



THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

Results of Elections

B.T. Ranadive

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THE CITU greets the working class and the people of West Bengal on their magnificent victory in the May elections. They have routed the Cong(I) which was now supported by other bourgeois parties like the Janata Party and have given a definite rebuff to the ambitions of the authoritarian party.

Our Vice-President, Com Jyoti Basu, who headed the left-front ministry in W. Bengal, deserve special congratulation for having steered the ministry for the full five-year term, despite all machinations of the authoritarian, communal and divisive forces to destabilise it.

The working class areas of West Bengal have voted massively for the Left Front and given huge majorities to the winning candidates. The strongholds of the CITU have been in the fore front to shape this big victory.

The massive support of the working class and the peasant masses has given an absolute majority to the CPI(M) and more than three-fourth majority to the Left Front.

The working class and the people of West Bengal can now expect the left-front Govt. to function for another full five-year term in defence of their democratic rights and for betterment of their living and working conditions.

This great victory of the democratic forces under the leadership of the Left will strengthen the anti-authoritarian forces all over the country. It calls on the entire trade union movement to support left forces for a decisive battle against authoritarianism.

The CITU greets the working class and the people of Kerala for their great fight against powerful combination of the reactionary forces. Headed by Cong(I) it represented the defectors and destructors who revolted against the popular measures of the Nayanar Ministry; it was supported by well-known forces of communalism, like the Indian Union

Muslim League, the Catholic Church and caste organisations.

Despite this, the Cong(I) combination could secure only a marginal victory and the instability of this alliance of opportune is easily seen.

In the 77 seats won by the combination, the Cong(I) has only 20 seats clearly exposing the extent to which it has surrendered to the communal forces. Without the 14 seats of the Indian Union Muslim League, the Cong(I) combination is in a clear minority.

The success of the Cong(I) is therefore clearly based on its disgraceful surrender to the forces of communalism.

The working class and people of Kerala are likely to be subjected to the pressure and acts of goondaism under the new Ministry. Its first concern will be to withdraw the progressive measures of the Nayanar Government like unemployment relief, and old-age pensions for agricultural workers.

The working class and the people of Kerala, the agricultural workers and small peasants will have to resist these attacks. They will have to defend the democratic rights of the people, the freedom of the trade union movement, which are bound to come under attack.

The left forces in the working class all over India highly appreciate the fight put up by the LDF combination and its success in resisting the attack of the forces of reaction. The 63 members of the LDF in the Assembly constitute a powerful shield for the democratic forces of Kerala to ward off the attacks of the totalitarian forces.

The elections in Haryana and Himachal also show that the Cong(I) is losing rapidly. In Haryana, it has resorted to underhand measures to get into the Ministry. The Haryana Governor has covered himself with utter disgrace by accepting Bhajan

OBSERVE ALL INDIA PROTEST DAY ON JUNE 4

Lal's claims to form the Ministry. He has acted as a sychophant of the ruling party at the Centre.

In Himachal, the Cong(I) is nearly beaten by a reactionary party like the BJP.

Within two years of its reign of power with huge majority, the Cong(I) is on the run. Its influence is getting daily eroded. The victory of Bahuguna in U.P. further marks its rapid erosion.

A party which pursued anti-working class and anti-people policies, which is preparing fresh fetters for the working class, which is plotting to impose the presidential system and mortgages the country to the IMF, how can it escape this fate?

The working class and the people of India must now redouble their efforts to fight this authoritarian party and deprive it of power. The West Bengal left front with a huge majority constitute a powerful bastion for the democratic forces. The Kerala LDF is yet another bastion along with Tripura Left Front Government. Let the working class and the people take every effort to unite and stand solidly against the authoritarian party. The trade union movement and its unity have a vital role to play in shaping this unity and strengthening the fight

against authoritarianism. Let them not fail in this vital task. □

Successful General Council Members of CITU in Elections

The following office-bearers, Working Committee Members and General Council Members were elected in the Assembly Elections held on May 19 from West Bengal and Kerala:

West Bengal

Jyoti Basu, Vice-President; Kamal Sarkar, Secretary; Krishnapada Ghosh,* Rabin Mukherjee*; SantiGhatak*; Jamini Saha*; Radhika Banerjee*; Bamapada Mukherjee*, Parimal Mitra*; Prabir Sen*; Bijoy Pal*; Niranjana Mukherjee; Khiti Burman; Jagadish Das; Ajit Bose; Gopal Bhattacharjee; Sitaram Gupta; Nani Kar; Dilip Majumdar; Haradhan Ray; Bikash Choudhury; Lakshman Bagdi; Ajit Chakravarty; Proloy Talukdar; Biren Bose; Harka Bahadur Rai; Punai Oraon; Mohanlal Oraon; Sailen Chatterjee; Shantashree Chatterjee; Subhash Bose.

Kerala

O. Bharathan*; M. Jinadevan*; K. Moosakutty; P. Kunhikannan.

*Working Committee Members

Annual Conference of Kilburn Workers' Union

The Eleventh Annual Conference of Kilburn Industrial Estate Workers' Union was held at Calcutta on April 27. Krishnapada Ghosh, Labour Minister of W. Bengal was the Chief Guest. The Conference raised the demands for need based productions by the Kilburn factory. It also demanded repeal of ESMA and NSA, remunerative prices to the peasants, check on price-rise and nationalisation of multinationals.

Insurance Employees' Convention

A regional trade union convention was organised at Sambalpur (Orissa) on 24 April, by Cuttack Division Insurance Employees' Association and Orissa State General Insurance Employees' Association in collaboration with Sambalpur Workers' and Employees' Coordination Committee. The Convention demanded restoration of the right to collective bargaining to the LIC employee and repeal of the LIC (Amendment) Act. It further demanded repeal of ESMA and NSA.

Demand Week by Coal Workers

Koyla Shramik Sangh (CITU) decided to observe demands week from May 13 to 20 with the 13-point demands of the Coal Workers of Madhya Pradesh. It also decided to hold demonstrations and processions on 20th and distribute leaflets on the 36-point demands made by the All India Coal Workers' Federation.

DEFEND RIGHT TO STRIKE

By P. Ramamurti M.P.
General Secretary-CITU
(In Hindi and English)

A critique of the Bills introduced in Parliament in the last Budget Session intended to curtail the right to strike
—(under print)

Estimated Cost — Re. 1.00 per copy

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Trade Unions and Wage Negotiations in Public Sector

THE Union Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee in his statement in Rajya Sabha on 4 May categorically stressed that the question of wage settlement in public sector undertakings will not be left to the management of those undertakings or to collective bargaining. This is a clear warning to all the trade unions in public sector undertakings that they will have to bargain very hard in the forthcoming wage negotiations and unless powerful pressure comes from below the directive of the Government would virtually amount to a new offensive of wage freeze in public sector undertakings.

The directive of the Government has come at a time when the real wages of the Indian workers have fallen substantially during the last 2 decades. Official statistics is available only till the year 1976 but the figures given below are revealing.

Index of Real Earnings of Workers

(Base 1961-100)

Year	Index Nos. of Real Earnings	Year	Index Nos. of Real Earnings
1967	91	1972	103
1968	94	1973	92
1969	101	1974	71
1970	101	1975	67
1971	101	1976	75

(Estimated)

N.B: (Compiled by Labour Bureau, Simla)

The picture has become further glooming during the last 5 years resulting in substantial erosion in real standard of living of the workers.

According to the Bureau of Public Enterprises 18.38 lakh workers are employed in the Central Government owned public undertakings and value added continuously shows an increase during the last 6 years. In 1975-76 it was Rs. 2083 crores which went upto Rs. 4385 crores during 1980-81 indicating a rise of over 110 per cent. However wage cost as percentage of total cost of production stood at 13.06 per cent in 1979-80 which went down to 12.15 per cent in 1980-81. In the previous year also wage costs declined by 1.38 per cent. The decline in real earnings in public sector is much

more glaring. In steel industry alone the decline in the real standard of living of the lowest paid unskilled worker is estimated to be by about 12 per cent. The extent of erosion in the standard of living at higher levels of skills is even much more. This happens because the rate of neutralisation is much below the actual rise in prices. In steel industry it works out to be only 84 per cent at the minimum level. The purpose of pegging the D.A. at Rs. 1.30 per point has thus been successful.

The skilled and highly skilled workers are also getting the same fixed rate of D.A. and the rate of neutralisation at highest level is even less than 50 per cent. The trade union movement has to seriously ponder over this pickpocketing of the D.A. month by month by the management.

The assurances given by the Government to ensure full neutralisation at the lowest level is not yet fulfilled with the result that there is in-built mechanism of systematic decline in the real standard of living of the workers in public sector undertakings.

The new directive by the B.P.E. that the wage rise should be linked with productivity will further lead to erosion in the real earnings of workers. The total package of directive of the B.P.E. in this regard can be summarised as follows:

1. No wage rise can be given at the existing level of productivity. All future wage rises must be linked with in corresponding rise in productivity.

2. There will be no retrospective effect in the future wage agreements. Hence all agreements will be effective from the date of signing of the agreement.

3. The effective period of the agreement should be 4 years.

4. Not more than 10 per cent of the wage bill can be increased as a result of the agreement (including fringe benefits).

5. The rate of D.A. will not exceed Rs. 1.30 per point in the rise in C.P.I. numbers (1960-100).

The net result of the proposal is that the workers must generate more profits to get a small share of it from the employers. They must also be prepared to suffer due to the inefficiency of the management which quite often keeps production low. They should also not grumble if the supply of power, coal and raw materials is not made available to the plant and accept less earnings if the production is low on

account of these shortages. They must put up with the excessive workload imposed on them, which alone will bring them additional remuneration. The package is so dangerous that all the Central Trade Unions have opposed this concept and the leadership of the INTUC is finding it difficult to accept it openly.

At the same time it cannot be ignored that in some public sector undertakings, though smaller in size, the leadership has accepted this pernicious concept and signed agreement providing linkage of wage rise with productivity. According to official reports in Napanagar Newsprint Factory, Cochin Shipyard etc. such agreements have been arrived at. Wherever trade union movement is weak the employers succeeded in forcing such unfavourable agreements on the workers which have immensely harmed the cause of public sector employees.

In some public sector undertakings due to the strong opposition of the trade unions the managements found it extremely difficult to sell the BPE directives and started pleading with it for withdrawing them at least so far as their undertaking was concerned. However the Government is determined to go ahead with the wage freeze drive and is doggedly insisting on adhering to these directives.

The growing pressure of the World Bank and IMF to "contain" inflation through "wage restraint", the increasing subservience of the Government policies to the needs the big business houses, both Indian and foreign is making the situation worse for the workers in public undertakings. The back seat driving of the BPE in wage negotiations in public sector has become more pronounced now.

Since wage negotiations in several public sector undertakings are impending in view of the fact that the last wage agreements are due to expire soon the question of opposing the wage policy gets added importance.

The trade unions in public sector have to bear in mind that the forthcoming negotiations are going to be very stiff since the Government is going to do its utmost to thwart any attempt to get a wage rise at the existing level of productivity. This highlights the need for a comprehensive unity of the working class in public sector for a concerted action to defeat the directives of the Government and its mouth-piece—the BPE. While the authorities are becoming more vociferous, the determination to fight the anti-working class policies is also growing among the working class. In major industries such as Steel, Coal, BHEL etc the working class is already preparing to resist the offensive of the Government. Universal condemnation of the official policy is clearly witnessed in the day to day agitations in these industries. Even Birla's paper Hindustan

Times has questioned "the advisability of the Bureau's latest directives".

"It is" the Editorial of the paper says, "doubtful whether public sector employees could be expected to forego wage increases and to work harder when they know that there are other disruptive factors over which they have no control. Should public sector units insist upon punctiliously following the Bureau's directive industrial disputes are bound to rise". (27 March 1982).

The Free Press Journal of Bombay has also editorially commented, "The industry would do well not to talk about linking wages to productivity". (31 March 1982). It had also pointed out that there had been no accord on wages and incomes policy. Yet the BPE continues to harp on this dangerous policy leading to confrontation between the workers and managements in public sector undertakings.

The National Campaign Committee of Trade Unions has, therefore, decided to mobilise the entire working class in public sector to defeat the wage freeze policy of the Government. It has planned conventions of public sector employees in Steel, Coal and BHEL undertakings so that the united movement of the workers in the undertakings generally affect the agreements in other units and hence priority is given to the movement in them. The negotiations in Banks are also overdue. Attempts to put LIC wage revision in cold storage are being made. Negotiations in several other undertakings have reached bottlenecks because of the recalcitrant attitude of the managements. In HSCL the management has stopped paying additional D.A. after the payment of interim relief. This step is unprecedented.

The All India BHEL Convention has been fixed at Bhopal on 21st and 22nd of June while the All India Steel Workers' Convention will be held at Jamshedpur on 26 27 June, Dates and venue of the Coal Convention are being finalised shortly in consultation with Central Trade Unions.

Incidentally such industry-wise united conventions are being held for the first time in the history of the TU movement in these industries. It would further strengthen the unity of the workers in these industries and mobilise nearly a million of workers in public sector for countrywide struggles. Since these undertakings constitute nearly half the employment in public sector the movement of these workers will have far reaching impact on the entire movement of public sector undertakings.

The trade unions in public sector should take these conventions seriously and do everything to make them successful in chalking out programme of joint action. It is possible to defeat the directive of the BPE if the working class in public sector undertakings move forward unitedly with firmness and determination.

Efforts for United Struggle of Central Government Employees

A powerful appeal for reforging unity in order to secure the just demands of Central Govt. employees has been made by S.K. Vyas (Confederation of C.G. employees), B.L. Sharma (National Confederation of Govt. employees, State and Central), Shrikrishna (IRWF) N.S. Bhargoo (Railway Employees Confederation), S.K. Dhar (Loco-Running Staff Association), K.L. Pathela (P&T Employees Federation) N.J. Iyer (RMS & MMS Employees Union-Class III), K. Adinarayana (Postal Employees Union-Postmen Class IV), K.L. Moza (Postal Employees Union-Class III), C.L. Aneja (Armed Forces H. Qrs. Association), Sardari Lal Sharma (Kendriya Sachivalaya Karmchari Sangh), C.S. V. Warriar (NG Audit & Accounts Association), K.K.N. Kutty (Income Tax Employees Federation), Dipen Ghosh (National Federation of Printing, Stationary & Publication Employees) and others.

Recalling the glorious strike of Central Govt. employees in July 1960 demanding implementation of the Need-based minimum wages on the norms formulated by the 15th I.L.C., which was ruthlessly suppressed by the Govt, the appeal pointed out that the leadership of the movement accepted impounding of D.A. arrears in 1967 first. Though another effort for united struggle was made in 1968 through one day's token strike in September 1968, the movement slowly drifted apart with the lure of some sectional economic gains. Instead of firmly advocating the demand of "Bonus for all" on the principles of deferred wage, a section of the C.G. employees demanded bonus for industrial workers like Railways, P&T, Ordnance Factories etc and ultimately agreed for productivity-linked-bonus thus weakening the common struggle and letting down the movement of entire working class of the country. Criticising the acceptance of impounding of arrears of D.A. and accrued emoluments due to merger of D.A. with pay, the appeal pointed out that it has created a dangerous precedent in that the Govt. may refuse to discharge their obligation to pay D.A. increases in cash, as and when due, to compensate rise in prices. Hence efforts are needed to force the Govt. to make a firm commitment in this respect.

The appeal pointed out that pay revision was due long back when C.P.I. numbers had crossed 272 points. Now one part of the agreement called for moratorium on major economic demands for one year. Recalling that the C.G. employees who were once the best paid workers, have now been reduced to the lowest paid employees amongst the organised sector of workers, the appeal noted the fact that

failure to organise the C.G. employees to carry on with a determined united fight braving all repressions is the root cause for this state of affairs. Self-critically accepting the fact that the leadership of C.G. employees movement as a whole is responsible for their inability to join in the mainstream of struggle on January 19, the appeal started that it would be erroneous to blame the employees as the leadership did not prepare them for the struggle. The appeal ended with a powerful plea for forging unity and called for a meeting on May 15 to find out the ways and means for developing united struggle.

JCM Meets

The National Council of Joint Consultative Machinery (JCM) though scheduled to meet once in 4 months, had not met for past one and half years. The Government called a meeting on May 13 and 14 in which it agreed to release early another slab of DA which has become due from April 1982. The Government side also agreed to consider the questions of stagnation relief and promotion after 15 years of service and give their decision by July and December 1982 respectively or record its disagreement.

Efforts for Unity to Continue

The meeting held on May 15, was not only attended by the representatives of the organisations who had convened it, but O.P. Gupta, (NFPTE) and K.N. Mathews (Defence Employees Federation) also attended. Only the AIRF leadership was absent. A seven member presidium conducted the meeting. After a free and frank discussion, the meeting decided that each organisation should continue the campaign from now on with due seriousness so that in the event the Government does not release the DA instalment or fail to consider the other demands pending before them, a powerful united movement could be built up. All agreed that without a powerful united movement outside, the negotiations through the JCM would not yield the desired results. In the meanwhile S.K. Vyas and K.N. Mathews have been entrusted with the responsibility to persuade all organisations including AIRF to come together on a united platform. The process of reforging unity of C.G. employees have thus been set rolling. □

RBI Employees Continue Struggle

The countrywide struggle of the Reserve Bank employees against the fifteen per cent increase in workload, introduction of fourth generation computer and the mass scale victimisations continues. While resistance to the increased work continued by returning the extra work at the close of office hours, demonstrations and deputations are being held in the different centres demanding withdrawal of the victimisations. The management has already served 14 dismissal orders, 54 dismissal notices, 10 termination notices, 56 suspension orders and several charge-sheets. In Calcutta five hundred bank employees comprised of the leadership of the Bank Employees' Federation, West Bengal and its units participated in a programme of squatting from 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. on May 7 in front of the RBI main office. In the afternoon about five thousand employees of different banks held a massive rally on the spot of squatting. On May 11 the branch units of the Federation led tiffin time mass deputation to the branch managers of all banks all over the state demanding negotiated settlement of the disputes.

Apart from the agitational steps against victimisation the struggle was taken to legal arena also. In Jaipur in a writ petition, the High Court ordered that the victimised employees would continue to receive their last salaries till the rule was disposed off. The Supreme Court also admitted appeal by H.C. Sharma, Secretary of the Delhi Branch of All India Reserve Bank Employees' Association and directed that subsistence allowance to the extent of full basic pay together with 25 per cent should be paid to him till disposal of the rule.

In a statement issued to the press, Arjun Prasad, General Secretary of UP Bank Workers' Federation has demanded of the

management to immediately withdraw all the penal measures. Various organisations all over the country have expressed their solidarity with the struggle of the RBI employees.

Cement Workers Preparing for Countrywide Movement

Cement workers belonging to all non-INTUC unions in the country will meet at New Delhi on May 31 to chalk out a plan of joint movement against the conspiracy of the Cement Manufacturers' Association and INTUC to force an arbitration on the ninety thousand workers of the industry. Going ahead with the arbitration by G. Ramanujam, the General Secretary of INTUC and R.P. Nivetia behind the back of the workers, it announced an interim relief of a paltry Rs. 80/- per month to the workers despite the tremendous profits acquired by the manufacturers due to the recent rise in prices. In return for this gratis, the arbitrators have asked for "the need for maximising production and productivity" in each of the manufacturing units. Thus the General Secretary of INTUC gave the green signal to the Cement barons to intensify the workload on the workers to recover the payment to be made to them. The leadership of CITU met AITUC and DMK Unions who have agreed for a joint movement.

Solidarity with Textile Workers

At the call of the National Campaign Committee, April 27 was observed by the various trade unions as the solidarity day in support of the Bombay Textile Workers' strike. Meetings and rallies were observed in various parts. Resolutions demanding negotiated settlement with the unions representing the

striking workers were adopted and sent to the Government. The Confederation of Central Government employees, the postal accounts employees and other organisations of workers representing different private and public sectors held meetings and denounced the Government's adamant attitude and open patronisation of the minority INTUC union in the textile industry in Bombay. The undeterred textile workers strike entered the fifth month on May 19.

CITU Demands Probe into Death of Working Woman

In a statement issued to the press on May 12, Vimala Rana-dive, Secretary, All India Coordination Committee of Working Women (CITU) said that the horrifying report of the death of Mary Vakkachan in the contractor's camp at Veraval, Gujarat on December 28, which was published on May 12, revealed once again how all labour laws were collapsing and what treatment was being meted out to the weaker sections of the society by the Congress(I) regime.

The report says that Vakkachan was brought from Kerala along with her two sisters by one K. Norbert, a labour contractor to work under Messrs Ravi Ratna Exporters Ltd., a firm owned by one M.P. Chopra. Along with other girls she was compelled to live in the same closed block along with the contractor's men. She was raped, tortured and killed in mysterious circumstances under a ritual of exorcism.

CITU has condemned the Government of India and the Government of Gujarat, both led by Congress(I), which have failed to implement laws on Inter-State Migrant Workmen and Contract Labour. CITU has further charged the police for their complicity

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Supreme Court Orders Relief To Victimised Locomen

THE victimised loco running staff have been fighting against the summary dismissals under Rule 14 (ii) of the D & A Rules. Apart from the organisational programmes taken from time to time, they have been putting up a serious legal battle. Many High Courts had granted interim order in respect of quarters and payment of wages subject to there being enough money in the PF. In one case the Kerala High Court had set aside the order. In another case the Calcutta High Court had upheld the order against which a petition was moved by Somnath Chatterjee M.P. Sr. Advocate and the Supreme Court granted a stay. The railway authorities first tried to get best legal talents to argue their cases by doubling the fees. Then finding that such moves in the High Courts are not yielding results, they started a dilatory process of transferring the cases to the Supreme Court for which a DO letter no. E (D & A) 81 R-G 6-7 dated 9.7.81 was issued by Director Establishment, Railway Board.

Here they received a jolt when Mr. Justice D.A. Desai and others ordered on 19.4.1982 in a number of petitions that the railway authorities must continue to pay the locomen the last salary drawn by them without relevance to their PF account and it was open to the authorities to take work from these workers or not. Immediately the Director, Railway Board in another DO letter on April 20, directed that no further cases to be transferred to Supreme Court and the cases should be contested in the High Courts on all available grounds.

Again on May 3, the locomen came upto the Supreme Court for precise clarification of the orders. On hearing both sides, Mr. Justices P.N. Bhagwati and D.A. Desai ordered that the railway authorities should pay full wages from January 1982 but for arrears upto December 1981 only 50% of the wages to be paid all within one month, without any relevance to PF accounts. The victimised locomen should also get all benefits like quarter, medical, pass, educational facilities etc. M.K. Ramamurthy, Sr. advocate appeared on behalf of victimised locomen and he was assisted by advocates Umesh Mishra, J. Ramamurthy, R. Vaigai and others.

Samar Mukherjee, M.P., in a letter to the Prime Minister has pointed out that the order of the Supreme Court proves once again that the locomen have been denied justice. He has once again opposed this foolish method of frittering away the resources and demanded an end to the victimisation and restoration of normalcy.

12 Men Panel Meets

The 12 men Panel, representing 11 category-wise associations met at Delhi on April 25. While reviewing 'Protest week' it was noted that the authorities, at many centres, have tried to strike terror by issuing chargesheets and/or suspending even those who were on duty. This resulted in some of the constituent units not taking active part. Despite this, the protest week was observed at many centres.

The Panel decided to complete the earlier tour programme of Central, Western, South Central and Southern railways from June 20 and to meet again at Madras on June 27.

It was also decided to hold a Convention/Seminar in Delhi in the last week of August 1982 on the following subjects:—

1. Accidents and Safety in the Railway.
2. Technological Updating and its effect.
3. Problems of railwaymen and industrial relations.
4. Problems of travelling public.

LRSA Working Committee

The Working Committee of LRSA met at Delhi on April 28-29 and endorsed the programme adopted by the 12 men Panel and directed all its units to collect adequate material on the subjects of the seminar in order to make it a grand success. It also decided to strengthen legal defence. Keeping the order of the Supreme Court in view, the meeting appealed to all loco running staff to strengthen the organisation. A tour programme of Central Office bearers also was drawn up. The meeting directed its units to observe June 4 everywhere in cooperation with other Central Trade Unions. The meeting adopted a number of resolutions including one criticising the statement of Railway Minister about LRSA and Station Masters Association, who were castigated for their militant struggles. In a resolution the Committee expressed solidarity with Bombay Textile Workers.

Annual Meetings — Conferences

The annual meeting of NF Rly Zonal LRSA was held at New Bongaigaon on May 1-3, 1982.

The annual meeting of All India Shunting Cabin & Yard Staff Association was held at Agra on April 29 to May 1, 1982. □

May Day Celebrations

IN the background of the growing danger of authoritarianism in the country and the danger to peace and the socialist camp created by the US imperialists' preparations for a nuclear war, the working class observed the May Day in a befitting manner in all parts of the country. It was observed in the midst of and in continuation of a series of glorious struggles waged by various sections of the workers in different parts of the country. Following is a brief report of the celebrations.

Delhi

At the Central Office of CITU the red flag was hoisted in the morning by P. Ramamurti, General Secretary of CITU. After his introductory speech B.T. Ranadive, President of CITU addressed the gathering.

In the afternoon a massive procession of thousands of workers was organised by the Delhi State Committee of CITU, which culminated at Feroze Shah Kotla ground. Among others, the meeting was addressed by B.T. Ranadive. Numerous other processions, meetings and rallies were organised by various sections of workers. This year the Delhi Union of journalists observed May Day by holding a largely attended meeting and invited the Central Trade Unions. On Behalf of CITU Nrisingha Chakrabarty, Secretary addressed the meeting.

CITU received greetings for May Day from All Union Central Council of Trade Unions, USSR; All China Federation of Trade Unions; and Vietnam Federation of Trade Unions.

W. Bengal

May Day was declared a holiday by the Left Front Govt. It was observed throughout the state by hoisting the red flag, placing wreaths on martyrs' memorials and by holding meetings, rallies and cultural functions. Kamal Sarkar, Secretary and Md. Ismail, Vice President of CITU addressed a largely attended meeting in the premises of the W. Bengal State Committee of CITU at Calcutta, after which a procession was taken out. Red flags were seen fluttering in the localities, lanes, bustees and union offices in the city, areas after areas being decorated with red festoons and chains. In the suburbs and districts also large sections of workers, students, youth, women's organisations and sections of peasantry and the agricultural labourers held innumerable meetings processions and rallies. The common pledge to carry forward united struggles for peace, democracy and socialism was conveyed from one place to another in every nook and corner of the state.

Tamilnadu

May Day was observed jointly by CITU and

AITUC along with the other unions. Slogans were finalised and a joint appeal was issued to the affiliated unions to observe the day jointly. Leaders of CITU and AITUC addressed rallies in different centres of the state.

In Madras hundreds of workers including women participated in a colourful procession which started from the Parry's Corner. The rally was addressed by P.G.K. Krishnan, V.P. Chintan, V. Meenakshisundaram of CITU and N.T. Vanamamalai, A.M. Gopu, R. Ganesan of AITUC.

In Madurai a massive rally was presided over by P.M. Kumar (CITU) and addressed by Pappa Umanath (CITU) and K.M. Sundaram (AITUC), besides leaders of Bank, Insurance, P&T, Govt. employees, teachers' organisations, etc.

At Coimbatore a massive public meeting was addressed by R. Umanath, V.K. Vellingiri of CITU and L.G. Geetha of AITUC. R. Vengedu of CITU presided over the meeting.

K.A. Nambiar (CITU) Rajagopal (AITUC) among others addressed a rally at Trichy.

In Salem the rally was addressed by K.R. Sundaram, K.S. Arthanari of CITU and Venugopal, K.T. Raju of AITUC.

Similar rallies were held at various other centres also.

Uttar Pradesh

May Day was observed in all the industrial places. At Kanpur a massive rally was organised by CITU along with the struggling workers of J.K. Rayon, J.K. Jute, Annapurna Biscuit Factory, Elgin Mills, etc. The rally was addressed by Sridhar Sharma, Ravi Sinha, Devi Kishan Mishra, Shyam Sunder, Rajendra Singh, Arvind Kumar etc. Similar rallies were held in various other parts of the State.

Bihar

CITU and various other unions and associations organised a massive rally at Patna. Similar rallies were held in the Steel City of Jamshedpur, in the Coal mine areas of Dhanbad and in other industrial areas of the State.

Reports from Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Haryana, etc. also speak of numerous rallies and processions held in observance of May Day.

Like in W. Bengal, May Day was declared a holiday in Tripura and Kerala also, where massive rallies and meetings were held all over the States. □

Diabolical Plan to Scuttle Trade Union Rights

WITH the introduction of the Trade Union (Amendment) Bill 1982 in Lok Sabha just before it was adjourned on April 30, and the Hospitals and other Institutions (Settlement of Disputes) Bill 1982 in Rajya Sabha just before its adjournment on May 6, the diabolical plan of taking away the trade union rights of the working class which they earned through the sacrifice of many comrades during the last eight decades, has been unfolded before the people.

The ruling class learnt the lesson that introduction of all the anti-working class provisions in one single Bill, would naturally rouse the working class against the same irrespective of political affiliations, as it did during the Janata regime in 1978. The plan, therefore, was to introduce it piece-meal. First came ESMO as an Ordinance banning strikes in 12 industries, just a few days before the Parliament session was to begin. The Working Class protested on August 17, 1981 and later on this protest turned into action in the huge workers' march to Parliament on November 23 last year and one day industrial general strike on January 19. The opposition parties in tune with the seething discontent of the working class outside, created a record in Parliament history by opposing every clause of the Bill and the debate continued till 5 a. m. of the next day.

Any sensible Government would have paused before taking any further step. But that is not to be with Smt. Gandhi's Government. By accepting the shameful conditionalities of the I.M.F. and World Bank loans, it had to prove its bonafides to its creditors in U.S. Hence these Bills were introduced in Parliament, which if passed, would emasculate the trade union movement of the country and reduce the working class to a fate worse than bonded labour.

When almost a mini-general elections was announced and the attention of the people shifted to the political battle against forces of authoritarianism, the Government first introduced the Industrial Disputes (Amendment) Bill on April 23 (See May 1982 issue). Then just on the last day of the Lok Sabha i.e. on April 30, the Government introduced the Trade Union (Amendment) Bill, the main thrust of which is aimed at cancelling registration

of the unions which lead illegal (read-militant) struggles. Provisions have been made to debar the active workers who are convicted under the Industrial Disputes Act for so-called unfair labour practices which include even peaceful picketing, from becoming office bearers of the Union. Untrammelled powers are sought to be vested with Registrar of Trade Unions to interfere in the internal affairs of the union classifying inter-union and intra-union rivalries as trade union disputes. This Bill would provide ample opportunity for the employers to win over a handful of men and start a trade union dispute in order to instal only a docile leadership in every union. The Bill intends to make formation of a new union very difficult. There are instances where attempts to form unions with seven applicants were thwarted by the management by victimising them. Increasing the number to 10% or 100 workmen which ever is less, means further hurdles and open incitement to victimise the workers. Then again the number of outsiders is being sought to be reduced from 50 to 25 per cent and every victimised workman will become an outsider. These are some of the anti-working class provisions in the Bill.

On May 6, the closing day of Rajya Sabha, the Government introduced the Hospitals and Other Institutions (Settlement of Disputes) Bill. Ostensibly the Bill is intended to provide a machinery for settlement of industrial disputes to the workmen in the undertakings which have been excluded from the definition of industry under the Industrial Disputes (Amendment) Bill to circumvent a judgement of the Supreme Court. A large section like doctors, nurses, pharmacists, teachers, non-teaching employees etc. are being denied of the right to strike and punishments of six months' imprisonment or a fine upto Rs. 5000/- or both has been provided for. Under this law even mass scale retrenchment will be reduced to individual disputes. The machinery is so conjured that the employers' men would head the committees or arbitrations who are not likely to risk their jobs to do justice to the workmen.

The Working Class of India, who carry forward a proud heritage of struggle and sacrifice and have shown great capacity to rise to a man, burying all differences within, would surely be giving a befitting reply, by unitedly throwing these Bills as bits of soiled papers to the dust bin of history. □

Andhra Pradesh

Police Firing Kills Two Cement Workers

A diabolic plan was hatched out by the police-management combine to capture the only functioning union viz. Panyam Cement Employees' Mazdoor Union, led by CITU under which all the two thousand workers of the Panyam Cement Factory in the Kurnool district of Andhra Pradesh are organised. In connivance with the management and the police, the entire operation was organised by one B.S. Murlidhar Reddy, a rich landlord and millowner, wielding considerable power in the surrounding fifteen villages. The plan was designed in a meeting on April 10 with the notorious anti-socials in the area. On April 12 truck loads of about 200 hoodlums were brought inside the factory premises. Known hoodlums of the underground world like Buggaipatti Thimmaiah, Balaswamy, Rosi Reddy, Bola Thimmadu Mallepalli, led the operation, which continued from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. in presence of a police force headed by a Sub-Inspector. These hoodlums were brought from outside places like Gootupalli, Musalicharun, Bethamacharla, Bugganapalli, etc. Due to blockade of the passages the normal change of the shifts in the factory did not materialise. The hoodlums beat up the workers including women at random. The Sub-Inspector of Police, Konda Reddy fired at the workers from point-blank range, killing three workers on the spot. It was alleged that the gun he used belonged to the gangsters.

After visiting the place, Parsa Satyanaryana, President; Nanduri Prasada Rao, General Secretary; P. Laxmi Das, Vice-President and N.V. Baskara Rao, Secretary of the Andhra Pradesh State Committee of CITU have issued

a statement condemning the link-up of the Government machinery with the management and the anti-socials and demanded immediate arrest of the culprits. They further demanded judicial probe into the firing and compensation to the affected families. In a delegation they met the Chief Minister and submitted a report to him. Although the Chief Minister promised to take appropriate steps in this respect, no measures have been reported to have been taken by him as yet. The undaunted workers are continuing a stubborn fight to defend the union and their trade unions rights.

Police Attacks CITU Union

After being compelled to sign an agreement with the CITU affiliated majority union, viz. SRPM Staff and Workers' Union, the management of Sri Rayala-seema Paper Mills, Kurnool started the nefarious games to break it. The Managing Director of the mill, Vasanta Gupta, who is a land lord, proprietor of two oil mills at Adoni, owner of a fleet of lorries and an erstwhile Chairman of Andhra Pradesh Small Scale Development Corporation, foisted a parallel union and started coercing the workers to leave the CITU Union and join the other one. But having failed to wean away the workers, the management sought the help of the police and the anti-socials. On March 29 at 3 A.M. the police raided the CITU office at Kurnool. They damaged the tube lights, photos, clocks, cycles and other articles of furniture and took away fifteen Godrej chairs from the office. Another raid was conducted the next day in the office, when fourteen leaders of different unions were taken to custody. Fortysix leaders and activists of the CITU Union along with T. Narasimhaiah, Secretary of the CPI

(M), Kurnool district were also arrested and kept in police custody. The hired hoodlums of the management, on the other hand, launched their attack on the dwellings of the workers and threw away the belongings. Due to the panic created by the hoodlums a number of workers applied for leave to shift their families to the village homes. But instead of granting leaves, the management terminated the services of thirty workers. In the sweep of repression, they further removed 120 workers from services from April 1. Workloads were increased and the canteen rates were enhanced. The workers however, are unitedly resisting the onslaught, keeping high the banner of CITU. CITU has demanded immediate reinstatement of all victimised employees.

Transport

At Yemiganur the private transport owners formed an association with the help of the Govt. machineries to counter the formation of the Transport Workers' Union led by CITU. The owners' association further stopped the plying of the vehicles affecting 250 drivers and conductors thereby. Murlidhar Reddy, who organised the raid on workers in Cementnagar, Kurnool on April 12, was made the President of the Owners' Association.

At Adoni when 800 transport workers led by CITU pressed upon the Owners' Association to implement the signed agreement, the management started retrenching the workers. Similar repressions have been let loose on the transport workers at Bethamcherla also. Led by CITU, the workers have launched a grim struggle to defend their rights against the authoritarian onslaught by the Congress (I) Government.

Bihar

Teachers on Indefinite Strike

SIXTEEN thousand University teachers went on indefinite strike from April 12. The call for strike was jointly given by the Bihar State University Teachers' Federation and the Bihar State University (Services) Teachers' Federation in pursuance of their 31-point demands. The demands included interim relief as per the recommendations of the University Grants Commission pending the revision of wages by UGC, full neutralisation of the cost of living index, house rent allowance, medical facilities, permanency of the temporary teachers, UGC grant to the Agricultural University, autonomy of university, etc. The strike embraced all the teachers of the 303 degree colleges and the post-graduate departments of the six universities in the State.

The striking teachers courted arrest from April 22 to 29. On assurance given by the Government for negotiations, they suspended programme of the second phase of courting arrest from April 30. But only after two sittings with the Industries Minister, the Chief Minister declared that nobody was authorised by the Government to carry on negotiations with the teachers. The two sittings with the Industries Minister were only informal and the Government would not concede to any demands involving financial obligations. As a result the striking teachers again started the "fill in the jail" programme from May 5. Till 6, May 856 teachers have been jailed. It may be recalled that as per the recommendations of the UGC, the pay scales of the teachers are to be revised every five years. But after 1973 no such revision has been made.

The struggle of the university teachers has acquired particular significance as over ninety per

cent of the Principals of the colleges and the Heads of the Post Graduate Departments of the universities have also joined the strike. They have endorsed the decision of the Action Committee not to participate in the examinations and the invigilations. While the Government is trying to conduct examinations in some universities with the help of police and homeguards, the examinations in the rest have been postponed indefinitely. The teachers have decided not to examine the answer books where examinations are being conducted without their participation. The National Council of the All India Federation of University and College Teachers' Organisations has decided that no university teacher in the country will examine the answer books of any examination conducted during the period of strike.

The strike has received full support from all walks of life. The primary and secondary teachers and the Government employees have refused to act as invigilators. The student and youth organisations have expressed their solidarity. The Central Trade Unions have called upon all sections of the workers to stand by the striking teachers.

The strike is being continued in the background of an all round demand for the resignation of the Congress (I) Ministry, because of its authoritarian attitude towards the workers' struggles. Even the teachers having affiliation with the ruling Congress (I) have joined the strike. Twice before i.e. during the strike of the non-gazetted employees and during the January 19 strike, the Government gave shoot-at-sight orders, but had to tarnish its face before the determination and militancy of the workers. This time the united might of the university teachers has put the Government on dock again.

Electricity Workers' Notice for Indefinite Strike

The workers of Patna Electric Supply Undertaking, organised under the CITU, have decided to go in for indefinite strike from May 13. A notice has been served in this respect by Bihar Rajya Vidyut Parishad Field Kamgarh Union (CITU) to the Government and the management. The notice has clearly given an ultimatum to the Government giving May 12 as the last day for commencement of negotiations on the 18-point charter of demands, failing which the strike would be resorted to. The long pending demands include payment of arrears due since take over of electric supply by the Government, filling up the posts lying vacant since long, overtime payment, medical allowance, abolition of contract system etc.

Coal Workers' Demands

In a statement issued on April 29, Rajendra Singh Chandel, Local Secretary of Colliery Mazdoor Sabha of India (CITU) has demanded constitution of a new wage board committee for the Barkana Colliery Workers. He also demanded regularisation of the jobs of the contractors' workers and the truck loading workers under the CCL. He further announced that the ECL Workers would observe strike on May 3 and 4 in pursuance of their pending demands. Demonstrations would be held on May 1 before each Project office and on May 3 before the General Manager, Barkakana.

ESI Employees Demonstrate

Led by Industrial Mazdoor Union (CITU), over three hundred employees of Employees' State Insurance Corporation held a demonstration before the ESIC of Jamshedpur on April 15. A memorandum was submitted to the Manager protesting against corruption and bureaucracy in the ESI administration. It also demanded adequate medical facilities for the workers.

Convention Against Drug Multi-nationals

A democratic convention against the drug multi-nationals was organised by BSSR Union at Dhanbad on April 18. U.S. Chanda, Executive Committee Member of the Union presided over the Convention. Inaugurating the Convention, Dr. P.K. Datta, a former President of the Indian Medical Association, made a scathing criticism against the policy of the Government of India to allow a free hand to the multi-national drug cartels to exploit the Indian people. He called upon the people from various walks of life to jointly struggle for changing the Government's policy and nationalisation of the multi-nationals. J.S. Majumdar, General Secretary of Federation of Medical Representatives' Associations of India elaborated the modus operandi of the drug multi-nationals to appropriate the fruits of labour by the worker. A large number of fraternal delegates addressed the Convention. The main resolution demanded nationalisation of the multi-nationals as recommended by the Hathi Committee.

Annual Conference of Mines & Quarries Workers' Union

The third annual conference of Santhal Parganas District Mines & Quarries Workers' Union was held at Pakur on April 30 and May 1. K.K. Mandal, the General Secretary of the union pin-pointed on the need based minimum wages for the workers. To coincide with the May Day, a massive rally was held on May 1, which was joined by various other sections of workers. Addressing the rally, Chandi Prasad, General Secretary of Bihar State Committee of CITU warned the workers against the danger of nuclear war created by the United States and called upon them to raise their voice against it for peace. He further called upon the workers to unite and launch joint struggles against the growing authoritarianism on the part of the Government and

fight for establishing their democratic and trade union rights. Earlier, Abdul Hakim and K.K.

Mandal were re-elected President and General Secretary of the Union.

Karnataka

Beedi Workers Demand Abolition of Contract System

The fourth conference of Karnataka State Beedi Workers' Federation held at Bantwal on April 24 and 25 demanded abolition of contract system in Beedi industry. 110 delegates attended the conference among whom 60 were women. The conference was presided over by S. Suryanarayana Rao, President of the Karnataka State Beedi Workers' Federation. After the hoisting of the red flag by B.H. Bangera, a veteran leader of the beedi workers from Bantwal, the conference was inaugurated by C. Nanjundappa, General Secretary of Karnataka State Committee of CITU.

In his report, Mohd. Dastagir, the General Secretary, elaborated the various problems faced by the five and half lakhs beedi workers of the State. He said that the peculiarity in the Beedi Industry was that the workers were appointed not by the principal employers, but by the intermediaries, i.e., the contractors, who deal with their wages and other service conditions.

They do not extend the fringe benefits of the Beedi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act to the workers. In case of the women workers the names of their husbands are entered in the records to deprive them of the maternity benefits.

Vimala Ranadive, Secretary, All India Co-ordination Committee of Working Women asked the women workers, who constituted the majority among the beedi workers, to shed all illusions about the woman Prime Minister who has failed to safeguard their dignity against the atrocities committed upon them and called upon them to get solidly orga-

nised under the CITU to consolidate the left and democratic forces. She drew the attention of the workers on the growing danger of a nuclear war created by the United States and called upon the workers to raise their voice against it for peace.

The main resolution of the conference on the problems of the beedi workers demanded abolition of contract system, provident fund scheme, 20 per cent bonus, wage of Rs. 12/- per one thousand beedies, etc. The conference decided to hold demonstrations before the Government offices throughout the State and conduct picketings in the offices of the Beedi manufacturers on May 24.

Resolutions were also adopted against price-rice, against attachment of movable properties of the beedi workers and the peasants as a measure to recover loans, against ESMA and NSA and supporting the textile workers' strike in Bombay and strike of workers of the Canara Public Conveyance Company at Mangalore.

A massive rally of about ten thousand workers was held on April 25. Large number of workers, mostly women, came to join the rally trekking long distances overnight through the hills and fields. Among those who addressed the rally, were C. Kannan, General Secretary of All India Beedi Workers Federation, S. Suryanarayana Rao, Vimala Ranadive, Mohd. Dastagir, Salima Begum, Mehrunbi, etc.

Management Hoodlums Attack Workers

Hired by the management of Rao Insulating Company, Whitefield, Bangalore, the anti-socials attacked the workers of the

company, most of whom were women, with cycle chains, knives and other lethal weapons on April 27, for formation of an union.

Though the company was established 18 years ago, the management did not provide any leave facilities, ESI benefits, Provident Fund, safety precautions, etc. to its 270 workers. The maximum salary paid to the workers was only Rs. 350/- per month. A number of workers including women lost their limbs in the process of work. But the management did not pay any compensation to them. For securing justice, fair play and better work-

ing conditions, the workers formed the Bangalore East Industrial Workers Union and got it affiliated to CITU. Within a month, the management refused to provide work to eight workers including one woman and hired the anti-socials to attack the workers. The goondas came inside the factory premises in three cars and assaulted the workers at random, severely injuring several including women workers. It was alleged that the police even provided them with their lathis to beat up the workers. The management locked out the factory the next day. When the workers arranged one

protest demonstration on April 28, section 144 Cr. P.C. was invoked immediately.

In a statement issued to the press, A.M. John Vincent and C. Kunjeppan, Convenors of the CITU K.R. Puram Coordination Committee condemned the high-handedness of the management and demanded arrest of the culprits. It was decided to organise a massive rally before the Chief Minister demanding redressal of the workers' grievances. It was also decided to observe one day's strike in support of the struggles of the workers in the area. □

Uttar Pradesh

Lathi Charge on Striking Workers

For the second time within two months the police made a random lathi charge on the workers of the Annapurna Biscuit Factory of Kanpur on April 27. As reported in the May issue, the workers of the Biscuit factory are on indefinite strike since April 19 in pursuance of their 25-point charter of demands. The call for the strike was jointly given by Kanpur Biscuit Karmachari Union (CITU) and Biscuit & Bakery Karmachari Union. Seventy five activists of the CITU union have already been removed from services. Pursuing its path of confrontation, the management tried to take away the goods from the factory by trucks on April 27. The workers who have been constantly guarding the gates tried to prevent the management from such illegal activities. On receiving the SOS from the management a large posse of police force arrived immediately and started the lathi charge, seriously injuring five. They further arrested twelve leaders of the CITU union including three office bearers. The undeterred workers fought back and held a massive rally at the gate. Addressing the rally, Daulat Ram, General Secretary

of UP State Committee of CITU condemned the Government for openly supporting the management in their illegal and anti-labour actions. A 350 strong armed police force has been posted to combat the five hundred workers on behalf of the management. He called upon all unions to raise funds in support of the struggle of the striking workers.

Congress (I) Hoodlums Attack CITU Leader

Ibrahim Siddiqui, Secretary of Vikram Cotton Mill Karmachari Sangh (CITU) was attacked with lethal weapons on the night of April 12 at Lucknow by the leaders the Youth Congress (I) with the help of some known anti-socials of the area. The attack was made in a pre-planned manner in connivance with the police. Even after repeated representations the police has taken no action against the culprits. Of late such planned attacks, particularly on the CITU activists are on increase in various industrial areas of the state. The clear motive is to stall the growing influence of CITU among the workers. Before this K. P. Singh, Ram Kumar Tripathy, Indrapal Singh, Harshay Singh, Ravi Sinha, Shiv

Lal Singh, etc. were attacked by the Congress (I) — anti-socials combine. The UP State Committee of CITU has called upon all unions to jointly resist the attacks on trade union activists and demand of the Government for the arrest of the anti-socials.

Indefinite Hunger Strike

Demanding reinstatement of the twenty victimised employees of Elgin Mill No. 2, the indefinite hunger strike by the workers, conducted by Suti Mill Mazdoor Sabha (CITU) entered its sixteenth day on May 6. To express solidarity with the workers a group of youth led by Chakrapani Dixit and Nabi Ahmed of the Democratic Youth Federation of India joined the hunger strike on the day. Addressing the workers, Durga Tiwary of DYFI made a scathing criticism against the Government policies which instead of providing employments to the unemployed, were adding to the number by throwing out of employment large number of workers for their trade union activities. He called upon the mill workers to carry forward their struggle till the victimised workers are reinstated.

Samachar Karmachari Union

The first Annual Conference of Allahabad Samachar Karmachari Union (CITU) was held on

May 9 under the presidentship of G.C. Gaharana. Inaugurating the conference, Harsahay Singh, President of UP State Committee of CITU, drew the attention of the workers to the successive authoritarian measures and the anti-worker enactments adopted by the Congress (I) Govt. both at the Centre and in the State and called upon them to carry forward their struggles linking their immediate demands against the employers with the general demands of the working class. A large number of fraternal delegates greeted the conference. Ten members participated in the Secretary's report which was passed unanimously. The conference adopted resolutions against price-rise, against ESMA and NSA, against the anti-labour policies of the Government and on the deteriorating law and order situation under the Congress(I) regime. G.C. Gaharana, A.S. Divakar and H.P. Srivastava were elected President, Vice-President and Secretary respectively.

Medical and Sales Representatives' Association

The UP Medical and Sales Representatives' Association (UPMSRA) was formally formed in its inaugural convention held at Lucknow on May 8 and 9. The inaugural convention was preceded by a statewide convention of the medical and sales representatives of UP at Varanasi which unanimously decided to form the organisation and constituted a Coordination Committee to complete the task. The Co-ordination Committee held city-wise conventions where more than seven hundred field workers endorsed the decision. The inaugural convention was attended by about five hundred delegates from various cities of the State. A large number of fraternal delegates greeted the new organisation. The UPMSRA unanimously resolved to affiliate itself to the Federation of Medical Representatives' Association of India. Rathin Chowdhury and Rakesh Pandey were elected President and General Secretary of UPMSRA respectively.

Government Violates Assurance

The J.K. Jute Workers' strike which continued even after the Government declared it illegal on April 24, was however withdrawn on May 7 after eighty three days of the strike on the assurances given by the Additional Labour Commissioner UP. Although the workers joined their duties, the management refused to reinstate the twenty seven dismissed activists. The eight arrested workers have not been released so far. Harassment of workers is being perpetrated by the management. In a statement issued to the press, Daulat-

ram, General Secretary of UP State Committee of CITU condemned the Govt's hypocritical policy towards the workers. He charged the Government for conniving with the management for declaring a lockout of the mill to prepare the ground for declaring both the strike and lockout as illegal. He demanded of the Government to compel the management to settle the demands of the workers, reinstate all victimised employees and release the arrested activists. He further called upon the workers to prepare for a protracted struggle for the mitigation of their demands.

Tripura

State Conference of CITU

The 5th State Conference of CITU was held on April 29 at Agartala. Over three hundred delegates from sixty unions and twenty five fraternal delegates participated in the conference. Inaugurating the conference Nripen Chakravarty, CC member of CPI(M) and Chief Minister of Tripura, called upon the delegates to unite all sections of the workers, the peasantry and the toiling people against the anti-labour and pro-monopolist policies of Congress(I) Government. He said that while the Indira regime with its growing authoritarianism has been attacking at the very roots of the democratic rights of the people, the Left-front Governments of Tripura

and West Bengal have been ceaselessly struggling for extension and expansion of the democratic process. Earlier, Chitta Chanda the veteran leader hoisted the red flag amidst deafening slogans by the 500-strong gathering at the Childrens' Park. The conference elected a 33-member State Committee with Baidyanath Majumdar as President and Biren Dutta as General Secretary.

Samar Mukherjee M.P. Treasurer of CITU addressed the open session. □

Death of Working Woman

(from page six)

in the case, because the dead body of Vakkachan was taken by them to the hospital. Demanding a thorough probe into the matter and punishment to the culprits, CITU has appealed to all democratic organisations and trade unions to raise their voice to put a halt to the abuse to the Inter-State migrant and contract labour, especially the women workers who are subjected to lustful sadistic tortures by the contractors and their musclemen.

Employees of Local Bodies to Get Gratuity

Local Bodies employing ten or more persons have been brought under Payment of Gratuity Act vide Notification published in Gazette on January 23 (S.O.Na 239) which would enable the employees to get gratuity now.

Rajasthan

Electricity Workers on Indefinite Strike

DEFYING the invoking of ESMA and illegalising the call for strike by the Govt. of Rajasthan, sixty-five thousand electricity workers all over the State went on an indefinite strike from May 19 under the slogans: "No Generation", "No Transmission", "No Distribution", "No Maintenance", "No Office Work". The call for the strike was jointly given by the Joint Action Committee comprising of CITU, AITUC, HMS, BMS and INTUC (Maurya), demanding settlement of the 7-point demands. In a statement issued to the press on May 20, P. Ramamurti, General Secretary of CITU condemned the Government of Rajasthan for banning the strike under the ESMA. He said that the Joint Action Committee representing all the workers of the Rajasthan State Electricity Board had been demanding negotiated settlement of their 7-point demands for a long time. Neither the Government nor the Electricity Board made any efforts for settlement even after the notice for the indefinite strike was served as far back as on April 15. On the contrary it invoked the ESMA and declared the strike illegal just a couple of hours prior to its commencement. This action of the Congress(I) Govt. lays bare its authoritarian character in dealing with the just demands of the workers and its policy of confrontation with their organisations. He congratulated the workers for launching the strike unitedly and called upon all affiliated unions to express solidarity with the striking workers.

Textile Workers

After a successful one day strike on April 15, the textile workers of Rajasthan were preparing for an indefinite strike after May 15. The decision for the indefinite strike was taken in view of the employers' adamancy to mitigate the workers' long

pending demands. The State Committee of CITU in its meeting on April 23 decided to approach all organisations to make the strike complete throughout the state.

Andaman & Nicobar Islands

P.K.S. Prasad, Chairman, Andaman Nicobar Govt. Employees Federation and Member Contract Labour Advisory Board has been arrested for exchange of words with the Labour Secretary in the Board Meeting on May 11.

A demonstration protesting against this unjustified arrest was broken up by police and some workers were arrested. While the workers have been released on bail, Prasad is behind the bars from May 11.

Describing the incident as unheard of in the course of functioning of Statutory Boards for the past few decades, the CITU Centre moved the Labour and Home Ministries for immediate release of Prasad and an enquiry into the conduct of the Labour Secretary of Andamans.

There is mounting resentment among the workers and protest telegrams are being sent by them to Government of India.

Consumer Price Index Numbers

Base 1960

State/Centre	1981		1982	State/Centre	1981		1982
	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.		Dec.	Jan.	Feb.
Andhra Pradesh				Orissa			
Gudur	466	464	461	Barbil	420	423	417
Guntur	503	508	494	Sambalpur	478	488	495
Hyderabad	476	468	470	Punjab			
Assam				Amritsar	472	467	470
Digboi	448	354	451	Rajasthan			
Doom Dooma	353	354	350	Ajmer	483	488	483
Labac	360	357	366	Jaipur	492	496	494
Mariani	363	362	364	Tamil Nadu			
Rangapara	361	364	373	Coimbatore	489	481	481
Bihar				Coonoor	471	467	465
Jamshedpur	430	433	434	Madras	461	454	453
Jharla	440	436	434	Madurai	492	474	466
Kodarma	490	494	497	U.P.			
Monghyr	496	484	481	Kanpur	440	441	442
Noamundi	431	435	445	Saharanpur	467	467	470
Gujarat				Varanasi	496	495	497
Ahmedabad	443	460	465	West Bengal			
Bhavanagar	464	462	463	Asansol	467	462	457
Haryana				Calcutta	426	419	413
Yamunanagar	487	489	482	Darjeeling	378	382	380
J. & K.				Howrah	405	403	396
Srinagar	477	477	481	Jalpaiguri	357	355	354
Karnataka				Raniganj	451	446	440
Ammathi	456	459	449	Delhi Territory	474	476	474
Bangalore	523	524	520	Other Centres			
Chikamagalur	485	495	494	Berhampur ('49)	668	649	633
Kolar G.F.	471	466	465	Cuttack ('49)	567	582	585
Kerala				Jabalpur ('49)	589	594	604
Alleppey	470	472	472	Beawar ('51-52)	577	574	571
Alwaye	465	466	470	Tripura (1961)	414	416	421
Mundakayam	456	457	448	H.P. (1965)	335	335	335
Madhya Pradesh				Goa (1966)	327	328	328
Balaghat	478	479	478	Bhilai (1966)	310	306	304
Bhopal	485	485	504	Bhilwara ('66)	305	306	304
Gwalior	468	469	472	Chhindwara ('66)	253	250	249
Indore	483	491	501	Kothagudem ('66)	316	306	308
Maharashtra				Rourkela ('66)	327	322	321
Bombay	469	468	469	All India ('49)	559	558	557
Nagpur	479	485	480	-do. ('60)	460	459	458
Sholapur	521	530	517				

Figures in bracket

indicate base year.

International Struggles Against Repression and for Peace

Israeli Terror

STRENGTHENED by the political, military and financial support from the American masters, the Zionist Israel is intensifying repressions on the Arab people of Palestine in the occupied territories of Gaza and the West Bank. Despite several deaths, the continuing strikes by the workers and the popular uprising among the Palestinians mark a new stage in the people's heroic resistance to the imposition of the so-called "autonomy" as a part of the Camp David agreement. It once again prove that the only way to establish peace is to withdraw the Israeli troops and restore the inalienable rights to the Palestinian people to establish their independent nation on their own territory under the leadership of the PLO.

South Africa

The killing of Dr. Neil Aggett, Transvaal Secretary of Food and Canning Workers' Union marks the escalation of terrorism by the South African racist regime against the trade unionists. He was arrested alongwith twenty others in November, 1981 under the infamous Terrorism Act which stipulates an indefinite period of detention, solitary confinement and denial of all legal rights to the opponents. This killing was preceded by similar deaths in prison of 53 other activists of the South African Trade Union Congress. Dr Aggett's funeral was an impressive political demonstration showing the determination of the South African workers and the people to carry forward their struggle against the attempts of the apartheid regime to crush the black trade union movement.

Japan

A large number of strikes were organised under

the Spring Demonstrations by SOHYO. The Spring Demonstrations were particularly characterised by the close link between these movements and the movements against war. In the biggest ever demonstration on May 23 about four lakh workers, women and other citizens called for an end to the arms race imposed by the American administration.

West Germany

Five lakh workers from all parts of the country marched on the Easter Day to the nuclear bases for Pershing-2 missiles made by NATO and the US and demonstrated for peace against war. A similar demonstration by fifty thousand people took place at Frankfurt on April 11.

United States

Twenty five thousand people participated in a peace march on April 10 at Chicago demanding a halt to the arms race by the Reagan administration. A similar demonstration took place at Washington on the May Day.

Great Britain

Meetings and marches took place during the peace week from April 5 to 11 throughout Great Britain. Thirty thousand demonstrators denounced the British Govt.'s decision to buy the Trident Strategic nuclear missile at Glasgow on April 10.

Italy

Organised by the trade unions, a sixty thousand strong demonstration took place at Comiso in Sicily on April 4 against Italy's plan for nuclear armament. The demonstrators included representatives of the peace movements from West Germany, Belgium, Denmark, Britain, Norway, France, Spain and the Netherlands.



Anti war Demonstrations in Washington on May Day