



THE WORKING CLASS

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STRIKE CALL BY NCC ON

Save Democracy Day — August 25

A meeting of seventeen opposition parties held at New Delhi on August 20 unanimously decided to observe Save Democracy Day on August 25 to protest against the attempt of the Congress (I) Govt. to super impose a naked authoritarian system by destroying the democratic and federal constitutional edifice. The meeting noted that the illegal act of Governor Ramlal of Andhra Pradesh was only a link in the chain of events in removing the duly elected State Govts, with clearly established majorities, in Pondicherry and Sikkim earlier and recently more brazenly in Jammu & Kashmir and then in Andhra Pradesh. The resolution of the meeting held Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and her party as directly responsible for this dangerous game of destabilisation and undoing the popular verdict of the people through defections and flagrant misuse of the office of the Governor.

The meeting sought the support of the National Campaign Committee for mobilising the working class to join in action. Promptly responding to the appeal, the National Campaign Committee called upon all sections of workers to observe the Save Democracy Day on August 25 by holding strike and other actions unitedly. In its meeting held on August 21 under the presidentship of Samar Mukherjee, M.P., General Secretary of CITU, the National Campaign Committee unanimously adopted the following resolution:

The National Campaign Committee of Trade Unions has always been condemning anti-working class and anti-people policies of the Government of India and mobilised working class against those actions.

The recent brazen faced and dictatorial action of Shri Ram Lal, Governor of Andhra Pradesh in arbitrarily dismissing the Telugu Desam Government led by Shri Rama Rao despite having a clear majority support in the Assembly is the most glaring example which shocked the entire democratic opinion in the country. A minority Government imposed on the

people of Andhra with the direct connivance of the Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi must be denounced in strong words. The butchery of democracy if allowed to succeed will throw overboard all cannons of democracy and the working class of India cannot be a silent spectator to these developments. The National Campaign Committee is of the view that the recent amendment to National Security Act and Terrorist Affected Area (Special Courts) Act which attacked trade Union and democratic rights of the working class are part of the grand design of Smt. Indira Gandhi to suppress democracy in the country.

The National Campaign Committee calls upon the working class of India to observe 25th August, 1984 as 'Save Democracy Day' by holding demonstrations, protest rallies, organising industrial strike actions, etc. so that powerful voice of protest of the working class is raised in defence of democracy throughout the country. It takes note of the call given by several opposition parties and observe the day to press the same issues.

The National Campaign Committee notes that the time for preparing for such countrywide action is short. It earnestly feels that the threat to democracy is so serious that workers must rise to the occasion and give a fitting rebuff to Smt. Indira Gandhi's machinations to impose authoritarian rule in India.

The meeting was attended by M.K. Pandhe, Nrisingha Chakraborty, P.K. Ganguly (CITU), Indrajit Gupta, T.N. Siddhanta, S.K. Sanyal (AITUC), A.P. Chakraborty, D.D. Shastri (TUCC), Pratul Chowdhury (UTUC), Gyan Singh (UTUC-LS), R.K. Bhakt (BMS), B.M. Toofan (HMS) and J.S. Dara (ITUC).

CITU Supports the Call

Supporting the call for strike B.T. Ranadive, President and Samar Mukherjee, General Secretary, CITU issued the following statement on August 22. The CITU Secretariat also decided to postpone the General Council meeting which was scheduled to be held at Jaipur from August 24-26, so that maximum

mobilisation could be made despite the short period, to make the strike on August 25 successful all over India:

"The Centre of Indian Trade Unions fully supports the call for observing "Save Democracy Day" on August 25, 1984 by strike and other actions as given by the National Campaign Committee of Trade Unions in response to the appeal of all opposition parties. The only befitting reply to the monstrous attack on the constitution manifest in the dismissal of N.T.R. ministry in Andhra Pradesh which still commands majority in the Assembly, is a massive strike action on August 25, and the CITU calls upon all its affiliated unions to observe the day through strike mobilising the entire working class and the democratic masses behind the call".

"The CITU appeals to the entire working class of the country to redeem its responsibility to the society and the people in the struggle for defence of democracy and against authoritarianism by making the strike call a success."

"Considering this unforeseen development, the CITU Secretariat has decided to defer the General Council meeting which was scheduled to be held at Jaipur on August 24-26, 1984 to a suitable date as early as possible".

Earlier on August 18, B.T. Ranadive, President, CITU issued the following statement denouncing the dismissal of the N.T. Rama Rao ministry and firing to suppress the voice of the people:

"The Centre of Indian Trade Unions denounces the dismissal of N.T. Rama Rao ministry in blatant violation of constitutional propriety and all democratic norms and the subsequent repression unleashed on the people protesting against this rape of democracy. Acting as an agent of the ruling Congress (I) party at the Centre which has set on destabilising all non-Congress (I) ministries, the Governor of Andhra Pradesh not only refused to meet the Chief Minister, the MLAs who support them and various other political leaders but also had them arrested from the door steps of Raj Bhavan even when Shri Rama Rao was the Chief Minister and Bhaskara Rao was not yet in office. Not satisfied with this, a reign of terror has been unleashed on the people of Andhra Pradesh who in their justified anger against this bringing down of a lawfully elected popular ministry had dared to protest.

The CITU denounces the shooting down of people in Andhra Pradesh on the day of the bundh on August 17. Press reports indicate already 11 have died and several grievously injured.

The CITU supports the demand of all opposition parties for the sack of the Governor and reinstatement of N.T. Rama Rao ministry allowing him opportunity to prove his majority in the Assembly, which, he had demanded. The CITU directs its affiliated unions to protest against this through mass demonstrations and other measures unitedly to stem the growth of authoritarianism of the Ruling Party.

States Observe Bundhs

According to latest reports, the left front of West Bengal along with the CITU and other trade unions

and the opposition parties and trade unions in Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu and Karnataka and the left democratic front in Kerala have called for bundhs in the states on August 25.

Court Arrest in Delhi

The Delhi units of the CPI(M), CPI and RSP held a joint demonstration and broke prohibitory orders at Patel Chowk, Parliament Street on August 21. Altogether 565 demonstrators were arrested.

The demonstration was organised while Parliament was discussing the shameless action of the Congress(I) Central Government and Governor Ram Lal in conspiring to murder democracy in Andhra Pradesh. The demonstration demanded reinstatement of the Rama Rao Ministry and dismissal of Ram Lal and safeguards against misuse of Governor's post in the states.

Prakash Karat, Secretary, Delhi State Committee, CPI(M) speaking at the rally before courting arrest appealed to the people of Delhi to participate in a big way in the joint rally being organised by all opposition parties at Ramlila grounds on 22nd August evening and make the protest movement totally successful on August 25.

Masa Rally

A massive rally joined by thousands of people was held at Ramlila grounds, Delhi on August 22. On behalf of CPI(M) the rally was addressed by B.T. Ranadive. Among others who addressed the rally were N.T. Rama Rao, Farooq Abdulla, Charan Singh, Chandra Sekhar, H.N. Bahuguna, Rajeshwar Rao, etc. The rally resolved to further intensify the struggle for the dismissal of Bhaskar Rao, sack of Governor Ramlal and reinstatement of N.T. Rama Rao as the Chief Minister, and to carry forward the struggle against the growing authoritarianism of the Congress(I) Government.

COALMINERS' SOLIDARITY DAY

The coal workers are continuing agitations in all the coal mines. As per the last decision of the Joint Action Committee taken in its meeting held at Calcutta on July 19, the coal workers observed protest week from July 30 to August 5 by holding joint demonstrations, processions, rallies and submission of memoranda to the local managements. Other sections of the working class observed coalminers' solidarity day on August 5 at the call of the National Campaign Committee demanding withdrawal of ESMA banning strike in the coal industry, convening of the JBCCI, implementation of the NCWA-III and withdrawal of the illegal 8 days' wage cut and reinstatement of all dismissed workers. A large number of telegrams and resolutions adopted in meetings were sent by the trade unions to the Prime Minister demanding withdrawal of ESMA in coal industry and convening of the JBCCI.

Joint Action Committee Serves Ultimatum

A deputation on behalf of the Joint Action Committee met the union Energy Minister, P. Shiv Shankar in the Parliament on August 10 and submitted a memorandum to him as per the decision of the meeting of JAC held at Delhi on August 9. The memorandum was signed by M.K. Pandhe (CITU), Kalyan Roy (AITUC) Hit Narian Singh (HMS), T.C. Jumde (BMS) Parasuram Panda (UTUC) and S.W. Dhabe (ITUC).

The memorandum gave proposals for settlement of the present tense industrial relation prevailing in the industry. The delegation pointed out that the JAC would wait for about one month for favourable response to the proposals, failing which the JAC would meet in the middle of September to announce the date for the indefinite strike. The following is the full text of the memorandum:

Joint Memorandum

The Joint Action Committee consisting of representatives of various Miners' Federations which met at New Delhi on the 9th August wish to present the following memorandum to you.

With reference to your requests to the trade unions in the coal industry to cooperate with the Coal India management and "sort out things across the table" when "production is falling very badly" in the Rajya Sabha on the 6th August, 1984, we want to stress that all our efforts to settle the problems across the table through the Joint Bipartite Committee for Coal Industry (JBCCI) have been rejected by the present Chairman who since last year has been following a persistent policy of confrontation with trade unions with whom the CIL have signed the National Coal Wage Agreement III in November, 1983 after a long negotiation. A fierce offensive has been mounted against seven lakh workers in the name of "discipline" and "order" while the Govt's own publications have pointed out to steady improvement in industrial relations till the present Chairman took over.

Following a circular of 24th August, 1984, eight days wages have been deducted for even absence for a day or an hour from earned wages for nearly 40,000 workers. Workers refusing to work on sundays or holidays have suffered a wage cut of even 27 days in a month as in GOPALI CHUK colliery in BCCL. Jobs of hundreds of permanent workers with 5 to 15 or 20 years have been terminated leading to even suicide by a miner in a colliery on 4th August. Every absence even on medical ground has been treated as a "conspiracy" and "strike" and every strike as "illegal" without bothering about the decision of the Union Labour Ministry. Concentrated attack has been launched since signing of the

NCWA III in every subsidiary company under the direct instruction and order of the CIL to victimise, transfer and harass trade union activists belonging to unions affiliated to AITUC, CITU, BMS, HMS and others.

All requests to open dialogue through JBCCI on the eve of the industrywide strike on 4th and 5th June (memorandums etc were sent to CIL and Energy Ministry as early as in March) regarding non-implementation of practically all provisions relating to Medical, Welfare, Education, Housing, Contract Labour etc, to break the dead-lock in the sub-committees of the JBCCI, meeting periodically as per the NCWA III agreement were just brushed aside. All the bi-partrite norms evolved in 1974 and working satisfactorily till 1982 were just scrapped by the present Chairman who held press conferences and personally used insulting languages against the members of the JBCCI belonging to all Central Trade Unions.

Instead of trying to find out the reasons of rising tension in the mines and settle them through discussion across the table, as you are now suggesting in the Parliament after the strike, the CIL authorities issued SECRET CIRCULAR dated 25th June, 1984 not to hold any discussion/negotiation with the non-INTUC unions. The Central Coalfield Ltd., in another Secret circular dated 12th July, 1984, directed: "No negotiation/discussion will take place with the representatives of the unions which have taken part in the strike in the month of June, 1984 and have indulged in agitation, demonstrations, strike etc" under the instructions from the CIL which are against the direction has been ruthlessly implemented in North Karanpura (CCL) leading to sharp decline in production.

So it is not we who are avoiding discussion and creating unrest in the CIL coal mines, it is the policy of the CIL and present Chairman which has created an atmosphere of confrontation. In this background, we took a decision unanimously to resort to indefinite strike. However, in the background of your appeal we are prepared to review our decision if the CIL authorities agree to take the following steps within one month:

(i) Convene immediately meeting of the JBCCI and hold it regularly as per the provisions of the NCWA III and as was done from 1974 to 1983 and restore all the bi-partrite norms.

(ii) Scrupulously implement all the provisions of the NCWA III, particularly in relations to Medical, Welfare, Education, Canteen, Contract Labour, Job to dependent of a worker etc.

(iii) Scrap application of ESMA in Coal Industry.

(iv) Withdraw the Circular dated 24th August, 1983 regarding the deduction of eight days wages,

(v) Withdraw the Circular dated 25th June, 1984 re: no discussion with unions.

(vi) Review all cases of eight days deduction of wages and refund the money.

(vii) Allow to join work all those whose services have been terminated following 4th and 5th June strike and withdraw break-service notices, arbitrary transfer orders, charge sheets and suspensions;

(viii) Improve safety conditions and strict implementation of all Safety Regulations and Court of Enquiry Reports.

(ix) Abolish contract system in transportation and in nature of jobs and prohibited categories and CIL must withdraw all cases against Government regarding abolition of contract labour.

If however our sincere proposals are not responded favourably the Joint Action Committee will be left with no other alternative but to announce the dates of indefinite strike in its next meeting to be organised in the middle of September next.

We would request you to intervene and ensure that the Joint Action Committee is not forced to take further steps in the overall interest of this strategic industry.

Eight Days Wage Deduction Illegal

IN his D.O. letter No. SM/2750/F-1/84 of July 30, Samar Mukherjee M.P., leader of CPI(M) group in Lok Sabha and General Secretary of CITU has written to the Prime Minister that deduction of 8 days' wage for one or two days' strike is blatantly illegal. Copies of the letter along with a note prepared by CITU in this respect have been endorsed to the Union Law and Labour Ministers also. The following is the full text of the note:

There have been increasing incidence of deduction of 8 days' earned wage for one day's strike. This is entirely illegal.

Proviso to subsection 2 of section 9 of the Payment of Wages Act" reads as under:

"Provided that, subject to any such rules made in this behalf by the State Government, if ten or more employed persons acting in concert absent themselves without due notices (that is to say without

giving the notice which is required under the terms of their contracts of employment) and without reasonable cause, such deduction from any such person may include such amount not exceeding his wage for eight days as may by any such terms be due to the employer in lieu of due notice."

The Payment of Wages Act was enacted in 1936 when strikes were regarded as breach of contract and the employers were eligible to sue for damages. Even then the afore said provision says that deduction of 8 days' earned wages is permissible if.

(i) Such provisions have been made in the terms of service of the workmen, which must specifically lay down that the employer would be due to get the money, and

(ii) The workmen, in concert, have absented themselves without due notice as provided for in the terms of contract of employment.

The most important point to be noted is that the terms of contract of employment must not only make a mention of this as a part of the term of contract, it should also lay down the period of notice which the employer is due to get and it should authorise the employer to deduct the wages as *dues to the employer*.

The words due to the employer has a special connotation because the subsequent clauses of The Payment of Wages Act provide how a record of the deductions under Section 7 of the Act are to be maintained or spent. But there is no mention of this deduction in the Act anywhere also. Hence deduction of 8 days' earned wages is in the nature of compensation for the workers' "absence in concert" in breach of terms of contract of employment which must be explicitly laid down before such deductions could be made.

When there was no right to strike every "absence in concert" by ten or more workmen was regarded as a strike and this was a penal clause against the workmen.

With the introduction of industrial Disputes Act 1947 which deals with period of notice of a strike, legal and illegal strikes having been defined in Section 22 and 23 of Act, there has been a vast change in the situation. The Industrial Disputes Act does not provide any penal clause for joining an illegal strike, except that in September '83, some amendments have been incorporated in the Act but have not been enforced so far.

Hence the proviso to subclause (2) to clause 9 of the Payment of Wages Act cannot be applied to any strike whether legal or illegal.

Violation of Safety Rules in Coal Mines

THE Third meeting of the Standing Committee on Safety in Coal Mines was held in Parliament House Energy Ministers Chamber on 8th August 1984. The Government of India tried to exclude the CITU from this meeting but ultimately had to extend invitation.

The Ministry earlier called the meeting on 28th June 1984. The CITU sent a protest telegram for excluding one of the constituents of the JBCCI from the meeting. However the Ministry ignored the telegram. The meeting was postponed due to some reasons. The CITU again pursued the matter and ultimately the Govt. had to invite the CITU to participate in the meeting.

Shri Shiv Shankar, Minister for Energy and Petroleum presided over the meeting. Apart from the representatives of the Central trade unions the heads of the subsidiaries and CIL as well as the Senior officers of the Department of Coal were present in the meeting.

The statistics supplied by the Government showed the rate of accident very high in coal mines.

Accidents in Coal Mines

Year	No. of Accidents	No. of Fatalities	No. of Serious injuries
1979	114	147	1143
1980	113	130	1132
1981	124	142	1208
1982	123	148	921
1983	124	157	748

The Report of the Court of Enquiry on Topa Colliery accident pointed out, "There was, indeed, a general atmosphere of lack of safety consciousness,...." The Report further observed, "After nationalisation of coal mines and the development of the mineral industry, there appears to have been an erosion of the authority of the Director General of Mines Safety for various reasons." According to DGMS there is a shortage of statutory mining personnel including 167 First Class Mine Managers, 65 Second Class Mines Managers and 153 Mine Surveyers in coal mines as on 23rd May 1983. The Report therefore noted, "This state of affairs cannot be allowed to continue for long."

Com. M.K. Pandhe Secretary CITU while participating in the discussion pointed out that the decisions of the Safety Conference and Reports of

AIPWF Meeting

Working Committee Meeting of All India Plantation Workers' Federation will be held on September 30, the last day of the General Council meeting of CITU.

the Court of Enquiries are not being implemented by the nationalised coal companies. He further noted that the Road Header machines are operated at great risk because coal dust is causing great hazards and the management is not taking any step to ensure occupational safety of a worker. He criticised the quality of timber supplied to the coal mines and noted that the Safety problems raised by the workers are not attended to by the managements. The CITU representative criticised the non-functioning of the pit safety committees despite statutory provisions. He also pointed out the failure to elect workers' safety inspectors to check the implementation of the Safety rules.

Referring to the protection given to the guilty officers by the CIL management Com. Pandhe pointed out that the mine managements do not take action on their own against guilty officers. He further pointed out that the question of Safety cannot be seen in isolation from the general industrial relations in coal mines. He demanded the intervention of the Minister to restore normalcy in industrial relations in coal industry without any further delay.

Com. Kalyan Roy (AITUC) pointed out that the CIL management is violating all safety rules and the Govt. should take action against such management.

Com. Damodar Pandey (INTUC) criticised the internal safety organisation of the mines. Com. Hit Narain Singh (HMS) and T.C. Jumde (BMS) noted that a large number of accidents are taking place due to fall of roof and sides and the managements failed to take any action.

The Minister of Energy admitted that there should be more safety consciousness in coal mines. He said that if the departmental enquiry proved a prima facie case that an officer was responsible for a lapse, the CIL management should not pay his legal expenses. The CIL on its own should take action against such guilty officer in addition to the action taken as per law.

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 5th November 1984.

Third Conference of Water Transport Workers Federation of India

The Third All India Conference of Water Transport Workers Federation of India will be held at Tuticorin on 12-14 October, 1984. Com. B.T. Ranadive, President, CITU will inaugurate it.

About 150 delegates and observers will participate in the conference.

Indefinite Strike Decision by AIRF

THE Working Committee of AIRF from its meeting held on August 6-8, 1984 has taken a decision that if the scheme of PLB for the years 1983-84 to 86-87 which was finalised as far back as in April 1984 is not formalised and payment made by Sept. 25, 1984, the AIRF shall start an indefinite strike of railwaymen on the demand of bonus, from September 28, 1984.

In the beginning, the resolution talked about delay by the Fourth Pay Commission in submitting its recommendation on parity in wages with public sector undertakings which was expected by October, 1984 and non-release of 4 instalments of DA, increase in the quantum of HRA, CCA, etc., and called upon railway men to participate in the countrywide programme of agitation and dharna on August 21, 1984.

It also decided to observe September 11, as bonus day on which date strike notice is to be served on the railway authorities through huge mobilisation.

Reacting to the resolution, S.K. Dhar, Secretary General (AILRSA) called upon the AIRF to invite all organisations of railwaymen for preparing a common charter of basic demands if the AIRF desires successful indefinite strike.

In response to the appeal of General Secretary, AIRF, for support, Samar Mukherjee M.P., General Secretary, CITU, in his communication dated August 23, stated that this struggle essentially has become a struggle to safeguard the right to collective bargaining. He stated that although the CITU's general stand is for payment of minimum 8.33 per cent bonus to all employees as deferred wage, the CITU fully supports any struggle for the right to collective bargaining and betterment of living and service conditions of railwaymen. He however, pointed out that "the details of the scheme which has been agreed upon, have not been given in the resolution and I do not know what steps are being taken to unite all the organisations of railwaymen. The experience of 1960 and 1974 shows that without a broad based unity, majority of the railwaymen cannot be inspired to join an indefinite strike. I hope that the AIRF should give some thought over the same, in case the strike becomes inevitable". He has already taken up the issue with the Finance Minister and the Railway Minister on the basis of the resolution adopted by the AIRF.

In a statement issued on August 23, the Railway Minister has cleared payment of 32 days' wages as bonus to Railwaymen for 1983-84. The statement is however, silent on the question of formalising the agreement for 1984-85 to 1986-87.

Conventions, Meetings, Demonstrations, Etc

A convention of Zonal Co-ordination Committee of railwaymen of SER was held at Adra on July 29, which was attended by 550 delegates. Basudev Acharya, M.P., Chairman, Reception Committee welcomed the delegates.

M.N. Prasad, Convenor, Zonal Co-ordination Committee of Railwaymen (ZCCR) placed his report. S.K. Dhar and Shrikrishna, Joint Convenors, NCCR, explained to the delegates the aims and objects of NCCR. As all the participants of NCCR were present in the convention, the convention elected the NCCR with M.N. Prasad and M.L.N. Murthy as Joint Convenors.

The NCCR Convention of Eastern Railway was held at Calcutta in the Muslim Institute Hall on July 30, which was attended by 750 delegates. This convention was also addressed by S.K. Dhar and Shrikrishna, Joint Convenors of NCCR after M.S. Mukherjee placed his report. After discussion the convention elected a committee of NCCR with M.S. Mukherjee, P.K. Dutta Gupta and Salil Bose as Joint Convenors.

Both these conventions adopted resolution supporting the struggle of the Coal Mine workers.

The Central Working Committee of AILRSA met at New Delhi on August 3 under the presidentship of K.A. Rajanna. After reviewing the present situation the meeting decided to stage 48 hours protest hunger strike before the Railway Minister's Bungalow from 10 A.M. of October 15, 1984 to 10 A.M. of October 17. It directed that on the concluding day massive demonstrations should be launched in every locoshed. The meeting also approved the application for affiliation to AIREC and decided to participate in the AGM of AIREC to be held at Lucknow on September 9 to 10, 1984.

The Indian Railways Coal Ash and Transshipment Handling Mazdoor Union (CITU) organised a massive demonstration before the General Manager, Eastern Railway at Calcutta on July 25, in which 2000 workers including 400 women participated. Their main demand was for absorption, after abolition of Steam Loco Shed.

The Loco Running Staff of Izzat Nagar Division (NER) staged a demonstration before the Divisional Railway Manager's office on August 17, in which over 600 Locomen participated.

Over 1500 railwaymen participated in a demonstration before the General Manager, Southern Railway at Madras under the leadership of NCCR of Southern Zone, as a part of the programme which was decided upon by the Central NCCR. The General Manager invited the representatives for handing over the memorandum to him and held a discussion with them.

The Palghat Divisional Conference of DREU was held on August 7, under the Chairmanship of P.V. Ramdas, General Secretary, DREU. Apart from the resolution on grievances of railwaymen the conference took organisational decisions for the success of the demonstration before the General Manager on August 20, as well as for membership and ideological campaign.

Complete Strike in Heavy Engineering Corporation

TWENTY thousand workers of Heavy Engineering Corporation, Ranchi, Bihar, a Central Public Sector Undertaking went on an indefinite strike from August 9, demanding settlement of their 19-point charter of demands. The strike is being jointly conducted by CITU, AITUC, HMS, BMS and two independent unions under the banner of Samyukt Abhijan Samity. The recognised union, INTUC which opposed the strike and caused the killing of one worker in the process, by hoodlums, was totally isolated. On July 23 the workers sounded the first warning bell to the management by going on one day's complete strike. But the management remained adamant and refused to negotiate with the striking unions clinging to the so called recognition of the scab INTUC union. The strike has again unveiled the Government's black face to hang on the non-existent INTUC as a drowning man catches at a straw. To save the already drowned INTUC, the Government has released the notorious CISF to unleash repression on the workers. Two leaders of the CITU union have already been dismissed and the Bihar Government has illegalised the strike — the only armament at its hand, which has been made blunt by the workers.

But despite the worthlessness of the INTUC having been proved in HEC and a production loss of Rs. 30 lakhs a day, the Government and the management are still sitting non-chalant about the fate of production and the consequent hardships of the workers and the people.

In the meantime four more unions have joined the Samyukt Abhijan Samity supporting the strike. The strike evoked remarkable enthusiasm among the family members of the workers and about 2500 women members of the workers' families demonstrated before the Chairman in support of the demands of the striking workers. On 15th August, the workers boycotted the official Independence Day celebrations and held their own separate celebrations under Chairmanship of Com. Yogeshwar Gope, President, Bihar State Committee of CITU. About 15000 workers attended the rally.

On 17th of August, at the call of the opposition political parties in Ranchi and by the Samyukt Abhijan Samity a bundh was observed in support of the striking workers. Several leading workers of the INTUC union are actively participating in the strike defying the official directive and some Congress(I) leaders also have openly come out in support of the strike.

M.K. Pandhe, Secretary, CITU visited Ranchi on 17th and 18th August and held two meetings of the Abhijan Samity to discuss the strike situation. He had two rounds of informal discussions with the Chairman, HEC but due to the adamant attitude of the management no settlement could be possible. On 18th evening a massive rally of about 7000 workers was held in Dhurua township which was

addressed by M.K. Pandhe and the leaders of all the organisations. The workers expressed the determination to carry forward the struggle.

The matter was raised in both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha by the Members of Parliament belonging to CPI(M) but so far the Government has not come forward with any seriousness to settle the demands of the workers. Their main worry is that if the issue is settled with the Samyukt Abhijan Samity the INTUC will be officially wiped out in the HEC.

Several cases of corruption have been brought to light recently in HEC. Since the INTUC leadership is protecting these corrupt officials the management has also made a prestige issue and is refusing to negotiate with the Samyukt Abhijan Samity to settle this dispute through negotiations. Despite escalation of the repressive measures by Bihar police, the morale of the workers is high and according to the telephonic message received by the CITU on 23rd August, the strike is complete.

CITU Demands Central Govt. Intervention

M.K. Pandhe, Secretary, CITU issued the following statement to the press on August 14:

The CITU warmly congratulates the 20,000 workers of Heavy Engineering Corporation, Ranchi for their united indefinite strike from 9th August 1984. The strike has been sponsored by a joint committee of CITU, AITUC, HMS, BMS affiliated and two independent unions in support of 19 point Charter of Demands including demands relating to City Compensatory Allowance, housing facilities, abolition of contract system, promotion facilities, etc. Despite the strike breaking activities of the INTUC union the strike is complete and peaceful.

The workers went on one day complete strike on 23rd July 1984 to draw the attention of the management to the serious discontent prevailing in the plant. Instead of realising the gravity of the situation the management refused to settle the demands only to boost the INTUC union which alone is responsible for the present indefinite strike in HEC.

The Government of Bihar instead of making efforts to settle the issues through negotiations has resorted to repressive measures to suppress the strike. Though HEC comes under Union Ministry of Industry, the Central Government is merely behaving like a silent spectator leading to prolongation of strike in this major public sector undertaking.

The CITU demands of the Government of India to intervene immediately so that the demands of the HEC workers are settled by an early date. The CITU appeals to all the trade unions to rally behind the striking workers so that their just struggle is successful in achieving their demands.

The National Campaign Committee has also issued a statement on August 16 supporting the struggle and demanding Central Government's intervention.

Dharna by Central Government Employees

ABOUT 5000 Central Government employees belonging to All India Railwaymen's Federation, Confederation of Central Government Employees and Workers, All India Defence Employees Federation, National Federation of P & T Employees, Income Tax Employees Federation, All India Audit (N. G.) & Accounts Association, Central Government Clerks' Union, etc. sat on Dharna for the whole day before the 4th Pay Commission's office, at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, on 21st August, 1984. The following demands were highlighted: (i) Grant of 4 instalments of D.A., (ii) Grant of Bonus before Puja for all Central Government Employees, (iii) Submission of Part report in respect of the demand of parity of wages with Public Sector Undertakings and grant of Interim relief of Rs. 265.

The Dharna started at 10-00 A.M. A presidium consisting of S. Madhusudan, Mittal (AIRF), S.M. Banerji (Defence) and O.P. Gupta (NFPTE) conducted the meeting.

S.M. Banerji while addressing the gathering said that the Government is doing great injustice by denying payment of 4 instalments of D.A. to Central Government employees. He warned the Government that if the Bonus is not paid before Puja the Central Government employees would be compelled to start a major agitation including strike.

O.P. Gupta, J.P. Choubey, S.K. Vyas, Siddique, O.P. Bhasin, Mann, N.J. Iyer, K.K.N. Kutty and Umraomal Purohit spoke. All the speakers exhorted the workers to be ready for united actions including strike if Government does not settle the basic demand of wage parity well in time.

A delegation consisting S.K. Vyas, Madhusudan, (Confederation), O.P. Gupta (NFPTE) and U.M. Purohit, Mittal (AIRF) met the Chairman, Pay Commission and submitted a memorandum. The Chairman assured consideration of the issues raised in the memorandum.

The Confederation of Central Government Employees and Workers have already given a call for Pay Boycott on 31st August, 1984, demanding immediate release of the 4 instalments of D.A that have already become due.

No Settlement on DA in Public Sector Undertakings

THE tripartite committee on DA in public sector undertakings could not make any headway in its meeting on 13th August, 1984 due to the refusal of the representatives of the Government of India to offer any new proposal for a higher rate of DA.

The Government representatives adhered to their proposal for Rs. 1.50 per point rise in index. The trade union representatives demanded Rs. 2 per point. It was then proposed that the matter should be once again discussed with the Minister of Finance for final decision.

Regarding the date of effect of the agreement the management offered that it would be implemented from June 1983 or in other words the new rate of DA will be made applicable offer 499 average Price Index Numbers for the Working Class.

M.K. Pandhe Secretary CITU pointed out that the stalemate in the DA committee is causing strong reactions among the workers in public sector. He demanded that the issue should be finalised in the next meeting of the committee.

Gopeshwar of the INTUC pointed out that different public sector units have different quarterly monthly average. Hence the matters should be left for the units to decide. This was not acceptable to the management representatives.

Raja Kulkarni (INTUC) and S.R. Kulkarni (HMS) noted that different agreements have different starting index numbers and hence the retrospective effect should be given for the earlier period also.

The Labour Minister who presided over the meeting said that it was only the Finance Minister who could speak about the final offer of the Government.

The next meeting of the DA Committee will be held on 31st August. The Finance Minister has agreed to meet the workers' representatives before the meeting of the tripartite committee.

CITU Protests Against BHEL Circular

THE BHEL management has issued a circular without consulting the constituents of the Joint Committee, BHEL, withdrawing certain facilities to workers who would be transferred at their request.

The workers who are transferred at their request will not be entitled to TA and DA, joining time, seniority and increase in entitlement for promotion by one year. This action has caused strong resentment among the workers all over the country.

M.K. Pandhe, Secretary, CITU, in a communication to the Director (Personnel), BHEL, dated 6th August has demanded keeping this circular in abeyance pending discussions with the trade unions with a view to come to an agreed decision in the matter.

Nationalisation of Textile Industry

THE Fourth Conference of W. Bengal Textile Workers' Federation held at Hrishi Banerjee Nagar, Kalyani on August 3 and 4 called for nationalisation of the entire textile industry. The Conference was inaugurated by B.T. Ranadive, President of CITU.

A presidium consisting of Kamal Bhattacharjee, Gopal Bhattacharjee, Nani Kar, Gour Kundu, Dilip Sen and Bishu Das conducted the proceedings of the Conference. After the welcome address by Amritendu Mukherjee, Minister of Animal Husbandry, W. Bengal, B.T. Ranadive delivered his inaugural speech. He held the policy of the Congress(I) Government responsible for the present severe crisis in the textile industry. Making a scathing criticism on the comment of Indira Gandhi who ascribed lack of market to the crisis in the industry, BTR said that the lack of market was due to the fast diminishing purchasing power of the people. Despite the per capita annual production of cloth having come down from 17 metres to 11 metres and the mills producing only upto 50 per cent of their installed capacities, and despite production loss due to the long drawn strike in the Bombay textile mills, heavy stocks of cloth are rotting in the market, because people cannot purchase them. Out of about 356 textile mills in the country, more than 58 are closed and about 100 have gone sick. About 1 lakh 25 thousand workers have been thrown out of employment. All the crisis is because of the capitalist planning of the bourgeois-landlord Government of Congress(I) for the benefit of the monopolists. He said that the Government of India extracts Rs. 300 crores as tax from the textile industry per annum, but has no plans to save the industry. This is the state of the industry after six five year plans. The only way to save the industry was to nationalise it with participation of the workers in the management with equal status. It cannot be entrusted to the bureaucratic and corrupt management only as is evident from the functioning of the NTC mills which also are being closed subserving the interests of the monopolists. And, to pass on the burden of the crisis on the workers, the Government and the monopolists have now unleashed the offensive of closures and lockouts on them. Not content with it the Government was increasingly resorting to authoritarian measures to suppress the democratic and trade union rights of the workers. He called upon the workers to consolidate unity with all other sections and carry forward the joint struggles against the policy of the Government for an alternative. He further drew attention of the workers towards the rise of the divisive and secessionist forces and the imperialist conspiracies behind them. He said, the bourgeois-landlord Government cannot protect the unity and integrity of the country; it is only the working class which has to do the task by fighting these forces. He also urged upon them to wage unremitting struggle for peace against the danger of war and expose the zingoist role of the

U.S. imperialists.

Greeting the Conference, Samar Mukherjee, General Secretary of CITU said that closures and sickness in textile industry have affected other industries also. He cited the example of the Texmaco engineering factory which had given notice for closure, because the company manufacturers machineries for the textile industry and the textile mills were declaring closure. He said that under such circumstances workers' struggles cannot afford to remain bogged down to their own economic demands only. Trade Unions have to unite and bring the vast masses of workers to the point of class struggle against the capitalist path of development.

Among others who greeted the Conference were Manoranjan Roy, the State General Secretary, Md. Amin, General Secretary BCMU and Santi Ghatak, the Minister of State for Labour. The Conference elected a 85 member Working Committee with Jamini Saha as the President and Gopal Biswas as General Secretary.

The open session was held on August 4 which was presided over by Amritendu Mukherjee and addressed by B.T. Ranadive, Samar Mukherjee, and Manoranjan Roy.

CITU CONGRATULATES WORKERS FOR PARTICIPATION IN SAVE DEMOCRACY DAY

B.T. Ranadive, President, CITU has issued the following statement on August 25:

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions congratulates the Working Class for its participation in the Protest Day, which is being observed today the 25th August, 1984. It specially congratulates the Working Class of West Bengal, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu and Karnataka for their massive participation in the bandh call given by the Left-front of West Bengal, the Left and Democratic Front of Kerala and several opposition parties in other States and the Central Trade Unions of the States.

By such participation in the democratic struggle the working class has shown its understanding that unless the growth of authoritarianism and the scuttling of the democracy is checked through determined working class action, their jobs, wages, trade union and democratic rights — nothing would be secure.

The CITU appeals to the entire working class to realise that the Congress Government at the Centre is bent upon destabilizing all States Governments which do not accept the diktats of the Centre and that the Parliamentary Democracy itself is in peril and come out boldly in the struggle for safeguarding democracy.

Road Transport Workers' Conference

THE Second Conference of the All India Road Transport Workers' Federation was held at Madras from August 13 to 15. The Conference which was originally scheduled to be held at Sangrur, Punjab last year, was twice postponed because of the situation there and was finally held at Madras with success. The Conference was attended by more than 300 delegates and observers from 11 states representing more than one lakh members.

After the welcome address by V.P. Chintan, Chairman of the Reception Committee B.T. Ranadive, President, CITU inaugurated the Conference. He drew attention to the deplorable condition of the road transport workers, when 50 per cent of the passenger road transport was run by the public sector. There was big wage disparity, variety of wage scale and D.A. rates. The public sector employers were following the same code as private employers to beat down the workers' demands and struggles. The goods transport was entirely in the private hands. Only the left front Government had taken some steps to relieve the situation for the workers. He urged upon the workers to gear up their organisational functions to build up a powerful all India movement which only can secure a standardised wage and D.A. formula. He pointed to the deepening crisis of the capitalist planning leading to growing attacks on the working class, the lock-outs and closures, the drive towards authoritarianism, challenge of the divisive forces and the danger of a nuclear war created by the US imperialists to destroy the achievement socialism, and called upon the workers to build up the organisation to meet these challenges by building up united struggles with all other sections of the workers.

The Conference was conducted by a presidium consisting of V.P. Chintan, G.S. Balaji Das, N. Prasad Rao, K.M. Abraham and Ashoke Dutta. Thirtyone delegates participated in the discussions on the General Secretary's report placed by Sujit Das, which was unanimously adopted. Among others who greeted the Conference were Samar Mukherjee, General Secretary, CITU, Rabin Mukherjee, Transport Minister of W. Bengal and M.M. Lawrence, President of Water Transport Workers' Federation of India. Samar Mukherjee pointed out that majority of the workers in this vital industry were still unorganised. He urged upon the delegates to gear up the organisational machineries to bring these workers under its fold so that effective struggles can be waged against the policies of the Government.

The Conference adopted resolutions on danger of war, divisive forces, on lockouts, closures and anti-labour policies on the Government, observing an all India demands day, etc. The Conference elected Md. Ismail and Sujit Das as President and General Secretary respectively.

Multinationals Violate the Labour Laws

M/s General Electric Company of India a subsidiary of one of the biggest multinational companies, is in the habit of violating the labour laws. It violated the laws of the land on Bonus and tried to deprive to workmen of their dues. The workers under the leadership of Paharpur Works Employees' Union (CITU) are engaged in a bitter struggle for upholding their rights, and they have been able to humble the company in the legal battle over their rights.

The Company declared 16.40 per cent bonus for 1979-80 (13.38 per cent from allocable surplus and the remaining from set on). The Union wanted the management to produce the balance sheet and other connecting documents for correct preparation of allocable surplus for calculation of bonus for the year 1979-80, but the management refused to do so. In the meanwhile the Union served a notice for one days strike on 10.10.80 and at the intervention of Com. Krishna Pada Ghosh, Labour Minister of Left Front Government of West Bengal, the Company paid 17.75 per cent as bonus subject to the adjustment on the adjudication of the issue.

In the tribunal, the union produced the allocable surplus calculations prepared by the Chartered Accounts in which provisional computation of allocable surplus was made as more than 20 per cent and demanded that the documents related to the Balance-sheet of the Company be produced for inspection. The management opposed on the ground that their balance-sheet and the allocable surplus have been drawn up by a reputed firm of Chartered Accountants. The Tribunal gave decision in favour of the union stating that they have a right to inspect the balance-sheet and other related documents. The management went into an appeal to the Calcutta High Court, its Divisional bench and lastly to the Supreme Court. All of them upheld the decision of the tribunal. Despite these judgements the management did not produce the record and ultimately, the tribunal ordered the payment of 20 per cent bonus to the workmen for the year 1979-80.

This case has shown that the general belief that by challenging the accounts of the Companies the allocable surplus cannot be changed very much is not correct. The lesson of this case is that if the accounts are prepared carefully and if all the related documents of the balance sheet which are more important, are examined, then in many cases the allocable surplus for payment of bonus may be increased.

In 1972-73 and 1973-74, the management had proposed bonus of 8.61 per cent and 14.49 per cent. The union similarly challenged the accounts and the matter went upto the High Court and finally the Company settled the matter amicably by paying 15.5 per cent as bonus plus Rs. 90 for each year.

But the legal battle is not all. In this case the management has not paid the remaining 2.25 per cent of the bonus as decided by the Tribunal. The struggle for receiving their due amount is still on.

Agricultural Workers' Convention

AN all India convention of agricultural workers was held at New Delhi on August 2. The convention was jointly sponsored by the four organisations of the agricultural workers, viz, All India Agricultural Worker's Union, Bharatiya Khet Mazdoor Union, Hind Khet Mazdoor Sabha and the Indian National and Allied Worker's Federation.

The convention was called in order to mobilise the agricultural workers to launch country-wide united struggles on the issue of their long pending demand for a comprehensive Central legislation. The Govt. of India although at one stage agreed to enact such a legislation, later backed out under pressure from the landlord lobbies. It raised a bogus plea that the States are not unanimous on the issue.

The resolution demanding such legislation was moved by P.K. Kunjachan, General Secretary of All India Agricultural Workers' Union. Speaking on the resolution, Har Kishan Singh Surjeet said that the standing Committee on Rural Labour under the Chairmanship of T. Anjaiah had unanimously decided in 1980 for a Central legislation on the agricultural workers. But the Government violated it, yielding to the pressures of the landlords in various states. He denounced the Government for extending such spurious plea that there was no unanimity amongst the States. For, in the Standing Committee all the political parties, the trade unions and the State Governments were represented, and they took the unanimous decision for the Central legislation. The Government also announced its positive decision on the floor of the Parliament. So it is obvious that it backed out later subserving the interests of the landlords. Besides, the fixation of the agricultural workers' wages has so far been guided by the Minimum Wages Act, 1948, which itself is a Central legislation. He said that the Government can be brought down to the knees to enact the Central law only by a powerful united movement of the agricultural workers supported by all other sections of workers.

The convention decided to hold State and district level joint conventions, to be completed within one month. This would be followed by mass signature collection all over the country on petitions demanding the Central legislation, to be submitted to the President of India through the State Governors in November. The petitions would be submitted to the Governors by holding mass demonstrations in all the State Capitals. Thereafter separate memoranda would be submitted to the President and the Prime Minister jointly by the four organisations demanding immediate enactment of the Central legislation.

Prior to the National convention, the Working Committee of the All India Agricultural Worker's

Union held its meeting at New Delhi on July 31 and August 1. The meeting decided to step up the organisational activities and initiate strong movements and further consolidate united actions with the other organisations in pursuance of the demand.

CITU Secretariat Meeting

THE Secretariat of CITU met at New Delhi on August 26, 1984, under the presidentship of Com. B.T. Ranadive. Other members who attended the meeting were Comrades Samar Mukherjee, E. Balanandan, P. Ramamurti, Suheela Gopalan, M.K. Pandhe, Nrisingha Chakraborty, C. Kannan, Mohd. Ismail, Niren Ghosh, M.M. Lawrence and P.K. Ganguly.

The meeting discussed the probable dates of the General Council meeting which had to be postponed due to the situation arising out of the arbitrary dismissal of N.T. Rama Rao ministry in Andhra Pradesh so as to enable our comrades to observe 25th August '84 as Save Democracy Day in a befitting manner. It recorded its appreciation that the working class of West Bengal, Kerala, Tripura, Tamilnadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir observed the bundh. In other states too, local bandhs had taken place while the working class participated in the programmes every where. The meeting decided certain tentative dates for holding the General Council meeting which would be finalised after consulting others.

The meeting discussed thread bare, the crisis in the textile industry and heard reports about the efforts to bring other trade union organisations also on a common platform, as the demand of "Nationalisation of Textile Industry" has been voiced by many central Trade union organisations. It decided to continue the efforts and ensure coming together of the central trade unions in the broadest possible Conference as early as possible.

The meeting also reviewed the situation in the coal industry and noted that the Energy Minister has assured that the problems would be sorted out through discussion in the JBCCI within a month. It also noted that Shri. M.S. Gujral is however continuing to deal with the matter in a highhanded manner. The Secretariat therefore called upon the affiliated unions to keep their vigil and preparedness, so that the movement could be developed further if necessary.

The meeting set up a sub-committee with Comrades P. Ramamurti, M.K. Pandhe and Nrisingha Chakraborty to prepare draft replies to the questionnaire circulated by the Committee set up by the Government under the chairmanship of Shri M. Narsimham to examine financial principles of a possible shift from physical to financial controls.

The meeting also discussed several organisational questions and took decisions on the same.

Workers Observe Punjab Week

IN pursuance of the call of CPI (M), workers observed the Punjab week all over the country from July 10 to 17 by holding meetings, processions and rallies. The mass organisations like CITU, Kishan Sabhas, SFI, DYFI etc mobilised workers, peasants, agricultural workers, students, youth, women and people from various walks of life to make the programme successful. The leaders of the organisations explained to the people the genesis of the Punjab imbroglio, the conspiracies of the USA, Great Britain and other imperialist countries to destabilise the country and the policy of the Congress (I) Government pursuing its narrow political ends which culminated in the deployment of army to flush out the criminals from the Golden Temple. They explained the criminal role of Bhindranwale, who was the creation of the Congress (I), and who, helped by the imperialist countries converted the place of sanctity into an arsenal of foreign armaments to destabilise the country with the direct secessionist slogan to graft a separate state Khalistan in the country. The week long campaigns also explained the fallacy of religious bigotry and how it makes a breeding ground for the imperialists to balkanise the country and gives opportunity to the ruling classes to dechannelise the democratic movement of the people to involve in fratricidal war. The meetings further drew the pointed attention of the working class to the counter attack posed by the divisive forces in the various parts of the country, in Punjab in particular to their rising united struggles. The week-long observance denounced the Government of India who relegated the political and democratic demands of the Akalis, mixed up state and religion, giving state patronization to religion and thereby spread the germ of religious fanaticism and extremism far and deep and vulgarised the spirit of secularism. The meetings called upon the people of all religions, of all walks of life to realise the gravity of the situation, the dangers from the imperialist countries to vanquish our hard won freedom by dismembering the country and the failure of the Congress (I) Government to solve the Punjab problem in time by refusing to cooperate with the opposition parties, violating the agreements time and again and doing the things unilaterally with mere administrative measures in vain pursuance of its narrow political gains, surrendering the national interests. The meetings also critically pointed out the failure of the Akali leadership to prevail upon the extremists and for adhering to the Anandpur Sahib resolution which called for a separate Sikh State, thus playing into the hands of the extremists. The meetings appealed to the Sikh masses to realise the dangerous and harmful activities indulged in by Bhindranwale and his extremist group who were moving under imperialist help with political motivations to alienate them from the masses of the Indian people under the garb of religion. The meetings also condemned the Hindu communalists who took advantage of the situation to go ahead with their divisive ideology and disrupt

the unity of the Indian people. The meetings called upon the working class to hold the reins and lead the indomitable struggle against the divisive and separatist forces and march ahead with the united struggles from protection of the working class unity to protect the country's unity and channelise the struggles against the policies of the bourgeois-landlord Government for achieving the economic and democratic demands of the people.

The following are the reports of observance:

Punjab: More than 60 meetings were held all over the state and thousands of pamphlets were distributed, H.S.K. Surjeet, P.B. member, CPI(M) addressed a largely attended meeting. His article on the Punjab developments was sold in thousands. Leaders of CITU, Kishan Sabha, SFI and DYFI also addressed a large number of meetings throughout the state.

W. Bengal: Massive statewide movements were carried on throughout the week, protesting against the Centre's policy of drift which resulted in the tragic events. Processions rallies, public meetings, conventions and extensive prosterings were organised exposing the Congress(I) Government's diabolical role in handling the situation which posed a great threat to the national unity and the unity of the working class. Surjeet's article was translated into Gurmukhi, Urdu and Bengali and sold in thousands to the industrial workers, labourers and the common people, large number of whom hailed from other parts of the country. CITU and other trade unions conducted innumerable meetings, gate meetings and rallies in all the industrial centres, tea plantation areas and big and small factories in the state. SFI and DYFI also organised big central rallies at Calcutta and in the districts.

Bihar: At Patna and all over the state meetings, gate meetings, street corner meetings, processions and rallies were held. Leaders of CITU, viz, Yogeshwar Gope, the State President, N.K. Shukla, the State Secretary along with leaders of the State CPI(M), Kishan Sabha, SFI and DYFI addressed the meetings.

Uttar Pradesh: Public meetings, "volunteers" march, long processions and general meetings were held in different parts of the state. Various unions also organised gate meetings in the industrial places. The meetings also denounced the Centre for toppling the Farooq Abdullah ministry.

Andhra Pradesh: Public meetings were organised in more than 50 places in the state, apart from indoor meetings and gate meetings in the industrial centres. H.S.K. Surjeet addressed a largely attended public meeting at Hyderabad. Over 40,000 booklets in Telugu on the Punjab developments were sold. The meetings also drew attention of the workers and the people to the arbitrary dismissal of the Farooq Abdullah ministry of Jammu and Kashmir.

Maharashtra: H.S.K. Surjeet addressed a largely attended public meeting at Bombay. Meetings and public meetings were also held in various other

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Stalemate in Wage Talks in 67 Public Sector Units

THE meeting of the Joint Forum of HSCL held on 13th August 1984 in New Delhi ended in a stalemate in wage negotiations as the management offered only a minimum guaranteed benefit of Rs. 70 at the lowest level and Rs. 125 at the highest level. In spite of this payment the minimum wages in HSCL would be far below the norm of industrial wage fixed by the BPE itself. The management offered this wage rise provided workers agreed to accept industrial pattern of D.A. At present D.A. in HSCL is governed by the Third Pay Commission formula. The HSCL management does not make the payment of new instalment of D.A. as soon as Government announces its payment. There is inordinate delay in making the payment and workers have to agitate even to get the D.A. instalment released.

Speaking in the meeting M. K. Pandhe Secretary, CITU clarified that without payment of industrial wage at par with other public sector undertakings the industrial D.A. formula has no meaning. He asked the management to come forward with a better proposal so that it can create a basis for meaningful negotiations.

HSCL and 66 other public sector undertakings are governed by the Third Pay Commission Pay Scales and D.A. formula. These employees have not been able to achieve the industrial wage pattern despite demands made in several places.

In Food Corporation of India with about 70,000 employees the workers are paid at par with Central Govt. employees. The management agreed to pay Central Pay Commission Interim Relief provided the workers agree to industrial D.A. However on the Wage Committee the management refused to take workers' representatives and an Officials' Committee was appointed. The employees' federation had to boycott the Wage Committee meetings.

In certain undertakings the management stopped payment of D.A. instalments to pressurise the workers to accept industrial D.A. pattern without payment of industrial wage at par with other public sector undertakings. A recent judgement of the Supreme Court however directed the management to continue payment CPC D.A. rate.

In several undertakings the management have not paid Pay Commission interim relief, in view of the BPE directive that the interim relief paid to the Government employees was not applicable to the public sector undertakings, thus making the wage levels in these undertakings much below the Central Government employees.

The D.A. in public sector undertakings is uniformly fixed for all the categories, while the Central Govt. D.A. formula provides differential rate of payment. Though first 2-3 lower categories of workers get more payment the higher categories of workers stand to lose. Though in public sector D.A. formula there is quarterly adjustment giving earlier benefit to the workers at highest levels the workers still lose

heavily due to higher rate available in the Central D.A. formula. The problems can be solved only by paying an industrial wage at par with other public sector undertakings which would give adequate compensation even to the higher level of workers.

However the BPE is opposing to grant these workers proper industrial wage which is causing bottlenecks in the wage negotiations in these undertakings.

Though the trade union movement in advanced Public Sector undertakings have defeated the BPE guidelines during wage negotiations the workers in the 67 undertakings who are governed by the Central Pay Commission Pay Scales and D.A. have not yet been able to throw overboard these guidelines. The BPE has told the managements of these undertakings that they cannot give any wage rise unless the workers agree to introduce the industrial D.A. formula.

The proposal of the trade unions to reach the industrial wage pattern at par with other public sector undertakings in a phased manner is also not acceptable to the BPE which has added to the gravity of the situation. The Government is also not prepared to accept the proposal to continue with the Pay Commission Scales and D.A. by giving an additional amount to be negotiated by the unions and the management, for each undertaking separately.

All this is happening because the trade union movement in this sector is weak and workers are unable to exert their influence as in the strategic sector of industries. In view of this the attempts made by some unions to build a united movement of these employees to achieve parity with other public sectors are welcome and the trade unions in major public sectors who achieved successful agreements should extend full support to these employees so that they can also achieve success and defeat the BPE guidelines.

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parts of the state. CITU organised general meetings and gate meetings at various industrial centres. The pamphlets on Punjab developments were sold in thousands throughout the state.

Apart from above, the Punjab week was observed in all other states also like in Tripura, Kerala, Tamilnadu, etc and various unions all over the country held meetings and gate meetings.

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AROUND THE STATES

BIHAR

Meeting of State CITU

The State Committee of CITU met at Patna on August 20 under the presidentship of Yogeshwar Gope. The meeting adopted a resolution denouncing the Government of India for the dismissal of the Farooq Abdullah ministry of Jammu and Kashmir and the N.T. Rama Rao ministry of Andhra Pradesh. It called upon the affiliated unions and appealed to all sections of workers to raise their voice of protest against the blatant authoritarian drive to scuttle the verdict of the people and democracy.

The meeting also called upon the unions to gear up the preparations to successfully observe September 12 with massive protest demonstrations against closures, lockouts, and retrenchments and demanding take over of all the closed units.

The meeting extended full support to the twenty thousand striking workers of Ranchi Heavy Engineering Corporation. It condemned the Government for its shameless patronization of the INTUC which was virtually wiped out in the HEC as evidenced by the sweeping strike and demanded of the Government to make immediate negotiated settlement with the Samyukt Abhijan Samity comprising the CITU, AITUC and other unions.

The meeting also extended support to the striking workers of the Agricultural Products Samity and the Water Services and demanded of the Government to make settlement on the issues.

The meeting further resolved to extend support to six lakh state government employees and school teachers who have decided to go on indefinite strike from September 4. It called upon all the unions to demonstrate solidarity in support of these employees.

The meeting denounced the Government of India for imposing ESMA in coal industry banning strikes. It also condemned the CIL management for unleashing severe repression on the coal workers. While supporting the struggle of the coal workers, the meeting demanded of the Government to withdraw the ban on strike and resolve the demands of the workers forthwith.

The meeting also supported the struggle of the private school teachers who were on hunger strike with their long pending demands and demanded of the Government to intervene for settlement of the dispute.

The meeting decided to observe September 1 as the day of peace against the danger of war and

called upon the unions to mobilise the workers to the maximum extent to join the demonstrations and expose the war pursuit of the U.S. imperialists.

UTTAR PRADESH

Strike by Tannery Workers

The workers of Tannery and Footwork Corporation (TAFCO), Kanpur, a Government of India undertaking went on one day's complete strike on July 11. The strike was called by the TAFCO Trade Union Sangharsh Samity comprising of CITU, AITUC, HMS and BMS to press the management for settlement of their charter of demands, which included 40 per cent wage increase, Rs. 2 per point variable D.A., enquiry into the charges of corruption on the part of the management, etc. The previous agreement had expired in August 1983, but the management refused to negotiate on the fresh demands and instead, tried to impose upon the workers its own proposals. The date of the strike was coincided with the general industrial strike in Kanpur which was called by the State Campaign Committee against closures, lockouts and anti-labour policies of the Government. To penalise the workers the management put up a notice on July 12 declaring the strike illegal and deducting 8-days wages of the workers. Rising in protest, the workers marched in procession to the Labour Commissioner and the District Magistrate, but they refused to intervene in the matter. The angered workers, 2500 strong, took out a procession to the Additional Labour Commissioner and kept him gheraoed the whole day and night. Ultimately the Additional Labour Commissioner issued a written advice to the management to withdraw the punitive measures. But the management refused to abide by the advice on the plea that it requires clearance from the Union Ministry of Industry. The undeterred workers released the Additional Labour Commissioner and marched to the TAFCO premises and kept the Managing Director and the General Manager gheraoed from the early morning. Ultimately, management bowed down and withdrew the penal measures. In the struggle all the seven unions in the undertaking joined together to form the united front excepting the INTUC.

Struggle of Diwan Rubber Workers

The workers of Diwan Rubber Industries, Bharat Rubber Industries and Diwan Enterprises, Rithani, Meerut are continuing their grim struggle since the last six months in pursuance of their several long pending demands. The management had dismissed a large number of the CITU activists, the workers went on strike, the management tried to push into anti-social elements to work during the strike. When the workers resisted, the police came to the rescue of the management. Thereafter, the management locked out the establishments from March 3. The Labour Commissioner gave an open support to the management's term of lifting the lockout from July

30 leaving behind 49 workers and asked the workers to join the same day. But when the workers went to join, the management refused them entry without any reasons. The Government did not intervene thereafter. The workers staged day-long dharnas before the Labour Commissioner's office and the District Magistrate's Office on August 8 and 9 respectively. In their next phase of action they are preparing for indefinite hunger strike before the Chief Minister's office at Lucknow.

Mass Meetings against Divisive Forces

The Saharanpur District Committee of CPI(M), CITU and Khet Mazdoor Union jointly organised mass meetings in several villages on July 20 and 21 to mobilise the people to raise their voice against the divisive and separatist forces and for communal harmony. The leaders explained the developments in Punjab and exposed the diabolical role of the Congress(I) Government at Centre to precipitate the unprecedented situation for its narrow political gains. The meetings also denounced the Government for its drive towards authoritarianism by toppling the elected Government of Farooq Abdullah of Jammu and Kashmir by engineering defections. They further drew attention of the workers, peasants and the agricultural labourers to the anti-labour policies of the Government and urged upon them to step up the united struggles, to contain the authoritarian drive of the Congress(I) Government and against its anti-labour policies.

ANDHRA PRADESH

Meeting of State CITU

A meeting of the State Committee of CITU was held at Vijayawada on July 24 and 25 under the presidentship of P. Satyanarayana. The meeting expressed serious concern over the developments in Punjab, the communal riots of Bombay and Bhiwandi and the revival of the secessionist movement in Assam and condemned the Centre for its failure to handle the developments. It denounced the toppling of the Jammu and Kashmir ministry of Abdullah Farooq. The meeting adopted resolutions calling upon the workers to unitedly fight the divisive forces and against the growing authoritarianism of the Congress(I) for the safeguard of democracy.

In another resolution it condemned the drive for nuclear war by the Reagan administration and called upon the workers to observe September 1 as the Peace Day all over the state in a massive way.

The meeting extended full support to the struggle of the agricultural workers conducted by the Agricultural Labour Union, Vijayawada on the issue of a Central legislation, minimum wages and other demands and congratulated the industrial workers who at the call of CITU participated in the week-long agitational programmes of the agricultural workers from July 10 to 15. It further congratulated

the workers for extending support for the success of the state kishan conference which was held at Ongole in June. In Panyam, the cement factory workers gave active support to the Kishans in occupying the forest Bazar land and cultivating it.

The meeting also discussed the situation in the Jute Industry in the State developing as a result of refusal of the employers to extend the benefit of the W. Bengal settlement. The unions gave notice for indefinite strike from July 5. While settlements have been arrived at in the Chittavalasa and Eluru jute mills, the employers refused for any settlement in Nellimarla and Aruna jute mills where the strike has been launched on July 5 embracing about 8000 workers. The State Committee directed all the affiliated unions to demonstrate their solidarity in support of the striking workers.

The meeting also discussed the situation arising out of the growing incidence of lockouts, closures and retrenchments and appealed to all trade unions to intensify the united struggles demanding take over of all the closed factories.

KARNATAKA

BGML Workers on Struggle

The workers of Bharat Gold Mines are on struggle against a retrograde scheme called BGML Employees Death and Retirement Relief Fund floated by the management in connivance with the leader of the patronized union, C.M. Arumugam. In the previous scheme the workers' contribution was Rs. 2 per month, out of which Rs. 2500 were being paid to the deceased employee's family. An employee was being paid at the rate of Rs. 25 per year of service at his retirement, termination or resignation. While the CITU union was fighting for betterment of the scheme at par with the other Bangalore based public sector undertakings, where Rs. 5 per employee are deducted and Rs. 10,000 are being paid to the deceased employee's family, the new scheme floated by the management proposes to deduct Rs. 10 per employee and pay only Rs. 3500 to the deceased's family. The benefits allowed to the employees on retirement, termination or resignation in the other public sector undertakings are Rs.300 per year of service upto a maximum of Rs.6500.

The CITU union started campaign and agitation demanding withdrawal of the retrograde scheme and extending the benefits at par with the other public sector undertakings in Bangalore. The stooge union deployed anti-social hoodlums to intimidate the workers and distributed printed leaflets trying to induce the workers to accept the new scheme. But the workers squarely rebuffed the stooge union. Failing to impose the scheme on the workers themselves, the management has sought approval of the Chief Labour Commissioner (Central) for imposing it. Braving all gangster attacks the workers have stepped up the struggle for attuning the scheme at par with the other Bangalore based undertakings.

TAMILNADU

Statewide Industrial Strike

A state level convention called by CITU, AITUC and LPF (DMK) on August 5 at Madras decided to organise a statewide industrial strike on September 12 against the growing lockouts and retrenchments and against the anti-labour policies of the Congress(I) Government at the Centre and the AIADMK Government in the State.

2000 delegates from all the districts attended the Convention which was conducted by a presidium consisting of K. Ramani (CITU), K.T.K. Thangamani (AITUC) and C. Kuppuswamy (LPF). The resolution of the Convention gave details of the lockouts and closures in the state. It pointed out that the employers while closing down the parent units, have started new units in backward areas with much truncated number of workers under reduced wages in their hunt for super profits and the Government was extending all benefits to them, financial and otherwise, for this. 2000 hosiery workers are on strike since the last four months and the State Government has not taken any steps to pressurise the employers for a settlement. Minimum wages notified by the Government are not being implemented and the Government is sitting nonchalant over the issue. In all cases of closures, lockouts and retrenchments the Government has failed to take action despite long drawn struggles by the workers. In view of the above situation, the workers are left with no alternative but to heighten up their united actions to start with the one day's strike on September 12.

Among those who participated in the discussions were K. Ramani, V.P. Chintan, M. Nanjappan, K. Vaithinathan, C. Govindarajan, A. Soundarajan, (CITU), M. Sundaran (AITUC) and M.V. Narayan Swami (LPF). Summing up the discussions R. Umanath, General Secretary of the state CITU appealed to all sections of workers to make the strike successfully. He also appealed the 14 opposition parties to extend support to the strike. The opposition parties organised a day's picketing in the Central and State Government offices in the state on August 25 against the anti-people policies of the central and the state governments. Their demands included workers' demands also.

The convention also adopted a resolution expressing solidarity to the struggle of the workers of Anglo French Textile Mills, Pondicherry and demanded its nationalisation.

While the trade unions and political parties are preparing for struggle, the various other sections of the salaried employees like the teachers, Government employees, etc., as also the students and youth are also preparing for struggle in the state with their demands. Advocates in the state have also experienced attack by the police, courts were boycotted

for days and they picketed the government offices in South Arcot District and courted arrest.

Construction Workers' Conference

The Conference of Periyar District Building and Quarry Workers' Union was held at Erode on July 23, presided over by P. Marimuthu. 142 delegates attended the conference. Addressing the conference, Debanjan Chakraborty, Convenor, Coordination Committee of Indian Construction Workers' Unions explained the problems of the construction workers and the initiative taken by CITU to organise them on an all India level. Among others who greeted the conference were K. Vaithinathan, state CITU Secretary and T.P. Muthuswami, Secretary of the District CPI (M). A mass meeting held later was attended by a large number of workers.

The Coimbatore District Building and Quarry Workers' Union also held its conference on July 24, which was presided over by M. Govindan. Among those who addressed the conference were Debanjan Chakraborty, K. Ramani, President of the State CITU and M. Nanjappan, Secretary of Coimbatore District CITU. The conference was followed by a mass meeting addressed by the CITU leaders.

Canara Bank Employees Join BEFI

The Canara Bank employees held a convention at Salem on July 22. The convention focused at the collaborationist policy of the AIBEA leadership which has greatly hampered the interests of the employees. The convention unanimously adopted a resolution disaffiliating the union from AIBEA and deciding to join the Canara Bank Staff Union which is affiliated to the Bank Employees' Federation of India (BEFI). It called upon the employees to massively participate in the struggle programmes of BEFI against the computerisation and mechanisation.

GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING

The General Council meeting of CITU which was scheduled to be held at Jaipur from August 24 to 26 was postponed in view of the call of the opposition parties to observe August 25 as the Save Democracy Day and the decision of the National Campaign Committee to participate in the programme by holding strike actions, etc., to protest against the toppling of the N.T. Rama Rao ministry of Andhra Pradesh. Many comrades however had already reached Jaipur by the time and had to return. The inconvenience caused to them is being regretted.

The postponed General Council meeting will now be held at Jaipur from September 28 to 30. Despite inconveniences, all comrades are requested to attend the meeting.

Raptakos Brett Field Workers Court Arrest

ABOUT one hundred medical representatives of Raptakos Brett, the monopoly drug company along with an equal number of other members of the Federation of Medical Representatives' Associations of India (FMRAI), coming from all over the country, defied Section 144 and courted arrest before the Parliament on August 14 and 22 in two groups. The court arrest programmes were preceded by 24 hour dharnas at the Boat Club.

Since January last, the field workers are on a grim struggle against mass scale dismissals and in pursuance of their charter of demands placed by FMRAI, braving all threats and gangster attacks by the hoodlums deployed by the management. Despite repeated representations made to the Union Ministers of Labour and Chemicals & Fertilizers by FMRAI, the All India Chemical and Pharmaceutical Employees Federation and the CITU, the Government has taken no action to prevail upon the management for a negotiated settlement. Both the ministers have rather shamelessly expressed their helplessness in the matter. On the contrary, exposing the Government's subservience to the monopolists, the Ministry of Labour while replying to the question raised by Ajit Bag, M.P., CPI-M in the Consultative Committee meeting held on August 16, has made a statement virtually justifying the stand taken by the management which has thoroughly distorted the facts by cooked up alibies. Sukomal Sen, M.P.,

CPI-M also raised a Special Motion in the Rajya Sabha on August 14, on which the Government has not yet given any reply.

In this background FMRAI chalked out the present phase of movement of court arrest and a fortnight of blockade of all the depots of the company in the country.

The CITU has sent a telegramme to the management followed by letter demanding reinstatement of all the dismissed workers and settlement of the charter of demands with FMRAI. The National Campaign Committee also issued a statement supporting the struggle and demanding of the Government to intervene. Initiated by Samar Mukherjee, leader of CPI-M group in Lok Sabha and General Secretary of CITU, and Dipen Ghose, leader of the CPI-M group in Rajya Sabha, fortyeight Members of Lok Sabha and twelve Members of the Rajya Sabha signed a memorandum to the Prime Minister to intervene, which was forwarded by Samar Mukherjee to the Prime Minister. Various M.Ps and leaders of the Central Trade Unions addressed the field workers during the dharna and the court arrest programme. Among those who addressed were E. Balanandan, Sukomal Sen, Md. Ismail-M.Ps., CPI(M), Ram Avtar Sashtri-M.P., CPI, Kulandai Vellu-M.P., (DMK), Nrisingha Chakraborty, P.K. Ganguly-Secretaries, CITU, Y.D. Sharma-Secretary, AITUC, and O.P. Aghi-Secretary BMS.



Led by George Verghese, Secretary, F.M.R.A.I., the Raptakos field workers courting arrest on August 22.

CITU Condemns Banning of Strike in I.E.L.

NRISINGHA CHAKRABORTY, Secretary, Centre of Indian Trade Unions has issued the following statement on August 4 :

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions severely condemns the action of the U.P. Government in invoking ESMA and banning of strikes in a multinational concern Indian Explosives Limited (Fertiliser Division) Kanpur. This has been done at a stage when the workmen have been forced to take a strike decision as the management has refused to settle the charter of demands on wage increase during the past three years, the earlier settlement having expired in 1981. For three years the management has been insisting that a scab INTUC union which does not have even 5 per cent following should also be made a party to the wage settlement, when over 95 per cent workers follow the recognised I.E.L. Employees union. There is no parallel to such misuse of ESMA to foist a scab Union on the reluctant workmen, while saving a multinational concern from the wrath of the workers.

The CITU demands that the notification issued by the U.P. Government should be withdrawn forthwith and the collective bargaining rights of the workers should be restored. The CITU warns the Govt that unless they revise the policies, the working class will go into action facing all odds in order to prevent the process of imposing scab unions on workmen.

The CITU appeals to all Trade Union Centres and the democratic mass organisations to raise their powerful voice of protest against such blatant misuse of state power.

SWFI Office Bearers Meeting

AN extended meeting of the office bearers of the Steel Workers Federation of India held at the Federation Headquarters at Durgapur on 29th July 1984 decided to observe 1st September in all steel plants as Peace Day and condemn the war preparations by the U.S. imperialists all over the world. M.K. Pandhe, Vice President of the Federation presided over the meeting.

The meeting decided to hold solidarity demonstrations all over the country in support of the demands of the Coal workers and condemn the vindictive actions taken by the CIL management.

The meeting called upon the steel workers to observe 12th September as solidarity with Bengal Day and demonstrations should be organised in all the steel townships when the working class of West Bengal will be observing "Bengal Bundh" to protest

against the Central Government's political discriminations against the left front Govt. of West Bengal. (The bundh has been advanced to August 25—Ed.)

The meeting also discussed the issues relating to job evaluation manual, the deliberations of the meeting on SAIL production and productivity. It also discussed the situation in steel plants and the need to strengthen the organisation of the Federation.

The Alloy Steel Plant handed over a Cheque of Rs. 20,000 to the President of the meeting for strengthening the SWFI activities.

The meeting decided to organise the trade union class for cadres in Bhadravati Steel Plant in consultation with the CITU Centre and Karnataka State Committee of CITU.

The Chairman and Director (Personnel), SAIL were to visit Durgapur for tripartite discussion on 30th and 31st July 1984 to discuss the situation in Durgapur with CITU. They however could not come which led to the postponement of the meeting.

Decision regarding the next Conference of the SWFI would be taken in the Working Committee meeting of the Federation in September.

Govt. Ignores Workers Proposal on Chairman of NSC

THE meeting of the Board of Governors of the National Safety Council was held in New Delhi on 3rd August. This was the first meeting after the nomination of a new Chairman by the Government of India rejecting the proposal put forward by the trade unions that the President of the Council should be in rotation between the representatives of the workers and the management.

M.K. Pandhe Secretary CITU raised the point in the meeting that in order to establish confidence among the workers the Chairman should be alternatively from the side of the workers. He expressed his strong feelings that the Government of India ignored the unanimous proposal given by the workers' representatives in the last meeting. The representatives of AITUC and BMS fully supported the view. During the discussion some of the employers' representatives also agreed that the Chairman of the council should be alternatively from the workers' side. Chandrakant Garware, new Chairman of the council presided over the meeting.

The meeting reviewed the preparations for the International symposium on Environment and Industrial Safety to be held at New Delhi on 13-15 November 1984. Samar Mukherjee, General Secretary, CITU will address the symposium while M.K. Pandhe, Secretary, CITU will act as Rapporteur for the Technical Session on Contribution of Trade Union movement in tackling the Industrial Environment and Accident Problems.

Electricity Workers Observe Anti-repression Day

AT the call of the Electricity Employee's Federation of India, the electricity workers observed Anti-Repression Day all over the country on August 3. The decision was taken by the federation in its working committee meeting held at Delhi in July. The electricity workers were compelled to launch the agitational programme in view of the refusal of the State Electricity Boards to implement the agreements in force and on the contrary unleashing repression and penal measures on the workers.

The Kerala electricity workers had to go on an indefinite strike which continued for 35 days to get the agreement implemented by the Board. Even after making settlement the management has started resorting to punitive measures transferring large number of workers to distant places

and imposing higher workload. In Tamilnadu also, when the previous agreement is going to expire in November, the management instead of taking a move to start negotiations for a fresh agreement, has resorted to impose malafide transfers and attacking the trade union rights of the workers. In Bihar the workers are being charge-sheeted on the plea that they are doing political work. In Punjab, works of permanent nature are being handed over to the contractors and the work-charge employees are being dispensed with. Similar repressive offensives are being unleashed at Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Haryana and other places. The EEFI appealed to all the trade unions in electricity and the workers to join the programme in furtherance of the united struggles of the electricity workers. The programme was launched in the states by holding demonstrations, rallies, etc.

Steel & Coal Workers Contribute to CITU Solidarity Fund

At the call of CITU to collect solidarity fund, collections were made in the Steel and Coal

industry. The contribution made to the CITU Centre so far is as follows:

	Rs.
Steel	
Hindustan Steel Employees Union (Durgapur Steel Plant)	20,000-00
Hindustan Steel Employees Union (Alloy Steel Plant)	10,000-00
A.B.K. Metal and Engineering Workers Union (Burnpur)	2,000-00
Association of SAIL Employees, Calcutta	2,000-00
United Mine Mazdoor Union, Tensa (Kalta), Orissa	1,000-00
Total Steel	35,000-00
Coal	
Colliery Mazdoor Sabha of India	50,000-00
M.P. Koyla Shramik Sangh	5,000-00
Coal Workers Union, Calcutta	1,000-00
Total Coal	56,000-00

The unions have also contributed to the CITU State Committees and to the Steel Workers Federation of India and All India Coal Workers Federation.

Consumer Price Index Numbers

Base 1960

State/Centre	Mar. 1984	Apr. 1984	May 1984	Bangalore	632	625	626	Coonoor	640	633	628
Andhra Pradesh				Chikamagalur	592	594	590	Madurai	612	601	596
Gudur	498	498	497	Kolar G.F.	559	571	590	U.P.			
Guntur	581	585	598	Kerala				Kanpur	532	515	517
Hyderabad	554	548	561	Alleppey	626	636	636	Saharanpur	557	545	550
Assam				Alwaye	612	610	619	Varanasi	630	634	627
Digboi	558	568	587	Mundakayam	580	577	579	West Bengal			
Doom Dooma	453	453	478	Madhya Pradesh				Asansol	540	541	541
Labac	449	459	467	Balaghat	571	574	585	Calcutta	521	536	539
Mariani	486	486	494	Bhopal	599	596	592	Darjeeling	460	452	457
Rangapara	470	475	479	Gwalior	557	554	561	Howrah	498	496	498
Bihar				Indore	591	596	600	Jalpaiguri	441	441	445
Jamshedpur	509	511	509	Maharashtra				Raniganj	1948	500	500
Jharia	516	503	498	Bombay	579	586	595	Delhi Territory	562	570	575
Kodarma	580	582	579	Nagpur	569	570	584	Other Centres			
Monghyr	562	551	537	Sholapur	690	588	598	Berhampur ('49)	753	750	773
Noamundi	522	524	524	Orissa				Cuttack ('49)	707	707	716
Gujarat				Barbil	503	515	517	Jabalpur ('49)	738	746	762
Ahmedabad	547	551	557	Sambalpur	590	593	603	Beawar ('51-52)	635	627	625
Bhavanagar	560	562	554	Punjab				Tripura ('61)	508	529	548
Haryana				Amritsar	555	554	551	H.P. ('65)	402	406	408
Yamunanagar	557	559	561	Rajasthan				Goa ('66)	411	412	416
J. & K.				Ajmer	549	542	544	Bhilai ('66)	368	368	373
Srinagar	601	626	636	Jaipur	563	556	567	Bhilwara ('66)	335	328	327
Karnataka				Tamil Nadu				Chhindawara ('66)	300	301	300
Ammathi	580	573	587	Madras	556	556	550	Kothagudem ('66)	350	351	357
				Coimbatore	606	605	615	Rourkela ('66)	365	367	372
								All India ('60)	558	559	562

(Figure in bracket indicate base year)

Sale of Public Undertaking to Private Hands

OVER 100 workers of Hansi Spinning Mill and Haryana Concast Ltd, Hisar, Haryana courted arrest on 23rd August, 1984 in protest against the reported attempt by the Bhajan Lal Government to sell away seven Public sector units including these two to Private sector.

In a memorandum addressed to the Prime Minister, the Hisar District Committee of CITU has stated that the Haryana Concast limited, is still a profit-making concern and as such its sale to private sector represents a major change in the policy decision of Government, without any announcement.

As far as Hansi Spinning Mill is concerned it is stated that this mill had been making profit till 1980-81, but from 1981-82, this company is incurring loss due to corruption and mismanagement of company finances. They have cited payment of spurious bills of a non-existent company named Mohan Universals, Delhi. There are other items about which the union possesses photostat copies of documents which will show the tampering of records and other corrupt practices.

The Hisar District Committee of CITU has demanded of the Government of India to stop the sale of these two units because they are viable concerns and their sale to Private sector would lead to exploitation of 6500 workers who are employed in these two undertakings.

The CITU has demanded that an enquiry be conducted through C.B.I. and other agencies to pinpoint mismanagement of finances and steps be taken to bring the offenders to book, besides stopping the sale. As both the mills have been closed to facilitate this fraud on public exchequer, the CITU also demanded that the factories be re-opened and run with the cooperation of the workers.

The workers courted arrest also demanding take over of the Hissar Textile Mills which has now been closed down from June 3, 1984, throwing about 5000 workers out of employment. The workers were under a grim struggle against the highhandedness of the management of this mill for more than last two years against lock out, retrenchments and violation of agreements. The Congress(I) State Government as well as the Centre while showering all the assurances to the workers, actually openly supported the management to carry on its rabid anti-labour activities and unleash repression on the workers with the help of the police.

The workers held a rally at the Boat Club before courting arrest. The rally was addressed by P.K. Ganguly, Secretary, CITU. Congratulating the

workers for their valiant struggle against this bid of the Government, he denounced the Government for embarking upon such anti-social and anti-national activities. He said, it is a Government of the monopolists, by the monopolists and for the monopolists and surrendering before the diktats of the IMF and the World Bank to boost up the private sector. He called upon the workers to further intensify the united struggles against the anti-people and anti-working class policies of the Government.

Samar Mukherjee, M.P., General Secretary, CITU, has taken up the matter with the Prime Minister.

CITU Supports Junior Doctors' Struggle

B. T. Ranadive, President and Samar Mukherjee, M.P., General Secretary, Centre of Indian Trade Unions have issued the following statement on July 26:

The CITU denounces the arbitrary termination of the services of 6500 junior doctors who are on strike from July 10, protesting against the sanction of three private capitation fee medical colleges by Maharashtra Govt. as such colleges are bound to lower down the standards of medical education. The junior doctors are fighting for a just cause upholding the dignity of a noble profession which deals with the lives of the people. As more than 20,000 qualified doctors are unemployed, the struggle acquires further importance.

The CITU strongly criticises the Prime Minister and the Health Minister, who despite their public opposition to capitation fee medical college have not taken any step against the Maharashtra Govt. for its violation of the accepted principle.

The CITU congratulates all the doctors who under the leadership of All India Junior Doctors' Association have observed one day token strike on July 24, in a solidarity action with the struggling junior doctors of Maharashtra.

The CITU while extending full support to the junior doctors of Maharashtra who are in this struggle, demands immediate intervention by the Central Govt. for settlement of the issue. The CITU directs its Maharashtra State Committee and all affiliated unions in Maharashtra to extend their solidarity to the just struggle of the junior doctors. It also appeals to the democratic mass organisations and the people of Maharashtra to raise their powerful voice in support of the struggle.

CITU Delegation Visits China

THE twenty four day visit of the seven member delegation of the CITU to China resulted in further strengthening of the fraternal bonds between the CITU and the All China Federation of Trade Unions. The fruitful discussions between the representatives of both the organisations have led to a better understanding of the situation in the two great Asian countries.

This was the third CITU delegation visiting China. The first visited in 1982 followed by another in 1983. The visit of these 2 delegations led to development of friendship between the CITU and the ACFTU.

The recent CITU delegation consisted of Comrades M.K. Pandhe Secretary CITU, Kamal Sarkar M.L.A., Secretary-CITU, M.M. Lawrence M.P., Secretary-CITU, Md. Amin, General Secretary, Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union, K.K. Roy Ganguly, General Secretary Water Transport Workers Federation of India, Asit Dutta, Goalpara Jilla Chah Mazdoor Union, Assam and Lalaji-Babu, Plantation Workers Leader from Punalur (Kerala.)

The delegation reached Beijing on 4th July and was warmly received by the ACFTU representations led by Com. Wang Zun, a member of the ACFTU secretariat.

On the next day, the delegation had a wide ranging talks with Com. Luo Gan, Vice-Chairman — ACFTU and other leading comrades of the ACFTU. The talks included subjects such as political and economic situation in China, the main talks of the TUs in China, international situations and attitude towards various issues etc.

After the cultural revolution and the correction of the left sectarian mistakes the functioning of the trade unions was revived in China. To-day the ACFTU has a total membership of 77 million in 4 lakh 50 thousand basic units. It has 3 lakh 20 thousand full time cadres spread over in branches in 29 provinces and 15 industry-wise T.U. Federations.

When the real wages of the Indian workers have been falling every year the workers in China are experiencing increase in the real earnings of workers. During 1983 the real earnings of workers increased by 6.4 per cent taking the average annual earnings to 529 yuans. The average annual earnings of peasants during 1983 were 309 yuans. Though the earnings in the rural area were much lower than the industrial area the increase during the year was as high as 14.7 per cent.

This remarkable advance in socialist China was possible because the economy in China knows no crisis with systematic advance ensured in all directions. Though on the eve of Chinese evolution Indian economy was ahead of China, to-day China

has surpassed India manyfold in all the major sectors. In case of foodgrain production, while India produces 150 million tons last year, China produced 387 million tons. The production of steel in China reached 39 million tons, while India stood at only 7.5 million tons. China produced 700 million tons of Coal, while India producing only 145 million tons. China produced over 110 million tons of Oil, when India is veering round only 25 million tons. Over and above this the prices in China are stable ensuring continuous upward revision in the standard of living of the masses.

During the cultural revolution the wages were uniform irrespective of performance which, according to the Chinese experience, was disincentive to higher production. As a result, the state had to subsidise losses of several units and local initiative in organising production was lacking. The earlier policy was characterised by the Chinese leadership as "Eating out of a big pot". The system has now been changed. There is now a basic wages which is paid to all the workers irrespective of performance. There is also another wage component of bonus linked with individual performance. The minimum basic wages in China are about 40-50 yuan while the maximum are about 70-100 yuan depending on the type of the undertakings. If bonuses are added to their the total wages roughly work out to twice the rise of the basic wage.

Steps have been taken to introduce democratic management in the State owned undertakings. In about half of the basic units workers' Congresses have been set up through election. These congresses meet once or twice a year in which the director and senior officials of the factory also participate. They review the work of the factories and workers give their criticism and suggestions for improvement. In some of the units the directors are elected by the workers but this is only on an experimental basis.

The CITU delegation had also a detailed discussion with Com. Ni Zhifu Chairman of ACFTU, who expressed satisfaction at the growing improvement of the fraternal relations between the CITU and ACFTU. The CITU delegation expressed its confidence that the fraternal bonds of friendship would continue to grow in days to come. Com. Ni Zhifu gave a banquet in honour of the CITU delegation.

Apart from Beijing the CITU delegation visited Shijiazhuang, Xian, Yenan, Nanjing, Wuxi, Shanghai and Hangzhou.

In Shijiazhuang, the delegation paid a visit to Dr. Norman Bethune — Memorial Hospital and Dr. Kotnis Memorial Hall. Both these institutes symbolise the proletarian internationalism shown by these two doctors. The heroic story of their life was well presented and the memorial has been built in a fitting manner. The film of the life of Dr. Kotnis

was indeed moving and throws good light on the life of this great son of India. The delegation placed wreaths on the Memorial stones of Dr. Norman Bethune and Dr. D. Kotnis.

In Xian, the historic capital in old China, the delegation visited the local headquarter of the 8th Route Army which was also known as "gate of Yen-an" from 1937 to 1946. It was openly functioning in Kuomintang controlled area for purchasing and transporting equipment to Yen-an. Many leading Chinese Comrades stayed in this office.

The visit of the delegation to Yen-an was very much educative. Apart from visiting the caves of senior Chinese leaders in Phoenix Hill, Qing Liang Mountain and the Date Garden as well as places where party conferences were held, the delegation could see the exhibition on the activities of the Communist Party of China in the war of resistance against Japan and in the final struggle to defeat Chiang Kai Sheik regime. An interesting documentary on the life of the revolutionaries in the liberated zones was also shown to the delegation. The delegation could not visit Nanjiwan due to heavy rains. Com. Chen Yu, former Vice-Chairman — ACFTU and leader of the delegation to fifth Conference of CITU was visiting Yen-an after 40 years along with the CITU delegation. So was also the case of Com. Hu-Gang, Member of the ACFTU Committee on International activities who was with the delegation throughout its stay in China.

Coming back to Xian the delegation visited the place of historic Xian Incident where two Generals of the Kuomintang army arrested Ching Kai Sheik in 1936 for his opposition to join hands with the Communists. He was released at the intervention of Com. Zhou En Lai. The Museum of the Terra Cotta Warriors and horses in Ling Tung country has meticulously preserved the historic relics of the Ching Dynasty over 2000 years ago. The small loose pagoda constructed after the return from India of Hueng Tsang the well known traveller many centuries ago has carefully preserved several Buddhist scriptures.

During their visit to the Shenyang Colour T.V. tube factory having Japanese technical collaboration the delegation could see how the Chinese workers assimilated modern technology within two years. This highly automatised factory has been producing one million colour picture tubes per year with only 100 workers and 91.3 per cent of quality production has been attained in a short time.

In Nanjing the delegation visited Mei Yuan village where Com. Zhou En Lai and other leaders of the Chinese communist party were staying in 1946 during their talks with Chiang Kai Sheik. It also visited Dr. Sun Yat Sen Memorial and a memorial to revolutionary Martyrs.

Wuxi is a beautiful city on the ancient grand canal but its industrial development is fast in the

recent past. The delegation visited workers housing colony and saw remarkable advance made in the construction of housing facilities for workers. Unlike India, the workers and officers stay in the same blocks and the allotment is done on the basis of size of the family. On an average a worker has to pay only 12 yuan for house rent, electricity, water charges and gas connection. The delegation visited a family with 3 persons having 190 yuan as monthly income. The family was spending about 45 yuan on food per month, clothing 12 yuan per month, while the total expenses do not exceed 150 yuan indicating net saving of 40 yuan per month. We were informed that the total bank deposit by workers and peasants in China have already exceeded 90 Billion Yuan. Over 60 per cent of the urban and 30 per cent of the rural families have TV sets. The delegation visited the rural household at Chen Gou village township and saw how the material well being of the rural masses was advancing very fast though at the present it is lower than the urban areas.

The workers sanatorium by the side of Taifu lake with 400 beds run by the trade unions of Jiangsu Province was very well organised though the demand for beds is much more. Only one third of the expenses, are paid by the worker. To look after 400 patients the sanatorium has 40 doctors, 60 nurses and 100 non-medical workers.

In Shanghai the delegation visited the place where the CPC was founded. The cultural palace run by the Trade Unions has more than 10,000 visitors every day which has multifarious activities to suit to interest of workers. A special cultural programme was organised for the Indian delegation by the workers visiting the palace.

The visit to Shanghai docks (No. 9) was very informative. Apart from the steps to develop the capacity of the docks the delegation could see the enormous efforts made by the authorities to look after the health and welfare of the workers. The delegation visited the house of a dock workers where both husband, wife were working as truck drivers. The wife was elected on the union Committee while the husband was an ordinary member. The delegation had a long discussion with the family to know their living conditions.

In Hangzhou the delegation visited a tea brigade and Rice brigade to see the new changes made in the commune system. Here family was given specific responsibility and people were seen engaged in sideline operations such as looking after pigs, poultry, fisheries etc. Since opening of the free market we saw flooding of the products and prices were reasonable. Delegation stopped on the way to check the prices of vegetables, fruits etc. The delegation also visited Zhejiang Jute Mills and Silk Textile Factory and observed the working and living conditions of the workers.

After returning to Beijing on 23rd July the delegation had a long discussion with Com. Wang Chong,

Vice-Chairman ACFTU and other senior leaders. The delegation asked some clarifications regarding the new open door policy, working of the new industrial relation system, differentials in earnings etc. It also gave an account of the Indian situation and how the CITU was fighting for unity of the working class in the struggle against the capitalist onslaughts. During the meeting there was also discussion on further strengthening of the mutual relationship between the CITU and the ACFTU.

The CITU delegation was received by Com. Hao Jianxiu, Alternative Member of the secretariat of the central committee of the CPC in the great Hall of the people. There was exchange of views on several problems of mutual interests. Senior leaders of the ACFTU were present on the occasion.

Com. Zhang Xiangshan, Adviser to the International Department of the Central Committee of the CPC had a cordial discussion with the delegation covering several topics of national and international importance. Senior officers of the International Department were also present during the talks.

During their stay in Beijing the delegation saw the history of revolutionary movement, underground shelter to house the entire population of the city of Beijing in the event of war as well as the Great Wall of China. The delegation visited Mausoleum of Com. Mao Ze Dong and paid their homage to his memory.

The delegation left Beijing on 27th July. Com. Wang Jiachong, Vice-Chairman, ACFTU and other leaders saw the delegation off at the airport.

Throughout the journey the delegation was warmly received by comrades and senior leaders of the provincial T.V. Councils who had friendly discussions with the delegation.

The delegation experienced everywhere deep warmth of friendship among the working class and people of China towards the working class and the people of India. The visit of the CITU delegations has considerably strengthened the fraternal relations between the two T. U. organisations of two great Asian neighbours.



Indian delegates with a Chinese worker's family

(from page 24)

Australia

A great long protest march against youth unemployment concluded in Australia in July. The march by the young unemployed Australians started on April 6 from New Castle, an industrial centre of

the country and went past through Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth and Broken Hill, covering the places in a period of three months. Unemployment in Australia went up from 4.2 per cent in 1973 to 12 per cent in 1981. The demonstrators were given all kinds of assistance by the local unions all the way.

International Struggles

Great Britain

The British Coal Miners' strike which entered the sixth month on August 13, saw violent clashes between the police and the coal workers in several northern England mines on August 22. The clashes occurred when the police tried to force the organised strike breakers to get through the picket lines to work. Hundreds of the striking coal miners were injured, but not a single strike breaker could get into. The National Coal Board which engaged the strike breakers said that it was a "near riot" at Bently mine near Doncaster in Yorkshire. Strikers built up barricades across the entrances to all the mines in the area.

Canada

"Jobs and not Bombs" and "No to nuclear weapons" were the slogans that greeted the delegates to the ruling Liberal Party's Congress which met at Ottawa recently. The demonstration for right to work and against spending on arms race was organised by the Ottawa District Unemployed Peoples Committee. The demonstrators protested against the high rate of unemployment and demanded of the Govt. to create new jobs instead of spending on arms race. The unemployed workforce in Canada increased from 10.1 per cent in 1973 to 15.3 per cent at the end of 1981. While the male unemployment rate rose from 5.8 per cent to 6.9 per cent, women's unemployment rose from 5.1 per cent to 8.4 per cent during the period.

El Salvador

The unitary body of the Salvadorean trade union movement, viz MUSYGES has called upon the Govt. of Napoleon Duarte to end the state of siege and grant across the board wage rises. It has further demanded release of all political prisoners and restoration of trade union freedom.

U.S.A.

The American administration has been attempting for years at ideological warfare against the socialist countries through the trade unions. A recent news item from New York Post states that Irwin Brown, the head of the foreign operations department of AFL-CIO has received 11 million dollars for this as the first instalment in endowment funds from the U.S. Congress. Walesa and the remnants of the illegal solidarity underground movement are at the top of the list for immediate assistance, which includes transistor radios, printing presses and other tools required for "underground struggle."

While carrying forward this ideological warfare against the socialist countries, monopolist offensives on the workers have been stepped up on the other

hand. The National Labour Relations Board has taken a decision which contrary to the agreements signed with the trade unions has given the right to the monopoly employers to close down plants and enterprises and transfer production to places where unorganised labour is available. Several car and steel corporations have already given the workers the choice — either to agree to considerable wage cuts and renounce the benefits they have won through long and hard struggles, or the plants will be closed down. The workers of course have decided to reject both and step up the class struggle.

South Africa

About 3500 workers in a Transvaal coal mine went on strike on July 4 demanding higher wages. Similar strike actions took place in other African mines the previous week. The workers rejected the proposal for 14 per cent wage rise by the employer's Association and demanded a 25 per cent increase. Violent repression was let loose on the workers killing one miner at Natal. The management of the Transvaal mines have replaced the black workers with white volunteers to maintain the production.

Israel

The strike movement of the Israeli workers is gaining momentum and affecting various economic sectors of the country. Strikes have been launched in the energy sector, postal service and in other essential and public services. Solidarity strikes in support of the movements have also been launched by employees of other Govt. institutions, firearm and foreign office employees. The recent strike of the radio and television workers and the 70,000 municipal workers totally paralysed all functions. The workers are demanding increase in wages in view of the unprecedented price rise and inflation which has now reached 400 per cent in one year. Side by side they demonstrated their growing dissatisfaction with the rising military expenses imposed by the Zionist forces which have resulted in serious aggravation of economic and social crisis.

Japan

Demonstrations of working women organised by the United Front Council of Trade Unions took place before the public establishments recently. The participants carried posters reading, "We demand equality at work and in social life". They attacked the policy of discrimination adopted by the Govt. and the employers against the women workers which is being openly carried out. They demanded for adequate measures by the Govt. for improving their working conditions, more employment opportunities and stop to discriminations.

(Contd. on page 23)