



THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

Fight for Peace and Against Warmongers

“THE issues of war and peace involve every individual because failure to involve them constructively would be disastrous to all.....The world's combined weapons of mass destruction suffice to kill every man, woman and child ten times over.....” Said Kurt Waldheim, UN Secretary General addressing a conference organised at the United Nations in June 1980 on the theme ‘The arms race and the human race’.

The history of monopoly capitalism and imperialism, its existence and growth during the last six decades and more, is replete with violence, war and bloodshed on a scale and bitterness unknown in history. In the short span of twentyfive years, the world bourgeoisie plunged humanity into two world wars, and slaughtered forty million people while maiming another eighty million, apart from colossal destruction of wealth accumulated through the toil and sweat of billions of men for ages.

Desperate Bid

In the present era, monopoly capitalism, in its desperate bid to escape its destined and impending doom have created feverish armament race; invention, manufacture and huge stockpiling of nuclear weapons; have set up thousands of military bases all over the globe; have forged aggressive military alliances and blocs and have resorted to rapid militarisation of the economies feverishly preparing for another global war—a war, if it takes place, with the most destructive and savage military technique of atomic and hydrogen weapons, laser beams and bacteriological warfare.

Banner of Revolt

In 1917, it is the working class guided by Marxism-Leninism that had hoisted the banner of revolt against capitalism, imperialism, violence and war. In 1970s, the most historic achievement was the victory of the people of Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea and the defeat in the battlefield of the powerful US military forces. It was the fourth biggest defeat of the world imperialism since the Great October Revolution, a common victory of the socialist camp, the world working class and the national liberation movement.

The continuous struggles of the world working class and peace loving democratic people and the liberation of many other countries forced the imperialists to come to the negotiating table and discuss disarmament.

The United Nations declared the 1970s as the First Disarmament Decade. International treaties were concluded. The emplacement of weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed and ocean-floor was banned. Bacteriological weapons were prohibited. Treaties on strategic arms limitation and prevention of nuclear war were concluded.

For multilateral and bilateral negotiations, a framework was created. The UN General Assembly organised its first special session on disarmament and some useful decisions were taken. The Helsinki Agreement on European Security and Cooperation of 1975 constituted an important achievement of the struggle of the workers and the people of Europe. Helsinki's Final Act accepted many fundamental principles like peaceful coexistence, non-interference

in the internal affairs of other states, inviolability of the frontiers and territorial integrity of the states.

Repudiating Treaties

On the morrow of the signing of the Helsinki Agreement, the imperialists started repudiating it in various ways. They refused to give it wide publicity. They raised howl over alleged violation of human rights in the USSR to stall the implementation of the Agreement. They sought open interference in the internal affairs of the socialist countries shamelessly screening the violations of human rights in their own territories.

The US imperialists conspired to overthrow the Allende Government and increased its military strength in South Korea and committed heinous crimes in many other countries. They scuttled Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty II (SALT II) talk scheduled to discuss and reach agreement for step by step and proportionate reduction in armaments. On the other hand they are increasing the massive expenditure on armament and military forces. The hunt is on for more effective weapons of genocide. Imperialists have already produced neutron bomb which can kill people while keeping property intact for the occupiers. Now they have developed laser beams capable of destroying intercontinental missiles in flight and they can hit the target at the speed of light. And above all an anti-Soviet frenzy is sought to be created among the people of the USA. The developments of the last decade show that the US imperialism and its allies are trying desperately to regain the supremacy that they had before the Second World War. Their claim that they arm themselves against the arms of socialist countries particularly of the Soviet Union is their ideological warfare against world peace, democracy and socialism.

At the Cost of Workers' Wages

The imperialists and the capitalists finance the arms race by robbing the workers' wages through inflation and by intensifying the plunder of the developing countries. They resort to arms trade because it earns them more and more profit and the arms are used against the working class and peoples' movement for democracy, peace, liberation and socialism.

In April 1977, the then US President Carter Shamelessly admitted that "Big-deficits during the Vietnam war have resulted in excessive demands and overheating of the economy. The war was partially financed at the expense of a hidden tax in form of inflation."

In Defence of Peace and Socialism

Ideologically, in the face of this ever growing menace of arms drive of the imperialists, the socialist states are duty bound to develop their armed might to defend themselves against any imperialist aggression and to defend the cause of world socialist revolution and peace. It is also the duty of the world socialist and peace loving forces to fight against the imperialists' war-mongering and arms expansion and raise the demand for general disarmament. While not forgetting the fact that the imperialists would not agree to such a total and general disarmament as the leopard can not change its spots, the international working class and the trade union movement will have to carry on the struggle for forcing disarmament on them by mobilising world public opinion against the menace.

In the present epoch, the imperialists pass on their burdens of their crisis on the working class and the people of the developing countries through multinational corporations. These corporations increase the prices of the goods exported to the developing countries and pay considerably less to the primary commodities they import from them, as has been amply explained in these columns last month. Crisis is seen in skyrocketing of prices and increasing unemployment. Even the west European countries are now forced to realise that the US multinational corporations bought up their industries by investing meagre money and exploiting their countrymen. A lot of profit earned this way is used to finance armament industry which, as Waldheim said, can now "kill every man, woman and child ten times over."

Real Assistance versus Armament Budget

Speaking at the 34th Session of the UN General Assembly, Cuban President Fidel Castro demanded on behalf of the non-aligned countries for real international assistance to the developing countries. He estimated such assistance at 300 billion dollars (at 1977 prices) for the entire decade of the 1980s, at the rate of 25 billion dollars a year. This estimate for a whole decade is just three-fifths of the present annual expenditure of 500 billion dollars on arms race.

The annual volume of military expenditure in the world is equivalent to two-thirds of the GNPs of the countries which constitutes the poorest half of the world's population. In recent years, these expenditures were about 14 times greater than the economic aid furnished by the advanced countries to the developing countries. And now US budget

alone for military investment is of more than 200 billion dollars for 1982.

Menace of Armament

The Seminar organised by Building Trade Union International in Vienna in June 1980 reveals that there is a shortage of about 300 million flats in the world which means over 1,200 million people are denied a basic right to housing. There are one million unemployed building workers in USA and 1.5 million in western and southern Europe. The situation is still worse in developing countries. With the money now wasted on arms race, in one year, 60 million flats can be built. One job in building industry can provide 4 to 8 jobs in allied trades.

The money earmarked for the development and design of the US Airforce fighter F-16 would be enough to finance eight major programmes similar to the World Health Organisation programme to eradicate smallpox in the world. The cost of one Trident submarine would finance the schooling of 16 million children in developing countries for a year. One modern tank which costs 500,000 dollars, is equal to the cost of equipping 520 classrooms. The building of one modern destroyer costs 100 million dollars, which is enough to bring electricity to towns and rural areas with a population of 9 million.

Taxation accounted for 26 per cent of the national income of the USA in 1944, 28 per cent in 1954, 31 per cent in 1964 and 37 per cent in 1974. If this goes on at the present rate, 50 per cent of wages of the workers in USA would end up as tax before the turn of the century. According to the estimates of the US economists, military expenditure creates less jobs than any other areas. It was estimated that a 30 billion dollar cut in the US military budget and deployment of the money for peaceful purposes could create 718,000 new jobs.

Real Import

For the workers and the trade unions, therefore, the struggle against the arms race is directly and inseparably linked with the struggle for the safeguard of the purchasing power of wages, through better living and working conditions, for trade union and democratic rights; to end exploitation and outflow of real resources from developing countries and the struggle for right to work.

Working Class Takes up the Challenge

On 22 June 1980, about 27,000 people marched in London to stop the Tory Government to turn the British Isles into an unsinkable carrier for US nuclear missiles. A week later, on 29 June over a thousand people marched to the airfield where a

US base for cruise missiles will be developed. The same kind of action took place in other parts of Great Britain where US missiles are to be stationed.

The protest actions of the workers, trade unions and other democratic forces forced the government of Norway, Netherlands and Belgium—three member countries of the NATO—to decline or put off decisions on having cruise missiles on their soil.

In June 1980, mass demonstrations were held in France by 14 organisations including the CGT, to protest against the new US missiles in Europe and French neutron bombs. Delegations, went to Brussels, where the NATO has its headquarters to make their protest heard.

The joint meeting of the CGT of France and FDGB of West Germany held in June 1980 at Limoges also stressed on the vigilance of the working class against danger threatening world peace.

The trade union congress held in Brighton in September 1980 condemned the British Government's part in the regeneration of the cold war atmosphere.

The national conference on trade union action held at Gary (Indiana) on 20-22 June, 1980 strongly denounced the arms race. It also denounced the fear of the so-called 'Soviet Threat' which the reactionaries use as an excuse to boost the arms expenditure. While the US treasury say that it has no funds for jobs, food, social security, education and health care, it has billions to spare for the arms race.

On June 21, 1980, the first day of draft registration ordered by Carter, thousands of US citizens came out to demonstrate against the draft and for peace. Demonstrations were held in Washington at the Selective Service National Headquarters and the post offices across the country.

The 9th World Trade Union Congress of WFTU (Prague, 1978) in which 210 million trade union members from all continents were represented made peace and disarmament, the central theme of an appeal to the workers and trade unions of the world.

Workers and trade unions in India and other Indian Ocean countries have held demonstration in the recent period to protest against the US arms build up and the creation of the bases of aggression, especially the nuclear base in Diego Garcia.

Rally the People

A strong working class and world trade union movement and a united and vigilant armed force of the socialist countries together can meet any aggres-

sive act of the imperialists with a devastating counter-blow. Peaceful coexistence is possible through the arduous struggle against imperialism, a struggle covering all the economic, political, ideological and military aspects.

The working class and the trade union movement in India will have to "rally the people in the

fight for peace and against the warmongers and take their rightful place in the ranks of the fighters for peace all over the world." This is the call given by the General Council of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions in its meeting held at Cannanore in September 1980.

—Vijender Sharma

Victory of Port and Dock Workers

THE unity and firm determination of the port and dock workers of the country forced the government to conclude the agreement on 4 January just few hours before the indefinite strike was to commence.

All India Coal Workers Convention : 4-5 April

THE All India Coal Workers Convention will be held on 4-5 April at Raniganj. Unions affiliated to CITU as well as unions willing to cooperate with the CITU will participate in the Convention. The total number of delegates attending the convention will be about 250.

The meeting of the all India coordination committee of coal unions held at Calcutta on 15 January worked out the details of the convention. A sub-committee has been formed to prepare a report for the convention.

B.T. Ranadive, President, CITU, will inaugurate the convention while Jyotia Bsu, Vice-President, CITU, and Chief Minister, West Bengal will address the open session on 5 April.

Each delegate will have to pay Rs. 5 as the delegate fee. A reception committee is being formed to make all the arrangements for the convention. The address of the reception committee is as follows : The Chairman, Reception Committee, All India Coal Workers Convention, c/o CMSI, Shishubagan, Raniganj, West Bengal. □

Earlier, late at night on 27 November, 1980, the government and all the four federations of port and dock workers had decided the main conclusions of the agreement and the proposed strike from 28 November was withdrawn.

However, at the final drafting stage the government tried to scuttle the 27 November-Agreement on the questions of difference in incremental rates, extension of scales, special allowance as pay for all purposes, etc. Therefore, the four federations again submitted a strike notice commencing on 5 January.

The negotiations on 3 January called by the government failed and the Union Minister Virendra Patil haughtily stated that there was no scope for

further negotiations and the workers will be dealt with firmly. But the firm determination of the port and dock workers all over the country forced the government to respect the earlier settlement. □

For Special Attention

In pursuance with the decision of the members of the General Council of CITU connected with engineering industry, a meeting of representatives from all State Committees (not more than five from each State) will be held at Howrah on the third and fourth March 1981.

A detailed circular has been issued from the Central Office. □

Soviet TU Greets CITU on Republic Day

On the occasion of the 31st Anniversary of our Republic Day, All Union Central Council of Trade Unions of Soviet Union has sent greetings to the CITU, the full text of which is being reproduced below :

DEAR Comrades, All Union Central Council of Trade Unions on behalf of Soviet organised wage and salaried workers and collective farmers extend heartfelt greetings to trade unions and working people of India on the occasion of national important date 31st Anniversary of Republic Day. We note with great satisfaction that friendly relations between the workers and trade unions of India and Soviet Union are constantly developing our joint struggle for peace, democracy and social progress, against imperialism and reaction; and for stronger unity of workers and trade union movement. The historical visit of L.I. Brezhnev, General Secretary, Central Committee, Communist Party of Soviet Union and Chairman of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics Supreme Soviet, to friendly India signifies still higher stage of development of friendship and cooperation between our two countries and will contribute to peace and security in Asia and world over. Wish Indian workers and their trade unions further success in their noble cause of building up New India. □

A New Perspective in Industrial Law

THAT judicial activist par excellence, the retired judge Mr. Krishna Iyer whom we shall sorely miss in the Supreme Court, has in his decision in the case between Life Insurance Corporation of India V. D.J. Bahadur and Chandrasekhar Bose and others V. Union of India and others, ((1980) Lab IC 1218) placed the Industrial Law once again in the proper perspective. The Trade Unionists, particularly in Public Undertakings, should be happy with the decision. Till now, the law was not so clearly enunciated as in this case and it used to be thought that statutory corporations, vested with power to frame regulations relating to conditions of service of employees, could over-ride awards or settlements under the Industrial Disputes Act or bypass the provisions thereof.

The present case is an offshoot of the decision in the case of Ram Prakash Manchanda V. Union of India and Madan Mohan Pathak V. Union of India (A 1978 SC 803=(1978) 3 SCR 334) in which the Payment of Bonus (Amendment) Act of 1976 was successfully challenged. That Act was enacted to extinguish the effect of the 1974 settlements of Bonus. The Supreme Act struck down the legislation and directed the Life Insurance Corporation to pay to the Class III and Class IV workmen of the Corporation the Bonus according to that 1974 settlement. There upon, the Corporation issued notices under Section 19(2) of the Industrial Disputes Act as well as S.9A thereof, by virtue where the settlement of 1974 was sought to be terminated.

Two questions arose in the instant case. First, whether the

Life Insurance Corporation Act overrides the Industrial Disputes Act. Secondly, whether a settlement or an award, even if terminated under section 19(2) or 19(6) of the Act, continues to govern the relations between the employer and the employee.

On the first question, the Court held that the Industrial Disputes Act is a special statute whereas the Life Insurance Corporation Act is a general statute. The Industrial Disputes Act is a prior statute while the Life Insurance Corporation Act is a subsequent Act. Justice Iyer held that, in determining whether a statute is a special or a general one, the focus must be on the principal subject matter plus the particular perspective. It may often be that a particular statute may be general with regard to one, while it may be special to another. Thus the Life Insurance Act is a special statute of nationalisation. But, it has nothing to do with the particular problem of disputes between employers and employees or investigation and adjudication of such disputes.

Justice Iyer rightly observed that the Life Insurance Corporation Act deals with an Army of Employees who are not workmen within the meaning of Industrial Disputes Act and consequently the provisions of the said Act are general in nature. If the particular focus is on Industrial Disputes between workmen and employers, this particularity is not subject matter of the said Act. Accordingly, according to Justice Iyer settlement or adjudication of Industrial disputes is a particular topic, whereas the provisions of the Life Insurance Corporation Act are

general relating to nationalisation, management and administration of the nationalised companies and various other matters including transfer of employees from private companies to the nationalised concerns. The said Act provides about regulations of service conditions of employees but such

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employees belong to various classes, even those who are not workmen.

Therefore, with reference to industrial disputes between employers and workmen, the Industrial Disputes Act is a special statute.

If the Life Insurance Corporation Act is a general Statute and the Industrial Disputes Act is a special Statute, what follows is that the provisions of that Statute are not superseded by the provisions in the Life Insurance Corporation Act and the latter must give way to the provisions of the I.D. Act.

In fact, that was what was also held by the Supreme Court in the case of R.P. Manchanda V. Union of India and Madan Mohan Pathak V. Union of India (supra).

But as has been stated above the life Insurance Corporation tried to avoid the impact of the said decision in the case of R.P. Manchanda and Madan Mohan Pathak by issuing notifications under the Industrial Disputes Act. U/s. 19(2) of the I.D. Act as well as Sec. 9A thereof. The Corporation terminated the 1974 Settlement between the Corporation and the employees thus seeking to deprive Class III and Class IV employees of the bonus which was granted to them by the said Settlement.

Now, what follows if a settlement or for that matter an award is terminated either under Article 19 (2) (or under Article

19 (6) as the case may be). Justice Krishna Iyer has held in clear terms that the terms of the Settlement continue to operate even though the Settlement is terminated. According to the Learned Judge the termination of a Settlement or of an Award merely gives the liberty either to the employer or the employee to raise fresh disputes, negotiate settlement or seek a fresh reference for adjudication. Until a new contract or Award on such fresh adjudication replaces the previous one, the former settlement or Award will regulate the relations between the parties. The learned Judge observed that industrial law frowns upon a lawless void and under the general law the contract of service created by an Award or settlement survives so long as a new lawful contract is not brought into being. For otherwise great anomalies will arise. It cannot certainly be suggested that if under a Settlement or an Award a worker gets an average of, say, Rs. 1,000/- per month, as soon as the Settlement or Award is terminated he will revert back to the salary or remuneration which he was getting prior to the settlement or the Award which is terminated. By the termination of an Award or settlement, the contract of employment is not terminated and the obligations created by the Award or settlement subsist until they are altered by a fresh adjudication or fresh contract.

To put it from another point of view, as stated by the Bombay High Court in Mangaldas Narayan Das V. Payment of Wages Authority ((1957) 2 LLJ 256,) when an Award is delivered by an Industrial Tribunal (and on a parity of reasoning, a settlement is arrived at), it has the effect of imposing a statutory

contract governing the relations of the employer and the employee. The termination of the settlement or the Contract merely gives rise to this result that Sec. 23 (c) would not stand in the way of any strike by the workmen or lock out by the employer in respect of any matter covered by the Award nor will breach of the terms of settlement or of the Award will not render the party liable to penalty u/s. 29 of the Industrial Disputes Act. It is not a case of an antecedent contract or Agreement being suspended because no provision for suspension can be spelt out from the provisions of the Industrial Disputes Act.

Justice Iyer relied upon the three judgements of the Supreme Court, namely, Chacko's case ((1964)5 SCR 625 (630, 631)= AIR 1964 SC 1522,) Mohd. Quasim Larry's case((1964) 7SCR 419 (422)=AIR 1964 SC 1699) and Indian Oil Corporation Case ((1976)1 SCR 110(117)=AIR 1975 SC 1856.) In the first case Dasgupta J, said, of course with reference to Sec 4 of the Industrial Disputes (Banking Companies) Act, that though the Award ceased to be in force after March 31, 1959, the new contract would continue to govern the relations between the parties till it is displaced by another contract.

In the 2nd case Chief Justice Gajendra Gadkar said that, when an Award is made and it prescribes a new wage structure, in law the old contractual wage structure becomes inoperative and its place is taken by the Wage structure prescribed by the Award, even though the operation of the Award or the Settlement may be terminated by a Notice under Clause (2) of (6) of Section 19 of the Industrial Disputes Act. Similarly are the

observations in the Indian Oil Corporation case.

According to Justice Iyer, the law is lucid that the Award or settlement does not perish but survives to bind parties until a fresh regulation of conditions of service takes place by a new Settlement or Award.

A contention was raised that when an Award or Settlement is terminated only so much of that Award or Settlement survives which have already been implemented or enjoyed but those parts of it which are to come into effect in future do not survive the notice of termination. Mr. Justice Iyer rejected this argument and said that trying to save the creation of vacuum by splitting up the Award into two parts, the Award under which benefits have already been enjoyed and that part of the Award under which benefits have not been enjoyed, is to dissect the Award in a manner not justified in law or logic. The fact of the matter is that the result of the Award ceasing to have effect is not that the Award ceases to exist; the result of the Award ceasing to have effect is that it is open to either party to give a notice of change and to attempt to bring about a change.

In short, by the decision in the case between Chandrasekhar Bose and others V. Union of India and others and Life Insurance Corporation V. D.J. Bahadur (Supra) the Supreme Court has broken new ground and has extended the frontiers of Industrial Equity and Justice.

—Arun Prokas Chatterjee

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Beedi Export Markets will not Benefit Workers

Beedi manufacturers in India employ 2.5 to 3 million workers, 90 per cent of whom are women. About one-half million work collectively in sheds and the rest in their own homes, mostly in villages. Beedi is manufactured by wrapping uncured tobacco in a tendu leaf and securing it with a piece of thread. No tools are used except ordinary scissors and cardboard.

Over Rs. 360 crore worth of beedis are produced in India annually but only Rs. 128 crore goes to the beedi workers as wages.

Not Even Minimum Wage

Contractors, who supply the materials for the manufacture of beedis in homes, rarely pay more than the equivalent of half the statutory minimum wage, which is almost impossible to enforce. Efforts have been made to organise the beedi workers and as the number of unemployed women wanting to make beedis exceeds the demand for the workers, the contractors hold all the cards.

Nevertheless, beedi making is an important source of income for the poorer rural households. A recent ILO-sponsored study found that women's earnings from beedi making constitute on an average as much as 45.5 per cent of the total income of the sample households. For widows and other women who are heads of households, beedi making makes the difference between destitution and survival.

Workers Should be Better Organised

In an industry so highly labour intensive and technically

simple the only way that workers could improve their lot is by organisation. Some 55 per cent of the women covered in the ILO study responded positively to the idea of forming cooperatives and as many as 45 per cent thought they could manage the cooperatives themselves.

India exports beedis mainly to neighbouring countries but is

now extending its market farther afield including the United States and Europe. Quantities exported are still limited but are likely to increase and give a new dimension to the industry.

However, the higher returns from expanding export markets will not benefit the workers until they can secure control over production and ensure equitable distribution of the increased profits. □

(Based on ILO Release).

Women Workers Face Enmasse Retrenchment

WOMEN workers in Tobacco, match, mines, coir and other industries are faced with serious situation which is going to result in enmasse retrenchment due to mechanisation. In Andhra Pradesh, the Indian Tobacco Company, a subsidiary of the world's biggest tobacco multinational, British American Tobacco Company, is now resorting to mechanised processing of tobacco leaves by introducing threshing plants. Already three green leaf threshing plants, two in Bangalore and one in Andhra Pradesh, are operating and three more are under process of installation in Andhra Pradesh.

As a result of this, about a lakh of women workers who constitute more than 90 per cent of the workforce in the industry will be thrown out of employment and face starvation and destitution.

The same situation exists in the match manufacturing industry in Tamilnadu and Kerala where more than a lakh women are likely to be thrown out due to the proposed introduction of sophisticated machines for manufacturing label printed match

box skillets. The Central Government has already granted licences to import the machinery.

The All India Coordination Committee of Working Women submitted a memorandum to the Union Labour Minister on 23 December, 1980 and explained the serious situation requesting him not to allow the machinery to be imported. The Coordination Committee further demanded that the introduction of mechanisation in the match factory in Tamilnadu be stopped, cancel all mechanisation licences and stop granting further, stop mechanisation in spinning sector in coir industry as planned by coir board and reinstatement of women workers thrown out of employment due to mechanisation in factories and elsewhere.

The Coordination Committee has called upon all its units in the States to protest against this attack on working women. In a statement on 7 January the Secretary of the Coordination Committee, Vimala Ranadive, called upon the trade unions, women's organisations and working women to raise their united voice against these attacks to save women from starvation and destitution. □

All India HSCL Workers to Strike on 19 February

A meeting of the All India Coordination Committee of the Hindustan Steelworks Construction Ltd held in Calcutta on 15 January decided to organise one day protest strike of over 20,000 HSCL workers all over the country on February 19 to express their resentment at the inordinate delay in commencing negotiations on the charter of demands jointly submitted by all the central trade unions, arbitrary retrenchment of 239 HSCL workers at Kudremukh site, victimisation of 5 CITU activists at Hyderabad, abolition of contract labour system and other issues.

M.K. Pandhe, Secretary, CITU, explained how negotiations on charter of demands had been stalled due to the adamant attitude of the INTUC in demanding more seats than the CITU in the negotiations committee. The Government of India is also not keen to have any meaningful negotiations with the trade unions on the plea of heavy losses of HSCL. He also mentioned that if the management is allowed to retrench the Kudremukh workers, it would lead to further retrenchment in HSCL, throwing thousands of workers on streets.

The meeting congratulated the Kudremukh comrades for their valient struggle against retrenchment. Five employees against whom retrenchment notices have been served are having dharna before the managing director's office for over a month.

The members of the coordination committee had a meeting with the managing director HSCL during which they demanded absorption of all the

Kudremukh workers in other HSCL projects. They stressed that instead of giving jobs to contractors the work should be undertaken departmentally so that there would be no problem of surplus in HSCL. The co-ordination committee members also demanded withdrawal of termination orders of five CITU

TUs Criticise Labour Policy in Steel Industry

IN a special meeting of the national joint committee for the steel industry (NJCS) by the Union Minister of Steel, Pranab Mukherjee, in New Delhi on 14 January, the trade union representatives criticised the callous attitude of the Union Government and the steel managements towards the steel workers.

The workers representatives expressed their strong feeling at the inability of the Steel Minister to meet the central trade unions for nearly one year after assumption of office. They pointed out that the trade unions in the steel industry were not taken into confidence before preparing the sixth plan for the steel industry.

They pointed out the unsatisfactory implementation of several clauses of the bi-partite agreement in steel industry. The criticism of the SAIL management for still allowing contract labour in permanent and perennial nature of jobs was particularly severe.

They criticised slow progress in house building activity for the steel workers and demanded expeditious steps to ensure completion of the construction programme before expiry of the agreement. The workers representatives criticised the lack

of adequate opportunities created by the steel industry despite expansion programme.

activists at Hyderabad. They also criticised the inaction of the management at the serious malpractices pointed out by the CITU in Bhilai.

Employees of Calcutta office have collected Rs. 1,300 to meet the expenses of Kudremukh comrades on dharna. The work team workers working at Calcutta Second Hoogly Bridge Projects contributed Rs. 500 to the fighting Kudremukh workers. □

of adequate opportunities created by the steel industry despite expansion programme.

The question of non-implementation of six studying group reports constituted by the former Union Steel Minister also came up for sharp criticism by the workers' representatives.

The strained industrial relations in some of the steel plants were mainly due to the manner in which the local management dealt with the genuine grievances of the workers. The workers representatives pointed out that the meetings of the NJCS were becoming a formal affairs and there was deep resentment among the workers about the lack of any conclusion in several meetings of the NJCS.

The question of black-marketing of steel products was also raised by the trade unions who demanded that the distribution system of scheme should be improved drastically.

The need for expansion of Durgapur and alloy steel plants was emphasised by the workers representatives who demanded early decision in the matter.

The steel minister assured to look into the problems raised by the workers representatives. He also agreed to meet the trade union representatives more often and hear their suggestions and criticisms. □

Public Sector Employees Indefinite Strike Continues

“THE workers have shown not merely that they have a just cause to agitate but also that they are united in their fight to get better wages...”, said the editorial of Deccan Herald on 12 January writing on the indefinite strike of the public sector employees which commenced on 26 December last.

The strike struggle of Bangalore based undertakings like HAL, BEL, BEML, ITI, HMT, public sector employees at Bangalore and Hyderabad and other places all over the country is now over a month old. This strike was forced on the workers because the managements shamelessly backed out from a commitment recorded in a settlement that they would revise the wages further if any Bangalore based public sector undertaking or BHEL gave better wages. Since then BHEL revised the wages and gave better wages by a settlement signed in January 1980 but enforced from 1.9.1978. The Government instead of honouring this commitment is refusing to settle and has resorted to unprecedented repression.

During July 1980, the Karnataka State Committee of CITU published the details of the BHEL agreement in all the public sector undertakings in Bangalore. Thereafter all the unions raised the issue with their respective managements which did not take it seriously.

The public sector employees, unions in Bangalore formed a Joint Action Front and submitted the joint charter of demands to the managements, but the managements, did not consider it necessary to initiate negotiations with their unions. Having found no alternative, the

trade unions chalked out programme of trade union actions and subsequently served indefinite strike notice to be commenced from any date after 10 December, 1980. Just few days before the strike commenced the Labour Commissioner intervened, but in vain.

Realising the adamant and callous attitude of the government, the trade unions intensified the struggle and mobilised the full support of the working class. A Solidarity Committee was formed consisting of central trade unions like CITU, AITUC, HMS and BMS. A large number of trade union actions followed.

In the meantime, the Central Government declared that the BHEL accord was invalid since it does not have the approval of the Cabinet because there was no government functioning in January 1980. The Union Minister C.M. Stephen went to Bangalore who went to the extent of saying that “that government could have repudiated it (BHEL Agreement)” forgetting that industrial relations are better maintained through negotiated settlements. Same editorial in Deccan Herald commented on this that “when the public sector workers agitate for the implementation of the understanding, there can be no reason for a responsible Centre Minister Mr. C.M. Stephen to rush to the city (Bangalore) and rub salt into the wounds of the workers and alienate their sympathy.”

A trade union convention held in Bangalore on 11 January while extending full support to the striking 1,25,000 employees, criticised the statement of Stephen and the government. The convention called upon the workers, employees, shopkeepers, etc. to organise a ‘Bangalore Bandh’ on January 21 in support of the justified demands of the public sector workers. Normal life in Bangalore came to a

standstill on this day with shops, restaurants, cinemas, banks, commercial establishments and educational institutions remaining closed. Bandh was total and peaceful. But in Hindustan Aeronautics area police resorted to unprecedented repression and firing on the workers and students. Some reporters allege that first police resorted to stone throwing on peaceful workers as a result of which two pressmen received injuries. Students were protesting against but-fare hike.

The CITU President, B.T. Ranadive, in a statement on 23 January strongly condemned the wanton police firing in which a number of persons were killed. While congratulating the working class of Bangalore for their mighty solidarity action, he appealed to them to maintain the unity. He also appealed to all trade unions to come together to force the government to change its anti-people policies.

In protest against this repression the workers observed 25 January as the ‘black day’ by wearing black badges. A joint statement by CITU, AITUC, HMS and BMS on 25 January in New Delhi while congratulating public sector workers called upon all trade unions to send protest telegrams to Prime Minister on 28 January in response to which a number of telegrams were sent by various unions. It also called upon to observe ‘Solidarity Day’ on 30 January by holding rallies, demonstrations and dharnas. As we go to the press we have received reports from various centres of observance of this day. In Delhi, a dharna was staged at the residence of the Prime Minister and a memorandum was also submitted.

The morale of the public sector workers is very high and they are determined to fight back any offensive of the government. It is understood that the central trade unions are thinking in terms of a one day token strike all over the country. (30 January) □

Bank Employees Revolt Against the Policies of AIBEA Leadership

Expressing strong indignation at the policies of collaboration with bankers and betrayal of the cause of the employees in matters of wages, other economic interests, workload, service security, etc. as also of the divisive activities fragmenting the employees trade union solidarity by the AIBEA leaders, bank employees all over the State of West Bengal, met in a whole day convention in Calcutta on 28 September, 1980. The convention took note of step by step degeneration of these leaders from mid-sixties culminating in total surrender to the bankers-government combine through the third bipartite settlement in the industry (1979).

AIBEA Leadership : Shameless Protagonists

In the first bipartite settlement (1966) the leaders accepted intensive mechanisation as quid pro quo of some monetary concessions. In the third settlement AIBEA leaders agreed, without giving any resistance whatsoever, to a reduction in dearness neutralisation rate added with imposition of a ceiling, gave implicit consent for workload increases widening the process of mechanisation/computerisation, acquiesced in stricter disciplinary measures apart from many retrograde anti-employee provisions in the name of abolishment of so-called 'restrictive practices', a term coined by the bankers. Along with these acts of class collaboration, the leaders put all sorts of hurdles and impediments to the development of joint struggles by employees of banks and other institutions, acted as shameless protagonists

of the earlier emergency regime by openly welcoming promulgation of emergency and all the anti-people action that followed from it.

Open Connivance

Inside the organisation all norms and forms of democratic functioning were made casualties one by one. Authoritarian fiat instead of taking sanctions and approval from the members on issues, became the order of the day. Any dissent was ruthlessly suppressed by expulsion etc. from the organisation, critics were harassed and persecuted by open connivance with the bank management, the organisation was virtually turned into the domain of a partisan, vindictive coterie. Despite a decision of the working committee, BPBEA the West Bengal State unit of AIBEA did not even hold its conference for more than three years. The General Secretary of BPBEA on his own expelled 16 units and four office-bearers for being signatories of the convention.

The Background

In the back ground of all these, the convention decided that in order to protect the interests of the employees, to reorganise them on the basis of correct class approach, to champion and ceaselessly strive for broad based unity and united actions of employees and workers, a conference of bank employees of the State would be held to herald the birth of a militant, conscious organisation of bank employees of West Bengal. A Preparatory Committee elected from the convention, was entrusted with the task of holding the conference.

Unity against Desruption

Accordingly, the conference of the bank employees of West Bengal was held at Calcutta from 16 to 18 January, 1981, amidst unprecedented enthusiasm and participation of bank employees. From it has emerged the Bank Employees Federation, West Bengal, an aspiration of bank employees of this State, an embodiment of their determination to forge unity against disruption by AIBEA leaders and an instrument of their's to fight against the attacks of the Government-bankers combine.

The open session in Subodh Mullick Square on 16 January was attended by over 12,000 bank employees, preceded by colourful procession reverberant with slogans of struggle and broad unity. The rally was presided over by Parimal Das, one of the pioneer of the AIBEA.

Naresh Paul, Convenor of the Preparatory Committee narrated the background under which the conference was being held.

Unity and Struggle

Addressing the open session, Jyoti Basu, Vice-President of CITU and the Chief Minister of West Bengal who was also the Chief Guest stated that the unity is to be for struggle and since the path of struggle has been given up by the domineering leaders, the need has necessarily arisen for a new organisation of bank employees to uphold unity and struggle. He stressed that in a society which is divided into exploiting and exploited class, struggle is bound to take place and the bank employees must realise that without struggle they could neither unify their ranks nor achieve their just demands.

He also touched upon the attacks by the ruling classes of the country on the life and living of the people. In the context of the growing need for expansion of banking in rural side, the bank employees have a role to play in catering to the service of the poor people, he stressed. Somnath Chatterjee, MP, Chairman of the Reception Committee for the conference also spoke similarly.

M. K. Pandhe, Secretary, CITU, compared various agreements concluded during the past three years to show how the AIBEA leadership is following the policy of surrender and collaboration. The rally was greeted by Dwipen Ghosh of 12 July Committee, Chandrasekhar Bose, President of All India Insurance Employees Association and Adyanath Bhattacharya, representing West Bengal Newspaper Employees Association.

The delegate session on 17 and 18 January was attended by 1,025 representatives of this State covering over 25,000 employees and 165 fraternal delegates from various other states. It started on 17 January after commemorating the martyrs and condoling the premature death of Comrade Sudhin Biswas, one of the founders of AIBEA.

Tide of United Struggles

Inaugurating the delegate session, Krishnapada Ghosh, the Labour Minister, West Bengal, stated that in a situation when unity is disrupted by undemocratic functioning and struggle is abandoned, as is the case for several past years in the bank employees movement, reformation becomes a forced necessity to

advance struggle and unity. He recalled that in 1966 also unions were not allowed to participate in the AITUC conference. This could not stem the tide of growth of struggle. Equally to say that the divisions in the movement is political would be incorrect as the formation of CITU led to the growth of united struggles.

In a message, sent by a telegram, B.T. Ranadive, President, CITU, wished the conference a grand success and hoped that step by step it would rear a militant organisation of the bank employees. Fraternal delegates from Assam, Bihar, UP, Andhra, Maharashtra, Delhi and Tripura also greeted the conference.

The Report

The Report of the Preparatory Committee placed before the session dwelt on the dangerous role of the imperialists in the international sphere, the anti-people and repressive policies of the Government of India, the popular steps of the Government of West Bengal and those of Kerala and Tripura, the contrast between the line of betrayal of AIBEA leaders and that of struggle by those in this conference on economic demands of bank employees, against various attacks by bankers through mechanisations, computerisations etc. and in the name of 'customer service', 'discipline' etc. It also warned against the attempt of the vested interests to put national integration into jeopardy. The Report emphasised the paramount necessity to forge unity for struggle and united movement. The main organisational resolution was moved by Naresh Paul and 44 dele-

gates took part in the discussion.

A Presidium consisting of Parimal Das, R.L. Nagar, Biren Sen, Manoj Bose and Chitta Banerjee; and a Steering Committee with Naresh Paul, Ashish Sen, S. Bardhan, S. Bal, Balakrishna Sethi, Kashinath Chatterjee, Naresh Das and Amitva Roy were formed to conduct the deliberations of the conference.

A resolution on 'Attacks of Bank Managements' was moved by Ashish Sen. A Constitution was also moved providing biennial elections and democratic functioning. All these were adopted unanimously. A strong Executive Committee with Naresh Paul as President; Keshav Sen, Anil Dutta and Kashinath Chatterjee as Vice-Presidents; Naresh Das as General Secretary; Shanti Bal, Shanti Bardhan, Subinoy Roy and Samir Dasgupta as Joint Secretaries; Amalendu Sen as Treasurer and Pradip Biswas as Assistant Treasurer were elected unanimously.

A Step Forward

The interest of the employees demands that if even a sizable minority has some legitimate grievances, the majority section try to resolve it through discussions, with democratic norms. The failure of the AIBEA leadership to maintain this democratic norm has led to this revolt and the formation of Bank Employees Federation, West Bengal, is a step forward to strive in the interests of the bank employees and to work in close cooperation with and as a part of the working class, and make every endeavour to undo the severe damages done to the bank employees' material interests by the capitulating coterie that grips the AIBEA. □

Delhi CITU Demands End to Closures, Police Repression

The Delhi State Committee of the CITU met on 18 January in New Delhi and discussed the current problems faced by the trade union movement and the state of industrial relations.

Through a resolution, the Delhi CITU strongly condemned the recent price-increases in petroleum products like petrol, diesel and kerosene and viewed that the price would further add burdens on the people who were already suffering from the skyrocketing prices.

Another resolution on closures and attacks on working class movement expressed concern on the increasing number of closures of industrial units by the managements in Delhi. Such closures are resorted to by the employers deliberately as a weapon to deprive the workers of their legitimate demands and to attack the trade union movement. Such closures have become wide spread in all the industrial complexes like Okhla, Wazirpur, etc. In the case of the Hindustan General Industries, Nangloj, employing over a thousand, workers have not been paid wages for five months nor or they given any material for production.

In all these attacks on the workers, the Delhi Police is being utilised to aid the managements and to suppress the workers' protests. Further the practice of giving ex-parte injunctions by the courts in favour of the managements is causing unrest among the workers.

In a Statement on 19 January, Sushil, Bhattacharya, M.P.,

Consumer Price Index Numbers

State/Centre	Base 1960			State/Centre	1980		
	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.		Sep.	Oct.	Nov.
Andhra Pradesh				Orissa			
Gudur	385	388	410	Barbil	362	369	379
Guntur	423	429	436	Sambalpur	449	443	438
Hyderabad		109	417	Punjab			
As sam				Amritsar	424	437	442
Digboi	421	421	414	Rajasthan			
Doom Dooma	356	359	367	Ajmer	422	423	432
Labac	337	344	344	Jaipur	445	445	448
Mariani	34 5	346	359	Tam il Nadu			
Rangapara	370	370	370	Coimbatore	413	420	429
Bihar				Coonoor	405	408	411
Jamshedpur	394	379	389	Madras	381	388	398
Jharia	382	386	392	Madurai	410	413	429
Kodarma	422	427	430	U.P.			
Monghyr	443	448	444	Kanpur	407	405	402
Noamundi	385	389	391	Saharanpur	411	419	419
Gujarat				Varanasi	461	467	470
Ahmedabad	374	379	381	West Bengal			
Bhavnagar	410	418	420	Asansol	412	421	428
Haryana				Calcutta	396	393	397
Yamunanagar	429	436	445	Darjeeling	337	350	352
J. & K.				Howrah	374	385	383
Srinagar	410	415	427	Jalpaiguri	348	353	349
Karnataka				Raniganj	400	408	414
Ammathi	421	426	434	Delhi	430	438	436
Bangalore	430	439	453	Other Centres*			
Chikamaglu	405	410	420	Berhampur ('49)	580	583	594
Kolar G.F.	406	415	420	Cuttack ('49)	505	505	512
Kerala				Jabalpur ('49)	526	532	541
Alleppey	411	413	416	Beawar ('51-52)	512	511	516
Alwaye	404	404	416	Tripura (1961)	349	355	357
Mundakayam	393	408	419	H.P. (1965)	293	299	303
Madhya Pradesh				Goa (1966)	287	292	296
Balaghat	417	414	419	Bhilai (1966)	273	275	275
Bhopal	406	410	410	Bhilwara ('66)	264	262	264
Gwalior	427	432	430	Chhindwara ('66)	232	232	232
Indore	428	422	428	Kothagudem ('66)	267	268	271
Maharashtra				Rourkela ('66)	289	289	293
Bombay	391	400	402	All India ('49)	489	493	500
Nagpur	395	401	405	-do- ('60)	402	406	411
Sholapur	407	408	419				

Figures in bracket

indicate base year.

General Secretary, Delhi CITU, said that offensive of the employees utilising closures, retrenchment and legal and police aid would have to be met unitedly by the trade union movement and demanded of the Delhi Administration immediate intervention to stop these closures and other anti-working class actions. □

Com. S. Venkatram

COMRADE Venkatram, President, HMS, untimely breathed his last in Bangalore on 20 January.

B.T. Ranadive President, CITU, has sent a condolence message to HMS and bereaved members of his family.

A condolence meeting held at HMS Headquarters in New Delhi on 23 January was attended by Nrisingha Chackrabarty, Secretary, CITU and Jogender Sharma, Secretary, Delhi CITU Committee.

Efforts for Unity Continues

A meeting of the 12 men Panel, representing 11 category-wise Associations including the LRSA held on 9 and 10 January, which was attended by the Convenors/Secretaries of UCR (NFRly), ZCCR (SERly) and CCRU (Southern Rly) decided unanimously to approach all trade union organisations of railwaymen for broadest possible unity to fight for the basic demands of railway workers. It was decided that the Joint Convenors should pursue the question of unity personally. A communication should be addressed to the Railway Minister with a copy to the Labour Minister for a negotiated settlement of the 16 point charter of demands. In the meanwhile the programme of mobilising railwaymen should be continued by holding Divisional Conventions on 15 March and Zonal Convention on 8 May. All Zonal Secretaries were directed to take special efforts for success of these programmes.

Murder of a Railway T.U. Leader

CHHABILAL Branch Secretary of Loco Mech. Staff Association of Rosa Northern Railway was murdered by a member of a recognised Federation on 6 January, just one day before a case of corruption in employment of casual labour was coming up for hearing. The murderer Ghanasyam, has confessed after his arrest. But the organised labour feel that there is a deep conspiracy behind this assassination and therefore probe by CBI has been demanded.

Locomen Prepare For a Struggle

SINCE the change in the Railway Ministry, there

appears to be a shift in the policy in respect of the working pattern and labour relations. While on one hand the agreed decisions of the Railway Board are not being implemented and the due meetings are not being held, on the other the working condition has been changed to a very great extent. 100 wagon long freight trains on U.S. pattern which run straight from one Marshalling Yard to another non-stop, are being introduced. As a result certain train examination and crew changing points are being by-passed. If this system is introduced it would increase work load on the staff, increase the danger of accidents and reduce the staff strength in the mechanical engineering branch including the loco running staff, who would be required to work beyond ten hours also if the train does not reach a Marshalling Yard within this period. Any protest against this is being ruthlessly suppressed by victimisation under Rule 14 (ii). The Central Working Committee of the All India Loco Running Staff Association met on 8 January and decided that another effort may be made to apprise all concerned including the Chief Ministers of the State Governments that if the situation is not reversed and effort for a negotiated settlement is not made, the Locomen will be forced to withdraw their co-operation from 16 February, 1981.

Women Molested in Talcher Railway Colony

THREE ladies in the Talcher Railway Colony were molested, while their male members were away on duty on 9 January. The workers of Talcher stopped work demanding arrest and punishment of the anti-

socials and some of them were arrested after the protest action. But the railway authorities victimised 10 workers who led the agitation. This unwarranted victimisation, together with such victimisations at Santragachi, where despite intervention by Left Front Govt. in West Bengal, the position was not normalised, has forced the locomen of SERly to resort to mass sick leave movement from 21 January. Due to mass victimisation in ER, NFR, NR and SR, the situation is likely to worsen if prompt settlement is not reached. Samar Mukherjee M.P., apprised the Deputy Railway Minister about the situation.

Meetings & Conventions

THE differences of opinion that arose in the Co-ordination Committee of Railwaymen's Unions (CCRU) Southern Rly, was resolved in the meeting held on 4 January and P.V. Ram Das of DREU and N.K. Pillay of Station Masters Association were elected Joint Convenors. It was also decided that CCRU will participate in the unity efforts of 12 men panel and plead for broader unity.

Annual Conference of NF Rly LRSA was held at Siliguri on 28-30 December 1980 which was inaugurated by Samar Mukherjee M.P. The open session was addressed by S.K. Dhar, Secretary General.

Third Annual Conference of UCR-Badarpur Branch was held on 11 January which was inaugurated by Nurul Huda M.L.A. while the open session was presided over by Samar Sengupta and addressed by Ramendra De, M.L.A. and others. N.K. Goswami and N.K. Bhattacharya have been re-elected as President and

[On Page Fourteen]

Plight of MES Workers in Andaman

The workers and employees of Military Engineering Service (MES), Port Blair, under the C.W.E. (P), Port Blair, are agitating for trade union rights and several other demands.

The registration of the MES Civilian Employees' Union was cancelled by the Registrar of Trade Unions due to the objection raised by the local management. The MES employees all over the country are given trade union rights but without any reason Andaman workers have been denied the right to form union. The authorities have also made the Army Act applicable on these workers which is totally unwarranted since these workers are purely civilian. It is to be noted that the employees in comparable industries in Andaman and Nicobar Islands have been allowed to form unions as civilian employees in the Naval Base have a registered union and has representation on the J.C.M.

In MES, the workers were recruited as Mazdoors and were promised wages as per rules of Central Pay Commission but the workers, on reaching Andamans, were compelled to sign another agreement providing wages applicable to Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

The conditions of workers here is extremely difficult and prices of essential commodities are extremely high. The workers have been demanding that Andaman Special Allowance should be paid to them.

The housing facility provided to the workers is extremely inadequate and unsatisfactory. Those who have not been provided with this facility are not given house rent allowance which used to be given to the workers earlier but was withdrawn by a special order

without assigning any reason. The retiring workers have to wait for a number of days to get the retirement and terminal benefits. Many employees who have to come to the mainland find it very difficult to go back again to receive the terminal benefits.

These workers who were recruited as task force by the authorities have been working for several years under the administration. But their services in the task force are not counted for seniority, promotion, etc. And, no clear-cut policy has been spelt out so far.

Whenever the workers go to mainland, on the return they are forced to halt at Calcutta due to non-availability of the shipping

facility. During this forced stay the workers face lot of inconvenience and do not get any daily allowance. Due to inadequate housing facility, many employees are unable to bring their children along with them to Andamans for education. The children, therefore, have to be kept at the mainland. No education allowance is given to the employees.

These employees do not have adequate promotion facilities. It is learnt that local authorities have recommended several of the demands of the workers to the higher authorities but so far no action have been taken. The workers have organised protest actions. On 22 December, there was a tool down strike. And two workers resorted to indefinite hunger strike from 12 December. □

CITU Demands Takeover of B & C Mills

B. T. Ranadive, President-CITU has issued the following Statement on 2 January :

The CITU strongly protests against the closure of one of the oldest textile mills in the country, the B&C Mills, Madras, which would throw thousands of workers to the streets. It appears that the management wanted the Workers to accept retrenchment, modernisation, increase in work load and reduced earnings all from a given date and though the organised labour was prepared to discuss phased introduction of some of these measures, the management refused to listen to reasons.

The CITU is of firm opinion that the problem has acquired a national character in view of the fact that at every stage of crisis the managements try to pass on the burden upon the shoulders of the workers, irrespective of the super-profits they have earned in the past and try to brow-beat the workers and the Government by declaring unilateral closures.

The CITU appeals to all Trade Union Centres to support the struggle of the B&C Mill workers and move jointly to secure solution of a national problem. □

Railway News...

[From Page Thirteen]

General Secretary of this Branch.

A democratic convention was held on January 13 jointly by the Eastern and South Eastern Railway Units of Ministerial Staff Association at Indian Association Hall at Calcutta, which was inaugurated by Dipen Ghosh, leader of Central Government Employees. Krishnapada Ghosh, Minister of Labour, Government of West Bengal, Saroj Chowdhury, General Secretary of Insurance Employees Association and others addressed the convention which highlighted the squeezing of employment potentialities due to mechanisation and computer drive in Indian Railways. □

Road Transport Workers to Organise All India Conference

A meeting of the Working Committee of the All India Road Transport Workers' Federation met at Madras on 30 and 31 December, 1980. V. P. Chintan presided over.

The meeting decided to organise 2nd all India conference at Vijayawada sometime in the second week of April, 1981, which will be preceded by the office-bearers meeting. The delegates will be elected on the basis of one delegate per 200 membership and one extra for its major half.

The Committee decided Rs. 5 as the delegate fee. The food will be supplied at the subsidised

Orissa CITU Meets

A meeting of Orissa State Committee of CITU was held at Puri on 11 January. Shivaji Patnaik, President of the State Committee, was in chair.

Ajeya Raut, General Secretary of the State Committee in his report reviewed the developments in the State since the last meeting. Comrades while speaking on the report noted that the CITU unions played an important role in the recent Orissa bundh organised by the students and supported by other mass organisations. The CITU unions have also been facing repressive measures of the Government while several CITU activists have been victimised by the managements. It was observed that CITU has strengthened its position in the mining belt.

The meeting reviewed the developments in the electricity industry and decided to call meeting of workers to consider

rates which is Rs. 20 for the duration of conference.

The Committee requested the member unions to submit their work reports and suggestions and specific demands which should be included in the final document. The conference will also consider the affiliation of new unions in addition to chalking out of an all India action programme.

The Committee adopted several resolutions on the pressing issues of the workers and against anti-working class policies of the Government.

The Working Committee appealed to the road transport workers to build up a powerful movement to fulfil their just demands. □

the steps to be taken to protect the interests of the electricity workers.

M. K. Pandhe, Secretary, CITU, attended the meeting on behalf of the CITU Centre. □

Haryana CITU Meets

A meeting of the Haryana State Committee of the CITU was held on 3 January. It discussed present political situation and some organisational questions.

The Committee decided to organise a trade union school. It deputed several comrades to collect the reports of police repression on workers in Haryana for the purpose of publishing them. The Committee decided to support the dharna programme of Bhiwani workers.

Another meeting of the Committee was held on January 23. The meeting reviewed the CITU activities in the region. A joint trade union convention

More trade union schools by CITU

THE CITU has organised three more trade union schools in the month of January. First school was organised at Puri in Orissa from 7 to 11 January. Sukomal Sen and M. K. Pandhe spoke on various subjects in this school. Second school was organised at Rohatak in Haryana from 19 to 23 January where Narsingha Chakrabarty and M. K. Pandhe covered the course of the classes. Third school was held at Tiruchirapalli in Tamilnadu from 25 to 29 and Sukomal Sen and M. K. Pandhe spoke on trade union related subjects. In each school 40 worker-students participated. In the nights some films on the working class movement and on education were also screened. Comrades have shown their tremendous receptive attitude in these schools. More schools will be organised in February. □

will be organised in Faridabad on 22 February, which will finalise a common charter of demands and further trade union actions. The convention will also consider the possibility of organising a joint demonstration before the Assembly in April.

The Committee adopted several resolutions condemning the arrest of Inder Jit in Hissar, lathi-charge on Kurukshetra students, lathi-charge and tear-gassing on demonstrators in Chandigarh and fraud in compilation of consumer price index.

Both the meetings were attended by M. K. Pandhe, Secretary, CITU. □

Central Govt. Employees observe A.I. Demands Day

AT the call of the All India Confederation of Central Government Workers and Employees, the Central Government employees all over West Bengal observed mass sit-in and demonstration before their respective offices on 20 January under the leadership of the West Bengal Co-ordination Committee to press for their 6 point demands. The sit-in was observed from 10.a.m. to 5.p.m. with demonstrations during the tiffin hours and rallies at the end of the office hours. In Calcutta alone over five thousand employees participated in the sit-in different offices. Leaders of the Central Govt. employees addressed the mass rallies where resolutions were adopted in support of the demands and sent to the Prime Minister, and Union Finance Minister.

On the same day, P & T employees of West Bengal, Sikkim and Andaman and Nicobar islands participated in large numbers in the mass dharnas and demonstrations before their offices at the call of the National Federation of P & T Employees and the Confederation of Central Govt. Employees. Along with the 6-point-demands of the Central Govt. employees, they were pressing for their own demands for minimum two promotions in service life, further five days' bonus and recruitment of adequate employees to maintain efficient postal services in the interest of the people. Resolutions in support of the demands were adopted in the mass dharnas held before all the big post offices and these were sent to

the Prime Minister and the Communications Minister.

Life Insurance Employees Observe Demands Day

AT the call of the All India Insurance Employees Association, Life Insurance Employees in West Bengal observed Demands Day on 20 January. In Calcutta the employees organised processions through the main streets to assemble at the Indian Association Hall where a meeting was held in the afternoon. Addressing the meeting Saroj Chowdhury, leader of the Insurance employees, pointed out that the authorities were trying to scuttle the Supreme Court decision on the question of service conditions and bonus of Life Insurance employees. He warned the authorities that the Insurance employees will be forced to launch a bigger movement if the Supreme Court decisions are not implemented forthwith. Leaders of the employees of Reserve Bank, General Insurance Corporation and State and Central Govt. organisations also spoke in the meeting in support of the demands of the Insurance employees.

Engineering Workers to Observe Mass Demonstrations and Rallies on 11 February

WORKERS and Employees of Engineering factories all over West Bengal are to observe a mass rally and demonstration before the office of the Engineering Employers' Association in Calcutta on 11 February next on the demand for reopening of closed and sick factories. The decision was taken at a special Convention of

representatives of more than one hundred Unions working in Engineering factories, held at the Indian Association Hall on 17 January under the auspices of the West Bengal Federation of Metal & Engineering Workers' Unions (CITU). The convention was attended by over 300 delegates and was presided over by Rabin Mukherjee, President of the Federation.

The main resolution was moved by Shanti Ghatak, General Secretary of the Federation. He pointed out that over 25 thousand workers have become jobless due to closure in 19 factories, lock-out in 3 factories and sickness in 12 factories in the State. Many factories have become sick due to the inefficiency and incompetence of the management, large-scale corruption and excessive profit hunting by employers. In some factories illegal lock-outs and closures have been declared by the employers and lakhs of rupees in arrear wages, ESI money, Provident Fund money of workers, gratuity etc. have been misappropriated by the employers.

Monoranjan Roy, General Secretary, West Bengal CITU, Rabin Mukherjee, President of the Federation, Bimal Chatterjee, President of the Jay Engineering Workers' Union and many other leaders and delegates addressed the convention.

The convention called upon the workers and employees of Engineering factories in the State to rally in large numbers on 11 February in support of the jobless workers of sick and closed factories and to make the mass demonstration and rally a success. An appeal was made to workers and employees of different industries to donate

generously for the relief of the jobless workers and employees of closed and sick factories.

Lock-out in Union Carbide Factory

ABOUT 350 workers and employees of the Union Carbide factory at Taratala (a U.S. monopoly concern) were carrying on movement for some time for their demands for reduction in work-load and working hours, for revision of grades and scales etc. The management resorted to various means including charge-sheets, suspension and retrenchment, and even 33 per cent cut in salary of December on the plea of fall in production, to suppress the workers' movement. When all this failed, the management suddenly declared lock-out in the factory.

A meeting was held on the same day attended by representatives of the head office union, Calcutta factory and other unions

connected with different units where demand was raised for the immediate withdrawal of the lock-out, withdrawal of victimisation measures and settlement of the workers' just demands. A programme of meetings at different factory gates and conventions on 22 January was observed successfully.

Closure of Stadmed Factory-325 Workers Thrown out.

The management of Stadmed (P) Ltd. declared a closure of their factory at Calcutta on 31 March, 1980. As a result, 325 workers and employees have been thrown out of job. The management have not even paid the arrear wages and other dues of the workers. The Company holds a 'A' category licence for the manufacture of over 100 different medicines and formulations. They are trying to shift their factory to Uttar Pradesh and are already selling medicines

produced in other factories in their brand name. Monoranjan Roy, General Secretary, CITU-West Bengal Committee has, in a statement, protested against this motivated closure and has demanded immediate take-over of the management of the company by the Central Government.

All India Strike Planned by ITC Workers on 5 February

Workers of the Indian Tobacco Company all over India will observe a day's token strike on 5 February next to protest against the anti-labour policies of the management and in support of their 6-point demands. This was announced by Somnath Chatterjee, M. P., President of the ITC Workers' Federation at a Press Conference at Calcutta on 16 January. Monoranjan Roy, General Secretary, West Bengal CITU was also present. □

Tripartite Meeting of Beeri and Cigar Workers

A tripartite meeting on Beeri and Cigar Workers (conditions of employment) Act, 1966 was held in New Delhi on 21 January. The Union Minister of State for Labour Ram Dulari Sinha presided over. Deputy Labour Minister Venkata Reddy was also present.

Ram Dulari Sinha said the Act should be implemented all over the country. It was decided to constitute implementation committees and review committees at the central and state levels.

The CITU representative, C. Kannan, Vice-President, CITU, proposed 8 amendments in the Act which included abolition of contract system; the term "industrial premises" should cover the dwelling houses where beeri and cigar making is carried on and

weekly holiday to such workers; enhancement in the punishment to Rs. 1,000 for the first offence compulsory imprisonment for the subsequent offences, etc.

The meeting decided that the minimum wages of beeri workers should be revised every two years. The workers representatives unanimously proposed that the minimum wages should be Rs. 15 per thousand beeris and fall back wages should be Rs. 10 per day.

The trade union representatives unanimously proposed that Provident Fund Scheme should be extended to all workers including home workers.

On 23 January, a meeting of Central Advisory Committee on Beeri Workers Welfare Fund was held in New Delhi.

The trade union representatives demanded revival of duty on tobacco instead of labelled beeri.

The meeting decided that the

welfare fund will be spent on the basis of the number of beeri workers in the states. It also decided to open dispensaries where 5,000 or more workers are working which was also the proposal of CITU representatives, C. Kannan and Nizamuddin. Number of mobile dispensaries will be increased and will work in rural areas. A special expert committee would be constituted to study diseases like TB prevalent in beeri workers.

On the question of housing, the TU representatives demanded Rs. 10,000 per worker for constructing house with 50 per cent as loan and 50 per cent as grant. State Government will be advised to constitute advisory committees. Subsistence allowance will be increased from Rs. 50 to Rs. 100 in case of workers hospitalised for T B etc. □

News in Brief

J.K. Workers Demonstrate : The workers of J.K. Jute Mill, Kanpur organised a massive demonstration on 31 December, 1980 at the gate of the mill in support of their demands which includes reinstatement of workers whose services were terminated in Emergency, regularisation of services, increased dearness allowance, house rent allowance, recognition of union on the basis of secret ballot etc. The demonstration was led by CITU union. Daulat Ram and others addressed the meeting. The meeting also condemned the murderous attack on CITU activists on 19 December by anti-social elements having allegiance to Congress(I).

Meanwhile, Syntex Tube Works Karmachari Union, Kanpur, also condemned the police and administration for conniving with the Congress(I) gangsters in attacking CITU activists. The union said that if this continued it would be forced to go on strike in support of struggling J.K. Jute workers.

Sugar Workers Strike Settled : The proposed indefinite strike in the Sugar Mill of Dhampur in UP from 24 December and the relay hunger strike continuing from 14 December by the mill workers under the leadership of CITU union was withdrawn on 25 December following a settlement. Other three unions in the mill had been following pro-management policies.

Workers Arrested and Lathi-charged : The General Secretary of UP State CITU criticised strongly the local police in Lucknow for resorting to lathi charge on struggling peaceful Shekhupur Badayun sugar mill workers on 20 December. Police also arrested more than 200

workers who were beaten up in the police station. While demanding immediate release of the workers and action against erring police officials, Daulat Ram said that increasing attacks on the workers was the reflection of the State's anti-workers policies.

Dharna by Biscuit and Hosiery workers : The CITU affiliated Biscuit Karmachari Union and Hosiery Textile Mazdoor Union organised a dharna in front of State Labour Minister's residence in Lucknow on December 13 in support of their demands.

Torch Light Procession by Hard Coke Workers : The workers of Continental Hard Coke in Hazaribagh district brought out a torch light procession on 30 December protesting against the termination of services of 105 workers. The workers also burnt the effigies of the owner and the management.

Metal Workers' Conference : 12th Annual Conference of A. B. K. Metal and Engineering Workers' Union and United Contractors' Workers' Union held at Burnpur on 27-28 December. C. S. Mukherjee presided over. 200 delegates participated. The Conference elected 113 member Executive Committee with C. S. Mukherjee as President and B.P. Mukherjee as General Secretary.

Textile Workers Win Wage rise : Following a settlement on 6 January, the textile workers in Punjab have won rise in their piece-rate wages. The workers led by CITU had earlier given an ultimatum for settlement which was arrived at between Punjab Textile Manufacturers Association and CITU unions which were represented by Mangat Ram, General Secretary, Punjab CITU, and others. The

rise is 15 per cent except in case of workers connected with silk, staple, shirting, wool viscous. The AITUC union had been propagating that the wage rise demand can not be won due to recession.

Koyla Shramik Sangh Executive Meets : Executive Committee of Koyla Shramik Sangh (CITU) met at Bistrampur on 5-6 January. Garibnarayan Sharma, Vice-President, presided over. The meeting discussed problems faced by the workers. It condemned National Security Act. The meeting decided to participate in All India Coal Workers Convention which would be held at Raniganj.

Workers Not Paid for Over Five Months: The management of Hindustan General Industries Ltd at Nangloi in Delhi has not paid the wages to its workers for last more than five months which has led its 1000 workers and 4000 of their family members to starvation. General Mazdoor Lal Jhanda Union (CITU) is leading the struggle for payment of wages and other demands but the authorities are silent on it. The Lt. Governor of Delhi is also not paying any attention even in case of such an important industry which manufactures railway wagon when the country need more wagons. The Union has sent a memorandum to the Prime Minister in this connection.

General Mazdoor Protest Against Police Repression : General Mazdoor Lal Jhanda Union, Kamalanagar Branch in Delhi, organised a demonstration in front the residence of the Deputy Commissioner of Police, North Delhi protesting against police repression on workers in Wazirpur area, on 24 December. Earlier on 12 December the

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CITU Demands Reinstatement of Dismissed IB Employees

B. T. Ranadive President
CITU has issued the following statement on 1 January :

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions strongly protests against arbitrary dismissals of the three leading office bearers of the Intelligence Bureau Employees Association under special Presidential powers for mere "crime" of submitting a Charter of Demands detailing the grievances of the Intelligence Branch employees.

This attack on the trade union rights following in the wake of similar attacks on the Research and Analytical Wing leaders clearly shows that the Government is not going to tolerate organisation of even those personnel who are being used to keep a watch on T.U. and democratic activities in the country.

The CITU demands that all the dismissal and other vindictive orders issued against these employees should be immediately withdrawn and their genuine grievances should be settled through negotiations. The CITU supports the demands of these employees that they should not be governed under the Police Act.

The CITU appeals to all the Central TUs to support the demands of these employees and raise their voice of protest against the vindictive measures of the Government. □

CITU Condemns Repression on Blind

B. T. Ranadive, President, C.I.T.U., has issued the following statement, on 2 January :

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions is shocked to learn the

reports about the reckless beating by the Delhi police when the blind persons were demonstrating before the residence of the Prime Minister yesterday in protest against the non-implementation of the assurances given by the former Union Labour Minister to the National Federation of the Blind last year.

The Delhi Police in their usual callous style have invented the crude story of the so-called clash between police and blind, to hood-wink the public. Their behaviour this time despite public criticism both inside and outside Parliament last year when the procession of the blind persons was attacked mercilessly, only further highlights how Delhi Police has become immune to public criticism.

This attack on the handicapped blind persons by the strong arm policemen has incidently become a new year gift by Mrs. Gandhi's Government to the blind persons during the "Year of the Disabled" declared by the United Nations.

The CITU demands immediate Suspension of the guilty police officers who were responsible for the dastardly attack on the helpless blind persons and judicial enquiry into the uncivilized behaviour of the police. The CITU further urges upon the Govt. to immediately implement the assurances given to the National Federation of the Blind so that their genuine demands are settled without any further delay. □

CITU Gndemns Repression on State Govt. Employees of Punjab

B. T. Ranadive, President-
CITU, has issued the following statement, on 10 January :

The CITU condemns the action of the Government of Punjab in suspending ten union

officials for launching a pen down strike in protest against earlier suspension of other two officials. The State Government Employees of Punjab have been agitating for a solution of the anomalies in their pay for a long time and they were forced to launch a movement because the Government had been delaying a decision on the problems. These suspensions are, therefore, an attempt to curb all movements of the workers and salaried employees thus attacking the very right of "Freedom of Association" and "Right to collective bargaining". The refusal of the Chief Secretary to open negotiation unless the struggle is withdrawn stems out of the authoritarian tendency of the ruling party which has been raising its ugly head once again.

The CITU appeals to the State Government employees to maintain unity in their ranks and mobilise other sections of democratic masses in support of their struggle. The CITU also appeals to all Trade Union Centres and Democratic Organisations of the working people to raise their powerful voice to force the Government of Punjab to withdraw repressive measures and open negotiations for a settlement of the just demands of the state employees. □

News in Brief

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management removed machines from the works of M/s Daulat Ram Om Prakash at the point of C.R.P. guns where the workers were on strike since 24, November 1980. A delegation led by Sushil Bhattacharya, M. P. General Secretary, Delhi CITU presented a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner. The demonstrating workers were addressed by Delhi CITU Secretary, Jogender Sharma, and Umesh Mishra and others. □

A YEAR OF FULFILMENT

- ★ Pension granted to 1.25 lakh agricultural workers above the age of 60.
- ★ Relief granted to 1.84 lakh unemployed youth.
- ★ Health Card Scheme benefitting 55 lakh School students launched.
- ★ Rs. ten crore seven point programme for rural reconstruction introduced.
- ★ Rs. 300 crore scheme for raising the economic conditions of the Harijans above poverty line drawn up.
- ★ Fishermen Welfare activities constituted in 400 fishing villages. Ten thousand houses for fishermen nearing completion—Construction of another 15000 taken up. Insurance scheme for fishermen introduced.
- ★ Interest relief scheme benefitting 1.35 lakh small farmers introduced. 33 point relief and reform measures announced in the budget implemented.
- ★ Kerala's Left Democratic Front Government open an alternate path of progress.

DEPT. OF PUBLIC RELATIONS
GOVT. OF KERALA.