



# THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

## Successful Nationwide 48 Hour Strike of Coal Miners

THE Coal Miners all over the country downed their tools on 4th and 5th June, in protest against non-implementation of the Third National Coal Wage Agreement, non-convening of the meeting of the JBCCI for the last 7 months, eight days wage deduction, mass transfers and termination of services, non-implementation of safety rules and gross interference by the CISF in trade union activities. The Chairman, Coal India, M.S. Gujral personally visited all the headquarters of the subsidiary companies and directed the strike-breaking operations. However, despite repeated threats the strike was by and large successful.

In Eastern Coalfields, the entire coal belt was handed over to the CISF by the management. In Sripur the CITU flag was snatched away by the CISF hoodlums while in Bhanora, Nigi, Kuardih, Nageswar, East Sitalpur and other collieries they entered workers dhowras and tried to force some of the workers to go into the mine with a view to start the operation but failed miserably. In several places CISF was even ready to fire at the workers. To create panic among the workers the ECL management officially announced that one engineer was shot dead by the strikers in Madharbani Colliery and the news was broadcasted on the radio. When the West Bengal police officials went to the spot they found the news totally false and the engineer was alive. Despite these attempts the workers observed the strike. Even INTUC workers joined the strike.

### Success of the strike

In BCCL area, according to the reports received by the headquarters of All India Coal Workers Federation, the strike was near total and even the local papers reported about the success of the strike. The attempts of the management to engage a large police force could not browbeat the workers.

In Singareni Collieries all the unions in the undertaking including the INTUC gave a call for strike and there was a total stoppage of mining operations.

In Western Coalfields majority of the collieries

observed a successful strike: In certain areas HMS and BMS unions did not campaign for the strike, which created some weakness in the region.

In Central Coalfields and Hazaribagh and Barkakhana areas the strike was successful. The management of Mithapur Colliery seeing that the strike was total, levelled a false charge against the CITU union that due to the sabotage of the boiler the work was stopped. In Central Sounda Colliery the village women came in large number to picket at the colliery pit and did a remarkable job despite police repression. A.P. Singh, R.L. Singh (both CITU) Kanhaiya Singh (AITUC) were arrested by the police in Argada Area. On the whole majority of the workers in CCL joined the strike on both the days.

The teachers in colliery schools were having holidays. However to express support to the striking workers and to press for their demands they demonstrated before the CIL Headquarters at Calcutta on 5th June despite heavy rains.

Angered by the success of the strike, M.S. Gujral immediately ordered deduction of 8 days wages from the pay of all the workers. He also instructed that 5 leading workers should be suspended for organising the strike in each colliery. In certain collieries casual workers were summarily terminated from service. Every colliery has been instructed to send a report to the Chairman, CIL about the vindictive actions.

The CITU and the AICWF have appealed to all the coal federations to fight these victimisation measures unitedly. Local movements and agitations are also being planned in all the coalfields.

The Working Committee of the AICWF is meeting at Calcutta on 27th June to review the local campaigns against the victimisations and carry forward the struggle to achieve the demands. A meeting of the Joint Action Committee of Coal Unions is likely to be held shortly to decide the future course of action.

The BCCL officials are reported to have heavily bribed police officials of Dhanbad to suppress the strike. All the police force was sumptuously fed and entertained at the cost of public sector undertaking. A secret telex message sent by Director (personnel), BCCL to CIL Headquarters on 1st June states:

*Discussions have been held with Dy. Commissioner and Superintendent of Police regarding arrangements for transport, accommodation and food for large Police force. Magistrates being mobilised for adequately dealing with law and order situation STOP assistance required by him has been agreed by the management. STOP "Assistance" is the code word for payment of money.*

### **CISF Game Foiled in Topsi Colliery**

Tarapada Mondal CITU leader of Topsi Colliery (West Bengal) was arrested by the CISF on 5th June. They wanted to arrest some more activists particularly Nitai Chatterjee, another CITU leader. When they entered Basti alongwith Manager and Agent of the colliery, they came across Nitai's wife Kalpana who was going to the temple for "Sasti Puja". The CISF personnel snatched all the puja material from her, abused her in filthy language and pushed her aside. When she shouted for help about 2000 colliery workers and villagers rushed there within a short time. The CISF personnel threatened to open fire but with the intervention of West Bengal police the firing was averted. The CISF had to hand over Com. Tarapada Mondal back to the people, though he was brutally assaulted.

In Krishnanagar colliery (West Bengal) the CISF along with Koolban Singh, the area security officer, forcibly entered dhowrah of workers and asked them to go for work. When Arun Ghosh, CITU activist opposed this action Koolban Singh brandished his pistol and threatened to shoot him. However a large number of workers gathered in a short time and CISF had to withdraw from the area.

The Chairman of CIL, M.S. Gujral was in a miserable condition on 5th June in the Headquarters of CIL. Angered by the report that no telex operator reported for duty he rushed to the telex room to contact ECL, BCCL and CCL for report on strike situation and started operating the telex himself. With great difficulty the officers persuaded him not to tamper with the sophisticated equipment. He was later on informed that the telex line itself was out of order. The telephones in his office were all dead due to heavy rains. Railways were not operating. Very few officers could report for duty on that day. When he heard that on 5th June there was no production in ECL, CCL and BCCL he immediately told the press that it was not due to strike but due to rains. Describing the agitated mood of Gujral some officials commented, "If he had powers he could have deducted 8 days wage of the rain god!"

**Samar Mukherjee, General Secretary, CITU issued the following statement on June 1:**

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions fully supports the decisions of the several federations in the Coal Industry to organise 48 hour strike on 4th and 5th June 1984 all over the country.

The Government of India and the CIL managements did not care to call even a meeting of the federations with a view to find out of the settlement of the issues. Under these circumstances it is the authorities who are responsible for the loss of coal production when the country is passing through acute crisis of coal.

In several centres the local managements have issued notices threatening the workers with dire consequences. The CITU is confident that the coal workers who recently organised two countrywide successful strikes will not be cowed down by such threats.

We have also received reports that in certain centres in meetings convened by the Regional Labour Commissioners the representatives of the management have "agreed" to consider the demands. If the CIL management would have been serious they could have discussed the issues with the representatives of Federations after submission of the strike notices. In view of this, such assurances fail to carry any conviction.

The CITU appeals to workers of all affiliations including the INTUC to make the 48 hour strike call a grand success so that the CIL management is forced to implement the agreement is full and convene a meeting of the Joint Bipartite Committee for Coal Industry (JBCCI) without any further delay to discuss the other outstanding issues.

**Nrisingha Chakraborty, Secretary, CITU issued the following statement on June 5:**

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions, congratulates the coalminers for their wide response to the call of 48 hours token strike jointly given by CITU, BMS, HMS and INTUC (Dara Group) in protest against the non-implementation of the wage agreement and the policy of victimisation pursued by the CIL management. This courageous and bold action by the coal miners despite the fear psychosis which is sought to be created by the CIL management as has been admitted today by the CIL spokesmen in their press briefing, is really praise worthy and denotes wide-spread resentment among the coal mine workers.

The CITU warns the Govt that they should take note of the fact that by admitting that this strike did not have that much response as in January 83, when there was no wage agreement, the CIL authorities

*(Contd. on page 15)*

# Second Conference of AICWF

PRIOR to the two day strike, the All India Coal Workers' Federation held its second conference at Ranchi from May 25 to 27. The conference called for gearing up of all the organisational machineries and activation of the CITU unions for the success of the strike, the decision of which was taken in the all India Coal Workers' Convention held at Asansol in April.

## Inauguration by BTR

Inaugurating the conference B.T. Ranadive, President, CITU said "The seven lakh coal workers in India have achieved magnificent unity through two countrywide strikes. In these two strikes they forced the Government to accept their demands, and through another strike call forced the Government of India to give clearance to their bipartite settlement. Now once again they are preparing for another nationwide strike on June 4 and 5 to ensure that the agreement is implemented in full".

He drew attention of the delegates to the fact that the conference was being held at a time when over two lakh coal miners in England were on a long-drawn strike to achieve their demands which required solidarity from the Indian coalminers. He pointed out that the capitalist exploitation was same everywhere. The capitalist Government in England was in deep crisis. The same was the case with the Govt. of India following the capitalist path of development since independence.

The crisis could be overcome only by reversing, the policies of the Government and the coal workers movement has to fight against these policies in the interest of the working class and the people of this country.

Referring to the recent antics of M.S. Gujral, Chairman, Coal India Ltd., Ranadive called upon the working class of India to rally behind the coal workers in their hour of trial and defeat Gujral's anti-working class and anti-people policies. "A hardboiled bureaucrat can be forced to retrace his draconian steps only in the face of the united might of the working class", he said.

Com. Ranadive observed that still feudal exploitation in the mines continues. Unfortunately, the INTUC (I) refuses to take part in the joint struggle against repression in the coalmines, whereas they have participated in the joint front built up among Jute and Port & Dock workers.

He called upon the coal workers to launch continuous struggles against capitalism, as the emancipation of the working class is not confined within the limits of economic struggle. The organisers of the Conference should see to it that the coalmine workers are trained for political battles also. Trade Union

movement should proceed alongside the people's movement.

The working class has to liberate itself by throwing the shackles of the capitalist class rule.

He mentioned about two big obstacles standing in the way of the workers' movement. On the one hand, the American conspiracy of nuclear war was there in the international field and on the other, the divisive forces were threatening to disintegrate the unity of the working class.

He criticised the policies of the Government which strengthened the divisive forces in the country and called upon the workers to carry forward a determined struggle against these forces to preserve the unity of the country and the working class.

After flag hoisting by M.K. Pandhe, President of AICWF, Coms. BTR, Samar Mukherjee and the delegates placed wreaths on the martyrs' memorial. The conference was attended by 296 delegates and observers from all the coal fields, of whom 249 were workers and employees. 199 delegates were below 40 years of age. 6 were women delegates.

## Presidential Address

In his presidential address, M.K. Pandhe highlighted the deplorable working and living conditions of the coal workers. With facts he pointed out how mechanisation had resulted in large redundancies in the mines. Women workers were the first targets and their number had considerably declined. He condemned the CIL management for conniving with the gangster elements to launch attacks on Sudevan and other CITU leaders in Madhya Pradesh and denounced the terror created by the CISF in West Bengal and Bihar to suppress the united strength of the workers. He called upon the workers to further consolidate the unity and give a rebuff to the management's machinations by making the strike successful.

## Fraternal Greetings

Fraternal messages were sent by the coal miners' unions from the USSR, China Yugoslavia, Great Britain, Australia and Vietnam. The Trade Union International of Miners and the Bangladesh Trade Union Kendra conveyed greetings to the Conference.

Warmly greeting the conference on behalf of the British working class, Ian Williams explained the background of the coal miners' strike of Great Britain and pointed out how they were fighting for the entire British working class. He criticised the policies of the Thatcher Government and recounted how the British working class was resisting these reactionary policies. He conveyed his best wishes for the success of the Conference.

### General Secretary's Report

Sunil Basu Roy, General Secretary, AICWF submitted his report. He reviewed the development since the foundation conference and the main activities of the federation to build up united movements to meet the challenges. 22 delegates participated in the discussion. The speakers narrated their experience of the new attacks and the efforts to build up united resistance locally. They expressed their determination to carry forward protracted struggles to meet the situation and for a successful strike. The report was adopted unanimously.

### Samar Mukherjee's Speech

Addressing the delegates, Samar Mukherjee, General Secretary, CITU paid warm tributes to the coal workers for their role in the struggle of the public sector workers. Their countrywide two strikes were mainly responsible to give a blow to the guidelines of BPE. He said that in a capitalist set up it is the usual practice of the employers and the Government not to implement the agreements. After the historic jute strike also the employers are putting obstructions in implementing the agreements. He called upon the workers to make the forthcoming strike further successful to force the CIL to implement the agreements.

### Resolutions

The conference adopted resolutions on struggle for peace against war, against divisive forces, for

participation in the 48-hour strike, for protection of job of women workers, against gangsterian and CISF repression, on protection to peasants whose lands were taken over by the coal companies, on safety in mines, on teachers' problems in coal mines etc.

A 43 member Working Committee was elected by the conference with M.K. Pandhe as President and Sunil Basu Roy as General Secretary.

Summing up the deliberations, B.T. Ranadive called upon the workers to play more active role to step up united movement of the workers and also to participate in the peace movement to strengthen the struggle against war in the country. The conference was also greeted by Yogeshwar Gope, President of Bihar State CITU and K.K. Tripathi, Vice-President of Steel Workers' Federation of India.

The M.P. Koyla Shramik Sangh handed over a purse of Rs. 5000 to B.T. Ranadive for the CITU fighting fund. They gave another purse of Rs. 5000 to M.K. Pandhe for the AICWF.

A public rally was held on May 27 which was presided over by M.K. Pandhe. Speaking on the occasion B.T. Ranadive appealed to the workers to extend full support to the cause of the coal workers to make the forthcoming strike successful. Samar Mukherjee emphasised the need for united struggle to effectively resist the growing offensives. Among others who spoke were Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, Yogeshwar Gope, Sunil Basu Roy, Rajendra Munda, Ian Williams, etc.



*Com. B.T. Ranadive inaugurating the conference*



*Com. Samar Mukherjee placing wreath on the martyrs' memorial*

# Struggle Against BPE's New Directive

**E**Mployees of Delhi offices of several public Sector undertakings are now in war path to protect their living standards. They are up in arms against the new directive of the BPE which is aimed at cutting down their D.A entitlements from Rs. 201.60p to Rs. 141.20 per annum.

Apart from the departmentally run undertakings there were 67 public sector undertakings out of 196, whose employees are on Third Pay Commission pay scales and D.A. formula, HSCL being one of them. The struggle of the employees of HSCL to secure a wage revision has been reported from time to time in these columns. Now a new situation has arisen due to a directive from BPE that all these undertakings must switch over to industrial D.A pattern i.e. Rs. 1.30p increase per point of rise in quarterly average of C.P.I. numbers. This is not a directive of parity in wages with steel, coal, and other public sector undertakings where the minimum wages at 500 points is somewhere near about 820 or so per month, with the basic pay at Rs. 550 as the lowest which would have given the employees some wage rise now. But this is a direct attack to reduce the DA entitlement of the workers and naturally the workers resented the same and have now joined hands irrespective of their affiliation to fight against this attack against their wages.

Another twist in the situation is that these workers have not been paid the interim relief declared by the Central Govt. to its own employees and departmentally run undertakings. But here also there is discrimination in that employees of some undertakings like D.T.C., RITES have been granted interim relief.

As these employees were in Pay Commission scales and D.A rates, there had been no wage negotiation in the past. So after receiving the directive from the BPE different managements just passed on the information to their employees as if it was a "fait accompli". Resistance came from the Engineers India Ltd. A section of employees filed a writ petition in the Supreme Court and the said case is coming up for direction on July 23.

There were also others who felt the necessity of bringing together all unions who represent the employees of these 67 undertakings. Preliminary efforts found response from as many as 38 unions belonging to many Central Trade Unions or unattached, who met informally and elected Com. L.R. Bharati, Vice-President, EPI Employees Union and Com. T.K. Ghosh, President, NSIC-PTC Employees Union as Joint Convenors to call for a meeting of the affected unions. This meeting was held on June 15, in the Kashmir Hall, YMCA Building, New Delhi, which was attended by nearly 75 representatives from the offices in and around Delhi.

The meeting was presided over by B.K. Garg. A team of three comrades. Bharati, Ghosh and S.S. Hans, conducted the meeting.

After Hans initiated the subject of the meeting which was later on amplified by Bharati, Nrisingha Chakraborty Secretary-CITU greeted the representatives. Explaining that the Central D.A. rates also suffer from several defects like it is not automatic and the trick of yearly average of 8 points has already caused erosion in wages on an average of Rs. 300 to Rs. 600 per annum, he said that the proposal of the BPE is an outright attack on wages. Had they offered parity, they would have offered a revision in wage scales with Rs. 550 as basic for the lowest paid employee which would have increased his HRA & CCA in order to compensate what he is losing as D.A. So now there are three districts groups viz. Central Govt. employees, Employees of Public Sector on Central rates of pay and D.A. and the remaining public sector employees who have the right to collective bargaining and have made wage agreements. The struggle therefore is going to be long drawn and it is advisable that efforts should be made to establish link with the other two groups so that a common struggle against B.P.E. could be developed for a rational wage policy which should include quarterly adjustment of D.A. with cent per cent neutralisation, a demand on which the entire trade union movement is committed. On behalf of CITU, he extended full support to the just struggle of these employees.

About 15 representatives spoke on the draft resolution. Y.D. Sharma, Secretary, AITUC greeted the delegates and supported the struggle. The resolution adopted in the meeting demanded immediate release of 4 instalment of D.A. which has fallen due and immediate release in future. It also demanded sanction of interim relief, immediately. The resolution said "in case the Govt. unilaterally implements the purported revision of pay scales and impose industrial D.A. formula a massive trade union movement will be organised by the trade unions for which a Joint Action Committee has been formed". All have been requested to keep contact with S.S. Hans, India Tourism Development Corporation, Jeevan Bihar Building, 3 Sansad Marg, New Delhi-110 001.

## The Working Class

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# All Trade Union Demand for Nationalisation of Bengal Potteries, National Tanneries and India Rubber Mfg. Ltd.

A delegation consisting of E., Balanandan, M.P. and Indrajit Gupta, M.P., along with the leaders of CITU, AITUC, INTUC, HMS unions and Officers' Association of Bengal Potteries, National Tannery and Indian Rubber Mfg. Ltd. met Smt. Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister on June 21 demanding nationalisation of the three companies.

It is to be noted that the management of Bengal Potteries was taken over by the Government of India in 1976 and was handed over to the Industrial Reconstruction Corporation of India (IRCI). But the funds were diverted and no raw materials were supplied to make this pioneer company viable. The date of notification period expires on 30th June which meant liquidation which would affect over 5000 workers. The delegation emphasised that the company could be made viable provided raw materials were supplied and the funds were properly utilised.

In National Tannery 80 percent of the share capital are being held by the public financial institutions like IRCI, IDBI, STC, etc. The Indian Rubber Mfg. Ltd. was also taken over by the Union Government, but subsequently denotified. The total number of workers to be affected by denotifications of the three companies would be over 6000. It is

also to be noted that the products manufactured by the companies are widely used by the government itself in Railways, P & T, in State Electricity Boards and other departments. These products earned good foreign exchange also. The workers united under all the trade unions have been on grim struggle for survival.

The Prime Minister assured to look into the demands for nationalisation positively. Prior to this, the workers' delegation also met Shree N.D. Tiwary, the Industries Minister, which was accompanied by Shree Samar Mukherjee, M.P., P.K. Ganguly, Secretary, CITU and Shree P.K. Kodyan, M.P., and also met Shree Pranab Mukherjee, the Finance Minister, which was accompanied by Shree Mohd. Ismail, M.P. and Shree Indrajit Gupta, M.P. Similar assurances were given by the two Ministers also. Shree N.D. Tiwary informed that he has already extended the period of notification of Bengal Potteries and called a meeting in the industry on June 27 to study the steps to be taken.

The unions were represented by Sarbashree Badal Kar and Bijoy Chakrabarty (CITU), Sunil Mohanta and Ashim Chakraborty (AITUC), Bhajan Das Gupta and R.S. Chouhan (HMS), Pramathesh Sen (INTUC), and T.K. Ghosh, S.N. Chaubey and Chandi Banerjee (Officers' Association).

## CITU's Reply to the Fourth Pay Commission Questionnaire

On June 15, the CITU submitted its reply to the Questionnaire circulated by the Fourth Pay Commission.

At the outset it had pointed out that this terms of Reference of the Pay Commission appears to be an attempt of the Govt, to differentiate between industrial and non-industrial sections of Govt. employees in respect of grant of wage parity. If that is so, it should be opposed by CITU.

It has also pointed out that before dealing with the question of national economy etc, the question of parity in wage with public sector employees has to be decided as early as possible and for that no other consideration is necessary. Because all other things remaining equal, wages equal to the employees of public sector should be given, as there is irrefutable argument in favour of the same.

Analysing the defects in the DA system, it has demanded DA on the basis of quarterly average with cent per cent neutralisation of rise in prices by grant of D.A.

It has opposed investment of wage increase and demanded payment in cash which would help the economy also.

It has opposed the proposal of part time work and said all systems of Casual Labour, Commission Venders and Bearers, E.D.P.'s etc should be abolished and need-based minimum wage should be given to all.

For details please read the CITU memorandum published as:

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Calcutta-700012.

# Brick-Kiln Owners Want Exemption from Labour Laws

**I**N the second meeting of the Tripartite Committee for Brick-Kiln Industry held on May 30, it became clear that the managements of the brick-kiln industry want exemption from the Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act as its provisions could be twisted to show that the workers in the brick-kiln industry are bonded labour.

Traditionally the brick kiln workers in the northern India are recruited from different states mainly from U.P., Bihar and Orissa, who at the time of enrolment take some advance money. The management complained that if such workers who have obtained handsome advance, leave the employment shortly after coming to work, they cannot legally recover the amount. Hence, the trouble started. Besides the system of double registration deposit of money etc, as required under the law, is creating difficulty for them. So they want exemption from this law. Already the U.P. State Government has granted them exemption.

Nrisingha Chakraborty, Secretary CITU, participating in the discussion, pointed out that double registration is a must as otherwise the interest of workmen cannot be protected. The exemption granted by U.P. Government cannot be effective on Orissa Government from which state the workers are recruited.

One of the management representatives quoting the statement of object of the Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act, stated that as the employers have agreed to issue employment cards, this act would not apply. This was also opposed by CITU as recruitment was being made from out side states.

The employers proposed that instead of implementation of Gratuity, ESI, EPF Acts, etc, they are prepared to pay the workmen lumpsum amount towards these benefits. But the labour representatives pointed out that this cannot be accepted as they would have no social security and at their old-age they would be in difficulties.

The workers' representatives wanted that a permanent employer-employee relationship should be so developed that each will feel concerned with the other and the terms and conditions of the service should be so determined as would subserve this central objective. While demanding that the benefits as provided in each law must be given to the brick-kiln workers, Nrisingha Chakraborty also said that a separate law for brick-kiln workers might tend to break the ranks of the working class and it is therefore, not favoured.

R.K.A. Subrahmaniya, Chairman of the meeting said that there are genuine difficulties of the employers, and there is necessity for simplifying the procedure in one package. He therefore proposed

that the department would circulate the draft of a separate law for the industry by 15 June among the members and the next meeting shall take place on July 3 for its finalisation.

## CITU Denounces the Dissolution of Sikkim Assembly

**T**HE Secretariat of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions issued the following statement on May 26:

The CITU denounces the dismissal of Bhandari Govt. of Sikkim and dissolution of the Sikkim Assembly and imposition of President's rule in an arbitrary manner. These actions once again prove the charge that the Article 356 of the Constitution is being misused for dismissal of the elected State Governments which the Congress (I) party does not approve, even if it belonged to the same party.

The CITU demands that Article 356 of the Constitution should be withdrawn so that the people's verdict is not trampled underfoot in this fashion.

### Second Conference of All India Road Transport Workers Federation

The Second Conference of All India Road Transport Workers' Federation will be held on August 13-15, 1984 at Madras. Com. B.T. Ranadive, President-CITU will inaugurate the conference. All delegates have to pay Rs. 5/- as Delegate Fee and Rs. 45/- per head towards food charges. All unions participating in the Conference will have to clear their affiliation dues upto 1983. All Delegates should inform the Reception Committee about the particulars of their arrival at Madras at the following address.

Com. A. Soundarajan,  
Secretary, Reception Committee,  
All India Road Transport Workers'  
Federation, Second Conference,  
52-Cooks Road,  
Madras—600 012.

All delegates requiring return reservations are also requested to inform the Reception Committee remitting money for return reservations.

## Interim Report and Relief Demanded

THE National Campaign Committee of Railwaymen (NCCR) which met at Delhi on June 3 and 4 noted that the questionnaire circulated by the 4th Central Pay Commission indicates that there is going to be a long delay in finalising the report. It has also noted that out of seven instalments of D.A. which have fallen due the Government have sanctioned only three so far. The question of bonus for railwaymen also has not been settled. The demand for parity in wage on which the Government should have given its final decision by 31st March last year and which has been referred to the 4th Central Pay Commission, may not be considered separately unless public opinion is mobilised in its favour.

The NCCR has therefore, decided to conduct massive campaign from July 10 to 25 on the following demands:

(a) Interim recommendation on parity in wage with public sector undertakings should be published by July 31st.

(b) Payment of Second Instalment of interim relief of Rs. 100/-

(c) Payment of bonus as per Act and PLB Incentive bonus as per earlier agreement.

(d) Release of the remaining four instalment of D.A. to be paid in cash.

(e) Bipartite negotiations for settlement of the charter of demands placed by NCCR.

It has also decided that one of the forms of the campaign shall be sending post cards to the Prime Minister by railway workers during this period. It has also decided to demonstrate before All General Managers on August 20, if the interim report is not published by July 31st, and continue programme of agitation thereafter.

### Recognition of CLW Labour Union Demanded

Sukomal Sen, M.P. CPI (M) made a special mention in the Rajya Sabha on May 8, explaining the background of the demand of recognition of CLW Labour Union. He stated that since the inception of CLW no union has so far been recognised. This amounts to denial of trade union rights and also right to collective bargaining to the workers. He demanded that the Government should recognise the CLW Labour union.

### Meetings, Conventions Etc

The Palghat Divisional Conference of DREU which was held at Cannanore on May 19th and 20th,

has become a memorable event. Over 500 delegates from all stations of this division assembled at Cannanore for the Conference, which was addressed by Comrades K. Ananda Nambiyar, President, R. Umnath MLA, General Secretary, Tamilnadu State Committee of CITU and Vice-President, P.V. Ram Das, General Secretary, DREU, O. Bharatan (CITU-Kerala), V.S. Achyutanandan, Secretary CPI (M), Kerala and others. It may be noted that NCCR was formed in this division of S. Rly first, 44 resolutions have been adopted and a programme has been drawn up for divisional conferences and formation of divisional NCCRs in other divisions as early as possible.

The CEC of SE railway LRSA, Zonal Committee of SE Railway, Guard Council and the Zonal coordination Committee of Railwaymen, SE Rly met at Anara on May 25 and 26th. 75 delegates from LRSA, 42 delegates from Guard Council and 20 delegates from ZCCR were present. The meeting ended in a mass rally on May 26 which was attended by about 3000 people, with a large number of women participating in the meeting.

Apart from Railway leaders, Sudhir Chakraborty, Secretary, Kisan Sabha, Anima Dhar of Ganatantrik Mahila Samithi, Basudev Acharya, M.P., and Swapn Banerjee, Chairman, Purulia Zilla Parishad addressed the meeting. The Railway workers contributed Rs. 187/- to the Truck Drivers who are on struggle in Purulia as a token of solidarity. The amount was handed over to Basudev Acharya.

### Retrenched Workers on Continuous Satyagrah

More than 150 ELR Workmen from Nagercoil Tirunelveli Construction line were retrenched illegally after six years of service. Although the High Court had quashed the retrenchment orders, the authorities have not taken them back into service. Trivandrum Divisional Committee of Dakshin Railway Employees Union has decided to start a continuous Satyagrah in front of the Chief Engineers' Construction's Office at Madras from June 11.

Samar Mukherjee, M.P. has intervened in the matter and drawn the attention of the Railway Minister.

### Fate of Calcutta Metro Railway Workers

So long the Metro Railway in Calcutta was a part of Indian Railway system and was being built up with thousands of railway workers who have come here on deputation for over 5 to 10 years. It is understood that there is a conspiracy to separate this from Indian Railway system and turn it into an autonomous corporation. Apprehensions among the workers being very high, Samar Mukherjee, M.P. has intervened in the matter.

# AROUND THE STATES

## TAMILNADU

**CITU Foundation Day:** The Foundation Day of CITU was observed all over the state on May 30 by flag hoisting, hall meetings and gate meetings. Addressing the meetings the leaders of CITU stressed on further stepping up of the independent activities of CITU and development of united struggles to intervene in the fiscal and anti-labour policies of the Government of India for an alternative policy in the interest of the working class and the toiling people.

**Hosiery Workers' Strike:** Over 20,000 hosiery workers in Tiruppur in Coimbatore district are continuing their united strike since April 19. Rallies and public meetings are being organised by CITU and other organisations in support of the strike and a successful bundh of Tiruppur town was observed on May 30 in solidarity with the striking workers.

**Lockout of Karur Mills:** The management declared an illegal lockout of the mill in the last week of May. The workers were on strike from January 17, jointly conducted by CITU, AITUC, DMK and Janata Unions. The management tried to break the strike in vain with the help of police and organised gangsters. A number of false cases were inflicted on the workers. Despite the repression, a successful bundh was organised at Karur. The Chief Minister gave a false promise of intervention. At this stage the management with the help of gangsters abducted two workers inside the factory. The news spread like wild fire and hundreds of people rushed to the factory and released the workers. The police came and brutally lathi charged the workers. In this background the management declared the lockout. R. Umanath, General Secretary of the State CITU visited the place and demanded of the Government to intervene to reopen the mill and settle the dispute.

**Strike in Ashok Leyland:** Organised under CITU, the workers went on one day's strike on June 2 demanding settlement of many long pending issues. Instead of settling the issues, the management has threatened to deduct 8 days wages. The workers are determined to step up the struggle.

**Electricity Workers' Struggle:** The workers of Tamilnadu Electricity Board are on struggle protesting against the malafide transfers of thousands of workers and employees. The Joint Action Committee consisting of CITU and other unions except the AITUC, INTUC and AIADMK unions called for protest demonstrations on 21st and mass rallies on 26th May. Thousands of workers participated in the demonstrations before the Board Offices. Several thousands including women employees and family members joined the procession at Madras and

demonstrated before the State Secretariat demanding withdrawal of the transfers.

**B & C Mills:** Even after the workers decided to call off the strike, the Buckingham & Carnatik Mill is still closed. Despite assurances given by the Union Minister of Commerce, to a central delegation consisting of E. Balanandan, M.P. and P.K. Ganguly, neither the Central Government nor the State Government has taken any steps to reopen the mill. The 8000 workers are on a grim struggle since January 15.

**Mass Dismissals:** 1500 workers of the Government owned Madhavaram Dairy are under dismissal for the last four years. The Government has even refused to abide by the direction of the High Court to reconsider its decision of the mass dismissal.

**United Movements:** The representatives of CITU, AITUC, LPF (DMK) and other trade unions met at Madras on June 14 to chalk out programmes of united struggles against the number of closures, lockouts and retrenchments in the State which have affected several thousand workers. To organise the campaign the leaders of the trade unions undertook tours of all the industrial centres. On June 30 public meetings were held all over the state. A state level Convention has been called on July 22 which will finalise further programmes of action.

**Call by Opposition Parties:** 15 opposition parties of the state also have called for Joint movement against closures, lockouts, price rise, collapse of public distribution system, police repression, divisive forces and against the attitude of the Sri Lanka Government towards the Tamil minorities. The CPI (M), CPI, Kamraj Congress, Muslim League and the trade unions like CITU, AITUC, etc decided to organise joint demonstrations before the ration shops all over the state on July 4. On July 10 demonstrations will be held before the district police offices and on July 3 demonstration will be held before the office of the Sri Lanka High Commissioner at Madras. Prior to these, public meetings have been arranged all over the state to explain the programmes.

**Struggle in Hindustan Photo Films:** A settlement was arrived at with this public sector undertaking and the unions on October 13, 1983. But on refusal of the management to implement some clauses on the plea that the Government of India had rejected those, the workers launched agitations and then went on strike on April 20. The management then agreed to implement all the clauses before the State Labour Deptt, but did not do so. The workers were compelled to go on for another strike on May 11. But the management declared a closure on the same day afternoon. On June 11, the management brought some outside anti-social elements to work inside. When the workers prevented, suddenly the police swooped on and made indiscriminate lathi charges severely injuring over 60 workers including V.V. Giri, the General Secretary of the CITU Union who was transferred to hospital. About 90 workers were arrested under 307 I.P.C. Undeterred by the repres-

sion, the workers are on a determined struggle to achieve their demands.

## UTTAR PRADESH

**Jail Bharo By J.K. Rayon Workers:** Organised under the J.K. Rayon Workers' Union (CITU) the workers of this Singhania establishment have decided to launch a jail bharo movement from July 9. The factory is under closure since May 16, 1983, affecting 2200 workers and their 10,000 family members. A series of agitational actions were launched by the workers braving ruthless repressions. Dharnas were staged before the Union Commerce and Labour Minister also. A number of representations were made both to the State and Central Governments including by the Central CITU leaders. But while the State Government have recommended for a take over of the company, the Central Government remained adamant remaining subservient to the Singhanias. The situation compelled the workers to launch the jail bharo programme demanding take over of the company. All other trade unions have extended full support to the struggle.

## KERALA

**Struggle of Fishermen:** The Struggle of the traditional fishermen which started in May, reached a new stage on June 16, when the leaders of CITU, AITUC, UTUC and INTUC(S) started an indefinite fast in front of the Secretariat at Trivandrum. The struggle has been launched in pursuance of the long pending demands of the traditional fishermen for implementations of marine fishing regulations, of the welfare schemes of the fishermen, ban on trawling during monsoon, pension for fishermen. The LDF Government had formulated schemes for these, but the UDF Government reversed the schemes and remained recalcitrant towards the demands. The struggle is increasingly receiving support from different trade unions.

**P&T Employees:** The 18th Joint Circle Conference of P&T unions affiliated to NFPTE was held from May 12 to 16 at Alleppey. Inaugurating the Conference, Samar Mukherjee, General Secretary of CITU called upon the workers to step up united struggles against the spate of victimisation in P&T. The Conference adopted programmes of action against the administration, including non-cooperation if the victimisations were not withdrawn by June 15. On May 13, the Conference also organised a peace convention and adopted resolution to carryforward the struggle for peace against the danger of war created by the USA. The Conference concluded with a massive demonstration participated by 8,500 comrades and addressed among others by E.K. Nayanar. According to the programmes, notices of action were presented to the postal circle authorities on June 1 through demonstrations. On July 12 a central rally will be held at Trivandram. Demonstrations would also be held on the day in all the districts.

## BIHAR

**Lathi Charge on Bharat Wagon Workers :** The long drawn struggle of the CITU led workers of Bharat Wagons, Muzaffarpur, a Government of India Undertaking, demanding a negotiated settlement of the charter of demands, took a serious turn on May 23 when the workers were demonstrating before the Chairman cum Managing Director. The police made a brutal lathi charge severely injuring 15 workers. The Jt. Secretary of the Bharat Wagon Kamgar Union, Jt. Secretary of the Apprentice Sangharsh Samity and the Jt. Secretary of the Casual Workers' Sangharsh Samity were arrested. The struggle was being conducted by a Joint Action Committee comprising of the three unions. The police also tried to demolish the tent under which the workers were staging continuous dharna since December, 1983. The workers however fought back and prevented the demolition of the tent. The next day the workers went on a spontaneous strike and totally paralysed the work. A huge gate meeting and a torch light procession were held in the evening. On 25th a delegation met the district authorities demanded immediate suspension of the police officials responsible for the unprovoked attack. But not content with the repressive steps, the management suspended three office bearers of the union. It is to be noted that on several representations made by the leadership of the Central CITU, including Samar Mukherjee, M.P., the General Secretary, the Industries Minister, N.D. Tiwary had given a false reply that the dispute was settled through negotiations. While the State CITU has condemned the management and the police and demanded immediate settlement of the demands, Samar Mukherjee has demanded proper explanations from the Industries Minister on the issue. Braving all repressions, the workers are carrying forward the struggle with determination to compel the management to come down with a negotiated settlement. Fraternal support has been extended by all other trade unions in the town.

## HARYANA

**Struggle of B. K. Iron & Steel Workers :** The management of B. K. Iron & Steel, Bahalgarh retrenched 106 migrant workers who came from Orissa. They were contract labour and the management had engaged them in perennial work. The moment they formed a union, they were unceremoniously driven out from the factory with the hope that they will be compelled to go back to Orissa and then the management will make new recruits at still lower wages. But the workers fought back and staged indefinite dharna. The management secured a court order prohibiting the dharna within 500 yds. of the gate. The workers complied with the court order and shifted beyond 500 yds. The angered management engaged hirelings to burn down their tents. The undaunted workers again erected a tent and kept on vigil on the management to prevent any new recruit. In its desperate bid, the management hirelings burnt down the jhuggis of the workers on May 25. Braving all these

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# The Holocaust of Bhiwandi

THE Communal holocaust of Bhiwandi-Thane-Bombay from May 18 to 25 is probably the worst ever during the 37 years of Indian independence. This, is the result of the policy of the Government of India following the capitalist path of development, breeding the divisive forces. Thus observed Md. Ismail, M.P., Vice-President of CITU after his return from the riot torn areas of Maharashtra. The well organised and planned massacre of the muslim minorities in which over 300 people were killed, hundreds were injured and crippled and property worth lakhs of rupees were destroyed and looted by the rabid Shiv Sena-RSS communalists, stands as a monument of shame to the bourgeois-landlord Government of India and the faction-ridden Congress (I) gangster-echelons of Maharashtra. As rightly observed by Md. Ismail, while Bhiwandi-Thane-Bombay burnt, the Congress (I) fiddled with the Shiv Sena for an unholy alliance to extract the political gains on the eve of elections. The police stood only as a watch dog to protect the partisan interests of the Congress (I) to divide the people and the working class and divert their struggles from the crisis ridden curses of the bourgeois-landlord system. And so went on the communalists of both the sections rampaging over the poor minorities with a maddening frenzy that beggars description. It was only when they saw the jeeps of red flags that they heaved a sigh of relief.

## Why and how it Started

It was absolutely laid bare that the main force behind the massacre was the Shiv Sena. Along with it combined the other Hindu communal organisations. All these organisations thrived under the political blessings of the Congress (I) in the state. Since the Shiv Sena's emergence in the late 1960's, all the Congress factions utilised it for their narrow partisan ends, including the notorious Antulay and the present Vasant Dada. Even after its black hands were exposed in the riots of 1965, 1968, 1970 and then the present one, the Congress (I) refused to categorically identify and condemn the Shiv Sena as it intends to utilise it for the coming elections. The working class and the people must understand that it was a pre-planned assault on the minority to humble it, to frighten it and to compel it to vote for the party in power, if they wished to live in peace.

It was in this perspective that the present orgy began. In April, the Shiva Senas put up posters all over, that with the present growth of population, the muslims would soon outnumber the Hindus. Then, large boards were put up in various street corners announcing of a huge public meeting at Chowpatty to be addressed by Ball Thackeray, the Shive Sena Chief and leaders of other Hindu communal organisations, to save the country from the danger of "green revolution" — an open provocation to the muslim minority. The CPI(M), CPI, CITU and other left and democratic organisations drew the attention of the Government to the danger

of a communal holocaust. But the Government remained non-chalant. In this public meeting Ball Thackeray made the most incendiary remarks against the muslims that, "If they do not say Vande Mataram, they should be thrown out and sent to Pakistan". On May 3 next, the Government for the first time after the 1970 riots, allowed the Shiv Senas to take out a Shiv Jayanti procession to celebrate the birth day of Shivaji, skillfully planning to lead the trouble. The Hindu Mahasabha posters branded the procession as a "victory of militant Hindus over their enemies". On May 7, the Pune based magazine "Sabat" published a rabidly communal article against the muslims. In retaliation, the Urdu papers published an answer against Thackeray. Following up, the Congress(I) MLA, A.R. Khan led a muslim procession at Parbhani which culminated in a demonstration garlanding Thackeray's photo with shoes and chappals, following the regular practice of the Shiv Senas. The Shiv Senas further retaliated by organising forcible bundhs in different areas in Bombay from May 15. All these nearly two months the Government simply fiddled while allowing the shape of things to be moulded and provoked by the Shiv Senas, despite repeated pointers by the left and democratic forces for maintaining the communal harmony. The CPI(M) and CITU also publicly warned the Government during the May Day rally. The flash point came on May 17 when the Shiv Senas put up Saffron flags at different places which was answered with the green flags by the Jamaite-islami. A fight ensued and the things exploded on May 18 at Bhiwandi. The rioters used knives, iron bars, swords, acid bulbs, petrol bombs, detonator explosives, molotov cocktails, Kerosine oil and revolvers in the carnage. The minorities were attacked by a 1000 strong mob. Their huts were burnt, properties looted and they were roasted alive. The most significant fact was that over 95 per cent of the properties of the poor and lower middle class — huts, shops, powerlooms, cattlesheds, were burnt. The rich were left untouched. The minorities — the muslims and others like the Malayalis, Tamils, Telegus and Kannadies, made a mass exodus for safety against the savage vengeance of the Shiv Senas and other Hindu communalists.

## Relief Operations

According to the leaders and M.Ps of CPI(M) who visited the riot torn areas, the relief operations were utterly poor and inadequate. Ahiliya Rangnekar, Godavari Parulekar as well as the M.Ps viz, Md. Ismail, Amal Dutta, R.P. Das and Massadul Hussain visited the places and the relief camps. The mass of humanity ravaged by the beastly humans were kept huddled together in the camps in hundreds like the sheep are thrust into the pen. Water supply was insufficient, sanitary conditions deplorable, no medical care and they had

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# Development in Punjab

Harkishan Singh Surjeet

EVERYONE in the country should feel concerned with what has been happening in Punjab. There have been three types of reactions to the recent developments in Punjab. Some people have heaved a sigh of relief at the flushing out of the extremists from the Golden Temple; some have termed the happenings tragic but unavoidable, and as far as Sikhs are concerned, on the whole feelings have been injured. They are expressing their anguish and protest in different ways, not only in Punjab, and not only in the other States in the country, but all over the world wherever they reside. In spite of the exposure of the extremists who had stockpiled highly sophisticated weapons and made the sacred place of worship into their arsenal, there is a general sense of anguish in the Sikh community. The very idea of the army having entered the Golden Temple has offended their religious sentiments. The communal polarisation has become more acute and the minds of people are getting poisoned. This suits the imperialists and the extremists. Though a big chunk of extremists have been liquidated, the ideological base of extremism has been further widened. The official leadership of the Akali Party stands isolated now and nobody is in a position to negotiate in this situation.

## CPI(M) Stand

While reiterating our constant condemnation of the activities of the extremists of killing innocent people and raising separatist slogans, we expressed our strong feeling that these tragic happenings could have been avoided if only the Prime Minister and the Central Government of the Congress had accepted the proposals of the Opposition parties for a solution of the Punjab tangle.

Our party also had repeatedly warned the Government that the situation could not be met by administrative measures alone and it was necessary to find a political solution to the problem. Otherwise, according to our party, the Government would be playing into the hands of the extremists.

It is no use debating now whether at this juncture the use of the army to flush out the extremists and establish law and order had become necessary. The army no doubt, took tremendous precautions to protect the Golden Temple and in spite of continuous fire, not a single shot was fired at the Harmandir Sahib by them.

We have to see the total effect of the developments on the situation in the state and the country as a whole. This action cannot be taken in isolation to what has been happening for more than two years now.

## Underground Arsenal

The discovery of stockpiles of sophisticated weapons and an underground maze of tunnels, manholes and bunkers opening right into the central room of the Akal Takht, puts the believers to shame because such a place of worship as the Golden Temple was converted into an arsenal by the extremists who were openly advocating the killing of innocents. The extremists wanted the Golden Temple to be blown up by the army, which would have enabled them to rouse the religious sentiments of the Sikhs and rally them behind their nefarious slogan of Khalistan. It is unfortunate that the people are still not able to see how the extremists were tampering with the sanctity of the Gurdwara. What had been happening inside when known to the public, will put the whole community to shame.

## An Avoidable Situation

But the question before us is whether what happened on June 6 in Amritsar and other places in Punjab could have been avoided? Our answer is positively yes, it could have been avoided. Several efforts were made to reach a negotiated settlement. But the Govt. did not respond. On April 20, 1983, an agreement was arrived at. Only the modalities of implementation were to be worked out. It was again the Government which backed out. On June 30, 1983 the Opposition parties worked out a consensus on the territorial disputes—that Chandigarh be handed over to the Punjab and certain areas be given to Haryana from Punjab to compensate Haryana, along with the finances to build a new capital. The Government again rejected this proposal. What the Prime Minister has now said in her broadcast to the nation on June 2 is more or less the same.

Commenting on the broadcast, S. Sahay has written in *The Statesman* dated June 7, "Further, on the two main demands—Chandigarh and river waters—Mrs. Gandhi had made it clear that Chandigarh should go to Punjab provided Haryana gets some Hindi-speaking area as compensation. This means that transfer of Abohar and Fazilka is no more linked with the transfer of Chandigarh". At all times the Akalis were prepared to accept this. That is why we say that if the Prime Minister had accepted the advice of Opposition parties, the solution could have been found long ago and we could have been saved from the tragic developments of June 6 which have aroused the religious sentiments of the Sikhs.

## Who Encouraged The Extremists?

We and other Opposition parties were constantly demanding a political solution to the Punjab tangle. This would have gone a long way to isolate the

extremists and fight them politically. Even the Akali leadership was demarcating itself from the extremists activities of killing innocent people. But it was the Government which wanted the extremists to be roped into any settlement and it was prepared to pay the price of release of all extremists.

Is it not a fact that P.S. Bhinder was sent from Delhi to Punjab to make a rapprochement with Bhindranwale? Was it not in the knowledge of the Government that many officials were in touch with the extremists and even when the people intervened and handed over the extremists to the police they were not touched? Is it not a fact that the chief lieutenants of Bhindranwale were released at the behest of central leaders? Is it not the Congress party which tried to build up Bhindranwale to fight the Akalis?

Who created the Dal Khalsa? When Bhindranwale visited Bombay and Delhi with armed men whose licences had been cancelled, who arranged for his reception in Delhi and Bombay? When the Akalis under pressure from the extremists, launched a movement against Article 25 of the Constitution and Parliament unanimously condemned their action because it was communalising the whole politics, was it not the Prime Minister and the Home Minister who promised that amendment would be made to Article 25, and that too, without taking the Opposition into confidence?

### Congress-I Interests Supreme

The Government was prepared to settle with the Akalis if they were prepared to support the Government and share power. It was prepared to settle with Bhindranwale forgetting all that he had done, provided he was prepared to help the ruling party to perpetuate its rule. The Government never sought the cooperation of Opposition parties to find a solution; it was using the Opposition parties only to pressurise the Akalis and then have a political deal with them directly. The narrow interests, of the Congress(I) party had always supremacy over national interests. Why is it that for the last one and a half years the Government has been refusing the demand for a White Paper on the activities of the extremists?

### Unity Weakened

How weak are the foundations of secularism in the country is proved by the fact that if in one State extremists belonging to one community indulge in disruptive activities in killing people belonging to another community, it has an immediate reflection on persons belonging to the same community in other states. If communal riots take place in one area they divide the people on communal lines. The voice of reason in defence of communal harmony becomes very weak.

In reality the Government uses these disturbances in order to weaken the democratic movement without going into its harmful consequences for national integration and national unity.

The Government talks about a foreign hand in destabilising the country but its policies provide a breeding ground for divisive and separatist forces and this is what suits imperialism.

The Government spends lot of money on various intelligence agencies, but now we have come to know that nobody in the Government had any knowledge of the stockpiling of sophisticated weapons in the Darbar Sahib complex. From where had these weapons come and how? Does it not show complete incompetence?

The ruling party must realise that parties may come and go, but if the unity of the country is disrupted it will prove very harmful both for our country and for the world. Today the divisive forces, the fundamentalists and separatists encouraged by imperialist powers are very active and doing everything to threaten the unity of the country. All the patriotic forces have to be made conscious of this danger. To use such a situation for narrow political ends is to play with fire.

The ruling party and its Government even at this stage must draw proper lessons from their handling of the situation in Punjab, in Jammu Kashmir and in Assam and other States of the north-eastern region.

### Role of Akali Party

During the present struggle the Akali Party has been demarcating itself from the activities of the extremists who were indulging in killing innocent people, committing dacoities and robberies. But they knew that the extremists were operating from the premises of the Golden Temple. The extremists were holding Press Conference in the precincts of the Golden Temple, they were using the platforms of Gurdwaras to instigate people to take revenge, they were openly advocating sacrilege of religious place. They announced the Constitution of Khalistan and raised its "flag". All these antinational actions were committed in complete disregard of the sanctity of gurdwaras. Never in the history of Gurdwaras management since 1921, were they made into arsenal with stockpiles of sophisticated weapons.

While the Akali leaders were objecting to the entry of the police into the gurdwaras, did they not have an obligation not to allow the criminals to find shelter in the gurdwaras and make their premises storehouses of all sorts of weapons?

The Akali leadership was claiming that their movement was peaceful but what about the parallel movement based on violence against innocent people going on from the same premises, without any open denunciation of them by the Akali leaders? In fact whenever extremists were caught red-handed, the Akali leaders defended them as innocent. They denied the storing of arms and harbouring of crimi-

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criminal acts of the management the workers are on a determined fight for reinstatement. In a statement, CITU has demanded immediate reinstatement of the workers and action against the management. The Union Labour Minister however still has maintained silence over the CITU's representations.

## DELHI

**Court Arrest by CITU Workers:** Demanding a minimum wage of Rs. 500 per month for the unskilled workers at 300 points of Consume Price Index, the workers organised under CITU in different industrial establishments, courted arrest on May 29 at Delhi. CITU had rejected the Delhi Administration's proposal of Rs. 354 and demanded Rs. 500 for the unskilled workers, Rs. 675 for the semi-skilled and Rs. 850 for the skilled workers as minimum wage. The variable D.A. should be Rs. 2 per point to all categories. In a number of processions the workers assembled a Patel Chowk and proceeded to Parliament Street for courting arrest. A total of 668 workers courted arrest on the day. CITU has approached all other trade unions, and as the second phase of movement an all trade union convention will be held to prepare for a one day's strike. Other higher forms of actions will be chalked out for carrying forward

the struggle thereafter.

## CITU Disapproves NSA Amendments

The Government of India in the name of curbing terrorism and separatist activities, especially in Punjab, has made two sweeping amendments to the National Security Act by promulgating an ordinance on June 21.

The amendments are intended to prevent the invalidation of detention if one of the grounds given for detention is found to be infirm and permit further detention after the expiry of revocation of a detention order with the proviso that the subsequent detention order will be subjected to the maximum period of 12 months, while, keeping unaffected the limit of 24 months for the disturbed areas of Punjab and Chandigarh.

Though, the Government had promised that the new provisions will not be used for vindictive actions against political parties, the experience of the trade union movement is that such provisions had been used against trade union and democratic movements. The CITU disapproves of these further amendments to the NSA.

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practically to starve. The black marketeers, reaping the harvest, were selling milk at Rs. 5 per litre, bread at Rs. 3 to Rs. 5 per loaf and so on. A 300 bed hospital was ready at Bhiwandi with equipments, but it was not used, as it was yet to be "inaugurated" by a VIP.

### Attempts to Restore Harmony

The CITU, AITUC, HMS, UTUC, and other trade unions met together on May 25 and formed a Joint Action Committee. They forced the Government to call a meeting of the National Integration Council. Prabhakar Sanzgiri (CITU) and B.S. Dhume (AITUC) pinpointed the culprits by name, but still the Government refused to take actions against the culprits. The CPI(M), CPI, CITU, AITUC and other organisations jointly organised a massive procession in Bombay on June 2. The procession joined by over two thousand people wound its way through the working class areas of central Bombay and culminated in a rally. The procession was led by Ahiliya Rangnekar, A.B. Savant CPI(M) and B.S. Dhume (CPI). A sea of red flags and banners characterised the march, reverberating with the slogans, "Down with the communal monsters", "Vasant Dada Government resign", "Long live working class unity" etc. The CPI(M) unit at Wada, an Adivasi area in Thane district sensing the trouble, immediately formed squads of Adivasi peasants which moved in the localities and prevented the mischief. They also removed the minority muslim community to safe places. In the process,

Kisan Halya Hadab, a CPI(M) activist and his family were beaten up by the rioters and his property looted. The CPI(M) unit in Bhiwandi also played a significant role in restoring communal harmony. The CPI(M) office at Bhiwandi was burnt down by the rioters. The SFI, Maharashtra Committee and DYFI also convened a joint meeting of the democratic student and youth organisations on June 2 to launch campaign for communal harmony. A joint convention has been called in Bombay in the first week of July. On June 12, a joint trade union convention was held at Bombay. Presided over by P. Sanzgiri of CITU, the convention was participated by AITUC, SSS, MFUCTO, Dutta Samant led unions and other trade unions. The State CITU also distributed thousands of leaflets condemning the State Government and the communal forces and appealing to the working class and the people to maintain communal harmony.

The riot is over, but the communal poison has spread far and wide. The working class, all the trade unions and the democratic forces are now left with the uphill task of fighting the communal poison and the defeating the divisive forces to channelise the struggles against the policies of the Government. It is obvious that a task of such demensions cannot be entrusted to the Congress(I), which even at this stage is busy in deriving political advantage out of the debris. At the prompting of the High Command, the notorious Antulay has been put in charge of a Committee for the rehabilitation of the riot victims. The question is being rightly raised in the political circles — who will be really rehabilitated, the riot victims or Antulay himself?

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nals in the Golden Temple and gurdwaras. We know that there was no love lost between Sant Longowal and Bhindranwale and even Prakash Singh Badal was on the hit-list of the extremists. But nobody has the courage to stand firm to protect the sanctity of the Golden Temple and clear it of anti-national forces. On the other hand, the movement was allowed to pass into the hands of the extremists.

Why has there been a change this time? The reason lies in the fact that the Akali leadership had become a prisoner of its own slogans. They were caught by extremists in their own net for once they maintained their adherence to the Anandpur Sahib resolution which advocates the formation of a state where the supremacy of the Sikhs is established, to their theory of Sikhs being a nation, their concept that religion and politics go together and following all this, the demand for amendment of Article 25 and Sikh Personal Law, they could not demarcate from the disruptive and separatist forces. These slogans lay the ideological basis of Khalistan, a slogan which the Akali leaders have been opposing. These slogans strike at the very basis of a secular State. Without understanding the implications, what they are advocating is the establishment of a theocratic State. i.e. Khalistan.

It is because of these slogans that the movement passed into the hands of the extremists and the Akali leadership lost control over it and today feels humiliated. If it had demarcated itself from the extremists and continued to join hands with the Opposition parties, the situation would have been different. They have to draw the proper lessons from these tragic happenings.

The extremists are still active and are propagating that the Akali leaders have betrayed the movement. With this propaganda they want to cover up their crimes and nefarious designs. Once this leadership which has experience and has imbibed a national outlook, loses its prestige and command, a vacuum will be created which can provide suitable ground for the extremists to operate. But the leaders have to pick up courage and see that the welfare of the Sikhs cannot be separated from the welfare and advance of the Hindus and others who live in Punjab, and with the welfare of the country as a whole. Those who have joined their followers in Srinagar with anti-India slogans are not their friends, and are only playing into the hands of the imperialists powers. The Akali Party has a strong base and it should not be allowed to be misled by the extremists.

This is the time to assuage the feelings of the Sikhs which have been hurt with the entry of the armed forces into the Golden Temple. But they have to see that the main responsibility for the situation lies on the extremists on the one hand, and on the other, the Government which continued to pursue a policy

of drift and did not accept the advice of the Opposition parties in finding a solution.

### Situation is Serious

One can say that the extremists have been flushed out of the Golden Temple Complex and from other hide-outs. But with the religious sentiments aroused, the ideological base of extremism has been widened. The role which the Hindu communalists are playing in Punjab and outside is adding fuel to the fire. With the curfew imposed in all towns and cities of the State, the political parties are paralysed. The complete censoring of news is resulting in the people either swallowing the imperialist propaganda made by Voice of America, the BBC, etc. or relying on various types of rumours spread by extremists and communalists of all hues.

It is the task of all secular and democratic-minded people to rise to the occasion, actively intervene in the situation and not allow the virus of communalism and separatism to further spread. They should see that the Government does not play one community against another, one State against another, that it accepts the genuine demands of the Punjabis and takes all measures to assuage the feelings of the Sikhs. The CPI (M), the CPI and the trade unions have to play an important role in this.

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(from page 2)

have virtually conceded that their attempt to strike terror in the hearts of the coal miners by deploying CISF, imposing wage cut, and penal measures including summary dismissals, had failed and unless the Govt intervenes immediately to bring an end to the policy of confrontation, withdraw the penal measures and ensure implementation of the National Coal Wage Agreement III, the resentment among the coal miners would lead to escalation of struggle in this vital sector of economy.

The CITU therefore demands that the Govt should immediately intervene in the matter and start a dialogue with the coal workers' Federations either separately or through the JBCCI for restoring normalcy in the coal industry in the national interest so that other branches of economy are not affected adversely.

The CITU appeals to all trade unions and democratic mass organisations to raise their powerful voice to bring an end to the policy of confrontation, for restoration of normalcy and settlement of the just demands of the workers which include implementation of the agreement and withdrawal of penal measures.

M.K. Pandhe, President All India Coal Workers' Federation also issued a statement on June 5 congratulating the workers for the successful strike.

# Glorious Movement in Raptakos Brett.

SINCE January last the field work in Raptakos Brett & Co. Ltd, a monopoly drug company remained totally paralysed due to countrywide agitations launched by the Federation of Medical Representatives' Associations of India (FMRAI). On behalf of the medical representatives of Company, FMRAI under which they are organised, submitted a charter of demands to the Company in July, 1983. The management sought for time till August end and asked for the list of the negotiating committee which was given. The field workers were waiting patiently for a negotiated settlement. But suddenly without any provocation, the management started attacking the field workers. Leading trade union functionaries including negotiating committee members were dismissed and transferred to distant places. Expense bills and salaries of over 150 field workers were illegally stopped. Not content with above, the management filed false police cases against a number of field workers.

In such a situation, the field workers of the company launched agitation against the victimisations and in defence of their trade union rights. On November 29, 1983 a successful one day strike was observed, participated by 86 per cent of the field workers. To break their consolidation under FMRAI, the management floated a fake Reptakos Brett Field Staff Association with a few stooge workers, arrived at a monetary agreement with it and tried to impose the same on others. In protest, the field workers went on two days' successful strike on February 2 and 3. They again resorted to a six-day strike from March 5 to 10. On March 8, the striking workers from all over India reached the company's Head Office at Bombay. FMRAI organised a street rally and a 1500 strong demonstration in front of the Head Office. But the management remained adamant and to suppress the movement, bribed the police officials in different states, recruited anti-socials, RSS hoodlums and relations of police officials. But the members of FMRAI accepted the challenge and carried forward the agitation. Relay hunger strikes and dharnas have been staged in every state before the Company's establishments.

The movement has taken a new turn with the participation of the family members in it. In Bihar, the mothers, sisters, and wives of medical representatives staged dharnas before the Company's establishments at Patna and Ranchi. While at Ranchi the family members numbering 16 staged a day long dharna on April 30 paralysing the functioning of the Depot, at Patna, they continued the dharna for full six days from April 30 to May 5 in the scorching heat. They raised slogans, physically obstructed supply of goods to and from the depot and compelled the local management to make trunk call to Bombay to convey their protest. They participated in the gate meetings daily which were addressed by

leaders of the various fraternal trade unions. Among those who participated in the programme were Sarnma Roy, Ila Chatterjee, Rita Adhya, Mitul Chowdhury, Manju Tarafdar, Tapasi Chatterjee, Rita Roy, Meera Banerjee, Chhaya Mukherjee, Kabita Chakrabarty, Aparna Chakrabarty, Suravi Ghosh, Bharati Majumdar, Mitali Sarkar, Reena Sahay, Ruma Bhattacharjee, Dipali Bhowmik, Latika Chatterjee, Mrs. Prasad Singh Roy, Sabitri Das, Ira Ganguly, Tapati Bishwas, Sanghamitra Ghosh, Kakoli Nag, Piu Guha Thakurta and Shanti Sharma.

The doctors, chemists' associations and other trade unions extended support. All medical representatives organised under FMRAI continued to donate one days' salaries to the struggle fund. The sales of the company fell down steeply, bringing it from the 4th position to the 20th position amongst the drug companies.

FMRAI approached the Government of India as well as all the State Governments for intervention. While none responded, the Labour Minister of the left front Government of West Bengal called the management for a negotiated settlement. But the management refused to make agreement with FMRAI and made a ridiculous offer to settle the issue only for the W. Bengal based medical representatives on the recommendation of the Labour Minister. This ridiculous offer was rejected by the Labour Minister and FMRAI. In the Working Committee meeting held at Calcutta on June 23 and 24, which was participated by the leadership of the All India Chemical and Pharmaceutical Employees' Federation, it was decided to step up the movement in conjunction with AICAPEF till all the victimisations are withdrawn and a negotiated settlement is arrived at.

## CITU General Council Meeting

The General Council Meeting of CITU will be held at Jaipur from August 24 to 26. All State Committees and industrial federations should send their reports to the Centre by July 15, covering the following points apart from other activities: (a) The economic situation in the state/industry in terms of closures, lockouts, retrenchments and other attacks on the working class, (b) Review of struggles against these attacks and (c) struggle for working class unity, its experiences and problems.

# Meeting of Jute Workers' Federation

THE Working Committee of the All India Jute Workers' Federation met in Calcutta on June 11 & 12. Mohammed Amin, Vice-President of the Federation was in the chair. Niren Ghosh, the General Secretary, submitted report on the last general strike and post strike situation and problems of Raigarh, Andhra Pradesh and Kanpur. Kamal Sarkar, Joint General Secretary, spoke on the Federation's activities and the tasks before it.

The Committee took serious note of the still continuing strike at Raigarh Jute Mills because of the employers' refusal to fully implement the last Calcutta agreement. As for Andhra Pradesh, in a tripartite meeting at Hyderabad the jute bosses and the Andhra Pradesh Government made a false promise that whatever agreement is reached in Calcutta would be fully implemented in Andhra Pradesh. The other trade unions took an active role to prevent the workers from going on strike on the plea that they will automatically get whatever the striking workers of West Bengal can achieve. And now the jute barons have taken the stand that they won't implement the Calcutta agreement. The Committee condemned the role of the Andhra Pradesh Government. The Committee expressed the hope that the jute workers of Andhra Pradesh will shed their illusions and launch an active struggle to get the Calcutta agreement implemented. The Committee also Condemned the BMS and UTUC (Lenin Sarani) who tried to run a slander campaign in Andhra Pradesh against the Calcutta agreement but was unsuccessful in their designs. The Working Committee in a resolution demanded that the Calcutta agreement be implemented on an all-India scale and that the jute industry and trade be nationalised forthwith. In other resolutions, it warned against the danger of war created by the U.S. imperialists and urged upon the workers to mobilise for peace; conduct active struggles for re-structuring Centre-State relations as per Srinagar declaration, for the 11-Point charter of demands as formulated at Calcutta meeting of the opposition parties and for the N.C.C. charter of demands. The Committee condemned the role of Congress(I) and its Government in the communal riots and the carnage unleashed by Bal Thackeray as their storm-trooper in Bhiwandi and Bombay. The Committee in a special resolution voiced its utmost condemnation of the arbitrary dismissal and imposition of President's rule in Sikkim and the efforts of Congress (I) to overthrow the Farooq Abdullah Government.

The Committee decided to hold the next Conference of the Federation at Vizianagram, Andhra Pradesh.

The meeting also welcomed the invitation from

the Textile and Light Industry Workers' Union's Central Committee to attend a symposium to be held in Moscow on 30th and 31st August, and unanimously decided to send Sibaprosad Bhattacharya as the delegate from Federation.

## CITU Condemns Suppression of Trade Union Activities in Ghaziabad and Modinagar

B. T. Ranadive, President, CITU has issued the following statement on June 7:

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions strongly condemns the prohibitory orders passed against Sushil Bhattacharya, M.P., General Secretary, Delhi State Committee of CITU and other CITU leaders debarring them from entering Ghaziabad District and Modinagar and clamping of section 144 I.P.C. in an authoritarian manner on June 6, 1984, just on the eve of a protest demonstration organised by CITU against the atrocious behaviour and repression started by O.N. Singh, S.O., Modinagar.

For some time past, the said S.O. had been acting as a lackey of the management and the INTUC union and attacking the CITU workers, beating them and arresting them on false charges in order to strike terror among the CITU membership in a vain bid to stem the tide of growth of CITU in the area. A demonstration and mass deputation to the District Magistrate for suspension and transfer of this S.O. was scheduled to be held on 6-6-84. While Sushil Bhattacharya, M.P., along with Prakash Karat, Secretary Delhi State Committee of CPI(M), Jogendra Sharma, Secretary, Delhi State Committee of CITU and others were proceeding to Modinagar, their car was stopped at Mohannager and the prohibitory order was served on them. Hundreds of workers were stopped at the railway station and bus depot by the police and were turned back. The resentment against this repressive policy was so high, that over 200 workers led by Jogendra Sharma went in a deputation to the District Magistrate but they were arrested on the way.

The CITU warns the Govt. that unless they take into cognizance the fact that the arbitrary repressive methods adopted by this particular S.O. is creating unrest among the workers and remove the source of such disturbance, the situation is likely to deteriorate further. The CITU condemns these repressive steps as these would not help restoring normalcy.

The CITU calls upon the workers of Ghaziabad and Modinagar to continue their resistance and appeals to all other trade union centres to raise their voice against this total suppression of all trade union activities.

## **Conference of Khagaria District AIDWA**

**T**HE first Conference of the Khagaria District (Bihar) AIDWA was held at Janata Vidyalaya, Mansi on May 27. The Conference was attended by about 700 delegates and observers who marched through the streets of Mansi shouting slogans and assembled at the conference hall. The significant feature was that over 90 per cent of the delegates were agricultural workers launching militant struggles in pursuance of their various demands led by Kishan Sabha. They consolidated themselves within a short time to form the district unit of AIDWA and hold the first Conference.

### **Inauguration by Vimal Ranadive**

The Conference was inaugurated by Vimal Ranadive, Vice-President of All India Democratic Women's Association and Secretary of All India Co-ordination Committee of Working Women. In her inaugural speech Vimal Ranadive highlighted the various movements launched by women in pursuance of their particular demands and also with the common demands of the people and the working class. She referred to the growing consciousness of women to demand for their rightful status in society and for more employment. Coming through struggles, the membership of AIDWA had come up to over 15 lakhs. She also stressed on the role of working women and urged for their more participation in trade union struggles under the Co-ordination Committees guided by the State Committees of CITU. She criticised the policy of the Congress(I) Government where even under a woman Prime Minister the condition of women was deteriorating. They were being discriminated in employments and remunerations and were the first targets for retrenchments. Atrocities on women were on the increase and they were the victims of both feudal torture and capitalist exploitation. She called upon them to join the mainstream of the democratic struggle in the country against the authoritarian policies of the Government and fight for their demands and rightful position in the society.

### **Discussions on the Report**

Jayashree Devi, Secretary of the District Committee placed the report of activities. In her report, she referred to the various struggles which were launched by the women in the district. She highlighted the militant struggle launched a few months back when several thousand women courted arrest protesting against the policies of the Congress(I) Government of Bihar.

Participating in the discussions on the report, more than ten delegates spoke on their various problems. Their speeches gave vivid description of the various ways of exploitation and oppression per-

petrated on women. Rama Devi from Parvati area made a scathing criticism of the Mukhia and Sarpanch of the village, who belonged to the Congress (I), for stealing money from the pension of the widows and the old women. She said, "We get only Rs. 30 per month as widows' pension, out of which the Mukhia takes Rs. 5 as his share. If this is denied no pension will be given to us." Several other delegates pointed out that out of 1000 women in the Anchal only 10 were enlisted for pension. Not to speak of pension, even for getting the application forms, bribes have to be paid. Since sometime past they have even stopped accepting applications for pensions. A number of pensions were due since 1981. The delegates expressed their determination for fight.

The majority of the delegates, being agricultural women, complained about the unequal wages they received for the same type and equal work. They said, they were being paid Rs. 2/- to Rs. 4/- only for the same work for which the men were being paid Rs. 8/- to Rs. 9. They criticised the Government for remaining recalcitrant to such injustices despite the fact that the Equal Remuneration Act was passed. Parvati Devi narrated that because of flood in Ganga about 200 families took shelter on the land of the landlord in their village. The landlord was trying to evict them by force. But despite repeated representations made to the Government, no help was coming from it. The discussions continued till late night after which Vimal Ranadive summed up the discussions and the report was adopted.

### **Resolutions**

The Conference passed a number of resolutions, viz. on land problem, widows' pensions, unequal wages, against corruption of the Mukhias and Sarpanchs, against the attacks and atrocities on the Harijan women by the landlords and their anti-social gangs, on the dowry deaths, on the anti-labour and anti-people policies of the Government and on peace movement. The Conference concluded with a call by Sudha Bindu Mitra, the leader of the Bihar Janawadi Mahila Samity for stepping up the struggles, who also summarised the future programme of action.

### **Open Session**

After the Conference, an open session was held which was attended by over 800 men and women. Among those who addressed the open session were Vimal Ranadive, Krishna Kant Singh, President of Bihar Kishan Sabha, Anandi Singh, Secretary of the District CPI (M) and leaders of SFI, DYFI and others. The speakers assured full support to the struggle of women and their demands.

# State Government Employees to Strike

THE All India State Government Employees' Federation has called upon the five million State Government employees of the country to observe one day nation wide token strike on September 4 for realisation of the following demands:

1. To control Price-rise by effecting radical change in the economic policy of the Central Government and by strengthening and widening of the public distribution system.
2. 8.33 per cent Bonus to State employees.
3. Interim relief to State employees on Central pattern pending pay parity with public sector employees.
4. Full Central D.A. with arrears.
5. Devolution of more funds by the Central Government to the State Governments.
6. Vacation of all victimations of the State Employees in different states and scrapping of all anti-employee enactments and ordinances.
7. Full Trade Union and Democratic rights for the State Employees.

This decision was taken by the National Executive of All India State Government Employees' Federation held at Bombay on June 10 and 11. The State Government employees of the country who number more than five millions are a deprived lot. Their genuine demands are not being conceded by the State Governments as they are suffering from the financial constraints. When the Central Government is approached, it simply ignores the problems stating that these are state subjects.

The All India State Government Employees' Federation strongly feels that towards solving the State Employees' problems and meeting their demands there is a dual responsibility of both the State Governments and the Central Government. The Central Government, whose economic policy is responsible for the price-rise etc., cannot at all deny their responsibility towards providing funds to the State Governments for giving D.A. to the State employees. Similarly, bonus being a national policy, the Central Government cannot turn a deaf ear to this demand of the state employees and they should provide funds for the purpose. While the left front Governments are supporting the cause of the state employees, they are handicapped because of lack of resources of funds which the Central Government is refusing to resolve. Now that the State Government employees have been reduced to the position of recipients of the lowest pay among the employees and workers of organised sectors, the Central Government will have to take measures so that the situation is remedied.

So with a view to draw the attention of both the Central and State Governments, the five million state employees will observe one day's token strike on September 4. Campaigns and demonstrations have already been launched by the employees in preparation of the strike. The Federation solicited the support of the press and the public to the just

cause of the state Government Employees' and their struggle.

# Meeting of Water Transport Workers' Federation

THE Working Committee of the Water Transport Workers' Federation of India met at Calcutta on June 2 and 3. The meeting warmly congratulated the port and dock workers for their historic unity and determined struggle in the nation-wide strike from 15th March to 10th April, 1984. The Working Committee also congratulated the Trade Union organisations within the country and abroad for the solidarity and support expressed by them in support of the strike. The meeting condemned the Government of India for the move taken by it to declare the strike as illegal and for deployment of navy to undertake the job of the striking workers. The developments at Paradip, Tuticorin, Kandla and Cochin during the strike period were reviewed in details and the meeting condemned the authorities of these ports as well as the State Governments for the role taken by them for breaking the morale of the striking workers. It was the united might of the workers which ultimately compelled the government of India to come to the terms for a settlement. The meeting warmly congratulated the Government of West Bengal for extending its support to the striking workers, and for its refusal to extend police help to the Indian Navy deployed to act as strike breaker.

From the experiences of the past and the role taken by the Government of India in not implementing the settlements reached in other public sectors, the Federation viewed that only a united might of the port and dock workers can ensure the proper implementation of the settlement. The meeting, therefore, called upon the port and dock workers to strengthen the unity still further and be ready for necessary action for implementation of the settlement and finalisation of the outstanding issues. A campaign and agitational programme was chalked out by the Federation to be implemented by its affiliates at the different ports.

The meeting also decided to continue further campaign and agitational programmes for the Indian Seamen. The Indian Seamen all over the country will launch campaign and movements against the Serious reduction of employment opportunities, supply of sub-standard and unhygienic food on board the vessel, unhealthy atmosphere of accommodations, etc. The meeting also decided to launch programmes of action demanding departmentalisation of all the workers working in the establishments installed by the Port and Dock Labour Board Authorities under the Workers' Welfare Scheme. It further decided to organise the workers in the minor ports and also the workers under the different Clearing and Forwarding Establishments and under the Inland Water Transport System.

## Labour Minister's Reply Reveals Management Deficiencies

WHILE answering questions on closures, the Labour Minister, Shree Veerendra Patil's reply confirmed the managements' deficiencies and faulty Government policy as the reasons. The questions put by Ajit Bag, M.P., (CPI-M) and the replies given by the Labour Minister on March 6 are as follows. It should be noted that the Government does not maintain unit wise details of closures, neither with respect to the dates of closures nor the number of workers affected. The statewise data of the number of closures and the number of workers affected are also a gross underestimate.

**Shri Ajit Bag :** will the Minister of Labour And Rehabilitation be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of closures up-to-date in the country and total number of workers affected thereby;

(b) State-wise break-up of the closed units with dates of the closures and the number of workers affected, unit-wise/state-wise;

(c) the reasons of the above closures; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to open the closed units by taking over or nationalisation, to save the workers?

**Answer: Shree Veerendra Patil**

(a) & (b) : On the basis of available information, a State-wise Statement showing the number of closures and workers affected during 1983 is attached. Unit-wise details of closures are not maintained.

(c) Closures have variously been due to financial stringencies, shortage of raw material and power, lack of demand, mis-management and industrial disputes.

(d) Government's policy on industrial sickness lays stress on remedial action to rehabilitate undertakings which have become sick. Under the policy, Banks and Financial Institutions are expected to take appropriate corrective action on the basis of diagnostic studies undertaken by them in each case. Government also provide necessary assistance for implementation of rehabilitation schemes prepared by Banks and Financial Institutions. Wherever it is found that a Unit cannot be revived, Government consider whether the Unit should be nationalised or any other alternative including workers' participation, can provide solution. Nationalisation could be considered only if the Unit can be made viable in a reasonable period of time and if it is in public interest to do so.

Name of States/Union Territories	No. of Closures	No. of workers affected
1. Andhra Pradesh	2	6,123
2. Assam	1	7
3. Bihar	5	5,930
4. Gujarat	36	10,656
5. Haryana	7	216
6. Himachal Pradesh	1	320
7. Jammu & Kashmir	...	...
8. Karnataka	—	—
9. Kerala	3	176
10. Madhya Pradesh	4	4,189
11. Maharashtra	35	718
12. Manipur	...	...
13. Meghalaya	...	...
14. Nagaland	—	—
15. Orissa	6	3,495(P)
16. Punjab	17	410
17. Rajasthan	6	1,656
18. Sikkim	...	...
19. Tamil Nadu	12	514
20. Tripura	...	...
21. Uttar Pradesh	...	4,207
22. West Bengal	45	3,451
23. Andaman & Nicobar	—	—
24. Arunachal Pradesh	...	...
25. Chandigarh	3	123
26. Dadra & Nagar Haveli	...	...
27. Delhi	8	526
28. Goa, Daman & Diu	1	105
29. Lakshdweep	—	—
30. Mizoram	...	...
31. Pondicherry	—	—
Total	192	42,822

(—)=Nil, (...)=Not available, (P)=Provisional.

### CITU Delegation to China

A seven member delegation to China will leave Calcutta on 3rd July and reach Beijing on 4th July via Rangoon and Kunming. The delegation is visiting China as per invitation conveyed by Com. Ni Zhifu, President, All China Federation of Trade Unions when he visited India recently.

Com. M.K. Pandhe, Secretary CITU will be the leader of the delegation. The other members of the delegation are as follows: Com. Kamal Sarkar, Secretary CITU, Com. Md. Amin, General Secretary, Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union, Com. M.M. Lawrence, Secretary, CITU, Com. K.K. Roy Gangulry, General Secretary Water Transport Workers' Federation of India, Com. Asit Dutta, Secretary, Goalpara Dist. Akhil Bharatiya Cha Mazdoor Sangh and Com. Lalaji Babu, Plantation Workers' leader from Punalur (Kerala).

# Secretariat Decisions

- \* **Condemned the repressive measures taken in the coal industry.**
- \* **Reiterated the Demand of Nationalisation of all Textile Mills.**
- \* **Decided to hold General Council meeting at Jaipur on August 24-26, '84.**

A meeting of the secretariat which was extended to the available members of working committee was held at New Delhi on 19-6-84 under the presidentship of Com. B.T. Ranadive, President, CITU.

Com. Samar Mukherjee, M.P., Com. E. Balanandan M.P., Com. Sushila Gopalad M.P., Com. Mohd. Ismail M.P., Com. Krishna Pada Ghosh, Com. S.Y. Kolhatkar, Com. Harshay Singh, Com. Shibaji Patnaik, Com. P.K. Ganguly, Com. Ahilya Rangneker, Com. Vimal Ranadive, Com. M.K. Pandhe, Com. R. Umanath and Com. Nrisingha Chakraborty were present.

The secretariat heard report about the 48 hrs strike in the coal industry. The secretariat condemned the repressive measures which have been taken by the C.I.L. authorities who in order to cover up their failure to settle the issues, have become vindictive. They have illegally imposed 8 days wage-cut, terminated services of many temporary workers and suspended the leaders of various coal unions giving rise to serious situation in this vital industry. The secretariat expressed satisfaction in that the workes have already started protest meetings dharnas etc and the resentment is growing. The secretariat decided that the General Secretary should meet the Prime Minister and apprise her about the gravity of the situation and demand her intervention. As the wage-cut was blatantly illegal, the secretariat decided to explore the possibility of taking recourse to legal steps as well.

The Secretariat noted that the situation in the textile industry has become worse and now 17 mills in Gujarat have been closed

down throwing thousands of workers out of employment. The demand of nationalising all textile mills, which was raised by CITU after nationalisation of 13 mills of Bombay, has now been raised by other trade union centres also. The secretariat criticised the Labour Ministry for not holding the meeting of the Industrial Committee on Textile industry though agenda for the meeting was submitted nearly one year back. The secretariat reiterated the demand of nationalisation of all textile mills and decided to explore the possibility of developing united movement on the issue through mutual consultations with other trade union organisations functioning in the industry.

Having noted the present developments, the secretraiat decided to hold the General Council meeting of CITU at Jaipur on August 24-26, 1984. In order to have a fruitful discussion, the secretariat directed the State Committees and Federations to send reports detailing the extent of crisis affecting their industry/state, the nature of resistance developed, reviewing the struggles led against the same and detailing their experience and the problems of united front functioning. The secretariat while discussing the agenda of the General Council meeting decided that the problems of Sugar industry should also be discussed in the meeting.

## Consumer Price Index Numbers

Base 1960

State/Centre	Feb. 1984	Mar. 1984	Apr. 1984				
				Nagpur	561	569	570
				Sholapur	600	690	588
<b>Andhra Pradesh</b>				<b>Orissa</b>			
Gudur	504	498	498	Barbil	510	503	515
Guntur	595	581	585	Sambalpur	584	590	593
Hyderabad	557	554	548	<b>Punjab</b>			
<b>Assam</b>				Amritsar	556	555	554
Digboi	547	558	568	<b>Rajasthan</b>			
Doom Dooma	460	453	453	Ajmer	552	549	542
Labac	422	449	459	Jaipur	574	563	556
Mariani	488	486	486	<b>Tamil Nadu</b>			
Rangapara	474	470	475	Madras	555	556	556
<b>Bihar</b>				Coimbatore	603	606	605
Jamshedpur	507	509	511	Coonor	640	640	633
Jharia	517	516	503	Madurai	631	612	601
Kodarma	579	580	582	<b>U.P.</b>			
Monghyr	583	562	551	Kanpur	539	532	515
Noamundi	523	522	524	Saharanpur	560	557	545
<b>Gujarat</b>				Varanasi	637	630	634
Ahmedabad	554	547	551	<b>West Bengal</b>			
Bhavanagar	568	560	562	Asansol	539	540	541
<b>Haryana</b>				Calcutta	523	521	536
Yamunanagar	552	557	559	Darjeeling	459	460	452
<b>J. &amp; K.</b>				Howrah	492	498	496
Srinagar	605	601	626	Jalpaiguri	438	441	441
<b>Karnataka</b>				Raniganj	599	498	500
Ammathi	593	580	573	<b>Delhi Territory</b>	559	562	570
Bangalore	637	632	625	<b>Other Centres</b>			
Chikamagalur	595	592	594	Berhampur ('49)	754	753	750
Kolar G.F.	582	559	571	Cuttack ('49)	717	707	707
<b>Kerala</b>				Jabalpur ('49)	731	738	746
Alleppey	631	626	636	Beawar ('51-52)	640	635	627
Alwaye	611	612	610	Tripura ('61)	492	508	529
Mundakayam	591	580	577	H.P. ('65)	399	402	406
<b>Madhya Pradesh</b>				Goa ('66)	406	411	412
Balaghat	574	571	574	Bhilai ('66)	367	368	368
Bhopal	595	599	596	Bhilwara ('66)	338	335	328
Gwalior	553	557	554	Chhindawara ('66)	302	300	301
Indore	580	591	596	Kothagudem ('66)	348	350	351
<b>Maharashtra</b>				Rourkela ('66)	370	365	367
Bombay	578	579	586	All India ('60)	561	558	559

(Figure in bracket indicate base year)

# Observance of May Day Abroad

THE Working class in the West prepared to celebrate May Day this year against a backdrop of declining standard of living, massive attacks on the trade unions by big business and the bourgeois governments, activation of right wing forces and a growing danger of war. In every single capitalist country attempts are being made to deprive the working class of the rights it has won through years of hard struggle and to abolish trade union freedom. The workers of the advanced capitalist countries, developing countries and the socialist countries rallied during the May Day to voice their common yearning to defend peace threatened by U.S. imperialism and to strengthen unity of action to push forward social progress, cooperation and understanding among all peoples of the world. The following are some features of these fights.

## United States

Although 1st May is not recognised as a public holiday, rallies were held in all the main cities of the country under the slogan, "Unity in the struggle for peace, jobs and equality." In Chicago from where the tradition of celebrating the May Day originated, thousands of workers rallied and demonstrated. In New York a huge rally was held on April 28 in the union square condemning the Pentagon plans to construct a nuclear weapon store in New York port. Demonstrations were organised by the dockers at Boston and Baltimore, school teachers at Gary, tyre makers in Denver, construction workers at San Francisco and others. Some strikes continued for two to three weeks. The workers demanded freeze of nuclear arms, right to social security, labour legislations, right to trade union activities and collective bargaining, strike actions and minimum wage.

## Great Britain

The British coal miners' strike which began in March, has become the longest in Western Europe — the most significant during the May Day Celebrations. Hundreds of workers have been injured in clash with the police and a large number has been arrested including Arther Scargill, the President of the National Union of Coal miners. In early June the police swooped on the coal workers to prevent the picketers from blocking coke deliveries. The undaunted workers hurled metal ball bearings, bricks and potatoes spiked with nails at the police. Picketing continued at various coal mines, electric stations, railway junctions and sea ports. Synchronizing with the May Day, huge rallies were organised from 28th April in different coal mines and places. In solidarity with the strikers, transport workers suspended the haulage of solid fuel and dockers refused to touch imported coal. The coal miners' strike has become the focus of home life in Britain. Radio and T.V. reports sound like war communi-

ques. The Thatcher Government, loosing its nerves, is resorting to brute force in vain. The myth of "British democracy" has burst like a soap bubble. Ian Macgregor, an American manager put in charge of the British coal industry, uttered in his frenzied exasperation that he would make no concessions, he will still close down 20 pits and throw out 20,000 jobs. Exposing her vengeance against the coal workers, Margaret Thacher said, "This is an attempt to substitute rule of law with rule of the mob." In reply, the Marxist leader Arther Scargill said that the National Coal Board will have to keep all the 175 mines of Britain open. Mick McGahey, President of the Scottish Miners' Union, speaking at a rally in London called upon the British workers to join enmasse the Trade Union Day of Action on 9th May in support of the miners. The national conference of representatives from all the regional branches of the mine workers' unions decided to carry on with the strike till the Government withdraws its move of closures.

## CITU Condemns Thatcher Government

*In the following letter to the National Union of Coalminers, Britain, sent on June 12, CITU extended support to the coalminers' strike and demanded release of Arther Scargill, the Union's President:*

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions warmly congratulates and extends firm solidarity to the coal miners of Great Britain who under the leadership of the National Union of Coal Miners have been struggling for over three months against closing down of several coal mines by British National Coal Board, which would throw thousands of coalminers jobless to the streets. The coal miners are conducting the struggle heroically despite the callous attitude of the National Coal Board and the Govt. of Great Britain towards their sufferings while the working class of the country has extended full solidarity and support to the coal miners.

The CITU condemns the Thatcher Govt. of Great Britain which instead of intervening for an early settlement has started repression and arrested Brother Arther Scargill, President of the National Union of Coal Miners.

The CITU demands that Brother Scargill should be released forthwith and the struggle should be settled through negotiations.

Yours sincerely,  
Nirisingha Chakrabarty  
Secretary

## West Germany

"Peace and jobs and 35-hour work a week" was the main slogan which reverberated throughout the main cities of the country during the May Day rallies. The rallies started with the Easter days in the third week of April in which tens of thousands took part. Thousands of striking steel workers marched to Bonn with their demand for 35-hour work a week. The West German steel workers are demanding the 35-hour week as a way to create new jobs and safeguard the existing ones. Unemployment has reached the staggering figure of 3 millions in the country. The more than a month old strike by over 66,000 steel workers is costing the country more than 109 million dollars a day. But the adamant Government is still refusing to come down below 38 hour a week and open up new avenues of employment, which the workers have rejected. The IG Metal Workers' Union has won an injunction in Frankfurt Labour Court preventing several companies from locking out in the state of Hesse. About 150,000 workers of other unions staged solidarity demonstrations in June in eleven cities in Hesse demanding of the Government to concede. The strike is also causing political problem for Chancellor Helmut Kohl who is facing scathing criticism by the Social Democrats for mishandling the strike. The working class of the country has condemned the deployment of the American missiles and military spending by the Kohl Government which has landed the country in a severe crisis. The Ruhr industrial region is the worst hit with 16 per cent of the adult population unemployed. In a massive rally the workers reiterated the demand for the 35-hour week which they said is the only way to ease the situation. They denounced the Government for consenting to the deployment of U.S. missiles, but refusing to concede to the 35-hour week demand. They resolved to fight and said, "Those who fight may lose, but those who do not fight will never win."

## Belgium

Belgium is in the midst of a wave of strikes. Steel workers are being followed by port workers, aircraft engineers, school teachers, civil servants and students. Two national general strikes have been called on the eve of May Day. After two years of austerity drive which cost 6 per cent fall in the income of the people, the Government has planned to tackle the crisis by saving 250,000 million Francs at the expense of the working people which will further reduce their income by another 6 per cent. To bring this "economic recovery" the Government has called for "new sacrifices". It has decided to reduce all social benefits, unemployment relief and cut spending on education and other state services; but big business gets thousands of millions of Francs in tax exemptions. In one year unemployment has gone up by 10 per cent. The urge for unity among the workers is growing. In their May Day address, the leaders of the big trade union centres, viz General Federation of

Labour and the Federation of Christian Trade Unions said that the Government's plans can be frustrated only through joint efforts by all the working people.

## Japan

May Day was observed as the "Red day of the Golden Week" in Japan. Millions of workers joined the May Day columns which wend their way through the streets of the cities, small towns, workers' settlements and even villages. Columns bearing banners of various trade unions and workers of the developing and decaying industries both marched shoulder to shoulder shouting slogans against military expenditure, for peace and jobs. Unemployment in the country has reached the highest in 30 years. Further inroads made by the robots, micro electronics and other rationalisation techniques have made the outlook of the labour market further worse. The red banners read, "No more Hiroshimas", "No more Nagashakies", "Tomahawks get out of Japan". Continuing the struggle against war and for peace and jobs massive countrywide protest rallies were organised on May 27 against the move to deploy the U.S. Tomahawk cruise missiles in Japan. The demonstrations were organised by the Anti-Tomahawk Coordination Committee.

## France

The demands against unemployment and the demands for peace and disarmament were forcefully voiced by the French workers on May Day. The most militant demonstration took place in Paris under CGT at the Place de la Republique. The workers resolved to carry forward the struggle to force the Government to change its policies to find solution to the workers' serious social and economic problems.

## Spain

Followed up by the massive May Day rallies throughout the country, a huge Central rally was held at Madrid demanding of the Government to come out from the NATO. An estimated five lakh workers and people joined the rally. The rally was organised by the Co-ordination Committee of the different peace movements of the country. After marching the streets of the capital the rally submitted a memorandum to the Government demanding

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## Editorial Board

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dismantling of U.S. bases and the country's withdrawal from the NATO.

### Uruguay

A huge demonstration of three lakh workers and common people was held on 1st May in front of the former Parliament palace at Montivideo. It was a powerful mobilisation against the military regime demanding improvement in workers' living conditions, release of political prisoners, legalisation of political parties and restoration of democracy. Another massive demonstration was held in June when the armed military police pounced upon the demonstrators and barbarously attacked them. About 80 people were seriously injured and a large number arrested.

### Italy

Massive united demonstrations took place on the May Day at Milan, Turin, Salerno and other cities. The demonstrations were organised jointly by CGIL, CISK and UIL. The workers reiterated their determination to carry forward the united struggles against the austerity measures of the Craxi Government and step up the struggles for peace and disarmament.

### Chile

About 150,000 people took part in the May Day demonstration at Santiago against the dictatorial regime of Pinochet. Pinochet's armed forces brutally intervened in the demonstrations seriously injuring more than 100 workers and arresting as many.

### Kuwait

The Kuwait Trade Union Federation organised a huge mass meeting at Kuwait City on May Day. The meeting demanded for declaration of May Day as a holiday. The workers of oil and petro-chemical industries in the country observed a strike on the day.

### Ethiopia

The workers celebrated May Day in the capital City of Addis Ababa. Saluting the successes made in the construction for a new socialist society, the rally condemned the U.S. imperialists for their war policies threatening the peace of the world.

### Angola

10,000 people participated in the May Day celebrations at Luanda. Slogans like "Long live Socialism," "Down with Imperialism" and "Long live peace throughout the world" marked the rally in the Angolan capital.

### Cuba

Hundreds of thousands of workers in Havana reaffirmed their determination to step up the socialist

constructions and make the country more prosperous and defend it against the U.S. conspiracies. The procession of May Day culminated in a huge rally at the historic Revolution Square where Roberto Viega, the General Secretary of the Cuban Workers' Centre addressed the workers.

### Soviet Union

Hundreds of thousands of workers took part in the May Day rally at Red Square, Moscow. The rally underlined the yearning of the Soviet people to eradicate the danger of nuclear war. Representatives of 111 trade union organisations from all over the world also attended the rally. The President of the All Unions Central Council of Trade Unions, USSR, appealed the workers and all other trade unions everywhere to unite in the struggle for peace against the threat of nuclear war and to eliminate the hot beads of tension in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

### Czechoslovakia

Over 250,000 people participated in the May Day rally at Prague. The rally highlighted the achievements of the socialist state and reaffirmed to make further progress in the socialist constructions. It reiterated the policy of the socialist Government to step up the struggle for peace and against the imperialist threat for nuclear war. It expressed solidarity with all peoples struggling for freedom and independence from the U.S. interventions.

### Poland

Massive rallies took place at Warsaw and other cities of Poland on the May Day. The rallies attended by over 9 million people, including a large number of young people gave an illustration of the growing support by the Polish workers for the policy of the socialist renewal of the Government and their desire to strengthen the achievements made by Socialist Poland. The rally condemned the attempts made by some groups of trouble makers to disturb the huge gatherings at Warsaw and other places which were completely frustrated.

**The characteristic feature of the current class struggles in the international arena is that they are going on against the back ground of a mounting anti-war movement. The economic and social demands have now merged with the anti-imperialist and anti-monopoly demands and for overall democratic rights and freedom from imperialist interventions. The working people in the capitalist countries are becoming increasingly aware of the direct connection between the monopolist onslaughts on their living standards and the arms build up by the imperialist countries and their zingoist foreign policy. In the May Day struggles and on the eve of it the trade unions and the militant detachment of the working people were specially active in upholding the rights of the working class in fighting against monopoly rule and for peace.**