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# THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU



**27th September 2000  
Massive CITU Rally in Delhi  
Petitions President to Intervene  
To Reverse Disastrous Economic Policies**

# RELEVANCE OF THE NOVEMBER REVOLUTION FOR THE WORKING CLASS

M K PANDHE

The protagonists of capitalism all over the world to-day are never tired of claiming that Socialist system has failed and it would never rise again. The restoration of capitalism in former Soviet Union and Eastern European countries, they argue, has proved beyond doubt the superiority of the capitalist system. The attempt to establish a unipolar world by U.S. imperialism has received a big boost after dismantling of socialism in these countries.

The setback to socialist and communist movements all over the world has, no doubt, created a great deal of confusion and frustration among the working class and the common people. These developments were totally unexpected to them. The socialist block was a big challenge to imperialist forces. They received the news of the downfall of socialism with great shock and dismay. Many could not visualise that the collapse of socialist system in East European Countries was not due to failure of socialism as a system but due to violation of the principles of socialism by the rulers of these countries. Working class which has to play a leading role in strengthening socialism was emasculated in those countries by not development of their socialist consciousness. Penetration of capitalist ideology within the working class was not effectively checked by the rulers. The task of strengthening socialist democracy in the state was callously ignored with the result that effective development of productive forces was adversely affected.

Though spectacular advances were made by socialist countries in improving defence technology, they failed to use of new technology to improve the living standards of the working people, which roused acute-discontentment within the working class and people, at large. This could not be reflected in working or the understandings due to lack of socialist democracy. This situation was utilised by internal reactionary forces who were clandestinely helped by imperialist forces. The working class in these socialist countries was

not coming forward in defence of socialism when anti-socialist forces launched counter-revolutionary movement to overthrow the socialist system. Several Western authors have admitted that Gorbachov and his cohorts were in league with imperialist forces to dismantle soviet system. The fact that socialism could not be defeated in China, Cuba, DPRK, Vietnam and Laos only shows that if the state relies on socialist consciousness of the working class and take measures for a sustained improvement in their standard of living, the socialist advance can by effectively ensured. These developments give a good lesson to the world working class that it was not failure of socialism but the violation of the socialist principle that was responsible for the downfall of socialist system.

After the restoration of capitalism in USSR the imperialist powers got big advantage to control the world market and save the capitalist system from the deepening economic crisis. The World Bank, IMF and WTO became the major agencies to strengthen the grip of the MNC's over the world economy. The concept of globalisation and liberalisation became the key slogans in defence of capitalism. To serve their interests a powerful ideological offensive was launched to make working class accepting their ideology without any resistance.

Along with the campaign against socialism itself the spokesmen of imperialism created an ideological background for their global design by telling the workers that there was no alternative to globalisation. The reformist trade union leaders are dittoing the arguments of MNCs and persuading the workers accept the capitalist path of development. Several advanced capitalist countries are giving their trade unions financial assistance to propagate in developing countries about the "inevitability" of the path of financial globalisation. The trade union leadership in the developing countries are outwardly talking about

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**THE  
WORKING  
CLASS**

CITU MONTHLY

**NOVEMBER 2000****ALL IN THE GAME****EDITORIAL BOARD****M K Pandhe**

(Chairman)

**W R Varada Rajan**

(Working Editor)

**P K Ganguly****Jibon Roy****Tapan sen****S Dev Roye****ONE YEAR OF BJP GOVERNANCE.... DOWN  
THE DISASTER LANE**

The Vajpayee Govt just completed the first year of its second term. It commenced with its tall commitment for all round 'turn around' of the economy after the supposed end of 'recession.' At the end of the first year, it is a dark shadow of decline staring at the face of the national economy and the common populace. The index of industrial production has recorded decline in growth rate. The manufacturing sector witnessed sharper decline with the capital goods sector indicating a negative trend in absolute term. In the agricultural front too, foodgrains production is heading for a decline. Despite desperate exercise of "robbing the poor" in the last union budget through drastic cut in food subsidies and developmental expenditure, and subsequent hike in fuel prices, the fiscal deficit has already signaled jumping well above the budgeted margin. In the external sector as well, while Rupee is taking a nose-dive, trade deficit is getting wider, courtesy reckless and overzealous liberalisation of import to please their Washington bosses. Side by side, the national wealth is being put on auction to the MNCs through hectic drive of privatisation.

The people are being robbed of their livelihood, poverty and joblessness aggravating all around. The manufacturing economy of ours is being sought to be converted into market place and service centre for the foreign products-this is the balance-sheet of their one-year governance in the economic front.

In the political and social front as well, the scenario is one of a mess. The divisive policy of the Govt at the centre is aimed at dividing people on lines of religion, caste etc. The calculated bogey against the minorities engineered by the Sangh clans and their desperate bid to saffronise the administration, education and various social and cultural institutions has already exposed the dubious distinction of the Sangh-guardianed Govt at the centre besides posing a serious threat to secular and democratic fabric.

And last but not the least, while chanting swadeshi slogans, the present-day Govt did not fail to bend down on their knees to their 'bideshi bosses' in Washington- on all economic and political matters, seriously undermining the national self-respect.

The country is being taken down to disaster lane- the economy is being put on auction, national self-respect undermined by shameless posture of servility before the imperialist power, national unity is under attack by brazen communalists and the democratic structure being put on severe strain.

There is no alternative to all out united struggle to save the country and the people.

# PETROLEUM PRICE HIKE - HEIGHT OF DECEIT AND DECEPTION

DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE

In its familiar game of chicanery BJP-led NDA Government has again tried to hoodwink the people by justifying the recent unprecedented hike of petroleum products viz. Kerosene, diesel, LPG, petrol and ATF on the plea of oil pool deficit. The common man has been gifted in this festive season with a burden of price hike in all commodities, because of the cascading effect of the decision of hike by the Government. Moreover this would further accelerate the declining industrial and agricultural growth as revealed in the Mid Term Review of the 9th Plan.

As a matter of fact, since they came to power in 1998, the NDA Government have the distinction of hiking the price of petroleum products five times in one form or the other, as detailed below:

- \* Consequent upon presentation of Union Budget on 1.6.98, an additional levy @ Re. 1/- per litre on petrol was imposed.
- \* Additional duty of Re. 1/- per litre on High Speed Diesel (HSD) on 27.2.99
- \* Price hike of 40% on HSD in October'99
- \* Price hike of 10% on petrol in Jan'2000
- \* Price hike on 23rd March 2000 - LPG: Increase of Rs. 30/- per cylinder, Kerosene: Increase of Rs. 2.50 per litre, ATF: Rs. 2.00 per litre
- \* Price hike on 29.9.2000

## IMPORT PARITY

The Union Minister of Petroleum Shri Ram Naik has tried to juggle with figures by stating that the international price of crude oil has reached the figure of \$ 36 per barrel which is about three times more than what it was in 1998 and therefore the steep hike is unavoidable. The price of \$ 36 per barrel was only for a couple of days in the month of September. The average crude price from January to September'2000 is about \$ 27.97 per barrel and it was only in the month of September that average was more than \$ 30 per barrel. What Shri Naik did not tell people that when they took over power in 1998, the average price in the year was \$ 12.72 per barrel and in the year 1999 the average price was \$ 17.8 and still as could be

seen from above, in 1998 and 1999 the Government has raised the price of petroleum products through additional duty/ levy and Administrative Price hike. The hypocrisy is amply reflected from the following statement of the Finance Minister, Yashwant Sinha in his budget speech on 27.2.99:

"Currently, international and domestic prices of crude oil and petroleum products are usually soft, and it is felt that raising some additional revenue through this commodity would be an equitable method of resource mobilisation. Therefore, I propose an additional duty of Re. 1 per litre on imported and domestic HSD, the revenue from which will accrue entirely to the Centre."

That is the mischief that this Government is playing with the common man of this country in the name of import parity. When the international price is 'soft' i.e. \$ 12 per barrel, the Finance Minister imposes a duty of Re. 1/- per litre. When the international price is high, the Petroleum Minister declares a hike on the plea of oil pool deficit. Government had collected not less than Rs. 15,000 crore from additional levy on price hike in 1998 and 1999 though the average crude price was much below \$ 20 dollar during these years.

## IMPORT DUTY

The present Government harps on the decision of the UF Government in November 1997 to justify its price hike. In the process it hides one of the major recommendations of the Expert Technical Group (ETG) based on which the UF Government had taken the decision in 1997. The ETG had specifically recommended the reduction of import duty, which was totally ignored by the present Government. The following table clearly shows the difference between what was promised and what has been realised by the present Government:

If the recommendation of the Group was followed then on the import duty alone the consumer would have been saved of an extra burden of not less than Rs. 10,000 crore in the year 1999-2000 and 2000-2001.

As per budgetary estimate receipt for customs & excise duties on crude and petroleum products this year would be around Rs. 25,000 crore approx. But at the current crude price of \$ 30 per barrel (which Ram Naik is quoting time and again to project the figure of Rs. 23,000 crore oil pool deficit), the Finance Ministry is expected to end up with Rs. 35,000 to Rs. 38,000 crore thus getting an extra bonanza of Rs. 10-13 thousand crore because of the international price hike. In the early nineties Rs. 4,500 crore surplus from oil pool account was appropriated by the Government to reduce its budget deficit. This has not been reimbursed back along with interest to the oil pool account. Who is subsidising whom?

#### OIL POOL DEFICIT

A hue and cry is being made by the Petroleum Minister and the media on the so called oil pool deficit. Till now the country has not been furnished with the figures and facts based on which the Government is working out the deficit. There has been no white paper presented in the Parliament as to how the administered price is being fixed. If it is on the basis of refining of imported crude indigenously then a consumer has a right to know as to how the refinery transfer-price is being

worked out for an old refinery at Digboi, Assam and say a modern refinery of M/s Reliance at Jamnagar, Gujarat. Similarly oil companies are paid for petroleum products on the basis of their prevailing international prices and since import duty on petroleum products as much higher than on crude any increase in international prices yields an additional benefit for oil companies at the cost of oil pool account. It is reported that during the months from April to August 2000 hardly any diesel was imported. In that case 'how the pricing was done for the diesel to the oil companies'?

Naik says that oil pool deficit as on date is Rs. 10,400 crore. Interestingly, when there was price hike in July, 1996 by UF Government, the oil pool deficit was Rs. 10,000 crore and the then Deputy Leader of BJP in Rajya Sabha, while opposing the hike had said:

"If there is a deficit in the oil pool account, heavens are not going to fall. There is so much of deficit in the Central Government but does it mean that we are going to tax people to the tune of Rs. 60,000 crores? No." (page 202, Rajya Sabha proceeding dated 17.7.1996)

#### DOUBLE SPEAK AND DUPLICITY

Who is really affected by oil pool deficit? Oil pool

### Petroleum Traiff The divide between promise and reality

Customs duty on	ETG Recommendations			Actuals 1999/00	Budget 2000/01
	1999/00	2000/01	2000/02		
Crude	10	0	0	20	15
HSD	25	15	15	30*	25*
MS	25	15	15	30	25
ATF	25	15	15	30	25
LPG	10	10	10	10	10
LNG	0	0	0	5	5
FO/LSHS	15	10	10	30	25
Naptha/NGL	5	5	5	5	5
Kerosene	0	0	0	0	0
Kerosene (PMS)	-	-	-	30	35
Others	20	20	15	30	25

\* Additional customs duty on HSD of Re. 1/lt.

deficit primarily affects the national oil companies as they face liquidity and cash flow problems. Is this Government really serious about the cash flow problems of those companies? The answer is an emphatic 'No'.

In February 1999 this Government forced the national oil companies viz., IOC, ONGC, GAIL for cross-holding of equity share among themselves. In the process IOC had to pay the Government an amount of Rs. 2475 crore for buying the Government shares in ONGC and GAIL. ONGC had to pay Rs. 1622 crore to the Government for buying Government shares of IOC and GAIL. GAIL had to pay Rs. 400 crore for acquiring shares in ONGC. So, at the cost of these national oil companies, about which the Government is so worried now, the Government of India mobilised more than Rs. 4,000 crore to manage its budgetary deficit.

Right now as a part of synergising the operation of stand alone refineries the Government is asking IOC to buy shares from Bongaigon Refinery and Petrochemicals and Chennai Refineries. Similarly, Bharat Petroleum Corporation, another PSU has been asked to buy the Government shares of Cochin Refinery. The merging of these units could have been done without putting any pressure on the reserves of these companies. There need not be any money transactions for merging of Government companies. However this is being done as a bye pass route to disinvestment, so that the money from the reserves of IOC and BPC is utilised for making up fiscal deficit. Another dividend earner and a oil marketing giant IBP is being sold as a part of disinvestment. Does this show any concern for these oil companies? Then why this hue and cry over oil pool account?

#### **CESS UNDER OIL INDUSTRY (DEVELOPMENT) ACT, 1974**

The above Act was to provide for the establishment of a Board for the development of oil industry and for that purpose to levy the duty of excise on crude oil and natural gas. A duty of Rs. 900 per ton is accordingly being charged on the crude oil and the gas produced in this country. Till March 2000, Rs. 36,000 crore has been collected out of which only Rs. 902 crore has been released by the Government to the Oil Industry Development Board (OIDB) has been meeting up

Government's revenue expenditure. The Standing Committee on Petroleum and Chemicals has time and again recommended to get all the funds collected under this Act to be utilised for development of petroleum sector. But Government has taken no action. Even in the year 1999-2000, Rs. 2542 crore have been collected. Why can't the Government utilise the amount collected this year for making up the oil pool deficit instead of fiscal deficit?

#### **SUBSIDY TO RELIANCE**

Actually, the Government is pursuing a policy by which the petroleum sector will be milked through high taxes and cess by showing an inflated subsidy. Resources are being mobilised from the common man to make up the fiscal deficit, while the corporate friends of the Government are being relieved of burdens. The Government which says that oil pool deficit is on account of subsidy to the kerosene and LPG users, does not mind giving subsidy to the biggest industrial corporate of this country. In a reply to a question in Rajya Sabha on 4.5.2000 the Government have admitted that because of the Sales Tax exemption given by the Gujarat Government to Reliance Petroleum Limited (RPL):

"About 2/3rd amount of the CST under-recoveries on account of inter company sales of controlled petroleum products of RPL to be moved inter-state would be reimbursed to oil marketing companies from oil pool account."

So the kerosene and LPG user have to pay more so that RPL is reimbursed by oil pool account!

#### **RESOURCE MOBILISATION - IS THERE ANY ALTERNATIVE**

In reply to a Rajya Sabha Question dated 25.7.2000 the Ministry of Finance has admitted that the total amount of tax outstanding on account of income tax, corporation tax, custom duty and central excise duty as on 31.3.99 and 31.3.2000 were Rs. 47,888 crore, Rs. 52,617 crore and Rs. 62,392 crore respectively. Naik is worried about increase of oil pool deficit by Rs. 4,000 crore from March 2000 to September 2000. But the Government is not at all worried about increase of unrecovered tax by Rs. 10,000 crore during 1999-2000. 100 top tax evader are listed in the same answer to the Parliament question. Government of the day does not have the guts to

touch any of them. The total amount recoverable from the 100 top tax evader is also Rs. 23,000 crore same as oil pool deficit.

Instead the Prime Minister gives a sop to his allies that if the international price comes down within two weeks, a re-look would be given on the price hike. SORRY, Mr. Prime Minister, the people do not need any sop through your allies. They demand TOTAL WITHDRAWAL OF THE PRICE HIKE AS THERE IS NO JUSTIFICATION FOR THE SAME. There is no place for feudal

benevolence and the Government owes an explanation for utter mismanagement of finance and oil sectors during the last two years. Even the process of price hike which followed nearly a month of speculation and statement by the Government, had allowed hoarding of petroleum products worth thousand of crores. Who have been benefited - not the common man, but the same tax evader who fill the kitty of not oil pool account but those of BJP and its allies. Allies may therefore ask for revision, the people want total withdrawal - sooner the better.

## CITU DENOUNCES OIL PRICE HIKE

**T**he CITU strongly denounced the steep hike in prices of petroleum products from the mid-night of 29th September 2000. The rise is an illogical, unfair and ill-conceived step that will hit hard the general household, the economy and life of common people.

The economy is in bad shape when industrial production is in a slump and recovery illusive. This step will give a death blow to the industry, the workers and obviously the common people. The adverse effect will soon be felt, specially through hike in transport cost and will soon cascade to other areas.

CITU called upon the working class to organize protest and lead all sections of the people against the retrograde steps taken by the Vajpayee Government.

## 13 OCT 2000 : PROTEST DAY OBSERVED

**O**n 7th October 2000, leaders of six Central Trade Unions viz., AITUC, HMS, CITU, UTUC, UTUC(LS) and TUCC, protested against the oil price hike and called for observance of a National Protest Day on 13 October 2000. Workers, all over the country, responded to the call by holding massive rallies and demonstrations etc., demanding total withdrawal of the price hike.

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- |   |  |
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# 'WISHING AWAY' THE TRADE UNIONS

E BALANANDAN

Despite the huge propaganda put out by the electronic and print media on the virtues of the current economic reforms, including the disinvestment and privatisation of the public sector, resentment and resistance against them is on the increase, not only among the workers and trade unions, but also among political parties. Thus the Congress (I), the party that initiated the reforms, is divided on this issue, and inside the BJP sections are against the reforms, on the grounds that they will compromise our freedom. Certain proposals have also been opposed by partners of the ruling front, the TDP and DMK.

This developing trend has frightened the reforms lobby and they have started directly attacking the trade unions and political parties opposing the reforms, demanding strong governmental action against the developing resistance.

A typical example is the angry reaction from one of the Economic Advisors to the Prime Minister - Mr. Jagdish Shettigar: In an article published in *The Statesman* dated August 25, he has put forward his theories justifying the policy of disinvestment and privatization, in the process, letting loose an attack on the trade unions and Left parties.

He propounds a new theory about the new awareness developing among the workers, about the heavenly benefits they are going to gain by abandoning trade unionism and wage settlements, etc. Thus he proclaims:

"in a free atmosphere where there is no presence of trade unions between them and the employers, the scope for earning is already better. They recognise now that productivity-linked returns actually improve living standards — unlike in the past. The guarantee for meeting the aspirations of their families is performance, not the agreement they sign through the trade unions."

He continues:

"They will be gainers and their families will have all their aspirations fulfilled by coming to an understanding with employers, "freely", without trade unions, based on production and

productivity."

Thus, we find that the economic advisor to the Prime Minister terming the trade unions a hindrance to the progress of the workers and suggesting they would be the gainers without trade unions. Therefore, his advice would be that there should be no trade unions. For helping the workers trade unions should be done away with! But, to his bad luck, experience the world over is just the other way round; where trade unions have been weakened or rather "made pliable", the workers as a class have lost heavily. The perks and privileges they enjoyed, including the social security, have been reduced, apart from the huge loss of employment opportunities. Any layman, who studies the labour matters today, can have no doubt about this. In the new environment of "jobless growth", the workers are put at the mercy of employers, since the right to organise is also being taken away in the name of labour market reforms.

## BITTER EXPERIENCE

The experience of globalisation has been graphically brought out in the OECD Survey Report published recently. It shows that joblessness is on the increase, together with poverty, among large sections of the population in the developed countries, including the United States. World Bank economist Rovi Kanbur, in his draft report for the World Development Report 2000 / 2001, had observed that the numbers under world poverty, outside China, increased from 916 million, to 986 million, over the past decade of intense globalisation; and that the neo-liberal policy mix produces volatility, instability and crisis.

In the case of India too, the story is not otherwise. The claim that the government is friendly to the poor is false, is proved by the government own statistics. To quote Jay Dubashi — no friend of the trade unions or the Left - ("Digging One's Own Grave", *Sunday Observer* July 23-29.), which I think should enlighten Mr. Shettigar.

"According to the National Council of Applied

Economic Research low and lower middle income groups increased their consumption of consumer goods like soap and toothpaste by 15% a year in cities and towns, and by a little over 16% in villages. This was before reforms. For the upper middle and high-income groups, the growth rates were less than 10% in towns and 13% in villages.

This means that low-income groups were doing better than the people at the top during the pre-reform period. The consumption rates of the bottom groups have slowed down to 11% (from 15%) in towns, and 10.5% (from 16%) in villages. These groups have been hit badly by rising inflation and growing unemployment - prominent features of Manmohan Singh's reforms. Small businessmen have been devastated by multinationals and imports, and so have medium-sized companies. No wonder they have no spare cash for consumer goods except the bare minimum, and have to spend most of their money on food and other essentials.

And what about the moneyed classes? The upper middle and high-income groups have stepped up their spending on consumer goods to 16% in the towns (from 10%) and 13% in villages (same as before).

These groups have much more money than before, for they have benefitted most from the advent of multinationals who pay fat salaries - and, of course, make fat profits.

"So what have we got? A tiny increase in GDP growth rates, and a sharp fall in the incomes of the poor." (Emphasis added)

The above demolishes the claim that the economic reforms being implemented, including the second-generation stage, are pro-poor, and proves that they are both against them as well as against our national interests.

The PM's advisor makes more precious arguments which, though fantastic, cannot also be ignored.

To quote: "No wonder flags which used to flutter outside factories in Mumbai have almost disappeared, unlike in the seventies. That leaves only the public sector undertakings as the last hope for the trade unions. If these units also get corporatised and start running purely on commercial principles, where should the trade

unions go? Where should the political parties relying solely on trade unions to maintain their support base, go? Disinvestment is actually a threat to trade unions. Unfortunately a section of the working class is being taken for a ride. That is why trade unions, and political parties depending on them, give all this an ideological colour... In this game of competitive misleading of workers, the BMS has also preferred not to be different from the rest".

In other words, the trade unions are fighting corporatisation of the public sector in order to save their skins, by giving the fight an ideological colour.

### 'MERITS' OF PRIVATISATION

Many arguments are made on the merits of privatisation. Without going to the details, let us take some examples from a few sectors.

#### Electricity :

- \* power rates have been hiked 3-4 times for agriculture, domestic use and industries, in those areas where it has been handed over to the Private sector.

- \* installed capacity as per the understanding has not improved, causing a slippage of 25% of the total 9th plan target. The impact of this on the national economy needs no explanation.

- \* Thus, power has become a commodity available only to those who can afford it, leaving the rest in darkness. In the process, billions of crores worth of public property has passed over into private hands.

**Telecom system** : ours is the biggest in the world, with an annual growth rate for the last few years of about 22%.

- \* profit for the year 1998-99, was Rs.7,646 crore, expected to reach Rs.9,000 crore in 1999-2000. They planned to increase the

- \* telephone availability planned to increase from the present 2.70 crore telephones to 5 crores, within less than 5-7 years. Still, the government wants to privatise in spite of opposition from the Defence Department.

- \* As a result of this privatisation, rural India will be deprived of telephone network expansion, and private operators will confine themselves to the profitable centres, and only those who have money will get telephones.

(Cont. on page 27)

their opposition to the blueprint of the world chalked out by the World Bank and IMF but tell the workers that they have to find out ways and means of working within the framework of globalisation, and advocate that the process of globalisation is "irreversible". Several foreign funded NGOs oppose some aspects of globalisation but in the end support the principles and programmes of globalisation. All these attempts led to create confusion in the minds of workers that ultimately serve the interest of capitalism. The recent advancement in information technology are being widely used for spreading disinformation and for leading cultural offensive against any socialist thinking or resistance.

### **WORKING CLASS AFTER DISMANTLING OF SOCIALISM IN USSR**

The experience after dismantling of socialism in USSR has clearly shown what socialism means to the working class. The World Bank in its report had to admit that the economic development in USSR was faster than the development in capitalist countries. After overthrow of socialist system the right to work was abolished and the unemployment in CIS countries has now exceeded 30 million. The MNCs have purchased socialist undertakings at throw away prices and drastically reduced manpower, imposed deteriorating working conditions withdrew or reduced cheap housing, free educational facilities, free medical treatment, retirement benefits pension etc. After loosing all this achievements the working class and the trade unions have now been forced to go on strike just for obtaining the wages for the work they had done. Unpaid wages run from 3 months to as high as one year in some cases.

The newly borned T.U. movement is swelling its ranks and becoming militant in fighting for the rights of the working class. The membership of trade unions in former Soviet Union has now exceeded 50 million. In every sector the trade union movement and class struggles are getting intensified with each passing day. The experience is making them realise that the gains of the November revolution have been lost by them due to counter revolution and restoration of capitalism. Their socialist consciousness is bound to increase

in these struggles. The renewal of trade union movement in CIS countries is an important development. The larger May Day rallies and demonstration of 7 November are indicative of the rising spirit of November revolution among the workers. The working class movement all over the world are enthused at these developments. The message of the November revolution is destined to emerge once again in the former land of socialism. The capitalist dreamers who were thinking that socialism has gone forever in former USSR will ultimately come to grief.

The trade union and socialist movements in Eastern Europe have also emerged and expanding due to the experience of capitalist exploitation.

### **SPECTACULAR ADVANCES IN SOCIALIST COUNTRIES**

The spectacular advances made by socialist countries are there for everyone to see. China with 120 crore of population is making remarkable advance in recent times. During the last two decades per capita income in China in real terms increased 4 times. The annual rate of economic growth was above 10 per cent which is more than any other country. Some U.S. economists visualise that with the present rates of growth by 2030 per capita income in China will exceed that of USA. The idea itself is giving a big jolt of those who talk of superiority of the capitalist system in the world. The socialist China has squarely defeated all attempts to destabilise it by the counter-revolutionary forces. China is now engaged in fighting against all imperialist attempts to separate Taiwan from China.

The revolutionary working class under the leadership of Com. Fidel Castro has defeated all conspiracies of U.S. imperialism to dislodge Cuba as a socialist country. The slogan "Socialism or Death" has brought together the entire population of the tiny island in the struggle against Clinton Administrations vile designs.

The remarkable world wide solidarity received by Cuba was even reflected in UN resolution. The socialist advance made by Cuba in the recent past has received wide acclaim all over the world.

The socialist advance in Vietnam and Laos after overcoming all difficulties have proved to the hilt that socialist ideas are still very much valid in the

contemporary world. The improvement in the standard of living in these countries at a time when South East Asian countries were experiencing in declining living standards have underlined the relevance of socialist ideas to-day.

The developments in Korean peninsula towards unification of motherland will certainly give a good rebuff to U.S. machinations. The important role played by socialist DPRK has enhanced their status internationally. North Korea is making great advances in socialist construction.

The challenge posed by the socialist countries to the capitalist system highlight the relevance of a new era heralded by the November revolution.

### **ANTI-IMPERIALIST CHALLENGE UNDER ADVANCED CAPITALISM**

Working class and popular movements in advanced capitalist countries have grown recently in the advanced capitalist countries against globalisation. The massive demonstrations in Seattle, Sao Paulo, Sydney, Bangkok, Prague, Lyons and other capitalist countries have expressed rousing anger of the working class against WTO and IMF. The recent campaign in Europe demanding cancellation of debt of the developing countries also reflects the growing awareness against capitalist globalisation. The recent cut in social security benefits by the Government of Germany and France have evoked resistance by the workers in these countries.

The ideological offensive of the capitalist thinkers is getting blunted by these developments. With unemployment rates reaching alarming levels, the long drawn recession at a global level is bound to generate social resistance in the capitalist countries. With no more euphoria of globalisation the growing economic crisis in the capitalist countries is heading towards serious situation. Some U.S. economists have expressed fears about world depression even bigger than 1929 depression.

### **CALLOUS WORKING CONDITIONS**

According a recent ILO study conducted in 5 advanced capitalist countries namely UK, USA, Germany, Finland and Poland the levels of anxiety, burnout and depression among the workers are "spiraling out of control" due to globalisation.

People cannot keep up with constantly changing work practices. In U.S. one out of 10 workers suffer

from clinical depression and the problem is getting worse. Some 200 million working days are lost due to stress while at work.

In Japan the number of workers dying due to Kharoshi (Exhaustion while doing excessive workload) is increasing alarmingly.

This in human character of capitalist globalisation is causing simmering discontentment among the workers which is likely to burst any moment in the world. Those who talk of capitalism as the most developed and acceptable form of society will find it difficult to continue against the most ferocious form of human exploitation.

### **REAL FACE OF CAPITALISM**

The real face of capitalism has been seen by the working people of the developing countries. The worst form of capitalist exploitation was witnessed in over 500 export processing zones all over the world where no law is applicable. The Governments of the countries tolerate it in the name of attracting foreign capital. The number of EPZs is likely to increase to 1000 in the next 5 years. In India we have 10 EPZs where workers are mercilessly exploited. The drive towards capturing market in the developing countries have resulted in growing sickness, closure and unemployment. Privatisation drives have sold valuable assets owned by the third world countries. The struggle against the depredations of international monopoly capital is growing all over the developing countries.

The message of the November revolution is that the class struggles of the working class and the toiling masses should end in overthrowing the yoke of the source of exploitation i.e. capitalism.

Without socialist consciousness among the working class it cannot play the crucial role to abolish capitalist exploitation. The present low level of socialist consciousness has to be developed for the development of revolutionary movement.

The relevance of the November revolution is today of paramount importance. The November revolution inspired millions of revolutionaries all over the world. It will still continue to inspire those who are striving to build a society free from exploitation of man by man.

**Long Live November Revolution!**

(Ms. Simmi Choudhary, an officer of the Indian Economic Service, presently working as an Assistant Director in the Ministry of Labour, Government of India, has authored a paper on 'International Labour Standards: The Journey So Far and The Road Ahead'. We publish here an extract from her paper dealing with the issue of linking labour standards with international trade. Courtesy: 'Labour & Development Bi-annual Journal, published by V V Giri National Labour Institute, December 1999 issue - Editor)

## LINKING OF LABOUR STANDARDS WITH INTERNATIONAL TRADE

The Uruguay Round of trade liberalisation negotiations resulted in the establishment of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in 1995. With the liberalisation of world trade, new concerns and apprehensions have also cropped up: threat of low cost competition from developing countries and job loss in the developed countries resulting in unemployment; dampening of real wages and widening wage inequalities in developed countries on account of import of Labour intensive products allegedly produced under low labour standards etc. The resultant likelihood of labour standards being wielded for protectionist purposes on the ground of "social dumping" has led to the issue of linkage between trade and labour standards and environmental issues.

Globalisation has captured the attention of governments, multilateral institutions and policy-makers everywhere. The globalising economy, characterised by the opening up of world markets, heightened competition, accelerated technological and structural changes as well as the cyber revolution is having a dramatic impact on the world of work. In a nearly universal market economy, the pace of economic activity is faster, contractual relationships start and terminate at short notice, and competition is intensified. The rate and scale of this change vary considerably both between and with countries and economic sectors but everywhere it has a major impact on workplace relations. The developments in trade, capital flows and production processes have delivered significant social and economic benefits. However, the increased global integration of economies has also brought a number of social costs in its wake. The economic adjustment process accompanying financial and trade liberalisation has resulted in a higher degree of employment volatility and an

increase in insecurity and inequality. Globalisation is controversial because of its differential impact on countries, communities and individuals. The global economy does not benefit every person or region in the world. Simultaneous inclusion and exclusion of people, regions and economic sectors is a significant characteristic of globalisation and presents some of its greatest challenges. As a result of a growing awareness of the need for a social pillar in the global economy, consensus has emerged in the international community around a set of fundamental principles and rights at work. Hence the demand by developed country trade unions and NGOs that a 'social clause' embodying minimum labour and environmental standards should be a part of WTO trade agreements. The minimum labour standards consist of the Core Conventions of the ILO.

The 'Core Conventions' have been identified as being fundamental to the rights at work of all workers. The 8 Core Conventions deal with the organise and bargain collectively; the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour; the abolition of child labour; and the elimination of discrimination in employment and occupation.

The following are the 8 Core Conventions of the ILO: 1. Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Conventions, 1948(C 87). 2. Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949(C 98). 3. Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (C 29). 4. Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (C 100). 5. Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (C 111) 6. Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (C 105) 7. Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (C 138) 8. Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention,

Convention No.87 and 98 deal with the right to organise and bargain collectively. They say that the right to organise will be granted to all workers and employers with the exemption of armed forces and police. Workers and employers are guaranteed the right to establish and join the organisation of their choice without state interference. Workers will be protected from anti-union discrimination and victimization. Convention No.29 and 105 deal with the elimination of forced labour. The use of forced or compulsory labour in all its forms is banned by Convention No.29, except when it is extracted by the State in an emergency or for military or public service. Abolition of debt bondage is covered under Convention No.105 where workers are advanced money by the employer and then forced to continue working for the same employer on the excuse of non-repayment of debt. Convention No.138 calls for a national policy to ensure the effective abolition of child labour. Convention No.100 calls for equal pay for men and women for work of equal value. Convention No.111 calls for a national policy to eliminate discrimination in access to employment training and working conditions, on grounds of race, colour, sex, religion, social origin, political opinion, national extraction or anything else, and to promote equality of opportunity and treatment in employment or occupation.

What has been proposed by certain quarters is that WTO member States which violate these Core Conventions should be penalised by trade sanctions. The basic argument of those demanding a link between world trade and workers' rights is that without this link, trade liberalisation undermines workers' rights by removing all obstacles to companies shifting production to parts of the world or to sectors where workers' rights are weakest, or importing products from them. This, in turn, puts pressure on countries or sectors which have stronger labour legislation to weaken it, so as to attract investment and avoid a flight of capital, and make their products competitive. The result is a 'race to the bottom', with the average level of workers' rights globally going further and further down.

The developed countries hold the view that 'social

clause' are guarantors that a growing number of advocates wish to incorporate in international trade agreements to ensure that the gradual liberalisation of markets is accompanied by improvements in conditions of work, or at least by the elimination of the most flagrant abuses and forms of exploitation. The premise for including a social clause in trade agreements rests on the need to eliminate unfair trade competition derived from intolerable labour exploitation and the notion that trade sanctions are the most effective means of achieving these.

The developing countries, including India, however, see this as a disguised form of protectionism. They perceive that the link between trade and labour standards would have adverse implications for economic development and the creation of jobs, and therefore, it would be counterproductive in its objectives. In an era of emerging inequalities, the attempts especially to link trade and labour standards will further widen the disparities thereby undermining the interests of the labour force in developing countries. Developing countries also feel that the motive of the proponents of social clause is to raise labour costs in developing countries in order to reduce their international competitiveness which is already based on lower wage costs. There is also an apprehension that the current proposal confined to a few ILO standards can merely open a thin edge of the wedge with further conditions being added later. Developing countries feel that the existing system is adequate given the continued pervasiveness of poverty in these countries. They are generally doing their best to improve labour standards, given the constraints of their level of development and their limited financial and administrative capacity. Pushing the process further, either by a social clause or other non-trade-related means would be harmful to the interests of developing countries. To improve the current position stepping up financial and technical assistance to developing countries directed at strengthening their capacity to progressively improve labour standards would be a more constructive approach. The developing countries also hold the view that cooperation rather than coercion as a means of promoting social progress would be more effective.

Dear Mr. Brown,

We don't know if this letter will ever reach your hand. We are not sure whether we will get answers to the questions faced by all the POOR PEOPLE of the world following so called Globalisation that was stately designed to remove poverty from the face of the world. The report titled as "OVERCOMING HUMAN POVERTY" (UNDP Poverty Report 2000) and the report by UNCATAD on "World Economic Situation and Prospects 2000" are before us which prompted us to write this letter.

**In reality the stark, cruel, naked truth is that "Poverty has not decreased but increased in the last ten years".**

We thank you for some candid observations, on the outcome of so called global integrated programmes for removing poverty after the "Social Summit for Social Development" in 1995. But you deserve the sharpest criticism because you have not brought out what are the "reasons" for this increasing poverty. In one of your suggestions you have called upon the poor to organise themselves against social deprivation, injustice, exclusion and so on. How do you propose the poor to be organised? As pressure groups? As beggars? And to be organised against whom? Is it against the most organised international monopoly capital which has the finances, the technology, backed by the most powerful state powers led by United States, which is armed to the teeth with most sophisticated armaments? And what about the role of the national governments? Are they not working as keepers of this world order which has brought windfall profits to Multi-nationals? Will these govts allow the poor to be organised to challenge the system?

#### HOW THEY BECAME RICH

You know very well that in the last ten years the monopoly houses in United States have doubled their assets, the number of billionaires have gone up more than double and today they have their grip over almost the entire gamut of money, investment, trade, commerce, every part of the economy and, of course, politics all over the world,

with rare exceptions. **All their wealth has been generated at the cost of us, the poor people of the world**, through globalisation. Can the poor, who earn less than one dollar a day, organise and fight these monopolies who earn more than a million dollars every hour? Is not your suggestion ridiculous, Mr. Brown? We need not go too far to substantiate our point. Your report says:

**"Until 1990s poverty was unknown in Mongolia. The collapse of trading relations with the Soviet Block and a wrenching transition to a market-based economy plunged more than a quarter of the population into poverty by 1994. A World Bank sponsored survey in 1998 estimated that 36% of the population was poor."**(Page 122). Is there any need to explain the contrast of the two systems? The Capitalist system creates poverty for the majority, the socialist system eliminates poverty. But are you honest enough to admit it? We know what is holding you back from telling the truth. The truth, again from your report:

**"China's official estimates of income poverty show an extra-ordinary drop from 260 million poor in 1978 to (just) 42 million in 1998. Using a higher poverty line, the World Bank estimated that in 1998 the poor numbered more than 100 million - still a dramatic reduction"** (Page 115)

Do we need any further proof that poverty cannot be removed without eliminating the exploiting classes? But to-day the exploiting classes are the rampage, which is why, even after five years of Social Summit - from your foreward in the report: **"The UN General Assembly will soon conduct its five-year review of progress against poverty following the 1995 World Summit for Social Development. Current trends, however, are troubling. What this review is likely to find is that progress has been negligible"**. You are very modest in your choice of words, Mr. Brown, the progress is not "negligible" but "negative" in reality.

#### GLOBALISATION IS ONE WAY TRAFFIC

Mr. Brown, we were told in early 1990's that globalisation was the cure for all the stagnation, under-development and therefore, poverty. Money,

investments would flow in like water and days of prosperity were just round the corner. Many people believed it. Ruling parties in our country believed it and they ushered in globalisation. What is the reality now? Let us quote what UNCTAD says:

"In 1998, with the stagnation of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows to developing countries and a sizable increase in flows to developed countries, **the share of developing countries in World FDI flows declined to 26 per cent from 37 per cent in the previous year. In 1999, this share declined further.** These reduced shares are largely the result of the exceptionally strong flows to the developed countries. Their share of the least developed countries in world FDI flows remained less than one per cent during most of this period". This is the ground reality. The multi-national giants have made vast quantities of money after pushing "globalisation" down the throat of developing countries. They are making huge profits in these markets, this money they invest within their own domestic Western economies. Which they want to stabilise and use for still higher profits. What else can be our fate Mr. Brown, other than being poorer?

The other picture of globalisation is revealing too. Again from your report: "**One reason that poor developing countries cannot pay off their debt is that they cannot penetrate major export markets in industrial countries - in part because of the formidable walls of protection that remain. Rich countries continue to protect their farmers, for example, while developing countries are being asked to open up their own agricultural sectors - a measure that threatens to undermine their food security and spread poverty**" (Executive summary, page 10 of the report). This is the real "**world order**" and **globalisation**. India, like many other developing countries, is standing on the brink of disaster, the entire peasantry is going to be pushed down to more severe poverty because cheap agricultural imports are threatening their existence. There seems to be no respite from the onslaughts of globalisation and the result is destitution and more destitution for the majority of the population.

#### **MARKET ECONOMY MEANS WHAT?**

The "Market" is trumpeted as the supreme altar of all economic activities. But what is the market,

Mr. Brown? The peasant goes to the market with his produce only to find that the price has suddenly crashed to ground. The peasant sells potato, onion, tomato to hoarders - for only half a rupee a kilo and has to buy it later at 10, 12 or 25 rupees a kilo, if he can buy it at all. The story is same with oilseeds, cotton, pulses, almost all agricultural products in India. And the Govt policy is "non-intervention in market forces". Whose government is this? Will such a government remove poverty? Millions of workers are forced to work on starvation wages. For them there is no appointment letter, no social security benefits, no provident fund, no gratuity, no fixed working hours and no job security. The Labour and Welfare departments have been practically locked-out. The employers care a hoot for labour standards or statutory obligations. They have made a system in which poverty remains perpetually, and those hapless creatures come back every day for a paltry pittance or else they starve, along with their families.

This "poverty driven" economy makes the Indian industrial employers happy because it has made them "competitive" in the world market. With the slightest sign of danger by cheaper supplies, the Indian entrepreneurs will further push down the wage with poorer service conditions, which they call Labour Market Reforms. If this "race to the bottom" continues, can poverty be eliminated, Mr. Brown?

So, poverty remains, poverty aggravates in a Capitalist Market Economy. You cannot deny it. Mr. Brown, global summits will come and go, reviews will be made routinely, oohs-aahs will be whispered, may be tears will be shed, but this cruel, capricious, greedy and one-sided world order will never eliminate poverty. One thing we can assure you, Mr. Brown is that, in spite of great difficulties and the present hostile world order, the poor are organising themselves for resistance and change of the order. But that is a different story. Meanwhile, we know that some noise has to be made by UNDP or World Bank or some others from time to time, because fighting poverty is "in fashion" to-day and is a matter of big money. The UNDP report is only noise, nothing more. But at last, thank you, at least, for the noise.

Yours sincerely,

**A poor but upright human being**

*(On the first death anniversary of Com. Vimal Ranadive, the All India Democratic Womens Association brought out a publication entitled "Vimal Ranadive Reminiscences". The book contains memories written by late Com. Vimaldi and also some rare photographs of her. Here is a review of the book by Com. K Hemalata - Editor)*

## "VIMAL RANADIVE REMINISCENCES"

"How can both of us work in the movement? What will happen to the children?"

"I am working as a full timer. My wife must earn to support the family. How can she work in the movement?"

These are some of the questions put by many activists, particularly when the question of bringing women in to the movement is raised. Sometimes they are genuinely not clear how to solve this problem. Sometimes, may be these are mere excuses.

Her active participation in all the activities of CITU and other organisations, including travelling long distances to address meetings at the age of 80, made everybody wonder where and how she got the energy for all this.

Vimal Ranadive's 'reminiscences', published by AIDWA, provides answers to all these questions. Though these reminiscences were written 'when her health was failing and she could not move around as actively as she had before', it is as if the teacher in her came forwards to explain the answers to these questions.

This is what Vimaldi has to say about the secret behind her strength:

"I feel that I remain active and healthy because I am not sitting at home, reading or watching TV. If I do not meet people and comrades, do not go to meetings or express myself, then I feel some strong feeling, as if I am isolated, lonely. Many comrades in my office advise me to stay at home at least on Sunday, but I cannot. Why? I feel lonely. I must go to the office, talk to the people, listen to their problems, mix with them, come back in the evening, and then rest. It is truly a big task to go for example to Jalandhar in the morning, address a conference for an hour and come back the same evening. But I cannot compare sitting at home with being with a vast number of women and listening to their stories. How to explain this? There is one's will power, but there is also the desire to learn

something from others, to give your impressions to them."

Again "Our life must be connected with the people and their problems. How happy one feels if one gets the job done, even if small. The person is in difficulty and you just try to help. Sometimes it bears fruit, sometimes not. But you feel happy because you tried to help the person."

Before marriage Vimal di had to take the responsibility of her siblings. She worked as a teacher, acted on stage and in cinemas to support the family. But she always found time and energy to work for the communist party of which she was a member and among the workers and women. She even managed to save some money from her earnings and donate for the party.

After marriage also she had to support the family as BTR was fully engaged in the activities of the Party. Her son Uday provides a glimpse of how she managed during those difficult days: "At that time my mother used to work long hours doing market research for a small company. It was the kind of job where one had to go to the address given and fill up the forms asking various questions to the customers. She used to get Rs.275/- per month and we somehow used to manage. So finally we bought one new [table] fan from the money she had saved and I was very happy because my mother could at least sleep comfortably. But this put a lot of strain on our budget and one day my mother looked worried and declared that she has no money to buy food. I suggested that we should sell old newspapers and so that day we could buy dal and rice and eat. My mother use to go for her party work, mainly to the working class areas, after her job and would return only after 9 pm. We then used to eat and sleep."

Vimal di was arrested many times. When she was arrested in 1948, her son was only two years. Her sister in-law Pramila Khal took good care of him

during the two years she was in jail. About those days she writes " My sister in law used to bring my son to meet me. Once he came and he was allowed to stay with me for the night. He was happy. When night came and the woman warden came to lock us up at 6 pm., Uday was angry and he would not allow her to lock the door. He bit her hand. He could not understand when I told him that the next day the doors would be opened. He cried and wept. The first thing in the morning he saw that the door was opened and he was happy till my relatives came to take him the next afternoon. He just lay in my lap and said he wanted to remain there. I had to face the problem now. Then with some help to distract the child by my relatives, on the pretext of showing him something outside the jail, he left me and went out. Suddenly he found the doors were closed and he was cheated. I heard later on he was crying the whole time till they got onto the train to Bombay. I felt sad." But that did not deter her from continuing with her political activities, for which she was arrested some more times. In 1962 when she was arrested again, Uday was older. Vimal di writes, "When I was closing the door he [the police] asked me also to come and showed me the arrest warrant. Uday was sleeping and I woke him up and told him. Poor fellow. He just asked me where he could stay and who would give him food. I told him the Rangnekar family would take care of him. And they did."

The inspiration for the work, says Vimal di comes

from the ideology and from the examples set by our great leaders. "To be in politics is something very important and especially when one is in the CPI [M], the ideals and examples one has to live up to are high. One feels proud when one hears of comrade P Sundaraiah, and his contribution. Comrade P Rama Murthy, EMS Nambooripad and Comrade BTR also. The sacrifices they have made for the people, for the working class, for the peasantry, has no limit. They inspired us by their deeds. We got inspired and started working under their guidance. This continuous work among the people, men and women, and the feeling that we are doing some good work remains with you. You try to continue the work, whatever possible, and whatever age, till you are out."

Vimal di told what she believed in and she spared no effort to practise what she believed, whatever the difficulties. Like most of us, she too had to face many difficulties, including family responsibilities, financial problems etc. But she stood firm in her commitment till her last breath and never left the people and the movement.

That is why the life of Vimal Ranadive inspires us and will continue to inspire the generations of activists forever.

'Vimal Ranadive Reminiscences' makes a very interesting and useful reading for all activists in the trade union and people's movements. It is priced Rs.10/- and is available at the CITU or AIDWA offices.

## EGYPTIAN TU FEDERATION CONDEMNS ISRAEL

**T**he Egyptian Trade Union Federation has, in a statement on October 9, condemned with great anger the barbaric and savage involvement of Israel at the Holy Akssa Mosque, which resulted in the killing and wounding of a large number of Palestinians by the Israeli soldiers. These incidents were provoked by a terrorist demonstration led by the Zeonist Aerial Charoune when he visited the mosque and challenged millions of muslims around the world, which aroused Palestinian anger.

The statement declared complete support to the brave Palestinian confrontation to the Israeli rirraff and to their heroic resistance to redeem all their rights - including their right to establish an independent state with Jerusalem as its capital.

The statement calls upon all muslims and christians the world over to express their anger and rescue the holy places from the Israeli occupation forces.

# WORLD CONFERENCE AGAINST NUCLEAR BOMBS

M M VARGHESE

On 6th August, 2000, at 7.00 A.M., 50,000 people from world over gathered in front of Hiroshima Peace Memorial to pay homage to the memory of victims of the World's first Atom Bomb attack way back in Hiroshima in 1945 by America. Japanese Prime Minister, Yoshiro Mori and Russian Ambassador to Japan, Alexander Panov attended this ceremony.

The entire city was virtually levelled, thousands upon thousands of lives were lost. Those who survived suffered irreparable physical and psychological damage. The intense heat rays and blast crushed and burned nearly all buildings within 2 KMs of the hypocentre. By the end of December, 1945, when the acute effects of initial radiation had subsided, the bomb had taken 2,10,000 precious lives of Japanese Military personnel and lakhs of innocent and unarmed civilians. Several millions of people including the unborn were affected.

## 'LANTERN FLOATING'

On the 6th August evening, the 'Lantern floating Ceremony' was held where peace activists lighted thousands of colourful lanterns and floated in the Motoyasu River in Hiroshima. Written on these lanterns were messages in many languages hailing world peace and opposing nuclear bombs. The Organising Committee consisting of hundreds of peace and anti-nuclear activists and organisation of nuclear victims, organised the 2000 World Conference against Atom & Hydrogen Bombs from 2nd to 9th August, 2000 at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The main theme of the Conference was "Action and co-operation for a nuclear free-21st century". About 300 delegates including 76 from overseas representing 8 international organisations and 34 national organisations in 20 countries as well as 10,000 delegates from across Japan representing anti-nuclear peace movements, Japanese Hibakusha and world nuclear victims, researchers and other prominent personalities participated in the Conference.

Sixteen delegates from India representing various

organisations participated in the Conference. CITU sent the following eight delegates:

1. M.M.Varghese, All India BHEL Employees' Union, New Delhi
2. Satish Kumar Sharma, Air Corporation Employees' Union, New Delhi
3. Manoj Kumar Sharma, Air Corporation Employees' Union, New Delhi
4. Mary Varghese, All India BHEL Employees' Union, New Delhi
5. MV.Tandel, Port & Dock Workers' Union, Mumbai
6. Gurupada Burman, CWFI, Haldia
7. Sudarshan Manna, CWFI, Haldia
8. Depashish Dey, Air Corporation Employees' Union, Calcutta

## PEACE MARCH

On arrival from Tokyo in the afternoon of 1st August, the overseas delegates visited the Peace Park and Peace Memorial Museum at Hiroshima. A three-day Peace March was organised from 2nd to 4th August. At the end of the peace rally, Depashish Dey from CITU was one among the speakers who addressed the rallyists. Five CITU delegates viz, Depashish Dey, M.V.Tandel, Mary Varghese, S.K.Sharma and M.K.Sharma joined the peace march. The participation of the CITU delegation in the peace rally very much enthused the local people. They were warmly welcomed with flowers and gifts by the local organisations. M.M.Varghese, Burman and Manna attended the information meeting held on 1.8.2000 in the evening wherein four overseas and four Japanese delegates were elected as Chairpersons to conduct International meetings and the plenary sessions.

In the morning of 2nd August, two teams of 5 each overseas delegates visited two hospitals meant for the A-bomb victims. M.M.Varghese was one among the 5 overseas delegates who visited the Fukushima Co-operative Hospital for Hibakushas in Hiroshima.

## CONFERENCE SESSIONS

The Opening Session and Plenary Sessions of the International Meeting were held on 2.8.2000 at Hiroshima. M.M.Varghese represented the CITU in the International Meeting.

In the Plenary Session on August 2nd and 3rd, discussions focusing on the sub-themes were held and the delegates presented several reports on each topic.

CITU representative, Sudarshan Manna, participated in the Workshop on 3rd August and Depashish Dey spoke in the Opening Plenary on 4th August. More than 10,000 participants attended the meeting. On August 5, M.M.Varghese and Satish Kumar Sharma participated in the International Solidarity Meeting and the Workshop. Mrs.Mary Varghese participated in the "No Nukes" programme organised by the Women's Forum on August 5.

On 7th morning the delegates moved to Nagasaki and visited A-bomb Epicenter Park and A-bomb Memorial Museum. On the 8th morning, five delegates visited the A-bomb Hospital. On the 8th, Satish Kumar Sharma and Depashish Dey participated in the Issue Based Meeting on "Grass-roots movements".

As a part of Nagasaki Day International Joint Action, a signature campaign for the "Appeal from Hiroshima and Nagasaki" was conducted. The international delegates collected signatures from local people at Nagasaki. The appeal has been

sent to the U.N. Secretary General and the heads of 189 countries of the world.

## DECLARATION CALL

The Closing Session of the Conference was held on 9th August. A declaration of the International Meeting was adopted in the closing session to express the common will of the participants. The declaration concluded with the following call:

"We appeal to the people of the world. We can change the world. This is our firm conviction, which is growing stronger every day. Let us bring together all our efforts and action to build a decisive momentum towards the earliest possible realisation of a nuclear-free 21st century. Let us bring about ever greater changes in the state of the world, and rally the fruits to the 2001 World Conference against A & H Bombs, the first of the 21st century."

Most of the foreign delegates had home stay at Tokyo, Hiroshima and Nagasaki. To promote international goodwill, home stay with volunteer families in Japan was a very pleasant and useful experience. The friendly treatment provided by the host families to the foreign delegates left an indelible impression on us.

Keisuke Fuse, International Bureau of Zenroren, despite other responsibilities member of the World Conference, accompanied the CITU delegates even during the peace march for three days and provided all assistance.

## CITU APPEALS FOR FLOOD RELIEF FOR WEST BENGAL

Unprecedented flood in West Bengal has already taken away more than one thousand lives, affecting nine districts and crores of people. Loss of crops and property is immeasurable. The Left Front Government has been carrying on relief work on war footing. But much more is required. CITU appeals to working class to come forward for relief and assistance of the flood affected people of West Bengal. All the unions are requested to collect fund for flood relief and send the same to "Chief Minister's Relief Fund, West Bengal" with intimation to CITU Centre.

### STATE CITU CONFERENCE CALLS FOR STRUGGLES

The Eighth conference of Tamilnadu CITU concluded at Madurai, on 30th September, with a clarion call to continue the struggles against the anti-people policies of the Central and State Governments. More than a lakh of workers are to court arrest by picketing before Central State Govt. Offices on 13th November.

#### Preparatory Campaigns

The Conference preparations had begun from May, with the holding of district conferences. September 5th was observed as flag day all over the State and State level campaign began.

Three special conventions were held to give focus to some of the issues.

The convention at Trichy was on Central and State public sector. A convention on problems of small and tiny industries was held in Chennai on 13th September. This was attended by the leaders of small and tiny industries Associations in the State. The third convention on textile sector was held at Erode on 17th September.

Five Jathas were taken out from Kanchipuram, Hosur, Pondicherry, Nilgiris and Kanyakumari, covering all the districts and reached Madurai on 26th.

#### 8th Conference

The Eighth conference was held at Madurai, in K.M. Haribhat memorial hall from 27-30.9.2000

at the venue named after A.Nallasivan from 27th to 30th September. Both these leaders, who had passed away after the last conference, had played major roles in building up CITU in the State.

The conference began with the hoisting of the CITU flag by J. Hemachandran, State President and lighting of the Martyrs Jyothi by M. Nanjappan, Vice-President. The flag was brought from the place where Com. Leelavathi the brave leader of Madurai, was assassinated by hoodlums.

J. Hemachandran presided. P. Mohan, Member of Parliament representing Madurai constituency and Chairman of the reception committee welcomed. Hemachandran in his presidential address referred to the International developments and various struggles against liberalisation and globalisation and also on national developments and the policies of the State Government.

R.Umanath, Vice-President, CITU, in his inaugural address referred to the anti-people policies of the NDA Govt and the necessity to build up united movements. He also referred to the international developments, the struggle from Seattle onwards. He also explained the communal offensive and the way BJP is going ahead with the communal agenda, even during

the Prime Minister's visit to U.S. The conference adopted a resolution protesting against the brutal attack by the people, on volunteers of the Kisan Sabha in Chennai on 25th September. The picketing in Chennai was part of State wide 'Rasta Roko' against the liberalisation policies creating havoc to the peasantry.

Three new books were released in the inaugural session. A short history of Indian Trade Union movement was released by W.R. Varada Rajan, Secretary, CITU. The second book was on the new economic policy and the third on IMF/WB policies.

#### Delegates Session

T.K. Rengarajan presented the General Secretary's report. The report was given to the delegates 10 days in advance and preliminary discussions had taken place in all the district wise delegations. Rengarajan referred to the serious crisis that has engulfed the industrial sectors in total. While reviewing the work done during the last 42 months, after the eleventh conference, he pointed out that a lot of struggles had taken place locally and as part of the national and state level struggles. A lot of struggles were also organised by industrial federations and co-ordination committees.

The second and third part of the report was on working women and on organisation.

# REPORTS & EVENTS

On the working women front, district conference of working women were held in 22 districts and a two-day State conference was also held, attended by 200 delegates covering almost all sectors, 34 delegates had attended the all India conference at Haldia. These conferences have once against brought forth the opportunities for us in building a powerful working womens movement. In Tamil Nadu, there are 317 comrades in the district co-ordination committees; 24 women comrades as office bearers in 17 district committees; 60 district committee members in 24 districts.

He pointed the weaknesses in the functioning of the district Co-ordination committees and called for regular and proper functioning so that all those, who are now in the committees, develop into effective leaders of the industries represented by them.

Referring to the organisation, he pointed out that despite the crisis, CITU has increased its membership by 50,000 after the last conference.

## Discussion

The debate on the General Secretary's report was divided into three separate discussions - the General report, working women and on organisation. 46 delegates participated in the discussion on the General report. 42 and 53 delegates participated in the discussion on working women and on organisation.

The participants in the discussion

also referred to the opportunities for building up a strong working women's movement; the necessity of further expansion and consolidation in unorganised sector, without losing sight of the necessity to build up organised sector organisations; strengthening industry wise movements and maintaining proper co-ordination with district committees; identifying cadres, educating them and preparing them to be leaders; strengthening financial discipline in unions, federations and in district committees; ensuring democratic functioning; proper guidance on the issues connected with caste oppression and mushrooming of caste based organisation.

W.R. Varada Rajan, Secretary CITU and P. Shanmugam, Tamilnadu Kisan Sabha leader greeted the conference. Varada Rajan while greeting the conference, praised the efforts of the State Committee in organising working women. He also pointed out the necessity of taking up the issues of the oppressed dalit people in addition to the class based issues which are taken up now by the unions.

## Cultural Festival

A workers cultural festival was held on 27th evening, in which various cultural troupes performed. K. Kalimuthu (AIADMK), C. Mahendran (CPI), N. Nanmaran (CPM), A. Soundrarajan (CITU) addressed this festival on various issues of economic and cultural importance.

## Seminar on Challenges

On the second day of the conference, a seminar on challenges before the T.U. movement was held. This seminar was addressed by M.K. Pandhe, S.S. Thiagarajan, General Secretary of State AITUC, K. Malaichami M.P., General Secretary of ATP(AIADMK), S. Duraiswami, General Secretary of MLF (MDMK), Ramanathan (INTUC), Arjun (HMS), Anavaradan (UTUC-LS), K. Gangadharan (TNGEA - AISSGEF), E.M. Joseph (AIIEA), K. Krishnan (BEFI) and M. Duraipandyan (Confederation of C.G. Employees).

All the participants in the seminar emphasised the need to build unity and untied struggles in defence of the hardwon rights of the working people. S. Kumaraswami (AICCTU) had sent his greetings.

## Concluding session

On the concluding day, R. Umanath during his brief intervention, dealt with the priority issues to be taken up, financial discipline in the organisation and the necessity of building up united struggles.

M.K. Pandhe, in his address, congratulated the delegate for their active participation in the discussions. He explained the international developments, especially the struggle against liberalisation. He also referred to the growing urge for unity among workers and the necessity to further strengthening the unity at base level.

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Summing up the discussion, T.K. Rengarajan clarified the CITU line on caste related issues and called upon the unions to take up the social issues of dalit and other oppressed people.

Rengarajan listed the immediate struggles. More than a lakh of workers will participate in picketing of the Central and State Govt. Offices on 13th November; Bonus day will be observed on 9th October; Working women will participate in observance of the Global day against hunger and poverty on 17th October; Contract labourers in the State Electricity Board will go on strike on 31st October and 1st November demanding regularisation;

Electricity workers in the State will participate in the national strike on 12th December against Electricity Bill 2000.

The conference elected a 33 member Secretariat with J. Hemachandran as President, T.K. Rengarajan as General Secretary and D. Janakiraman as Treasurer. A.K. Padmanabhan, A. Soundararajan, P.M. Kumar were elected Asst. General Secretaries. There are 14 new office bearers including four women comrades. The new State committee has 83 members including 9 women. There were 600 delegates including 95 women in the conference.

### Rally

Despite heavy rains a massive procession was taken out, which concluded in a rally, at the venue named after Com. Leelavathi. By all accounts, this was the largest ever rally organised by CITU in the State. Among those who addressed the rally were M.K. Pandhe, R. Umanath, W.R. Varada Rajan, J. Hemachandran and T.K. Rengarajan.

The biography of R. Umanath, the veteran leader of the Trade Union movement, written by S.P. Agathialingam was released by M.K. Pandhe at the rally. The first copy was received by M. Raji, Convener of the working women committee.

*(Report from A.K. Padmanabhan)*

## WAGE AGREEMENT IN N.B.C.C.

On 9th September 2000, a new wage agreement was achieved by the workers of N.B.C.C. Ltd.

After expiry of the last settlement on 31.3.99, the CITU union submitted the charter of demands and launched a continuous struggles for wage revision. Thereafter, the N.B.C.C. management was compelled to start the negotiations and arrive a settlement for a period of 7 years

- 9 months, with 100% D.A. neutralisation keeping aside the Mohan Committee recommendations.

As a result of the settlement, the workers will get salary increase from Rs.1,340/- to Rs. 1,800/- per month.

On the issue of rationalisation of pay scales with career advancement plan, a subcommittee will be constituted consisting one member of each

union to finalise the same within two months.

The settlement was signed by all the operating unions viz, CITU, AITUC, INTUC, INTTUC and independent unions in NBCC.

The NBCC CITU union was represented by ASOK DE, Vice President, S.S. RATH, Vice President and AMAL KUNDU, General Secretary.

*(Report from Amal Kundu)*

## PROTEST DAY AGAINST GLOBALISATION

A Conference by 22 trade unions was organised in Mumbai on 23rd Sept. The theme

was "Globalisation: Its Impact on the Working Class". The venue was the conference hall of the

famous Podar College of Arts & Commerce at Matunga in Central Mumbai. The organisers were the

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constituents of Mumbai based Trade Unions Joint Action Committee. This body comprises Central Trade Union organisations like CITU, AITUC, UTUC, HMS, HMKP and Kamgar Aghadi, Sarvasramik sangh, Sarvasramikh Sanghatana, associations of Banks and Insurance Employees, Central & State Government Employees

Organizations, Unions of College and University Teachers and Federations of Electricity Workers etc.

The meeting participated by 250 delegates decided to observe a coordinated one day protest action throughout Maharashtra on 15th November 2000, against these policies of the Central Govt. The

constituents of Joint Trade Union Action Committee on the day will organise meetings and demonstrations against the dangers of this policy in all taluka headquarters, district headquarters, industrial and commercial centers in Maharashtra and in Bombay.

*(Report from P.R Krishnan)*

### DEFENCE EMPLOYEES NATIONAL CONVENTION

The 20th National Convention of the All India Defence Employees Federation was held at S. Banerjee Nagar of Armapur Estate, Kanpur 19-21, Sept. 2000. Capt. Laxmi Segal, the renowned freedom fighter, was the Chief Patron of the Reception Committee. 451 delegate from all over India attended.

The Union Defence Minister, George Fernandes, inaugurated the convention on the 19th September. In his speech he said that the present Govt. was observing the same policy already adopted by Narasimha Rao, while he was in power. He also stated that time had come to corporatise

and privatise Defence Factories for meeting quantitative and qualitative requirements of Arms, Ammunition and stores for the Defence of the country. Samar Mukherjee (CITU), A.B. Bardhan (AITUC), Tiwary (HMS), Subhasini Ali and other trade union leaders, in their speeches, criticised the present anti-people, anti-employees attitude of the Govt. of India and called for united movement by the employees, workers and toiling people of the country.

The convention discussed various departmental issues like disparity in salary and curtailing of leave facilities of the industrial workers,

trade union rights etc., and adopted resolutions on building sustained movements against anti-employee industrial and economic policies of Govt. of India.

A 45 member new Executive Committee with T.I. Madhavan as President, Dipen Ghosh, A.B. Bardhan, Sarad Yadav and R.D. Paul and as Vice-Presidents, Sailo Bhattacharjee and C. Sreekumar as General Secretaries, J.D. Surya Banshi as Treasurer was elected by the convention.

The convention ended with an open session addressed by Samar Mukherjee.

### BEFI DEMANDS FRESH OPTION FOR PENSION

The Reserve Bank of India has opened up its Pension Scheme for those of its employees who did not opt for it at the time of its introduction or in spite of having several opportunities subsequently. In the commercial

banks, not a single opportunity has been given to the employees after the last date stipulated in the Pension Regulation 1995. In the course of the discussions for the 7th bipartite wage settlement, the Bank Employees Federation of

India (BEFI) requested one more opportunity to these employees to opt for pension as also to allow members of the Pension Fund to switch over to CPF.

It was expected that the Indian Banks Association (IBA) would

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recommend for such an opportunity for the commercial bank employees to be accepted by the Government. As there was no communication from the IBA on the subject, the BEFI in a letter to

the IBA Chairman demanded that a fresh opportunity must be given to commercial bank employees to choose between contributory PF and Pension Scheme better way. If RBI can offer one more

opportunity after several already given, there is no cogent reason for not allowing at least one more opportunity to the employees of the commercial banks, the BEFI argued. *(Report from S. Bardhan)*

## MARUTI UDYOG LOCKED OUT: REPRESSION LET LOOSE

Lately on 12.10.2000, the management of Maruti Udyog Ltd virtually locked out the factory. The workers were not allowed to join the duty in the morning shift. The management and the Haryana Police tried to coerce the workers to sign the good conduct bond. They were kept out. Compelling the workers to sign such an undertaking is against the provisions of industrial law and constitutes an unfair labour practice. Due to stubborn attitude of the management, there will be huge production loss, which may undermine this unique industrial establishment. The Govt. of India has 50% stake in Maruti Udyog Ltd.

The workers have been on peaceful agitation since the last 18th September as the management refused to discuss and sort out the long outstanding issue of revision in the incentive scheme and equal contribution to pension scheme as per subsisting bipartite agreement. No worker and unionised employees had signed the good conduct undertaking and joined work today. Production has come to a standstill.

The management after placing 11 workers under suspension, terminated the service of seven workers. On this the General Secretary and President of Maruti Udyog Employees Union sat on indefinite hunger strike from 3rd October, 2000. The police at the behest of the management took the fasting leaders away and put them in the hospital. On discharge from the hospital they were arrested by the police. On being let out on bail the next day, the police again arrested them under section, 107 and 151 of Cr.PC. The City Magistrate, under pressure from the State administration and the management, did not accept bail and sent them to jail. The magistrate has not even accepted the cash amount as surety.

All the Central Trade Union Organisations have expressed solidarity with the agitating workers. Central Trade Unions also wrote to the Heavy Industry Minister to prevail upon the management to initiate dialogue and withdraw the victimisation. It is unfortunate that the Govt has not intervened, in spite of the fact it has three directors on the Board. The entire factory area has been

converted into Police Chawni to terrorise the workers we once again urge upon the Heavy Industry Minister and Maruti management to lift the lock out and start production and simultaneously start business like discussions with the union for amicable settlement on the pending issues.

The leaders of seven national trade unions viz, AITUC, BMS, CITU, HMS, INTUC, UTUC and UTUC(LS) addressed a joint press conference on 12.10.2000 and declared that workers of all affiliations would rally in support of Maruti Udyog workers.

### ATTENTION

ALL STATE  
COMMITTEES/  
FEDERATIONS  
ARE REQUESTED TO  
REMIT THEIR  
COLLECTIONS FOR  
B T R MEMORIAL  
FUND IMMEDIATELY

### BHARAT GOLD MINES : WINDING UP STAYED

**A**ppellate Authority of Industrial & Financial Reconstruction, New Delhi, considering the Appeal Nos. 277,290 & 291 of 2000 has on 29.9.2000 stayed the operations of the BIFR ORDER winding up BHARAT GOLD MINES LIMITED, K.G.F., Karnataka. The Appellate Authority granted time for the workers to consider all or part of their PF earnings to be invested in the revival scheme. The Appellate Authority has considered the workers submissions that about 344 million tons of 'tailings' containing gold estimated from 0.53 to 0.76 grams per ton. 750 to 1000 tons of gold can be extracted

from the tailings dumped during one and half century of gold production by the Mines. Of the total estimated 34 millions tons of 'tailings', if 2 or 3 millions tons are processed, annually 12000 to 2200 Kgs of gold could be produced without any mining operations. Further, from this capital earnings the mining operations could be also developed. The appellants have shown their readiness for rationalisation of work force.

Apart from Bharat Gold Mines Employees Union (CITU), United Workers Union and an Australian company registered in Karnataka filed the appeals. The Australian Company has made an offer to

purchase the assets of BGML at a cost of Rs.33 crore; with 50% down payment and deferred payment of the balance with 9% interest. The Appellate Authority directed the Australian Mining Company to discuss with the workers' unions as to how they can associate themselves with the Revival Scheme.

The Appellate Authority posted the hearing of the appeals to 15th November, 2000, to consider finally whether the workers are willing to invest their provident fund earnings and also to involve the Australian Company in the Revival Scheme.

*(Report from V.J.K. Nair)*

### BEL EMPLOYEES DHARNA

**T**he work of BEL units all over India was at standstill for 3 days from 10th to 12th October 2000, owing to a dharna programme of employees against negative and indifferent attitude of management towards their wage

revision. The call for dharna was given by CITU and INTUC jointly while BMS, HMS and AITUC also supported the action of the employees. According to reports received, employees took part in dharna programme in Ghaziabad,

Panchkoola, Kotdwar, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Machhilipatnam, Chennai, Pune and Talaja. Apart from this the work in nine production units and all the regional offices was also effected.

#### COM. M.S. KRISHNAN

Com. M.S. Krishnan, former President of AITUC and a popular leader of the working class in Karnataka passed away on 5.9.2000 at Bangalore.

Com. MSK, as he was fondly called by his admirers, as a student plunged into the freedom movement and was imprisoned several times. He chose to abandon his studies and started organising workers in Bangalore and rose to become one of their top leaders. He renounced all the property, which he inherited from his family and gave it to the Communist Party. He was elected as an MLA from Bangalore city for four times. His special contribution was in the field of building up Public Sector Unions of Bangalore. He actively associated himself with the Joint Action Front (JAF), for building powerful struggles conducted by the Public Sector Workers. The CITU condoles the death of Com. M.S. Krishnan and pays homage to his memory.

Consumer Price Index Numbers for Industrial Workers on base: 1982 = 100

Sr. No	Centre	June 2000	July 2000	August 2000	Sr. No.	Centre	June 2000	July 2000	August 2000
1	Gudur	448	440	437	45	Amritsar	383	389	390
2	Guntur	439	439	441	46	Ludhiana	400	402	399
3	Hyderabad	422	422	422	47	Ajmer	436	438	432
4	Visakhapatnam	438	436	436	48	Jaipur	404	407	404
5	Warangal	446	452	443	49	Chennai	476	476	475
6	D D Tinsukia	388	387	391	50	Coimbatore	437	437	432
7	Guwahati	462	463	461	51	Coonoor	436	434	428
8	Labac-Silchar	378	375	374	52	Madurai	440	440	441
9	Mariani Jorhat	415	416	415	53	Salem	433	432	434
10	Rangapara-Tezpur	402	406	407	54	Tiruchirapally	476	481	476
11	Jamshedpur	404	408	408	55	Agra	401	402	403
12	Jharia	361	364	365	56	Ghaziabad	447	450	451
13	Kodarma	368	371	367	57	Kanpur	427	433	431
14	Monghyr Jamalpur	409	409	411	58	Saharanpur	398	401	411
15	Noamundi	397	392	393	59	Varanasi	468	473	466
16	Ranchi-Hatia	415	414	418	60	Asansol	410	415	418
17	Ahmedabad	443	446	444	61	Calcutta	440	450	456
18	Bhavnagar	473	472	467	62	Darjeeling	382	380	386
19	Rajkot	446	449	421	63	Durgapur	461	473	479
20	Surat	449	447	446	64	Haldia	476	479	482
21	Vadodra	435	437	433	65	Howrah	495	501	505
22	Faridabad	447	452	447	66	Jalpaiguri	393	405	406
23	Yamunanagar	416	416	415	67	Raniganj	379	378	379
24	Srinagar	465	477	472	68	Chandigarh	457	463	462
25	Bangalore	423	423	427	69	Delhi	520	524	520
26	Belgaum	477	479	473	70	Pondicherry	476	479	474
27	Hubli-Dharwar	436	439	434					
28	Mercara	460	454	454		<b>All India</b>	<b>442</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>443</b>
29	Alwaye	449	447	442		<b>Additional Series of Labour Bureau</b>			
30	Mundakayam	459	455	449					
31	Quilon	448	441	441	1	Kothagudem	435	442	456
32	Thiruvananthapuram	515	522	506	2	Himachal Pradesh	428	436	437
33	Balaghat	386	390	390	3	Bhilwara	439	441	440
34	Bhilai	395	397	390	4	Chhindwara	416	419	423
35	Bhopal	452	455	452	5	Tripura	327	317	414
36	Indore	445	449	448	6	Goa	526	529	525
37	Jabalpur	451	454	442					
38	Mumbai	513	512	507					
39	Nagpur	456	475	474					
40	Nasik	456	471	474					
41	Pune	491	497	503					
42	Solapur	468	483	481					
43	Barbil	410	413	415					
44	Rourkela	404	406	410					

Government of India  
Ministry of Labour  
Labour Bureau  
Shimla - 171 004

\* In the process, Rs.2.5 lakh crore worth of public property is being transferred to Indian and foreign companies.

**Ports** are to be handed over to private hands.

\* In Mumbai, the Jawaharlal Nehru Port has already been handed to an Australian multinational company.

\* The concept that ports are of strategic importance is given up; they are being transferred to foreign multinationals, alleging that the Indians cannot run a port efficiently!

### AI, IA, AIRPORTS

\* It is claimed that without foreign experts and foreign capital India its airports and air travel systems.

In short, the rulers of the country are convinced that the ordinary Indian, barring a few in big business, cannot manage anything efficiently, including the governance of the country, without the direction of the World Bank, and that, too, must be within the frame-work of US strategic interests.

Many decisions are being taken avoiding parliamentary debate. herefore, the working class, as a class, has no option but to oppose them with the support of the large sections of the people, irrespective of party affiliations. This realisation is now gaining momentum. The theories of the Mr. Shettigars & Co. cannot dissuade them, rather they will only make them fight more vigorously, not only in their own interest but as their patriotic duty.

### ECONOMIC TIMES DIRECTIVE

An Editorial 'Bite the Bullet' by The Economic Times (August 17, 2000), pointing out deficiencies in the field of agriculture, makes the following demands.

"Two other obvious areas of lagged or stagnant reforms are privatization and labour market reforms. Again, there has been no dearth of generalized official statements on the need for progress in these areas. But these statements have not been translated into practice. Labour market reforms in particular have proved a non-starter. The fact is that having dealt with the relatively easy part of the reforms the government must now get down to tackling organized resistance from those with vested interests. The longer it delays such confrontation, the more it conveys the impression of weakness and hence strengthens the resistance".

In conclusion it proclaims : "It is time to BITE THE BULLET".

Thus this mouthpiece of big business did not mince words. It wants urgent steps towards privatisation and labour market reforms, together with strict action against the developing resistance. Confront it and suppress it, is the order of this big business-friendly daily.

Privatisation is already on at top speed. But still more is demanded. On the labour market too, the government has appointed a commission to bring it in tune with the liberalised set-up. To curtail the right to organise, to restrict the right to strike and above all, hire-and-fire rights to be made the absolute prerogative of employers.

The meaning of the above will surely be properly understood by the trade unions. The attempt is to render the working class helpless by taking away all the rights they are currently enjoying, and achieved through bitter struggles. The result would be to turn workers into mere slaves.

The right to strike and the right to organise are basic rights, which cannot be allowed to be abridged or taken away.

## CITU STATE CONFERENCES

**Maharashtra:** 1-3 Nov. at Thane;

**Delhi:** 8-9 Nov. at New Delhi

**Madhya Pradesh:** 13-16 Nov. at Chirimiri; **Kerala:** 28th Nov. to 1st Dec at Kannur

**Orissa:** 3-5 Dec. at Cuttack;

**Assam:** 3-5 Dec. at Digboi

- \* Against anti-people, anti-national economic policies
- \* Against Communalism

## MASSIVE WORKERS' DEMONSTRATION AT DELHI MASS PETITION CARRYING CRORES OF SIGNATURES SUBMITTED TO PRESIDENT OF INDIA

New Delhi, September 27, 2000-Thirty thousands strong demonstration of workers denounced the anti-national and anti-people economic policies of the BJP-led Govt of India and its nefarious game to aid and promote the communal forces in the country.

The demonstration comprised of workers converged from Delhi and adjoining States carried along mass petitions addressed to President of India signed by crores of people from all over the country for submission to President's office.

The procession started from Feroz Shah Kotla Ground at 11 AM and proceeded towards Parliament through Jawharlal Nehru Road, Ranjit Singh Flyover and the rally was held at Patel Chawk , Parliament Street.

The rally was addressed by Com M K Pandhe, General Secretary, CITU, S B Bharadwaj, Badal Saroj, Satvir Singh, and Chandrasekhar, General Secretaries of Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana and Punjab State Committees respectively and Hetram Beniwal and Daulat Ram, President of Rajasthan and UP State Committee of CITU respectively.

Speakers pointed out that in the coming winter session of Parliament the Govt will try to rush through many privatisation bills-on Coal mines, Bank, financial sector, Telecom, Electricity and many others besides pressing for other anti-worker bills against which massive protest have to be organised countrywide. They welcomed the decision of the Electricity Workers strike on 12th December and also the strike decision by the United forum of Bank employees.

After the meeting the truck-load mass petitions signed by two crore people was submitted to President of India.