



# THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITY

**West Bengal Bank Employees Call for**

## **Fight Against Disruptive Role of AIBEA Leadership**

*Expressing strong indignation at the All India Bank Employees Association (AIBEA) leaders' policies of collaboration with bankers and betrayal of the cause of the employees in matters of wages, other economic interests, work-load, service security, etc. as also of their divisive activities fragmenting the employees' trade union solidarity, bank employees in the State of West Bengal from various districts met in a whole-day Convention on 28th September 1980 at Thyagaraja Hall, with Nares Paul (Vice-President BPBEA), Sudhir Chaudhury (United Commercial Bank) and Kalyan Sengupta (Bank of Baroda) in the Presidium.*

*From the Unions in 34 banks, 793 delegates and 380 observers representing about 25,000 employees participated. More than 30 of them took part in the deliberations.*

*Incidentally, the commercial bank offices in West Bengal have an approximate 38,000 workmen plus 12,000 in State Bank of India. Of these, BPBEA affiliates account for nearly 34,000.*

*Apart from compromising the vital interests of the employees and surrender to the dictates of bankers and their masters in the Governmental authority, the leaders of AIBEA and its various State level organisations have been resorting to expulsion/disaffiliation of unions in order to buttress any resenting voice and are patronising formation of parallel bodies to disrupt the primary units which do not agree to toe their line*

*The General Secretary of BPBEA, the West Bengal constituent of AIBEA, without any decision of the Working Committee and the General Council, has recently announced removal, thereby meaning expulsion, of 4 office-bearers (seniormost vice president who happens to be one of the founders of*

*AIBEA, two joint secretaries, assistant treasurer) and the President and Secretaries, of as many as 16 unions, on the plea of their being Conveners of this Convention.*

*Face to face with all these developments, the Convention adopted unanimously, amidst thunderous applause, a DECLARATION (published below) inter alia calling upon bank employees to dissociate from AIBEA and its State organs; it elected a 28-member Preparatory Committee having Nares Paul as convener, with the task of establishing a New State-level organisation by holding a Conference within 3 months or soon thereafter and also to initiate the process of forming an all-India organisation of bank employees for properly reflecting the aims and objectives outlined in paragraph 17 of the DECLARATION.*

### **Declaration**

#### **Background**

1. During a period when bank employees were subjects of untold miseries and humiliations due to absence of any wage-norm, service security, trade union and democratic rights etc., when 'hire and fire', was literally the order of the day in the employer-employee relations in banking institutions in the country, the All India Bank employees' Association (AIBEA) was inaugurated in December 1945.

2. The objectives of this Association, the AIBEA, was to unite the bank employees all over the country under a common bond, for protection against onslaughts of the bankers and the government, for betterment of their economic conditions, for ensuring security of service, for realising trade union and other democratic rights, and so forth.

**All India Port and Dock Workers' Indefinite Strike  
from November 18**

3. For the fulfilment of these objectives, the organisation was set up on the sound foundations of trade union democracy and functioning.

4. In context of class relations, the bank employees being part of the community of working class, the adopted guide lines of this movement and struggles were those of the working class, to act in close co-operation and unison with rest of the working class.

5. In the initial years of formation of AIBEA, with the aforesaid objectives set before them, the employees of various banks in different parts of the country got tremendous impetus and enthusiastically moved forward to build the organisation extensively and in the intensity. AIBEA put its worthy marks in the history of trade union movement and struggle. It had its great impact on the opposite class forces—the bankers and their mentors in governmental authority.

6. To halt the militant advances of bank employees, the Government imposed Tribunal after Tribunal for deciding their wages and other service conditions. This was the state of affairs till the year 1962. The break came in 1964 when AIBEA rightly took the decision for direct struggle in pursuit of achieving demands. Following the working class approach and methods of direct struggles, bank employees created a situation that forced the bankers to sit for bi-lateral negotiations.

### **Severe Setback**

7. This was a good augury, but leaders of AIBEA faltered and instead of asserting the class approach to issues that led to the struggle, succumbed to the machinations of the bankers. In return for some wage revision, they swallowed the scheme of wide-spread mechanisation, they allowed retention of the pernicious provisions of Tribunal award regarding 'discipline'. The great upheaval of bank employees thus got a severe set-back at the hands of the leaders. This was in 1966. Last year's glorious strike by Grindlays Bank employees—the unprecedented and the longest (November 1979-February 1980)—brought to surface what the 1966 Bi-partite settlement on mechanisation really meant. AIBEA leaders openly sabotaged the struggle by asking the Delhi unit to turn black-legs. Subsequent bipartite settlements of 1970 & 1979 exposed how, following the footprints of the first bipartite settlement, these leaders one after another surrendered the basic interest of the employees at the altar of bankers and the Government. Instead of resorting to working class struggles, a conscious acceptance of a reduction in dearness neutralisation rate added with imposition of a ceiling, implicit consent for work

load increases widening the process of mechanisations/computerisation, stricter disciplinary measures etc. through a show of voluntary arbitration are further indications of the way these leaders have done serious harm to the employees cause. These are nothing but instances of sheer betrayal.

### **Extent of the Class Collaboration**

8. Since the time of entering the dungeon of class collaboration, these leaders have been meticulously pursuing a course of drifting away from the rest of the working class as evidenced by non-participation in the anti-wage freeze convention of all central trade unions and office employees federations at New Delhi (1975), by participation in a similar type convention at Bangalore (1979) but not implementing except in one or two States, the unanimous decision of countrywide strike on 14th September 1979.

9. A manifestation of the extent of the collaboration of these leaders with the ruling cliques became known when they utilised the bank employees platform to hail 'Emergency' of 1975.

### **Throttling Voice of Difference**

10. Bank employees naturally became vocal against what these leaders went on doing since 1966, detrimental to the employees' vital interests. To throttle such voice of difference, these leaders started systematic removal of the exponents of differing views from the organisation, started fragmentation by floating splinter, parallel and ad-hoc bodies and unions in various banks and regions, disaffiliation of non-conformist units from state federations; e.g. Orissa (1969), Bihar (starting with Central Bank in 1978 and onwards), Andhra (1979), Kerala (1980), Ahmedabad (1979); Union Bank, (Bombay in 1976 and in other States later on), United Commercial Bank (Orissa-1972, Bihar, West Bengal, Delhi), Reserve Bank, (New Delhi, Nagpur, Madras, Hyderabad, Patna, Calcutta). There are numerous such cases in different parts of the country and banks.

11. In this state of West Bengal, the State Unit of AIBEA, the Bengal Provincial Bank Employees Association, have refused to hold meetings of the Working Committee (excepting on 3/4 occasions during last three years) or of General Council, and despite a decision one year ago is not only not holding the conference long over due, its General Secretary, who himself has failed to get elected in his base unit for the last three years, but unabashedly continuing to cling on to his position in BPBEA, has on his own chosen to announce removal of 16 constituent units and 4 office-bearers namely, a Vice-

President, 2 Joint Secretaries and Assistant Treasurer from their respective positions in the BPBEA, thereby preparing ground for their expulsion from the General Council of AIBEA.

### **AIBEA Leadership Out to Break Unity**

12. In spite of repeated opposition and objection and objections raised within the forums of the organisation, ever since the days of the first bi-partite settlement in 1966, these leaders of AIBEA and their protagonists in different States and banks, have not only continued but widened their role of capitulation. As a logical carry forward of this role, they have in the AIBEA General Council meeting at Baroda in December 1979 decided upon eliminating all dissenting opinion within AIBEA and its Units, to ensure and perpetuate control over the organisation by their coterie. In this process, they are out to break, in every possible manner, the unity of bank employees and their organisational solidarity so as to serve the bankers and their masters more effectively.

13. Thus, in the course of last one decade and more, these leaders have forced out of the organisation several scores of thousands of employees. Now, gone are the days when the name of AIBEA symbolised a united body reflecting the aims and aspirations of bank employees, functioning under democratic norms and with the ideals, principles and outlook of the working class. AIBEA is now converted in to a hunting ground for opportunists, self-seekers and careerist bureaucratic Trade Union bosses plagued by internecine feud within themselves as a natural sequence. Its functioning today is that of a coterie; others are either to obey or to quit and if one fails to comply with either, he has to face expulsion. Expulsion/disaffiliations is the dominant feature against those who have refused to oblige the leaders either to obey blindly or to quit and have expressed resentment by upholding proper view points.

### **Decision for a New Organisation**

14 This Convention is convinced that the AIBEA and its State Units under such capricious leaders have ceased to be a purposeful organisation and unfior of bank employees to protect and advance their genuine and vital interest. The banner of AIBEA has been molested and torn asunder beyond repair by such leaders. It is of no avail to have around it any longer.

15. This Convention, therefore, calls upon the bank employees in the State of West Bengal to rise in condemnation of the AIBEA leaders and their proteges in every bank, to take the unavoidable

decision to dissociate from AIBEA and its State organs.

16. The Unions/Associations participating in this Convention decides in favour of secession from the BPBEA, the State Unit of AIBEA.

### **In the Interest of Bank Employees**

17. This Convention resolves to initiate establishment and building up of an appropriate mass organisation of bank employees which will eschew the path of class collaboration, will be guided by the principles and norms of democratic trade union functioning, will forge purposeful unity of bank employees-unity for struggle-to protect and extend their class interests, will work in close co-operation with and as a part of the working class, and make every endeavour to undo the sever damages done to the bank employees' material interests by the capitulating coterie that grips the AIBEA and its constituents State Units in the sphere of service security, wage-erosion, mechanisation/computerisation and so forth, and in the sphere of organisation by resort to calculative disruption, floating of splinter unions, expulsion and disaffiliation of units which do not toe their policies.

### **Preparatory Committee**

18. In the above perspective, this Convention resolves further to set up a Preparatory Committee entrusted with the task of holding a Conference for the State of West Bengal within three months from now or as soon thereafter as possible.

19. The preparatory committee consisting of 28 members with powers to co-opt others, is authorised to raise funds frame a draft constitution, enrol unions provisionally, decide the basis of delegations, invite representatives of bank employees' unions/associations/federations in other States with a view to setting apace the process of forming an all-India Organisation, and take all steps necessary in this regard.

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# Who Rules : Delhi or Westminster ?

By **Jim Slater**

*(This article is being reproduced from 'The Seamen', March 1980 issue published by the National Union of Seamen, London. The author is the General Secretary of the Union).*

**T**HE report of the working group on the employment of non-domiciled seafarers on British ships was published by the Department of Trade early in 1977. Its main recommendation was that there should be wage equality for all seafarers employed on our ships whatever their country of domicile.

This recommendation has the wholehearted support of the National Union of Seamen. Indeed it was on our initiative that the working group was set up. British shipowners and the previous government also accepted the report's conclusion. All three parties have worked actively and extensively to secure its implementation.

But these efforts have been resisted by some overseas administrations, especially India, which is by far the largest single supplier of non-domiciled seafarers to our ships.

Indian resistance to wage equality stems from fears about the possible inflationary consequences of the proposed higher wage rates. Whatever the merits of such arguments the effect is that Indian wages policy, not British wages policy, is being enforced on a large number of British ships.

In other words, the social and economic objectives of the British Government shipowners and maritime unions are taking second place to the views of the government in Delhi.

As an alternative to increased wages for Indian Seamen, Delhi

would prefer to see the money channelled into a welfare fund. This fund would be used for the benefit of all Indian seafarers and not just those employed on British ships.

The money paid by British shipowners would be invested in India and the welfare fund would be financed by the interest. So indirectly, the money, which should benefit seafarers, would be used to bolster the Indian economy. This was never the objective the working party had in mind.

A Similar fund has been in existence in Pakistan since 1975. The money is actually invested in the Pakistan Shipping Corporation, a state owned concern. Helping our competitors with British shipowner's cash hardly seems to be the best way of using money which should by right be paid to Indian or Pakistani seamen.

Frankly I am most alarmed that the working party's recommendations have yet to be implemented. As a result Indian seamen are currently receiving £60 a month less than they would if the Indian government's opposition had been overcome. I remain totally committed to the principle of wage equality and also totally opposed to the funding of the wage differential between British and Indian seafarer's rates.

The entire question of the working party's report, the progress or the lack of progress made in implementing its main recommendation, is due to be

reviewed this year. My view is that the Indian government, or any other government should not be allowed to dictate the wage rates of seamen employed on our ships.

The Indian government should be told that the rate for the job must be paid to the individual seafarer and not into any fund. The basic question—who rules on British ships: Delhi or Westminster? — must be resolved at the earliest opportunity.

## **Government of India Solely Responsible**

Holding the same opinion as of Jim Slater, the General Secretary of the Forward Seamen's Union of India, Ashutosh Bangerjee, said on July 25, 'Government of India is solely responsible for the loss of Indian seamen's job potentialities aboard British vessels and or foreign flag vessels.' He continues :

Due to the effect of a long time animosity against the gradual increase of available job potentialities aboard British Flag and/or Foreign Flag-vessels, the Government of India accordingly, rather intentionally, interfered with the internal policy of the Government of Britain and their Trade Union counterparts in the Maritime industry and as a result of such prolonging interruptions, today our registered Indian seamen continuously facing acute unemployment in India, as both the Government of India and Indian shipowners got no status and/or abilities at all to offer employment to the entire bulk of 38,000 registered but unemployed seamen aboard Indian-Flag vessels.

Moreover, the Government of India, got no corruption-free machineries at all in India to use

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# Port and Dock Workers Prepare for Indefinite Strike from Nove. 18

**A**S a result of a settlement with the Water Transport Workers Federation of India, All India Port and Dock Workers Federation, Indian National Port and Dock Workers Federation and Port, Dock and Waterfront Workers Federation, the Government of India constituted a Bi-partite Wage Negotiating Machinery with the representatives of the said four federations. These representatives earnestly and sincerely endeavoured through discussions to reach conclusions on a fair and reasonable revision of wages and other conditions of service of the port and dock workers. With the said objective,

they participated in a series of meetings held during the last five months. The discussions bore no fruits and the four federations came to the conclusion that by continuing the discussion in the bi-partite machinery no useful purpose will be served because of the unhelpful attitude of the employers.

Under the terms of the agreement with the Government with the said federations, the revised wage structure and other service conditions are to come into effect from January 1, 1980. Since several months have already passed in fruitless discussion, the port and dock workers are natu-

rally agitated very much and the is mounting jeopardising industrial harmony in the major ports.

The said four federations have therefore unanimously resolved on October 10 to intimate the Government, the port and dock authorities and other employers of dock workers that they will organise an indefinite strike from November 18 at all the major ports if an amicable settlement on the charter of demands already presented to the employers representatives on the bi-partite machinery is not concluded before the said date.

In the resolution the four federations have hoped that the Government will intervene without any further delay and reach or help to reach a negotiated settlement.

## Seamen. . .

[From Page Four]

properly huge accumulated ITF-money for the benefit of Indian seamen through the existing Seafarers' Welfare Fund Society Cell, because, despite our repeated enquiries since the year 1973, the Administrative Officer, of the said Fund (Whose office is particularly lying in Bombay) did not submit any accounts either to the Indian seamen or to the public in India and against which Indian seamen are agitating almost daily in almost all major Indian ports. Without paying any heed to such Indian seamen's agitations, now the Government of India issued notice to stop disbursement of such Fund money to any Indian seamen on and from the month of August, 1980.

Registered but unemployed Indian seamen need more job opportunities without disparity in wages at this juncture and they do not believe in Welfare Fund

money, as, the said is not being utilised for the benefit of Indian shipowners-in-distress since a long time. Government of India should take all possible initiative to increase Indian seamen's job avenues aboard merchant vessels

of friendly Maritime nations and not to encourage bolstering Indian economic development at the cost of other friendly nations' "Fund Money", as, far which we are earning bad names world wide.

## Greetings to the Working Class and People of USSR

**O**N the occasion of the Sixtyfourth Anniversary of the historic October Revolution, the Centre of Indian Trade Unions and The Working Class sends its warm greetings to the working class and the people of USSR for their magnificent advances in Socialist Construction.

The remarkable scientific and technological achievements in USSR have surpassed the USA in several respects. When the capitalist system is engulfed in a deep economic crisis a sustained economic growth in USSR is a matter of pride for every one who cherishes victory of socialism over capitalism.

The CITU is happy to note the growing friendly relations between the people of India and USSR and wish that they would be strengthened in the days to come.

The CITU wishes more and more victories to the working class and the people of USSR in further socialist construction and in defence of world peace.

The CITU conveys its warm greetings to All Union Central Council of Trade Unions and expresses its confidence that the fraternal relations between the AUCCTU and CITU would continue to grow in future.

# Mockery of Committee on ILO Conventions

THE 15th Session of the Committee on ILO Conventions held in New Delhi on 15th October failed to achieve any fruitful results since the representatives of the Government of India were not prepared to take a positive attitude on any of the ILO conventions considered by the Committee.

K.S. Raghupathi, Secretary, Ministry of Labour, presided over the meeting.

In the last meeting of the Committee it was agreed that in order to implement the convention concerning the maximum permissible weight to be carried by one worker the target date should be fixed at May 1980. However the Departments of transport, food and Railways did not take any action to ensure maximum weight of 55 kgs for transportation. The representatives of trade unions strongly criticised the arguments of various Ministries and demanded immediate implementation of the Convention. The representatives of private sector employers also demanded its implementation. The President of the meeting therefore agreed to get a note prepared on the steps to be taken to implement the convention which should be considered in the next meeting to be convened on the eve of the forthcoming National Labour Conference.

The representatives of the trade unions criticised non-ratification of the Convention concerning Labour Inspection in Agriculture and pointed out how even the Minimum Wages fixed for the Agricultural workers were not implemented by the land-owners.

The CITU representative raised the question of non-implementation of the wage rates fixed by the ILO for the Indian seamen. The management even failed to give proper data which was agreed to in the last meeting,

Regarding the ILO Conventions and Recommendations adopted at the 65th Session, the Union Labour Ministry prepared a note which virtually admitted that no convention could be implemented. The note made a bold statement that, "Employers and workers in India generally enjoy all the rights enumerated in the Convention. They have full freedom to organise themselves into unions and federations without previous authorisation and without having to fulfil any substantive conditions."

The CITU representative observed that there may be full freedom of association for employers in India but not for the workers. He criticised the Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules which insist that any amendment of substantial character in the rules of the Association shall be made only with the previous approval of the Government. These rules also provide that the Association cannot publish any periodical without the prior approval of the Government and that the Association cannot address any communication to any foreign authority except the Government which has a right to withhold it.

"The ILO Committee on Expert" the official note stated, "had taken objection to the prohibition of 'outsiders' as a condition for grant of recogni-

tion. The prohibition of outsiders is not an absolute restriction to the right to organise, but is limited in nature as being a precondition for grant of recognition only. Even then, the Committee of Experts appear to have regarded it as violative of Convention No. 87."

After a long winded argument the Government note stated, ".....In view of the foregoing, it is clear that the existing law and practice in the country do not permit ratification of either Convention 87 or 98". The representative of trade unions vehemently criticised this attitude of the Government and demanded change in the existing law and practice to fulfil the obligations under the ILO Conventions. The spokesman of the Labour Ministry however could not give any satisfactory arguments to justify the Government standpoint. Their attitude was to delay the consideration of the issue on some frivolous ground.

The attitude of the Government led to a remark from Naval Tata that Government should vote for only those Conventions which India can implement. Trade Union representatives however objected to this argument.

The meeting thus ended without any definite conclusion. Some trade union representatives remarked that the Government was treating the Committee meeting as a formality to meet the requirements of ILO Rules.

The CITU was represented in the meeting by M.K. Pandhe. Among the other T.U. representatives were Kanti Mehta (INTUC) B.N. Rajhans (HMS) T.N. Siddhanta (AITUC) and Prabhakar Ghate (BMS).

# CITU Criticises Sixth Plan Basic Policies

**I**N a meeting with the Minister for planning, N.D. Tewari, in New Delhi on 11 October, the representatives of the CITU strongly criticised the basic approach of the Sixth Plan and pointed out that the net result of the Plan would be just the opposite of what the planning is proposing to achieve. The CITU therefore demanded complete reversal of these policies.

This meeting was specially arranged to hear the views of the CITU since the invitation was not extended to an earlier meeting of the Central trade unions held in September last due to oversight.

On behalf of the CITU the meeting was attended by P. Ramamurti, General Secretary, M. K. Pandhe, Secretary and Nrisingha Chakrabarty, Secretary.

P. Ramamurti spoke at length on the Sixth Plan framework and observed that the Government should have consulted the trade union before placing the draft before the meeting of the National Development Council held recently. He pointed out that the Association of trade unions in drafting the Plan was only formal. Moreover, he noted, the consultation with the trade unions was only on the labour policy but the trade unions were interested to have their say in economic policies also.

Reviewing the outcome of the earlier Plans Ramamurti said that these Plans have only encouraged the growth in inequalities and concentration of capital in the hands of few busi-

ness houses. He underlined the fact that one hundred big business houses control nearly 80 per cent of the total paid-up capital in the country. In absence of implementation of land reforms the rural rich appropriated all the funds that the Plans have injected in the rural areas.

There was no wonder that people living below the poverty line continued to grow over several Plans, Ramamurti continued. He gave facts to substantiate his point of view.

The CITU criticised the growth of multinationals in the country as a result of which the industrial development in the country was retarded. Even in sectors where indigenous know-how was available the Government was permitting multinational companies to operate. The plethora of foreign collaboration agreements signed with foreign multinationals by the Indian bourgeoisie had led to export of precious funds out of the country.

Ramamurti criticised the reckless drive towards exports and huge subsidy given to the exporters from the budgetary resources. He pointed out the excessive dependence of the Plan on the world bank aid and how the World Bank has been dictating the plan policies. Instead of marching towards self-reliance the country was becoming increasingly dependent on foreign loans.

The CITU criticised the Research and Development work in India and noted that whatever work had been done in India

was not being utilised by the Government. The scientists and technicians were getting demoralised and many had been leaving the country.

Ramamurti criticised the wage freeze policy of the Government and pointed out how with skyrocketing inflation the real standard of living of the working class was continuously getting eroded. The growing reliance of additional taxation was always over-fulfilled in all the Plans.

Referring to the workers participation in management, Ramamurti noted that the existing schemes were making a farce of the workers participation. The administration in public sector had not shown any inclination to introduce genuine workers participation. The trade unions therefore did not accept the farcical scheme of workers participation.

Ramamurti pointed out how the workers exposing malpractices in public sector had been penalised by the managements. Unless the Government give protection to such workers who would come forward to throw light on the misdeeds in public sector undertaking, he asked.

The CITU representatives criticised the non-implementation of six study group reports in steel industry and the Report of the representative of 10 central trade union on working of the public undertaking. The workers had therefore been losing faith in the credibility of the Government. It was therefore necessary to take immediate steps to implement these reports.

The CITU representatives requested the Minister to take into consideration these views before the draft is finalised.

# Syndicate Bank Staff Call for Unity and Struggle

**T**HE Second Conference of the Syndicate Bank Staff Union was held at Pune from October 3 to 6. It was attended by nearly 700 delegates/observers of the Syndicate Bank Staff Unions, other bank employees and members of various trade unions. The President of the Union, V.R. Kamath presided over. Suresh Taur, Mayor of the Pune Municipal Corporation welcomed the gathering as the Chairman of the Reception Committee.

M. K. Pandhe, Secretary, CITU, inaugurated the Conference in the absence of B.T. Ranadive, President, CITU, who is hospitalised in Kerala. He outlined the objectives of the trade union movement and its relevance to the present day situation in the country. Dealing with the bank employees front, M.K. Pandhe was critical of the role of the AIBEA as well as its undemocratic functioning. He conveyed to the assembled delegates and observers the warm greetings of the CITU.

W.R. Varadarajan, Secretary of the All India Reserve Bank Employees Association greeted the Conference on behalf of the Reserve Bank employees. C.L. Rajaratnam, General Secretary, NCBE addressed the gathering as the Chief Guest. G.M.V. Nayak and Prabhakar Mankar greeted the Conference respectively on behalf of Canara Bank Staff Union and the local CITU.

M.S.N. Rao, General Secretary of the Union presented his report. Referring to the struggle of bank employees for wage revision etc., Rao said the AIBEA which had considered itself as the 'sole bargaining agent' and the champion of the

cause of the bank employees betrayed the bankworkers in its anxiety to support emergency and gain political advantage. He condemned the tactics adopted by the management of the Syndicate Bank through court injunctions and such other measures. He firmly declared that the Syndicate Bank Staff Union is an organisation which will fight not only for rights but also against all tyrannical and jungle laws of the country.

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## Massive Rally at Faridabad

**O**VER 8,000 workers participated in a rally on October 17 at Faridabad which was jointly organised by the Faridabad district committee of the CITU and other local unions to observe the martyrs day in memory of the workers killed on the same day last year by the police and the henchmen of the managements. On this day the workers in 1979 were organising a rally to protest against the anti-working class policies of the State Government and the management.

The workers decided to carry forward the struggle on their 8-point charter of demands. The rally was addressed by M. K. Pandhe, Secretary, CITU amongst others.

Earlier, the Faridabad district committee of the CITU organised a series of actions on the pressing issues of the working class and the common people. On September 22, a dharna was organised in front of BDO's office and a 8-point memorandum was submitted to the BDO in support of the demands of the farmers. On September 23, a dharna was organised outside

V.R. Kamath in his presidential address advised the Syndicate Bank Staff members to be more united and fight for several lost rights. He was emphatic that Syndicate Bank Staff Union has great future.

The Conference adopted several resolutions on the pressing issues of the bank employees, working class and the common people. It has called upon the bank employees to unite and struggle in support of their demands and against anti-working class and authoritarian policies of the Government.

food and supply office and a 8-point memorandum was given to the Controller demanding distribution of essential commodities at cheap rates from fair price shops. On September 24, a 6-point memorandum was submitted to the employment officer after a day long dharna. On September 25, following a day long dharna outside labour department, a 10-point charter of demands was submitted with the labour commissioner. September 26 dharna was organised to protest against the atrocities on women and the weaker sections and a memorandum was given to the deputy commissioner.

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## CITU's New Publication Computer Menace in Indian Railways

by

**Nrisingha Chakrabarty**  
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## Tamilnadu Workers Protest Against Black Ordinances

**S**HE working class and the peasantry of the state of Tamilnadu rose to protest against the black Ordinance proclaimed by the India Government. Lakhs of workers and peasants participated in protest actions organised in past two months at the calls of several trade union organisations and demanded withdrawal of Preventive Detention and other such draconian Ordinances. Reports of strikes, joint actions, demonstrations, rallies, and conventions have come from all the districts in the State.

In Madras, a Convention was organised on October 5 at the call of CITU, AITUC, WPC and TNTUC (Janata) which was addressed among others by R. Umanath. In response to the call of this Convention, over a lakh workers struck work on October 14 for one hour and organised demonstrations.

At the call of CITU, AITUC, TNTUC, and KNTUC, over 50,000 workers went on strike for four hours in Coimbatore district. Coimbatore and Thiruppur towns marked 5,000 strong demonstrations.

Over two lakh agriculture workers observed strike on September 30 in Thanjavur district and held demonstrations against the Ordinances. In Madurai district, municipal, tannery and cigar and other workers struck work and organised demonstrations on September 26. Trichy district faced strike action of the workers on October 10 organised in response to a joint call.

The workers of Burn and Company, a public sector, went on a four hour strike on September 24 in Salem. The workers of other units also joined and held

meetings and demonstrations. In response to a call by a joint-convention of trade unions including CITU held on September 9 at Tuticorin, the workers in this district observed October 8 as the protest day by organising meetings and demonstrations. The workers observed strike on October 22 in Kanyakumari district. Through out this period hundreds of meetings and demonstrations were organised against the Ordinances demand-

## All India Construction Workers Demands Day on Nov. 20

**A**T the call of the CITU, the construction and erection workers all over the country will observe November 20 as All India Demands Day to press for their outstanding demands including the demands like rise in wages, job security, ban on retrenchment, comprehensive law to regularise working conditions in construction industry, abolition of contract labour system, and for trade union rights.

On that day the CITU unions will hold demonstrations and meetings to highlight common problems faced by the workers in this industry. The leaflets and posters will be brought out to mark the action programme. The workers will wear badges

in their withdrawal.

## Mass Protest Actions against Rising Prices

In response to the call by the third Conference of the Tamilnadu State Committee of the CITU held recently, thousands of workers in the State organised demonstrations, rallies, meetings on October 6 as a part of the struggle against skyrocketing prices and to mobilise workers to demand takeover of wholesale food grain and the distribution of essential articles through fair price shops. The action programme was very successful.

depicting the demands of the day. Wherever possible the actions will be carried out jointly with other trade unions.

The decision to observe the all India demands day on November 20 was taken by a meeting of the comrades working in construction and erection industry held at Cannanore on September 15 with Samar Mukherjee in Chair. The meeting was attended by 55 representatives from West Bengal, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamilnadu, Karnataka, Punjab, J & K, Orissa and Bihar. After reviewing the activities of unions and the problems faced by the workers in this industry, the meeting gave a call to this effect.

## CITU Protests Against PD Ordinance in Karnataka

**A**T the call of the Bangalore district committee of the CITU, thousands of workers marched in a procession to submit a memorandum to the Governor on September 10 protesting against the Preventive Detention Ordinance contemplated by the Chief Minister of Karnataka. In the memorandum the workers appealed not to promulgate the Ordinance which will be used against trade union leaders and workers in the name of curbing the activities of the

blackmarketeers and hoarders.

A delegation consisting of CITU leaders S. Suryanarayana Rao, T.S. Ananthram, R. Srinivas and N. L. Upadhyaya met the Governor in Raj Bhawan and submitted the memorandum. The delegation impressed upon the Governor that the workers were surprised with this move of the Government especially when there had been a massive General Strike in the State on August 18 against Essential Services Act, which curtail right to strike in certain sections.

# Jute Workers Form All India Federation

Inaugurating the first all India jute workers Conference at Kanpur on September 27, Niren Ghosh, MP, declared, "Our struggle is a direct challenge to monopoly capital. And we are fighting not only for three lakh workers, but also for the livelihood of 40 lakh farmers and their families, in all, about two crore people...with the formation of the all India federation, the whole trade union struggle will be raised to a new level."

The two-day Conference was participated by 179 delegates from nine States in India and they formed All India Jute Workers' Federation. The venue of the Conference was named after the popular trade union leader of Kanpur, the late Com. Ram Asrey who died of a heart attack during the protracted jute workers' strike in 1973.

## A Political Struggle

Niren Ghosh continued, "It is also a political struggle. In opposing to the capitalists who want to keep the working class passive in politics to preserve their class rule, we must activate it as the workers can never be free unless a worker-peasant rule is established in this country."

A seven member Presidium consisting of Mohammad Ismail, Mohammad Amin, Gangadhar Reddy, R.S. Tiwari, Pijush Das, Ravi Sinha and Zaif conducted the deliberations of the Conference.

Kamal Sarkar, Convenor of the Organising Committee of the All India Jute Workers Conference, presented his report which outlined the jute workers movement history and setting up of the jute industry. He informed

that the first jute mill was established in Hoogly district in 1855. After 1947, thirteen Indian monopolists were there to dominate it. And after the establishment of left front Governments in West Bengal and Tripura, a State sector has also come up.

## Glorious History

The Bengal Jute Workers' Union has had a glorious history since its inception in 1922 just after the first phase of the non-cooperation movement. An industry-wide strike broke out in 1929 which lasted for 39 days. The workers made significant gains. Hours of work were reduced from 64 per week to 54 and the system of punishment and bribery was abolished. Their right to organise a trade union was conceded and women workers, for the first time, got the employers to concede maternity leave. But this organisation existed only sporadically till the Bengal Chalkal Mazdoor Union (BCMU) came into being, which has been a focus of the jute workers struggle since. A second industry-wide strike followed covering 100 mills which lasted 74 days and was crushed with unprecedented repression.

The Convenor of the Organising Committee said Indian Jute Manufacturers Association came up in 1884 and it was renamed in 1902 as Indian Jute Mills Association which has been active right from the British period and coordinated the activities of the Jute Mills owners, regarding industry and the workers' demands. After 1947 the Government of India did nothing to curtail dividends being siphoned

off to Britain. But, the movements and struggles continued. But these could not make any impact against the combined forces of the jute monopolists and the Congress Government. The working condition of the workers remained unchanged.

## Strike Struggles

The formation of the first united front Government gave filip to the movement of the jute workers led by the BCMU, but lack of unity among jute workers prevented any further action. INTUC refused to join in a strike in 1968. Left forces advanced and in 1969 during the period of second united front Government, INTUC also joined and eight day strike followed. The jute barons who had refused only a year ago had to accept various demands of the workers. The jute workers by their unity, struggle and correct assessment of the political situation drastically changed the colonial wage structure that the Indian monopolists had succeeded in maintaining after Independence and the jute workers began their steady struggle to get parity with other industrial workers.

In 1972, the jute workers gave an industry-wide strike call and once more forced the jute barons to concede another wage rise. It was then at the all India Convention of the Jute workers at Raniganj in West Bengal that the idea of an all India organisation of jute workers was first mooted.

## Left Front Government

After the overthrow of the semi-fascist terror in West Bengal and of the emergency regime and establishment of left front Government in the State, a historic 50-day strike struggle was carried out, due to which the

workers have won Rs. 486.07 as minimum wage. The working class in West Bengal considers the left front Government as its own. Unlike the previous Congress Governments, the left front Government has declared that the police will not interfere in trade union and democratic movements. Kamal Sarkar said, "Armed with this knowledge and with the active help of the Government, the working class has gained innumerable victories."

Welcoming the delegates, Lakshmi Sehgal said, "Today due to the emergence of the left front Government in West Bengal and the struggle launched by the jute workers in Kanpur under CITU leadership, they are far ahead of the textile workers."

Gangadhar Reddy (Andhra Pradesh) reported that after protracted negotiations the new Wage Board Committee accepted that it would implement the wage revision that was given to West

Bengal jute workers. R.S. Tiwari of AITUC (M.P.) said a management has not implemented a settlement on West Bengal pattern as yet. Pijush Nag (Tripura) outlining the jute workers movement in Tripura pointed out the help rendered by them to the recent riot victims and their solidarity movements. Gunadhar Gogoi (Assam) reported the plight of the jute workers due to the present movement in the State.

## Resolutions

The Conference passed a number of resolutions on the recent riots in U.P., floods, defence of left front Governments of West Bengal and Tripura and democratic front Government of Kerala, and especially against the draconian 'National Security Ordinance imposed on the country by Indira Gandhi's Government recently.

The Conference elected a 34-member Working Committee and a 16-member executive, with Lakshmi Sehgal as President and Niren Ghosh as General Secretary and Kamal Sarkar as Joint

General Secretary. The Vice-presidents are G.K. Rao, Md. Ismail, Md. Amin, Sudhin Kumar, Amal Ghosh Dastidar and Ajit Sarkar; the Secretaries are Khiti Burman, Gangadhar Reddy, Pijush Nag and Daulat Ram. One post of Vice President and one of Secretary will be filled up later from Madhya Pradesh and Orissa respectively.

## Greetings

Greetings were received from trade unions of China, GDR, Yugoslavia, Bangladesh, U.K. ILO and Sri Lanka. The USSR Textile and Light Industries Workers Union which has a membership of four million, sent the Secretary of its Central Committee, Maria Nevzgodina and Nina Bondar to the Conference as fraternal delegates.

In the end a rally was organised in which more than 30,000 people took part. The rally was addressed by Lakshmi Sehgal, Niren Ghosh, Maria Nevzgodina and the Chief Guest Jyoti Basu, Chief Minister of West Bengal.

## Bihar State CITU Meets

THE Bihar State Committee of the CITU met on October 7 and 8 at Katras in Dhanbad district. Md. Ismail presided over. From CITU Centre M.K. Pandhe, Secretary, CITU, participated in the meeting.

The Committee paid homage to the memory of Comrades Dinen Bhattacharya and Suhrid Mullick Chowdhury.

The General Secretary of the Committee, Chandi Prasad, presented his report. During the meeting the report 12 members gave the account of the struggles carried out in their areas.

M.K. Pandhe suggested the

formation of coordination committees on the basis of major industries. He explained the decisions taken by the General Council at Cannanore.

The Committee decided to organise the trade union school in two phases. First such school will be organised at Madhupur from November 15 to 19. It also decided to form coordination committees of CITU unions in major industries like steel, coal, beeri. S.K. Bakshi will convene the meeting of CITU unions in steel industry in the State while Chandi Prasad will convene that of beeri unions. Sirajuddin Ahmad has been nominated by the Com-

mittee on the committee on beeri workers constituted by the Central Government.

The Committee also decided to publish the report on the problems of electricity workers which will be given by Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi on the basis of the discussion he had with the Chief Minister. This will be distributed among the workers.

The meeting adopted resolutions which stated that a delegation should meet Labour Minister or Labour Secretary regarding the registration of unions and to demand refixation of minimum wages for the workers of Scheduled industries.

[On Page Thirteen]

## **Coal Workers of Asansol Demonstrate**

**L**ED by the Colliery Mazdoor Sabha of India (CITU), about thirty thousand coal workers of the Asansol belt demonstrated before the head office of the Eastern Coal fields Ltd, and submitted a memorandum to the Chief Personnel Officer on their 35-point demands. From Ranigunge, Asansol, Mugma and other areas thousands of men and women workers came by trucks and in processions to assemble at the ECL Stadium where a rally was held after which they proceeded in a procession to the ECL office.

The demands of the coal workers include implementation of the second national Coal Wage Award, supply of essential commodities at fair prices, implementation of safety measures, more hospital facilities etc.

Robin Sen, President of the Colliery Mazdoor Sabha submitted the memorandum on behalf of the workers. Before that a meeting was held presided by Robin Sen and addressed by Haradhan Roy, Bijoy Pal, Bamapada Mukherjee, Santosh Dutta and D.N. Singh. The meeting decided that if the demands are not settled satisfactorily within one month the coal workers will be forced to observe a day's token strike.

## **Victory for ADCO Workers**

**A**FTER being on continuous strike for over seven months and after suffering terrible hardships during this long period, the workers of Adco Limited, a factory in Hooghly district, won

a big victory when the management was forced to sign a bipartite agreement on October 5, last. According to the agreement, the retrenched employees will be taken back, ad hoc increment will be paid, temporary and contractors' workers will be absorbed in permanent work, all charge-sheets will be withdrawn and some other demands will be met. The factory will re-open on October 24. The struggle was led by Adco Limited Employees' Unions.

## **Continuous Strike by Cinema Employees**

**T**EN thousand Cinema employees in the State went on strike from September 11, last under the leadership of the Bengal Motion Picture Employees' Union for their charter of demands including higher wages and bonus. Immediately thereafter the cinema owners declared lock-out. Tripartite negotiations failed to bring about a settlement till recently due to the adamant attitude of the Eastern India Motion Pictures Association. However, in view of the impending festival season, an agreement was reached on October 15, under which the strike and lock-out were withdrawn with effect from October 16, pending further talks for a final settlement.

## **Bonus Boycott by Tea Workers to Continue**

**T**HE tripartite talks on the question of bonus for Tea garden workers has so far failed due to the adamant attitude of the owners. They have refused to pay more than the statutory minimum of 8.33 per cent as against the workers' demand for 20 per cent. The workers have boycotted payment of 8.33 per cent. Out of 263 tea gardens in

the State, owners of 16 gardens have already agreed to pay 20 per cent and owners of 33 more are agreeable to pay more than 8.33 per cent. The bonus dispute relates to the others 240 gardens. Immediately after the failure of the tripartite talks, representatives of all the trade unions met in the chamber of the State Forest & Tourism Minister and Trade Union leader Parimal Mitra and decided to continue the bonus boycott movement till the demand of the workers for 20 per cent bonus is met.

## **Indefinite Cease Work by Workers of Metal Box**

**O**VER 3500 workers and employees of the Calcutta factory of the Metal Box Company observed a two-hour cease-work on September 23, in support of the workers and employees of the Kharagpur Bearing unit of the company who started an indefinite stay-in strike from September 11, in support of their demands and to protest against the authoritarian activities of the management. The main demands of the workers of the Kharagpur unit are two months' exgratia for all workers and employees, higher wages for helpers, permanency for trainees and casual workers and benefits at par with other units of Metal Box. The strike is being led by the Metal Box Workers' Union (CITU). At the instigation of the management, anti-socials under the influence of the local CPI and Congress (I) elements attacked the striking workers and injured many of them when a meeting of the workers was being held. In protest an indefinite cease-work was started.

## Jute Workers Struggle for 20 cent Bonus

**A**T the call of eleven Central Trade Unions including the CITU, INTUC, AITUC, UTUC, HMS and BMS, all workers in 62 out of 63 Jute Mills in West Bengal observed a completely successful token strike on October 10, last in support of their demand for 20 per cent Bonus and for declaration of Rs. 300 per quintal as the minimum support price for raw jute. The workers of Union North Jute Mill, managed by the Government as a sick unit, did not join the strike as their demand for higher Bonus had already been settled by the management.

Jute workers in West Bengal have been continuing their struggle for 20 per cent Bonus since 1979. On September 21, 1979 they observed a one-hour token strike in each shift and on

October 10, they organised a mass equitation to their respective management in support of this demand. Again on November 12, 1979 they observed a two-hour token strike in each shift on the same demand. However, the Jute barons adamantly refused to concede this demand and paid only 8.33 percent. This year the workers demanded the early payment of the balance 11.67 percent Bonus for 1979-79 and a further 20 per cent Bonus for 1979-80 in view of the fabulous profits earned by the Jute barons during these two years. Led by the IJMA, the Jute barons refused to accept the demand on the hackneyed plea of inability to pay and unilaterally declared 8.33 per cent Bonus as per the Bonus Ordinance. The workers have unitedly decided to boycott payment of 8.33 per cent Bonus and are determined to carry on the struggle till their demand for 20 per cent Bonus for 1978-79 and

1979-80 are met fully.

At the initiative of the State Labour Minister Krishnapada Chosh tripartite negotiations were held for a peaceful settlement of the dispute but the IJMA refused to accept the workers' demand. When the last round of talks failed to move them an inch, all the Central Trade Unions Working in the industry met and decided to give a joint call for the token strike of October 10, last.

On the afternoon of October 10, a massive rally of Jute workers was held before the IJMA office in Calcutta which was presided by Kamal Sarkar, General Secretary of BCMU. The rally unanimously decided to continue the Bonus boycott movement till victory and to intensify the struggle after the festival season on the demands for 20 per cent Bonus, nationalisation of the Jute industry and Rs. 300 per quintal price for raw Jute.

## Bihar CITU Meet...

[From Page Centre]

The meeting condemned the Gua firing through another resolution and demanded the adequate compensation for the families of dead and injured workers. It also decided to send a delegation to Gua for on the spot inquiry. The Committee also demanded the adequate representation in the Government bodies like on minimum wages, ESI, contract workers etc.

On the question of the price rise, unemployment and black ordinance it decided to make a programme and contact other central trade unions and federations in the State for joint movements. It also supported the struggle of local corporation employees. The Committee decided to take up demands of tri-

bals in its next meeting. It also decided to finalise the final membership report of the Hatio Mazoodr Union and will hold its elections in January.

Vijay Kant Lal Das will prepare a report on small scale industries which will be discussed

## CITU Organises Workers' Education Programme.

**T**HE CITU has organised two residential workers' education programmes in the month of October. The first programme was organised at Adhyatmik Nagar Inter College near Ghaziabad in U. P. from October 11 to 15 which was attended by 40 workers and addressed by Major Jaipal Singh, Sushil Bhattacharya, M. K. Pandhe and Nrisingha Chakrabarty.

The second programme was organised at Chandod near Baroda in Gujarat which was

in the next meeting of the Committee.

Mohammad Ismail requested the members to implement the decisions of the meeting and review it in the next meeting of the Committee which is scheduled to take place in January 1981.

also attended by 40 workers and addressed by Vasant Rao Mahandale, Chandu Bhai Patel, M. K. Pandhe and Nrisingha Chakrabarty.

The programmes covered the topics like trade union and scientific socialism, history of world trade union movement and trade union movement of India, the labour laws, wage trends etc. Several more such programmes will be organised in November and December this year in different States.

# Growing Struggles of Railwaymen

**D**uring the past two months, railway workers had been forced to protest against the policies of the authorities.

Workers of Bhilai loco shed downed their tools on September 1, when the authorities in a calculated move tried to induct 10 of their favourites from outside the channel of promotion. On September 3, the authorities asked the workers to leave their places of duty. In solidarity with the struggling workers, the OHE staff joined the struggle, while the loco shed workers erected a tent at the gate and continued dharna. The authorities lodged false complaints of assault/intimidation against the leaders of the struggle and caused arrest of 11 leaders under Essential Services Maintenance Ordinance who were held without any trial. The police conducted a quarter to quarter search in the railway colony with a view to strike terror and misbehave with the wives of the leading workers. Over 500 women of railway colony marched in a procession shouting slogans to the DSP who after hearing them, not only stopped the search but also caused release of the arrested workers even while the struggle was continuing. On September 10, there was a very big demonstration before the Divisional Railway Manager at Bilaspur, who refused to talk to the delegation. The LRSA started a work-to-rule movement in a solidarity action from September 11. M. N. Prasad, Convenor of the Zonal Coordination Committee of Railwaymen intervened and after negotiation the struggle was withdrawn from September 13.

On September 21, all workers at Dangoaposi, S E Rly, stopped

work in protest against the refusal of the authorities to take action against some anti-social elements belonging to NFIR union who with the protection of the OC-RPF, tried to break open the quarter of a railway employee who was out of head quarter on duty and molest his wife. On the other hand, the OC-RPF utilising his position caused arrest of nine workers who were leading the struggle. 400 women surrounded the jeep and explained to the police, how these leaders have been instrumental in protecting the honour of the ladies of the colony. In the face of the resistance by the women, the police had to release the arrested workers. The authorities first refused to negotiate with the striking workmen. But again M. N. Prasad intervened at the level of the General Manager and the struggle was called off after a settlement was reached.

From October 1, the loco running staff of N F Rly went into a work-to-rule agitation in protest against the refusal of the authorities to implement the earlier agreement reached at Katihar four months back and orders of the Railway Board to reinstate Samaresh Some passed in July last. After the agitation continued for 3 days, the authorities issued orders for reinstatement and the earlier agreement after which the struggle was called off.

For about ten hours, the wheels of all trains in Gauhati station and yard came to a grinding halt on October 13. This was also for violation of Railway Boards orders for payment of bonus on or before October 10. The authorities did not pay the loco shed, carriage and shunting

staff on that date. On October 11, they served an ultimatum that if the payment is not made within 48 hours, the wheels would come to a stop, which the authorities ignored and hence the stoppage of work started as scheduled. The workers went back to duty after payment was made to them.

On September 29, railway workers demonstrated before the General Manager Southern Railway under the leadership of CCRU and handed over a memorandum on the demands formulated by them.

On October 4, the loco running staff all over the country demonstrated before the General Manager to protest against victimisation. From the reports received so far, the demonstrations in Eastern, Southern, Northern and North-East Frontier railways were impressive.

## Meetings and Conferences

The annual meeting of the all India Loco Mechanical Staff Association was held on September 22 and 23 at Delhi in which over two thousand delegates participated. The meeting elected Satish Bahadur as President, P. N. Nandi as Working President and Shyam Behari Lal as General Secretary. Highlighting the demand for uniform, the workers led a bare-chest demonstration in the capital of the country.

The Madras Divisional Conference of Dakshin Railway Employees Union was held on September 27 in Kerala Samagam Hall in Madras which was attended by K. Ananda Nambiar, President DREU and Nrisingha Chakrabarty, Secretary CITU, amongst others.

# CITU Calls for Drastic Improvement in Working of CIL

**T**HE CITU strongly criticised the mismanagement in Coal India Ltd. and demanded stringent measures to improve the working of the coal mines while appearing before the Fazal Committee appointed by the Government of India to review the working of public sector undertakings in India. The Chairman of the Working Group R. Billimoria and other members of the Group were also present.

The CITU pointed out the glaring cases of non-implementation of the long term bipartite agreement. The callous attitude towards genuine grievances of the workers was leading to strained industrial relations in the coal mines. The failure of the Government to ensure adequate supply of power to coal mines had greatly affected the production of coal. The age old controversy between the departments of coal, rail, power and steel still remained unsolved and the Government had not shown any concern to settle these controversies once for all.

The CITU pointed out that the workers were interested in production but bureaucracy was provoking them to action by refusing to settle their longstanding grievances. The close relationship between the officials and contractors had been raised by trade unions on several occasions but the Government failed to take any action in the matter. The suggestions given by the workers to improve the working of the coal mines were normally not attended to.

The CITU demanded that the Joint Consultation in coal industry should be meaningful if the conditions in the coal mines

were to be improved drastically. The performance of the coal Department was extremely

## Second Conf. of Steel Workers

**T**HE second Conference of Bokaro Steel Mazdoor Union was held on October 5 and 6. Hare Krishna, outgoing President was in Chair M.K. Pandhe, Secretary, CITU, inaugurated the Conference.

G.K. Baksi, outgoing General Secretary, submitted a report on activities of the Union since its foundation. Fraternal delegates from various other steel plants greeted the Conference.

The Conference elected a new Working Committee with Md. Ismail, MP, as President.

A well attended mass meeting was held on October 6 which was addressed among others by G.S. Vidyarthi, M.K. Pandhe, Chandi Prasad, Md. Ismail, Hare Krishna and Jibon Bihari Roy.

unsatisfactory and the Ministry officials were unconcerned about the workers grievances.

M.K. Pandhe Secretary appeared before the Committee on behalf of the CITU.

## Steel Contract Workers Demands Day on Nov. 20.

**A** meeting of the All India Steel Workers Coordinating Committee held at Bokaro on 6 October reviewed the observation of the all India protest day on 12 August. According to reports received, it was observed well in all the Centres. About 15,000 books in Hindi and Bengali were sold among the steel workers prior to the observation of the Day.

The meeting decided to submit a memorandum to the Chairman SAIL on the demands of the contract workers.

The meeting further decided to observe the all India steel contract workers day on November 20 to popularise the demands of the contract workers in the steel industry and prepare for all India struggle on these demands.

## From Horse's Mouth

(We are publishing below the extract of the speech of the Minister of State for Labour in the meeting of the Consultative Committee of MPs held on October 28 in New Delhi. It is self explanatory.—Ed.)

**“T**HE condition under which labour works in this country leave much to be improved, though conditions vary from industry to industry. The level of wages is generally very low; even at that level the real wages get eroded under conditions of inflation. There are large number of workforce in agriculture, construction industry and other employments where the conditions of work are not yet regulated and they suffer from a sense of insecurity. The International Labour Organisation has adopted several conventions setting standards for the conditions of work. While we have accepted these conventions in principle we have not been able to ratify many of them because we have a long way to go to attain these standards.”

## Newspaper Employees Warn the Govt.

**T**HE National Committee of the Confederation of Newspaper and News-Agency Employees' Organisations has called upon newspaper employees throughout the country to remain prepared to launch an indefinite strike if the Central Government failed to issue an early notification on the Palekar Tribunal's final recommendations incorporating modifications suggested by the Confederation.

After the meeting on October 6, Chairman of the Confederation, S. Y. Kolhatkar released the main resolution at a press conference, in Bangalore. He warned that the employees of newspapers and news-agencies had exhausted their patience and if their aspirations for a proper wage revision were not fulfilled without any further delay then the Central Government and the employers alone would be responsible for the ensuing unrest in the industry.

The Committee's meeting was preceded by the twelfth annual Conference of the All India Newspaper Employees on October 4 and 6 as also a meeting of the General Council of the Federation of PTI Employees' Unions. The delegate meetings of the two bodies had recommended to the Confederation a prolonged countrywide struggle programme, including an indefinite strike, to secure the modifications of Palekar Tribunal's final recommendations on the basis of memoranda already submitted to the Government by the constituent units of the Confederation.

Earlier, the newspaper and news-agencies employees had given an unprecedented response to the call by the Confederation to go on strike on September 30.

The strike was unparalleled for its success in the entire history of the newspapers employees' movement. On that day not only were all the major news-

papers in all the metropolitan cities closed but almost all the newspapers in even the districts could not come out. The employees of all the four national news-agencies observed the strike,

## CITU Condemns Retrenchment in HSCL

**M.K. Pandhe**, Secretary, C.I.T.U. has issued the following statement on October 3 :

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions strongly condemns the steps of the HSCL management to retrench a large number of workers on the plea of their being surplus. Already in Kudremukh 239 workers have been served with notices of retrenchment, 100 of whom are skilled and highly skilled workers.

Despite CITU's proposal to the management to absorb these workers in adjoining Supa projects and other projects under HSCL the management deliberately did not pay any heed to it.

When there are only 22,000 workers employed in HSCL, the management has engaged over 50,000 workers through contractors to do several jobs. As a matter of policy the HSCL management has decided to give more and more jobs to contractors and throw out the existing HSCL employees on streets by declaring them surplus.

Several officers of HSCL in connivance with the unscrupulous contractors are minting money while the company is incurring losses after losses. To cover up these malpractices the management is circulating the false story that the productivity of the workers is low. The CITU strongly refutes this canard and demands that the Government should impartially enquire into the sabotage of production by

the HSCL management to suit the interest of contractors.

The CITU urges upon the Union Steel Minister to take steps to get the retrenchment notices withdrawn and get the work done through departmental labour.

The CITU appeals to all the unions in HSCL, irrespective of their affiliations to raise voice of protest against the vindictive action of the management so that the HSCL authorities are forced to withdraw the retrenchment measures.

## Conference of J&K Govt. Low Paid Employees

**T**HE fourth Conference of All J & K Low Paid Government Employees Federation was held on October 8 and 9 at Srinagar. Inaugurating the Conference, P. Ramamurti, MP, General Secretary, CITU, called upon the delegates to fight unitedly against the anti-working class anti-people policies of the Government and for the pressing demands of the common people.

Sampath Prakash, General Secretary of the Federation, presenting his report said that fighting against the forces of communalism and narrow regionalism, our trade union movement must march ahead to help the peoples forces in resisting every attack on peoples livelihood. Sampath Prakash was elected by the Conference as the President of Federation.

## Conference of ICI Employees

THE 27th Annual Conference of the Federation of ICI & Associated Companies Employees Unions was held in New Delhi on 29-30 September. M.G. Naik, President of the Federation, presided over the Conference. S.B. Chatterjee, General Secretary, presented a report on the activities of the Federation.

The inaugural function was addressed among others by Samar Mukherjee, Treasurer, CITU and M.K. Pandhe, Secretary, CITU.

The Federation achieved success in winning pension, gratuity and provident fund as well as uniform service conditions in all the centres. At present it is engaged in the struggle against computerisation and for uniform rate of bonus to all 7,500 employees.

## Police Firing on Tea Garden Workers

THE workers of Krishnakali Tea Estate in Goalpara district have been demanding 20 per cent bonus. But the manager tried to push through 8.33 per cent forcibly instead of coming to settlement with the representatives of the union supported by overwhelming majority of the workers.

With a view to create terror the manager visited the quarters of the workers on the night of 12 October with a gun and hit a worker causing serious injuries. To protest against this the workers gathered in front of the managers residence but to their surprise a police party came and opened fire on the peaceful workers injuring seriously a male and a female worker.

The Assam State Committee of the CITU has strongly condemned the unprovoked and unwarranted firing and demanded adequate compensation to the workers and a high power judicial inquiry into the incident.

## News in Brief

**Orissa Sales Reps Protest :** Orissa Sales Representative Union staged a protest demonstration in front of the Glaxo Laboratories offices at Cuttack on 29 August. The rally was organised to protest against the victimisation and retrenchment of a large number of workers including trade union leaders and the general anti-national policies pursued by the multinational pharmaceutical companies.

**Unity Day Celebrated :** The Unnao (UP) district Committee of the CITU alongwith some fraternal organisations organised a National Unity Day at Unnao on 15 August. Niren Ghosh, MP, Secretary, CITU, addressed the rally. With the expansion in the Ganga Ghat area in this region, the working condition of workers are also registering a steep decline. Championing the demands of the workers the CITU is making impressive advances for the last three years.

**Airlines Canteen Workers :** More than 500 canteen workers of the Indian Airlines working all over the country have decided to go on a token strike shortly. Their only demand is that they should be treated as regular employees of the Airlines.

**Sugar Workers' Rally :** The workers of Ramala Chini Mill Mazdoor Union (CITU) of Meerut, UP, held an impressive rally on August 18 at the factory gate in support of their demands.

**Small Scale Industry Workers**

**Conf. : Jaipur Small Scale Karbhanna Labour Union (CITU)** held its annual conference at Jaipur on 3 August. It was inaugurated by Mohan Punamia, President, Rajasthan State Committee of CITU. Workers' 80 representatives participated in it.

**Trade Union Convention :** A trade union convention was jointly organised by NGEE, IRTWA, AIC & WWA Dalmianagar workers' Union (CITU), Kisan Sabha, DYF and CITU, on 24 August at Sasaram in Bihar. The convention adopted several resolutions like against price rise and multinationals, etc.

**Coal Workers Demonstrate :** At the call of the CCL branch of the Colliery Mazdoor Sabha of India, the workers of the Barkakana area observed demands week from September 19 to 25 for the payment of bonus. On September 29, the workers organised a demonstration in front of the office of the General Manager which was led by Bihar CMSI General Secretary R.P. Singh.

**Coal Workers Arrested :** Eighty eight coal workers and leaders including Bihar CMSI General Secretary were arrested by the police in connivance with the management on September 24 in Sandi area of Hazaribagh. The workers of the Continental Coke Minerals were protesting against the retrenchment of eight workers and demanding need based minimum wages, implementation of Factory Act, etc.

**Fight against Multinationals in Drug Industry :** The 12th General Council meeting of the Federation of Medical Representatives' Associations of India was held at Trivandrum from September 6 to 8 which was participated by 262 delegates and 57 observers from all over

the country. They called upon the members and the workers to fight against the exploitation of workers by the multinational companies and for their complete nationalisation. E. Balanandan, Secretary, CITU, addressed the Session on September 6 and the open rally was addressed by E.K. Nayanar, Chief Minister of Kerala among others

**Demonstration against Price Rise :** The workers of the Bhilai Steel Plant brought out a procession in Bhilai on September 29 to protest against sky rocketting prices, and communalism. On their way to the rally ground some goondas led by local INTUC leaders attacked the procession and tried to frustrate it. P.K. Mukherjee was injured among others. Later a complaint was lodged with the police and the rally was held as scheduled.

**Delhi CITU Convention against Police Repression etc. :** The Delhi committee of the CITU organised a Convention on August 31 at Kamalanagar against police repression, and for Rs. 500 as minimum wage, take over of whole sale trade of essential commodities and their distribution at cheaper rates from fair price shops. The Convention was presided over by Shadi Ram which was participated by 350 delegates including 10 women. A similar convention was organised at Ghaziabad by the local CITU Committee on August 30 which was presided over by Bhagwan Das and participated by 280 delegates including 5 women.

**Police Repression on Struggling workers :** The workers of Haryana Glass Sewali are struggling since October 10 in support of their demands. On October 15 the police arrested 15 activists and workers and they were beaten up mercilessly in Rai police station. Later they were left some 40 kilometers away

Consumer Price Index Numbers									
Base 1960									
State/Centre		1980			State/Centre		1980		
		June	July	Aug.			June	July	Aug.
<b>Andhra Pradesh</b>									
Gudur		381	387	396	<b>Orissa</b>				
Guntur		413	420	428	Barbil		354	355	360
Hyderabad		389	401	399	Sambalpur		430	446	448
<b>Assam</b>									
Digboi		412	409	411	<b>Punjab</b>				
Doom Dooma		345	347	348	Amritsar		394	408	416
Labac		358	345	331	<b>Rajasthan</b>				
Mariani		339	343	342	Ajmer		405	420	422
Rangapara		355	353	367	Jaipur		425	433	438
<b>Bihar</b>									
Jamshedpur		378	386	388	<b>Tamil Nadu</b>				
Jharia		360	368	374	Coimbatore		397	401	411
Kodarma		410	412	421	Coonoor		391	404	403
Monghyr		410	422	440	Madras		371	383	384
Noamundi		376	377	379	Madurai		403	412	409
<b>Gujarat</b>									
Ahmedabad		366	371	372	<b>U.P.</b>				
Bhavnagar		391	399	409	Kanpur		381	398	389
<b>Haryana</b>					Saharanpur		394	405	401
Yamunanagar		423	436	430	Varanasi		442	446	457
<b>J. &amp; K.</b>									
Srinagar		404	409	405	<b>West Bengal</b>				
<b>Karnataka</b>									
Ammathi		390	408	417	Asansol		391	395	402
Bangalore		407	417	421	Calcutta		375	381	387
Chikamagalur		384	391	394	Darjeeling		325	327	331
Kolar G.F.		383	395	396	Howrah		359	363	370
<b>Kerala</b>									
Alleppey		383	403	396	Jalpaiguri		323	331	339
Alwaye		387	401	397	Raniganj		375	379	390
Mundakayam		362	375	361	<b>Delhi</b>		412	423	428
<b>Madhya Pradesh</b>									
Balaghat		406	419	429	<b>Other Centres*</b>				
Bhopal		385	393	396	Berhampur ('49)		552	576	571
Gwalior		415	425	425	Cuttack ('49)		491	510	505
Indore		396	409	416	Jabalpur ('49)		507	522	521
<b>Maharashtra</b>									
Bombay		389	399	396	Beawar ('51-'52)		497	512	521
Nagpur		382	392	393	Tripura (1961)		364	350	346
Shoapal		389	401	403	H.P. (1965)		283	289	291
					Goa (1966)		279	290	291
					Bhilai (1966)		256	264	272
					Bhilwara ('66)		260	267	265
					Chhindwara ('66)		222	224	232
					Kothagudem ('66)		256	259	266
					Rourkela ('66)		283	285	285
					<b>All India ('49)</b>		469	479	483
					-do- ('60)373		386	394	394

Figures in bracket indicate base year.

from their places. The police also removed the tent, union board and the flags of the striking workers. The police has let loose the reign of terror in the workers' colonies also. After the police action the workers organised a massive demonstration and demanded the release of the arrested workers in a memorandum of the Deputy Commissioner of the Sonapat district. More than

700 workers of the factory are organised under CITU banner.

**Massive demonstration in Sonapat :** Over two thousand workers organised a demonstration on August 30 at Atlas Factory Gate in support of their demands. The gathering was addressed by Haryana CITU President Raghbir Singh Hooda among others.

**T**HE third Conference of the Tamilnadu State Committee of the CITU was held at Tiruchirapalli from 18 to 21 September. Representing 230 unions with 1,21,639 membership, 387 delegates participated in the Conference. Together with the State CITU office bearers, fraternal delegates and observers, 441 participated in all.

The Conference venue was named 'A.K.G. Nagar' dedicated to the memory of the beloved leader Comrade A.K. Gopalan. The Conference hall was named 'Ponmalai Thyagikal Arangam' in honour of 5 martyrs from Ponmalai. Trichy, who fell victims to Britishers' bullets during the historic struggle of Railway employees in September 1946.

A leader of the railway employees movement, Sundramoorthy, hoisted the flag. A. Balasubramanian, inaugurated the Conference. He dwelt at length on the imperialist conspiracies that threatened the national security and integration at home and heightened war tensions endangering world peace and detailed the task before the working class of our country.

K. Ramani in his presidential address outlined the political development since the last Conference and called upon the delegates to discuss and devise appropriate strategy to fight the offensives of the authoritarian rule which is increasingly assuming menacing proportions.

The General Secretary of the State CITU, R. Umanath, presented his general report. The Report noted that the CITU has considerably increased its influence over the working class in Tamilnadu and is attracting all

sections of workers and employees. The CITU has played a leading role in all joint struggles in the State. The CITU's role in organising stubborn resistance to the anti-working class policies of the Government and in organising industrywise united actions was in support of striking struggles of various sections of the working class despite shortcomings and weaknesses was significant. The State CITU is also publishing a monthly journal 'CITU Seithi' in Tamil since September 1979 and its circulation has increased to about 5,000 from 2,000.

Forty four delegates participated in the debate on the General Secretary's Report. The Conference adopted several resolutions on various pressing issues of the working class and the working people. Greeting the Conference on behalf of the Centre, Samar Mukherjee highlighted the role played by the left front Government of West Bengal, Kerala, and Tripura in favour of the working class. The Conference was also greeted by R. Ramraj (Kisan Sabha), N. Namraman (SYF), M. Balaji (SFI), K. Srinivasan (Insurance Employees Associations), Pappa Umanath (Democratic Women Federation) and Vimala Rao (Working Women Coordination Committee).

The Conference elected a 41-member executive committee with K. Ramani as President and R. Umanath as General Secretary.

On 21 September, a rally was organised which was addressed by Samar Mukherjee, A. Balasubramanian, K. Ramani, V.P. Chintan, R. Umanath, and K. Anandanambiar.

**I**N a meeting organised in the hall of the West Bengal State Committee at Calcutta on, 27 September, Manoranjan Roy, General Secretary of the State CITU handed over a cheque of Rs. 68,000 to the visiting Chief Minister of Tripura, Nripen Chakravorty. The sum was received from 313 unions at the State Committee's call. This is the sum that they have given in addition to their earlier donations. 'Nabi Prabhat' a Panjabi daily also gave a cheque of Rs. 500.

On the same day, the State Government employees Coordination Committee presented a cheque for Rs. 2 lakhs to the Tripura Chief Minister in a separate meeting.

Addressing the gathering Nripen Chakravorty said our activities in uniting the masses and fighting the enemies of the people have yielded results so that even now in affected areas the tribals and non-tribals, Bengalies work, read and help side by side and more closely than before.

**Haryana :** Meanwhile, Hissar district Committee of the CITU has sent a cheque for Rs. 901 to help victims of riots. Of this sum Rs. 500 has been donated by Lal Zhanda Kapra Mazdor Ekta Union, Rs. 201 by Haryana Polysteel Workers' Union and Rs. 200 by Hansi Cooperative Spinning Mill Workers' Union.

### The Working Class

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## Central Government Employees Prepare for Further Action

**I**N response to a call by the Confederation of Central Government Employees and Workers, lakhs of Central Government employees observed 'pay boycott' on September 30. The action was cent per cent successful. The pay boycott action became a manifestation of unity of all Central Government employees. The action was organised to press demands common to all Central Government employees, particularly the demand of bonus to all employees.

The National Executive of the Confederation met along with representatives of Coordination Committees in various places on October 12 and 13 to review the implementation of the programme and for strengthening future actions. The Central Government has so far not even consulted the representatives of the Confederation on the question of bonus. The Confederation has reiterated the demand of considering bonus as deferred wage and payment of minimum 8.33 per cent bonus to all employees.

The National Executive decided to conduct signature campaign till November 15. A dharna will be organised before the finance ministry office on Oct. 28 if no meeting takes place with the Finance Minister before the meeting of the joint Consultative Machinery. It will try to mobilise the members of Parliament, try to organise joint actions with AIRF and AIDEF. It decided to observe October 28 as all India demands day and

organise rallies through out the country on November 20.

## Statewide Bandh in Maharashtra

**I**N response to a call by the Congress (U), CPI (M), CPI, Janata, PWP, Lok Dal and RPI (G) and supported by the Joint Action Committee of Trade Unions consisting of CITU, AITUC, UTUC, HMS and other office employee organisations, all major sections of society in both urban and rural areas observed Bandh in Maharashtra on October 15 making it a near total success all over the State.

The Bandh received enthusiastic response from the working class landless labour, small peasants, petty shopkeepers, middle class employees, women, youth, students and so on.

The Bandh was organised against rising prices, atrocities on women, and weaker sections, deteriorating law and order situation and National Security and Preventive Detention Ordinances.

In a last desperate bid to crush the movement, the State Government clamped Section 144 through out the State prohibiting the assembly of five or more persons. More than 5,000 political workers were arrested among them were Ahilya Rangnekar, Ramachandra Ghangare, B.P. Kashyap.

In spite of the Section 144 the Bandh received a massive response throughout the State. It is estimated that more than 40 to 50 lakh workers and employees all over the State took part in the

The National Executive will review the situation in early December and try to build up a joint movement with AIRF, AIDEF and NFPTE on the common demands like of bonus.

Bandh. One of the most important victories was the cent per cent Bandh in the textile mills, with over two lakh workers, in the teeth of opposition from the INTUC-affiliated and Government and management recognised Rashtriya Mill Mazdor Sangh. At several places, the meetings and rallies were organised, despite a heavy police bandobast to frustrate the Bandh.

## CITU Nominations

1. **Central Advisory Council on Child Labour :** Susheela Gopalan, Vice President, CITU.
2. **Central Board of Trustees Employees Provident Funds :** E. Balanandan, Secretary, CITU.
3. **Central Advisory Committee on Equal Remuneration Act :** Ahilya Rangnekar.
4. **Central Advisory Committee on Beeri Welfare :** (1) C. Kannan, Vice President, CITU and (2) Nizamuddin (West Bengal).

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