chittabrata Majumdar

The rising unemployment is a perennial problem in all the third world countries like ours. The problem has been aggravated further with the massive downsizing of the existing manpower through indiscriminate implementation of exit policies in form of golden hand shake, voluntary retirement scheme etc. during the last two decades under reform with a plea of making the organisations more efficient and viable. Beyond any doubt the real motto behind such downsizing was malicious and just to shrug the responsibility of the permanent commitment towards the employees to a maximum possible extent to maximise the profit. The neo-liberal reform of the country has thus prepared the ground ready in favour of capitalist putting the workers in a back foot so far as the bargaining capacity is concerned at least for the time being. This may be noted that during the ongoing reform process the size of the unemployment has been ever increasing, since the job opportunity has been perpetually lagging compared to the requirement. The close down of industrial units, and the retrenchment of so-called surplus employees has further fuelled the crises. The millions of job seekers including the educated youth and women are desperate to get job for their mere survival, irrespective of the quality and condition, which is nothing but the compulsion for the distress selling of labour. This was exactly the situation what the capitalist indigenous and of foreign origin have master minded to create.

Engagement of labour via contractors while being most common practice since long, usage of various agencies that provide the labour at a much cheaper cost is also rapidly proved to be the favourite to the big organisations. Use of agencies popularly known as "Third Party" in activities of perennial nature to sustain the smooth operation has become a common practice now a day by the industrial and business houses including the multinational companies. In a pre-conceived move the companies have sought to replace the permanent work force by massive deployment of casual labour.

Since the arrangement have been done between the principal and agencies for supply of labour, the former, though the user of the labour, can conveniently deny the responsibility to adhere the labour laws of the country in absence of direct employee employer relationship as per the present frame of labour laws. In reality many of such agencies are nothing but the mere cosmetic faces of these big houses since every process from selection to deployment are the subject matter of the latter in disguise. Thus these agencies in true sense are the satellites of the parent organisations to continue the increasing exploitation of working class clandestinely.

With the patronage of the monopoly capital and multinationals these agencies have been mushrooming during these days to subordinate the sole capitalist interest. The referred agencies today use to supply manual labour as well as engineers, professionals etc. to meet the capitalist's requirement at a low price. They are casuals, without having job permanency, living at the mercy of their true employers i.e. the principal. These workers are denied of right of association for collective bargaining. The violation of the provisions of minimum wages along with the laws relating ESI, bonus, gratuity, provident fund etc. are the common features in the new form. In addition, work rules such as working hours as per the factories act and other similar laws has become unrestricted practice. No additional pay for the additional work hours is offered. They are kept all the time under the threat of retrenchment. The list of the violation of labour rights and attacks by the employers on the workers is a long one to deal with and getting longer as the neo-liberalisation process as long as continues. The lack of adequate legislative supervision to ensure the adherence of the existing statutes has made the things worse.

The plethora of unemployed work force in the country and the mode of the usage of labour via third party have lead to increase of unorganised

labour force in the organised sector.

The new generation industries, the neo-liberals' favourites as "sunrise industries", powerful with the new technologies have been since their inception more vigorously adopting the strategy of deployment of work force through the same passive route with the help of the said agencies. Even for the direct engagement of very insignificant number, the employment is offered on strictly contractual basis, where no permanency exists along with the other benefits. These contractual appointees along with the others are denied of all sorts of justice. There is hardly any adherence of the labour laws so as to working hours as evidenced by the stretched working hours in all most all the enterprises operating in presently booming IT sectors. The units came into existence as the BPO centres have been operating in shifts. The facts reveal that the employers do not bother to adhere the labour statutes and norms regarding the working time and are flouting conveniently the other stipulation as well. The continuous overworking and unbearable strain of the work compel the workers to quite on their own very soon.

This way, by the massive downsizing the bourgeoisie of the country along with the foreign capital conspired to suppress the organised labour force and to bulldoze the workers' collective bargaining strength to maximise their interest, through new method of utilisation of labour. They, in combination are consistently putting all sorts of pressures to compel the governments to amend the existing labour laws as well as enact the new sets of statues to allow more and more concessions to enable them to pitch all sorts of heinous attacks on the toiling mass to fulfil their lust and thirst of profit. Even more, the pro liberalisation block move further to advocate for the casualisation process in the government department and public sector units out of their antagonistic class outlook towards the working class.

The workers in this new scenario have to properly understand the tactic that the capitalist bourgeois have devised to deceit the working class and its impact in proper perspective. In a determined organised manner the working class must come forward to compel the Government to frame adequate machinery to ensure the implementation and adherence of the existing statutes as well as the further legal framework to foil the emerging attacks of the capital.

With the proper understanding the working class have to build the broader unity to evolve the strategy to defend themselves and to defeat the menace of the neo-liberal form of capitalist onslaught.

In defence of State Transport in AP

INDEFINITE HUNGER STRIKE FROM DECEMBER 10

The policy of the AP State Govt is designed to ruin the state owned public transport system in favour of the private bus operators. The policies had been so designed that the state transport corporation is losing revenues heavily in favour of the private bus owners. In this background, the APSRTC Staff & Workers' Federation affiliated to CITU has decided to embark on indefinite hunger strike from 10th Dcember 2004 to press for their demand for a change in Govt policy on state transport system. The hunger strike was preceded by a month long campaign among the people on the demands. The main demands of the Federation are : 1) Reduction of MV tax on RTC vehicles to 2% by AP State Revenue Committee, 2)Total reimbursement of cost of concessions in traveling by State Transport granted by the State Govt, 3) Levy of sales tax on purchase of diesel on par with Railways at 4% in stead of 19.33%, 4) Illicit operation by private transport should be curbed.

The hunger strike started on 10th December 2004 under the leadership of R Laxmaiah, General Secretary, APSRTC Staff & Workers' Federation along with four other office bearers of the Fderation viz., YRK Reddy, Uma Maheswar Rao, J Diwakar and Sundarya.

Document

INTERNATIONAL FORUM 0N ECONOMIC GLOBALISATION AND TRADE UNIONS: THE BEIJING CONSENSUS 2004

On 10-11 October, 2004 the INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION FORUM was launched in Beijing as an open platform for all trade unions in the world, in order to respond to globalisation, to strengthen unity and cooperation, to voice their opinions, exchange ideas and coordinate positions to promote peace and development, workers' rights and interests. The ACFTU, WFTU, OATUU, ICATU and GCTU had been taken this initiative.

The Beijing Consensus 2004 adopted by the International Trade Union Forum is given below:

"1. We, the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU), the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), the Organisation of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU), the International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions (ICATU) and the General Confederation of Trade Unions (GCTU) of CIS Countries, meeting in Beijing from 10 to 11 October 2004 jointly launch the International Forum on Economic Globalisation and Trade Unions. The Forum discussed two subjects: (1) the impact of economic globalisation on the international trade union movement and related tasks; and (2) the developments in the world trade union movement.

2. Participants noted that there is a growing trend towards neoliberal globalisation. On the one hand, with the rapid advance of science and technology, globalisation has, to a certain extent, optimized the allocation of resources, deepened the international division of labour and promoted income growth and economic development worldwide. On the other hand, with the free cross-border movement of capital, globalisation has aggravated economic inequalities and social injustice across the world. This has brought immense pressures and challenges to workers all over the world in the sphere of employment, social security and workers' rights.

3. The participants noted that in the context of globalisation, the world trade union movement is faced with new situations and severe challenges. To face these challenges, the trade union movement should transcend ideological, cultural and religious differences or international affiliation, promote exchanges and dialogues amongst trade unions, seek common grounds while putting aside differences, strengthen solidarity, enhance friendship, promote cooperation and achieve a win-win outcome.

4. The participants reaffirm that peace and development are the main themes before the world today as well as the foundation and sound development of the international trade union movement. To preserve peace and promote development is the common task of trade unions of all countries. Poverty and under-employment remain the major problems plaguing developing countries. The international community should pay more attention to peace and development. In particular, developed countries should take up more international responsibilities and work hard to maintain world peace and stability in order to create a better environment for the world economy. Trade unions in a vast number of developing countries should actively explore effective ways to eliminate poverty, promote employment and make unremitting efforts to improve the living standards of the working people.

5. Recognising that the vast numbers of trade union organizations in developing countries are a major force of the international trade union movement which shoulders the important responsibility of representing and protecting the rights and interests of the working people. They should also get actively involved in the affairs of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and contribute to the activities of the ILO in the conditions of economic globalisation, to better safeguard the rights and interests of the broad masses of

workers, actively facilitate the implementation of international labour standards in accordance with national conditions and attach great importance to the protection of the unique advantages and characteristics of developing countries in the world economy and trade.

6. Participants affirm that democratization in international relations and diversity in development models is a reality in the international community. Development models for trade unions are somewhat different as they are affected by various factors such as the level of economic development and cultural background in different countries. Therefore, trade unions of various countries have the right to choose their own path of development in line with their own national conditions and the aspirations of their workers. In the international trade union movement, the principle of equality, mutual respect and non-interference in each other's internal affairs should be upheld. Trade unions of all countries, big or small, should be treated as equals and have the same right to participate in the international trade union movement.

7. In order to strengthen unity and cooperation amongst trade unions, promoting friendship and development, the ACFTU, WFTU, OATUU, ICATU and GCTU will set up an International Trade Union Forum and put in place topics for discussion at each Forum through consultation and make it an open platform for all trade unions to voice their opinions, exchange ideas and coordinate their positions. This Forum will be sponsored by the ACFTU, WFTU, OATUU, ICATU and GCTU.

8. Each year, during the International Labour Conference in June, all the parties will be involved in the decision, through consultation, on the topics, timing, and venue of the next Forum. Each party will be the Coordinator by rotation, responsible for the discussion of issues concerned.

The World Confederation of Labour, which is now holding its 209th Confederal Board session in Morocco, has made a historical decision that should strengthen international trade unionism. The general secretariat of WCL has been given the official mandate to enter upon negotiations with ICFTU in order to create a new international trade union organisation.

WCL, which opened its Confederal Board session last Tuesday in Casablanca, in Morocco, has made a historical decision for the future of international trade unionism. Indeed, after extended debates, the Board members representing all the affiliates have reached an agreement.

The international situation and the extent of globalisation in its neo-liberal model have led the trade union world to reflect on the way it functions. It is essential, today, to make all-out efforts to protect the workers' rights.

This Wednesday 20 October will no doubt go down in the history of trade unionism. The Confederal Board has decided to officially instruct the general secretariat of WCL to enter upon negotiations with the other democratic international trade unions, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions - ICFTU, about the creation of a new international trade union organisation that would be open to other democratic and independent organisations affiliated neither to WCL nor to ICFTU. So, formal negotiations will be started with ICFTU. WCL hopes that they will result in a real strengthening of trade unionism.

"Society has strongly evolved in recent years and the workers' rights are more and more violated under the pressure of the neo-liberal globalisation", said Willy Thys, Secretary General of the World Confederation of Labour. "It is essential for the trade unions to protect in the best possible way the workers' rights and to advance social justice".

HISTORIC VICTORY OF BSNL EMPLOYEES UNION

In the Recent secret ballot held countrywide in all BSNL units for recognition of unions, the alliance led by BSNL Employees' Union got elected securing decisive 53% votes. Eleven unions participated in the verification. However, the real contest was between National Federation of Telecom Employees (NFTE), the existing recognised union and an alliance of six unions led by BSNL Employees Union (BSNLEU). BSNLEU alliance got 1,39,827 votes out of the 2,62,988 votes polled securing a decisive majority of 53 per cent votes. NFTE BSNL got 1,00,226 votes.

CITU DELEGATION VISITS VIETNAM

S. Veeraiah

A four member CITU team visited Vietnam from 2nd to 8th October, on an invitation from Vietnam. General Confederation of Labour(VGCL). Comrades Mersi Kuttiamma, Prakash Rajkhowa and myself are in the team led by Com. Mohammed Ameen, Vice President of CITU and Labour Minister, West Bengal. We were received by Com. Bin, international department Deputy Director of VGCL, at Hanoi airport, on 2nd morning. Being Saturday & Sunday, 2nd and 3rd are holidays there. Hence, we were taken to Ha long Bay, in a distance of 200 Kms and accommodated in a hotel run by VGCL. That day, we met regional leaders of VGCL. On the 2nd day, we were taken to a cave located in an Island. By evening, we reached Hanoi.

In Hanoi, we met VGCL delegation, led by Com. Dang Kak, tung, Vice President, in their office. Later, we were taken to Fertilizer factory, cable factory and to an automobile Co. On the last day of 7th, we were taken to Hoabin Hydro power station, in a distance of 200 km, located on the other side of Hanoi. We visited Com. Hochimin's Mausoleum. Meetings were held with Vietnam labour minister, lie duedong; Union's central leadership of transport, chemical, fertilizers and electricity and with VGCL Hanoi city leaders. Central committee member of Vietnam communist party and international affairs Vice Chairman Com. Tom Tamin Cho invited our delegation to his office. We spoke to union leaders, management representatives and workers, on occasion of our visits to the factories. We also went to a village Noidong and visited some peasants houses and had a talk with them. This was not part of the decided programme. On our request, we were taken there. We also spoke to people on the streets and markets.

We were told of their successes in agriculture and industrial sectors. 20 years back they used to import rice. But now, they became 2nd biggest exporters. Once, govt. could supply only 3mts of cloth per head. But now, apart from meeting the local needs, they were able to export. They have become good exporters of fish and prawns also. They were in trouble when Soviet Union collapsed within ten years of the end of the war. Foreign and national private capital was allowed for the sake of technology and capital. Socialist market economy is being implemented since 1996. Public sector is playing a crucial role in the economy, while at the same time, private sector is also allowed. Food, clothing, shelter, education and medical facilities are in the reach of all the people. They told us that the meaning of socialism is not to distribute poverty or to enjoy whatever is available by all, but to increase production and secure better life and modern facilites for all.

On the whole, there is not much of dissatisfaction. In comparison to us, they are getting better food and other facilities. All this is not possible with the wages alone they are getting. They are doing 2,-3 hours overtime. Workers are involved in the decision making. Parliament also will take workers into confidence in it's decisions. Prime Minister, labour minister meets trade union leaders, frequently. Women are in large number in production. But there is limitation for their growth to the union leadership. Due to domestic as well as office work they are unable to do active work in the union.

40% workers are still non-unionised. This year they are planning to enrol one more million workers in the union. Initially workers are attracted to multi national Co's from public sector. But, within a short period they have realised that public sector is better, as there is no job security and other facilities in MNC's and are returning to PSU's. Even though everybody has to implement labour laws, private managements are trying to evade providing statutory benefits and job security by taking advantage of the loopholes in the Acts. Hence, since 1996 there were 723 strikes. All these were settled within one or two days at the local level. In some of the PSU's also, situation has come upto the position of strike. Right to Strike is available for all, and any strike decision requires 51% of the workers to endorse. Union alone had the right to call for the strike. Strikes cannot be resorted to in defence, civil aviation, electricity and

hospitals.

Foreign capital is being allowed in all sectors, excepting defence, civil aviation, mines and information sectors. Government helped for the growth of indigenous capitalists, with the help of bank loans . Swallowing of private establishments by the MNC's has started. Problems of 7% unemployment and 10% poverty are existing. Gap between urban and rural incomes, between haves and have-nots is also increasing They are confident that they will come out of these shortly. We were told that 'bad characteristics like corruption, bribery and flesh trade is being brought by MNCs along with foreign capital and technology and is creating problems in the society.

Political education is being imparted among the workers enable them to face the problems created by private capital. Awareness is being created to fight against non-implementation of labour laws, instead of capitalist system. They feel that it is very easy to become millionaries. They have respect to Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi and their policies. They were surprised to hear when we explained about the anti-people policies pursued by both of them.

They are believing that the Hyderabad is becoming like silicon valley with the growth of software industry.

They also feel that the new generation is not serious about war for independence and sacrifices and they simply want to become good businessmen. It has become a headache for them, they said.

I feel that we cannot say that there are no difficulties for socialism in Vietnam. But Soviet experiences are in their memory and mind. On the whole the visit has benefited and helped us to understand the socialism and the problems being faced by the socialist system in the worldwide surroundings of capitalist order.

J & K: CONSTRUCTION WORKERS' DEMANDS ACHIEVED

The construction workers in Udhampur-Srinagar-Barmullah Railway project have been on strike since 2nd August 2994 demanding a negotiated settlement on their charter of demands. The main contractor deployed by the Railway Authority-Hindustan Construction Corporation (HCC) sought to ignore the workers' just demands which led to strike. The HCC tried to break the strike through terror and atrocities and the local administration sided with the contractor. Firing was opened on the peaceful dharna of the striking workers killing one worker. The police and army deployed against the workers forced the striking workers to take shelter in the jungle in the midst of severe winter. The police force and the army ransacked the adjoining villages for supporting the striking workers providing food an shelter. The entire project area at Banihal was converted into a concentration camp to break the strike and compel the struggling workers to surrender. But all such efforts of the contractor-State administration combine miserably failed.

Members of Parliament viz., Basudeb Acharia, Jibon Roy, Sudhangshu Seal, Amitava Nandy visited the workplace and extended solidarity to workers. M K Pandhe, President, CITU also visited Banihal and addressed the striking workers. H Y Tarigami, MLA stood firmly by the side of the struggling workers and fought for their cause. CITU general Secretary, Chittabrata Majumdar, MP met the Union Defence Minister and protested against deployment of Army against the striking workers. CITU central leadership alongwith the MPs Dipankar Mukherjee, Mehboob Jahedi met the Chief Minister of J&K at New Delhi and urged upon his intervention to restrain the local police from carrying on repression on the workers and activate the labour deptt to ensure a negotiated settlement. Side by side the workers at Banihal continued their struggle with heroic determination braving inhuman atrocities. One worker died in the jungle in pneumonia owing to severe cold.

The HCC management initially refuse to negotiate with the CITU union. But the determined struggle by the workers compelled the labour deptt and the HCC management to start negotiation with the USB Rail Project Workers' Union and on 16th December 2004 a settlement was arrived at in the presence of Assistant Labour Commissioner (Central). The settlement envisaged introduction of Project Allowance @ Rs 500/- per month for all construction workers, medical allowance equivalent to 25 days' wages per year, timely supply of uniforms to all workers and reinstatement of almost all terminated workmen. It was also agreed that other demands of the workers will be examined and finalized shortly. On the basis of above settlement, the strike was called off. CITU congratulated the construction workers of J&K for their heroic and successful struggle.

COM. B.T.RANADIVE: BECKON LIGHT OF WORKING CLASS MOVEMENT

E. BALANANDAN

The birth centenary of Com. B.T. Ranadive the outstanding revolutionary leader of the Indian Working Class movement is on December 19, 2004. The Centre of Indian Trade Unions were celebrating this birth centenary year throughout the country in a befitting manner by holding seminars, public meetings, conventions etc, highlighting his teachings on the trade union and revolutionary movement of the country.

During my long association with Com. BTR as he was fondly known, as a trade union activist and Party worker, I have had the opportunity to discuss with him on several political and trade union issues which always much benefited me and I found in him a teacher and a guide. Though he breathed his last on 6th of April 1990 his affectionate memory is always alive in my memory.

While we were working together in the Party head quarters, I found in him certain special qualities which cannot be forgotten needs reference.

For him all the seven days of the week were working days and never failed to come to the office at appointed time 8.30 AM and continue to work throughout except the time he take for midday meals and a little time to take rest. He continues to read and write till late at night. When he goes out of Delhi for some other programmes too we found him very punctual. When he goes for a trade union meeting or conference, he used to discuss with the local comrades, especially with the workers, about the problems and issues they are confronting which resulted in developing his closer affinity with the workers.

Com. BTR started his political career after completing his M.A. Degree with distinction in 1927. By 1928, he became one of the leaders of AITUC while working among the textile workers in the famous Girni Kamgar Union. He led many strikes of the textile workers in Bombay and played an important role in organizing the Railwaymen and become Secretary of the GIP Railwaymens' Union. Throughout his life he was a trade unionist besides having high positions in the Communist Party. There is no intention to give a full description of his activity in this small article. Only a very short reference is made here to highlight certain important events especially his contribution to the trade union movement.

On February 18th , 1946 when the historic Naval ratings revolt took place in Bombay and Karachi, the Communist Party came out strongly in support of the revolt while the Muslim League and the Congress Party condemned this patriotic action of the soldiers risking even their life. AITUC called a general strike on 22nd February in support of the revolt in which 35 lakh workers joined in Greater Bombay. The whole people of Bombay was practically joined this movement, enthusiastically collected food and other materials to be supplied to the ratings in revolt. The British Government was not idle. They declared martial law and the military forces were deployed in the streets of Bombay and they have shot down 500 people, mainly workers, in two days. In mobilizing mass support and a successful strike of workers Com. B.TR. played a big role. This is one of the memorable battles he led in his lifetime.

As pointed out earlier Com. BTR continued his trade union activity till his death. In the course of his work in the trade unions, he had to continuously oppose the reactionary tendencies among its leadership by firmly upholding the banner of revolutionary trade unionism. That was one of the reasons for him to take the lead to organise the Centre of Indian Trade Unions, coming out of the AITUC.

Throughout his life, he tried to unify the working class. The main liver he used for unifying the class was "the democratic functioning of trade unions". In his concept, trade union democracy does not mean only a formal one of adhering to majority decision making in unions, but also a form of educating the workers for widening the political vision. While evolving policies, he wanted serious discussions and debates in the trade union bodies. The trade union leadership must properly

explain the issues under discussion and its links with the prevailing political situation. Thus it can be made a liver for the education of the working class.

Com. B.T.R. joined the communist party in the year 1928 when the party was illegal. Slowly he had become one of the leader of the communist movement acquiring deeper knowledge in Marxism-Leninism. Throughout his life he remained one of the top ideologue and towering leader of the Communist movement and made invaluable contribution in shaping the revolutionary ideology of the working class and revolutionary organizational principles.

His contributions to the development of Indian trade union movement was immense. Even while holding heavy responsibilities in the communist party Com. BTR never gave up his close relation with the trade union movement. He was one of the prominent leaders of AITUC. Even after the formation of Communist Party of India (Marxist) in 1964, he wanted to continue in AITUC in order to preserve the unity of the working class.

Com. BTR drafted a document on "The task on the trade union front", in 1967, which was adopted by the Central Committee and published as a Party document. In this document, he has elaborately explained the importance of the trade union unity and the democratic functioning of the trade unions. However, the AITUC leadership wanted to impose their reformist political line in the trade unions movement and resorted to undemocratic methods which finally forced the fighting section of the leadership to take steps for forming the Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU). This step was taken to keep the independence of the trade unions and to make the class struggles effective by building working class unity.

The CITU was formed in a big conference of the trade unions held in Calcutta between May 28-31, 1970 in which more than 5000 delegates participated. The first President of this organization was Com. B.T.Ranadive and Com. P. Ramamurthy was its General Secretary. I was also one among the presidium members of this conference.

I do not wish to go into the details of the formation of CITU but suffice to say that Com. BTR was its actual guide and teacher from its inception in 1970 till his death in 1990. The history of the CITU proved beyond doubt that the formation of the CITU has helped to develop and paved the way for united platforms of trade unions in the midst of struggle against the onslaught by the capitalists and the governments.

In his concluding speech of the first conference of the CITU, he emphasised the need for upholding the unity of the working class and stressed that the central part of the trade union activities must be to build the grassroot unity of the working class and to develop united resistance of trade unions against the anti-working class policies of the capitalists.

To quote

" ...We have explained why we have to start this new organization... It is precisely because in this period, only an organization devoted to unity of the working class and pledge to lead its united resistance will be able to defend its daily interest.

" We fight reformism, we fight revisionism, we fight every such tendency, only because our common class struggle against our main enemy is hampered. Every worker must see in us the sacred defender of his interests, the sacred defender of the unity of the working class in the struggle against the employers; they must realise that we fight the revisionists or the policies of the INTUC only because they disrupt the common struggle. Our unions if they are afraid now, of bold united-front offers to revisionists, reformist unions, wherever they have following, then we will fail in our efforts for unity."

" This is the time when the working class demands unity, this is the time the working class on its own thinks that unless it is united the offensive cannot be met. This is the time when our organization must jump into the fray and tell everyone, there is a banner of unity of common action, joint action. Let everyone who stands for unity irrespective of his organization and affiliation to join this banner."

While framing the CITU constitution he has incorporated provisions for keeping unity and for the democratic functioning of the trade unions which is the crux of the CITU Constitution. Let us quote a little from the CITU constitution.

Aims and Objectives:

3 (A) " The CITU believes that the exploitation of the working class can be ended only by socializing

all the means of production; distribution and exchange and establishing a Socialist State. Holding fast the ideal of socialism, the CITU stands for the complete emancipation of the society from all exploitation.

4. Democratic Functioning

(a) To achieve its purpose the CITU will constantly endeavor to build united activity with other central organisations and of unions and organisations affiliated and not affiliated, in the struggle for common objectives.

(b) The CITU considers that the democratic functioning of the organization at all levels and of its constituents is essential to achieve its objectives.

(c) The democratic functioning of the organization requires strict adherence to the provisions of the Constitution regarding periodic meetings of CITU bodies, to the discharge of the obligations of their responsibilities and the collective functioning of the various bodies under the Constitution.

(d) The minority view point in the CITU bodies, should have the right of free expression, and should be given adequate representation in all its bodies. This will be ensured by the method of cumulative voting.

(e) The CITU bodies at the centre have the responsibility of ensuring that the State Committees and other bodies that may be elected, function democratically, according to the rules laid down ensuring free expression, within the organization for all sections".

The above quotations shows how the trade unions should function for unifying the class which I don't think still many of our cadres have taken seriously in their day to day work. Here again we have to see the importance of uniting the class by adopting the appropriate methods to keep the minority sections in the unions by giving them proper representation in the organizational set up and ensure full freedom to express their views.

Together with I have to highlight a point which has been stressed by Com. B.T.R. in the Vth conference of CITU about the Confederation of Trade Unions which has paramount importance today. In the light of the imperialist led globalization, liberalization and privatisation having adverse impact on every sections of workers, an all embracsing battle for policy change is the need of the hour.

Therefore it is obvious, the B.T.R. dictum of confederation of Indian Trade Unions has to be pursued seriously by adopting a flexible approach.

The effects of increasing attack on the working class will enable them to understand that the line we propose is the only line for ensuring unity of the class and for developing nationwide resistance for a policy change. The guidance given by Com. BTR in this respect cannot be forgotten.

Com. B.T.R updated "the task on the trade union front 1967" in 1983 taking into consideration of the changes took place thereafter. In this document too B.T.R. stressed the need for uniting the class, which is the central part of the trade union activity of the communists. Missing this vital point, revolutionary trade union work has no meaning. Drawing concrete examples he has stressed in the document, the importance of our work in the reformist unions and also explained the necessity of developing the revolutionary consciousness of the workers and drawing them nearer to the party.

The BTR dictum that has been quoted above is the biggest contribution he has made to the development of the trade union movement in a nutshell. From the very inception of the CITU he was its President and was guiding its work almost on day to day basis. During this period, in his address to the various conferences of CITU and his articles published in many journals of trade unions were of much help for the Indian Trade Union movement

While we celebrate the B.T.R. centenary this year we are confronted with many a challenges. The imperialist offensive have developed into serious proportions leading to direct interference in the free nations and conquering them using their military might which we have witnessed of late in Afghanistan and Iraq. Besides the imperialist led economic globalisation are subjecting the weaker nations to inhuman exploitation. The working class world over is the worst affected.

Therefore we have to take the pledge that we will uphold the legacy of Com. B.T. Ranadive in the fight against imperialism and in the fight against capitalist exploitation and the fight for a new future for building socialism in the country.

BRICK KILN WORKERS DEMONSTRATE BEFORE PARLIAMENT

Demanding

- Immediate Withdrawal Of Notification On Usage Of Fly Ash In Brick Kilns
- Compensation/Relief To The Workers Of Closed Brick Kilns
- Enforcement Of All Labour Laws In Brick Kilns

A huge demonstration of the brick kiln workers from Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan and UP led by CITU was held on 13th December at Patel Chawk, New Delhi. The demonstartaion denounced the notifications issued by the Central/State Govts on compulsory usage of fly ash generated by the thermal power plants in the country by the Brick kilns. The brick kiln owners have opposed such notification and as a result several thousands of brick kilns have been closed down leading to loss of jobs to lakhs of brick kiln workers.

The workers of brick kilns from Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and UP assembled in thousands at Jantar Mantar and marched towards Parliament. The procession was blockaded at Patel chawk where it converged into a rally. The rally was addressed by Dipankar Mukherjee and Jibon Roy, both members of Parliament, Tapan Sen, Secretary CITU, Satvir Singh, Raghunath Singh and Mohanlal, General Secretaries of Haryana, Delhi and Punjab State CITU respectively, Vijay Mishra, Working President, Punjab State CITU, Binod Kumar, Devraj Varma, Jagadish and other leaders of the unions of brick kiln workers from these states.

The speakers pointed out that the above said notification issued at the instance of Union Environment Ministry pursuant to an observation by Delhi High Court is aimed at containing pollution created by fly ash from the power plants. But it is surprising that the burden of the entire pollution control exercise has been thrust on the brick kilns who are no way responsible for fly ash generation. CITU suggested that the fly ash pollution can best be addressed at source itself by the thermal power plants through setting up bye product plants for making bricks by fly ash through mechanized process. And most of the Thermal power plants in the country are financially well-placed to take up this obligatory responsibility. Alternatively fly ash can be safely disposed through their usage in cement factories operating in walled premises. Usage of fly ash in all-open workplace like brick kilns cannot contain the pollution, rather it will create severe health hazards for the brick kiln workers and their families normally residing in jhuggis around the brick kilns.

CITU already urged upon the prime Minister for urgent intervention to ensure that the notification on fly ash usage by brick kilns is withdrawn, all the brick kilns which closed down as a consequence are reopened, the lakhs of workers who lost their earnings are compensated and labour laws are strictly enforced in all the brick kilns. From the demonstration a delegation under the leadership of Chittabrata Majumdar MP, General Secretary CITU, has met the Union Minister of State on Environment and submitted a memorandum in that regard.

Against petro-price hike

COUNTRYWIDE PROTEST DEMONSTRATION ON NOVEMBER 24

Against unjust and hefty hike in the prices of petrol, diesel and cooking gas by the Govt of India, the workers irrespective of affiliations staged countrywide protest demonstrations on 24th November 2004. In almost all districts of the country, state capitals and industrial centers, massive demonstrations were held jointly demanding roll-back of the price hike. The trade unions affiliated to CITU, AITUC, HMS, AICCTU, UTUC, UTUC-LS and TUCC and various independent trade unions joined the protest action at different parts of the country.

Delhi

In the national capital at Delhi, demonstration was held at Patel Chawk in Parliament Street. Thousands of workers from Delhi industrial area assembled at Jantar Mantar at 12 hours and marched towards Parliament. The procession was blocked by the police force before the police at Patel Chawk junction where it converged into a mass meeting.

The meeting was addressed by Tapan Sen, Secretary CITU, Amarjit Kaur (AITUC), Swapan Mukherjee (AICCTU), Asit Ganguly (UTUC), R K Sharma (UTUC-LS) and Devrajan (TUCC). Speakers, while urging upon the UPA Govt to rioll back the unjust price hike of petroleum prices, called upon the working class prepare for countrywide united action against anti-people measures of the Govt.

West Bengal

In the State capital at Kolkata a huge rally of several thousands of workers held on 24th November afternoon denounced the price rise of petroleum products and called upon the working people to unitedly fight for withdrawal of the price hike.

At Rani Rasmoni Road at the heart of the city, the mass rally was held at the joint call of various central trade uions and employees organisations. The main resolution demanding withdrawal of the price-hike decision was placed by Kali Ghosh, General Secretary of West Bengal State Committee of CITU.

Among others who spoke in the meeting were Shyamal Chakraborty, President West Bengal State CITU, Ranjit Guha (AITUC), Ashok Ghosh (UTUC), Sankar Saha (UTUC-LS), Dibakar Bhattacharya (AICCTU), Smarajit Roychowdhury (12TH July Committee) and Pradip Biswas (BEFI). Shyamal Chakraborty, while condemning the anti-people price hike of the petro-products by the Govt of India and stressing upon the urgent need to intensify countrywide united struggle against the same, announced that the transport workers of West Bengal will stop all the vehicles for half an hour from 12 hrs to 12-30 pm on 1st December 2004 in protest against the petro-price hike.

Punjab

Demonstration was held throughout the state. At Chandigarh a big rally was held which was addressed by Balwant Singh, Raghunath Singh, President and General Secretary of Punjab State CITU. Besides Chandigarh, rallies were held at Ludhiana, Sangrur, Patiala, Pathankot, Batala, Bhatinda, Hoshierpur, Asran, Rajpura and Muktasar.

Bihar

Besides joint demonstrations at the district level, the state capital Patna witnessed a huge road-blockade action by thousands of workers on 24th November 2004. The main thoroughfare in the city at Income Tax circle was blockaded by the demonstrators since 24th early hours. Leadership of CITU, AITUC, AICCTU, UTUC-LS besides other mass organisations addressed the rally there and demanded immediate roll back of the petro-price-hike. The demonstrators organized a huge human chain in that area paralyzing traffic for hours. Ultimately, a huge police force has been brought to the spot to disperse the blockade. The leadership comprising Chandi Prasad (CITU), Subodh Roy (Kisan Sabha), Shivsankar Singh,

Baleshwar Singh, Nathun Jamadar, Rajkumar Jha, Baijnath Jha, all from CITU, Chakradhar Prasad Singh from AITUC, Shivlal Prasad from UTUC-LS and R N Thakur from AICCTU courted arrest on that occasion.

Assam

Protest demonstration was held before all district headquarters. At Guawahati, the workers and employees from various industries and establishments assembled at Judges Ground, There-from a big procession of thousands of workers has been taken out to move through main crossings and converged into a demonstration before Meghdoot Bhawan-the head post office of Assam. The demonstration was addressed by Deben Bhattacharya, General Secretary, Assam State CITU besides Upen Talukdar (AITUC) Bimal Nandy (UTUC-LS), Harendra Dev Goswami (HMS) and Pankaj Das (AICCTU), who all demanded immediate roll back of the price rise of petro-products.

Uttar Pradesh

In UP demonstration was organized in various industrial centers. At Lucknow, a delegation consisting of Daulat Ram, General Secretary, State CITU, Umashankar Mishra (HMS), Radheshyam Tiwari(AITUC), Shri Chandrabhan (AIICCTU) and Rakesh Kumar (Bank) met the Governor, Mr T V Rajeshwar and submitted a memorandum pressing for the demand for immediate roll back of price hike of petroleum products causing immense misery to common people.

Chhattisgarh

In Chhattisgarh demonstration/ dhrana/rallies etc were organized at various districts and industrial centers on 24th November where hundreds of workers have participated. The meetings were addressed by A K Lal at Dhamtari, M K Nandy at Rajnandgaon, J P Tikariya at Dalli-Rajhara, Deewangon at Rajgarh, V M Manohar and S N Bannerjee.

U.P: JOINT DHARNA BEFORE STATE ASSEMBLY

Lucknow, November 22, 2004, thousands of workers staged dharna before the state Assembly at the joint call of central trade unions viz., CITU, AITUC, HMS, BMS, HMKP and INTUC. The trade unions demanded immediate implementation of the unanimous recommendation of the State Minimum Wage Advisory Board constituted by the State Govt, regarding statutory minimum wages rates.

The State Minimum Wage Advisory board finalized its unanimous recommendation on statutory minimum wages rates couple of months back. Despite repeated persuasion by all the trade unions in the state, the State Govt is just sitting on the recommendation without taking any decision on the same. The trade unions urged upon the Govt to implement the recommendation as it is since the since the same has been unanimous decision of the Advisory Committee consisting of representatives form the trade unions, Govt and the employers. But the State Govt is not acting on the same at the instance of the employers' lobby.

The joint dharna of the workers demanded immediate implemenatation of the recommendation failing which the workers would go in for countrywide strike on 19th January 2005. The dharna took the shape of a huge mass rally participated workers from all industrial areas of the State and was presided by a presidium comprising leadership of all central trade unions including Kamalapati Tripathy of CITU. The rally was addressed by Daulat Ram (CITU), Basudev Pandeya (AITUC), Radheshyam Tiwari (UPTUC), Debnath Singha (BMS), D S Mishra (INTUC) besides others.

From the rally resolution was passed in support of the struggle of the glass-bangle workers of Ferozabad and condemning inhuman repression by the state administration. Another resolution was passed demanding abolition of all restriction on labour inspection and strict enforcement of all labour laws in the State. The rally also announced the firm decision of the

trade unions to stage statewide strike on 19th January 2005 demanding issuance of minimum wage notification in line with the recommendation of the State Advisory Board. During the rally, the Chief Secretary of the State Govt invited a delegation of TU Leaders for meeting. In the meeting with the Chief Secretary, the TU leaders reiterated their firm decision for strike action on 19th January 2005 and urged upon the Govt to concede to the just demands of the workers.

The U P State units of the Central Trade Unions will be meeting soon to fianalise the joint campaign programme for the statewide strike action on 19th January 2005.

WORKERS UNION FORMED IN CHENNAI AIRPORT

In Chennai Airport around 450 workers have been deployed as casual or on contract since last several years in handling of cargo and flight operations. They have to work for long hours without any compensation and are deprived of most of the statutory benefits. They work in permanent areas of work but their service gets discontinued after every 90 days by the management to avoid legal obligation to absorb them in permanent roll of the company.

CITU took initiative to organize them in trade union. On 14th October 2004, around 400 workers assembled at Masjid Street, Pallvaram to hold their first conference to form Indian Airlines Workers and Staff Union at Chennai Airport.

The meeting was addressed by A Soundarrajan, General Secretary, Tamilnadu State CITU and also R Ramanathan, former General Secretary, Air Corporation Employees Union, s Appanu, Secretary of South Chennai District CITU. A 23 member working committee was elected by the conference with A Soundarrajan as President, P Muniswami as Secretary and G Viswanathan as Treasurer.

Haryana

AGAINST NON-ENFORCEMENT OF LABOUR LAWS

Panipat, November 16, the Deputy Commissioner's office has witnessed a massive demonstration of thousands of workers from construction, textile and Anganwadi sector demanding action against deliberate non-enforcement of labour laws.

In none of the factories and establishments, the labour laws are being properly enforced; statutory minimum wages are not being paid in most of the cases and 12 hours work without proper compensation has become the order of the day. Safety rules are flouted causing injuries and even fatal accidents. The labour department, in connivance with the employers, remained indifferent to hundreds of complaints of labour law violations lodged by the workers and the trade unions. In this background, the Panipat District CITU organized demonstration before the district headquarters to protest against the employers-administration nexus perpetrating miseries on the workers in almost all sectors. The demonstration also highlighted the demand for constitution of welfare board for construction workers as per central legislation and granting of employee-status to anganwadi workers. The demonstration and rally continued for several hours. A memorandum demanding proper enforcement of labour laws was submitted to Deputy Commissioner. Anand Jawahara, Secretary of Panipat District CITU, Rajib Chowdhury, Jai Bhagwan, Santosh Rawal and others addressed the rally.

B T R CENTENARY OBSERVATION

DELHI

On the occasion of BTR birth centenary, a general body meeting of the leadership of various unions in Delhi state was held on 20th December 2004 at BTR Bhawan, New Delhi. Around 150 leading comrades of the state attended the meeting. The meeting was presided over by S B Bharadwaj, Secretary CITU. Kanai Banerjee, Secretary CITU was the main speaker who dealt in details on the life and teachings of com BTR.

WEST BENGAL

The State Committee took an elaborate programme of observation of com BTR centenary throughout the year through trade union schools, seminar on BTR's teachings. They published a number of booklets on BTR's selectd writings. On 19th December meetings have been organized in different industrial centers of the state.

As per reports received, In Calcutta District Ofiice of CITU red flag was hoisted by Ashim Banerjee, Secretary of the district CITU and BTR's phota was garlanded by Raghunath Kushary and other senior leaders.

In Durgapur Steel Township a big hall meeting was held at the Srijani auditorium. The hall was overcrowded and could not accommodate all the participants. M K Pandhe, President CITU addressed the meeting and called upon the workers to carry forward the goal cherished by BTR for the working class movement. The meeting was also addressed by Kali Ghosh, General Secretary, West Bengal State CITU, Bamapada Mukherjee, President Burdwan district CITU.

In Midnapur town a mass meeting was held on the occasion which was attended by several thousands. The meeting was addressed by Dipak Dasgupta, Secretary of WB State CITU and presided over by Dipak Sarkar, President, District CITU.

In South Dianjpur, a big meeting was held in the main bus stand. In Bangshihari, seminar was organized. At Kaliaganj and Itahar, blood donation was organized and DYFI workers joined the programme in a big way and hundreds have donated blood. A well attended symposium was organized by Electricity Board Workmen's Union at Siliguri. Reports of well attended meetings, rallies etc were also received from Khardah in North 24 Prgs and Nalhati, Rampurhat, Mayureshwar, Mahammadbazar, Seuri, Lavpur in Birbhum district.

ORISSA

At the initiative of Orissa State CITU, a seminar was organized on Right to Work, which was addressed by Ardhendu Dakshi, Secretary CITU. In the afternoon of 19th December 2004 meeting was held in PMG Square which was attended by more than 2000 workers. The meeting was presided over by Lambodar Nayak, President Orissa State CITU. Ardhendu Dakshi, Secretary CITU, in his inaugural speech highlighted different aspects of BTR's life and teachings. Others who addressed the meeting were Shivaji Patnaik, Vice President, Bishnu Mahanty, General Secretary Orissa State CITU, Souri Bnadhu Kar (AITUC), Jogendra Tripathy (HMS), Dushmanta Das (Shramik Karmachari Ekta Manch), Ajit Das (SFI) and Judhisthir Behara (DYFI).

ASSAM

A Seminar was organized in Laxmiram Barua Sadan at Guwahati by Assam State Committee of CITU. Asit Dutta, President of the State CITU presided over the seminar. Main speaker on this occasion was Jibon Roy, MP and Secretary CITU. He spoke elaborately on various aspects of BTR's teachings to the working class movement and the need to build up unity of the working class through expanding struggle at the grass root level. He stressed upon the urgency of carrying on consistent struggle against revisionism and sectarianism in the working class movement through the path charted out by BTR. IPTA comrades performed mass songs at the beginning of the programme.

ANDAMAN

On the occasion of BTR Centenary day, a meeting of trade union functionaries and activists was held at Hotel ACC Auditorium at Port Blair at the initiative of CITU and other friendly unions.

The meeting was addressed by H N Parial, former Chairman, Port Blair Municipal Board, B Chandrachoodan, Working President A&N CITU, Pranab Banerjee, President and D Ayyappan, General Secretary, NGO's Association and KG Das, Vice Chairman, Govt Employees' & Workers' Federation. The meeting was presided over by R Pious D'Silva, President, A&N State CITU. The speakers offered their tribute to immense contribution made by Com BTR and his invaluable teachings in the cause of working class movement.

TAMILNADU

At Chennai a big hall meeting was held to commemorate the centenary of both Com BTR and AK Gopalan on 11th December 2004. J Hemachandran, Predident CITU presided over the programme. The meeting was addressed by R Umanath besides A Soundarrajan, General Secretary TN State CITU and K Varada Rajan, General Secretary, All India Kisan Sabha. A special issue of "Theekathir" was published on the occasion.

BIHAR

A hall meting was organized at Patna on 19th Dcember 2004. Chandi Prasad, President Bihar State CITU presided over the meeting. W R Varada Rajan, Secretary while inaugurating the meeting dealt at length the lefe and teachings of BTR and the task before the working class movement. U N Chakraborty, Vice President Bihar State CITU and convenor of the coordination committee for observation of BTR Centenary in the state delivered the welcome address. Prof Nawal Kishore Chaowdhury of Patna University also addressed the gathering. A calender for 2005 carrying photograph of BTR was released by the state committee on the occasion.

Punjab

AGAINST NONENFORCEMENT OF LABOUR LAWS

Series of programmes were taken by the Punjab State CITU against the anti-worker role of the Punjab Govt and virtual non-enforcement of labour laws.

Cycle Workers Movement

The workers of the cycle industries in Ludhiana were organized by CITU but their union was not being registered by the Punjab Labour deptt at the instance of the employers' organization. Despite submitting the application for registration of union at least six months ago, the registrar's office is delaying registration of the union one flimsy pretext. Against this nefarious game of the labour deptt, the cycle industry workers held demonstration before the Labour Commissioner's office at Chandigarh on 21st September 2004. Again on 10th October, the workers organized a massive demonstration at Garh Shankar during the visit of the Punjab Labour Minister in that place. This was followed by again a dharna before the office of the labour Commissioner at Chandigarh on 23rd November and a huge demonstration on 25th November by the cycle industry workers demanding early registration of their trade union.

Brick kiln workers' struggle

On 22nd November, all the district headquarters in Punjab including Chandigarh witnessed demonstration by thousands of brick kiln workers demanding withdrawal of the govt notification on compulsory usage of fly-ash generated by the thermal power plants by all the brick kilns. The brick kiln owners refused to obey this notification and kept the brick kilns closed in Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and UP leading to loss of livelihood of several lakhs of brick kiln workers. CITU demanded withdrawal of the govt order and compensation to the workers who lost their livelihood.

Uttaranchal

THDC WORKERS UNION CONFERENCE

Dehradun, October 25, the conference of the union of the workers of Tehri Hydro Dam Corporation was held. Dipankar Mukherjee MP, secretary CITU inaugurated the conference. Birendra Bhandari, General Secretary of Uttaranchal State CITU also addressed the delegate session. Surinder Singh Thakur, Secretary of the union placed the Report which was deliberated upon by the delegates present in the conference. The deliberation pointed out the anti-worker policy of the management and stressed upon the need for united struggle. The conference unanimously elected the new leadership with Trilok Singh as President, Surinder Singh Thakur as Secretary and Krishan Pal Singh as Treasurer.

Mumbai

RAILWAYMEN PROTEST PETROL PRICE HIKE

On 9th November 2004, the railway employees staged massive demonstration under the leadership of National Railwaymen's Union before the office of the General Manager, Central Railway in protest against petroleum pricehike. The employees came in procession from Thane, Kalyan, Kurla, Buculla, Parel, Matunga and other places and converge into a big rally before the GM's office. The rally denounced the price hike of petro products and demanded withdrawal of the same. The meeting was addressed by Y G Joshi, S K Bose, S Dharmadhikary and Chintamoni Bhoir. From the demonstration a memorandum was sent to PM through GM's office.

WORKSHOP HELD AT BHEL, HARIDWAR

Haridwar, December 19, 2004- a workshop on the main issues of the teachings of B T Ranadive was held at the BHEL township at Haridwar at the initiative of CITU unions there viz., BHEL Kamgarh Union and CFFP Shramik Union. Around 70 leading comrades and activists participated in the workshop. P D Baloni, President, BHEL Kamgarh Union presided over the workshop. Elam Chand, General Secretary, BHEL Kamgarh Union initiated the discussion. K K Bori, President, CFFP Shramik R P Jakhmola, Vice President, R C Dhiman spoke in the workshop on various aspects of com BTR's invaluable contribution and guidance to the working class movement. Brahmpal Singh, Vic President, BKU also addressed the workshop.

P D Baloni, while summing up the deliberation stated about the decision of 11th conference of CITU on yearlong observance of BTR Centenary through holding of TU education and intensive educative campaign on the teachings of BTR. In Haridwar, already trade union school has been organized and the campaign on ideological and organizational tasks should be continued among the mass of the workers with all seriousness.

READ & SUBSCRIBE
THE VOICE OF THE WORKING WOMAN
Now, a monthly journal of the All India Coordination Committee of Working Women
Single Copy Rs. 5
Annual Subscription Rs. 40

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX NUMBERS FOR INDUSTRIAL WORKERS ON BASE 1982=100

State	Sr. No.	Centre	Month Sept.' 04	Oct.' 04
Andhra Pradesh	1	Gudur	494	498
	2	Guntur	512	515
	3	Hyderabad	520	519
	4	Visakhapatnam	507	509
	5	Warangal	537	534
Assam	6	D.D. Tinsukia	434	440
	7	Guwahati	524	525
	8	Labac-Silchar	417	419
	9	Mariani-Jorhat	441	445
	10	Rangapara-Tezpur	437	447
Bihar	11	Monghyr	486	496
Chhattisgarh	12	Bhillai	466	471
Gujarat	13	Ahmedabad	519	521
	14	Bhavnagar	545	538
	15	Rajkot	479	475
	16	Surat	504	506
	17	Vadodra	502	501
Haryana	18	Faridabad	547	547
	19	Yamunanagar	502	502
J & K	20	Srinagar	604	609
Jharkhand	21	Jamshedpur	486	491
	22	Jharia	424	430
	23	Kodarma	442	451
	24	Noamundi	467	474
	25	Ranchi-Hatia	482	493
Karnataka	26	Bangalore	508	510
	27	Belgaum	568	568
	28	Hubli-Dharwar	531	531
	29	Mercara	497	500
Kerala	30	Alwaye	518	521
	31	Mundakayam	501	501
	32	Quilon	536	533
	33	Thiruvananthapuram	573	569
Madhya Pradesh	34	Balaghat	468	470
	35	Bhopal	545	544
	36	Indore	529	532
	37	Jabalpur	522	524
Maharastra	38	Mumbai	610	612
	39	Nagpur	540	542
	40	Nasik	565	572
	41	Pune	581	584
	42	Solapur	534	534
Orissa	43	Barbil	466	463
	44	Rourkela	464	467
Punjab	45	Amritsar	465	466
	46	Ludhiana	483	486
Rajasthan	47	Ajmer	521	529
	48	Jaipur	477	478
Tamil Nadu	49	Chennai	553	559
	50	Coimbatore	497	500
	51	Coonoor	499	499
	52	Madurai	494	494
	53	Salem	482	474
	54	Tiruchirapally	551	550
Uttar Pradesh	55	Agra	497	494
	56	Ghaziabad	527	534
	57	Kanpur	501	505
	58	Saharanpur	489	491
	59	Varanasi	550	550
West Bengal	60	Asansol	496	504
	61	Darjeeling	443	439
	62	Durgapur	591	600
	63	Haldia	618	626
	64	Howrah	605	626
	65	Jalpaiguri	450	455
	66	Kolkata	577	591
	67	Raniganj	457	463
Chandigarh	68	Chandigarh	577	576
Delhi	69	Delhi	615	618
Pondicherry	70	Pondicherry	557	571
ALL-INDIA			**523**	**526**

Additional Series of Labour Bureau

State		Centre	September 2004	October 2004
Andhra Pradesh	1	Kethgudem	519	526
Himachal Pradesh	2	Himachal Pradesh	497	500
Rajasthan	3	Bhilwara	517	516
Madhya Pradesh	4	Chhindwara	470	470
Tripura	5	Tripura	461	473
Goa	6	Goa	617	617

MAMOTH RALLY BY THE ELECTRICITY WORKERS

New Delhi, December 10, the national capital witnessed biggest ever rally and demonstration by the electricity employees demanding immediate review of the Electricity Act 2003 and stalling all moves of the governments to unbundled the electricity boards in the country. The National Common Minimum Programme stipulated in clear terms the review of the Electricity Act 2003 and the workers' rally demanded implementation of that commitment in line with the suggestions given by the electricity employees movement.

The National Coordination Committee of Electricity Employees and Engineers comprising trade unions of the electricity board employees and engineers of almost all affiliations has given the call for a massive demonstration before Parliament on 10th December demanding removal of the retrograde clauses in the Electricity Act 2003 aimed at total privatization of the electricity sector in line with the directives of World Bank and IMF. More than thirty thousand workers of electricity sector assembled at the Patel Chawk, New Delhi from Delhi and mainly from the adjoining states of North India. There have been also representations of the electricity employees unions from southern and eastern states as well in the rally.

The rally was addressed by A.B. Bardhan (AITUC) E. Balanandan and Swadesh Dev Roye(CITU), B S Meel, General Secretary, Electricity Employees Federation of India besides Shailendra Dubey, Akhtar Hussain, H.N. Mishra, Ashoka Rao, Chakradar P. Singh, Girish Pande, V.K. Sharma, Chidambaram and others representing various electricity employees organistions.

Speakers pointed out the grievous impact of the Electricity Act 2003 and unbundling and privatization of electricity boards in various states wherever it took place. Electricity tariff was hiked beyond affordable limit, rampant power cuts are taking place owing to lack of synergy and mismanagement in generation, transmission and distribution and the privatized segments operating at cross purposes resulting severe distress and hardship of crores of common people. They demanded thorough review of the Electricity Act 2003 as committed by the UPA Govt, removal of all retrograde provisions of unbundling, privatization, ending of cross subsidies etc in view of the disastrous experience of such actions in many of the states including Delhi and stalling of the moves for unbundling of Electricity Boards in various states till the Act is satisfactorily reviewed and corrected in consultation with the trade unions. The Resolution unanimously passed by the rally, while highlighting those demands declared emphatically that if the Govt. does not concede to these just demands within two months, the Electricity Employees and Engineers have to go for countrywide strike action.



Licensed to post without prepayment under License No. U(C-39)/2003-05 Posted at Eastern Court P. O New Delhi
Postal Regd. No. DL-13016/2003 - 05 Delhi RNI 18560/71 January 1 & 2, 2005

GOVT EMPLOYEES RALLY FOR RIGHT TO STRIKE

New Delhi, December 7, the national capital witnessed a massive and militant rally of the State and Central Govt Employees from all over the country to demand legislative action by the Govt of India to ensure Right to Strike for all including the Govt employees in the background of ban-order by the Supreme Court (August 6, 2003). The All India State Govt Employees Federation and the Cofederation of Central Govt Employees and Workers have jointly sponsored the rally.

On 7th December, a mammoth procession of fifty thousand govt employees started from Ramlila Maidan to converge into a rally at Patel Chawk. The rally was addressed by S K Vyas and Sukomal Sen, General Secretaries of Confederation and AISGEF respectively besides other leaders. The speakers asserted that in the face of the ban imposed by the apex court, the Govt employees throughout the country, the Govt employees asserted boldly their right to strike on 24th February 2004 and they have to repeat it again if the Govt do not respond to their just demand. From the rally a mass petition addressed to Lok Sabha Speaker demanding legislation on Right to Strike, carrying crores of signature was submitted.



Printed and published by M K Pandhe on behalf of Centre of Indian Trade Unions and printed at Progressive Printers, A-21 Jhilmil Industrial Area, Shahdara, Delhi - 95 and published from B T Ranadive Bhawan, 13-A Rouse Avenue, New Delhi - 110 002.
Editor: M K Pandhe