



THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITY

FROM JAIL BHARO

TO BHARAT BANDH AND INDUSTRIAL STRIKE ON SEPTEMBER 9

□ P.K. Ganguly

September 9, 1993 is going to be a red letter day in the history of the united struggle of the working class and its allies in India to safeguard the national and economic sovereignty of the country from the clutches of the imperialists and their tentacles, the multinationals. The 19th August jail Bharo was a clear indicator to the growing upsurge of increasing sections of working and toiling people against the IMF-prescribed economic and industrial policies being adopted by the Narasimha Rao Government.

It is now about two years that the struggle against the new economic policies had started with the two countrywide industrial strikes of November 29, 1991 and 16th June 1992 called by the trade union movement. The movement till then was by and large limited to the working class - the most organised and the advanced detached section of the toiling people. But after the 25th November Delhi rally and the formation of the National Platform of Mass Organisations in the 15th April Delhi Convention, the movement has taken the shape of mass actions with the joining of the peasantry, agricultural labour, students, youth, women and several other sections of professional employees. The courting arrest of 19th August reflected this mass action more or less in all the states of the country. It was decidedly the first courting arrest by the mass organisations since independence.

As per reports, well over one million people were arrested in the country. The reports from all the

states indicated that the courting arrests were not simply token, but they truly reflected the growing militancy, determination, consciousness and the urge for unity among the mass organisations, transcending all political barriers, to save the country from landing into an economic marsh under the directives of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. They demonstrated their unity to condemn the Narasimha Rao Government for lying supine to the whips of IMF and gradually slipping back to the pre-independence days under its neo-colonial conditionalities.

Panicked by the show of mass unity and intolerant to the growing resistance to the policies, the government laid bare its authoritarian character by letting loose the state machinery to unleash repression on the mass in various states. In the capital of the country all sorts of forces were unleashed on the marchers. The water cannon trucks, lethal police, armed police with the light machine guns, women police, tear gas shells, rapid action force and what not! As if there was a war. Similar reports came from several other places like Bihar, Orissa, etc. In several places a number of workers have been put into jails and a large number were injured including women. To such extent the IMF/World Bank and their mentors, the US imperialists have taken the Narasimha Rao Government under their grip, that even against a token court arrest programme, war like preparations

had to be made. While the masses wanted to safeguard the sovereignty of the country, the Narasimha Rao Government wanted to safeguard the interest of the IMF and the multinationals.

But the people treated the lathi charge and tear gas shells as very minor obstacles in their path to root out the IMF-dictated policies from the country. At the same time they also demonstrated their unprovoked and disciplined character, but firm to the cause. They demonstrated their determination to make the 9th September Bharat Bandh and industrial strike a total success.

All sections of the working and toiling people are experiencing the progressively deteriorating conditions under the IMF conditionalities. Despite the government's beating of the IMF drum of development, unemployment and price rise the two abominable vices of the capitalist system have grown unabated during the last two years of the policies and have corroded the standard of living of each family. Instead of employment generation, it has been a scene of unemployment generation in the country. Unemployment, that is, the workforce which has never got any employment, rose from 34 millions, to about 38 millions during the period. While shouting hoarse about employment generation through high tech modernisation by multinationals, the government has failed to protect even the existing employment. With its move to implement the Exit Policy, nearly ten lakh workers are destined to be thrown out of job from the so-called sick units. The first major victim is going to be the public sector in the textile industry - the pioneer and prestigious industry of the country. Eighty thousand workers are to be thrown out by closing down 42 National Textile Corporation mills. The same fate hangs over several other vital industries like fertilizers, power, road transport, steel and others which have their impact on the national economy. The Goswami Committee on Industrial Sickness has made the passage further smooth. On one hand closing down the "sick" public sector units forthwith, and on the other hand accelerating the speed of privatisation and making entry of the multinationals easier will become the order of the day. The process of subversion of a self reliant economy and deindustrialisation and de-indigenisation has started to make room for the multinationals to cause a so called "industrial revolution" in the country to recolonise it. The Dunkel proposals with the provisions on Intellectual Property

Rights are true indicators that the imperialists want to trap the country under their neo-colonial net. They want to capture not only the industrial and service sectors, but the agricultural sector too. With their demand to change the country's Patent Act and get it as a member of the Paris Convention on Patents, they want to take us to 1883, the date of the Convention. All the new policies in different industries including the latest drug policy are being reformulated in tune with the new economic policies to suit the multinationals and create a new regime of imperialist world order.

Even the unorganised and the small and tiny sectors have not been left out. The multinationals and the monopolies have been allowed to penetrate these sectors. With their deteriorating conditions and the spectre of closures, the workers of these sectors were compelled to go on strike, on July 14 last. They are also preparing in a big way to join the 9th September bandh.

Having met the conditionalities of the IMF to give a free lance to the multinationals and their few Indian monopoly sector collaborators, the government has now triumphantly declared that its Balance of Payment crisis is over, for which it took loans from the IMF. But this is a big fraud. Negative trade is still plaguing the country, and it will continue to do so, as import liberalisation is the basis of the IMF dictates. When trade war amongst the imperialist countries has sharpened further under the aegis of protectionism, and the GATT wants to prevail over the third world countries in particular, where is the prospect of India's export? The external loan has gone upto about Rs.250,000 crores from Rs 90,000 crores during the last two years of the economic policy. Almost hundred per cent of the loan taken during the first nine months of 92-93 was eaten up by repayment of loans taken earlier. The country is thus in virtual debt trap. So the net result is not only unemployment, closures, sickness or forced VRS, but a growing recession, price rise, dwindling purchasing power of the people and almost open corruption at the top involving the Prime Minister even. Bofors scandal is now relegated under the Rs.5,000 crore bank swindling and Rs.15,000 crores of Public Sector swindling through disinvestment.

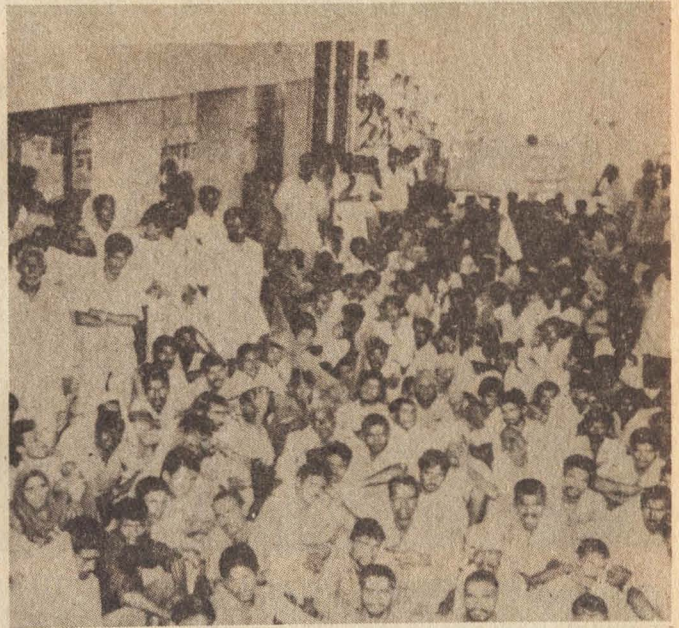
Narasimha Rao government thus has dragged the country into a cross road during the last two years

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MASSIVE COUNTRYWIDE COURT ARREST

In the most massive Jail Bharo action ever launched, over ten lakh people courted arrest all over India on August 19 protesting against the IMF-dictated economic and industrial policies being pursued by the Narasimha Rao Government. The programme was launched as a part of the ongoing campaign in preparation for the Bharat Bandh and industrial strike on September 9 at the call of the National Platform of Mass organisations. The programme was launched in all states, in cities, districts and even in rural areas jointly by workers, peasants, agricultural workers, students, youth and women. At several places police made lathi charge and burst tear gas shells injuring many including women. At several places workers were put into jails. Following are the reports of the court arrest from different states:

Delhi :about ten thousand persons courted arrest in the capital. They assembled at Jantar Mantar Park. Leaders of various mass organisations who addressed the rally were M K Pandhe (CITU), Indrajit Gupta (AITUC), Chandrasekhar (HMS), Swapan Mukherjee (AICCTU), J P Singh (TUCC),etc. The



Courting arrest at D.C. office, Hissar



WHO SAYS WATER IS SCARCE?: Police using water cannons to good effect against demonstrating trade union workers on the Capital's Parliament Street on Thursday. —By Courtesy Indian Express.



M.K.Pandhe, General Secretary, CITU addressing the rally before Court Arrest

procession then proceeded towards the Parliament. The police instead of making any arrangement to arrest them tried to disperse the people by force by using water cannons. Then they started tear gasing and lathi-charging. A number of persons including women were injured. Among those arrested were a number of MPs namely Hannan Mollah, Md. Salim, M A Baby, Suseela Gopalan, Dr Asim Bala (all CPI(M)); Indrajit Gupta, Chaturananan Misra, N E Balaram, Bhogendra Jha, Gaya Singh, (all from CPI); M K Pandhe, P K Ganguly, Ranjit Basu, P Singh, Tapan Sen, S B Bhardwaj, Mohanlal (all from CITU); B D Joshi, T A Francis (AITUC); V Tiagi (HMS); Swapan Mukherjee (AICCTU); Brinda Karat (AIDWA); Tara Reddy (NFIW); Sujan Chakraborty (SFI); etc. Some women were even beaten up by the police. The platform of Mass Organisations condemned the high handedness of the police. A furore was raised in the Parliament and V C Shukla had to beg apology and assure for an enquiry into the lathi charge.

Bihar: About 1.5 lakhs courted arrest all over the state. At Patna a procession of 10,000 proceeded towards Secretariat. They were stopped there and police started lathicharging them at random. A large number of workers including J S Majumdar, the General Secretary of the State Committee of CITU

were injured.

Tamilnadu: Nearly 1 lakh people courted arrest in more than 100 centres all over the state. Workers from organised and unorganised sectors, from private and public sector participated in the programme alongwith members of other mass organisations. Among those who courted arrest were T K Rangarajan, A Soundararajan, W R Varadarajan and P M Kumar of CITU, AM Gopu, J Laxmanan (AITUC), C Kuppuswamy and V Perumal (LPF), etc. Procession of Kisan Sabha and Agricultural Workers were led by K Vardarajan, G Veerayan and V Thambuswamy. A large number of women joined the court arrest led by Mythili Sivaraman. In Madras City more than 10,000 people courted arrest. DMK, CPI (M), CPI and Janata Dal extended support to the movement.

Kerala: About six lakh workers and others courted arrest at 300 centres in Kerala. Dharna was also staged at 12 places in Trivandrum. Among the participants were E K Nayanar and other leaders.

W. Bengal : Over three lakh people staged mass dharnas at different places in W Bengal. At Esplande East in Calcutta about one lakh people participated in the dharna from 10am to 7pm. Among those who



Police unleashing water cannon against demonstrators



A Section of the Women's Contingent

addressed the dharna were Niren Ghosh and Chittabrata Majumdar, the State President and General Secretary of CITU.

Tripura : Over two lakh people participated in mass dharnas all over the state despite heavy rains and inclement weather. 50,000 people staged dharna at Agartala, which was addressed by the State CITU President and General Secretary, Baidyanath Majumdar and Sudarshan Das.

Maharashtra : Nearly one lakh people staged dharnas and courted arrest in Bombay, Kolhapur, Nanded, Nagpur, etc.

M P : Thousands of people including the victims of Bhopal Gas Tragedy courted arrest in Bhopal, Indore, Gwalior and 40 other places. Among those arrested were Shailendra Shaily of CPI (M), C R Bakshi of CPI and M W Siddiqui of Janata Dal.

Punjab : About one lakh people courted arrest in the state at different places like Chandigarh, Sangrur, Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur, Amritsar, etc. At Sangrur they gheraoed the DC office for five hours.

Karnataka : Over 25,000 people courted arrest at Bangalore. Several thousands were arrested in other places also in the state.

A.P. : Over two lakh persons courted arrest in Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, Vijaywada and other centres.

U.P. : Over one lakh persons courted arrest in UP including over five thousands each in Kanpur, Varanasi, Lucknow and other places. The Vidhan Sabha road was also blocked for several hours by the demonstrators.

Rajasthan : Over 35 thousands courted arrest in the state. At Udaipur and the rural areas more than 3000 workers and peasants courted arrest and gheraoed the thana. Similar reports came from Jaipur, Ajmer, Sriganganagar, Hanumangar, Suratgarh, Gajasingpur, Raising Nagar, Sadul Sahar, Sangaria, Jhunjhunu, Bikaner, Chittorgarh, Dangarpur, Shikar, Barmer, Bharatpur, Johdpur, Kota, Bhilwara, Bundi, Churu, Alwar, etc.

Orissa : Over fifty thousands courted arrest in the state. At Keonjhar the police lathi charged at about 2000 people. Eight persons had to be hospitalised. About 100 women were arrested. 27 were jailed. Apart from Bhubaneshwar, Cuttack, etc courting

arrest was made in rural and block head quarters also.

Gujarat : Over 15,000 people courted arrest at Ahmedabad, Baroda, Surat, Bhavnagar and other places in the state.

Haryana : Over ten thousands courted arrest at Faridabad, Hissar, Sirsa, Rohtak, Bhiwani, Jind, Sonapat and other places.

To Bharat Bandh and Industrial Strike.....

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through the IMF policies. The question arises as to whether we can safeguard our freedom and independence or allow ourselves to be recolonised! The answer has to be given by the working and toiling people on September 9 by closing all industries and establishments. Almost all the national industrial federations have already declared their decision to join 9th September strike. The State Government employees and several sections of the Central Government employees, defence employees are also joining the bandh. Everything, all establishments, institutions, transport and communications must come to a halt on the day. The slogan has to be raised - Narasimha Rao GOVERNMENT may sell the country to IMF, but the people shall not. IMF quit India!

But that is not the only problem. The Bandh call has also been given against the menace of communalism and the protagonists of the Hindu Rashtra - the Sangh Parivar, the RSS-BJP-VHP. With the demolition of the Babri Masjid and the communal conflagration, they have subverted the Constitution and the secular fabric of the country. They have continued their vandalism by pulling down the picture posters drawn by renowned artists of the country on the occasion of the cultural show organised by the Safdar Hashmi Memorial Trust at Ayodhya on the Independence Day. These fascistic forces have also dragged the country into another cross roads. The question is whether we can safeguard the secular character of the State or allow it to be a fascistic Hindu Rashtra. The answer has to be given on 9th September to safeguard the unity and integrity of the country and its sovereignty. Forward to the success of 9th September!

Protest strike in Steel Industry on 7th September 1993

In spite of unequivocal opposition by the entire trade union movement and the working class irrespective of faith and affiliation the Govt of India is headbent in privatisation of IISCO a giant public sector steel plant with assets valuing more than Rs.16000 crores including its townships, plants and machineries and mines producing precious high quality iron ores. Unusual haste and unscrupulous keenness have already been demonstrated by persons at the helm of the affair in Govt of India & steel industry to clinch the privatisation-deal with M/s Mukand, a scrap handling firm for change of hands of IISCO. The terms and stipulation of the deal exposed itself to be a gift making operation to Mukand the price being less than one thousandth part of its total asset value at current market price. Who knows that what else and in what amount is supposed to change hand between the givers and takers in the process of the said deal.

The unequivocal opposition expressed by the trade unions, officers organisations and the Members of Parliament from West Bengal both at the level of Steel Minister, Finance Minister and Prime Minister to the move for privatisation of IISCO has atleast slowed down the pace of such move, but the Govt is still pursuing its move for privatisation of IISCO as is evident from the subsequent development.

The workers and officers of IISCO and the steel industry in particular irrespective of affiliations and the whole of the working class movement in general have also expressed their firm resolve to oppose and resist the Govt of India's desperate and over enthusiastic bid to hand over IISCO to private sector. With such determination all the central trade unions viz INTUC, AITUC, CITU, HMS, BMS and all the trade unions functioning in steel industry all over the country including Steel Executive Federation of India representing Officers of the Public Sector steel industry met in a massive convention on 4th August 1993 at Calcutta. Besides the issue of privatisation of IISCO, the aspects of disinvestment of shares of public sector units including SAIL which has already unveiled itself to be another most scandalous scam by the revelation of CAG report, and also govt's policy on wages, pension and other benefits and rights of

the workers have also come under heavy criticism in the deliberation. The text of the resolution declaring protest strike all over the steel industry on 7th September 1993, adopted unanimously in the convention is reproduced hereunder:

RESOLUTION

The Joint Convention of AITUC, BMS, CITU, HMS, INTUC and their affiliated trade unions in steel industries and Steel Executive Federation of India(SEFI) today, the 4th August 1993 at Calcutta.

1. Strongly protested against:-
 - a) Move for privatisation of the Indian Iron & Steel Co.,
 - b) Disemberment of IISCO from SAIL.
 - c) Erratic disinvestment of shares of Steel Authority of India at throw away prices.
 - d) Guidelines of the Government on wages, pension, etc.
2. The Convention express serious concern over the inordinate delay in concluding.
 - a) Fresh settlement effective from 1.1.92 over wages and other issues of demands as the period of the last agreement was over on 31.12.91.
 - b) Pension scheme on additional 2% contribution each of the employee and SAIL management effective from 1.1.89
 - c) Slabs of variable dearness allowance over minimum VDA rate of Rs 2/- per point to achieve full neutralisation at all benefits.
 - d) Payment of annual bonus without any eligibility and ceiling restrictions.
3. Demands
 - a) Setting up of an enquiry committee into the steps taken by the government and management activities of IISCO after its take over.
 - b) Continued working of IISCO like other steel plants as a part of SAIL for all purposes

with no dismembership of fragmentation.

c) A Technical Committee with representations of employees from moderanisation of IISCO under SAIL.

d) An Enquiry Committee to look into the disinvestment of shares of SAIL and for corrective steps.

e) Settlement of all issues like wages, pension, VDA bonus and Disinvestment without least further delay.

f) An explanation from the Steel Authority of India for non- implementation of the Memorandum of Settlement in IISCO dated 12th July 1989. The Management terminated services of about 5000 workers and demolished practically major installations of Burnpur Works without taking steps as envisaged in the Memorandum of Settlement.

This Convension expresses its grave concern and resentment that inspite of representations and reminders no steps have been taken by the authorities over the above issues.

The Convention warns the government that any step or action for privatisation of IISCO will be strongly opposed and resisted by the employees and will have wide repercussions affecting industrial relations in the Steel industry which may affect the long tradition of peace, production and progress in the Steel Plants for which the managment of the steel industry and the government will be entirely responsible.

This Convention congratulates the officers and workers of IISCO particularly Burnpur Works, for the excellent performance comparable to other steel plants inspite of several odds and constraints.

The Convention appreciates the timely resolution unanimously passed in the Legislative Assembly of West Bengal against privatisation of IISCO and instead asking for its moderanisation by SAIL.

The Convention appeals to the working class to rally behind the IISCO employees in this great struggle in their honour of strain.

In view of the facts stated above, it is hereby decided that the employees of steel industry will go on one day protest strike on 7th September 1993.

4. We appeal to all sections of steel industries to

realise the gravity of situation.

Privatisation, direct or through disinvestment is an open challenge. The fate of Public Sector philosophy and system depend largely upon success of our struggle.

As always steel workers have been vanguard and a spacesetter of national industrial life.

We call upon for a united concentrated and dedicated struggle towards a viable, stable and purposeful public sector and steel industry with all protections and progress of job security along with economic progress of the employees.

We are confident that the men of steel will rise from strength to strength to acquire themselves credibility and will come out with flying colours.

We hope that the proposed move of the Government to privatise the IISCO Acts 1977 through the Act will be droppsed.

CITU CONDEMNS KILLING OF CPI(M) LEADER IN BIHAR.

The CITU strongly condemns the killing of Com. Govind Prasad, the Nalanda District Secretary of CPI(M) by the armed guards of Hilsa Block in Bihar on August 13.

The armed guards opened fire on the members of mass organisations and people who were holding a rally under the leadership of Com. Prasad on communal harmony at the call of the Rastriya Ekata Abhiyan. The rally was also organised to protest against the economic policy of the government.

The CITU demands punishments to the culprits and pays homage to Com. Prasad. The CITU congratulates the workers, peasants and others who came out in protest in thousands against the dastardly killing.

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COAL MINERS PREPARE FOR BHARAT BANDH ON 9th SEPTEMBER

The working committee of All India Coal Workers Federation which met on 30th July '93 at Calcutta discussed and reviewed the preparation for the coal workers' participation in the Jail Bharo programme of 19th August '93 and Bharat bandh of 9th September '93 called by National Platform of mass organisations against Govt of India's economic and industrial policy and against communalism.

The meeting of the Working Committee which was presided by Com M K Pandhe President, AICWF unanimously decided to mount and multiply its preparatory effort to take the message of struggle against the disastrous policies of the govt to the grass roots of the coal industry throughout the country and make both the "Jail Bharo" of 19th August and "Bharat bandh" on 9th September a total success in the entire coal belt of the country.

While initiating discussion on the agenda, Com M K Pandhe elucidated the present scenario in the country's economy in the background of pursuance of the economic and industrial policy of the Govt of India with all its fall out with particular reference to coal industry and the mounting awareness and opposition against those policies and their impact among the working class and the people in general. It is in this background the national platform of mass organisation has decided to call for united protest action by the entire population representing all walks of life. Working class took the lead to develop this united platform. Coal workers must play its distinct role to strengthen this platform by making its programme for jail Bharo and Bharat Bandh a total success.

The Govt's attitude in respect of wage negotiation in public sector including coal industry was also evaluated by Com Pandhe in his deliberation, which, he explained, is organically linked to the Govt's policy of so called liberalisation.

Com Sunil Basu Roy general Secretary AICWF also deliberated on the agenda and impressed upon

the need for intensive grass-root- level campaign to make the programmes a total success.

The representatives of the unions from different coal centres and collieries all over the country took part in the discussion. In the deliberation review of the present organisational position in different collieries, new initiatives as well as shortcomings experienced while carrying on campaigns and organisational activities etc. surfaced alongwith the problems faced by the different units in their day to day trade union activities. Alarming rise in the number of accidents in coal mines including number of fatalities and the casual approach of the management on the aspect of safety also came up for discussion. Com G P Goswami, Com Haradhan Roy MP, Com Raja Rao, Com S Kumar, N M Singh, P R Banerjee, Ramanika Gupta, Asok Yadav, MD Tajuddin, Manas Mukherjee, Gasesh Dhar, Chanchal Ghosal, D Sukla, M K Singh, P S Pandey and Bandana Sengupta participated in the discussions. The committee resolved unanimously to loose no time to repair the organisational weaknesses and intensify the campaign throughout the coal industry so that the ensuing programme of jail bharo and Bharat Bandh become a total success in the coal industry and its adjoining areas. Besides above, the working committee decided to form two sub-committees to prepare report on safety in coal mines and impact of new technology in coal industry.

The Working Committee also decided to host the session of international miners organisation in India. It has also decided to hold AICWF conference at Calcutta by the end of the year and all the units were asked to submit respective organisational report to General Secretary by September '93.

As preparatory programme for strike of 9th September, the working Committee adopted programmes of series of demonstrations and meetings throughout the coal industry during the month of August. □

Railwaymen's Convention/Conferences upheld Bharat Bandh on 9th September 1993

NATIONAL CONVENTION OF ALL INDIA RAILWAY EMPLOYEES CONFEDERATION

The national convention of Railwaymen organised by AIREC at New Delhi on 21.8.93 called upon the railwaymen to prepare for and make the 'Bharat Bandh' programme of 9th September 1993 a grand success.

The convention was presided over by Com.C M Singh and participated by 700 delegates from railwaymen from all over the country.

The deliberation was initiated by Com N S Bhangoo, Secretary General, AIREC who dealt in the present scenario in railway industry in the backdrop of industrial and economic policy of the government, the impact of which is being severely felt by the railwaymen also alongwith the other section of population. Railwaymen must not remain isolated from the mainstream of struggle against the policy of the government and advancement of this struggle can help in boosting the struggle of railwaymen for their own demands in a big way.

The convention was also addressed by Saila Bose, Secretary TUI/Transport and J P Chowbey, General Secretary AIRF, R L Bhattacharya, acting General Secretary of Postal Employees Federation, S K Vyas, Secretary General of Confederation of Central Govt Workers and Employees. The representatives of Railwaymen from different parts of the country have also deliberated in the convention.

The convention resolved unanimously that for making the Bharat Bandh on 9th September 1993 a total success, intensive campaign should be carried on the issues and the programme among the railwaymen and all out effort must be made by all concerned.

The convention also dealt on the economic demands of Railwaymen and Central Government employees and called upon the Railwaymen to be in readiness to join any united action programme that may be devised jointly alongwith other organisations. The convention authorised the central working committee of AIREC to decide on the suitable course of action.

27th Conference of Dakshin Railway Employees Union(DREU)

The 27th conference of DREU was held at Madras from 29.7.93 to 31.7.93. The conference was preceded by a 2000 strong procession of railwaymen from Madras Central Railway station to the venue of the conference. The procession was sought to be obstructed and disrupted by the police authorities but

determination of the railway workers ultimately foiled such move of the police.

The conference was inaugurated by Com.Kanai Banerjee, Secretary CITU and was addressed by various fraternal organisations like AISMA, AIREC, Guards Council and Engineering Employees Council. Com.A Nallasivan MP, Com.Durai Pandian General Secretary of Tamilnadu unit of Confederation of Govt Employees greeted the conference.

The deliberation of the conference dealt in detail the disastrous impact of the economic and industrial policies of the government. The railway authorities decision to surrender numerous posts and ban on recruitment and phenomenal increase of contract workers with paltry wages and benefit being paid to them are all reflection of railway authorities subservience to IMF dictated policies which totally militate against the interest of the working class.

The conference decided to observe campaign week from 19.8.93 to 25.8.93 among the railway workers and residents of the railway colonies on the issues highlighted by the national platform of mass organisations while declaring Bharat Bandh on 9th September 1993. The campaign would also highlight the railway authorities anti-worker policies like man power-reduction, contracting out permanent nature of job etc which are nothing but reflection of the Govt of India's policy as per dictates of IMF and World Bank.

Besides above, the conference decided to organise special level conventions on the problems of contract workers, working women and problems relating to manpower reduction and ban on recruitment etc. The conference also decided to observe communal harmony week from 9.8.93 to 15.8.93.

The conference was participated 439 delegates of which 47 participated in the deliberation. From the conference a 16 member Secretariat was elected with Com.R Umanath as president and Com P V Ramadas as General Secretary.

22nd Conference of Chittaranjan Locomotive Works Labour Union

The 22nd conference of CLW Labour Union was held at Chittaranjan locomotive works, West Bengal, on 23rd to 25th July 1993. On 23rd July 1993 Cong(I) declared bandh in West Bengal but the workers of Chittaranjan foiled the Bandh call by Cong(I) with their massive presence in the workshop and also made the conference a total success.

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Kisan Sabha Condemns Brutal Murders

Ram Narayan Goswami, MP, General Secretary All India Kisan Sabha(AIKS) has strongly condemned the gruesome murder of Shri Maheshwar Singh, a popular leader of the current movement in Darbhanga(Bihar) and vice president of Darbhanga Block Unit of AIKS, on 18th August last by pro-landlord criminals. Unfortunately these criminals are associated with IPF and CPI(ML) who oppose the movement for distribution of ceiling surplus and government waste land in Bihar. Instead, they raise the slogan of land nationalisation and are openly supporting the landlords at a number of spots. This heinous crime was organised at Majhiama village, where 341 landless and poor peasants are fighting for the protection and patas of their possession of 75 acres of surplus land belonging to the landlord family of Raghapur Deorhis. Shri Goswami has demanded immediate arrest of the culprits, adequate compensation to the family of the martyr kisan leader Shri Maheswar Singh. It is to be recalled that only a week ago, Shri Govind Prasad, a popular leader and advocate of Nalanda and Dist Secretary of CPI(M) was brutally shot dead by police while leading a peaceful demonstration before Hilsa Block office, demanding implementation of land reforms and adequate relief for drought affected people of the region. Shri Goswami has demanded from the government of Bihar, to immediately take up the implementation of the land reforms, after plugging loopholes, provide proper compensation and relief to the affected people, and punish the guilty officials conniving with landlords.

COM BHAG SINGH SAJJAN

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions deeply mourns the death of

Com.Bhag Singh Sajjan, veteran communist leader of Punjab. Com.Bhag Singh Sajjan joined the left movement in 1936 and then dedicated his life to the service of the working class and the peasantry. He had to undergo imprisonment and had to go underground several times during the course of these struggles. In the seventies he shifted his centre of activities to Chandigarh and began developing the trade union movement there.

Popularly known as Babaji, Com.Bhag Singh Sajjan's life and work will continue to inspire all those who stand with the working class. The CITU dips its red banner paying homage to Com. Bhag Singh Sajjan.

Com. T.N.SIDDHANTA

Centre of Indian Trade Unions deeply mourns the sudden demise of Com T N Siddhanta, Secretary, All India Trade Union Congress and a veteran trade unionist, who passed away on 12th August at New Delhi. Throughout his organisational life spread over decades, Com Siddhanta made valuable contribution in advancing united trade union movement in the country. The CITU conveys its heartfelt condolence to AITUC.

CITU MOURNS UTPAL DUTTA'S PASSING AWAY

The CITU deeply mourns the demise of Utpal Dutta, the outstanding playwright, actor and director and a frontline leader of the progressive and people's cultural movement who passed away on 19th August at Calcutta. Com Dutta's contribution to the cause of progressive culture is invaluable. He distinguished himself by his unflinching commitment to socialist ideology and to the cause of left and democratic movement. He also played a vital role in popularising street theatres as a form of political campaign among the common people. Com Utpal Dutta's death has caused irreparable loss not only to the cultural world but to the democratic movement as a whole. CITU conveys its condolence to his bereaved wife Smt Shova Sen and other family members.

Com. S.K. BISHOYEE

CITU is shocked with grief at the premature death of Com. S.K. BISHOYEE, member of the Orissa State Committee of CITU. He was only 38 years old. Com. Bishoyee joined the democratic movement from his early student life and the trade union movement in the early seventies in the Rourkela Steel Plant as a steel worker. Later on he left the job and became a wholetime organiser of the movement. Com. Bishoyee also played an active role in revitalising the CITU organisation in Orissa. The CITU conveys its condolence to Orissa State Committee of CITU and Com Bishoyee's bereaved family.

CITU CONDEMNS VANDALISM BY RSS-BJP-VHP

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions strongly condemns the RSS-BJP-VHP for pulling down the poster exhibitions put up by the Safdar Hashmi Memorial Trust (SAHMAT) at Faizabad-Ayodhya on the occasion of the cultural function organised by them on 14th/15th August night.

The cultural function participated by reputed artists from different parts of the country was organised to take the city out of the siege of the communal forces and to spread the message of communal harmony and the secular character of Indian culture on the occasion of Independence Day. The picture posters were drawn by renowned artists of the country in this respect. It was abominably reprehensible that such rare specimens of art were damaged by the vandals of the Sangh Parivar. The vandalism further exposed the fascistic nature of the protagonists of Hindu Rashtra.

The CITU also unequivocally condemns the UP administration which is now under the centre, for its callous attitude to apprehend the vandals. The CITU warmly congratulates the SAHMAT for successfully carrying on the function whole night which attracted large number of people, despite the threats given by the Sangh Parivar.

COM ACHINTYA BHATTACHARYA

The CITU has received with grief on 24.8.93 the shocking news of the death of Com. Achintya Bhattacharya, the veteran working class and CPI (M) leader and member of the Central Committee.

Com. Achintya Bhattacharya has served the cause of the working class in the most dedicated manner during the span of over 50 years of his political life. Born in Sylhet in undivided Bengal he joined the freedom struggle while a student. He was one among the first leading working class leaders to organise the tea plantation workers of Cachar District.

Com. Achintya Bhattacharya has undergone imprisonment several times and was underground during Emergency. The working people will ever remember his unflinching commitment to their cause.

The CITU dips its red banner in memory of the departed leader and conveys its heartfelt condolences to the members of his family.

Contd. from 10.

The conference with 410 delegates and 75 observers and 25 fraternal delegates declared their firm resolve to make the Bharat Bandh of 9th September a total success to try a halt to the disastrous policies of the government and also to the communal and divisive forces. Unanimous resolution was passed from the conference to that effect.

The conference was presided over by Com S R Das and Com. Nirmal Mukherjee outgoing General Secretary placed the report. 66 delegates participated in the deliberation on reports and resolution.

The conference also adopted charter of demands of the railwaymen on all India issues and also on the CLW based demands and also endorsed the AIRF's decision to go in for indefinite strike. Among other resolutions unanimously adopted were the resolutions against economic and industrial policies of the government, against various anti-worker policies of the govt and railway authorities, on demanding recognition through secret ballot, on CLW labour unions decision to affiliate with AIREC etc.

The conference elected 62 member executive committee and 11 member office bearer with S R Das as president and Nirmal Mukherjee as general secretary.

Railway Workers Staged hunger Strike at Calcutta

As decided by South Eastern Railway unit of all India Loco Running Staff Association, 20 Railway employees staged hunger strike on 17th and 18th August 1993 to press for the railway workers demand.

On 18th a delegation headed by Com. Uday Chatterjee and M M Prasad met Chief Personnel officer and demanded fulfilment of the locomen's demand. On 18th itself the S E Rly workers gathered in a mass meeting at 1.30 PM which was addressed by Com S K Dhar, Secretary General AILRSA, and Basudev Acharya MP.

Conference of Lumbing Division of AIREC

The conference of Lumbing division of AIREC held on 8th and 9th August 1993 at Lumbing expressed total support to the call of Bharat Bandh on 9th September.

The conference was attended by 286 delegates out of which 20 delegates participated in the deliberation of the conference. The conference also adopted 34 point charter of demand of AIREC.

The conference elected a 13 member divisional executive committee with Com N K Bhattacharjee and S K Routh as president and secretary respectively. On 9th August a 500 strong procession of railwaymen submitted memorandum to DRM/Lumbing. □

SUGAR WORKERS START MOBILISATION

Sugar workers in different places have started gearing up their organisational activities. The Third Wage Board period will be over in October, 1993. While the National Sugar Workers Co-ordination Committee comprising of all the trade unions had already met once, the unions and federations under the CITU have started conducting conventions and conferences. The Sugar Workers Federation of India (CITU) has already decided to hold its second conference at Saharanpur (U.P) on November 5-6, 1993. Following are two brief reports of Conventions at Andhra Pradesh and Tamilnadu:

Andhra Pradesh

The second joint convention of sugar workers was held at Hyderabad on 5th July. About one thousand workers from 30 factories representing CITU, INTUC, AITUC, IFTU and BMS attended the convention. It was presided over by Kandiah (CITU), Venkaiah (INTUC), Bikshapathy (IFTU), M J Mohan Rao (AITUC) and R V Subbha Rao (BMS).

Srihari (CITU), Convenor of the Coordination Committee placed the report of activities during the last four years after the first convention of 1987. Workers from all unions participated in the discussion. A memorandum containing various demands of sugar workers including wage negotiation, housing, regularisation and other service conditions was prepared and submitted to the State Labour Minister. The Minister assured to call a tripartite meeting shortly to discuss the demands. The meeting also adopted a resolution condemning privatisation of cooperative sugar mills.

Tamilnadu:

The Tamilnadu State Sugar Workers Federation (CITU) held its fourth conference at Chingalpatti on August 15 and 16. The conference was presided over by K Vaithinathan and inaugurated by P K Ganguly, Secretary, CITU.

In his inaugural address P K Ganguly pointed to the drive of privatisation of the sugar mills in keeping with the new economic policies. He further pointed to the huge profits made by the few sugar barons due to the progressively increasing of the free sale quota of sugar and reducing that of the levy sugar quota

by the government. The recent decontrol of Molasses had further increased the profits of the barons. In view of the expiry of the Third Wage Board period, he called for united actions by all trade unions for wage revision through collective bargaining. He further called for mobilisation of the sugar workers in the forthcoming Bharat Bandh on 9th September.

Rajamani, the General Secretary placed the report. It was discussed by about 30 members and unanimously adopted.

A special feature of the conference was an elaborate explanation on the Cauveri Water Dispute by Com Krishna Raj to educate the workers and shed the chauvinistic tendencies on the issue.

Among others who addressed the conference were T K Rangarajan, the State CITU General Secretary, C Govindarajan, and leaders of AITUC, LPF and HMS. The conference ended with an open session on 16th August. K Vaithinathan and Rajamani were re-elected as President and General Secretary respectively. □

BANK AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS DECIDE FOR INDEFINITE STRIKE

The Joint Action Committee of Banks, Insurance and other financing Institutions has given a call for two one-day strike actions in the country on September 2 and October 4 in pursuance of their long pending demand for pension as a third benefit.

The joint Action Committee has further decided to go in for indefinite strike in the country from November 2 if the government fails to respond positively to the demand.

Apart from above, the Joint Action Committee has also called upon the employees of all the financial institutions to observe strike on 9th September, the Bharat Bandh day, in protest against the IMF-dictated economic policies of the Government at the call of the National Platform of Mass Organisations. The Joint Action Committee has launched full scale preparations for the success of the above strike actions in all banks, insurance and other financial institutions in the country. □

CONVENTION OF THE L.I.C. WORKING WOMEN VISAKHAPATNAM DIVISION

The 2nd Convention of Working Women of Visakhapatnam Division was held at Visakhapatnam on 10th July, 1993. The Convention was attended by as many as 130 comrades from all the Units of the Division.

Smt. K. padma, Fellow Research Scholar, National Institute of Labour, NOIDA, New Delhi, who attended the convention as Chief Guest has explained the members about the various problems being faced by the women working in both Organised and Unorganised Sector. She had elaborately dealt with the stringent conditions and the health hazards to which the women workers are prone in industries like Beedies, marine food processing units, fire works, industries etc. They work under the harassment of private managements. She also conveyed that nearly 80% of working women are in unorganized sector mainly agriculture and they are working under stress and strain even without minimum facilities. She called upon the members to organise women in such unorganised sectors and strive for a social change which would ultimately free the women from the yoke of social oppression.

Com. R. Govinda Rajan, Joint Secretary, AIEA greeted the convention and appealed to the comrades to develop their consciousness to the changing political and economic scenario and work actively in the Trade Union movement.

Com. M. Padmaja, Convenor has submitted a report on behalf of the Committee and it was adopted unanimously. About 10 comrades have discussed on various aspects of national and international importance. The convention adopted as many as 8 resolutions. The first being immediate recognition of AIEA.

The whole hearted participation by every comrade wall poster writings by lady comrades on over demands both from headquarters and moffussil has contributed for its success. The convention elected unanimously a new committee consisting of 28 members with Com. M. Padmaja as the Convenor. □

Anganwadi Workers to Join Bharat Bandh

The Convenor of the Samyukta Sangharsh Samiti of Anganwadi Workers Mrs. Vimala Ranadive has issued the following statement on 2-8-1993:-

The All India Samyukta Sangharsh Samiti of Anganwadi Workers and helpers calls upon its constituents to prepare itself fully to make the 9th September "Bharat Bandh" a historic success and also to participate enmasse in the 19th August '93 Jail Bhara programme.

The Samyuktha Sangharsh Samithi also calls upon its constituents to join the campaign programmes organised by the mass organisations in their states and also organise conventions, meetings independently as well to mobilise mass opinion against anti people. New Economic Policies of the Narasimha Rao Government. Which is out to destroy the economic independence of the country and also against the communal forces which are out to destroy the unity of the nation.

Signed by Com. B.D. Joshi, AITUC

" " V. Tyagi, HMS

" " B.K. Prasad, NFTU. □

CITU Welcomes Supreme Court Order for Reinstatement of Dismissed/Removed Railwaymen

The Secretariat of the CITU has issued the following statement on 13.8.93.

The CITU welcomes the recent judgement of the Supreme Court in the course of which the apex court has ordered that Railway employees dismissed under rule 14(2) for having participated in the Loco Staff Strike of 1981 shall be restored to their respective position.

The victimised staff concerned stood dismissed from service for over 12 years and though various benches of Central Administrative Tribunal passed judgement in favour of the employees: the Govt and the Railway Administration had chosen to prefer appeal against those judgements. At long last the Supreme Court has unequivocally declared that the exercise of power by the Administration was arbitrary and that the participants in the strike was unjustly treated.

Although the judgement may not be satisfactory to the victimised employees in all respect, it nevertheless signified a great victory on their part in the struggle they heroically fought for more than a decade in the course of which they had embraced tremendous sufferings. They have won a judgement which will strengthen the trade union rights of all Govt employees.

The CITU warmly congratulates the valliant locomen for this victory. □

WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING OF E.E.F.I

The All India Working Committee Meeting of E.E.F.I. was held on 12th and 13th June 1993 at Trivandrum under the Chairmanship of Com. E. Balanandan, President.

The meeting was attended by 30 members (including 3 women) representing 11 States and Unions. 12 workers reports of the unions have been roneod and circulated among Working Committee Members.

The meeting at the beginning paid its homage for the demies of Comrades Chris Hani, Aliver Tambo of African Leaders, S. Florence of Tamilnadu and Madhan Bandari of Nepal by standing in silence for two minutes by all the members.

Com. E. Balanandan in his presidential speach, has explained the current political and economical situation of the Global and particularly of our Country that is now facing. He pointed out that our Country is fast moving to the condition prevailing prior to 1947. Public Sectors are not only being destroyed but, it is sold to a throw away price to the multinationals and private tycoons thereby there is a heavy loss to the tune of Rs.3400 crore. While pointing out the increasing anger of the working class and the people, he called up on all workers, peasants, youths, women, students to organise in a bigger force and go for bandh and strike on 9th September 1993 as per the call given by the wider campaign counil of Trade Unions and other organisations.

He further warned against the comunal forces and anti-secular organisations and appeal to the working class to see that our country is undevided and secularism is preserved.

Then Com. K.R. Unnithan, one of the Secretaries of the EEFI placed a brief review report of the action taken on the decision of Delhi Working Committee meeting. He said that only one Regional Convention was able to convene at Chandigarh. We have brought out a abridged booklet of workshop materials on power problem in India. Which is welcomed by all walks of life.

Then the General Secretary has given a report of works done by the affiliated unions and also to improve our organisation. There was a discussion on this subject. All the representative of unions took part in it and gave valuable suggestions.

Next Com. K.O. Habeeb(Kerala) proposed, an important resolution on against privatisation. This was seconded by Com.B.S. Meel(Rajasthan). This was unanimously passed.

Then our president explained the need of building unity among Trade Unions and working class. It

become al the more important and urgent under present context and appealed that all efforts should be taken to achieve this goal, an ultimate goal to-words confederation.

The Working Committee meeting passed the following resolutions; unanimously:

- 1) Against anti-privatisation of power Industry.
- 2) Appeal to all powermen to organise and take part in the forthcoming all India strike on 9th September 1993.

Exibition on power position :

A very good exhibition with picture, drawings, datas etc. was organised and opened for public view on power position both, National level as well as Kerala state level on 12.6.93 for a period of one week at most busy centre called Gandhi park. This tremendous efforts was taken by the Kerala State Electricity Board Officers Association. A good number of people have seen the exhibition and appreciated the useful and hard efforts taken by the EEFI organisation to educate the masses against the anti- privatisation etc.

Donation to Rajasthan Power Engineers' struggle:

Kerala State Electricity Board Officers Association could able to collect Rs. 34,000\ - and handed over to Com. B.S. Meel, a victimised Engineer and president of the Engineers Association of Rajasthan State Electricity for a long and protracted struggle conducted for doubling the power production of the State and to improve the service condition f them. There was a function for this on 15th June and Com. E. Balanandan handed over the donation amount before a huge gathering of powermen. □

Power Workers' Federations Extend Support to Desu Workers in their Struggle Against Privatisation

In a joint statement on 13.8.93, E. Balanandan, M.P. and A.B. Bardhan, President of the Electricity Employees' Federation of India. and the All India Federation of Electricity Employees respectively, have extended full support to the programme of action by the Trade Unions of the Delhi Electricity supply undertaking against the Central Government's move to privatise DESU.

Contd. on page 24

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX NUMBERS FOR INDUSTRIAL WORKERS

(BASE 1992 = 100)

Centre	April 93	May 93	Linking factor for Old Base	Centre	April 93	May 93	Linking factor for Old Base
All India	245	246	4.93	Ludhiana	226	227	
Gudur	242	241	4.33	Ajmer	245	243	5.01
Guntur	250	253	5.60	Jaipur	236	240	5.17
Hyderabad	232	234	5.23	Coimbatore	240	241	5.35
Visakhapatnam	245	246	--	Coonor	256	257	4.80
Warrangal	232	235	--	Madras	249	251	5.05
Doom-Dooma				Madurai	245	248	5.27
Tinsukia	221	228	4.05	Salem	232	230	--
Gauhati	249	245	--	Tiruchirapally	248	245	--
Labac-Silchar	223	226	3.96	Agra	230	234	--
Mariani-Jorhat	236	239	3.95	Ghaziabad	240	242	--
Rangapara-Tezpur	235	239	4.29	Kanpur	247	247	4.69
Jamshedpur	232	232	4.68	Saharanpur	238	241	5.06
Jharia	217	218	4.63	Varanasi	262	259	5.12
Kodarma	221	223	5.43	Asansol	230	233	4.77
Monghyr	230	228	5.29	Calcutta	248	249	4.74
Noamundi	235	238	4.58	Darjeeling	221	222	4.55
Ranchi-Hatia	237	239	--	Durgapur	256	258	--
Ahmedabad	237	240	4.78	Haldia	261	261	--
Baroda	242	246	--	Howrah	261	262	4.12
Bhavanagar	242	248	4.99	Jalpaiguri	221	222	4.16
Rajkot	235	237	--	Raniganj	223	222	4.40
Surat	248	251	--	Chandigarh	249	250	--
Faridabad	236	239	--	Delhi	267	269	4.97
Yamunanagar	228	228	5.53	Pondicherry	267	270	--
Srinagar	249	249	5.47				
Bangalore	243	245	5.66	Additional series of Labour Bureau			
Belgam	246	249	--	Kothagudem	240	240	3.25
Hubli-Dharwar	253	255	--	Himachal Pradesh	237	239	3.75
Mercara	237	238	--	Bhilwara	243	243	3.20
Alwaye	241	242	5.19	Chindwara	259	257	2.59
Mundakayam	243	246	4.67	Tripura	251	253	4.37
Quilon	254	248	--	Goa	274	287	3.40
Trivandrum	262	266	--				
Bhalaghat	237	240	5.24	Other series of Labour Bureau			
Bhilai	223	224	3.49	Centre	Base	'90	1990
Bhopal	256	257	5.46	Ammathi	1960		
Indore	263	261	5.18	Chickmangalur	1960		
Jabalpur	263	262	6.41	Kolar Gold Field	1960		
Bombay	266	269	5.12	Sambalpur			
Nagpur	259	262	4.99	Berhampur			
Nasik	262	264	--	Cuttack			
Pune	260	261	--				
Sholapur	259	261	5.03				
Barbil	238	242	5.00				
Rourkela	227	230	3.59				
Amritsar	231	232	5.19				

Note: Figures on old base can be obtained by multiplying the Index Number on New Base by the linking factor given and rounding off the result to nearest whole number.

--Dash denotes new centres under 1982 series,

Technology Upgradation and New Economic Policy

□ Jibon Roy

(Speech read in seminar organised by national productivity council held on 22 & 23rd April 1993 at New Delhi)

It is not correct to say that the trade unions are opposed to technology. On the contrary trade union movement believes that the unprecedented advancement of scientific and technological developments which is sweeping the developed countries since seventies could be turned into as the chief accelerator of social and economic advancement of the entire world, provided this knowledge is universalised and directed for the advancement of human civilisation. Trade unions firmly believe that boundless possibilities opened up by modern science & technology must be made use of to serve the tasks of resolving the basic socio-economic problems of mankind, regard less of boundaries. It believes that advancement of productive forces as a result of the transformation of scientific and technological advancement into means of production contribute the material basis for the development of human society as a natural historic process. The advancement of science & technology and its transformation into productive forces on one hand and social progress on the other depends on how the labour savings arising out of progressive acceleration in labour productivity are effectively channeled in the interest of the whole community and making as a whole. In other words advancement of scientific knowledge, its conversion to productive technique and social development are the three mutually complementary components which will together accelerate the progress of making. Therefore, technological upgradation is of vital interest to mankind as a whole.

The monopolisation of scientific knowledge by a handful of developed countries and holding back of major share of technology by the multinationals for their private profits in the name of patent holdings have impended the equilibrium between technological progress and the development of society. Control of multinationals over the patenting of technology brought about problems for the developing nations to take advantage of worldwide advancement of scientific knowledge and developing adequate technology in those countries. As far as

India is concerned, after the Govt of India's decision to structurally adjust India's domestic economy with the global market the process of self-reliant development of scientific and technical knowledge and the advancement of technology has suffered a big set back. Loosening of all kind of social control over the productive forces as envisaged by the new industrial policy had jeopardised the capacity to develop a social back-up in the field of scientific education which is the essential pre requisite for advancing indigenous technology and absorbing foreign technology in the indigenous context. Technology import is important but more important is its adoption and upgradation through indigenous process. So long the recipient country lags behind in attaining such capabilities to technology can take root in any developing nation. On the other hand indiscriminate import takes it to technological bankruptcy. Advancement of productive forces blindly relying on a foreign technology brings imbalances and crisis in the entire economic system unless proper care is taken for the effective transfer of technology and production techniques. Pursuance of the new industrial and economic policies may land us in such a death trap.

The 1956 industrial policy resolution provided the vision to achieve self-reliance in the field of technology at the shortest possible time. Before adopting any new perspective it would be better to review first the line which has been pursued during the last five decades. It was thought that the heavy industries, the commanding heights of the public sector and the planned economic growth coupled with the policy of equitable distribution would together enable us to establish a dynamic base of indigenous scientific and technological capabilities. This policy has given us rich dividence to the extent it has been followed. Basic technological foundations of the modern industry has been imported, mostly from the erstwhile USSR and gradually been combined in the process of

developing indigenous techniques. By mid eighties India was commanding the third largest contingent of scientific and technical personnel and could make effective breakthrough in the fields of machine building industry, high level construction technique, chemical industries, in all fields of agriculture, space research and in many other branches of industry.

But, inspite of such marked advance in the fields mentioned above, subsequent departure in graduality from the basic tenets of the said policy and consequent distortions and dilutions coupled with the failure on the part of ruling policy to ensure at least an workable equitability in the distribution of social wealth, failure to ensure radical land reform to release huge potential for expansion of a domestic market have together negatively affected the sustenance of self-reliance industrial growth of the country. Eventually desperate shift from need based basic approach of economic growth to import based export oriented production of consumer durable have landed the country's economy to the brink of virtual bankruptcy. These distortions had their effect on the administration of the economy and disrupted the natural continuity of upgradation of the technology and severely distorted the very process of industrial growth as envisaged in the 1956 resolutions.

The recent policy shift in economic and industrial policy, privatisation, free entry of multinationals, import liberalisation and export orientation will open the floodgates for indiscriminate use of foreign technology in India. This shift has threatened the existing technological infrastructure built during the last five decades with extinction but provides no real ground for an alternate or upgraded indigenous technological base.

Globalisation coupled with free competition inevitably makes the existing technology almost obsolete. Shift of priority to exports which is the compulsion of present debt trap situation, compels us to satisfy the demands of developed nations. They impose stringent quality control in the name of international standards which goes on higher and higher with technology upgradation in developed world. Without undermining the necessity of producing quality product, it must be said that the compulsion of introducing international standards

has turned to be the instrument to subvert the process of growth of the technology base of underdeveloped nations. In a state of globalisation, products meant for domestic consumption also will come under heavy scrutinisation of ISO standard. We know that many Government department officials began pressing for international standards on public sector enterprises knowing fully well this standards means not only the total upgradation of technology but also a total change in production process in some case. This type of pressure is built up to patronise the imports by multinationals.

A competitive economy in a underdeveloped country attracts for its immediate profit and export such technologies which does not correspondingly strengthen the technological base as such and also scientific education system.

The present policy shift may give rise the following scenario in the field of scientific knowledge and technology.

1. Accelerated import of consumables, which has emerged as a general feature after the import liberalisation will make many of the existing productive techniques obsolete.

2. In the areas of 100% foreign participation including power, petroleum etc multinationals will bring their own technology. They themselves will operate and have the option to withdraw. In such a situation where is the option of technology transfer or imposing any kind of regulations? Such import will immensely harm the indigenous technological structure.

3. In case of joint ventures also the foreign participants will bring technology in the form of capital goods as their share of participation. After liberalisation multinationals enjoy greater regulating autonomy in these joint ventures. In the absence of legislative or contractual support binding the multinationals for transferring the technology to their Indian partner in a specific time frame liberalisation will pave the way for a technology trap.

4. Liberalisation will give rise to the incidence of importing technology for part production. Since the production chain of many multinationals products is staggered in a number of countries no single country can attain technical know how for the entire product.

5. Glorification of Dunkel proposals which is coming from the very high places in the Planning

Commission and Government points to the likelihood of acceptance of the proposals by the Government. In that eventuality, scientific and technical education in all its branches will cripple permanently.

6. Multinationals are vigorously demanding the right of exit in more explicit terms to be reflected in the labour legislation. This demand in real terms means the free right for the flight of capital. Once the right of exit of capital is allowed, the right of technology flight is also guaranteed. This situation lands a third world country to a technology trap. Therefore Government should see that in no circumstance the right of exist is allowed.

7. On the matter of technology upgradation and its import from foreign countries Government of India should formulate a comprehensive policy. The new policy should see to it that the technological base so far built is protected and expanded. Technology should suit India's socio-economic and its environmental needs. There should be organisational guarantee so that uneconomic and obsolete technology is not imposed on us. New policy should guarantee transfer of technology in a specific period after its import.

Any upgradation of technology should enhance employment generation. Upgradation of technology in a particular commodity production means displacement of labour in one side and substantial increase in productivity on the other. In each stage of technology upgradation of production capacity and site of the plant is not expanded simultaneously it will give rise to unemployment. Therefore, in a situation of acute unemployment there should be clear priorities where the technological upgradation should be brought in and the areas to be avoided. We must not be shy to invite technology upgradation in those areas which give immediate boost to industrialisation and the general standards of living i.e. heavy industry, steel, oil and other basic and infrastructural areas. In a developing country like ours, we cannot afford to bring advanced technology in manufacturing areas like soap, match boxes, biscuits, potato chips soft drinks etc. Entry of high technology in small scale sector will have devastating effect over the employment. New policy allowing multinationals and Indian monopoly houses in small sector will bring advance technology in this sector, in large scale. This will make several million people unemployed in this traditional sector of industries.

But, unfortunately the present economic and industrial policies provided no option to the government on the choice of technology. Therefore what is left over to the trade unions and the workers is the facing of eventuality or to fight back the policy. Technological change envisaged in he new policy will bring about massive structural change in the labour composition. Not that quantum of labour in the reduced but the system of contracting work will come in a large scale. In service sector there may not be that much decline as in the case of manufacturing sector but the structural division between regular and contract workforce will remain all the more same.

As the new techniques eliminates all the precise nature of jobs, skilled and highly skilled workers in the premodernised stage has to be sent out in large numbers. The rest may be redeployed in simple operations or in unskilled or semi skilled categories. Off loading of jobs for contract system will take place in three major directions. This will bring down wages drastically. Already, in various parts of the country wage rates are much below the statutory wage declared by the government agencies. This will further decline under the new policy drive.

A flourishing contract system will boost the exploitation of child and women workers. Increasing unemployment and competition in labour market will intensify caste exploitation. On the other hand unemployment among the middle classes will be pushed up which will in turn bring down wages.

In view of the complexity of the problem and the crisis in the economy. The Centre of Indian Trade Unions urges upon the Government to review the new policy and discuss the entire gamut of technology policy with the trade unions at the apex level. It also wants to emphasise the need of legislative guarantee so that no employer can impose any technology unilaterally. Even after the introduction of the policy there should be continuous dialogue between the two sides. □

ERATTA

The consumer price index numbers appearing in the August issue were by mistake printed as of Dec.92 and Jan.93. It should be read as February and March 93. The All India figures were also misprinted as 421 and 232. This correct numbers are 242 and 243. The mistake is regretted.

— Editor

Privatisation of Nationalised Insurance Industry Why and In Whose Interest!

□ Shanti Bhattacharjee

The proposal made by Dr Manmohan Singh, Union Finance Minister, in his budget speech on February 27, 1993, is the fitting finale as it were of the process of privatisation of public sector financial institutions being undertaken by the Congress (I) government at the centre. He said that:

"With reforms underway in the banking sector and in the capital markets, it is necessary to address the need for similar reforms in the insurance industry aimed at introducing a more competitive environment, subject to suitable regulation and supervision. I propose to appoint a High Powered Committee to go into these issues in depth and submit its recommendations within six months". (Source : The Statesman - 28.2.93).

The Minister left no one in any doubt about the decision of the government that they were determined to start the process of privatisation of nationalised insurance industry whatever may be its adverse effects on the people, the nation and the national economy.

The Life Insurance Corporation of India came into existence in 1956 nationalising the life insurance business of 244 Indian and foreign insurance companies. It may be recalled in this connection that Indian National Congress during India's freedom struggle formed a National Planning Committee with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as its Chairman which constituted a Sub-Committee. The Sub-committee inquired into the working of the insurance industry and discussed the concept of insurance, its potentiality, its place in the national economy, the scope and need for social security etc. Following observation of the Sub-Committee is relevant:

"Recognition of insurance as a social service will be much fuller and truer under state enterprises while the mobilisation of its funds will be much better to enable the capital to be found for other development projects more effectively" (Source : Tyrst with Trust - An LIC publication).

The government which nationalised life insurance business in 1956 and the General Insurance business in 1973, was run by the Congress Party. The government which is dismantling this sector now is also run by the same Congress Party. The govt which nationalised the life insurance business told the nation that it was necessary for the progress and advancement of the country. The government which is now destroying it, also says it is necessary for the advancement of the country. What a contrast!

In his address to the nation on January 19, 1956, the then Finance Minister, Dr C D Deshmukh while nationalising the life insurance business announced:

"Nationalisation of life insurance is a further step (after the nationalisation of Imperial Bank) in the direction of more effective mobilisation of the people's savings.

"With a second plan in the offing, involving an accelerated rate of investments and development, the widening and deepening of all possible channels of public savings has become more than ever necessary. Of this process, the nationalisation of insurance is a vital part".

"...we have come to the conclusion that nationalisation of life insurance is essential for implementation of our plan and therefore, required in public interest" (Source : Bid)

The nationalised insurance industry like many other similar institutions in this sector has played its role and played wonderfully well the role for which it was nationalised. But the present government is hell bent to destroy this sector, obviously not for the interest of the country. The Finance Minister has, therefore, proposed to form a High Powered Committee - a Narasimha Committee type committee set up for the banking sector - to give shape to the government's decision to make India's insurance market available to the foreign and domestic companies. One must not, therefore, have any

confusion and illusion whatsoever about the real motive of the government behind setting up such a committee.

WHAT WOULD BE ITS EFFECT

Privatisation of life and general insurance would be disastrous for the nation and the national economy. While the life insurance business was nationalised in 1956, the government advanced a loan of Rs.5 crores. From 1957 to 1992, LIC has paid Rs.531.04 crores to the government as its share of surplus (profit). In 1992 alone it paid Rs.90 crores.

LIC over the years has grown, its business,

premium income, investment and investment return have increased by leaps and bounds and its expense ratio has drastically come down from its statutory limit of 15% to 3.46% in 1992. Most part of LIC's investment has gone to socially purposive projects which benefits the people at large. Rate of interest on LIC's investment is guided by the government imposed restrictions. It was about 12% in 1992. The following chart will illustrate the points more clearly and enable one to know and understand the progress of LIC and its contribution to the nation:

CHART (RS IN CRORES)

	1958	1968	1978	1988	1992
New business	343.07	844.47	2020.71	12467.65	32176.30
Business in Force	—	4745.77	14342.29	50656.30	125037.88
Premium Income	73.62	213.01	709.43	2671.88	6959.91
Life Fund	447.81	1260.06	4500.70	16631.84	34691.39
Investment in Socially Purposive Sector	288.12	898.69	3501.51	12998.95	26019.90
Income on Investment	—	59.02	305.09	1557.21	3573.86
*Expense Ratio	15.46%	15.90%	15.65%	8.10%	3.46%

Statutory limit of expense : 15% (Source : LIC Fact Book, 1992).

Similar also is the position with the General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC) General Insurance business was nationalised in 1979. It functions through four subsidiary companies. The profit of GIC is also fabulous. It earned a profit of Rs.290.38 crores in 1990-91 and 1989-90 respectively. It has been possible because GIC has worked well. To a great extent it could fulfill its commitment to the nation.

Since Insurance industry as a whole - both LIC & GIC worked well, progressed well and earned fabulous profits, consideration of its restructuring like that of banks was not included in the terms of reference of the Narasimhan Committee. It will be clear from the following press report:

"The primary reasons for keeping the insurance

sector out of the proceedings of the committee is the commendable performance of the state-owned insurance companies. In sharp contrast to the banks, they have been performing creditably and with considerable success, (Source : Business standard, November 7, 1991).

So, privatisation of such a growing, profit-making industry, making enormous contributions to India's economy will bring ruination to the industry, harm the people and above all deprive the nation of its ever-increasing contribution.

WHY THIS VOLTE FACE:

In nationalising this and some other industries, the government told that the nationalised sector must occupy commanding height in India's economy and make it a self-reliant one. The advanced capitalist

countries, afflicted by continuing recession need and badly need India's insurance and banking market. To clinch a deal in this respect, series of parleys, sometime open and most often secret, are continuing for long between the representatives of these multinational giant insurance companies and the Indian Government. Recently, Mr Peter Grant, Chairman of the Sun Life Assurance Society of UK and Mr Ronand Anderson, Senior Vice President of American International Group (AIG), the US based insurance and financial visited India. Following excerpts from the press reports following their visits would give comprehensive idea of these parleys:

"Sun Life Assurance has extensive plans for investment in the Indian financial sector. The company has already a tie-up with Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) to sell unit-linked life assurance to community in the UK. It is also holding talks with the LIC for selling Unit-linked assurance in India. The tie-up with the LIC is also significant as it signals the entry of foreign insurance firms in the Indian market. Significantly, the Indian government has also reportedly conveyed to the USA and to Canada that it would give access to foreign insurance firms....."

(Source : The Telegraph, 25.1.93).

"Apart from AIG (The American International Group), other insurance companies in US are also anxiously awaiting the right signals from the Indian Government. In response to the growing interest in the Indian market, the US-India Business Council, has set up a financial service committee headed by Mr Anderson".

(Source : The Economic Times - 27.1.93).

WHY TRADE UNIONS OPPOSE

The insurance employees and their national trade union All India Insurance Employees' Association (AIIEA) as also the entire Indian Trade Union movement is opposed to any move to privatise the public sector which would undoubtedly bring disaster to Indian economy, make it totally dependent on imperialist countries. Such move would strengthen the forces who want to bring India to its pre-independence days for loot and plunder. Experience shows that foreign banks operating in

India are virtually independent, the Government has very little control over their functioning, their investment pattern, etc.

In case of LIC, most of its profits, known as "valuation SURplus" go to the benefits of its policy holders and the people at large. Sizable amount of its investment, around 80/85% goes to Central and State Governments development projects at a considerably low rate of interest. LIC's role in this sphere is unique and really commendable. Similar is also the position with the GIC. Entry of multinational insurance company to the Indian market will reverse this process and make it most vulnerable. The situation will further worsen then the share of this profit-making industry will be sold out in the open market in line with the government decision. All these together will lead to total privatisation of this industry much to the detriment of the national interest.

A committee of LIC management came to the conclusion "If the government has to allow foreign insurance companies to operate in India, it shall have also to allow private insurance companies to come in. Introduction of competition by private sector, whether Indian or foreign, which will understandably concentrate all their efforts in the profitable urban sector, would slow down the growth and spread of business, particularly in rural areas. Insurance business by private sector will be mostly an elitist urban phenomenon as was evident during the pre-nationalisation days. It will later only to the rich man's insurance needs leaving the bulk of the country's population uncared for. In effect, this would amount to putting the clock back for no worthwhile reason".

"To sum up, the insurance sector in India has acquitted itself very well both in terms of commercial and social objectives. This dual responsibility has not been easy to carry. Now that we have done well, the multinational US insurance companies possibly want to take away the more profitable parts which are necessary for us to carry out our social responsibilities. This should not be permitted".

(Source : Tryst with Trust - P: 500- 502).

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Miners In Continuous Hunger Strike in East Germany to Resist Closure

The euphoria over merger of two Germanies started fading away when the East Germany workers found themselves in the lurch. Operation of so-called 'market economy' is leading to closure of mines and factories on the ground of so-called viability. Not the need to create and enhance productive capacity but the consideration of profit only is becoming the sole determinant of all economic decision of the Government and the capitalists.

A large chunk of miners of the Thomas Muentzer Potash Mine in Bischofferode in the East German state of Thuringia had been on hunger strike from early July to oppose the bid of the Govt to partially close down the mine.

The striking miners and their families have refused to accept offers of 'Replacement Jobs' insisting instead that they should be allowed to produce potash, a key fertilizer ingredient to help feed a starving world.

The mine which employed 700 workers is stated to have closed down by Treuhand Agencies actively backed by the govt and the bankers. The Treuhand is the agency charged with integrating the former East German states with unified German economy and is at present involved in silent liquidation of 900 odd companies and establishments employing over one million workers.

The Bischofferode Potash Miners have declared that their struggle is not only for saving the job of 700

miners but also to save the productive capacity of the nation in general and mining sector in particular. "Benefit and advancement of the country and the people lie not in closing down productive units to fatten the profits of few but in expanding the productive capacity, and numerous productive Mittelstand (small and medium sized units) through enhanced investment in industry and agriculture and creation of productive jobs" observed senior officials of the Mining Workers Union. "Foreign cartels" he charged "have been on offensive against German Potash producers and German govt has turned a deaf ear to miners' complaint" "Potash for Development aid, bread for the world and job for us" was the slogan of the striking miners.

Centering the struggle of the workers of Potash Mine, workers of other industrial units through out Germany and also the farmers have already raised their voice of solidarity and '28th July' was observed as solidarity day of the workers all over Germany.

On August 1, the city of Bischofferode witnessed rally by thousands of workers chanting slogan against so called policy of globalisation and closing down of productive units. The solidarity messages coming from all over Germany for the striking mine workers condemned the behind-the-curtain role of IMF and World Bank imposing measures of misery and starvation on the people of the world.

Contd. from page 22

THE MOVE HAS TO BE THWARTED

The stage has been set to start the process of PRIVATISATION of insurance industry and to present Indian insurance market to imperialist countries on a platter. This, if the government succeeds, will bring immense harm to the country and confer enormous benefits on the imperialist countries, particularly the USA and the domestic monopoly houses. Privatisation of public sector is a part of Government's new economic and industrial policy. The working people observed two successful one

day strikes, one on November 29, 1991 and the other on June 16, 1992 to register their protest against this policy. Further programmes including number of strike actions are being contemplated. In the Insurance and the banking industries about 10 lac officers and employees went on a day's strike on March 29, 1993 with the contemplation of another two-days' strike in April, should the government not change its position. Call for Bharat Bandh by the trade unions and democratic forces has also come on the agenda.

Because of the pressure of these united struggles manifesting the determination of the working people,

the government could not move as swiftly as it had intended. So, the need of the day is to intensify the struggles to force the government to change its policies. The governments move towards privatisation of insurance industry or any other industries cannot be, it must be clearly understood, fought in isolation. Struggles against privatisation has, therefore, to be linked up with the struggles against the anti-people policies of the government.

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In stead of taking steps to set right the difficulties and problems pointed out by the Trade Unions, which would help improve DESU's functioning and finances and its service to the consumers, the govt has been negotiating with private parties for handing it over to them. The shortcomings of the DESU are being used as arguments to create public opinion to push through such a deal.

It is part of the same overall policy in other parts of the country for privatising power generation and distribution. The immediate result would be to considerably raise power tariff, so that it becomes a luxury for the rich and out of reach for the common man.

Our federations call upon all their state units to send messages of solidarity with the struggling DESU workers.

The Special Bench of Supreme Court in their judgement of 5th August 1993 ordered reinstatement of victimised Railway Staff (mostly loco running staff) who were dismissed from service under Rule 14(2).

Read

The Working Class
(English)

&

CITU Mazdoor
(Hindi)

A Monthly Journal of C.I.T.U.

Published by M.K.Pandhe on behalf of Centre of Indian Trade Unions
6, Talkatora Road, New Delhi, Typeset by Aanklan Softwares, Tel.
386077, and Printed by him at Progressive Printers, A-21, Jhilmil
Ind. Area, G.T.Road, Shahdara, Delhi-95 Ph:2282847.

Support From CGT, France, In Struggle Against Government's Economic Policies

The CGT, France has protested against the brutal repression on workers by the police on 19th August last during Jail Bharo programme and extended solidarity to our movement. We are reproducing the telegram received by the CITU from the CGT in this respect.

CITU
15, Talkatora Road
New Delhi 110 001

French CGT sent today cable to Prime Minister, India, protesting against brutal repression on trade union demonstration against economic policy of Government.

CGT demanded immediate release of imprisoned workers and trade unionists and respect fundamental human rights including right to demonstrate.

Be assured of our solidarity and support.

Fraternally
Montreuil, Le 20 August 1993
J P Page
Head, International Dept
Member of Executive, CGT, France

BOOK POST