



THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

REJECT THE DUNKEL DRAFT

□ P K Ganguly

Peter Sutherland, the present Director General of GATT and the successor of Arthur Dunkel visited India on 28 October last. He met the Prime Minister, the Finance Minister, the Commerce Minister and the officials of monopolists' organisations like ASSOCHAM, FICCI, etc. The objective was to pressurize the Govt of India to sign the Dunkel Draft by 15 December without any amendments. He also threatened that India will have to face isolation in international trade if it does not sign on the dotted lines.

The Platform of Mass Organisations under a very short notice organized a demonstration at Jantar Mantar, Delhi to protest against the visit of Sutherland and demanding of the Govt to reject the draconian proposals.

The GATT, the IMF and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank) were constituted by the imperialist powers in the Bretton Woods Conference after the war to design the international economic system in the post war era. USA, the gendarme of world reaction in its drive for new world order, has been utilising these international financial and trade organisations to transnationalise the world economy under its hegemony. Since the last half century, the role of these institutions has been increasingly become that of financial masters, imposing privatisation, "free" trade and other forms of neo colonial offensives. After the collapse of Soviet Union, the countervailing force against imperialist domination over the world, it has been a scene of most audacious power grab by the giant multinational corporations in the name of "free" trade. The USA is utilising this forum with the objective of dominance to the extent of changing the

domestic laws of the country and tilt its policies to give absolute power and positions to the multinationals to conduct the economic governance of the country in their favour.

Nowhere has this been more vividly revealed than in the current Uruguay round of GATT negotiations. In Brussels in December 1990 where the Uruguay round of talks were destined to be concluded, the US corporate representatives were made part of the official US delegation, which was supposed to be a negotiating session of the govts. The unholy alliance of the corporate and state powers is leading to critical changes in the global political and economic scene with the emergence of new regional trading blocks. North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) is yet another such block which has been formed by America to consolidate and exercise corporate power.

The assertion that free trade system will benefit all trade partners is a hoax and utterly unfounded. Access to industrially advanced countries' markets is the principal carrot which is being used by the advanced capitalist countries in the GATT negotiations. This is to blackmail the third world countries and trap them into the neo-colonial net of exploitation by an imperialist regime through a growingly unequal trade and where intellectual property laws must conform to those of the imperialist countries and the third world countries must remove all constraints on foreign investments and services. Further the third world countries must surrender their sovereignty to the multinational corporations.

It goes without argument that with an increase in the so called free trade, poverty in the third world has

**COUNTRYWIDE RALLY AGAINST DUNKEL DRAFT
— DECEMBER 9**

certainly not been eliminated. On the contrary it has increased. The actual sufferers are the common people, the workers, peasantry, etc. Even in USA itself, which doubled its trade with other countries during the last two decades of "free trade," the average weekly wages of the workers fell by 18 per cent, social security measures like health, insurance were slashed, safety and environment standards were lowered and in 1991, 2.1 million Americans, the highest in 20 years fell, below the poverty line.

One of the most obnoxious vulnerabilities of the third world countries in GATT like open trade system dominated by the imperialist countries is the massive and increasing debt. It is this system of deregulated international free trade that has led to the unrepayable and unsustainable debt to which India has been trapped, as the following chart will reveal: (Source - Economic Review 1992-93.)

(Amount in billion US Dollars).

1980	1985	1988	1989	1990	1991	Upto Sep'92
- 81	-86	-89	-90	-91	-92	
23.50	37.35	53.90	58.63	63.40	67.58	71.11

At the end of September 1992, the per capita external debt amounts to 82 dollars.

One vital issue which workers have to confront in the Dunkel Draft is the question of trade union rights. Workers' rights form a special subset of human rights issues related to GATT and other regional free trade agreements like NAFTA. In GATT itself there is a clause which connects workers' rights with the free trade agreements so as to ensure the minimum international standards formulated by the ILO. In the Uruguay Round of GATT negotiations this has been one of the issues of discussion. But the Dunkel Draft lacks such a social clause which would ensure workers' rights. The proposals in the Dunkel Draft actually go contrary to such rights of the workers. On the other hand, as stated, they force the countries to change their domestic laws including trade union laws to suit free entry and functioning of the multinationals without any obstacle created by the working class. Apart from the Dunkel Draft, the individual imperialist countries also impose their own trade laws on the third world countries, which go against the workers. The USA is most notorious in this respect to impose Super and Special 301 against India.

Thus, instead of giving workers' rights, anti-labour

formulations constitute part of the Dunkel Draft and results of such international free trades. It is therefore under pressure, the govt has taken a move to amend Industrial Relations Laws in keeping with the new economic policy to curb the right to strike and put trade union movement into straight jacket. It is precisely against such results, that is attack on workers' rights, closures and loss of jobs that the workers have waged a big struggle against NAFTA in America, Canada and Mexico. In India also we are experiencing the same results--the Exit Policy.

In short, to repeat and reiterate, the Dunkel proposals postulate the most dangerous provisions to undermine the economic sovereignty of the country, like no restrictions on foreign equity participation; no restrictions on areas of investment; no licensing; no export obligations to fund imports; free import of raw materials; components and intermediates; no obligation to use locally available products and raw materials and above all, repeal of all laws and policies which put restrictions on above. It is under such pressure that the Government has taken a move to repeal the Trade and Merchandise Marks Act and other laws, and is dangerously inclined to sign the Dunkel Draft.

Although the three strategies under Dunkel Draft, the TRIMS, TRIPS and GATS are interlinked and orchestrated to enable the multinationals to have full control over the Indian economy, including in agriculture, financial and service sector, the TRIPS singularly constitute one of the worst forms of neo-colonial exploitation. They want to take the country to the pre-independent stage by overall amendment of the intellectual property laws and make India a member of the Paris Convention on Patents of 1883. This will result in a process of complete deindigenisation and deindustrialisation in the country.

The Platform of Mass Organisations immediately met after the demonstration against Peter Sutherland and decided to observe protest week against the Dunkel Proposals all over the country from December 3 to 9. Massive rallies will have to be organised in all state capitals on December 9, mobilising all the trade unions, and mass organisations of peasantry, agricultural workers, students, youth, women and scientific organisations. At Delhi a massive rally will be organised before the parliament on 9th December. All forces must unite to fight this neo-colonial offensive and compel the Government of India to reject the Dunkel Draft. □

National Protest Week Against Dunkel Proposals

The National Platform of Mass Organisations in its meeting held on 30th October evening decided to observe a National Protest Week from December 3 to 9, 1993 against the Dunkel proposals and in defence of national sovereignty. The meeting was presided over by P K Kodyan of Bharatiya Khet Mazdoor Union.

The meeting was attended by the representatives of trade unions, kisans, agricultural workers, students, youth, women and other professional workers organisations.

The meeting condemned the Narasimha Rao Government of inviting Peter Sutherland, the Director General of GATT to India at the instance of GATT and warned it against surrendering to its pressure to accept the draconian Dunkel draft without any change before December 15th.

The meeting congratulated the workers, peasants, agricultural workers and other mass organisations and professional workers' associations for demonstrating their opposition to Peter Sutherland at Delhi on October 28.

The meeting decided to intensify countrywide campaign against the Dunkel proposals demanding its total rejection, by observing a week from December 3 to 9 by holding processions, rallies, demonstrations, dharnas, wearing of black badges, leaflet distribution and other forms of direct actions in all the states.

The week will culminate on December 9 by holding joint rallies in all states, towns, industrial centres, talukas and villages. The organisations in all the states have been requested to hold urgent meetings to chalk out detailed action programmes.

Demonstration before Parliament:

At Delhi a massive joint rally will be held on December 9 before Parliament. Workers, Kisans, Agricultural Workers, students, youth women and other professional workers' organisations, organisations and forces opposing the Dunkel proposals will be mobilised on the day at Delhi to demand of the Govt to reject the Dunkel proposals.

The meeting appealed to all other organisations and patriotic forces to actively support the agitational programme in defence of national sovereignty and raise their powerful voice of protest from all corners of the country so that the Govt is forced to give up its policy of surrender before the Dunkel draft.

Demonstration against Sutherland's Visit:

Earlier on October 28 a demonstration was organised jointly by the National Platform of Mass Organisations and the National Working Group on Patent Laws to protest against the visit of Peter Sutherland, the Director General of GATT. Peter Sutherland, the successor of Arthur Dunkel visited India to pressurise the Government to accept the Dunkel Draft before December 15 without any change. Sutherland met the Prime Minister, the Commerce Minister, senior officials and the monopolists' associations like ASSOCHAM, FICCI, etc.

Workers, peasants, agricultural labour and others came from Delhi and adjoining areas of Haryana, Western UP, etc and rallied at Jantar Mantar Park from three hours denouncing the Government for inviting Peter Sutherland to India. The rally was addressed among others by M K Pandhe(CITU), S K Sanyal(AITUC), K K Neogi(AICCTU), N K Shukla(AIKS), B K Keyala(National Working Group on Patent Laws), etc. A delegation later met the Union Commerce Minister Pranab Mukherjee and submitted the following memorandum to him:

Memorandum

To
Shri Pranab Mukherjee
Hon'ble Minister of Commerce
Government of India New Delhi.

Sub : Reject Dunkel Draft Text
Peter Sutherland Go Back

Dear Sir

Mr Peter Sutherland, the successor of Mr Arthur Dunkel is in Delhi. We understand that he will be meeting you and other Ministers, Senior Officials and Business Organisations such as ASSOCHAM and FICCI. Our presumption is that he is visiting India to pressurise Government to ensure acceptance of Dunkel Draft Text without any change before December 15, 1993. We would like to convey the strong feelings of a large number of public interest Groups, Unions and Organisations that the Indian people find the Dunkel Draft text in its present form totally unacceptable and as such it should be rejected and the visit of Mr Sutherland be boycotted.

The acceptance of the Dunkel Draft will mean:

- Compromising the sovereignty of our Parliament to legislate for the key sectors of

- economy;
- Giving free entry to MNCs in all sectors of our economy to plunder resources of our country without any substantive contribution to the development of our economy;
 - Weakening of our scientific and technological capabilities under the onslaught of the proposed new patent system;
 - Reducing the national industry to a secondary role of sub- contractors;
 - Decline of the national industry which would lead to further unemployment;
 - Subjecting the agriculture sector to the vagaries and constraints of international markets, thus jeopardizing food security in the long run;
 - Enslaving Indian farmers to multinational corporations who will use their land and labour to produce specific export crops at cheaper and cheaper rates;
 - Tremendous decline in the availability of new seeds and their prices would rise manifold;
 - Elimination of priority sector lending to all the crucial sectors of our economy, vis agriculture and small scale industry;
 - Draining the savings out of the country due to the opening of banking and insurance sectors to multinationals leading to further shortage of funds for investment in domestic industry and agriculture;

- Deterioration of the health care system due to reduced availability of modern medicines and their prices increasing four to five fold;
- In effect situation would be created leading to recolonisation of Indian economy, media and culture.

In the background of above, we demand:

- a) That a Joint Parliamentary Committee(JPC) be established immediately to analyse the Dunkel Draft Text and make suitable recommendations;
- b) That a high-powered Judicial Commission be established immediately to examine the constitutional, sovereign and legal issues arising out of the Dunkel Draft Text and make suitable recommendations;
- c) That a full-fledged debate be held in Parliament keeping the recommendations of the Joint Parliamentary Committee and the Judicial Commission in view; and
- d) That final decision on the Dunkel Draft Text should be taken in an appropriate democratic manner after due consultation with the State Legislatures and the State Governments.

We do hope that you would kindly give serious consideration to this Memorandum.

CALL FOR BIGGER MASS ACTIONS AGAINST DISMANTLING OF PUBLIC SECTOR

The extended meeting of the Committee of Public Sector Trade Unions(CPSTU) was held at Yuba Kendra, Maulali, Calcutta on 6th November 1993 to review the problems faced by the Public Sector Undertakings and chalk out further programme of action. The meeting was conducted by a Presidium consisting of Kamalapati Rai, Vice President AITUC, N. Prasada Rao, Vice President, CITU, Jayanta Poddar, Vice President, HMS, Babu Mathew, Jt. Convenor, JAF Bangalore and William Passo, Jt. Convenor, Co-ordination Committee of Public Sector Unions, Hyderabad. The meeting unanimously adopted the following declaration:

DECLARATION

The CPSTU congratulates the 23 lakh public sector employees for their magnificent participation

in the All India Industrial strike and Bharat Bandh on 9th September in protest against the economic and industrial policies of the Government of India.

The Narasimha Rao Govt. totally ignoring the massive protest action by the working class is going ahead with these policies which hit hard the public sector units. CAG Reports has clearly pointed out that public sector shares of profit making undertakings have been sold at throw away prices, while the drive towards privatisation is in full swing. Refusal of the Government of India to give order to the public sector and favouring the private sector and multinational companies has posed a serious problem of orders for several well run units. Some loss making units which have been referred to BIFR are threatened with closure.

The Special Tripartiate Committee has not been meeting regularly and the decision taken in these meetings have by and large remained unimplemented. The same is the fate of most of industry level Tripartiate Committees. The assurance of the Labour Minister to CPSTU Delegation to constitute Tripartite Committees for Mining and other industries have not been implemented as yet.

Many pending issues of the public sector workers, such as, removal of all ceilings in the Payment of Bonus Act, enhancing the exemption limit in the Income Tax Act to Rs.50,000/- have been kept pending for a long time. Non settlement of wage negotiations of workers as well as failure of the Government to work out multislap system of DA for the workers is causing strong resentment among the workers all over India.

The CPSTU therefore call upon the workers in public sector to strengthen their united movement along with other mass organisation and people so that a powerful movement of the public sector can be unleashed in the country to save the public sector. It appeals to the public sector workers to implement the following phased programme of action,

1. Organise unit level, State level and industry level conventions by the end of January 1994 and take measures to prepare well documented techno-economic revival plan for each undertakings and campaign in support of these plans so that Govt. of India is forced to accept them.

2. Organise a National protest Day on December 7 against the proposed Industrial Relations Bill and demanding removal of all ceilings in the payment of Bonus Act.

3. Organise a massive Dharna before Prime Minister's residence by the last week of March next year, the exact date to be announced later.

4. Arrange a meeting in Delhi to brief M.P.s on the problems of public sector particularly the question of sickness in public sector.

5. Observe National protest Week against Dunkel

Proposals and in defence of national sovereignty from 3rd to 9th December 1993 culminating in a rally on 9th December 1993.

The CPSTU further appeals to the public sector workers to intensify the struggle and organise higher and wider forms of local, regional, and industrywise industrial actions on specific problems of public sector workers to oppose the disastrous policies of the Govt. of India.

The meeting reviewed the situation regarding the demand for interim relief. Since the situation differs from industry to industry and place to place it was decided that the matter should be left for the negotiating unions to take decision in the matter.

The meeting expressed grave concern at the growing tendency in public sector to procure material from the private sector units and called upon the trade unions to resist this tendency.

Sd/-	Sd/-	Sd/-
(Kamalapati Roy) Vice President AITUC	(N.Prasada Rao) Vice-President CITU	(Jayanta Poddar) Vice-President HMS

Sd/-	Sd/-
(Baboo Mathew) Jt. Convenor JAF, Bangalore	(William Passo) Convenor, Co-ordination Committee of Public Sector Unions, Hyderabad.

Editorial Board

M.K. Pandhe (Chairman)

P.K. Ganguly (Working Editor)

Niren Ghosh, M.M. Lawrence,

Vimal Ranadive, Ranjit Basu

COM. IBRAHIM ZAKARIA

The CITU deeply mourns the sad demise of Com. Ibrahim Zakaria President of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) on November 2. Com. Zakaria was earlier the General Secretary of the WFTU and was elected its President in the 12th World Trade Union Conference held at Moscow in 1990. With the death Com. Zakaria the World Trade Union movement has lost a veteran leader of the international working class.

The CITU has sent the following message to WFTU on 4.11.93:-

World Federation of Trade Unions
Branick
Branicka 112 4 Prague 14000
Czech Republic

Shocked to learn the sad demise of Comrade Ibrahim Zakaria, President of WFTU. CITU deeply mourns his passing away. The World Trade Union movement has lost a veteran fighter for the cause of International Working Class. Please accept our heartfelt condolences and convey the same to the bereaved members of his family.
P.K.GANGULY

Secretary,
Centre of Indian Trade Unions

The WFTU Secretariat has adopted the following condolence message on the death of Com. Zakaria.

The President Of The WFTU, Ibrahim Zakaria Has Died

Today, the trade union movement - and in particular the World Federation of Trade Unions and trade unions and workers in the Sudan - has been dealt a serious blow with the sudden death this morning of Brother Ibrahim Zakaria, President of the WFTU.

Joining in the sorrow felt by his family, in him we have lost a great fighter for the rights and interests of the working class and the people of

his country and for the unity and solidarity of workers all over the world, and one of the best known and most respected personalities of recent times.

Born on 17 March 1929, from his youth he put all his energies into social struggles, as a railway worker and trade union activist, and repeatedly suffered repression in his country.

For more than 35 years his life was inextricably linked with the fate of the WFTU, to which he dedicated his love and wisdom. Having occupied various posts, including serving on the WFTU Secretariat, in 1980 he assumed responsibility as acting General Secretary, and was elected General Secretary at the 10th World Trade Union Congress held in 1982. In addition, he represented the workers' interests at the UN, the ILO and in other international forums.

His election as President at the 12th World Trade Union Congress in 1990 was an expression of the high esteem in which he was held, not only within the ranks of his beloved WFTU, but also amongst the most diverse elements of the World trade union movement. He stood out as a fervent advocate both of a renewed WFTU, better adapted to the needs of its member organisations, and of more effective international solidarity, as he demonstrated eloquently at his last public engagement at the 45th session of the General Council, held recently in Warsaw.

The preparations for the 13th World Trade Union Congress, as decided by the General Council, will be the best opportunity through which to honour his memory, strengthening the WFTU in its defence of the interest of workers the world over.

At this painful time, the WFTU Secretariat expresses its deepest sympathy and its solidarity with his family and all Sudanese workers.

The Secretariat of the World Federation of Trade Unions.

Central Trade Unions Submit Unanimous proposal on Salab System of DA for Central Public Sector.

Unanimous proposal on slab system of DA for the central Govt public sector employees has been submitted to the Union Labour Minister and Chairman, Tripartite Committee on DA for the Central PSU, Shri P A Sangma in a jointly addressed letter by the General Secretaries of INTUC, CITU, AITUC, HMS and BMS.

It may be recalled that a committee to go into the question on DA for the central PSU employees and to submit due recommendation the Govt was constituted more than four years ago. While the minimum per point rate of Rs.2.00 was finalised and implemented w.e.f. 1.1.1992, the question of slab system was accepted by the Government in principle and in the last meeting of the committee it was decided that the trade unions should submit joint proposal to the Govt for its consideration and acceptance.

Thus with the instant joint proposal submitted by the trade unions, it is expected that the long pending issue of slab system of DA for the central PSU employees would be settled.

The text of the letter is as follows:-

Dear sir,

We recall the decision of the Tripartite Committee on DA in the last meeting that the Govt of India accepts in principle the introduction of slab system of DA for the Central PSUs from 1st January 1992 and the Central TUs should submit their considered proposal on the question.

Accordingly, we hereby submit the following proposal for the consideration of the committee:-

For the purpose of working out the slab system total wages (Basic + VDA + FDA) as on 1.1.1992 should be the basis.

The slabs should be worked out in the following manner:-

1. Below Rs.1800 - Rs.2 per point
2. Rs.1801-2200 - Rs.2.50 per point
3. Rs.2201-2600 - Rs.3 per point
4. Rs.2601 - 3000 - Rs.3.50 per point.
5. Rs.3001 - 3400 - Rs. 4 per point
6. Rs.3401 - 3800 - Rs.4.50 per point
7. Rs.3801-4200 - Rs. 5 per point.

We earnestly hope that the Govt of India would give serious consideration to this proposal.

Since the DA Committee was constituted more than 4 years ago and workers are anxiously awaiting the outcome of the slab system, we would request for an early meeting of Tripartite Committee on DA for Central PSUs so that this long outstanding issue is settled without any further delay.

sd/ Gopeshwar sd/- M K Pandhe sd/- R K Bhakt
Gen.Secy Gen.Secy Gen secy
INTUC CITU BMS
sd/- Umraomal Purohit sd/- B D Joshi Gen.Secy
Gen.Secy HMS AITUC

CITU Seeks Government Intervention In Postal and Telecom Strike

The Secretariat of the CITU has issued the following statement on November 20:

The strike of the Telecom workers all over India from 6th December 1993 in protest against bifurcation of privatisation of telecom services will paralyse the entire telecommunication system in the country. The Department of Telecommunication is going ahead with their plans of privatisation of the services which is a dangerous move for the country. It would be extremely harmful to the economy if the Govt of India gives up its role in this sector. The policy pursued by the Govt of India is virtually liquidating the department of telecommunications in a phased manner. The CITU therefore fully supports the just struggle of the telecom workers.

The postal services in the country will also be paralysed from 7th December 1993 since all the unions have given notices for indefinite strike from 7th

December to press or the demands of the Extra Departmental employees. It is shocking to hear that the 3 lakh Extra Departmental employees are doing permanent type of jobs for several years. They receive paltry wages and are denied any retirement benefits. The working and living conditions for them are simply shocking.

The CITU, therefore, urges upon the Prime Minister to intervene in these 2 strikes so that settlement of the just issues raised by the unions is achieved without any further delay.

The CITU warns the Govt that it alone will be responsible for the inconvenience caused to the people if the strike in these two vital sectors materialises. In such a situation trade union movement in India will not merely act like a silent spectator. It will rally round telecom and postal employees till they achieve success in their demands.

THE PUBLIC SECTOR

□ Saroj Chaudhury

This November 14, the nation remembered the first Prime Minister of free India, Jawaharlal Nehru on his 105th birthday. The official routine was gone through with the usual functions: offering of floral tributes at the Shantivan by the State dignitaries, garlanding his large portrait in the Parliament House by prominent parliamentarians of different parties, opening of a large international trade fair by the Prime Minister, release white pigeons, drills by well-fed, well-clad children of affluent families, loud assertions to carry forward the ideals of Nehru, very elaborate coverage in the electronic media and so on. Everyone knew including the organisers and participants that from the next day it would be business as usual.

This year Nehru's birthday was observed amidst Fund-Bank dictated destruction of the public sector and burying deep the ideal of self-reliance. This Nov 14 when the core sector of the economy built at enormous cost to the nation and with the diligence and devotion of the nation's workers, engineers and technicians, has been gifted away to marauding multinationals, when very viable and crucial public undertakings are being deliberately made sick and transformed into veritable slaughter houses of jobs. In the name of reforms nationalisation of banking has been scuttled and crooks are at work to send nationalised insurance to meet the same fate. A highly specialised national organisation like the Geological Survey of India (GSI) with which were associated several eminent Indian scientists of international repute is under dismantling and the entire mineral wealth is being given to the foreigners on a platter on lucrative terms. But the commitments of the present policy makers are too deep to be shaken by these ravages.

While, however, denigrating and destruction of the public sector goes on, the workers in the various units continue to produce more and better. Herein below are some more examples as culled out from press reports which tell their own tale of successes:

TCIL's Profits Up by 62 Per Cent: The public sector undertaking, Telecommunications Consultants India Ltd under the department of Telecommunications recorded 38 per cent increase in turnover and posted profits of Rs.23.7 crore, an increase of 62 per cent over the previous year. It earned foreign exchange of Rs.1320.42 million and bagged orders worth Rs.2300 million during the year.

Cochin Refineries Dividend to Government: The public sector Cochin Refineries recorded highest ever profits before tax of Rs.153.62 crore in 1992-93 and paid a dividend of Rs.9.11 crore to the government on its 55.05 per cent state in the company. Capacity utilisation of over 100 per cent was achieved for the fifth year in succession.

HPCL's Highest-ever Dividend: The public sector Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd posted all round progress in 1992-93. The refineries processed the highest ever crude level of 10.38 million tones. The internal resources generation during the year rose to Rs.322.01 crore. The total value added on its operations was Rs.1,264 crore as compared to Rs.940.85 crore in the previous year. HPCL paid Rs.3,332 crore as duties and taxes. It paid Rs.17.9 crore as dividend to the government.

RCF's Progress : The Rashtriya Chemicals & Fertilisers Ltd bettered its overall capacity utilisation of its Trombay-based plans to 93.5 per cent resulting in the second highest production in the last 15 years. RCF paid Rs.11.03 crore to government as its share of dividend for 1992-93.

GRSE Virtually Wipes Out Losses: The public sector Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Ltd is on its way to wipe out its accumulated losses of Rs.99.49 crore upto 1988. It registered a profit of Rs.23.35 crore in 1992-93 and hopes to post profit of Rs.25 crore in 1993-94 and pay dividends from 1994-95. As part of modernisation plans, it has set up a highly sophisticated electronic workshop to handle weapons. It has at present only one per cent idle capacity and is pinning hopes on manufacture of survey ships which no other shipyard in the country undertakes. Being under the administrative control of defence ministry it looks forward to increased budgetary support and orders.

ITI Declares 16 Per Cent Dividend: The public sector Indian Telephone Industries achieved a phenomenal growth of 36 per cent in production and consequently a two-fold increase in pre-tax profit. ITI declared 16 per cent dividend and paid Rs.10.95 crore to Telecom Commission as government's share for the year 1992-93.

MFL Pays Rs.24.3 Crore as Dividend: National Fertilizers Ltd paid Rs.24.53 crore as dividend for 1992-93 to the government. Maintaining its steady growth, the half-yearly performance for the first 6 months of the financial year ending Sept. 1993 has surpassed previous levels. □

MENACE OF GROWING UNEMPLOYMENT

□ M K Pandhe

Shri P A Sangma, Union Labour Minister in a recent statement in Parliament made a sweeping remark that all the backlog of unemployment in India would be wiped out by 2002 years. Sangma relied on the figure supplied by the Planning Commission which claims that during the Eighth Plan an additional employment of 4 crore 75 lakh would be generated while the figure for the Ninth Plan was also estimated to be of the order of 4 crore 75 lakhs.

The Planning Commission has been giving assurances of additional job creation in each plan which was never fulfilled. The employment statistics of the Govt of India does not show corresponding rise in employment. As a matter of fact, in the manufacturing sector there is decline in the employment. Whatever employment growth is there is seen in the service sector.

The Government of India has been collecting statistics regarding employment market through its own employment Exchange. The figure of registered unemployment in the urban areas alone has now exceeded 3 crore and 75 lakhs. On an average the growth in these figures is by about 15 per cent every year. There are no employment exchanges in the rural areas but the estimated unemployment in the rural areas is about 7 crore! Thus nearly 11 crore of people in the country are without jobs.

Out of 87 crore of country's population the people of the age group of 18-58 years are roughly estimated to be about 40 crore. Thus nearly 25 per cent of the workforce is not having any work. So long such a large chunk of our population is not having gainful employment, any talk of elimination of poverty will be meaningless.

India's population grows roughly by 2 crores which requires massive programme of employment generation in the country. However, the official schemes of employment generation provide less than Rs.10 as wages to workers for 100 days a week which is practically given out as doles.

It must be noted that the employment in the organised sector is a small part of total employment in the country. According to official figures during 1992 the employment in the organised sector was only 2 crore 68 lakhs of which only 9 lakh was in the private sector. It is estimated that only 15 per cent of

our employment is in the organised sector.

India is the largest employer of the child labour in the world. When the earnings of parents are not sufficient to make both ends meet a small child has no option but to work to supplement the family income. Despite several projects taken by the Govt of India on child labour the number of children working continues to grow year by year. Mere lip sympathy for the children of school going age will not produce any result so long the minimum wages are not pushed above the poverty line. Any law prohibiting the child labour in certain industry will not succeed since children will be forced to work in some other industries.

If before making a statement in Parliament Shri Sangma would have given some thought to these aspects he would have been more cautious in making a claim of elimination of backlog of unemployment in 10 years time.

As a result of the new economic policies of the Govt of India employment has become one of the major casualties. Instead of creation of new jobs the existing jobs are threatened and large scale unemployment is being contemplated by the Govt in both the organised and the unorganised sector.

As Dr Sudipta Mandal who estimated that during the first 2 years the addition to the unemployment would be of the order of 2 crores bulk of which would be in the unorganised sector.

Several traditional units are facing closures threatening to swell the unemployment further. The largest hit is the handloom sector where lakhs have been thrown on street.

The Government of India at the instance of the World Bank and the IMF have constituted a National Renewal Fund which is actually a National Retrenchment Fund. Instead of providing money for the revival of the industries it provides for retrenchment compensation to the workers who are thrown out of jobs. The World Bank has pledged to contribute \$ 500 (Rs.1300 Crore) to this fund which only shows the keenness of the World Bank to dislodge a large number of workers from their source of livelihood. Though this measure is called by the World Bank a Social security Net it only provides temporary relief to the victim who becomes destitute

after some time.

The National Renewal Fund and the Exit Policy are two sides of the same coin. The Exit policy will facilitate the unscrupulous employers game to close down the unit and NRF will provide for retrenchment compensation. The Exit Policy does not differentiate between real and malafide closure. It gives a green signal to the employer to close down the unit at his sweet will. Its impact on the society is no concern of the management and the Government. Shri Sangma who talks of providing full employment within 10 years is actually talking of giving employers full powers to close down the unit at his sweet will and add to the gravity of the problem. If he had any seriousness in providing more job to the people he would have first protected the existing jobs.

The conditions in rural areas are particularly extremely bad. In absence of genuine land reform, the concentration of land in India except Bengal, Tripura and Kerala continues. The number of landless people goes on increasing in the rural side and no programme of land distribution to the landless is taken up. If this situation is allowed to continue further it would further aggravate the crisis and unemployment is bound to increase rapidly,

notwithstanding the rosy picture painted by the planning commission and repeated by Sangma.

The trade union and the youth movements of India must take up the cause of the unemployed in right earnest. Unless unemployed are organised and they fight for a national programme of job generation the present detrimental economic policies cannot be fought effectively. The advanced technology that is being inducted in the country with greater speed was made more urgent.

The National Convention on right to work held in Durgapur three years ago was an pioneering attempt in this regard. The efforts were not carried further and no all India movement could be built up on this question.

The CITU has pointed out that the follow up action of Durgapur Convention must be taken up seriously by the united movement of the working class. This will unleash powerful forces to challenge the existing policies and initiate struggle for alternate policies. The big potential of this movement can never be underestimated.

Let us take up the task with utmost concern so that we can meet the challenging situation squarely.

CONSTRUCTION WORKERS MEETING IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

On 19th November, the construction workers met at Katla and Jakri of Himachal Pradesh. The workers of Nathpa Jakri Hydel Power Station Project in good number assembled in the above two meetings.

Com Rakesh Singa, President, CITU State Committee of H P presided over the meetings. Co. Debanjan Chakrabarti, General Secretary, Construction Workers Federation of India, Com. Mulk Raj, Working President, Com. Natha Singh, Secretary and Com. Harinder Singh Randhawa, DCM of CWFI also spoke.

The leaders told about the details of the project and how to organise the thousands of construction workers engaged in "NJPC", HCC, Jaiprakash Engineering, Continental Construction, etc companies.

The leaders also explained the role of CITU and the policy of CITU in organising united movement of the working class.

The Secretariat Members of "Nathpa Jakri Bujli Mazdoor Union" met and decided the following programme of action -

1. Leaflet will be issued demanding adequate compensation to land losers for the project and one permanent service/employment from each affected family. The leaflets will be distributed in thousands. Posters and wall writing will be done in support of these demands. Signature campaign of affected families also will be done to submit before the project authority and the Govt of H P.
2. Two days trade union school of 30 activists will be held on 18th and 19th December, 1993.
3. Union conference will be held in the last week of January, 1994.
4. Besides, on the basis of other worker demands the project authority to be pressurised as per their commitment in tripartite meeting.

TAMILNADU STATE SECRETARIAT MEETING

Bonus Movement :

CITU, AITUC and LPF had decided to conduct united movement on Bonus. State wide demonstrations were held on 5th. But, due to some political developments and unwillingness on the part of other Trade Unions, this movement could not be continued at State level. But, in State Transport Corporations, these three organisations are continuing united campaign with Badge Wearing and meetings. State wide rallies were also held in all the State Transport Corporations.

In other industries, Bonus negotiations are going on and in many of the settlements workers have been able to get more Bonus than what the Act stipulates.

In Chettinadu Cement Company workers are to get Bonus 20% and 12 Gms of Gold plus eversilver vessels worth Rs.250/-, Madhurai Coats has entered into an agreement to pay Bonus on the basis of the amount the company earns (Gross profit Minus Depreciation and interest). This agreement ensures payment Rs.5000(26%) as Bonus for 3 years.

While these 2 settlements take into account the wage ceilings in Bonus Act, same other settlements agree to pay Bonus with out considering these ceilings.

Electricity Workers Struggle:

More than 20,000 contract workers went on an indefinite strike from 11th October demanding regularisation, Occupational wages, statutory Benefits etc. On 14th October, regular workers belonging to CITU union also went on strike in support of their wage demands and insolidarity with striking contract workers. The contract workers strike was called off after the Electricity Board reached an understanding with CITU union to pay an increase of Rs.9 per day and ensuring a minimum wage of Rs.31/- per day.

Education:

Sixty leading cadres from all over the State attended a One day lecture on New Economic Policy

and impact on labour. The lecture was given by Dr. Nagarajan of Madras Institute of Developmental studies. A two day Trade Union education programme was conducted for leading cadres in Sugar Industry 92 Comrades from 18 Sugar factories attended the class. History of Indian Trade Union Movement, T.U. Movement in sugar industry in Tamilnadu, Trade Union - Task and Organisation, and Major Labour Legislations were the subjects.

Two-day classes for about 50 working women cadres are being organised on 30th and 31st October.

Solidarity:

Nearly 1.75 lakhs of Primary Teachers had gone on state wide strike from 8th September. CITU State Committee had directed the affiliated unions to send Telegrams to the Chief Minister and to organise solidarity Dharnas all over the state. Before the decisions were implemented, strike was called off after a settlement.

Earth quake relief:

State Committee had given a call to donate one day wage for earth quake relief and many unions have donated one day wage. Details of amounts donated by our unions are being collected.

Struggles and victories:

Tannery workers in the state have successfully concluded an agreement which gives an increase of Rs. 10.50 per day, Rs. 7.53 in basic 2.97 as DA)

Entyce showroom workers all over the state have gained a wage increase of Rs.210 after 2 month long strike. For the first time they will also be getting, Dearness allowance on par with the shop and establishment employees in the state.

Handloom workers Federation organised a day's Dharna in Madras in which leaders of handloom workers unions from all over the state participated. The demands included implementation of 22 items reservation for handloom products, proper implementation of handloom workers welfare Act etc.

Khadi and Village Industries workers are to

organise a Dharna on 1.11.93 in Madras.

Workers and employees in local bodies have formed a state level action committee for struggle on their demand. CITU, AITUC and the Co-ordination Committee of employees Unions are members of this Joint Action Committee.

Joint Movement against Economic Policies:

All Unions in Magnesite Industry including INTUC have been united in a movement in Salem, against the new liberalisation policy which has almost made 10,000 workers jobless. A massive rally and public meeting was held on 17th October. Which was attended by leaders of all the Central Trade Unions including CITU, INTUC,

AITUC, LPF, ATP etc.

All India Decisions:

Comrade Umanath reported on the decisions of All India Secretariate on that basis decisions were taken to organise Dharnas on 7th December, Com. BTR's birth day on 19th December and submission of Annual returns and payment of affiliation fees, Nominees to attend workshop in Cochin were finalised.

Issues regarding wage negotiations in Textile, and Electricity Board were discussed.

The next meeting of the Secretariate will be held on 21st November and District Secretaries meeting will be held on 22rd November.

KARNATAKA STATE COUNCIL MEETING

Karnataka State Council of CITU in its meeting held at Belgaum on 30th, 31st October, 93 decided to organise Dharna in front of Vidhan Soudha from 22nd November, 93 onwards demanding minimum wage notification by State Government for plantation, beedi, hotel, agarbatti and other employees covered by minimum wages. Dharna will continue till government issues notification. Labour representatives in the minimum wages advisory committee succeed in fixing Rs.46.64 as minimum wages for cinema workers. The CITU demanded Rs.1800 on 1309 points or Rs.46.64 as fixed for cinema workers. 5000 workers from different parts of the State will participate in this indefinite dharna. Every day hundreds of workers from Bangalore city will participate in the dharna and offer food packets to these who participate in dharna.

The State Council decided to collect one day wages from all workers to help earth quake and flood victims in Maharashtra and Karnataka. Rs.10 lakhs has been already collected out of which the Government departments and managements have nearly Rs.5 lakhs to government relief fund directly. It was decided to give 75% to CITU centre to construct hospital, school buildings and 25% to be distributed in Karnataka. In another resolution the State Council condemned the Central Govt. for placing Carbon Block Plant and its paste plant on INDAL factory in Belgaum in difficulties. The entire raw material required for producing Carbon Blocks for Aluminium Smelter pots were being imported till

the Belgaum plant came up producing this valued added item indigenously. Central Govt. in its Finance Bill for 93-94 has lowered custom duty on imports of Carbon Blocks from 55% to 35% @retained at the same time the custom duty of 85% on electrically charged Anthrasite Coal the raw material required to produce Carbon Blocks. This Govt. policy make the finish products import cheaper than import of raw material. By this Govt. loses revenue and made the Belgaum INDAL plant a sick unit, leading to loss of revenue, disruption of production in the country, effecting employment. The Council demanded reversion of Central Govt. policy and remove altogether the import duty on raw material to encourage domestic production and/or raise duty on import of Carbon Blocks to original level of 55%.

RAIL ROCO BY D.Y.F.I.

Karnataka State Committee of DYFI organised Rail Roco on 3rd Nov. 93 in Bangalore Railway Station to demand implementation of development projects and filing up of vacant posts in Karnataka. In order to provide employment to nearly 50 lakhs of unemployed youths in the State Govt. should take up new development works in public sector, take immediate steps to start Vijayanagar Steel Plant at Hospet for which foundation was laid 22 years back, recruitment in public sector industries like BEL, HAL, HMT, BHEL, ITI etc. for which new recruitment is stopped due to economic policy of Central Govt., recruitment to State Government offices which was stopped since 1983 and one lakh posts are vacant.

HEROIC STRUGGLE OF HPC PANCHGRAM WORKERS

According to a delayed report reached here the workers of Hindustan Paper Corpn. Ltd., Panchgram(Assam) took part in the Industrial strike and Bharat Bandh on 9th of Sept., 1993. Police brutally lathicharged and resorted to all sorts of repression upon the striking workers. 84 workers arrested. Among them 51 were put in confinement for long. They were then detained in Police lock-up for one and half day in Hailakandi. They were jailed on 10th Sept. and released on 11th night. Police mercilessly beat up the President and Vice President of the union. They were also put in lock up, where DSP himself beat both of the office bearers. They were also seriously injured in lathicharge at Panchgram.

This was not the end of the drama. 55 workers, members of CITU led unions and charged with fabricated cases, were put to suspension by the management.

Workers filed a writ petition against the suspension in Guwahati high court. CITU condemned the brutal police repression upon

striking workers and suspension by the management. It demanded unconditional withdrawal of fabricated cases against the workers, restoration of the democratic rights of the worker, revocation of the suspension orders and punishment to all guilty civil and police personal responsible for the incidents.

Punjab CITU Launches Agitational Programme

The meeting of Punjab CITU was held on 25-26 October in Chandigarh. It was decided to launch agitation in favour of the major demands of working class in Punjab. The workers will sit on dharnas and assemble for demonstration in each district headquarters in the whole month of November. A state level demonstration will be held in Chandigarh on December 2.

The major demands are: increase in the minimum wages, implementation of labour laws, against interference of police in trade union activities. A resolution was passed against the increase in electricity tariff in Punjab and Chandigarh. It was demanded to reverse the decision immediately.

TOPICS FOR SYLLABUS FOR T.U. SCHOOLS

(As adopted in the Bhubaneshwar Working Committee meeting, held from June 4-6, 1993)

1. Scientific World outlook(Dialectical Materialism)
2. Laws of Social Development(Historical Materialism)
3. Political Economy of Capitalism
4. Socialist Society.
5. History of the World T.U. Movement(Two Lectures)
6. History of Indian T.U. Movement (Three Lectures)
7. Tasks of the Trade Unions in the Present Period (Two Lectures)
8. Outline History of Freedom Movement
9. Questions of Wage Policy
10. Outline of Labour Laws in India
11. Law Governing Industrial Relations.
12. Law Governing Working Conditions
13. Law Governing Social Security in India
14. ILO and the Trade Unions
15. Tripartite Machinery in India
16. Organisation and Functions of Trade Unions

89th Birth Anniversary of Com.BTR

The Secretariat decided to observe the 89th birth anniversary of Com. B T Ranaidve, the Founder President of the CITU, on 19th December, 1993 in a befitting manner.

All State Committees, District Committees, Unions Federations should observe the day by holding seminars, symposiums, conventions, meetings, etc.

Trade Union unity and the question of Confederation which was stressed by Com.BTR should be focused on the occasion. Comrades should make it a point to sell the three volumes of Com.BTR's writings on the occasion.

Exit Policy - the New Offensive

□ P K Ganguly

The working class in India is faced with a new offensive. It is the offensive of the Exit Policy. It is nothing but giving the employers a free hand to close down their establishments and throw out the workers on the street, as a legal right. Exit Policy is the bane and objective of the new economic and industrial policy being formulated and implemented at the behest of the IMF-World Bank.

In their drive for liberalisation and globalisation of economy with the slogan of market economy, which is nothing but unbridled progress of international monopoly capital, the IMF-Bank have imposed their terms to the Government of India, which has embarked upon the capitalist path of development since independence. From its path of privatisation therefore, the public sector and self-reliance with the domestic laws and policies have to be demolished ruthlessly to facilitate unhindered entry of multinationals. Focus of this imperialist sponsored liberalisation is globalisation, i.e opening up to the world and play the game of "survival of the fittest" under the international market force.

So it is not simply privatisation to boost the Indian private sector, but privatisation to boost the foreign monopoly capital. That is, the multinationals have to be given a freehand to invest in any sector of Indian economy according to their commercial judgement including in the core sectors which contribute to the national economic growth and which was therefore reserved for the public sector as a symbol of national planning and self-reliance. Even the small scale and tiny sector have been thrown open to them. So the multinationals are to cause a thorough going so-called "industrial revolution" in India through a process of domestic deindustrialisation and deindigenisation.

So the first step for this has to be the closure of units and a combination of privatisation and closure of the public sector. Hence the Exit Policy. The industries therefore are being made sick to create the ground for ultimate closure step by step. In its drive towards Exit Policy, the Government therefore amended the Sick Industrial Companies Act, despite total opposition by all the Central Trade Unions, to

refer the Public Sector Units also to the Board of Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR), which has in reality been constituted as a quasi-judicial institution to liquidate the units. Fifty eight public sector units have been targetted as the first group of casualties under the policy and are being referred to the BIFR for liquidation. Nearly seven lakh workers are going to be jobless soon. Another group of forty units also marked "sick" are waiting in the queue. A total of nearly ten lakh jobs are going to be scuttled as the initial target from these 98 public units. NTC with the largest group of public sector units is going to be the worst hit with 42 mills going to be closed down throwing out 80,000 workers jobless in one stroke.

According to a study conducted by the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy(NIPFP), by 1993-94 there will be an extra unemployment of 12 million people from the organised sector only. This joblessness will be due to outright closures, which have already started. On sickness the study estimated that about 2.96 million workers will be affected in the same period. Out of this about 2 millions(68 per cent) will be in the small scale and tiny sector. Sickness has also increased from about 3 lakhs to over 4 lakhs during the period. While in the organised sector, public or private, the workers are being forced out through Voluntary Retirement Schemes, the entire workforce in the small scale and tiny sectors will be simply thrown out on the street without any type of compensation whatsoever.

Urban registered unemployment during the period of two years of the new economic policy already has risen from 34 millions to about 38 millions. The Planning Commission has itself estimated that it may reach a colossal figure of 94 million between 1996- 2002. But according to the Planning Commission itself, the net additional labour force seeking job by that time would be 36 million. Add to this the back log of unemployment of 23 millions which have already been created by April, 1992 according to the Committee on Employment set up by the National Development Council. And this

back log is progressively increasing with each Five Year Plan. Then add to it the joblessness created by closures and sickness, which the planners are still under-estimating, although they do admit now that because of the ongoing structural reforms there will be a slow down in employment. The final figure of joblessness is unthinkable!

With this picture, the data being prepared by the Government itself and its various committees, the Government is coming fast with the Exit Policy with the slogan and propaganda campaign of employment generation. The real experience of the working class however is that it is a policy of unemployment generation, further accentuated by closures. And now they want to hasten the process of closure as per the recommendations of the Goswami Committee. But Goswami Committee's recommendations for fast tract operation of the sick units have not come from any individual brain. It is perfectly in line with and under pressure from the World Bank. According to press report, in an internal note circulated by the World Bank at the end of May, 1993 it said, "it is important that a programme to deal expeditiously with the sick public sector enterprises be adopted in near term, in order to allow for timely disposal of assets and compensation of affected workers." It is under such pressure that the BIFR has been given the power of liquidation of the companies and the number of benches have been increased for expeditious liquidation of the companies, if the so-called restructure plans of scuttling the jobs of thousands are not accepted by the unions. In fact, the foreign investors would not invest in the country unless they are assured of an Exit Policy.

To carry out the above objective, the Government has introduced the Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) as an integral part of the Exit Policy, and the most obnoxious offensive unleashed against the workers under the new economic policy. For this despite total opposition by the trade unions, they created the so called National Renewal Fund (NRF) under pressure from IMF. The World Bank readily funded 500 million dollars for the Fund. The entire fund is being utilised for VRS, although they talked of utilising it for "redeployment and retraining" which has now been proved a hoax.

In the name of modernisation, the so called revival

schemes prepared by the managements Government start with closure of some units and scuttling of jobs through VRS first and then modernising the rest of the establishments with a massively reduced work force. This is the first step of the Exit Policy. The amounts earmarked for VRS are much more than that for modernisation of the units. If the Government were really serious for modernisation, then the sick units could have easily been modernised with the existing workforce by diverting the amount kept for VRS to the modernisation fund. Concrete modernisation plans so as to revive the units have been given by the unions jointly in several cases. But this shall not be done, as they have to go ahead with the Exit Policy step by step. Having amended the SICA, they have stopped budgetary support to the sick units as per the amended rules. Under the same provisions the Financial Institutions also cannot advance money for modernisation to the units referred to BIFR. So while the Government is shouting hoarse for modernisation to hoodwink the people, they have themselves deliberately created legal blockades for modernisation fund. Diversifying the confusion, they are pressurising the unions to agree to the sale of surplus land to get the modernisation fund, or to run the units as cooperatives as a last resort, if they do not accept reduction of workforce and closure of certain parts of the establishments. Thus while there is dearth of modernisation fund, there is no dearth of funds for VRS, as World Bank is donating it in NRF. In its fast tract operation the BIFR is threateningly putting forth the last date of survivals --- acceptance or death, to the unions. Everything is thus planfully directed towards the Exit Policy, so that in the melee of confusions the unions are forced to sign on the dotted lines, or face liquidations of the companies, the power for which has been given to the BIFR.

So the workers are at cross roads. The Exit Policy has come as the worst offensive directly hitting the workers. Both the organised sector, public and private, and the unorganised sector of industries are equally affected. But this Exit Policy can be defeated and the IMF-Bank can be squarely met, if the entire trade union movement unites, irrespective of affiliations. Enriched with the experience of the two strike struggles and the 9th September Bharat Bandh, trade union unity can be further consolidated against the Exit Policy specifically, mobilising the workforce from both the organised sector and unorganised sector. The trade unions must carry forward united struggle to fight this new offensive. □

MAGNIFICENT AILRSA VICTORY

SUPREME COURT ORDERS RE-INSTATEMENT OF VICTIMISED LOCOMEN AND RAILWAYMEN

(Due to lack of space, only a small excerpt from this report was published in our November issue. In view of its importance we are now publishing the report in full duly updated--Ed.)

The Supreme Court has in a recent Judgement issued direction to restore to their respective post within a period of three months from the date of the judgement the employees who were dismissed under rule 14(2) for having participated in the Locomen Strike of 1981. The Judgement was delivered on August 5, 1993 by the Supreme Court bench consisting of Justice S.C. Agarwal and Justice R.M. Sahai. This Judgement was followed by another Judgement of August 12, and the two together covered 113 employees victimised under Rule 14(2). A third Judgement was delivered on October 11, 1993 re-instating 25 more employees, who were dismissed through disciplinary proceedings. Still another judgement delivered in the Supreme Court on 5.11.93 reinstated 33 Employees, who were removed and dismissed under 14(ii). As a result of these and earlier Judgments of High Court, Central Admn. Tribunal or Supreme Court, in all 600 victimised employees have so far been taken back. 76 employees are involved in cases which are still pending at Central Administrative Tribunals or Supreme Court. Efforts are being made by the LRSA so that there may not be any delay in formally settling their cases in the line of August 5 judgement because of the orders are of general in nature.

HARD EARNED VICTORY

These several hundred Railwaymen, mostly Loco Running Staff, with a few belonging to other categories, were victimised in connection with Loco Staff agitation in 1980-81, under the banner of 'ALL INDIA LOCO RUNNING STAFF ASSOCIATION (AILRSA)' During these twelve years the LRSA carried a tireless struggle on one hand to keep the victimised Comrades alive providing relief and to get legal remedy against victimisation, and on the other hand to pressurize the Govt. in various ways for re-instatement. It was a heroic struggle which the LRSA had been carrying on for 12 years. The LRSA, its leaders, activists and ordinary members closely

united to conduct this struggle. It is an amazing fit on the part of a trade union not only to carry on the struggle for 12 years, but also to hold out for such a long period against tremendous odds till final victory was achieved.

They faced many ups and downs during the course of this struggle. They had to conduct court cases in almost all the High Courts and all the benches of the Central Administrative Tribunals of the country. Some of the Judgments upheld victimisation against which they had immediately to run to the Supreme Court for appeal against the Judgement. In other cases, in which judgments were in favour of the employees, it is the Railway Authorities who ran for appeal and the LRSA had to defend its victory at High Court or CAT. In many cases, complication was created when the court ordered for departmental enquiry to be held and the Railway administration avoided it on various place. These complications were to be dealt with by the LRSA.

Besides the organisation had been ceaselessly maintaining pressure on successive Govts. through appeals, deputations, meetings, processions and demonstrations. They mobilised the members of parliament belonging to all parties. With their help, again and again met the Minister Incharge and high officials to represent their cases. In addition they mobilised the other trade unions and democratic forces of the country in support of their struggle. They could also mobilise the support of International Labour Organisation, WFTU, TUI and other foreign organisations in pressurising the Govt. of India. In the National sphere, the Centre of Indian Trade Union(CITU) played an unique role in extending and organising help both economically and on programatic basis in fighting their cases in the court of law and pressurising the Central Govt. for their re-instatement.

NATIONAL FRONT GOVT.

During the tenure of National Front Govt. at the 'fag end of their life', the then Railway Minister George Fernandes signed order for re-instatement of the victimised. Reliance was placed on the cabinet decision taken in Nov.90 before the Govt was forced to quit. It was urged that the succeeding Governments honour the decision and direct re-instatement of all employees and payment of back

wages. But the machination of the Railway Board and the Cong.(I) Govt.'s refusal to honour the decision of the previous Govt. stood in the way of the victimised coming back to work much earlier.

During the tenure of the Govt. led by Chandra Shekhar and also later during the Cong(I) Govts which succeeded it, time and again the Minister's gave assurance regarding re-instatement, but only to dishonour it.

During both National Front and Cong(I) rules the issue came up many a time in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, members of the two houses cutting across party barriers, raised the demand for re-instatement. On occasions the Ministers had to give assurance, again, not to honour it.

In the meantime, in different cases, Supreme Court started issuing direction for reinstatement, and the victimised were coming back to work by small groups.

Public Concern about Workers Right

One Supreme Court Judgement delivered in 1985, created strain among all sections of working people and also the intellectuals. Trade Union and

democratic convention were held throughout the country demanding full fundamental rights for Govt. Employees. Seminars were organised by intellectuals with the participation of renowned jurists and other, where the demand for fundamental rights for the employees were upheld. Almost immediately following these, supreme court delivered another judgement in which the employes were given an opportunity of self defence by providing enquiry at the appellate stage. It is a land mark in the history of legal fight that even after Supreme Court Judgement upholding the victimisation, the same got reversed due to further legal battles on the merit of the cases in different central administrative tribunals.

It is LRSA which has always been the driving force behind all campaigns in the Railway Trade Union movement.

And finally the Supreme Court Judgement of August 5, has crowned their 12 years ceaseless struggle with complete success. The firm determination and tenacity and tremendous courage displayed by LRSA have set a glorious example before the trade union movement. □

AIREC MEET

The Special Central Working Committee meeting of AIREC was held on Oct 17 with C M Singh, President in the Chair. The meeting took a series of programmes for strengthening the AIREC at different levels. It directed its units at all levels to strengthen the organisation as would enable it to play an independent role to intensify the railwaymen's movement on their own demands and also to join the working class at large in the movement against the anti working class and anti people policies of the central govt.

In the context of withdrawal of strike decision of the Central Govt employees by the NJCA accepting paltry concessions, the meeting heard the reports from all over the country, which reflected discontentment of the general workers expressed in some places even through demonstration by the members against the leadership of their own organisation.

This meeting considered that the settlement actually bartered away the interest of the Central GOvt Employees including railwaymen. This has pushed the trade union movement backed a full decade. The meeting expressed its serious concern over this development and came to the conclusion that if such activities continue, the workers would

become hostile towards trade union movement as a whole. The meeting identified the main points of short comings as follows:

Firstly, the charter of demands was seriously deficient in that it did not include the vital demands relating to privatisation, off loading redundancy, non filling up the vacancies, overall danger of job security, job potential etc.

Secondly the leadership refused to build up total unity by declining to include the AIREC in the united platform, though it had a glorious record of struggle.

Thirdly, withdrawal of strike call even before serving strike notice accepting meager concession, when mood for struggle was building up caused serious set back.

The meeting re-affirmed its decision of making every effort to build united movement in the railways. It extended an appeal to all the central govt employees and their organisations to come forward to build up broad based unity to achieve all long pending demands through united struggle. The following programmes have been taken in these direction:

1 Mobilisation against the proposed industrial bills on 7th December 1993 as per sponsoring committee decision.

2. Observance of a campaign week from 1st

December to 7th December 1993 on the 34 point charter of demands of AIREC.

3. Besides some organisational decisions the meeting also resolved to organise conventions at several places such as Calcutta, Gorakhpur, Bombay, Madras.

This meeting appreciated the massive demonstration by CLW Labour Union against the privatisation and off loading at Chittaranjan Locomotive Works on 2.9.93 expressed shock at the contents of the letter of the AIRF General Secretary to the Railway Board complaining of discrimination against AIRF union which was denied permission to hold demonstration. The letter is so worded that it will provide a weapon to the authorities in their effort to stop all trade union demonstration in future. While

it will certainly not add to the strength of AIRF union, it will help authorities to weaken trade union movement in CLW. This will not strengthen AIRF union but will tend to weaken all trade union demonstrations in future.

AILRSA meet

AILRSA in its Central Working Committee meeting was held on 6th and 7th October 1993 has taken the programme of campaign week from 2nd Nov to 8th Nov 1993 followed by shed wise demonstration on the demands of Locomen on 9th Nov 1993. The programme has been observed in a befitting manner all over the Indian railways. □

Victory for Anganwadi Workers in Maharashtra

Kiran Moghe

On the 6th October '93 the Chief Minister of Maharashtra Shri Sharad Pawar announced an increase in the honorarium of Anganwadi workers and helpers - by Rs. 100/- and Rs. 75/- respectively. The increase is to be given with retrospective effect from the 2nd October '92. As a result, Anganwadi employees in Maharashtra will perhaps be the highest paid in comparison to employees in the rest of the country.

It may be recalled that the government of Maharashtra announced an increase of Rs. 100/- & Rs. 75/- in May '92, along with an increase in the duties and responsibilities of the employees. Therefore when the Government of India announced an increase of 125 & Rs. 90 the State Government conveniently adjusted this amount against the earlier increase ! As a result, Anganwadi workers and helpers were being paid nothing for the extra burden of work.

The Anganwadi Karmachari Sanghatana (Maharashtra) has been protesting against this blatant exploitation and injustice for the past year. Despite many protest actions and petitions, there was no sign of the government agreeing to the demand. As a result, all the unions decided to organise a massive protest to Mantralaya on the 1st of November '93. However, on seeing the solidarity and militant spirit of the Anganwadi women, the State Government hurriedly announced the increase.

Other demands such as payment of pending TA

dills, TA for workers in urban projects who live beyond a distance of 8 km from the Anganwadi centre have also been agreed to.

Most importantly, the government has asked our union submit a set of model recruitment rules for recruiting experienced Anganwadi Workers as supervisors, and for keeping 50% of the supervisors reserved for such workers. These model rules are being prepared and will be submitted to the state government. □

CITU delegation to visit China

On an invitation from All China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) a three member CITU delegation will be visiting China during December 1993. The delegation led by Com Kanai Banerjee, Secretary CITU will leave for Beijing on 18th December 1993. The other members of the delegation are Com. Shakti Prasanna Bhattacharya (Tripura) and Com. Kashmir Singh Thakur (HP).

Visit to Kazhakistan

A trade union delegation comprising of CITU, AITUC and INTUC along with Com. Debkumar Ganguly of WFTU has left for a visit to Republic of Khazakistan on 20th November 1993. The delegation will be visiting different places during their weeklong stay. Com. Amalendu Ghatak (WB) is in the delegation on behalf of CITU.

PENSION SETTLEMENT FOR FINANCIAL SECTOR EMPLOYEES

The joint struggle on the issue of pension as a third retirement benefit in the financial sector, which began in 1990 under the aegis of the Pension Coordination Body, came to a successful conclusion on 29th October with an agreement between the Indian Bankers Association and the unions of officers and employees.

The struggle reached new dimensions with the formation of a Joint Action Committee of the unions and associations of employees and officers of banks, insurance and other financial institutions. Apart from the demand of pension as an additional retirement benefit over and above CPF and gratuity, the struggle was on the issues of wage revision, bonus for all and against privatisation. The JAC launched three countrywide strike actions in the financial sectors on 30th April, 1992; 29th March, 1993 and on 2nd September, 1993. Another strike call on 4th October was withdrawn because of the Maharashtra earthquake. The JAC then called for indefinite strike from November 2. This compelled the government to come down and make settlement. Apart from AIBOC, AIBEA, NCBE, AIBOA, the IBA was compelled to call the Bank Employees Federation of India (BEFI) also in the negotiations, which was as otherwise excluded earlier.

Earlier, the AIBEA and IBA had reached a memorandum of understanding (MOU) agreeing for an inferior pension scheme. Under this MOU, basic pension was related to only 600 points of AICPI. No relief was provided to those who would not opt for pension, and pension scheme was to be prospective only.

The above deficiencies have been removed from the present settlement, which has invalidated the MOU with the AIBEA. Basic pension has been linked to index level of 1150 points of CPI instead of 600, which means that the amount of basic pension is almost doubled. Consequently, computation amount is also doubled. D.A. will be paid on the remaining points in the index. The pension scheme has been made applicable retrospectively from 1.1.1986. Moreover, substantial relief has been provided to those who will not opt for pension. In

their case, additional contribution to PF will be made at 10 per cent of DA payable at 1150 points of CPI, which means contribution will be doubled in these cases also.

This will eventually entitle them for higher loans from PF for house construction or to meet other social obligations. With this agreement, the principle that DA will rank for PF is being established in the financial sector.

The AIBEA in fact called for strike actions demanding implementation of their MOU without any modification. The strike calls however were called off. Consequent to the present agreement, the indefinite strike call by the JAC was naturally withdrawn.

The government also offered to raise the eligibility ceiling of bonus to Rs.4500/- Although the JAC welcomed it, yet it demanded that bonus should be given to all without ceilings.

The IBA has also assured that talks on wage revision would begin. The JAC has demanded that it should start within six months, failing which appropriate trade union actions would be launched. Besides, the JAC has decided to carry forward the struggle against privatisation.

Salient Features of the Pension Settlement

1. Pension scheme on the lines of RBI pension scheme to come into effect from 1.11.93.
2. Employees in service as on 31.10.93 will be allowed option to choose between CPF and Pension.
3. No option for new entrants from 1.11.93 for whom pension will be compulsory.
4. Employees retired on or after 1.1.86 would get pension from 1.11.93 if they refund employer's share of PF contribution with 6% simple interest.
5. For calculation of CPF, D.A. upto 1150 points to be included in pay. This will also qualify for computation of basic pension, but not gratuity.

CITU-CTUC WORKSHOP FOR TRADE UNION EDUCATORS

The CITU has decided to hold five regional workshops in Co operation with the Commonwealth Trade Union Council (CTUC) for importing training to trade union educators. The workshops have been fixed at Bhubaneswar, Cochin, Noida, Jaipur and Chandigarh. Each of the workshop are to be attended by four participants from each of the four surrounding states. In other words in every workshop there would be sixteen representatives and also a representative from the CITU centre and the CTUC project Co-ordinator, Asia Office.

The Workshops have been designed to exclusively concentrate on methodology of conducting education sessions.

The Bhubaneswar workshop has already taken place from 1st to 5th November '93. This was attended by the representatives from Assam, Manipur, Orissa and West Bengal. The workshop at Cochin was held from 15th to 19th November '93 and was attended by the representatives from the states of Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka and Tamilnadu.

The workshops syllabus included different process of introduction viz., Self-introduction, pair introduction and group introduction. Then these different process was applied in the workshop and the participants were asked to make evaluation of these process.

The next activity was how to identify problems and issues. The participants were asked to identify issues confronted by the workers at these different places viz., at home, at workplace and at community. This was

done by dividing the total participants into three groups.

The post problem identification session was followed by planning and preparing a complete blueprint for running a session. The participants in this session was divided into six pairs. Each pair was given to select an issue or a subject related there to as identified by then earlier and asked to conduct a full session by each pair amongst rest of the participants. The session planning was meticulous in the sense that the aims, target group, organisational preparation, pre-session organisation, union building elements, the topic and an activity, selecting the groups, report back, observation and report back etc. were taken into consideration and was put to test.

In the process, while materials drawn from different national and international experience were made available. The participants were made to play the role of students, educators and organisers as well.

On the whole the methodology dealt in throughout the workshop suggests as method of education which is aimed at ensuring active involvement of the students in a TU education session in the whole education programme. It gives much stress on the interaction among the students on the subjects dealt in the class room following the introduction of the subjects before the students. It also gives an idea about the method and system of trade union education being practiced among the trade unions in various commonwealth countries. □

GREAT VICTORY FOR DELHI NURSES

The Nurses of Guru Tej Bahadur Hospital, Shahdra has achieved a great victory in their struggle under the leadership of the Delhi Hospital Employees and Nurses Union. They have made the Delhi Administration to agree to appoint an additional 740 nurses in the hospital, to give promotions to more than 350 nurses and to immediately consider the question of housing.

The Delhi Administration run hospital - The University College of Medical Sciences and Guru Teg Bahadur Hospital, Shahdra - had to have 1053 nurses as per norms. But the Delhi Administration recruited less than 300 nurses and was simply sitting pretty for the last 3 years, putting an inhuman workload on the shoulders of the nurses. The nurses were forced to do 2-3 shifts continuously without any break and were not even permitted to take casual leave. The union took up the matter with the Administration several times but other than promises to sort out matters on

priority, the administration did not move.

Finally the nurses went on a one day mass casual leave on 15.10.93 and the management was forced to close down the entire hospital for one day. Again several round of negotiations followed and a delegation of the nurses met the Lt. Governor of Delhi, P K Dave, led by Vimala Ranadive. Beginning from 16.11.93 the nurses went on 2 hours strike continuously for 3 days and decided to progressively increase the number of hours till the administration was made to see reason. On 18.11.93 the Secretary (Medical), Delhi Administration gave it in writing to the nurses their decision to recruit 740 nurses and clearly laid down the time schedule for various phases of recruitment, which is being done in 3 phases. The Secretary (Medical) also agreed to effect simultaneous promotions as per the February 1990 agreement with the Delhi Nurses and also to look into the problem of housing. □

RECESSION IN INDIA HITS COAL INDUSTRY

□ M K Pandhe

The all round recessionary trends in Indian industry have brought down the demand for coal in the country considerably. However, an attempt is being made through media that the recession has not affected the Coal Industry in any manner.

The Times of India(Delhi Edition) dated 17th November 1993 has observed the adverse impact of the recession in the country on the railway traffic. "Railway sources said there has been less offer of traffic from core sectors such as cement, foodgrains, fertilisers, petroleum oil and lubricants, iron ore and other raw materials for steel plants and finished products from steel plants."

The correspondent however observed, "The only redeeming feature in the traffic is the traffic in coal. The revenue earning freight traffic for coal has been more than two million tonnes above the target during first six months of the current financial year."

The increased coal traffic is not due to higher coal production in the country. As a result of drastic reduction of custom duty on coal from 85 to 30 per cent the steel plants have been importing more coal which is generally transported by train from the ports. Secondly, due to ready availability of wagons in view of reduced traffic in other sectors consumers find it more economical to transport coal by rail compared to do so by trucks.

However from the official statistics of Coal India the demand for coal has been falling since the last one year. The cement industry in 1992-93 purchased 14% less coal than the previous year. The industry had cancelled 12 rakes of coal during the year, which were ordered earlier due to shortage of demand.

The thermal power stations had a stock of 8.6 million tonnes of coal in their stockyard on 1.4.1993 in comparison with 6 million tonnes one year ago. From the Rajmahal coalfields the NTPC has drastically reduced its demand of coal since the demand for power from Farakka power station has been dropped substantially.

Due to bad planning by the Central Government,

though the State of Bihar is facing acute power shortage the electricity produced in Farakka Project cannot be utilised in Bihar due to absence of transmission lines. Despite huge investments in Rajmahal coalfields and building up of capacity of production of 6.7 million tonnes the area could produce only 3 million tonnes of coal last year.

The coal India is reported to have burnt 7 lakh tonnes of coal at the pit head of Rajmahal coalfields due to fire. However, insiders say that the burning of coal was a scandalous affair in order to manipulate the production statistics. Trade unions in their talks with management had already demanded impartial enquiry into the manner in which the coal was burnt.

The Planning Commission had fixed the target of coal production for the year 1994-95 to 227 million tonnes. However, due to fall in demand the coal India had suggested that the production target should be brought down to 223 tonnes. The reason given by the CIL for this reduction is that the percentage of industrial production to GDP is reduced and hence there would be no demand for more coal within the country in the near future. Another reason given by CIL for this purpose is that the Govt of India is permitting consumers to import coal directly and with reduced import duties some foreign sellers particularly Indonesia is dumping coal in India at cheaper prices. The Tamilnadu Government has already decided to import coal for their Tuticorin Thermal Power Plant.

The Coal India reported huge pit head stocks this year due to recession. As on 1st October the pit head stock of CIL stood at 36 million tonnes compared to 33 million tonnes one year ago. Except Northern Coalfields Ltd all coal companies have reported that they were focusing "acute demand constraint."

The target of coal despatch for the year was fixed at 222 million tonnes for 1993-94. The production this year is estimated to reach 216 million tonnes but CIL expressed its inability to despatch even this much production. The management during their discussion

with trade unions expressed fear that the pit head stocks are likely to increase at least by one million tonnes.

During 1991-92 and 1992-93 the productivity in Coal Industry increased. During 1991-92 for underground mines the output per manshift (OMS) stood at 53 tonnes, which rose to 55 during 1992-93. In case of open cast mines the OMS increased from 3.70 to 3.85 tonnes. However, due to lack of demand for coal the management is not interested in higher production resulting management declaring more and more workers as surplus in coal industry.

In the name of uneconomic mines the management has already earmarked some mines for closure. Some of the new mines to be developed in the upland period are being given up due to lack of demand. Large scale privatisation of new coal mines is in the offing. The CIL management is also making an attempt to export coal to some of the neighbouring countries. Already some coal is being smuggled to Bangladesh through clandestine channels.

The CIL management has become more aggressive in throwing out of large number of coal miners from their job under voluntary retirement scheme. On the plea of meeting the crisis situation the management has evolved a strategy to reduce the manpower drastically and about 2 lakh coal miners have been targeted by the CIL management. The other aspect of the strategy is to produce more and more coal through contract labour. Though this practice is illegal it appears that the Department of Coal under Ajit Panja's leadership has given green signal to the management to go ahead with their programme. According to estimates during 1991-92 total coal production done through contractors stood at about 45 million tonnes which went up to above 65 million tonnes during 1992-93.

The contract workers who are doing production jobs are paid one fourth of the wages of the regular employees and have no working conditions whatsoever. The contractors violate all the labour laws but as a principle employer the CIL management is not ensuring the implementation of the labour laws. Some of the contractors are well known mafias who are literally looting the Coal India in connivance with the officials. It is regretted that some trade union leaders have also taken contracts under Binami cover

and hence they allow such illegal practices in the industry.

Instead of taking action against such malpractices the Government of India chose to give "excellence awards" to those subsidiaries of CIL who have used the largest number of contract labour. On 30th September 1993 the Prime Minister himself gave these Awards in a gala function in Delhi for which the CIL management spent over Rs 75 lakhs. The CITU decided not to participate in this function in protest against such wasteful expenditure.

When budgetary support has been withdrawn by the Government of India and tall talk is going on in the country about austerity measures it is reported that CIL had given donations to several organisations in Ajit Panja's parliamentary constituency. The Minister for Coal is reported to be regularly visiting Park Street office of CCL and occupy the Chairman CCL's chamber while doing all his Congress Party work from that office. The expenses of entertaining the Congress party satraps who have nothing to do with Coal India are supposed to be borne by the CIL. Under these circumstances the Minister cannot check any malpractice going on in the undertakings.

The management is pleading the case of financial stringency only when the question of demands of workers are raised by the unions. The welfare measures agreed in the last National Coal Wage Agreement have not yet been fully implemented on the plea of resource constraint. Though the last coal wage agreement was over on 31st June 1991 the wage negotiations for a new agreement have not progressed much. The CIL management has offered a paltry amount of Rs 40 which has been rejected by all the coal unions.

The CITU has appealed to all the coal unions to jointly prepare for a countrywide struggle of the 7 lakh coal workers so that the CIL management is forced to stop all the malpractices prevalent in the industry, implement all the commitments given in the last wage agreement and offer a decent wage rise to all the coal workers.

The All India Coal Workers Federation is holding its fourth conference at Calcutta on 24-26 December which will review the situation in coal industry and chalk out future programme of action. □

T.U. CLASS ORGANISED BY THE CALCUTTA DISTT. COMMITTEE OF C.I.T.U

The Calcutta Distt. Committee of CITU organised a Trade Union class from 1st to 4th November, 1993 in 'Shramik Bhavan', the office building of CITU State Committee.

The T.U. class organised to raise the consciousness of the leading T.U. comrades to explain the present political & economical situation of India and of the world. Also to educate the comrades about how to run the function of the Trade Unions democratically based on the guideline of the CITU's organisational documents adopted at the working committee meeting at Bhubaneshwar.

The participants of the class were mainly from the office bearers of the unions. Two hundred seventy five leading T.U. activists participated in the class.

The T.U. class was held on four subjects, viz-

1. The real state of capitalistic exploitation & how to be set free from this.
2. Economic policy of Govt. of India and present economic & social condition.
3. Successive International & Indian Trade Union movement.
4. Duties of T.U. movement at the present situation & the organisational document of CITU.

Veteran economist, Comrade Satyabrata Sen

took class on the 1st. two days. On the 3rd day prominent T.U. leader Comrade Sukomal Sen, M.P. explained the history of T.U. movement. On the last day, Com. Chittabrata Mazumder, General Secretary of CITU W.B. Committee taught about the organisational task of the unions at this present critical situation and democratic functioning of the union to maintain close contact at grass root level.

At the end of every class the students were allowed to question on the subject if they find any confusion and the teacher removed the confusion of the students.

On the last day, Com. Joygopal Roy, Treasurer, CITU Cal. Dist Committee handed over a cheque of rupees forty three thousand to Com. B.T.R. Memorial fund. Thus the Calcutta Distt. Committee uptill now donated rupees three lakhs eighty eight thousand to the fund. Comrade Rajdeo Gowala, Rathin Sen, Joygopal Roy and Jayanta Das gupta took the chair respectively on these four days.

The class was highly appreciated by the participants.

CONFERENCE OF BANGLADESH AGRICULTURAL FARM LABOUR FEDERATION

The fourth national conference of Bangladesh Agricultural Farm Labour Federation was held in Dhaka from 26 October to 2nd November' 1993.

The representatives of various trade unions also participated in the conferences. Apart from Com. Mihir Ganguly of CITU, Com. Hannan Mollah MP and Com. Sunit Chopra of All India Agricultural Workers' Union and ILO's Director Mr Ornke from Dhaka also took part in the proceedings of the conference.

The open session was held on 27 October at the Dhaka Sahid Minar. It was inaugurated by Com Rashed Khan Menon M P. The leaders of the various trade unions, members of foreign delegations and Bangladeshi farm labour union leaders addressed the gathering. The delegate session was held on 28th Oct. Com. Mihir Ganguly placed his report. Com. Kausar Ali (CITU) also took part in the discussion.

A new committee was formed. Com. Jaimal Abedin was elected President while Sukkur Ali became the working President and Nurul Anwar the General Secretary. This committee consists of 41 members.

Resolutions were adopted regarding the future programmes. Besides launching struggles for realization of demands of agriculture workers the conference also decided to hold workers education programme, leadership training and self employment scheme, etc.

The conference received greetings from various international trade unions including All China Federation of Trade Unions, Korea Trade Union, CGT France, ICFTU, Iraqi Trade Unions, Australian Council of Trade Unions, New Zealand etc. Indian Trade union leaders also visited Chittagong and Cox Bazar. Discussions were held with the various leaders of Bangladeshi Trade unions. Com. Hannan Mollah was the main speaker.

Bangladeshi leaders told that the govt of Begum Jia was pursuing the IMF and World Bank dictated policies. Mrs Jia was refusing to accept the genuine demands of the workers, whereas she was in favour of these very demands when she was not in power. The Govt did not increase the wages of agricultural farms. United struggles were being carried forward.

CUBAN TU LEADER VISITS INDIA

Comrade Joaquin Bernal Camaro, the Vice-President of the Trade Union Council of Cuba (CTC) and Head of its International Department was in a visit to India from 2nd to 8th of December 1993. During his brief stay in Delhi for 2 days Com.Bernal visited CITU Headquarters and had discussions with the CITU Secretariat members. Among those who were present included CITU President Com. E Balanandan, and Comrades Vimal Ranadive, Kanai Banerjee, Jibon Roy, P K Ganguly and Ranjit Basu. During the course of discussion Com Bernal explained as to how from the very beginning after the revolution the US imperialists had been trying to block the development of Cuba. But despite this in Cuba health, education etc was free for all. Land was distributed amongst the landless labourers. The workers enjoyed full security. Through export of sugar etc Cuba had strengthened its economy. And now after the breakup of Soviet Union the US imperialists are creating all sorts of blockade against Cuba. Particularly because of the economic blockade Cuba is in deep crisis. Over and above this the US imperialists are openly aiding and abetting the counter revolutionary forces, continuously making propaganda through radio and TV inciting the people to act against the revolution. Against this inhuman machinations of US imperialists the people of Cuba, under the leadership of Com.Fidel Castro are fighting heroically and would protect the gains of revolutions whatever maybe the sacrifice. He said, that at this critical juncture, Cuba needs support world over. Com.Balanandan while reassuring CITU's total solidarity said that working people of India has always been and will always be extending their unflinching support to glorious struggles of the revolutionary people of Cuba.

Com.Bernal, later visited the headquarters of AITUC, INTUC, HMS, UTUC, TUCC and UTUC (LS) also and met their leaders. AIIEA leaders met Com.Bernal and hosted a dinner in his honour.

The Cuban trade union leader visited Calcutta also and stayed there for 3 days. During his stay in Calcutta, where he was a State Guest of W.Bengal Govt, Com.Bernal visited several factories, met the workers and had discussions with various TU leaders. He also attended the October Revolution Day Rally on 7th November as a special invitee and addressed the gathering there.

UN Votes against US Blockade against Cuba

For the second time in one year the United Nations General Assembly supported Cuba by voting against the US economic Blockade against Cuba. According to the Editorial published in New York Times, from Washington, overwhelming majority by which the countries voted against the blockade was a denouncement of the US policies and further isolated the USA instead of isolating Cuba.

The CITU has sent the following message to the Cuban Trade Union Council:

4..11.93

The Secretary General
Central De Trabajadores De Cuba
CTC Nacional
San Carlos Y Pensilver
Ciudad Habana, Cuba
Dear Comrade,

Please accept our heartiest congratulations and warm revolutionary greetings on the victory of Cuba on the UN General Assembly Resolution against the US blockade against Cuba. It was a most humiliating defeat for the US imperialists as it was seen that overwhelming majority of the countries voted in favour of an end to the 32 year old US economic blockade against Cuba.

It was a good coincidence that Com.Joaquin Bernal Camero was here when the news came. Assuring you our continued support, with warm revolutionary greetings again.

Yours comradely,
P K Ganguly
Secretary

BOOK POST