



THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

EIGHTY FIFTH SESSION OF THE ILO

M K PANDHE

The eighty fifth session of the International Labour Organisation held in Geneva from 3rd to 19th June 1997 reflected the conflict of interests between the developed and developing countries.

The Director General Michel Hansenne who commenced his report by stating that, "The fall of the Berlin wall was a decisive turning point, as it marked the end of the bipolar world which had witnessed the birth of the International Labour Organisation." He continued, "the disappearance of the planned economy system hastened the advent of a global market, whose laws, promises and risks now extend throughout the entire world."

The ILO Director voiced the opinion of the advanced capitalist countries as mentioned in his Report "the great potential of globalisation to promote economic progress" but he had to admit about its "its potentially negative social consequences." Thus the thrust he gave in his Report was to ensure that "trade liberalisation goes hand-in-hand with social progress." However, the proposal he gave essentially helped the interests of the advanced capitalist countries at the cost of the developing countries.

ILO Support to Globalisation

"Globalisation" the Director General noted, "encourages establishment, extension or strengthening of economic blocks" which essentially was a protectionist measure by the advanced capitalist countries by forming trade blocks, like NAFTA, ECM, ASEAN, etc, which acted against the interests of the third world countries. Referring to growing inequalities in the world the Director General observed, "of course, there is no proof that globalisation is the direct cause

of these inequalities." However he could not ignore the hard reality of the world today about declining levels of wages. He notes, "Leaving aside the various interpretations which divide the specialists it is highly likely that public opinion will continue to believe widely that globalisation inevitably implies downward levelling of pay for jobs of equal (low) skills in a market in which goods and capital can freely circulate."

In the declaration of the Singapore Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organisation held in December 1996 the Ministers of Trade & Commerce renewed their commitment to the observance of the "core labour standards" i.e. conventions relating to Freedom of Association and Collective bargaining (No.87 and 98), Forced Labour (No.29 and No.105); non-discrimination (No.100 and No.111); Minimum Age (No.138). The meeting noted that the ILO was the "competent body to set and deal with these standards." The Director General wants to take up this issue as a part of the multilateral trade system.

While there should be a firm commitment by the trade union movement to get these standards implemented in every country in the world and trade unions should fight to get them accepted by their government the ILO Director General is virtually making out a case to link these commitments with multilateral trade agreement in line with the design of the advanced capitalist countries of the third world which cannot be accepted by the trade union movement.

Role of Global Policeman

The Director General's proposal to strengthen the supervisory system would virtually make the ILO

Com. Yamuna Prasad Shastri is No More

Veteran Freedom Fighter, the great hero of the Goa-liberation struggle, one of the veterans of the working class and peasant movement of Madhya Pradesh, Com. Yamunaprasad Shastri breathed his last on 20th June 1997 early morning at Bhopal. He has just crossed seventy years few days back. He was also the State Secretariat member of CPI(M) at Madhya Pradesh till his death.

The seventy years" span of life of Com. Yamunaprasad Shastri was a record of struggles for the cause of peasants, workers and the exploited humanity. He joined the freedom movement in his boyhood and faced repression and imprisonment by British government. Later on he was drawn to socialist movement by Acharya Narendradev. He played a heroic role in the liberation struggle of Goa from Portugese domination confronting brutal repression from Portugese Administration and lost one eye owing to severe police torture in 1955. Subsequently he lost the other eye also. But his blindness could not deter him from his mass activities and building up movements in the least.

He was the leader of Praja Socialist Party in Madhya Pradesh and later became President of Madhya Pradesh Janata Party in 1977. He was elected Member of parliament twice from Rewa in Madhya Pradesh.

Com. Shastri also devoted himself in organising the working class in the struggle against exploitation. He was elected President of MP Committee of HMS till he left HMS and joined CITU few years back.

Com. Shastri was a firm believer in socialism, and spent his entire life in the struggle for people's cause. His quest for the path for struggle for socialism and unflinching commitment to masses has led him to join CPI(M) five years back and during this short span he dedicated himself in building the party and strengthening mass struggles in Madhya Pradesh.

Com. Yamuna Prasad Shastri is no more. His demise has created a great void in the democratic movement, particularly in Madhya Pradesh.

CITU condoles the death of Com. Shastri and pays homage to the departed leader.

taking the job of policeman by inspecting establishments within the country. The Director General also visualises formulation of "charter of codes of practice for producers and of labels guaranteeing the conditions under which consumer articles are manufactured."

These proposals will further make ILO a part of WTO and on the basis of ILO observations WTO can impose sanctions against the countries. This will seriously hit the interests of developing countries and 130 developing countries have taken objection to such derogatory clauses in the Director General's proposals.

The Director General's proposals further seeks to bring through the backdoor the rejected proposal of linking social clause with international trade. This would further reduce the share of developing countries in the world trade and strengthen the share of the advanced capitalist countries and add to greater

inequalities.

The ICFTU fully endorsed the proposal of the Director General and supported the stand of the advanced capitalist countries. However both the Indian constituents of the ICFTU namely the INTUC and HMS opposed the Director General's proposals which enabled Indian delegation to take a united stand in the ILO Conference.

The Indian workers delegation consisted of Venugopal (BMS), as delegate, S S Sharma (BMS), Subrata Mukherjee and R C Khuntia (INTUC), M K Pandhe (CITU), V Tiagi (HMS) and K L Mahendra (AITUC) as advisers. The Government of India gave clearance to the delegation only on 1st June in the evening which prevented the workers representatives from attending the workers group meeting held on 2nd June. The Union Labour Ministry started the process of finalising the list of delegation very late. a case filed by the INTUC in the Supreme Court con-

tributed to the delay.

In the year 1996 the CITU was nominated as a member of the delegation after a lapse of 17 years but the CITU refused to join the delegation since it was informed at the fag end of the ILO Conference.

United Opposition by India

In the workers group meeting during the ILO conference M K Pandhe, General Secretary, CITU opposed the formulation in the Director General's report and demanded detailed discussion on the reports since it harms the interests of the developing countries. Venugopal (BMS) and K L Mahendra (AITUC) also expressed their disapproval of the stand of the Director General. The united stand taken by the Indian delegation received wide support from other developing countries. Several countries from Africa also expressed their difference of opinion with the formulations made by the Director General.

The visit of the World Bank President James Wolfensohn and his address to the session also indicated an attempt to bring World Bank and the ILO together to serve the common interests of globalisation. He stated, "We respect the expertise of the ILO. we build on it and we have worked together with you. But I have to say with all candour that in the past I do not think this relationship has been deep enough or sufficient to face the sorts of challenges we are facing. I am very proud that, in this last year, we have taken a step forward. We have to set priorities, achievable targets, and we have to set for ourselves a framework in which we can judge our effectiveness." "The framework" is clearly a framework of globalisation and neo-liberalism reflected through IMF/World Bank dictated structural adjustment programme.

Lip Sympathy for the Poor

To win the sympathy of the poorer nations the President of the World Bank said, "Our world is a world in which 3 billion people live with less than US \$ 2 a day and 1.3 billion with less than US \$ 1 a day...we live in a world in which 56% of the people have less than 5% of the income. A world of great differences between countries, the rich and the poor. A world of great inequalities within countries, between the rich and the poor"and those inequities are increasing." Yet he had the temerity to suggest that "The notion that we have two world is a foolish notion.

We describe them in terms of developed and developing world but in fact they are inextricably linked." The World Bank policies actually seek to increase these inequalities. The proposals to provide one percent of the GDP by the developed countries as developmental assistance to the developing world agreed 20 years ago is almost forgotten while the decision of the World Development summit at Copehagen in 1995 to give more emphasis on employment generation and elimination of poverty have remained on paper. World Bank President's lip Sympathy to the poorer countries should be viewed in this context.

Reflecting on the growth of private investments and privatisation Wolfensohn noted that, "Seven years ago, the private sector was half the size of the official sector. Today at US\$ 240 billion it is five times the size of the official sector. This is not only a quantitative change, it is also an enormous qualitative change".

"We are absolutely linked the aims of the ILO and those of the Bank" Wolfensohn concluded. Mrs Olga Keltosova, Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slova Republic who was elected as president of the ILO COnference endorsed the views of the World Bank President stating "We are convinced that cooperation between the World Bank and the ILO will be beneficial to all our constituents." It is a clear attempt to make the ILO subservient to the World Bank IMF and the WTO.

Intervention in the Name of Monitoring

The Director General while introducing his Report suggested that solemn declaration to be adopted in 1998 conference of the ILO which would re-affirm the commitment of the ILO member states, by virtue of their membership in the organisation, to abide by the principles of the core conventions, whether or not they have ratified them, while establishing a mechanism to monitor this convention.

The so-called mechanism to monitor the core convention would give a handle to the ILO to inspect establishments in countries and label the products. On the basis of ILO's finding the WTO will impose sanction against the countries.

These sanctions are generally imposed only against the developing countries. The recent world history showed that UN sanctions against countries

trading with Racist minority Government of South Africa was blatantly flouted by the advanced countries. The UN Resolution demanding lifting of unjust economic blockade by US imperialists was openly flouted by the US Government. However the same UN is pouncing upon Iraq to ensure implementation of UN resolution as interpreted by US imperialists leading to starvation of Iraqi children. US continues its blockade against Libya despite world condemnation.

India has ratified 37 ILO convention while US has ratified only 11. None of the core ILO convention has been ratified by US but they will impose decisions against the developing countries.

Private Prisons in US

US Government passed a law prohibiting entry of carpets produced by child labour in India on plea of respecting social standard. However, as the spokesman at the ASFL-GO Stanley, A Gacek while speaking in the ILO pointed out the shocking conditions in private prisons in US where prisoners are handed over to the private manufacturers for doing hard work at paltry wages violating the ILO convention on forced labour. According to him total output produced in such private prisons in US is over US \$ 9 billion. But can any country in the world prohibit import of goods produced in such private prisons? The ILO does not speak strongly against such practices because 25 per cent of the ILO funding comes from US Government. The ILO is also influenced by the advanced capitalist countries since over 60 per cent of the ILO contributions come from these developed countries. The ILO has 174 member states with a budget of US\$ 558 million. Though overwhelming majority of the member states are developing countries their voice is not heard powerfully in the ILO. There is urgent need for the developing countries to be more assertive if they have to protect the interest of their national economies and conditions of workers.

Need for More Assertive Role By Indian Government

The Indian Government criticized the proposals in the Director General's Report but was not very assertive in the approach. The Government of India should have taken initiative in contacting other developing countries to raise their voice against the machinations by the World Bank. It was sorrowful to note that the Government of Colombia made a statement

on behalf of 130 countries in the developing world. The Colombian Government being a dictatorial regime and indulging in drug traffic cannot carry much weight in the world. Therefore Govt of India should have played a leading role. The trade unions and the Govt representatives of China opposed the concept of linking social clause with World trade. The population of India and China is more than 40 per cent of the World population and together can have more weight at the world level. After the meeting of Labour Ministers of Non-aligned countries in 1995 the Government of India failed to pursue the matter seriously. Even now if the Government of India takes up keen interest to mobilise support among developing countries it can play effective role in bringing together these Governments to voice the genuine aspirations of the people in the developing countries.

On Application of Standards

The Committee on Application of Standards considered 27 cases of complaints in different countries in the world. M K Pandhe was a member of this committee from India. While speaking on Labour administration in the tripartite meeting he pointed out how as a result of globalisation the Labour administration is getting less importance. He pointed out how in the name of abolishing "Inspector Raj" in some Indian states the system world of inspection of factory was abolished resulting in deteriorating working conditions. He also criticised the shocking conditions prevailing in export processing zones where no labour laws are being implemented and trade union rights are non-existent. He pointed out how phenomenon of child labour was a direct result of poverty and the problem can be solved effectively only after elimination of poverty.

Pandhe also spoke on the situation in Pakistan, Bangladesh and India and stressed the need for respecting trade unions rights and working conditions by the governments of these countries.

The situation in South Korea, Indonesia, Iran, Sudan, etc also came up for consideration and several speakers expressed concern for not respecting the ILO conventions by these governments.

On Fee Charging Employment Agencies

A convention on this subject was adopted by the
[On Page 28]

COUNTRYWIDE BANK EMPLOYEES' STRIKE ON 4TH JULY

TARAKESWAR CHAKRABORTI, GENERAL SECRETARY, AIBEA, SR SENGUPTA, GENERAL SECRETARY, AIBOC, P. LAKSHMINARASIAH, GENERAL SECRETARY, NCBE, DEBESH BHATTACHARJEE, VICE PRESIDENT, AIBOA, ASHIS SEN, GENERAL SECRETARY, BEFI, AMAL KR. GHOSH, SECRETARY INBOC, D. DE SARKAR, ORGANIZATIONAL SECRETARY, INBEF, BD MONDAL, REGIONAL SECRETARY, NOBW AND NOBO has issued the following STATEMENT to the press:

"On 4th July, 1997, there shall be a nation-wide Bank Strike as per the call of United Forum of Bank Unions on the following six demands:

AGAINST

1. Establishment of Local Area Private Banks.

DEMANDS

2. PENSION

- (a) Implementation of Pension Settlement in Private Banks.
 - (b) Withdrawal of clause in Pension Regulations denying pension to employees/officers for "participation in strike"
 - (c) Introduction of Pension Scheme in RRBs/Co-operative Banks.
3. (a) Scrap Mahalik Committee Report on RRB employees/officers wages.
(b) Implementation of 6th Bipartite/Officers' salary revision in RRBs.
 4. Lifting of ban on recruitment and compassionate appointments.
 5. Removal of ceilings on Gratuity and Bonus.
 6. Ban on Non-Banking Financial Companies on Accepting deposits from public.

The strike shall cover 1.3 million bank employees/officers working in all commercial banks of the country in public and private sector, foreign banks, RRBs and Co-operative Banks. The stay-out strike shall commence at 6.00 AM OF 4th July, 1997 and end at 6 AM on 5th July, 1997.

It may be recalled that at the call of our nine unions an All India Bank Strike was to take place on 4.4.1997. At the last moment, the strike was deferred because of sudden uncertain political developments in the country.

It was our fond hope that the authorities - Finance Ministry, RBI, IBA - shall take note of the deep seated

feelings of the entire community of bank employees and bring about an amicable resolution of the grievances. Our hope has been belied, rather the present attitude of the Government towards banking industry is characterized by calculated casualness and indifference. Government's attitude is amply manifested by the fact that Finance Ministry is sitting pretty tight on certain understandings on Residual Issues" arrived at after prolonged negotiations between the management and the unions.

In this situation, the employees and officers are left with no option but to agitate. We enclose the Joint Declaration dated 3.6.1997 issued by our nine unions explaining the circumstances forcing us to give the country-wide strike call.

It is most unfortunate that despite nationwide pretexts, Government seems to be bent upon issuing licenses for Local Area Private Banks. What type of people are going to get the license can be illustrated by the fact that Bhansalis were also given licence by RBI to start a private bank. Local Area Private Banks (LAPBs) are against the national interest as it will mean handing over the rural economy of private sector - the money-lenders, rich landlords, traders, black money holders, black marketers. Not a few of these private banks will be owned by big industrial house who will mobilize all the resources from the rural areas and transfer them elsewhere for speculative and their own business interests.

The ascent CRB Scam is nothing but a by-product of so-called liberalization and privatisation. It is strange that the Governor of RBI would have asked the banks on 15.4.97 to extend credit to Non Banking Finance Companies (NBFCs) when the file regarding CRB must have been on the tables of high authorities of RBI. Our unions strongly feel that NBFCs should not be allowed to have deposits from the public. All savings of the nation should be channelised through banking system and utilized for productive purposes.

We also lend our full support to the present agitation of SBI officers against suspension of four junior rank officers who have been made scapegoats in relation to CRB Scam. It is quite clear that this is a desperate attempt on the part of the authorities to shield the higher executives of SBI as well as of RBI, SEBI and Finance Ministry but for whose

[Contd On Page 12]

BEFI Resolutions and COD

The Central Committee of Bank Employees Federation of India adopted the following resolutions and finalised its Charter of Demands for the 7th Tripartite negotiations on 5-6 May:

Indian Bank

BEFI is deeply concerned with the situation in Indian Bank. In one year alone (1995-96) the bank has posted a colossal loss of over Rs 1300 crores. The connivance of the banks' top executives with unscrupulous and fraudulent borrowers and the involvement of political personalities have come to sharp focus. This has been going on for years. Question rightly arises what the Reserve Bank and the Government were doing? We accuse them of dereliction of their duties. The bank's capital base is severely jolted. Its image is tarnished. It has to be brought on proper rails. Being owner of the bank the Government cannot absolve itself of its responsibility. For protection of the bank, the interests of its depositors and other common clientele, the government must infuse adequate fresh capital out of budgetary allocation which has been denied to it while providing such infusion to other weak banks. The defrauding borrowers and the guilty executives must be brought to book and effectively penalised.

RBI role

in context of the happenings in Indian Bank as also the situation in several other banks like UCO Bank, United Bank of India, etc, BEFI is very much critical about the role of Reserve Bank in matters of supervision, scrutiny and control of banks and other financial institutions. Had there been timely intervention by RBI, these banks would not have reached the distressing state of affairs. Its inaction in effecting meaningful monitoring and its tendency to wilt before the Government instead of asserting its independent authority as Central Bank of the country have aggravated the circumstances. With the setting up of the Department of Supervision RBI was expected to draw proper lesson from past mistakes and adopt stringent measures of rectification. But, this stands belied. Inspection norms have been diluted. The job is done most perfunctorily. Checks and scrutiny of branches have been left to the discretion of the top officials of the banks and their internal machinery. This means laissez faire to corruption and manipula-

tors of frauds. This must stop. RBI must have to perform its obligatory supervisory functions over the banks free from interference by political bigwigs and vested interests.

Demonstration before RBI

BEFI has decided to stage demonstrations on 11 June 1997 before Reserve Bank at all centres demanding:

a) Names of big and corporate defaulters of bank loans should be immediately published and all measures taken to recover the outstanding dues from them including, inter alia, confiscation of their guarantors' properties instead of resorting to write-off of the loans or compromises affecting long term interests of banks. Wilful defaulters must be subjected to strong punishment.

b) Reserve Bank's supervisory mechanism must function properly and any case of malfeasance should be severely dealt with.

c) Top personnel of banks indulging in corrupt practices must be immediately identified and penalised.

Wage demands

The period of last wage settlement in banking industry is expiring in October 1997. As per agreement, all apex-level unions are to hand over fresh demands for commencement of negotiations six months prior to that expiry date.

BEFI submitted the new charter of demands on 20 May 1997 to Indian Banks Association. The salient features are:

Revised pay scales to be restructured at consumer price index of 1716 (1960=100) which was the average figure for quarter ended December 1996. Whatever higher linkage figure will be available at the time of negotiations that will be adopted and pay scales now prepared will have to be recast.

The amount so arrived at has been raised by 22.5% being the percentage rise in Net National Product (NNP) during 1992-93 to 1996-97 (Method adopted by V Pay Commission). Accordingly, demanded scales are:

Clerical cadre Rs 3350 - Rs 10,500

Subordinate cadre Rs 3050 - Rs 7,650

Dearness Allowance formula as before, the rate per 4 point slab being 0.24% of pay

Computer increment to be extended to those not entitled now.

Conveyance allowance to be raised to Rs 300 pm and treated as reimbursement of transport charges.

Regional Rural Bank Staff have to be brought within the ambit of industrywise wage settlements in banks, including implementation of 6th bipartite settlement which remains denied so far.

Convention of BEFI at Bathinda

On the call of the Bank Employees Federation of India (BEFI), a convention was held at Bathinda on 10th May at Teachers Home against the corruption prevailing in Public Sector Banks. Addressing the convention, Dipankar Mukherjee MP, said that at present more than Rs 40,000 crores stood as Non-Performing assets (NPAs) in Public Sector Banks which is the amount due from big businessmen and

ALL SUPPORT TO BANK STRIKE ON 4TH JULY.

The Secretariat of CITU issued the following statement to the press.

The employees and officers of the Banking industry have been going on for countrywide strike on 4th July 1997 to record their protest against the retrograde policy of the Govt of India towards the Banking Sector of the Country.

Nine organisations of Bank Employees and Officers all over the country have sponsored this strike.

The strike is going to take place in the background of continuing protest of the entire trade union movement against the Govt's policy of indulgence and encouragement of Non-banking financial institutions in private sector at the cost of commercial banks, Govt move to allow more private Banks in the country, privatisation through disinvestment, discriminatory application of Pension Scheme among the bank employees and officers, including imposition of retrograde condition of non-participation in strike for pension-eligibility, ban on recruitment in Banks and other pressing issues.

CITU extends all support to the united struggle of the Bank Employees and officers all over the country and calls upon all their affiliates and members to come forward in solidarity with the striking Bank employees.

industrialists. He strongly demanded from the Govt of India to publish the names and addresses of these big defaulters so that the public may know that who have defrauded with their money in Bank's deposits. Mr Harish Sharma, All India Joint Secretary, BEFI, addressing the convention, said that BEFI is the first organisation in banking industry which has started a move to save the Banks from going into loss and appealed to all bank employees and officers to do this task unitedly. He cautioned the bank employees of serious consequence in case of banks going into loss, giving the example of New Bank of India. M M Behal, General Secretary, SBOP Staff Union said that Rs 400 crores are lying as Non-Performing Assets in State Bank of Patiala. He demanded a probe by CBI as to how this huge amount has gone into NPA and said that the senior officers responsible for the same should be strictly punished. The convention was also addressed by Ashwani Sharma, General Secretary, BEFI (HP), Lachhman Singh, President, BEFI, Bathinda, Harminder Dhillon from Pb, Subordinate Services Federation, Sandeep Parchanda from Medical Rep Union and Sat Pal Bharti from CITU, Bathinda.

CITU Welcomes united resolve of the Five Federations to fight back the move to privatise the Coal Mines

The Secretariat of CITU has issued the following statement to the press:

CITU welcomes the decision of coal workers to launch a nation-wide united struggle to force the Government to refrain from the dangerous move to denationalize the coal mines. The resolution which was adopted at the meeting of all the five national federations of the coal workers affiliated with CITU, AITUC, HMS, INTUC and BMS held at Calcutta on 28.5.97 expressed serious concern over the decision of the Central Cabinet to bring a bill in Parliament to denationalize the coal mines. The meeting has decided to hold a joining convention on 6th July '97 to finalise the date of a countrywide strike of the coal workers.

CITU while recording its strong protest to the move of the Government expresses solidarity with the struggling coal workers and assures full support to their movement in the coming days.

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX NUMBERS FOR INDUSTRIAL WORKERS (BASE 1982 = 100)

Centre	Mar 97	April 97	Linking Factor for Old Base	Centre	Mar 97	April 97	Linking Factor for Old Base
All India	351	354	4.93	Barbil	322	325	5.00
Gudur	353	357	4.33	Rourkela	331	337	3.59
Guntur	351	355	5.60	Amritsar	310	314	5.19
Hyderabad	326	328	5.23	Ludhiana	316	324	—
Visakhapatnam	340	340	—	Ajmer	350	359	5.01
Warrangal	337	341	—	Jaipur	344	348	5.17
Doom-Dooma Tinsukia	318	318	4.05	Chennai	375	380	—
Guwahati	349	351	—	Coimbatore	346	348	5.35
Labac-Silchar	305	314	3.96	Coonoor	384	381	4.80
Mariani-Jorhat	336	338	3.95	Madurai	358	363	5.27
Rangapara-Tezpur	333	340	4.29	Salem	364	369	—
Jamshedpur	337	336	4.68	Tiruchirapally	399	408	—
Jharia	294	299	4.63	Agra	332	336	—
Kodarma	315	306	5.43	Ghaziabad	348	345	—
Monghyr	340	326	5.29	Kanpur	350	351	4.69
Noamundi	338	337	4.58	Saharanpur	319	325	5.06
Ranchi-Hatia	338	333	—	Varanasi	371	369	5.12
Ahmedabad	353	352	4.78	Asansol	311	314	4.77
Vadodara	343	338	—	Calcutta	346	352	4.74
Bhavanagar	363	364	4.99	Darjeeling	298	300	4.55
Rajkot	338	342	—	Durgapur	352	358	—
Surat	364	369	—	Haldia	373	380	—
Faridabad	354	355	—	Howrah	356	364	4.12
Yamunanagar	334	342	5.53	Jalpaiguri	302	304	4.16
Srinagar	346	348	5.47	Raniganj	304	314	4.40
Bangalore	356	356	5.66	Chandigarh	329	340	—
Belgaum	372	378	—	Delhi	369	372	4.97
Hubli-Dharwar	352	354	—	Pondicherry	415	417	—
Mercara	363	370	—				
Alwaye	363	363	5.19	Additional series of Labour Bureau			
Mundakayam	371	372	—	Kothagudem	353	356	3.25
Quilon	393	391	—	Himachal Pradesh	336	340	3.75
Thiruvananthapuram	380	389	—	Bhilwara	341	346	3.20
Bhalaghat	332	334	5.24	Chindwara	350	352	2.59
Bhilai	316	320	3.49	Tripura	322	338	4.37
Bhopal	367	369	5.46	Goa	406	407	3.40
Indore	348	350	5.18				
Jabalpur	359	352	6.41	Note: Figures on old base can be obtained by			
Mumbai	383	396	5.12	multiplying the Index Number on New Base by the			
Nagpur	374	374	4.99	linking factor given and rounding off the result to			
Nasik	368	368	—	nearest whole number.			
Pune	375	376	—	—Dash denotes new centres under 1982 series,			
Solapur	374	364	5.03				

7TH BIHAR STATE CONFERENCE OF CITU

360 delegates/observers representing 41 unions attended the 7th Bihar state conference of CITU held at Sahid Coms. Kishun, Budhan, Kokil, Pramod, Ramdev, Ramavtar Nagar, Dhanbad from 6-8 June, 1997. 180 delegates were from Coal, 41 delegates from Steel, 12 from Engineering, 5 from Electricity, 14 from Pharmaceuticals, 17 from Bidi, 42 from other unorganized sector and 41 other represented various industrial sector in which 219 were from public sector, 84 from private sector and 30 delegates represented both sectors. 56 delegates were from scheduled caste, 35 were tribals, 37 minorities and 213 from other social groups.

After the flag hoisting and floral tributes to martyrs a public meeting was held at local Kohinoor maidan which was addressed by CITU's all India Vice-President Com. Samar Mukherjee, West Bengal State President Com. Niran Ghosh, CITU's All India Secretary, Com. Vimal Ranadive, CPI(M) M.P. Com. Chandra Kala Pande, CITU's state general secretary Com. J.S. Majumdar and CITU and colliery Kamgar Union leaders Com. A.K. Roy and Com. S.K. Bakshi. The leaders called upon the workers to launch serious battle against the new economic policy of the central government, against communalism and for country's unity and against corruption. The meeting was presided over by state President Com. Chandni Prasad.

The Conference was inaugurated by Com Samar Mukherjee calling upon the workers to strive for unity and uphold the banner of working class internationalism and socialism. Com. A.K. Roy, Chairman of the reception committee while welcoming the delegates called upon the workers to emphasize on class unity and class character opposed to capitalist and decadent cultural influence on them.

The inaugural session was greeted by the state secretary of AITUC Com. Rajendra Yadav, state secretary of AICCTU Com R.N. Thakur and state General Secretary of HMKP Com. M.K. Singh. They all expressed desire for united working class movement against anti-working class and anti people policies of central and state governments. Moving a vote of thanks CITU state general secretary Com. J.S. Majumdar expressed desire for discussion amongst all trade unions for broadest possible working class unity in the state.

Delegate session was greeted by General Secretary of Bihar State Kisan Sabha Com. Vijay Thakur, State President of Agricultural Workers Union Com. Sarangdhar Paswan, State president of DYFI Com. Awdehs Kumar, State President of AIDWA Com. Sandhya Bakshi, State general secretary of Bihar state Non-Gazetted Employees Federation Com.

Yogendra Prasad, State Secretary of BEFI Com. P.N. Singh and others.

The General Secretary placed the report in which apart from explaining main trends in the international and national situation and all India struggle the situation in Bihar was explained in details at political, social and at administrative level. It was emphasized that land struggle in Bihar was the key to the democratic movement. The report explained the deteriorating situation in Central Public Sector undertakings, Coal Industries, Ancillary Industries, Agriculture based Industries including Sugar, State Public Sector undertakings, State Electricity Board,

State Transport, Cottage Industries, including Bidi etc. Stone Quarries etc.

The report noted that during the period between 6th and 7th Conference the movement in Bihar under CITU has increased and its influence had also increased. In new areas and in new industries the organization had spread. In Coal, Sugar, Iron Ore, Road Transport many AITUC, INTUC, HMS unions and branches and functionaries with workers joined CITU. Compared to last conference the membership increase was by eleven thousand. The Conference set a target of one lac membership in 1997 and 1.25 lakhs in 1998. The Conference also reviewed statewide industrial federations/Co-ordination committees. It was decided to increase the functioning of the Co-ordination committee within shortest possible time. The conference decided to hold district conferences and constitute district committees.

In movemental task with the slogan of "Udyog Bachao and Udyog Barhao", it was decided to hold state level seminar against closure and sickness to hold conventions and demonstrations; to build up movement on the demands of unorganized labour and contract labour; and to organise a massive rally at Patna.

The Conference adopted resolution to complete the task of Rs. 8 lakhs for Com. BTR Memorial Fund within 31st August, Rs.5 lakh fund for state CITU building to begin in 1998 and one lakh special fund every year for state centre.

The conference adopted a number of resolutions including the resolution to observe 150th Anniversary of Communist Manifesto; to observe for solidarity action with peasant struggle and their demands; against privatisation of coal and electricity industries; for revival and support to State Road Transport Corporation and State Public Sector, demand for working women for help to education of tribal and scheduled caste students etc. 68 delegates participated in two days discussions and adopted the reports and statement of accounts unanimously.

The meeting elected a 17 member secretariat re-lecting Com. Chandi Prasad as state President and Com. J.S. Majumdar as General Secretary, Com.S.K. Bakshi, Com. K.K. Tripathi and Com. Ramanika Gupta as Vice-President; Com. T.N. Singh, com. Narendra Mishra, Com. Mihir Choudhury, Com. Mithilish Singh, Com. Ganesh Shankar Singh, Com. Amarendra Pd. Mishra, Com. Arun Kumar Mishra as

Secretaries, and Com. S.N. Singh as Treasurer.

The Conference newly elected Com. A.K. Roy and Com. Yogendra Prasad Singh as Vice-Presidents keeping one post vacant for future co-option and Com. Yadav Prasad as Secretary. The Conference also elected a 47-member state committee keeping 3 posts vacant for co-option.

FIRST J & K STATE CITU CONFERENCE

The working class of J&K State organised its 1st historic Conference of CITU in the Jammu city at Abhenav Theatre on 24-25th May, 1997.

An impressive open session was held in 24th May which was attended by over 1500 workers and presided over by Comd. Mohd. Maqbool Convenor, CITU Coordination Committee. Before starting of the open session Com. Nanak Chand Senior Trade Union leader hoisted the CITU Flag in the compound of Abhenav Theater Com. K.K. Bakshi, Chairman reception committee welcomed the delegates and others who attended the open session.

Com. M.K. Pandhe, General Secretary, CITU while inaugurating the conference appreciated the working class of J&K for holding the conference despite all odds because of the prevailing situation in the state. He linked the problem of Kashmir with the economic development of the state and stressed that the well organised working class while be able to take up the challenge of secessionist and communal forces. He urged upon the state government to adopt the pro-labour policy to solve several pending problems in the state. Com. Pandhe pointed out that CITU must understand the need for stabilising the UF Govt. at the centre led by Shri I.K. Gujral. How ever the economic policies pursued by the Central Govt. are adversely effecting the interest of the country and its people. The reckless entry of M.N.C"s the massive concessions given to the big business houses. De-regulation of economy privatisation of public sector undertaking, reduction on import duty etc. are adversely effecting domestic producers and have resulted in deteriorating of poverty conditions of the people. He appeal all the Trade Unions to resist these policies unitedly.

Com. Mohd Yousuf Targami, MLA, while addressing said that it was a historic day in J&K when the working class organised its 1st conference. He hoped that the CITU will not only fight for demands of the working class alone but for the entire toiling masses also.

While concluding the open session Com. Mohd. Maqbool explained the tasks before the CITU conference.

The conference was attended by 145 delegates including seven women from different sectors like Mines, Power, Tourism, un-organised Textiles, HMT etc.

A presidium consisting of Com. Nanak Chand, Com. Ashok Kumar, Com. R.K. Bhat, Miss Chemali Sharma and Mohd. Maqbool conducting proceedings. Com. Mohd. Maqbool convenor CITU Coordination Committee explained the National and International situation as well as the situation of the J&K state and explained the challenges before the working class movement of J&K.

Com. Om Parkash Organising Secy. placed the report of activities of last four years of CITU Coordination Committee and immediate tasks before the CITU. 19 Comrades took part in the discussion and adopted the report unanimously.

The conference adopted many resolution particularly against the economic policy, communal and diversive forces. On reopening of Kalakote Coal mines and judicial inquiry on recent mines disaster, on restoration of Trade Union rights in Chinab Textiles Mill at Kathua, on increasing of minimum wages, implementation of labour laws in unorganised sector and re-opening of (Union Carbide) Factory at Khanmoh Srinagar.

The conference elected 22 member state working committee with 7 office bearers. Com. Mohd, Maqbool as state president, Om Parkash as General Secretary., Nanak Chand and Ashok Kumar as Vice-Presidents, Roop Lal and R.K. Bhat as Secretaries and Om Prakash Mahjan as Cashier. The delegate session was addressed by Com. M.K. Pandhe. He stressed the need for developing the strong CITU centre in the state. He also urged the working class of J&K to participate in the march to parliament programme in September against the pension scheme.

Action call of the Conference)

The Conference decided to march to New Secretariat in Jammu in Nov. 1997 to highlight the immediate demands of the working class of state and launch a signature campaign and collect 10,000 signature to submit to State Chief Minister on the date of March.

Delhi State CITU Conference

The 9th Delhi State Conference of CITU was concluded successfully from 14th to 16th June, with a clarion call for one day strike in the State on 11th August, 1997. The entire routes and corners of Gautam Buddha Nagar, newly emerged district and the newly developed industrial centre of Asia, Noida, were decorated with flags, banners of CITU. 216 delegates attended the conference.

Com. Mohan Lal, State President hoisted the flag and later on Central leaders along with state leaders paid their tributes to martyr's column. A presidium was constituted with Com. Mohan Lal, Com. Brahmjeet Singh and Com. Nathu Prasad.

Condolence resolutions were proposed by the presidium on the sad demise of international and national leaders including state level leaders Com. Ved Gupta, Com. JC Roy and Com. Raisuddin. Com. Bali Ram Verma, Chairman, reception Committee delivered the welcome address.

Com. E Balanandan inaugurated the conference. He dwelt upon the new economic policy, liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation. He invited all the delegates to launch untiring struggle against these policies and put further efforts for broader unity in working class.

Com. Suraj Bhan Bhardwaj, General Secretary of State Committee presented his report in which the present situation of working class movement at international level, national level and in Delhi, Ghaziabad and Faridabad was discussed at length. Further, the working class struggle in the last 3 years was analysed and proposed to launch further struggles for the cause of working class and against the communal and casteist forces and by this way to increase the strength to 1.5 lacs.

45 delegates participated in the discussion. The thrust of discussion was to launch the further struggles and to sharpen the working class agitation and strengthen the unity. The vote on account was passed for the last 3 years.

The report was passed unanimously. The conference formed a new state committee with 39 members. Com. Mohan Lal, President, Com. Baliram, Verma, Vice President, Com. Suraj Bhan Bhardwaj, General Secretary, Com. K M Tiwari, Secretary, Com. Mam Chand, treasurer along with 11 members were elected as State Secretariat members. Besides, the 39 members state committee was also elected.

Com. Asha Lata, General Secretary, Janawadi Mahila Sangh and Com. O P Sharma, Secretary, NIEF greeted the conference. From the CITU Centre, Com. Kanai Banerjee, Com. Tapan Sen and Com. Deb Roye attended the conference.

The conference adopted resolutions regarding various problems facing the working class. In his concluding speech Com. Kanai Banerjee called for strengthening the organisation by democratic process to face the onslaughts on the working class.

On 16th June, in the evening a huge rally was organised and from all corners workers participated in the rally; all the newly elected state leaders were introduced. Com. Sukomal Sen, General Secretary, All India State Employees Federation in his speech attacked the new economic policy, globalisation and privatisation. To stop these policies and reverse them, he exhorted to launch mass struggles.

The rally unanimously adopted a resolution to go in for one day strike on 11th August.

CITU DENOUNCES THE ORDINANCE ON OUT OF TURN ALLOTMENT OF GOVT QUARTERS.

CITU Denounces the promulgation of Presidential Ordinance at the behest of Govt of India which seeks to regularise and legitimize the out of turn and irregular allotment of Govt quarters through shady deals in the face of otherwise order of the Supreme Court to remove such irregularity.

CITU notes, of the various scams coming to light exposing the corrupt governance of Narasimha Rao regime the Housing Scam nourished by the then Govt at the Centre was the most sensitive exposing the depth of the corruption in the concerned Govt depts. with direct patronage of Ministers and bureaucrats. While thousands of Govt employees have been on the waiting list for Govt. accommodation, rampant out of turn allotments through illegal gratification had become almost a normal and regular practice in the Govt. The intervention of the apex court in this matter have been warmly welcomed by the people.

It is shocking to note that the United Front Govt. at the Centre which is committed to offer a clean administration as declared in its Common Minimum Programme has acted in legitimizing the most unclean and irregular act in the matter of allotment of Govt. Accommodation by its predecessor, through promulgation of the ordinance, that too to frustrate the order of the apex court of the country for a corrective action. In the background of the castigating observation of the Supreme Court regarding the dubious role of the concerned Minister and bureaucrats and the working of the Housing dept., the recent action of the Govt. by upholding a major part of those irregular deeds is really unfortunate and condemnable.

CITU demands upon the Govt. of India to take note of the protest from all quarters and withdraw the ordinance to uphold the spirit of propriety and fairness and to respond to its own commitment for a fair and clean administration.

WORKING WOMEN'S KARNATAKA STATE CONVENTION

□ Vishwa Kundapura

Gender discrimination against female workers in being perpetrated in almost every field of life. Working women should come forward to fight this menace so as to get justice and equal wages for equal work.

All India working women coordination committee (AIWWCC) convenor Comrade Vimala Ranadive gave this call to the working women folk of Karnataka while inaugurating a state level convention of working women on March 12 at Bangalore.

The Convention was organised by Karnataka unit of AIWWCC.

Com. Vimala Ranadive exhorted upon toiling women to take responsible positions in organizations in order to bring effective changes in the working class movement of Karnataka.

The globalisation of economy has thrown new challenges. Globalisation is severely affecting the job opportunities, i.e. it is resulting in job cuts and the female workers are more suffering of this bad tendency, she explained the gathering.

Without fundamental change in feudal system there can't be proper reservation for women or gender equality, Com. Vimala opined.

AIWWCC Tamilnadu unit convenor Com. Rajeshwari while addressing the convention called upon to resist the efforting of vested interests to divide people on the basis of caste religion, region, lan-

guage etc., she also appealed to fight for creating a healthy society.

GIC employee Vijaya Murthy presided over the convention which was attended by nearly two hundred people hailing from different parts of the state representing unorganised sector like Beedi, Agarbathi, Garment, Anganwadi, Plantation, irrigation Department etc.,

Employees representing organised sector like Bank, LIC, Health Dept., Public Sector, Govt. Depts., Judiciary also participate.

State Unit Convenor Com. S. Varalakshmi presented the report delegates participated in the discussion over the reports.

CITU State president S. Suryanarayana Rao, General Secretary V.J.K. Nair, J.M.S. State President K.S. Vimala were among others who addressed the convention.

The convention elected S. Varalakshmi as convenor of Karnataka State Working Women Coordination Committee. The following were the members of the committee. Vijaya Murthy, Lalitha Shenoy, K.S. Vimala, Padmavathi Shenoy, Padmavathi, Ramani, N. Prabhavathi, Bharathi, Leelavathi, Yashoda, Khurshida Begum, Radha, Gowri, Santhana Laxmi, Sujatha, Uma, Ashwini, Geetha and Shehanaz.

[From Page 5]

culpable collusive indulgence the CRB Scam could not have taken place.

We urge on the authorities to immediately end the State Bank agitation through dialogue and discussions with the concerned union. Should the situation remain unchanged, the entire banking industry may witness dislocation.

We invite pitned attention of the authorities for immediate implementation of Pension Settlement in Private Banks. More than three and a half years have passed after the settlement was signed on 29.10.1993. Similarly, the pernicious clause enabling the bank

management to forfeit entire past service in the event of an employee participating strike has not yet been removed. It is clearly stipulated that all the rules of pension shall be on the liens of RBI pension scheme. Neither in RBI nor in SBI, LIC, GIC, foreign banks, such an anti-employee clause exists.

We totally reject the Report of the Mhalik Committee on wages and service conditions of RRB employees. We demand that the RRB employees must continue to get the benefit of same wages and service conditions as are applicable to the sponsoring banks' employees.

Sd/-(T.Chakraborty)
Gen. Secretary(AIBEA)
Sd/-Ashis Sen,
Gen.Secy.(BEFI)
Sd/-(B.D. Mondol)
For NOBW

Sd/-(SRSengupta)
Gen.Secretary(AIBOC)
Sd/- Debesh Bhattacharjee
Vice President(AIBOA)
Sd/-(B.D.Mondal)
Regional Secy.(NOBO)

Sd/-(P Lakshminarasaiiah)
Gen. Secretary(NCBE)
Sd/- D. DE Sarkar
Org. Secy.(INFEF)
Sd/-(A.K. Ghosh)
For Gen.Secy.(INBOC)

CITU Centre Observes Foundation Day

A gathering of more than 100 selected CITU activists was held at its Central Office on May 30 to mark the 27th Foundation Day of the trade union centre. The meeting was attended by CITU President E Balanandan, General Secretary, M K Pandhe, national secretaries Kanai Banerjee, Vimal Ranadive, P K Ganguly, Jibon Roy, S Dev Roye and Tapan Sen, Delhi State CITU General Secretary, S B Bharadwaj, former M P Sukomal Sen and AIDWA secretary Pramila Pandhe among others.

Rich tributes were paid by the speakers to the role of CITU in promoting working class unity and solidarity and in defending the vital interests of the labouring people.

E Balanandan recalled the activities of CITU over the years and appealed to all trade union centres to rise above affiliations and join hands in the ongoing struggle against the policies of liberalisation, globalisation and privatisation, which are hitting at the very roots of working class interests.

M K Pandhe underlined the need for strengthening the organisation and called for raising the CITU membership to 3.5 million before the year-end. He earnestly appealed that all CITU activists should strive to fulfil their fund-raising targets for the BTR Memorial as early as possible.

among others who spoke were Sukomal Sen, Jibon Roy and S B Bharadwaj.

Tamilnadu Observes CITU Foundation Day as Peoples Unity Day

30th May, the foundation day of CITU was observed as People's Unity Day throughout Tamilnadu.

Tamilnadu has recently become a hot bed of caste clashes. Recently there have been a series of violent occurrences in the southern districts of Tamilnadu. People belonging to the lower strata of the society were being mobilised on caste lines for clashing against each other and many people have been killed and many houses and other properties have been burnt.

It was in these circumstances, CITU State Committee decided to observe the foundation day as People's Unity Day. A meeting of the district secretaries was convened on 21st May. The meeting called upon all sections of the people to put an end to the clashes and maintain unity. While making this

appeal, CITU noted that social oppression, including practices of various forms of untouchability was still being practiced in various parts of the state.

Tamilnadu Kisan Sabha and State committees of AIDWA, DYFI, SFI, and All India Agricultural Workers Union jointly issued an appeal to this members to join the rallies on 30th May.

Thousands of leaflets were distributed all over the State. Processions were organised in various district centres. Hundreds of workers including women and members of other mass organisations participated in the processions and public meetings.

N Sankaraya, Secretary State CPI(M) and other leaders addressed the meeting in Madurai Town, which was one of the Centres affected in recent violence. N Varadarajan addressed the meeting at Dindigul. In Thirupur, C Govindasami, State Secretary CITU and others led the procession. Reports of processions and meetings have come from various centres including North Madras, South Madras, Nagapattinam, Pondicherry, Chengalpattu, Kanchipuram and Ooty.

LIC EMPLOYEES' CONTRIBUTIONS

In deference to the call of All India Insurance Employees' Association, the LIC Employees of Coimbatore Division have liberally contributed to the fund for giving relief to the family of Late Leelavathi of Madurai Corporation, who was murdered while serving the people. A sum of Rs. 23,000/- has been remitted to the Madurai Divisional Unit of AIIEA as the first installment for being handed over to the family of Leelavathi on 12.06.1997.

LIC Employees are not found wanting in the matter donating to the relief of affected sections of the people. Keeping up their tradition of volunteering help and succour to the people in distress, the Coimbatore Divisional Unit of AIIEA has remitted Rs. 5,000/- towards fund for relief of Earthquake victims of JABALPUR.

Cuba.

The international delegations present at the May Day events declared that these massive rallies irradiated conviction, bravery and confidence and served to revitalise the struggle of trade unions the world over.

Peru

Rallies and demonstrations were held in Lima and the rest of Peru to commemorate International Workers' Day. They paid homage to all of the martyrs of the working class and condemned the authoritarian attitude of the Peruvian government which, together with those with economic and military power, continued to attack the trade union movement. They have, to all intents and purposes, destroyed all social gains made in the labourfield, the most pressing demands of the working people are not being accepted.

They further reiterated that servicing the foreign debt is being carried out at people's expense. Poverty is spreading, wages are being frozen and unemployment is on the increase. All trade unionists, led by the General Confederation of Workers of Peru (CGTP) reject neo-liberal policies, demand respect for labour laws and human rights, and do not accept the civilian-military dictatorship of the government.

Guatemala

In the rallies called by trade union organisations to commemorate May Day, trade union leaders laid unanimous emphasis on the key demand made by the workers. The policies pursued by the ruling PAN party are starving the workers to death. Wages are falling in value by the day whilst prices for food and services are rising. neo-liberal policy favours the rich - not the poor. The Guatemalan government is not heeding the clamour of the workers concerning the urgent need to generate jobs. Speeches made by trade union leaders from Unsitragua and other trade unions called for unity among trade unions in order to ensure a more effective defence of gains and the labour code. These demands were echoed by the workers at the rallies.

Great Britain

May Day Vote Ends 18-Year Tory Rule

In the general elections on May Day, the British people have voted to end the 18-year Tory government's rule. notorious for their anti-trade union and anti-working class laws and their Thatcherite

monetarist fundamentalism.

The Labour Party backed by the British trade union movement won a landslide victory, winning 419 seats and gaining a massive 179 seat majority in the House of Commons.

The crushing defeat of the Tories who lost 177 seats, saw leading members of the outgoing Cabinet losing their seats, including former foreign secretary Malcolm Rifkind and leadership contender Michael Portillo. The Tories were totally wiped out in Scotland and Wales and in almost every major industrial and commercial centre in England.

British TUC General Secretary, John Monks, has stated that he looks forward to the new government implementing its programme, in particular help for the young and long term unemployed, union recognition and a minimum wage.

He further stated: "But more than specific measures I am looking for a change of tone. After 18 years of being shut out of national debate, trade unions hope for a government that will realise the potential of trade unions and their members to help solve the problems our country faces.

The new government must govern in the interests of the whole country, and not of any one interest group. But I am confident it will treat the union case with fairness, and recognise that the pendulum has swung too far in recent years in the direction of the bad employer.

(From Flashes from the Trade Unions, WFTU, 9/97).

May Day in Pakistan

Labour from All Pakistan Trade Union Federation

The workers community observed International Labour Day with the traditional zeal and held rallies throughout the big cities of the country on 1st May under the auspices of All Pakistan Trade Union Federation.

A big rally was organised in Lahore where the workers of different industrial units, public private sector and informal sector gathered at central office of APTUF in industrial area Gulberg Lahore. The workers marched on the different roads of the city, carrying national flag and red banners, while paying homage to the Martyrs of Chicago the workers also protested against privatisation, unemployment, price hike and retrenchment of workers. Large number of women from the different industries, brick kilns, agricultural sector, informal sector, slum dwelling areas

also participated in the rally. The procession was led by Gulzar Ahmed Chaudhry, General Secretary, Rubina Jamil Chairperson and other leaders, they marched on the different roads of the city.

While addressing the rally, Gulzar Ahmed Chaudhry paid rich tributes to Chicago martyrs and criticise the anti-workers policies of the government as well as employers.

He condemned privatisation and demanded that government should take proper measures to stop the inflation and the workers minimum wages should be fixed at least Rs 6000/- (US\$150) per month. He also demanded to provide job opportunities on merits and all the closed factories should be start forthwith. Proper steps should be taken for the implementation of labour laws and union's representatives be given participation in the Board of Directors of the factories.

Rubina Jamil while addressing the rally highlighted the problems of working women that they have to work more than eight hours without extra wages, they were hired on temporary basis and the contract system was extending, women workers were deprived all legal facilities. She criticised the policy of government as well as IMF/World Bank. She said that it was the duty of the government to provide employment to the people and proper steps should be taken for the safeguard of the women's rights as well as men. She also demanded equal representation of women in assemblies and other decision making bodies.

Then the procession marched and joined the big rally of Pakistan Workers Confederation because APTUF is the component organisation of PWC. Main procession march don the main roads of the city and reached on the Parliament House Punjab, where the main leaders of PWC, Gulzar Ahmed Chaudhry, Khursheed Ahmed, Rubina Jamil, Gulum Khan, Miran Kashmiri, Moahammad Aslam addressed the workers.

They urged the government to bring radical socio economic reforms. The workers stressed the government to formulate progressive labour policy and restore trade union rights. They demanded application of labour laws on the agricultural workers, informal sector workers and not to privatise the national utilities like WAPDA, Railway, Telecommunication, Karachi Port Trust and other industries. The workers also demanded to eliminate all the discriminatory laws against the women and they should be given equal share in all sphere of life.



CITU Delegations Visiting Abroad

Tapan Sen, Secretary, CITU, is visiting Japan in July 1997 to participate in an international seminar on "Workers" Participation within Enterprise" organised by the Asian Productivity Organisation, Tokyo.

Dr Hemalata Kandikuppa is going to Hong Kong to attend a Regional Trainers" Training Workshop slated for August 4-11, 1997. The workshop is going to be organised by the Committee of Asian Women (CAW), Hong Kong.

A CITU delegation consisting of M K Pandhe, M M Lawrence, V B Cherian, N M Sundaram, A Saundara Rajan, Sadhan Kanjilal, S Suryanarayana Rao, Sukomal Sen, R M Godbole, Ashok Rao, Lakshaman Seth, Natha Singh, Bijan Mitra, S Mukherjee, Arun Kumar, V Y Kadam, Rajinder Kumar and K S Rajan is visiting Havana (Cuba) in the first week of August 1997 to take part in the International Meeting of Workers Against Neo-liberalism and Globalisation.

A three-member CITU delegation to the 14th World Festival of Youth and Students, which is going to be held at Havana from July 28 to August 5, 1997, is proceeding for Cuba in the last week of July. The delegation will consist of Vivek Rao, Sudhipta Gupta and Debasis De.

[From Page 14]

This confirmed the viability of the company with increasing profit.

The Ministry accordingly submitted its note to the Cabinet Secretary on 9th June morning for consideration of the Cabinet Sub-Committee for revival of the company. However, attempts to sabotage the revival issue continued. In its note to the Cabinet Secretary, the Secretary of the Ministry of Chemicals did not enclose the plan submitted by the Marketing Director, thereby violating the decision of the meeting. He also gave the option for the SSI price standard while recommending for the BICP standard. Thus it was left to the Finance Ministry to decide the choice.

The Cabinet Sub-Committee was supposed to meet on 10th June to take the final decision. The meeting however was not held, because on 9th evening there was sudden change in the Ministerial portfolios and the Minister of Chemicals was changed. But the question arises as to whether the recommendations for the revival of IDPL which has now been already submitted to the Cabinet Secretary can be changed by the new Minister, Sri Arunachalam? So the struggle has to continue to save the IDPL. The Save IDPL Committee has decided to meet shortly and assess the situation. Necessity arising, a call for countrywide movement has to be given.

International Labour Standards in Hong Kong to be Continued

The ILO, Geneva has issued the following communique on 17th June:

The 85th International Labour Conference was told on 17th June that International Labour Standards prevailing in Hong Kong prior to the 1 July transfer of sovereignty will be applied after 1 July 1997 by the Government of China. The following statement was read out in the Plenary session of the ILC:

"The Director-General received on 10 June 1997 forty-six notifications from the Government of China concerning the application or continued application to Hong Kong after 1 July 1997, and will ensure the continued application to Hong Kong from that date of all the Conventions which were applicable to Hong Kong until that date under declarations made by the Government of the United Kingdom, except three which were specifically designed for non-metropolitan territories."

The three conventions which applied to non-metropolitan areas are No.82, Social Policy (Non-metropolitan territories), 1947; No.86, Contracts of Employment (Indigenous Workers), 1947; and No.84, Right of Association (Non-metropolitan territories), 1947.

The following is a list of the 46 ILO Conventions which apply to Hong Kong Special Administrative Region with effect from 1 July 1997 in the same manner as prior to that date:

No.2 - Unemployment Convention, 1919; No.3 Maternity protection Convention, 1919; No.5 - Minimum Age (Industry) Convention, 1919; No.7 - Minimum Age (Sea), Convention, 1920; No.8 - Unemployment Indemnity (Shipwreck) Convention, 1920; No.10 - Minimum Age (Agriculture) Convention; 1921; No.11 - Right of Association (Agriculture) Convention, 1921; No.12 - Workmen's Compensation (Agriculture), 1921; No.14 - Weekly Rest (Industry) Convention, 1921; No.15 - Minimum Wage (Trimmers and Stokers) Convention, 1921; No.16 - Medical Examination of Young Persons (Sea), Convention, 1921; No.16 - Medical Examination of Young Persons (Sea) Convention, 1925; No.19 - Equality of Treatment (Accident Compensation) Convention, 1925; No.22 - Seamen's articles of Agreement

Convention, 1926; No.23 - Repatriation of Seamen Convention, 1926, No.29 - Forced Labour Convention, 1930; No.32 - Protection Against Accidents (Dockers) Convention (Revised), 1932; No.42 - Workmen's Compensation (Occupational Diseases) Convention (Revised), 1934; No.45 - Underground Work (Women) Convention, 1935; No.50 - Recruiting of Indigenous Workers Convention 1936; No.58 - Minimum Age (Sea) Convention (Revised) 1936; No.59 - Minimum Age (Industry) convention (Revised, 1937; No.64 - Contracts of Employment (Indigenous Workers) Convention, 1939; No.65 - Penal Sanctions (indigenous Workers) Convention, 1939, No.74 - Certification of Able Seamen Convention, 1946; No.81 - Labour Inspection Convention, 1947; No.87 - Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948; No.90 - Night work of Young Persons (Industry) Convention (Revised) 1948; No.92 - Accommodation of Crews Convention (Revised), 1949; No.97 - Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949; No.98 - Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949; No.101 - Holidays with Pay (Agriculture) Convention, 1952; No.105 - Abolition of Forced Labour convention, 1957; No.108 - Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention, 1958; No.115 - Radiation Protection Convention, 1960; No.122 - Employment Policy Convention, 1964; No.124 - Medical Examination of Young Persons (Underground Work) Convention, 1965; No.133 - Accommodation of Crews (Supplementary Provisions) Convention 1970; No.141 - Rural Workers' Organisations Convention, 1975; No.142 - Human Resources Development Convention, 1975; No.144 - Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976; No.147 - Merchant Shipping (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1976, No.148 - Working Environment (Air Pollution, Noise and Vibration) Convention, 1977, No.150 - Labour Administration Convention, 1978; No.151 - Labour Relations (Public Service) Convention, 1978; No.160 - Labour Statistics Convention, 1985.

The People's Republic of China has ratified the following 18 conventions.

[Cont'd On Page 25]

THREE YEARS OF MOBILIZATION OF TRADE UNIONS

We are publishing hereunder in abridged form excerpts from the report of the Presidium of the Vietnam General Confederation of Labour placed at its National Plenary Conference trade union development on non-state sector-Ed).

Having realized its responsibility in uniting workers into trade unions to contribute to developing production, creating social and politic order, protecting legitimate rights and interests of workers in market economy, right from 1998, the VGCL Presidium already directed trade unions of all levels to review their work for drawing experience. Annual conferences are organized to review trade union's activities and work out new plans, and policies for trade union in all economic sectors. Recruiting new members and setting up grassroot unions in non-state sector are considered the primary, vital tasks. As a result, a growing number of working people has voluntarily jointed trade union organizations.

In 1994, the union system had 1,420 grassroots trade unions with 66,013 unionists and members in non-state sector. In 1995, other 1,531 grassroots trade unions with 48,550 unionists and members were established.

In 1996 alone, 2,017 grassroot trade unions, craft unions, labour associations came into being. As a result, after three years 3,618 grassroots trade unions, craft unions, labour associations with 276,018 unionists, members came into being and by December 31, 1996 the total number of members equivalent to 63% of the eligible enterprises under the Labour Code and the Decision 81-VGCL on Vietnamese Trade Union's Constitution.

2,393 out of above mentioned 5,044 grassroots trade unions are in private enterprises, limited liability companies and joint-stock companies accounting for 30% of the eligible businesses, 485 grassroots trade unions in cooperatives, equivalent to 80% of eligible cooperatives and 485 grassroot trade unions in foreign invested companies, equivalent to 60.5% of eligibly working business.

The number of grassroots trade unions, craft unions, labour associations and the number of unionists and members in the period of 1994-1996 are respectively 4.7 times and 4.2 times greater than in the period of 1989-1993.

Many confederations of Labour have high growth rate of unions in non-State sector during the past few

years such as Ho Chi Minh City, An Giang, Song Be, Hanoi, Can Tho, Ba Ria-Vung Tau, Dong Nai, Hai Phong. However, the rate of people taking part in trade unions in respective business is still low. For instance, this rate in 1995 was 60% in Ho Chi Minh City (58% of which are in foreign invested companies), 35.8% in An Giang, 33% in Hanoi, 33% in Ba Ria-Vung Tau, 30% in Dong Nai, 25.4% in Kon Tum, 18% in Bac Thai and 15% in Thanh Hoa.

Functions and activities of grassroots trade unions, craft unions and labour associations.

The tasks and functions of grassroots trade unions in non-state sector were more clearly defined in the Labour Code.

Many grassroots trade unions in private businesses, limited liability companies, joint-stock companies and foreign invested enterprises have relied on the Labour Code and State's policies to work out trade union activities for the sake of working people such as to mobilize and encourage working people to learn and work in accordance with the Labour Code, help working people sign labour contracts, negotiate and sign labour agreements with enterprise employers, elaborate working regulations, jointly work with employers to carry out the State's laws, policies, settle down labour disputes in conformity with regulations, many employers recognized that the employer-employee relationship, since the establishment of trade unions in enterprises, has been greatly improved and employers can better understand workers' wishes and feelings, hence help them tackle problems in production for their deserving interests and strictly follow the laws.... Since trade unions came into being, workers have been able to sign labour contracts with at least a year-term or longer, had social and accident insurances bought by the companies...hence enable them to work with their minds in peace and find it easier to ask the trade union for help when they have troubles. The fact shows that if grassroots trade unions in enterprises have a thorough grasp of working regulations and laws, workers legitimate interests will be ensured and their roles promoted.

However, to fulfill the task of defending workers legitimate interests many grassroots trade unions have to work cleverly and persistently, showing the firmness and unity between trade union executive committee and working people. This is clearly illus-

trated by the example of SEABREEZE's grassroots trade union. The trade union and Vietnamese managers of the company has strongly proposed to the Executive Board and Director to reevaluate the foreign invested capital in form of equipment sent to Vietnam which was doubled the real prices, opposed the foreign partners who vilated investment laws and benefits of the Vietnamese side, required strict judgement to foreigners who voilated the regulations on working management stipulated by Vietnamese Laws, fought against enticed bad elements obstructing trade union's activities. Owing to the assistance of upper-level trade unions, grassroot trade unions' activities have been maintained, efficiency promoted to be deserve with workers' reliance.

Trade Union's activities in cooperatives.

Because of its special collective form of business, the unionists are also the cooperative members who contribute capital as well as properties to the cooperative, equally share responsibilities and management under the cooperative's regulations. Many cooperative grassroots trade unions have promoted their efficiency by focusing on such activities as organizing meetings to help cooperative members jointly work with the managerial boards to innovate their production and business, shifting the cooperative management into a new mechanism, advancing technology, creating more jobs, improving cooperative members' life and ensuring the harmony in the benefits of the cooperatives and their mem-

bers. Cooperative trade unions have greatly contributed to seeking for business contracts, creating jobs for working people, expanding cooperative production... Cooperative trade union have also proposed concerned managing institutions to improve policies on cooperatives such as to specify worker's salary levels and salary scale, reduce taxes for cooperatives with many poor workers, adjust unreasonable policies on cooperatives, give priority in providing capital loan, expand business cooperation, buy social insurance for cooperative members. For the last few years, other forms that helped unite working people in non-state sector have been craft unions and labour associations. Member of craft unions and labour associations are individuals or self-employed workers who own and directly run their businesses under the controls of State's authorities such as the People Committee, Labour agencies, Taxation department, Police... Under the guidances of trade unions in local area, the activities of cract unions and labour associations aim at mutual cooperation and assistance to create more jobs, abide by the laws on business licence and production, By doing this, many craft unions and labour associations have helped local authorities maintain order and security, publize laws and regulations among working people.

Because of their practical activities, the working quality of grassroots trade unions and craft unions have greatly improved.

Declaration on the Occasion of the 6th Anniversary of Jan-17, 1991 Aggressin Against Iraq

Working people of Iraq recollect unpleasant memories of the 30 state wanton and vindictive aggression launched against Iraq on Jan 16-17, 1991 and at times when they express utmost denunciation and profound condemnation on the insistence by the UN-dominated forces to further retain the all round, unjust economic embargo imposed on Iraq, despite its full compliance with all relevant resolutions dictated by forces dominating the Security Council, it strongly asks it to respond to the commitments stated in is unjustly dictated resolutions against Iraq, in putting an immediate end to the illegal and unlawful sanctions of the no-flight zone decision on northern and southern of Iraq which should be immediately lifted as being a unilateral decision having nothing to

do with the UN Security Council resolution issued against Iraq thus, constituting blatant violation of international law, infringing upon the UN charter enacting a grave unprecedent ..in the international relations. We are fully confident that you are well aware of the harsh suffering people and workers of Iraq undergo as a result of the continuation of the unrivaled and Barbarous economic embargo dictated on them since more than six years now depriving Iraqis the access to life saving food, medicine and other basic needs hence hundreds of thousands of innocent people have already died among them children, the elderly, women, the disable, the sick and the needy, spearheaded by workers thus, the im-

[On Page 27]

INTERNATIONAL STRUGGLE

Great Britain

10,000 MARCH TO DEMAND JOBS AND JUSTICE FOR DOCK WORKERS.

On 12 April, over ten thousand people marched through central London to demand jobs and social justice for the sacked Liverpool dock workers.

Dockers and their families presented a people's charter for social justice to the Prime Minister's office.

The charter listed 10 demands, starting with the reinstatement of the 500 Liverpool dockers and other sacked strikers around Britain. It called for the repeal of all anti-union laws, the renationalisation of privatised industries and free health care and education for all.

The charter also listed the demand for a nuclear-free world and urged action to reverse global pollution and the devastation of the Earth's resources.

The marchers followed the footsteps of Britain's original Chartists, who marched on Parliament, from south London's Kensington Park almost 150 years ago.

The dockers were sacked by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company for refusing to cross a picket line 18 months ago.

As the Morning Star pointed out in an editorial, in the past, the dockers would have been able to count on solidarity action from other workers in exactly the same way as the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company is backed by other companies and by the Tory government. But workers' solidarity was specifically banned by the Tory government, who vilified it as "secondary" action, as though the plight of one group of workers was of no interest or consequence to another group.

The demonstration also marked the launch of the British leg of Euromarch '97 which is to converge on Amsterdam on 14 June to coincide with the European Union international conference.

LATIN AMERICAN CONSTRUCTION WORKERS ADOPT ACTION PROGRAMME

Latin America

Construction workers' federation and unions in Latin America and the Caribbean within the Latin

American Federation of Construction, Wood and Building Materials (FLEMACON), are stepping up their large-scale struggles and carrying out successful events.

The FLEMACON Executive Secretariat, meeting in the city of Bogota, Colombia on 17 and 18 February during the 20th congress of FENALTRACONCEM, hereby publish the following:

The Political, Social and Economic situation in Latin America.

The discredit and crisis suffered by Latin American state models as applied in the 1960s and 1970s, was followed by the propagation of the neoliberal model which was projected as a long-term alternative in the 1980s and particularly after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the socialist bloc,

After 10 years this model, implemented in the majority of our countries on what was intended to be a long term basis, and which claimed to be able to transform and modernise society, has not abided by any of the promises which formed the basis of its creation.

Since the policy was introduced 1,600 state enterprises have been sold, 200 of them large-scale companies, bringing in more than 80,000 million dollars for governments.

However, the per capita tax burden in Latin America has risen by an average of 20% in recent years, bringing about the corresponding fall in household incomes. As a result, the tax-collecting neoliberal state is a rich government residing over an increasingly poor society; the resources sucked from a country are not channeled into providing or generating new jobs.

Many of the companies which previously operated with monopoly status have since been privatised, and all of them have increased the prices they charge. The promise made had been that privatisation was efficient and led to lower prices, but in effect the reverse has occurred. In recent years, basic rates have increased fivefold.

In recent years, almost 3 million workers in the state sector in Latin American countries have been dismissed, losing all rights. A further 12 million in other sectors have lost their jobs as a result of the re-

cession, whilst the remainder of those in work have seen their incomes fall. If the tax burden and higher prices are added to this equation, it can be understood why consumer spending has declined.

To the above should be added the effects of privatisation, together with the commercialisation of health, education and social security - sectors from which the state has been withdrawing little by little.

Foreign debt in Latin America amounted to 421,000 million dollars in 1989, but in spite of the payment of 315,297 million dollars to service and pay off this debt in subsequent years, the total level of foreign debt had risen to 562,000 million dollars in 1996, according to a World Bank report.

In recent years, the level of construction of basic infrastructure as a share of global investment in Latin America dams, bridges, hospitals, schools and housing - has fallen by between 40 and 50 per cent, since the lion's share of budgets has been used to pay off and service foreign debt.

To conclude, although the economic product per capita has not increased, the number of people in work has declined and state enterprises no longer exist, governments are spending more than they did a decade ago. Experience shows that negating the role of the state in market regulation exacerbates problems; that privatising through ideological conviction and economic interest creates abusive monopolies; and that the state's regulatory role should be resumed in conditions characterized by transparency on the market and economic competitiveness, where the majority's interest is safeguarded.

We call upon all trade union organisations to engage in and strengthen solidarity and united action amongst workers and people against the stances adopted by governments and employers in ignoring rights and benefits.

South Korea

NATIONAL TRADE UNION CENTRES TO CONTINUE PROTESTS AGAINST NEW LABOUR LAW

The new version of labour law amendments voted by the South Korean National Assembly on 10 March has failed to satisfy the national trade union centres. The Korean Confederation of Trade Union (KCTU) declared that a new strike will be launched in May in protest. The KCTU was particularly dissatis-

fied with the rejection of the demand for full trade union rights for teachers and public service employees.

The new labour law which accepts multiple trade unions at the national and industrialize level formally awards recognition to the KCTU. However, multiple trade unions at the enterprise level are to be allowed only from the year 2002 after the introduction of methods and procedures of collective bargaining such as single bargaining representation.

The new law delays by two years the granting of new powers to employers to sack surplus workers. It is now stipulated that companies will only be allowed to cut jobs in "economic emergencies". The employers' demand for non-payment of wages during strikes has been accepted in the new law.

The new legislation also requires the abolition of salary payments for full-time union officials in five years.

On the employers' demand for replacement of striking workers, the law provides that they can replace strikers only with other workers of the business concerned (i.e., employees of the same company, yet in different work places) during a period of industrial action. Sub-contracting during a period of industrial action is prohibited.

The unions consider that some of the provisions in the new law are worse than those in the amendments adopted last December which provoked nationwide strikes and are thus in contradiction with international labour standards.

TEACHERS' STRUGGLE FOR UNION RECOGNITION: Teachers in South Korea are continuing their struggle, including hunger strikes, for trade union rights and for the formal recognition of the National Teachers' Labour Union (Jongyojo). The union has a membership of over 15,000.

Germany

MINERS' STRIKE AND MARCH TO BONN STOP SUBSIDY CUTS

Following a week-long strike and occupation of pits and massive protest actions, including a March to Bonn, the coalminers of Germany have forced government to stop the planned cuts in subsidies and have saved jobs which were planned to be eliminated by the management.

Under the agreement reached on 13 March between the government and the coalminers' union, the

government agreed to nearly one billion Deutsche marks (DM) in aid for the coal industry than planned until 2000 and agreed that there will be no obligatory dismissals.

Earlier, in their march to Bonn, on 10 March, about 3,000 miners arrived in Bonn in motorcycle convoys, cars and vans and blockaded a main road through the government quarter as well as the headquarters of Chancellor Helmut Kohl's Christian Democratic Party and his coalition partner, the free Democratic Party. They sealed entrances to the Free Democrat party headquarters with chains, forcing it to move its weekly leadership meeting to parliament buildings.

The miners occupied town halls, pits and roads across the Ruhr industrial heartland and the Saarland on the French border. In the Ruhr valley town of Duisburg, around 2,000 miners from the Walsum colliery drove in convoy to the town labour office and, in Bottrop, around 2,000 miners protested outside the local Christian Democrat headquarters.

In the Saarland region, miners blocked Germany's main motorway route to Luxembourg.

STRIKING BUILDING WORKERS STORM REICHSTAG BUILDING

On 14 March, hundreds of German building workers broke through barricades and stormed the building site at Berlin's Reichstag (the building which will again become Germany's parliament in 1999) after their five-day strike over the chronic unemployment in their industry.

About 6,000 building workers then marched from the Brandenburg Gate to the city centre to demonstrate against job losses in the industry which has mounted to 400,000.

KMU DEMANDS DISMANTLING OF US BASES IN AISA

(KMU, the Philippines Trade Unions adopted the following resolution in their presently held 14th Conference:

The US military bases in Japan are located in Okinawa and other parts of Japan. "The US-Japan Joint Security Declaration", signed in April 1996, states that the area for the US-Japan military cooperation should be expanded from the Far East Asia to the entire Asia-Pacific region and the world over. During the Gulf war, the sortie bases that US imperialism attacked Iraq were US bases in Yokosuka, Okinawa and others in Japan. Japanese "Self Defence Force"

also dispatched its personnel to Cambodia and Golan Heights as the United Nations' "Peace Keeping Operation (PKO).

The US bases in Japan do not serve the interest of the people in Japan especially in Okinawa. The people suffer from the presence of the US bases in Japan because of continuing violence and rape cases by US servicemen, compulsory confiscation of land and strengthening of the function of US bases.

The US bases in Japan and the US-Japan military cooperation aims to pursue imperialist scramble and attack the anti-imperialist struggles in the world especially in the Asia-Pacific region. The US-Japan Security Treaty legalizes this.

To dismantle US bases in Japan, which is one of the tools to oppress the peoples of the world, and to abolish the US-Japan Security Treaty, which combines US and Japanese imperialism, are important tasks not only for Japanese people but also for the peoples of the world.

The Filipino people were able to dismantle the US bases. The people in Japan especially in Okinawa and South Korea struggle against USA bases. On May 15, 1997, big mobilization against US bases was held in Okinawa and South Korea. Let us advance our struggle and solidarity to dismantle US bases in Aisa and all over the world!

[From Page 20]

No.7 - Minimum Age (Sea), 1920; No.11 - Right of Association (Agriculture 1921; No.14 - Weekly Rest (Industry), 1921; No.15 - Minimum Age (Trimmers and Stokers), 1921; No.16 - Medical Examination of Young Persons (Sea), 1921; No.19 - Equality of Treatment (Accident Compensation), 1925; No.22 - Seamen's Articles of Agreement, 1926; No.23 - Repatriation of Seamen, 1926; No.26 - Minimum Wage fixing Machinery, 1928; No.27 - Marking of Weight (Packages Transported by Vessels), 1929; No.32 - Protection Against Accidents (Dockers) (Revised), 1932; No.45 - Underground Work (Women), 1935; No.59 - Minimum Age (Industry) (Revised), 1937; No.80 - Final Articles Revision, 1946; No.100 - Equal Remuneration, 1951; No.144 - Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards), 1976; No.159 - Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons), 1983 No.170 - Chemicals, 1990.

□

Environment vs The Poor

□ Ashish Kothari

The last two years have seen a spate of actions on the environment which, at first glance, are to be applauded, but which have worrying implications. Unless the urban-based environmental movement understands and deals with these implications, it stands to lose the momentum and credibility it has built up over the years.

In India, the natural environment is important not only for its aesthetic and intangible ecological benefits, but more so for being the survival base of hundreds of millions of poor people who eke out a daily living from land, forests, wetlands, and wildlife. While it is morally imperative that nature be protected for its own right, the survival rights of the poor cannot be swept aside in the bargain. Such neglect is even less justified when it is done in the interests of the recreational requirements of the urban elite.

The Supreme Court orders to relocate 1500 polluting industries from Delhi, and to throw out all encroachments from the Delhi Ridge Reserved Forest, are important landmarks. But have we considered their serious unintended consequences on the innocent poor? Over 30,000 workers employed in these industries will be rendered jobless, and cash compensation is no substitute. The slum-dwellers and villagers who are being thrown out of their current settlement on the Ridge, also number several thousand. Predictably, even as they are being evicted, government and private agencies, the biggest destroyers of the Ridge, remain relatively untouched. Since slum-dwellers have no legal standing, it is easy to summarily evict them; even villages who were earlier declared part of a panchayat and given ration cards, have suddenly been told they are encroachers since no land rights are recorded in official documents. At the same time, luxury farm-houses belonging to influential people, which are immediately adjacent to the villages, have been declared to be outside the Reserved Forest, and thus allowed to stay on!

Other examples are symptomatic of a malaise that has deep roots in elite urban environmentalism. The legitimate concern for wildlife conservation has resulted in the establishment of an extensive network of protected areas (PAs). These areas harbor some of our last natural habitats and wildlife populations, but they are also home to perhaps over 3 million rural people. Unfortunately, conservationist demands for

strict protection have resulted in the forcible eviction of thousands of people, or the curtailment of access to resources used by the poor for fuel, fodder, and livelihood. In Rajaji National park, nomadic Gujjars and rope weaving communities are the targets; in Gir National park, the pastoral Maldharis have been kicked out; in Pench National Park, a recent petition has topped fishing by local people in the reservoir.

Conservationists justifiably point out that outside vested interests (fish traders in Pench, the land mafia in Borivalli) often benefit in the name of the poor, and that resource exploitation is often extremely destructive. But in the process of targeting these unscrupulous elements, it is the poor who are worst affected. Unfortunately, most conservationists have remained unenthusiastic about helping the poor to gain a respectable livelihood which can take them away from the clutches of commercial interests. Unfortunately too, human rights activists have ignored the fact that legally protected areas have often been the only defence against destructive industrial expansion, and that sharply divided local communities are not always the best conservationists.

Environmentalists are undoubtedly acting out of a legitimate sense of urgency and desperation. Yet, though we cannot always predict the outcomes of their actions, we seem to be very slow learners from past experience, and suffer from huge blind spots. We put full faith in bureaucratic action to give the environment or rehabilitate the poor, though we know that governments lack the willpower to do so. We feel (rather unscientifically) that any resource use inside a protected area is detrimental to biodiversity, but accept tourism (albeit "eco-tourism") in the same area, and indulging in it ourselves. Most damning is our blind spot towards our own consumerist demands on resources, which give rise to many of the country's destructive developmental projects. Marble from mining in Sariska Tiger Reserve adorns our homes; our cars pollute the air which we want the Delhi Ridge to clean up. We do not want the eyesore industries which produce the products we use, but we do not mind them being relocated into some rural area where they result in forcible acquisition of agricultural land and hazards to the air and water of villagers.

As urban environmentalists, we must be willing to

confront the model of development which we benefit from, and which is the cause of many of the conflicts. The problems of Rajaji National Park emanate less from Gujjars and rope-weavers and more from the unchecked urban expansion of Dehradun and Rishikesh and Haridwar, the Chilla Hydro-electricity channel, and massive industrial complexes... all of which have created problems not only for wildlife but for the villagers also. In Pench, the original culprits are not the villagers of Totiadh who fish in the reservoir, but the Pench dam itself, to build which the villagers were brought there in the first place. Yet how many of us have asked for the closure of the Chilla channel; or for taking off private cars from Delhi's streets and replacing them by good public transport?

Some environmental groups have begun to speak out against the above injustice, Kalpavriksh, Shrishti, Vatavaran, WWF-i, DRAG, and others have condemned the action against slum-dwellers and villagers on the Delhi Ridge, and demanded that action instead be taken against the major destroyers. Wildlife conservationists like Bittu Sahgal have joined mass movement against destructive development projects; in turn movement leaders like Medha Patkar have joined the appeal to protect the tiger. As urban conservationists, we are realising that when it comes

to the crunch, it is not we who will be blocking the bulldozers of developers. It will be villagers whose livelihoods are threatened, as in Sariska Tiger Reserve where they stopped rampant mining. Local communities must therefore be involved in forest and wildlife conservation, with rights to decision-making powers and to livelihood resources.

Environmentalists and human rights advocates need agreement on some basic elements of a common platform, including: no forcible displacement of local communities from either environmental or developmental projects; no exploitation of threatened wildlife species; rejection of commercial-industrial projects in natural habitats; and equitable partnerships for conservation and livelihood generation.

Environmental sustainability cannot be achieved without social equity. Both poor people and urban environmentalists have a common enemy in the commercial-industrial juggernaut which threatens to convert every natural habitat into raw material and every rural community into cheap labour. The sooner we urban environmentalists erase our blind spots, and start seeing things from the point of view of the poor, the surer will we be of achieving our objectives.

(Ashish Kothari is founder-member of Kalpavriksh, and lecturer at Indian Institute of Public Administration.)

[From Page 22]

posed economic sanctions on Iraqis turned to cause genocidal crimes and an all out mass annihilation of a whole nation, in blatant contradiction with laws of heaven and earth and UN human character.

However, it should be noted that the "Understanding Protocole" concluded between Iraq and the UN concerning a formula of selling oil in return of food, medicine and other requirements, is but a temporary and exceptional procedure that never constitute a substitution for the implementation of Paragraph 22 of resolution 687, which... a final end to the economic embargo or a course for its deferment, in addition to the fact that the revenues collected from selling limited quantities of oil as dictated in the "understanding protocle" shall actually not cover but meager basic needs of the whole nation of 20 million people of Iraq, in the shadow of the vast, mall round destruction of the economic and civilian infrastructure enacted in Iraq as a result of the premediated and fully organised US led coalition bombing, let alone the impact and severe consequences of the

incessant and continued comprehensive, barbaric economic embargo causing dreadful plight of the living, depriving Iraqis of basic human requirements and raw material, for the reconstruction of the country's mass destructed infrastructure. Working people in Iraq would address all freedom fighters, humanitarian, trade union organisations and all conscientious people the world over to continue raising their gracious voice, exercising pressure on respective governments for influencing an active role in defense of a final and immediate end to the unlawful and immoral economic embargo after Iraq's full compliance and positive response with all UN Security Council relevant resolutions. Your generous initiatives and sympathetic response towards this top humanitarian issue in terms of addressing appeals to ask the UN Security Council for an end to the dreadful plight Iraqis under go, would be immensely and highly appreciated by the people and workers of Iraq.

Long live international solidarity

Baghdad, Jan 15, 1997

Executive Bureau General Federation of Trade Unions, Iraq

ILO—

[From Page 4]

ILO in 1949 (No.96) which provided for constituting employment agencies by the government only. The ILO now wants to involve private fee charging employment agencies and hence the proposal to revise the convention was brought in the ILO session. As a result of globalisation a large number of private employment agencies have sprang up all over the world but many of them do not protect the interest of the employment seekers. It was observed that several poor and unethical practices were prevailing in the employment market due to these private agencies. The draft convention sought to update it by providing regulation of these agencies and the Plenary Session ratified the revision of the convention. K L Mahendra represented India on this committee and gave several suggestions to improve the convention.

On Job Creation

There was a preliminary discussion on the Report prepared by the ILO office on this subject to stimulate job creation in small and medium sized enterprises with a view to elaborating a new instrument in the form of recommendation to be adopted next year. The survey conducted by the ILO has shown that all over the world 80 per cent of the new jobs are generated by the small and medium sized enterprises. It was observed that working and living conditions of workers are much below standard and suggested some measures to ensure adequate social standards, working conditions and social protection. The Report of the Committee along with the draft of the Recommendations was adopted unanimously by the Plenary session.

On Contract Labour

The ILO conference had a first discussion on development of new standard to regularise the use of Contract labour. L Mishra, Secretary, Ministry of Labour, Govt of India was elected as Chairman of this

committee. The draft did not give any importance to the idea of abolition of this pernicious system but was emphasising the regulation the working condition. The report prepared by the ILO noted that increased competition, globalisation, new technologies and restructuring are affecting the relationships between employers and workers "Traditional long term formal employment is increasingly giving way to the use of contract workers, with a parallel growth in new approaches to the rights of workers as well as social and safety factors."

The draft of the Convention give some protective measures for contract workers but perpetuates the system in the industrial undertakings. The trade unions in India have demanded several improvements in the present contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act in India but the draft convention falls short of expectation of workers since it underlines the importance of contract workers in a globalised economy. Despite improvements in the original draft this draft convention has got shortcomings. Though the Govt of India supported the draft convention the Indian employers representative opposed it. However, the draft was approved by the Plenary session of the ILO. V Tiagi of HMS was a member of this committee.

R Venugopal who spoke in the plenary session criticised the Director General's proposals and demanded steps against multinationals who are responsible for the poverty in the developing countries. Subrata Mukherjee (INTUC) who attended a meeting of the Governing Body of the ILO expressed his reservations with the observations of the Director General and demanded reconsideration of the stand to protect the interests of the developing countries.

The 85th Session of the ILO brought into sharp focus the area of differences between the developing and developed countries. It also highlighted the attempts to make the ILO an instrument to serve the interests of the World Bank, IMF and the WTO. Unless the TU movement of the developing countries get together and assert their position the future of the ILO itself will be at stake.

