



THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

Forward to Preparation for One Day Strike in All Industries

—**B.T. Ranadive**

The National Convention of Central Trade Union organisations and Federations which met in Bombay on June 4 should prove an outstanding event in the struggle of the trade unions, if all faithfully carry out its call for State-Conventions and one-day all-India strike. The materialisation of one day all-India strike will be a historic step forward of the trade union movement, an announcement of unprecedented labour unity, and will give a new dimension to the widespread democratic protest movement against the anti-people policies of the Congress (I) Government.

The CITU, its state Committees and its affiliated unions should see to it that the Statewide Conventions become centres of mass mobilisation and contribute effectively to the preparation of one day India-wide action.

The Convention while exposing the anti-Labour policies of the Congress (I) Government spoke on behalf of the entire people on many issues.

Important Development

It demanded remunerative price for the peasants and higher wage to agricultural workers. This was perhaps the first time that an all-India Trade union gathering representing diverse political and ideological currents raised its voice in defence of the peasant and agricultural workers—the majority of the Indian people. Besides the CITU participants there are very few organisations who declare in their constitution support for the peasantry and need of worker-peasant alliance. In the Convention however speaker after speaker supported the peasant and the agricultural worker and expressed keen desire that the working class should take initiative in organising agricultural workers.

This was of course the effect of the valiant struggle of the peasantry over the last year.

This is a very important development and if carried forward it will add immensely to the strength of the democratic and anti-vested interests forces in the country.

Against Repressive Policies

The Convention once again spoke on behalf of the entire people when it raised its voice against price-rise and demanded "sale of all essential commodities such as food-grains, edible oil, cloth, sugar, etc. at subsidised prices, through a network of shops in the public distribution system under the control and supervision of popular committees."

The Convention flayed the Congress(I) Government for its repressive policy, for going back on earlier agreements, for its wages and incomes policy, for extortionate taxation measures, for callous attitudes towards contract and migrant workers, for attack on the rights of collective bargaining, favouritism towards the INTUC and demanded repeal of National Security Act, full guarantee of trade union rights, recognition of trade unions through secret ballot, ban on retrenchment and closure, introduction of unemployment allowance, bonus for all and need based minimum wage.

There is no doubt that the CITU unions will mobilise the working class on these demands during the preparation for State Conventions.

Intensified Attacks

The problems facing the trade union movement—the attacks on rights, living standards—are part of the struggle of the Indian people against the Congress(I) rule and its growingly authoritarian manifestation. They cannot be divorced from the political situation existing in the country.

[On Page Six]

A Memorable Event in United TU Movement

The united trade union movement in India has witnessed an event of immense importance when on June 4 a National Trade Union Convention against Price-Rise and against Anti-Labour Policies of the Government was organised at Bombay by eight central trade unions and forty industrial federations which gave a clarion call to prepare for a one day all India strike in support of the demands raised in the convention. The Congress (I) unions did not participate in the convention.

More than 3,000 delegates representing over a crore of workers and employees from all sections of the working class, from public and private sector and from salaried employees, packed the Shanmukhananda Hall beyond its capacity and endorsed the decisions of the National Convention with a firm and determined pledge to carry out them so that the Congress(I) government is forced to concede the demands.

Significance

The significance of the convention was that a beginning has been made to polarise the entire working force, including a section of the INTUC, on the basis of the alternative demands as against the reactionary authoritarian policies of the Congress(I) government. Crossing the limitations of uniting merely on some specific demands, the working class converged to fight against the basic issues: the anti-labour policies of the Government of India and galloping price rise, a question of paramount importance which

hit the toiling people at the core making it difficult to make both their ends meet. Another significance was that the working class whole-heartedly supported the demands of the peasantry in unqualified terms.

Thus, taking the toiling people along with it and coming out from the grooves of isolated industry-wise or employer-wise or State or region wise struggles, the working class in India, in alliance with the peasantry, set the Programme of united-struggles to effectively resist the onslaughts of the authoritarian Government.

The convention premises was named Bal Dandavate Nagar in memory of the departed President of HMS.

A Presidium consisting of Samar Mukherjee (CITU), A.B. Bardhan (AITUC), N. C. Ganguly (BMS), D. D. Vashist (HMS), Srikanta Nair (UTUC), J. S. Dara (INTUC), Gyan Singh (UTUC LS) and S.D. Paliwal (TUCC) conducted the deliberations of the convention.

The Worst Offender

After adoption of the resolutions on martyrs and on Comrade Bal Dandavate, P. Ramamurti, General Secretary of the CITU, moved the main resolution. He explained how the government itself was the worst offender for the steep rise in prices by the pro-monopolists, pro-feudal and pro-multinational policies. The deficit financing, indirect taxes like excise duties, the phenomenon of black money and inflation have been the constant

armaments to increase the prices and fleece the people. To safeguard the interests of the monopolists and the feudals, the government had now armed itself with National Security Act—the new nomenclature of MISA.

The CITU General Secretary elaborated that the government had started the attack all round, striking at the roots of right to collective bargaining, freedom of association, right to strike, job security and all that matters to the working people as a whole. P. Ramamurti pointed out that the recent attack on the LIC workers, the workers of the public sector undertakings, the railway workers, government employees, indiscriminate firings, suppression of the peasants' movements, subjugation of the judiciary and intolerance to the left and democratic governments in country, all these point out to one fact—the rapid recurrence of authoritarianism in the country. Ramamurti called upon the delegates that the programme chalked out by the convention must be explained and popularised amongst all sections of the working class irrespective of their affiliations so that they can be implemented effectively.

Phased Programme

The programme called for a phase-wise long drawn struggles which include State/regionwise conventions within three months and setting up of State Committees with the units of the central trade unions and other organisations in line with the National Campaign Committee, observance of one pro-

test/demand day, march to Parliament in the winter session and one day's strike in all industries in all sectors. The National Campaign Committee will meet on July 24 in New Delhi to discuss further steps.

Shanti Patel (HMS), Indrajit Gupta (AITUC), Dattopant Thengadi (BMS), Jatin Chakrabarty (UTUC), JS Dara (INTUC), Pritish Chanda (UTUC-LS) and Amar Chakravarty (TUCC) supported the resolution.

Among those who spoke from central trade unions and industrial federations were Samar Mukherjee (CITU), Ram Naresh Singh (BMS), Samant Rai (HMS), KL Mahendra (AITUC), SK Vyas (Central Government Employees), Sukomal Sen (State Government Employees), Saroj Choudhury (LIC), Samuel Augustine (Defence), MK Pandhe (Coal), MM Lawrence (Water Transport), RK Garg (General Insurance), Madan Phadnis (Newspaper Employees), JP Choubey (Railway), SK Dhar (Loco Running Staff), KK Thekedath (University and College Teachers), Md. Ismail (Road Transport), SW Dhabe (Agricultural Labour), KA Rajan (Electricity), Naresh Das (Bank), and Dhani Ram Khosla (Plantation). In all 55 persons spoke in the convention.

Leaders of the Bangalore based public sector units, Michael Fernandes, MS Krishanan (Joint Action Front), S Suryanarayana Rao (CITU) and Prabhakar Ghate (BMS) welcomed the convention and spoke on the central government going back on its commitment.

P Ramamurti, while replying to the discussion, welcomed some of the suggestions made by the speakers. A well attended public meeting was held at Shivaji Park which was addressed among others by P Ramamurti, Indrajit

Gupta, D Vashist, D Thengadi and Jatin Chakravarty.

The full text of the resolution passed in the convention is being reproduced below.

RESOLUTION

This National Convention of Central Trade Unions and Industrial Federations, is meeting at a time when the working class throughout the country is facing all-round attacks on its wages and other emoluments, and on the trade union and democratic rights secured through decades of bitter struggles and heroic sacrifices.

Galloping Prices

The entire working people are groaning under the ever-mounting weight of rising prices and ever increasing unemployment.

The Government led by Smt. Indira Gandhi has miserably failed to hold the price line despite all the tall promises made by her during the 1980 Lok Sabha elections. The wholesale price index has shown a rise of nearly 17 Percent between March 1980 and March 1981, and the same trend still continues and even more so in the case of retail prices. The daily necessities of life like sugar, pulses, edible oils, cereals, cloth kerosene, domestic coal, soap etc. are going beyond the reach of the common man.

Galloping prices are further aggravated by the Government's own policies of putting more and more burdens on the working people while appeasing the monied and propertied classes.

The biggest component of the Government's indirect taxes is the excise duties on essential commodities. Deficit financing is mounting from year to year, Government controlled Prices of articles like coal, steel petrol, railway fares and postal

charges are Periodically raised in the name of getting resources. Industrialists, speculators and smugglers are allowed to amass huge amounts of black money which are utilised to manipulate the market through hoarding and profiteering. The latest concession to these anti-social forces is the scheme of bearer bonds.

Instead of taking steps to reduce economic disparities by attacking the profits and privileges of the monopolists and other exploiting strata, the Government is deliberately permitting still further concentration of economic power to take place.

Erosion in Real Wages

In sharp contrast to this, the Government is aggressive, advocating a "rationalisation" of the wage structure, meaning thereby a reduction of higher wages to a lower standard. While there is no action taken to raise the miserably low wages prevalent in many sectors particularly in the agricultural and "Minimum Wage" categories, the worker in organised industry is being threatened that unless he accepts increased work-load he should not claim higher wages. And in the name of controlling "inflation", the workers' emoluments like D.A. and bonus are sought to be scaled down or frozen.

The Bureau of Public Enterprises under the Ministry of Finance has issued directive to the Public sector managements virtually imposing a wage freeze on the workers. Naturally, the private sector employers are not lagging behind. They are being assisted by the fraudulent cost of living index figures compiled by the Government itself in open defiance of the Rtah Committee's recommendations. Every rise in prices is thereby

leading to further erosion in the workers real wages.

Desperate Attacks

The condition of contractors' and migrant labour, of working women and child labour beggars description.

The struggles of peasants for remunerative prices and of agricultural workers for higher wages are sought to be ruthlessly suppressed.

Faced with the rapidly spreading discontent of the toiling people and the rising tide of their resistance, the Government and employers have launched desperate attacks on the trade union rights and struggles.

The National Security Act is being shamelessly utilised against trade unionists and striking workers, despite all assurances to the contrary. In State after State ruled by the Congress (I), new laws are being enacted seeking to prohibit strikes and declare them as 'illegal'. Summary dismissals, charge-sheets, suspensions, transfers, compulsory retirements and even extermnants of trade union activists have become the order of the day.

Hundreds are arrested and implicated in concocted criminal cases, hired goondas of the employers have been physically assaulting, injuring and even killing trade union workers and even raping women-folk of striking workers, to all of which the the police turns a blind eye.

Firing and lathi-charges are daily occurrences, from which even Government employees and public sector workers have not been spared.

Events prove unmistakeably that the Government had decided to throw to winds the sanctity of agreements and collective bargaining, and to impose on the employees wages and conditions it arbitrarily decides. Such is the

lesson of the L.I.C. and G.I.C. and of the prolonged struggle of the workers of the Bangalore-based public sector industries in the course of which the Government sought to defy vne Supreme Court's directives and did not hesitate to impose a lock-out in 4 public sector units in order to crush the workers' rights.

Fovour to Congress(I) Unions

The question of recognition of trade unions is purposefully kept pending by the Government although all trade unions other than the officially patronised INTUC of Congress(I) have demanded that it should be determined by the democratic process of secret ballot of the workers.

Basic ILO conventions like "Freedom of Association" and "Right of Collective Bargaining" and others are not yet ratified.

The Supreme Court's decision on widening the definition of "Industry" to include Educational and Hospital employees is not yet implemented. On the contrary, attempts are being made to further restrict the rights of University and College teachers.

The Government's labour relations policy is heavily loaded in favour of Congress-I led unions, even where these are patently not representative of the majority of workers. Official consultation with other trade unions is fast becoming nothing but a "Window-dressing", as seen, for example, in the case of selection of workers' delegates to the ILO.

Paramount Importance

This Convention further expresses its grave concern at the attempts being made by the reactionary vested interest to divide the workers on the basis

of castes, religion, language, regionalism etc. and to instigate fratricidal strife in the ranks of the working class, so that its unity is disrupted and weakened and its attention is diverted into wrong channels. It is, therefore, imperative that the trade unions should sharpen their vigilance and activity, and fight consciously for defending and strengthening the unity of the working class without which the Trade Union movement cannot survive.

This Convention warmly greets the lakhs of workers and employees, in public and private sectors alike, who have conducted heroic struggles during the past year to protect their working and living conditions and to safeguard their trade union and democratic rights.

Experience shows that isolated struggles of different sections of workers are frequently suppressed by the collusion of the Government, employers and state machinery. It is, therefore, of paramount importance that the working class prepares itself for a country-wide united movement against the price rise and to reverse the Government's anti-labour policies. The concerted might of the organised working class must seriously take-up the challenge posed by the Government's attempts to wipe out all past gains of the labour movement.

Demands

This convention calls upon the entire working class of India to rally together in the fight against the price rise and press for the following demands :

1. Sale of all essential commodities such as foodgrains, edible oil, cloth, sugar etc. at subsidised prices through a network of shops in public distribution system under the control and supervision of popular committees by ensur-

ing adequate and uninterrupted supply of these commodities.

2. Remunerative price to the peasants and higher wage to agricultural workers.
3. Stringent measures against black-marketers, hoarders, smugglers, speculators and officials protecting them. In this anti-price rise movement, the trade unions should enlist the active support and cooperation of other sections of the consumers and toilers.

This Convention further calls upon the working class to unite for the following economic demands and for trade union rights:-

1. Need-based minimum wages on the basis of norms laid down by the 15th Indian Labour Conference;
2. Full neutralisation of the rise in cost of living. Removal of ceiling of Rs. 1.30 per point rise in price index (1960) base arbitrarily fixed by the B.P.E.;
3. Amendment of Payment of Bonus Act providing Bonus for all workers without ceiling and pre-condition;
4. Ban on retrenchment and closures; Introduction of unemployment allowance to the unemployed;
5. Withdrawal of all victimisation measures against workers and T.U. activists;
6. Rectification of fraudulent cost of living indices;
7. Recognition of T.U.s. through secret ballot;
8. Full guarantee of collective bargaining and T.U. rights without any discrimination;
9. Repeal of National Security Act and other repressive measures.

Programme

The Convention therefore calls for holding similar state-

wise and regionwise conventions all over the country in the next 3 months so that the main issue focussed in this Convention are popularised among all sections of the working class. For this purpose similar statewide campaigning committees should be set up.

This Convention, taking into account the need for a prolonged and sustained movement with an ever-widening mass base, resolves that the state wide conventions should be held with the clear perspective of further follow up which would include:

1. Observance of an all India protest and Demands Day;
2. A massive workers' March to Parliament; and

Bihar Glass and Potteries Workers Conference

THE third conference of Bihar Glass and Potteries Kamgar Union (CITU) was held at Madhupur on May 9 and 10. Abdul Hakim inaugurated the conference.

Noor Imam, General Secretary of the Union, presented his report. About 10 delegates participated in the discussion on the report.

Through a resolution the conference demanded immediate restructuring of the wages of glass and potteries workers and formation of minimum wage committee and representation to the CITU on it. Another resolution demanded distribution of essential commodities through fair price shops at subsidised rates. Another resolution condemned the repressive policy of the government and condemned the attacks on the loco running staff, insurance employees, etc.

The conference elected a new 25-member executive committee with Chandi Prasad as Presi-

3. A country-wide, one day Token Strike in all sectors of industry.

The Convention authorises the National Campaign Committee to fix suitable dates and time schedules for the above, and other necessary, programmes so as to ensure the most effective mobilisation of the working Class and other toiling sections.

The combined might of the united working class and the toiling masses in the country side will be such a formidable force that it can bring about a change in the anti-working class anti-people, pro-monopoly pro-multinational policies of the Government. □

dent, Abdul Hakim as the Working President and Noor Imam as the General Secretary. □

Speedcraft Workers Attacked

THE workers of the speedcraft factory in Patna have been agitating for some time against illegal lockout in the factory. Despite the efforts of the labour department the management had been escaping any settlement with the workers.

On May 21, the security and police authorities resorted to attack on peaceful workers sitting on dharna and their dwelling was burnt. In a statement on May 22, Chandi Prasad, General Secretary, Bihar CITU, while condemning the authorities for attack on the workers and their pro-management policy appealed to the higher authorities for bringing an end to the police interference in industrial disputes and demanded of the labour department to impress upon the management to implement the award of the Engineering wage Board. □

Forward to All India Strike...

[From Front Page]

The Congress(I) Government is determined to make the judiciary a subservient instrument of the executive. This attack has been growingly intensified. The grant of bonus to LIC employees has not decided the battle between the judiciary and executive. If the trade union movement does not consciously throw in all its weight to frustrate and defeat these attacks it will lose its battle for trade union rights. This means cooperating with all anti-authoritarian forces.

The trade union movement should note the dangers of Presidential system which the Congress(I) Party is seeking to impose on the country. The call for Presidential system is nothing but a call for one party rule, for personal dictatorship and the working class should have been fully warned and called upon to join other democratic forces in opposing this authoritarian conspiracy. The battle between the democratic and authoritarian

forces sees ups and downs and the active participation of workers and the trade union movement is required to ensure its continuous success.

Authoritarian Party Routed in West Bengal

A week before the Convention the authoritarian party and its allies met with a big defeat in West Bengal. In the municipal elections they were routed, the Left Front headed by CPI(M) winning 68 out of 78 municipalities. This was possible because the working class and other democratic elements stood solidly by the left.

A bigger defeat was inflicted on the Congress(I) in the Assembly and Lok Sabha Elections. This victory of the working class and democratic forces was ensured by the policies of the Left Front Government which firmly protected all democratic and trade union rights and stood by the peasantry.

In other States opposition parties lost all bye-elections, partly as a result of rigging by the unscrupulous Congress(I) administration. But it cannot be denied that these parties also failed to rouse the workers because they had no alternative policies to show.

Broaden the Struggle against Authoritarianism

In their fight for trade union rights and living conditions for the workers, the trade union movement cannot ignore these realities. Its united voice should speak against attacks on judiciary and against the design of imposing a Presidential system. It should unhesitatingly appreciate the fight put by the Left Front Ministries against the Congress(I) and welcome their growing mass influence. And while working for the Convention and one-day action it should ensure the active participation of its followers in broadening the struggle against authoritarianism. □

Working Women's Conf. at Kolhapur

THE second conference of Maharashtra Shramik Mahila Sangh was held at Kolhapur on 29 and 30 May. More than 500 delegates representing beeri, agriculture and industrial workers, bank and LIC employees, teachers and other sections of the working people enthusiastically participated in it.

Hemlata Kom, an Adivasi woman and sarpanch of the Talasari panchayat in Thane district hoisted the flag. Susheela Shedwale, President of the Reception Committee greeted the delegates. Ahilya Ranganekar, member of the Working

Committee of the CITU, presided over.

While congratulating the delegates, Ahilya Ranganekar cautioned them against the rising attacks on all sections of women such as rapes, molestations and dowry harassments by a section of the society and sometimes even by the police. Emphasising the women's place in the society, she said that though the women work equally to support her family with her husband or parents, she has no right to say in the economic affairs of the house. Our society has driven her

to such a position that she cannot even demand equal rights provided by the constitution. Referring to the current situation, she said we cannot expect anything from Indira Gandhi. What ever protection provided by the constitution is totally inadequate and there are too many loopholes in the law of the land. She called upon the women to fight unitedly otherwise it will be difficult to live respectfully for women in such a society,

The most important feature of the conference was that some totally uneducated women workers from beeri and agricultural workers narrating the

[On Page Eleven]

Assam CITU Gears Up its Activities

IN the teeth of violent opposition from the protagonists of the Chauvinist "anti-foreigner" movement, Assam CITU has gradually stepped up movements uniting the working class in various spheres.

The period of April and May was marked with rising struggles by the CITU unions leading to successful wage agreements in spheres like plywood, umbrella manufacturing, Brahmaputra Jute mills, Meghalaya Jute mills, etc. Wage board Tripartite agreements on minimum wages in Shops and Establishment and Road Building & Construction works were finalised. One days' massive strike by 9,000 workers in the plywood industry called by CITU forced the employers to pay wages for the closure period.

The CITU has advanced in the Engineering Industry in Assam and formed a Co-ordination Committee of all CITU Unions which has taken a move for a fresh Tripartite wage agreement, the previous one having expired long ago.

The CITU Unions in Assam extended massive support to the LIC Workers during their strike period. In the teeth of violent opposition from the Chauvinist forces, CITU mobilised a massive force at Gauhati on April 15, i.e. the All India Solidarity Day, at the call of the Central Trade Unions in support of the LIC workers.

May Day

The May rallies in Assam this year surpassed all previous records in depth and dimensions. This year, the red flag of May Day fluttered not only in all big and small towns, but also in village areas, where enthusiastic workers, students and the youth

held innumerable rallies and demonstrations, some of which formed into huge working class congregations. The most significant rally was held at Gauhati, where CITU took the initiative of unifying the Central Trade Unions and other organisations, including the Central and State Federations to join the rally. Even the BMS which had hitherto kept themselves off from the May Day celebrations, joined the rally although symbolically. The INTUC however, did not participate. The General Secretary of the Assam State Committee of CITU, Amal Ghosh Dastidar was the main speaker in the rally. He explained the political significance of the May Day and called upon the workers to unite and fight the forces of secessionism and chauvinism which divided them. At the instance of CITU and other trade unions, the Government of Assam had to declare May Day as a paid holiday. The District authorities allowed to hold rallies on the May Day.

Another significant development was the tumultuous participation of the tea garden workers under the banner of CITU. Big rallies and processions in a number of places by the tea garden workers lend a new colour to the May Day.

Severe Repression on the Tea Garden Workers

The advance of CITU in Assam Tea Gardens have made INTUC and the planters jittery. A severe repression has been let loose on the workers of the CITU Unions by the planters in collusion with the police and the hospital has been turned into a police camp at Krishnakali Tea

Estate (Goalpara Discript).

On May 15 night, two workers of Krishnakali tea estate were arrested in concocted case. They were stripped of their clothes and beaten till they became unconscious. Later on they were chained in the police station. The police created such a region of terror in Baraline that the male workers had to flee away for fear of life. Taking advantage of this abnormal situation the police raped Smt. Phingi on that day. When her mother-in-law protested she was also assaulted. The garden manager, the goonda hirelings and the police are criminally assaulting helpless and distressed female workers.

On June 10 night, the goondas of the management set fire the house of Nihal Urage, the President of Krishnakali T.E. Branch of the Akhil Bharatiya Chah Mazdoor Sangha (CITU) and burnt to ashes all his belongings. Earlier on march 25 he was arrested without any warrant and the police entered his house, abused his wife in vulgar languages and molested her.

Similar attacks are continuing in Chapur, Dilli and other tea estates. These attacks are calculated to strike terror and suppress the workers.

Curiously, although the victims of these attacks are the adivasi and tribal workers in the tea estates, the Taimur Government instead of protecting the minorities in Assam, have placed the police force at the biddings of the Tea Planters both British and Indian.

P. Ramamurti, M.P., General Secretary of CITU, has stongly protested against these barbarous attacks in a latter to Smt. Taimur and stated that "as head of the Government in the State,

[On Page Twelve]

Violation of Freedom of Association and Right to Collective Bargaining in India

IN refutation of a news item that India had been black-listed, the Government of India in a press release, had claimed, "In comparison with any other country in the world India had one of the best records in this regard."

Addressing a press conference on June 19, in New Delhi, P. Ramamurti General Secretary of the CITU, said,

"In regard to a number of cases including one Case No.995 (Border Roads Organisation) relating to India, where repeated letters had evoked no response from the respective Government the latest 208th Report by the Committee on Freedom of Association presented to the last meeting of the I.L.O. States that "the Committee wishes to point out in this regard that, in conformity with the procedural rules set out in paragraph 17 of its 177th Report approved by the Governing Body, it will present a Report at its next Session on the substance of the case even if the Government's observations have not been received at that date." This was a case of violation of the right of freedom of organisation complained to the I.L.O. by the C.I.T.U. That despite repeated reminders the Government of India had no satisfactory explanation to offer and the Committee had been forced to Report it to the I.L.O. and State that it will have to give its findings ex-parte, explodes the myth of the Government's claim.

The Government of India dares not refute the fact that it has not ratified the I.L.O. Conventions No. 87 and 98 on "Freedom of Association" and "Right to collective bargaining." In the last meeting of the

Committee on Conventions constituted by the Government of India the representative from C.I.T.U. and other workers' organisations strongly demanded that the Government of India should ratify these conventions immediately. But this has not been done.

The C.I.T.U. would like to point out that in the past several complaints have been lodged with the I.L.O. regarding incarceration of Trade Union Leaders without trial, occupation of union offices and other forms of repression, denying the right of "Freedom of Association" and in several cases the Committee on Freedom of Association—I.L.O. has recorded its disapproval. Since the cong.(I) returned to power in January 1980 the Trade Union rights, right to strike, freedom of association and right to collective bargaining are under severe attack. For example during the last strike of the Loco Running Staff, employees had been dismissed on the ground that their fathers had been on strike. The Minister for Railways had declared that if such cases are brought to his notice, he would immediately rectify them. Subsequently the Calcutta High Court had stayed these orders. The Railway Board is merrily wasting public money in the courts. What is the action the Minister has taken against the officers that go on merrily along this uncivilized path? This has again been repeated during the struggle of the Orissa State Government Employees only a few days back when a teenaged son of a strike-leader was taken into custody in the dead part of the night, mercilessly beaten and

kept under custody without food and water for nearly 20 hours by the police. In Krishnakali and Chapar Tea Estates of Goalpara District, Assam, the workers were arrested, roped and made to lie down and the police officer urinated on their faces and head. The residential quarters of Nihal Urang, President of the Union has been burnt down. Earlier his wife was abused and molested. Are these acts of any civilised Government or its police force?

The brutal repression that is going on throughout the country beggars description. In Himachal Pradesh P.W.D employees were killed and injured due to brutal lathi charge and firings by the police. 500 employees have been summarily dismissed for mere crime of demanding job security. Over 7000 loco Running Staff have been penalised for protesting against non-implementation of the agreements reached with them as early as in 1974. In Talcher, the women members of the Railwaymen families have been assaulted. Throughout Haryana, the Goonda hirelings of the management and the police are in collusion, suppressing all agitations. In several Congress (I) ruled States, the authorities refuse to negotiate with the unions who are leading the strikes. More and more strikes are being banned and the National Security Act is being applied against the Trade Union Leaders.

Victimisation for formation of Unions has now become the order of the day. In Gopichand Textile Mills, Hissar, there was no registered union for the past two decades. As soon as CITU took steps for formation of union, goonda hirelings of the manage-

ment with the collusion of Haryana Police fired upon and terrorised the workers. In Kota, in a RSEB Project a sub-contractor dismissed 14 workers for demanding minimum wages, prescribed by the Government itself under the Law. In protest the entire 1500 workers struck work. The sub-contractor collected his entire money from the RSEB and BHEL and bolted away. Both these public sector companies are washing their hands off their commitment that these workers are not their workers.

False and concocted charges of attempt to murder etc are being brought against union leaders in order to keep them in jail for a long period. P.K. Moitra, Vice-President of Madhya Pradesh Committee of CITU and a respectable Advocate among others, is being kept in jail.

Such cases can be multiplied. It is clear that the claim of the Government is not only a tra-

vesty of truth and an attempt to mislead the public. The CITU is confident that the Government will not succeed. □

Jute Workers Observe Countrywide Demands Day

IN response to a call by the All India Jute Workers Federation in accordance with their decision of its Working Committee meeting held in New Delhi in last March, the jute workers all over India observed a demands day on May 11. This was the first all India action of the Jute workers since the formation of the all India federation.

The trade unions of jute workers in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Assam, Orissa, and Tripura observed the day with the submission of a 4-point charter of demands having signed by thousands of jute workers irrespective of their affiliations of the jute mills. On the day numerous rallies and meetings were held and the

charter was submitted to the respective managers addressed to to the Labour Minister through the Chairman of the Indian Jute Mills Association.

In the charter, all India jute workers demanded: 1. Uniform wage scales through out the country in accordance with the recommendations on Grades and Scales of Pay for Jute Workers by West Bengal Labour Minister. 2. Uniform pattern of workload through out the country and restoration of pre-1972 condition in regard to the workload through reduction of load already been imposed. 3. Reinstatement of victimised workers and their leaders in Assam cooperative Jute Mills, J.K. Jute Mills and Kanpur Jute Udyog and handing

[On Page Eleven]

CITU Condemns Railway Ministry for Accidents

P. Ramamurti, M.P., General Secretary, Centre of Indian Trade Unions has issued the following statement on June 7:

The CITU expresses deep anguish at the loss of over 500 lives in an accident caused by collapse of a bridge between Badlaghat and Dhamaraghat Stations of North Eastern Railway and conveys its heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family members of the accident victims.

The CITU condemns the Railway Board and the Railway Ministry as they are solely responsible for this grievous accident. During the debate on

railway budget in February last, I had pointedly drawn the attention of the Railway Minister to the collusion and utter neglect of maintenance of the tracks, bridges and rolling stock during the last 15 years. The drastic reduction of the maintenance staff in all these departments in the name of economy drive has created a dangerous situation. The recent change over to trains with heavier loads has further aggravated the situation. This accident confirms my warning.

The CITU demands that the Railway Ministry should immediately reverse the present policy

and undertake a crash programme of replacement of over-aged track, bridges and rolling stock and their proper maintenance. This can only be done by reducing work load and duty hours of staff. The CITU warns the Government that unless they do so such disastrous accidents, involving loss of precious human lives cannot be eliminated. This also spells disaster to the already brittle infra-structure of the economy.

The CITU further warns that attempts at making some small fry the scapegoat will be an eye-wash and cannot cure the deep malady of the railways. □

Kanpur Hosiery Workers on Indefinite Strike

LED by Textile Mazdoor Union (CITU), the Hosiery workers in Kanpur have gone on indefinite strike from April 28 in support of their demands which include : Rs. 500 as minimum wage, dearness allowance, earned and casual leaves, 8-hour duty, reinstatement of victimised workers, etc. Before going on strike the workers had organised a dharna in front of the residence of the State Labour Minister.

Since the beginning of the strike the management has been taking help of goondas to break the fighting unity of the workers. On May 12, some hirelings of the management attacked the workers with lethal weapons and injured many sitting peacefully on a dharna. Several workers including the General Secretary of the Union Rameshwar Prasad Mishra were hospitalised.

In view of the police inaction and anti-worker attitude of the hosiery managements, Mishra started indefinite hunger strike and other workers joined the relay strike. On May 30, police arrested R. P. Mishra due to which the workers are strongly dissatisfied. Even such actions could not break the morale of 13,000 workers who continued their struggle.

In a statement on May 30, the Union President Daulat Ram condemned the attacks by the goondas and police interference and demanded immediate settlement on the demands of the workers. □

Lockout Preferred in Bihar Industries

THE new formula for variable dearness allowance announced by the Bihar government on February 24 is not being imple-

mented by many mill owners. Several managements are also not implementing the award of the Engineering wage Board. It is understood that the mill owners are trying to stall the implementation by moving the court in this matter.

Chandi Prasad, General Secretary, Bihar CITU, in a statement on May 21 called upon the workers to expose the conspiracy of the mill owners against their due wages. □

In Brief

J. K. Synthetics Mazdoor Union : The annual conference of the Union was held on May 24 at Kota. The Union General Secretary Vijayashankar Jha presented the report which was adopted after discussion. It adopted several resolutions on the pressing demands of the workers and on current situation. The conference elected P. N. Dhanda as President and Vijayashankar Jha as the General Secretary.

CITU Foundation Day in Jaipur : The foundation day of the CITU was celebrated in Jaipur on May 30 by organising gate meetings through out the State capital. Speakers in the meetings highlighted the achievements of the CITU and the lessons obtained from the united struggles.

Expulsion of Ila Bhatt : A meeting of the representatives of various women organisations including All India Coordination Committee of Working Women, All India Democratic Women's Association, Janavadi Mahila Samiti, held on May 21 in New Delhi condemned the leadership of the Textile Labour Association, Ahmedabad, for evicting the Self Employed Women's Association from its premises and expelling its secretary Mrs Ila Bhatt from the

TLA membership. In a resolution the meeting declared its solidarity with Mrs Bhatt and other SEWA members in defence of reservation for scheduled castes.

Prime Minister's Statement condemned : The Coordination Committee of Working Women, Delhi, in a Statement on June 23, has strongly condemned the recent statement of the Prime Minister which upholds 'patently wrong approach which not only discriminates against women employees in the airlines but also treat them as sexual objects.' It demanded that Prime Minister withdraw these and direct the management of the Indian Airlines and Air India to stop these unfair practices which discriminates against women and exploit them on the basis of their sex.

Dehli Hotel Workers : The workers of the Gaylord Ice Cream Factory resorted to strike on May 20 in protest against anti-worker attitude of the management. The strike was withdrawn only after the General Manager accepted his mistakes.

Municipal Workers Conference : The 11th annual conference of the Municipal Workers Lal Zhanda Union (CITU) was held on April 24. The Delhi CITU General Secretary Sushil Bhattacharya, MP, inaugurated it. 12 delegates participated in the debate on the report submitted by the General Secretary. The conference elected Chacha Shadi Ram as president and Bachan Singh as General Secretary.

Nayanar Visits Chhattisgarh Region : The Chief Minister of the Left and Democratic Front Government of Kerala, E.K. Nayanar visited Chhattisgarh region in Madhya Pradesh on May 28 and 29. He addressed several rallies in the area and

was given a warm reception by the workers who were joined by the students, youth and others. The workers in Durg, Raipur, Bhilar, Bilaspur and other centre were greatly enthused with the development that has been witnessed in Kerala after the present government came to power. The Congress(I) goondas in coonivance with the police tried to disturb several meetings. Bhilai Steel Plant management was showing on the one hand as if Nayanar was their guest and on the other hand they got the power of the area cut where his meeting was going on.

Jaipur Printing Workers : About 500 printing workers met on June 2 at Jaipur and decided to fight against the exploitation. The meeting decided to form a union and get that affiliated to the CITU.

Koyla Shramik : The coal workers in Bhatgavan colliery (WCL, Bistrampur, M.P.) are facing arbitrary repression in recent months particularly in May and June when 86 workers were removed from their jobs. These workers had lost their land to the colliery and no compensation has been given to them as yet. They were given employment which has also been taken by this act. Koyla Shramik Sangh (CITU) met the SDO of Surajpur and other authorities. When no action was taken the workers resorted to token strike on June 19. The situation in the area is tense.

Bihar Transport Workers : The authorities of Bihar State Road Transport Corporation, instead of conceding the just and legitimate demands of the workers which include increase of buses in Dumka Depot, absorption of all temporary staff who have completed 240 days work, supply of uniform, an end to the victimisation of the office

bearers, have forced the union leaders Nityanand Tiwari and Raja Raghunandan to go on indefinite hunger strike in front of the Transport Bhavan in Patna from June 12 and 13. Hari Krishna, Vice President and Chandi Prasad, General Secretary, Bihar CITU, in a statement on June 24 have demanded immediate settlement on the demands of the workers.

Rajasthan Electric Equipment : The workers of Rajasthan Electric Equipment, Malviyanagar, Jaipur, resumed their work from May 9. They had gone on strike in support of their demands from April 11. A settlement was arrived at between the management and the Small Scale Labour Union (CITU) on May 8 as a result of which the workers got a wage rise of Rs. 52, 7-day casual leaves, 10 days leave for festivals and double overtime.

FCI Employees' Struggle : The Executive Committee of Kandla Stevedores and Dockworkers' Union which met on June 5 at Kandla strongly condemned the anti-labour policies of the FCI management towards the agitation of staff and impressed upon the management to settle the demands of the staff at the earliest. The committee said if no solution is found immediately, there might be industrial unrest in the zone.

Hardwar and Rishikesh Workers Meetings : The workers of BHEL, Hardwar and IDPL, Rishikesh organised public meetings on May 4 and 5 respectively. Addressing these meetings, Sushil Bhattacharya, M.P., General Secretary, Delhi CITU, criticised the anti-worker policies of the Government and called upon the workers to fight unitedly for their democratic and trade union rights. □

Working Women ...

[From Page Six]

exploitation that they faced said that they fought for their rights, went to jail and experienced many hardships in the struggles. But they are not afraid of the attacks of the goondas of the owners, what they know is that they have to fight against them unitedly. This enthused the delegates in many ways.

The conference adopted several resolutions including on atrocities on women, problems of women, peaceful coexistence, rising prices, slum dwellers problems, etc. The conference elected a 15 member executive committee with Shevanta Rajgore as President and Ahilya Ranganekar as General Secretary. On May 30 a rally was organised which has addressed by Ahilya Ranganekar, Prabha Sawant, Hemlata Kom, Subhashini Ali and others. □

Jute Workers...

[From Centre Pages]

over of forcefully captured trade union offices in Assam by the secessionist-Congress(I) alliance and guarnatee uniterupted trade union activity. 4. Remunerative prices to the jute growers and direct purchase of raw jute from the growers by the government and nationalisation of entire jute industry including foreign trade.

Lakshami Sehgal, President and Niren Ghosh, M.P., General Secretary, All India Jute Workers Federation have congratulated 3.5 lakh jute workers of the country for this magnificent action. They called upon the jute workers to build a vigorous campaign movement towards a mighty struggle throughout the country in the interest of jute workers and jute growers. □

Conference of Chabagan Mazdoor Union

THE conference of CITU affiliated Chabagan Mazdoor Union, West Bengal was held on 4 6, June at Malbazar, Jalpaiguri. More than 300 delegates participated in the conference.

While inaugurating the conference, the Union President, Subodh Sen highlighted the national and international political and economic situation. Bir Sen Kujur read the report placed by the Joint General Secretary, Manik Sanyal. 21 delegates participated in the discussion.

Parimal Mitra, General Secretary of the Union, congratulated the delegates for valuable discussion, and explained the central government's attitude towards the workers. The conference raised a 21-point charter of demands.

The open session was addressed by Parimal Mitra, Minister, West Bengal. Jyoti Bose, Subodh Sen, Manik Sanyal and others. □

Assam CITU Marches Ahead

[From Page Seven]

you have the responsibility to ensure that the citizens can exercise their freedom" and requested her "to intervene immediately and stop these inhuman atrocities".

Since the fundamental right of freedom of association is involved, P. Ramamurti has sent the following telegram to International Labour Organisation, Geneva.

"Right of freedom of association of workers in Tea Estates in Assam Trampled under foot. Houses of workers leaders being burnt down. Their wives molested. Complaint follows. Solicit immediate intervention". □

Consumer Price Index Numbers

Base 1960

State/Centre	1981			State/Centre	1981		
	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.		Feb.	Mar.	Apr.
Andhra Pradesh				Orissa			
Gudur	422	420	422	Barbil	386	385	391
Guntur	438	437	447	Sambalpur	420	430	431
Hyderabad	428	433	438	Punjab			
Assam				Amritsar	426	427	442
Digboi	420	421	423	Rajasthan			
Doom Dooma	349	342	353	Ajmer	450	444	449
Labac	336	342	342	Jaipur	464	456	446
Mariani	354	349	356	Tamil Nadu			
Rangapara	358	354	351	Coimbatore	445	459	455
Bihar				Coonoor	433	432	437
Jamshedpur	387	395	400	Madras	409	410	412
Jharia	391	393	397	Madurai	452	430	432
Kodarma	421	422	427	U.P.			
Monghyr	452	446	438	Kanpur	404	405	412
Noamundi	408	406	404	Saharanpur	424	424	430
Gujarat				Varanasi	483	490	484
Ahmedabad	389	393	406	West Bengal			
Bhavnagar	414	418	438	Asansol	432	429	435
Haryana				Calcutta	384	385	397
Yamunanagar	449	457	467	Darjeeling	334	344	347
J. & K.				Howrah	377	379	381
Srinagar	420	428	449	Jalpaiguri	337	338	342
Karnataka				Raniganj	406	404	412
Ammathi	445	451	452	Delhi	434	438	448
Bangalore	468	469	472	Other Centres*			
Chikamagalur	422	437	450	Berhampur ('49)	564	568	550
Kolar G.F.	438	445	451	Cuttack ('49)	531	523	536
Kerala				Jabalpur ('49)	558	557	578
Alleppey	432	432	441	Beawar ('51-52)	530	525	532
Alwaye	433	442	441	Tripura (1961)	380	382	394
Mundakayam	445	434	435	H.P. (1965)	312	313	317
Madhya Pradesh				Goa (1966)	359	311	316
Balaghat	433	438	447	Bhilai (1966)	287	290	295
Bhopal	430	434	447	Bhilwara ('66)	276	278	279
Gwalior	443	438	455	Chhindwara ('66)	236	240	247
Indore	454	458	472	Kothagudem ('66)	278	279	286
Maharashtra				Rourkela ('66)	292	292	294
Bombay	423	423	435	All India ('49)	508	420	427
Nagpur	411	425	435	-do- ('60)	418	510	519
Sholapur	440	444	472				

Figures in brackets indicate base year.

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Downward Trend of Industrial Accidents in GDR

Professor Dr. Horst Rehtanz, Director of the Institute of Labour Safety in the State Secretariat of Labour and Wages, German Democratic Republic was interviewed by the FDGB Review, a monthly journal published by the Confederation of Free German Trade Unions (FDGB), regarding the industrial accidents in the country. His interview :

Can you give us a few figures to demonstrate the downward tendency in industrial accidents in the GDR ?

Rehtanz : Surely, if we take the first half of 1980, we find that the number of industrial accidents per 1,000 employed people decreased from 15.41 to 14.32 as compared to the same period in 1979. Looking back over a longer period, this development becomes even more evident. In the twenty years from 1959 to 1979 the number of industrial accidents decreased by 38.4 per cent and the rate of fatal accidents went down by 56.2 per cent in the same period.

Where can the causes of this be found ?

Rehtanz : In the first place they lie in our social order. To put it more precisely, in the position which labour safety occupies in our country. It stems from the fact that in our country the well-being of man is the primary concern and everything is being done for the benefit of the working people. We regard production and labour safety as a unity. Every measure aimed at increasing production and labour production and labour productivity therefore has to meet the

requirements of labour safety and health protection. Since in socialism labour safety is not subordinated to the sole aim of the employer, that is, making maximum profits, but management and planning of production emanate from the needs of the people which also include the preservation of health, joy in living and satisfaction from labour, the requirements of labour safety are always fulfilled in an inseparable unity with the reproduction process. The high accidents rates in the industrialised countries clearly show that there only as much labour safety is conceded as the workers wring out of their employers in the hard class struggle and as the employers need for improving the utilisation of capital. However, in socialism his labour safety is basic concern of society. This also means that more and more jobs are reorganised or newly organised through the application of scientific organisation of labour. In the first half of 1980 alone arduous or unhealthy working conditions of 20,000 working people could be eradicated.

How do the trade unions in GDR exercise their right to control labour safety ?

Rehtanz : In various ways. As a representatives of the FDGB in the committee of labour and social policy of our parliament I am able to exert an influence at national level on the fact that the problems of labour safety are always given the necessary attention. But I want to add the same time that we would not have reached the present high standard of labour

safety without the work of the some 12,000 voluntary labour safety inspectors and 2,14,000 labour safety officials in the trade unions. Labour safety is a part of the right to a "comprehensive codetermination in state, economy and society" which anchored in the Constitution. The rights necessary for this purpose are defined clearly in the Labour Code and in the labour safety regulations. Codetermination has its starting point in the definition of legal norms, it is ensured in planning and becomes evident in daily practice in a tangible form.

Can you explain this in more details ?

Rehtanz : The practice of codetermination of the trade unions in labour safety includes, for example, the participation of labour safety officials in the regular control rounds in the enterprise. A report is drawn up on each of these control rounds and here deficiencies are listed and a date is fixed for their elimination. The enterprise of department trade union committee takes a decision on this report and makes the trade union member meeting acquainted with it. Then it is passed on to the enterprise manager. The report can also be used by the labour safety inspection of the trade unions to give the responsible managers legally binding orders to make good the discovered deficiencies within a period. This means that the responsible persons can also be called to account for them, if they have not fulfilled their duty in spite of several exhortations. In case of grave offences against the labour safety regulation this may lead to application for a

[On Page Fourteen]

Inhuman Duty Hours for Locomen

The LRSA had been complaining that since November last, the agreement on ten hour duty was being flouted and protests were being ruthlessly suppressed by victimisation. This has been one of the main causes for which they were forced to agitate in February 1981. Now the Railway Board has formalised what they had been doing during the past six months by issuing a circular on April 3. This circular gives a go-bye to the principle of maximum hours of duty being counted from 'Signing on' to 'Signing off' and lays down that in no case the staff can stable a train before reaching the destination. This is nothing but "Jungle law" which existed prior to Rajadhyakshya Award in 1946 and was termed "in human" by the then Chief Labour Commissioner.

The Advisory Committee of AILRSA which met at Bombay on June 5, has issued an appeal to all Loco Running Staff irrespective of their affiliation to unite so that this inhuman slave labour cannot be imposed.

The LRSA noted that despite the policy of repression and victimisation the spirit of struggle continues unflagging. Locomen of Dornakal-Kazipet section of South Central Railway refused to work beyond the scheduled ten hours for which the Divisional Secretary of the LRSA has been victimised.

Scuttling of Earlier Agreement

The earlier agreement on restructuring of pay scales arrived at with the LRSA in July 1980 last has also been scuttled with adverse effect on the revision of running allowances. It

has particularly hit the Motormen and Guards in the suburban section of all metropolitan cities. The Advisory Committee of LRSA decided to educate the locomen about the curtailment that has been imposed on them. The Motormen's Association of Central Railway invited S.K. Dhar, Secretary General of the Association and after discussion it was decided to build up unity at grass-root level to combat this curtailment.

Policy of Victimization Continues

The railway authorities are continuing with their policy of victimisation. In S.E. Railway

this has taken a very serious turn. In view of the stay orders granted by the Calcutta High Court in the cases of arbitrary dismissals, retirements and transfers, the authorities have now started the attack in the Divisions. The railwaymen of Bilaspur, Khurda Road and Waltair Divisions are under serious attack. Several important union functionaries have been transferred out of the Divisions. One of them is being forced to change his category also. The authorities are also not honouring the stay orders in transfer cases on the plea that as per their records in the transfer has already been effected and hence the injunctions do not apply. The Aid Committee at Calcutta has decided to take up matter after the summer vacation of the Court.

Industrial Accidents Decrease in GDR

[From Page Thirteen]

judicial inquiry to the public prosecutor by the labour safety inspection, the inspection of technical control of the industrial hygiene inspection.

Where do the limits of labour safety lie at present ?

Rehtanz: Since there are no limits in our country, which result from the social order, there can be obstacles only where people have not succeeded in detecting all causes which may lead to injuries to health at work. To the extent to which we determine these causes we create the basis for means and measures to eliminate them. Of course, human behaviour which leads to industrial accidents cannot be absolutely excluded in socialism in future. But everything is being done to organise working conditions in such a way that such improper modes of behaviour seldom occur. On the one hand this requires constant education

to conduct meeting the requirements of labour safety—here a large responsibility lies with the trade unions—and, on the other hand, when improper modes of behaviour have been detected to be causes of accidents, it always has to be examined to what extent such errors can be prevented by technological or organisational measures in the future. □

-FDGB Review, 2/81.

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May Day Celebrated Throughout India

MORE than 3,000 workers marched from Mori Gate to Gandhi Maidan in Delhi on May Day where a rally was organised jointly by the CITU, UTUC, AIRBEA, AIEA, and others. B. T. Ranadive, President, CITU while addressing the rally called upon the workers to unitedly fight against all attacks of the Indira Government on the living and working conditions of the working class. Highlighting the achievements of the Left Front Government of West Bengal and Tripura and Left Democratic Government of Kerala, he said these governments are the big out-posts of democracy in the country and have respected the interests of the working class. He called upon them to defend these governments and popularise their achievements.

Reports have been reached from other centres also. In Sonapat, a well attended meeting was addressed by P. Ramamurti General Secretary of the CITU. In Jaipur, several meetings were organised which were addressed by Mohan Punamia, Secretary CITU, Prahlad, Suresh Vyas and others. More than 5,000 workers attended the May Day rally in Amritsar which was addressed by M. K. Pandhe, Secretary, CITU. In Patna, the CITU, AITUC and UTUC submitted a memorandum through mass demonstration to the State Governor, and several meetings were held.

In Bombay, a very impressive joint meeting was organised. Madras witnessed a huge May Day rally. Tens of thousands of workers participated in a rally in Calcutta. Similar rallies were organised in different parts of the State. In Kanpur the rally was addressed by H. S. Surjeet,

Vice-President, All India Kisan Sabha. In Assam, a large number of rallies were organised in different parts despite secessionist movement leaders' threat.

A big public meeting was held in Trivandrum, Cannanore, and other places in the State. May Day rallies throughout the country witnessed ever increasing enthusiasm among the working

class. Reports have been received from Rajamundry, Purnapani, Kota Bhilai, Bhopal, Vijaywada, Hyderabad, Trichi, Trichur, Kottayam, Nagpur, Jamshedpur, Durgapur, Asansole, Raniganj, Lucknow, Meerut, Pauri, Peelibhit, Sitamarhi, Etawa, Ghazipur, Barhalganj, Ghaziabad, Bangalore, Agartala, Vesco, Vishakhapatnam, etc. This year except in few cases, by and large, the meetings were organised unitedly. □

Attack on Plantation Workers in Tamilnadu

IN the wake of plantation workers in Tamilnadu getting more and more organised and forcing the managements to give minimum benefits, the plantation managements in the State in connivance with the police have let loose a reign of terror and resorted to illegal victimisation of the plantation workers.

In Chithrangoe area, Kanchangadu Jayamaruti estate, the management refused employment for five of its employees just because they have joined the union. The management started recruiting goondas and outside workers. These goonda elements attack the workers with active support from the police.

On May 20, Perumal of the estate union had participated in conciliation proceedings before the labour officer at Nagercoil. In the night, the police in connivance with the management raided the union office and arrested Perumal and other activists of the Union. Next morning a number of other workers were arrested on false grounds, including from the areas like Manakavilai, Attoor, Mundavilai, Thiruvattar, Kulasekaram, etc.

The State CITU Secretary,

J. Hemachandran, MLA, has condemned this attack and called upon the State Government to stop this terror and demanded the release of all arrested workers. Vimala Ranadive, Secretary, All India Plantation Workers' Federation (CITU), in a letter to the State Chief Minister has requested him to take 'suitable action' in the matter. □

Tamilnadu Tannery Workers Conference

The third State conference of Tamilnadu tannery workers was held at Vaniyabadi in North Arcot district in Tamilnadu on May 16 and 17. 185 delegates including 40 women from all tannery centres in the State attended the conference. V. K. Kothandaraman presided over. K.R. Sundaram, MLA, inaugurated it.

S.A. Thangarajan submitted the detailed report on the conditions of the industry and the demands of the workers. R. Umanath, MLA, A. Balasubrahmanian, P. Ramamurti, MP, addressed the delegate and the open sessions. □

Police Repression Continues in Haryana

THE workers in Haryana are facing brutal repression and a reign of terror has been let loose by mill managements with the help of goondas and in connivance with the State police. Various reports of repression have been published in earlier issues of 'the Working Class'.

The workers of Gopichand Textile Mill, Sirsa, conducted a 59 day strike in support of their demands and against police repression. The settlement arrived at between the management and the workers on May 16 is openly being violated by the management as the management has not taken all those workers on job who were supposed to be taken after the strike was called off. The colony gates have not been opened for the workers and the labour colony has been turned into the goonda camp due to which the workers are facing hardships. Terrorising the workers with the help of police and its goonda force, the management is trying to break the fighting unity of the workers in vain. The police remain silent spectator even when the workers are attacked in its presence.

The workers of Hissar Textile Mills went on strike from May 19 in support of their demands of D.A., bonus, vacation of all cases of victimisation, etc., while the management remained adamant and was not ready to concede any of the demands. The Haryana State Committee of the CITU in a statement on May 31 strongly condemned the attitude of authorities and demanded immediate settlement.

On May 3, the brutal police of the Bhajanlal Government

resorted to lathi charge on the agitating workers of Lakhani Rubber of Faridabad. The belongings of the workers from their dwellings were looted and the children and female members of the workers families were assaulted. These workers have been protesting against the lock-out in the factory since April 18. More than 40 workers were arrested and were implicated in false cases.

On May 8, in Faridabad, a CITU activist Shatrughan Dvivedi was attacked by the anti-social elements. When he went to police to lodge a complaint, police arrested him and started beating him. In the night his friend Vijay Kumar Jha went to the police station to enquire about Dvivedi, he was also ordered to be beaten. Both these comrades were kept in custody over night where they were continuously beaten to strike terror in the workers. These comrades sustained serious injuries.

The woman workers of M. and M. Industry, Kundali (Sonapat) have been fighting along with other workers since April 21 in protest against the dismissal of 17 workers including the Vice President of the workers' union, Shyama Varma. The management had dismissed them to break the union and workers' fighting unity.

The workers have been sitting on Dharna since then and on May 22, the hirelings of the management including the factory foreman attacked the workers with lethal weapons. As result, the Union treasurer Krishna and Rajkumar were injured seriously while many others sustained injuries.

The workers immediately organised a protest demonstration which turned into a rally at the factory gate. While addressing the rally, S.N. Solanki, General Secretary, Haryana CITU, warned the State Government that if the factory owner and his goondas were not arrested immediately, the workers would be forced to launch bigger actions.

Successful One Day Strike on May 20

In response to a call by the CITU, AITUC, HMS, and BMS, the working class of Haryana observed one day general strike on May 20. Lakhs of workers in Ballabgarh, Guargon, Panipat, Karnal, Bhiwani, Rohtak, Hissar, Sonapat, Bahadurgarh, Gannor, Bahalgarh, Rai, Kundali, etc. did not join the work and made the strike a successful event.

The workers have been demanding Rs. 500 as the minimum wage, withdrawal of NSA, representation to central trade unions in all tripartite committees, end to the contract labour, improvement in the ESI Scheme, immediate payment of provident fund. In addition to these demands the workers demanded an end to the police repression, lay off, lockout, enquiry into the firings resorted to by the police at various places, end to the police interference in industrial disputes, etc.

The CITU President B.T. Ranadive while congratulating Haryana workers appealed to them to 'preserve and strengthen their unity for winning their just demands.' □

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