

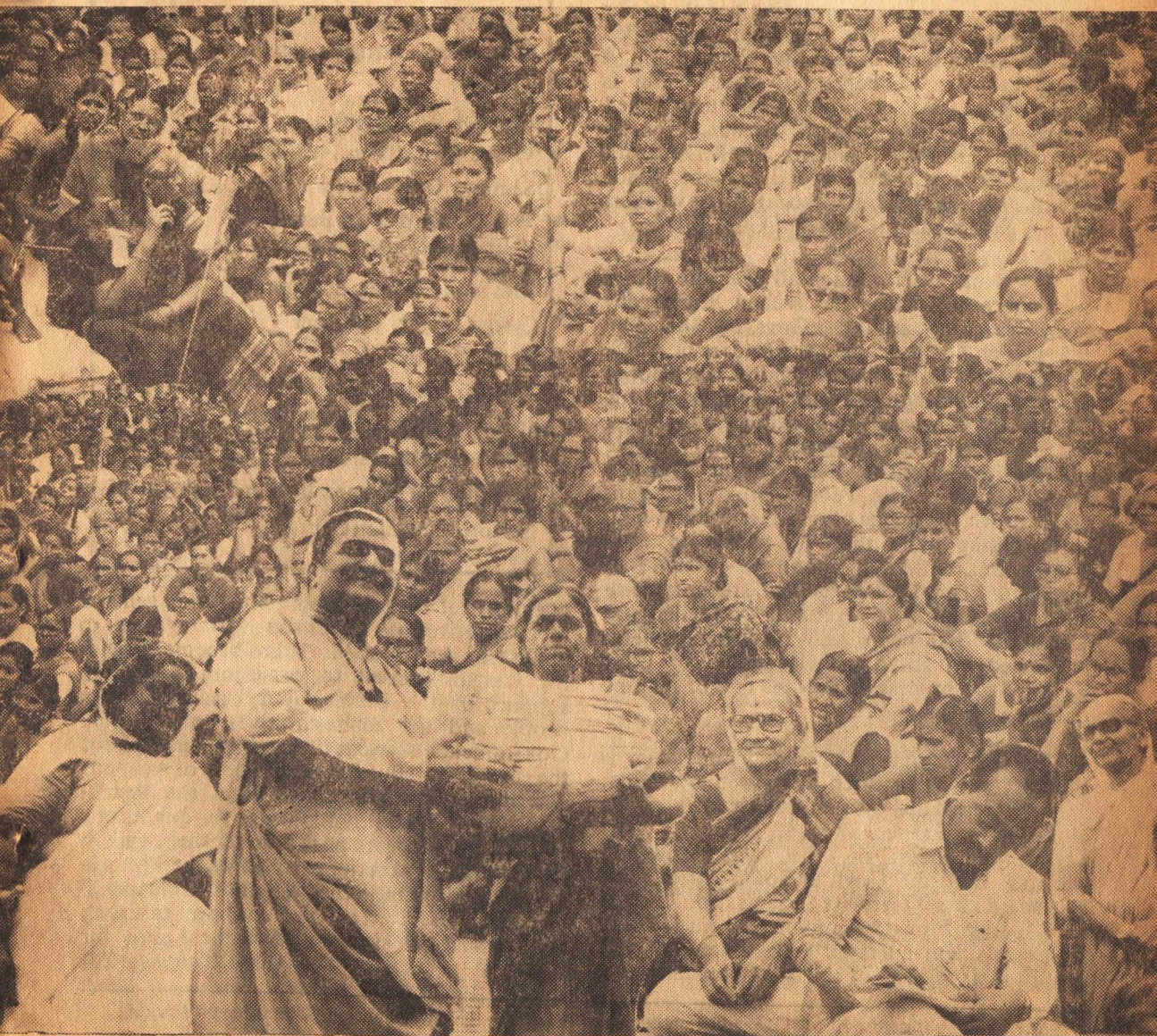
THE VOICE
OF

THE WORKING WOMAN

Vol V No. 5

September 1985

Re 1



Massive Women's Rally in Hyderabad on 14 July 1985.

Release Nelson Mandela

MS. Winni Mandela, wife of Nelson Mandela, an undisputed leader of the South African people, rejected outright a donation of \$ 10,000 from the U.S. Govt. Human Rights Fund. The money was offered to her to rebuild the house burnt by the known racists. Her husband, Nelson Mandela is languishing in jail for 22 years now. The non-aligned movement including people in our country and Govt. has repeatedly demanded his release in the UN, Security Council and at other forums. The demand to release him is now being raised from hitherto unexpected quarters, like USA, France, Sweden, Norway and other European Countries. The UDF, Natal Indian Congress, ANC, as well as the Trade Unions among which the Strong Mine workers union, gave a call for strike in Gold Mines.

The democratic opinion all over the world was concerned when the second Emergency was declared by the Racist Govt. on 20th July '85 launching attacks on the leaders of ANC. The intensity of the hatred against the Botha Govt. can be noted from the support for the March to Palsmoor Prison in Cape Town led by Dr. Alan Boesak. 30,000 people marched to the Prison where Nelson Mandela was detained. The People broke the ban, clashes with the police occurred every now and then, killing more than 30 people in only 3 days. But the March continued in spite of the ban. The Church leaders, students, University lecturers were arrested. At Stellenborth University 300 white and coloured students attempted an anti-apartheid march to Cape Town. Such procession was the first of its kind in South Africa.

The declaration of the second Emergency is the last resort to stick to power by Botha. This move resulted even in the breach of its allies such as France, Sweden, Norway. The Secretary General of the Commonwealth declared that the Govt. of South Africa must be treated as a "Terrorist Organisation". The EEC foreign Ministers conference held recently in Brussels demanded an "immediate and unconditional release of Nelson Mandela and

In This Issue

Release Nelson Mandela	2-28
Observance of Working Women's Day	3-4
AICCWW Delegation Meets Union Labour Minister	5-6
Computerisation and Working Women	7-8
Private Schools—Public Exploitation	10
Chitra Sen's Struggle Against Transfer	11
Nairobi Conference	12-13
Women's Rally in Hyderabad	15-16
Seminar On Common Civil Code	17
WWCC formed in Bewar	18
Jaipur Women Resolve to Fight J.M.S. in Bhopal, Sonapat,	
Ganga Nagar, Udaypur	20-21
Raichur AIDWA	22
Women in Action	24
Soviet Women's Committee's Letter on Hiroshima	25
All Glory to Women in Viet Nam	26
Nelson Mandela (Contd.)	28

opening of negotiations with the genuine representatives of the Blacks with a view to abolishing Apartheid". It has become difficult for Reagan himself to come out openly in support of the Botha Govt. because his own people and the representatives of friendly Governments started demanding solution of the problem. But for the support of weapons and money from USA and Britain the Apartheid Govt. could not survive for a moment. From all the corners of the world the demand for economic sanctions to force the Pretoria Govt. to "dismantle the system of Apartheid" is being raised. The people have taken up arms to end this system of Apartheid once for

(Contd. on page 28)

Working Women's Demands Day

As per the decision taken in the meeting of the All India Co-ordination Committee held at Trivandrum on 2nd June 1985, 6th August was observed in many states, by submitting the memorandum to the Chief Ministers on the demands of the working Women. The following reports have been received by the AICCWW uptill now.

In Karnataka

ALL India Demands Day was observed in Karnataka at Mangalore (3 places), Sakleshpur, Hassan, Chikamagalur and Bangalore on 6-8-1985.

Working Women's meetings were held at Gujjarakere and Mahanavamikatte in Mangalore city and Thokkotu in the suburbs of Mangalore on 6-8-85. B. Madhava and P. Ramachandra-Rao addressed the meetings and explained the contents of the memorandum.

About 250 women workers (all plantation workers) took out a procession from the office of Karnataka Thota Karmikara Sangha, paraded the streets of Sakleshpur, shouting slogans on the All India Demands and submitted memorandum addressed to Chief Minister and Social Welfare Minister of Central Govt to the Manager of the office in the absence of Assistant Commissioner. Later a meeting was held at Rotary Nursery Hall, Varija, Executive Committee member of union presided over the meeting. V. Sukumar, General Secretary, Krishna Maistry, Vice-President and Poul D'Souza Asstt. Secretary of the union addressed the meeting and explained the contents of the memorandum.

250 women workers gathered at the office of Coffee Curing Saw Mills Mathu Ithara Karmikara Sangha, at Hassan. Manjamma presided over the meeting. V. Sukumar, General Secretary of the union addressed the meeting and explained the All India Demands contained in the memorandum. Then they went in a procession shouting slogans on All India Demands through the main thoroughfares of Hassan, demonstrated in front of office of Deputy Commissioner and District Magistrate.

A deputation consisting of 20 women workers led by V. Sukumar met the Deputy Commissioner and submitted memorandum addressed to Chief Minister and Social Welfare Minister of Govt. of India. They also submitted a memorandum containing complaints regarding non-implementation of Welfare measures in Factories Act in the Coffee Curing Establishments at Hassan, managements repression on unionised women etc., to the Deputy Commissioner.

A deputation of 40 women workers from Malanadu Planters Coffee Curing Works led by A.K. Viswanath and G.S. Raghavendra Secretary and Asstt. Secretary of the union met the Deputy Commissioner, Chikamagalur and submitted memorandum signed by 145 women workers from plantations and coffee curing works.

A meeting of women workers was held at Bangalore at NGO Hall. M.M. Rajamma member of AICCWW, Khurshid Begum CITU State Council member, Shantha Kumari, Treasurer SFI State Committee, P.K. Subramani, A. John Vincent and R. Srinivas state Council members of CITU addressed the meeting.

In Kerala

The Kerala State Committee of Working Women's Co-ordination Committee met on 30th June, 1985 at Trivandrum and decided to observe 6th August as Working Women's Day in the state. To make it a grand success women workers meetings were held in the Districts. These meetings were attended by Com. M. Sarada, Nazimuneza, Girija Bai and Leelamma from the State Committee. Decisions were taken in the meetings to wear badges by women workers while at work and to submit memorandum to the District Collectors after holding demonstrations.

In Trivandrum women workers observed the 'Day' wearing badges. In the noon a demonstration was held in front of the Govt. Secretariat in which about 75 women representing various sectors participated. CITU

State Secretary Com. Padmalochanan addressed the demonstrators. Later a delegation consisting of Com. Nazimuneza, Girja Bai, Santhakumari, Kamalam and Indiradevi met the Chief Minister and presented the memorandum.

In Cannanore the Working Women's Day was observed by taking out a procession of about 85 women. A memorandum was presented to the District Collector. A demonstration of about 65 women workers was held at Kottayam. The Working Women's day was observed in Quilon by conducting procession and presenting memorandum.

In the Districts of Calicut, Alleppy and Ernakulam the 'Day' was observed by wearing badges and presenting memorandum to the respective collectors.

In Delhi

A deputation of the Delhi Coordination Committee of Working Women met the Chief Executive Councillor of Delhi, Shri Jag Pravesh Chandra, on 6th August 1985, and submitted a memorandum to him, highlighting the problems and demands of working women in Delhi.

At the very outset, the CEC accepted the memorandum, looked it over briefly and told the deputation that he would do the needful. On our insistence, he was compelled to discuss the demands with us, point-by-point, but his attitude remained frivolous and non-serious throughout.

We were shocked when he claimed no knowledge of the legislation relating to creche. He asserted: "There is no eve — teasing in Delhi, my whole Administration has worked to stop it." This was height of his ignorance when an Anti-Eve-Teasing Bill, Delhi is pending approval of the Central Government. When we protested against his statement he stated that some eve-teasing is bound to exist, everywhere.

During our discussions with the CEC, an industrialist who was present intervened several times, and tried to negate the necessity of protective legislation for women, which he

affirmed would only lead to further unemployment of women. We objected to his intervention but the CEC advised us to listen to him, as he was an "influential party man and policies are decided in the party". The real attitude of the ruling party becomes eminently clear from the stand taken by both these persons. It also exposes the hollowness of the tall claims made by the government at national and international forums regarding their concern and measures taken for the progress and development of women in India.

The only demand the CEC was willing to look into was of public toilets for ladies, and working women's hostels. He stated however, that he could only act further if he was "pressurized".

The deputation came away convinced of the necessity to do just that, through a programme of agitation and struggle, involving large number of working women, on the demands already made in the charter.

In Sonapat — Haryana

For the first time, a meeting of working women was organised on 6th August, in Sonapat. Women from LIC and Balwadi attended the meeting. Vimal Ranadive, Secretary, AICCW explained the purpose of Co-ordination Committee for Working Women and reported about the discussion in the meeting with the Union Labour Minister. During discussion, many working women attending expressed the need for a special retiring room for women. It was decided to hold another meeting with more representatives from other offices after one month to take up the problem of separate common room for ladies and a working women's hostel.

In Bhubaneswar—Orissa

As per the decision of the A.I.C.C.W.W. A delegation led by Com. Indumati Nandy, Com. J. Dey and Com. Bidyut Lata Samal submitted a memorandum of six point charter of demands to the state Chief Minister's Secretary, in the absence of Chief Minister in the Capital. The memorandum contained more than one hundred working women's signatures.

Delegation discussed the demands and cur-
(Contd. on page 26)

AICCWW Delegation Meets Labour Minister

A memorandum on the problems of working women was submitted to the Union Labour Minister, Shri T. Anjaiah on 5th August '85 on behalf of All India Co-ordination Committee of Working Women. The delegation consisted of Kishori Sexena, Pramila Pandhe (Social Welfare Mahila Karmachari Union) Rama Dixit (AIIEA) Vrinda Karat and Ranjana Narula (Delhi Co-ordination Committee) besides Vimal Ranadive the Secretary AICCWW. The memorandum highlighted in the main, the increasing unemployment among women, during the Women's Decade, the rapid growth from the organised to the unorganised industries such as Tobacco and mines, the non-implementation of the legislations including the Equal Remuneration and Maternity Benefit Acts, the provision of Creche and hostels for working women, Transport facilities etc. During discussion, the question of mechanisation in Tobacco was raised when thousands of women in the industry were being thrown out due to introduction of green threshing plant machine. A demand was made not to allow the licences to the multinational companies like ILTD for the GTP. A demand also was made to have a legislation for women in the unorganised industries such as Beedi, Garment, Electronic and in small scale industries who do not come under Minimum Wages Act and suffer long hours of tedious jobs with no minimum facilities like toilet. After Shri T. Anjaiah listened to the demands he suggested that the delegation should meet the Labour Secretary Shri Bhatnagar to discuss the memorandum point by point and give their suggestions to the Govt.

Accordingly, the delegation met Shri Bhatnagar on the 16th August and discussed the points in the memorandum. Shri Ashoka Narayan, the Joint Labour Secretary and Mrs. M.M. Bassi, Joint Labour Commissioner, Delhi also were present.

The following note was forwarded to the Labour Secretary, to the Union Labour Ministry on the basis of the discussion on 27th August 1985, by the Secretary AICCWW.

"As desired by you in the meeting, held on 16th of August at 11 A.M. with the

representatives of All India Co-ordination Committee of Working Women, we are furnishing further information on the questions raised in our memorandum submitted to Shri T. Anjaiah, the Union Labour Minister on the 5th August, 1985.

1. While discussing the first point namely "Growth of Unemployment", we mentioned the specific question of mechanisation in Tobacco industry in Andhra Pradesh which is an organised sector resulting in closures of Tobacco Factories and depots throwing thousands of women out of employment in spite of the professed policies of the Sixth Five Year plan namely not to introduce mechanisation in the labour intensive industries. The Green Threshing Plants (GTP) were being introduced since 1983 and a number of trade unions from Andhra Pradesh and AICCWW represented the case to the late Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi and also the then Union Labour Minister. Demand was made not to give licenses to the ILTD multinational company to import the machines. After a thorough discussion, Shri Tiwari promised that giving the licenses would be stopped. In the meeting took place on 16th, we again brought to your notice the present situation where four more depots, viz. Guntur, Childalempeta, Ongole and Tangutur have been closed by the management throwing out about 3000 women employees. The copy of the memorandum by the ILTD Union to the Andhra Chief Minister was also submitted in the meeting. After going through the same, you had said that these women came from the unorganised sector and issuing licenses do not come under the purview of the Centre and it was a state subject. After a detailed discussion you had assured the delegation that you would look into the matter. We would like to remind you again that the licenses to import the GTP should not be given to these multinational companies who earn super-profits by introduction of such job killing devices. We also conveyed to you about the possibility of such mechanisation in the match stick industries in Sivkasi in Tamilnadu where women constitute the major force. We would request you to look into the matter with regard to issue of licenses which is the Centre's

subject and stop mechanisation in Tobacco Industry while reinstating all the women labour who have been retrenched from those depots.

2. Second point we raised in the meeting was about the non-implementation of the various legislations such as Equal Remuneration Act, Maternity benefit Act and provision of creche etc. A request was made by you that we should submit the instances of the unequal wages in various industries so that you could look into matter. Instances are many. We give some examples here for your information. In plantation Industry where women constitute a near majority, the difference in wages in Assam is about Rs. 1-2 between men and women for the same nature of work. In the Beedi Industry, in almost all states except Kerala and Karnataka, the difference in wages remains about Rs. 3-4. In construction, under Government and private, the difference in wages remains between Rs. 2 to 6. In a recent agreement in Bihar arrived at between the representatives of workers INTUC (Cong-I) and Beedi Employers in January 1985, women would get Rs. 6-10 for 1000 beedies while men would get Rs. 9.50. In the Agricultural sector, women are paid less than the men in almost all states. The minimum wages also are not paid to the women workers. The Indian Labour Journal in 1980 in a special article giving a survey about women in Plantation said "...However the differentials in wage rates of men and women are found to be continuing in some plantations even at the time of this study, even after passing of 1976 Act, such unfair practices continue in plantations..."

We hope all these unfair practices will be looked into as promised in the meeting and justice will be done to the women who are still employed.

3. A question was raised by Smt. Rama Das of LIC about the provision of creche, and a retiring room for working women which was an urgent necessity for the women working in offices. It is true that those women do not come under such acts which provide creche and thus are deprived of this facility. The delegation therefore put before you that this facility should be extended to these women. The delegation also put before you that the recent amendment passed in ESI Act goes against the interest of working woman as the same results

in loss of maternity benefit. This Act passed is a crude joke for the women when the directive principles of State policy lauds the sacred motherhood. After discussion you promised us that these two items (1) retiring room and (2) provision of creche will be considered.

4. Most important question discussed in the meeting was about the representation of Women's Organisations and the AICCWW on the various committees formed in the States and at the Centre such as Equal Remuneration Committee, Committee of employment of women and the Advisory Committees. The enforcement of any beneficial law concerning women would definitely improve if the women's representatives are associated with the enforcement machinery. We brought to your notice that AIDWA and AICCWW have not been given any representation in any of these Committees. The AICCWW is working for the specific problems of working women, and as far as our knowledge goes it is the only such Committee in India. The representatives of AICCWW have attended many International Conferences as well. Unfortunately, despite prolonged correspondence between CITU and Union Labour Ministry sometime back, this question has not been solved. You had promised to consider this point by saying that women's organisations should be given representations.

In the discussion, the delegation demanded the right to work to be included in the constitution as a fundamental right, to which you replied that it was not possible to give work to lakhs of unemployed people and therefore you do not accept this demand. Anyway, as you said that there are lakhs of people unemployed, will it be too much to ask from the Government to stop their mechanisation and modernisation plans, stop import of mechanical device from Multinational companies so that more unemployment of men and women could be stopped?

We hope that the above questions will be discussed by the Govt. including the Cabinet if necessary as promised by you and some solution of the above noted problems of the working women would be found at the conclusion of women's Decade.

We also hope to have an acknowledgement of this letter and an early favourable reply.

Computer and Working Women

Vimal Ranadive

THE Journal of Reserve Bank Employees Association, Calcutta, 'Voice' in their May-June '85 issue has published a special article on 'Automation'. The article is thought provoking and timely published. It appealed for joint action to all concerned employees to fight against this menace. The article has given facts and figures in support of their arguments and none could doubt about the serious consequences of computerisation on the employees and the workers.

The official statement made by the Prime Minister time to time, and the policies declared later on, make very clear that the Government was moving rapidly for modernisation, and computerisation. It is therefore very important for the trade union movement to speak in one voice what we stand for. When the trade union movement oppose the modernisation, or oppose the installation of computers in any establishment the question is posed as if the trade union movement is against industrialisation and the progress of the country, while other countries are moving fast to industrialisation.

What is the reality? The article in the 'Voice' has quoted one instance after another, with facts and figures of the likely impact on the employment wherever the computers are being planned. Secondly, these steps are being suggested at the time when the figures of unemployment in Urban and rural areas in our country has reached in crores, and this is not disputed even by the Government. The registered Urban unemployment in our country for the month of September 1984 is nearly 24 million, while the rural unemployment is 43 millions. The RBI estimates 28350 closers of factories in June '84, while sick units went up from 22366 in December 1979 to 60157 in December 1984. Under these circumstances, when the computers are installed, one cannot just think of the havoc they would play with thousands of lives of common people.

The arguments forwarded by the Multi-nationals and quoted in plenty in the 'Voice' that there would be no retrenchment, no

replacement of labour etc. due to automation and mechanisation are replied well in the article. They are an eye opener for the working people including working women.

As per the information, the AIBEA signed an agreement with the Bank management under which the banking industry will introduce 200 large computers, 2000 mini, and 10,000 accounting machines which may render 40,000 employees surplus and no new recruitment for 5 years! In Railways when computers are introduced 6 lakhs workers will be surplus.

The 'Voice' has quoted the opinions of eminent personalities who have thoroughly studied the problem. Prof. V.K. Demodaran, the Principal, Scientific Officer, Kerala Technology and Environment Committee said, "the number of computers used in India has risen from first computer installed in 1955 to 1000 in 1975 and to 3000 in 1984, and is further expected to increase to 1,00,000 by 1990". If this is so, one would be aghast to learn the future situation in our country when crores of people are unemployed and lakhs are waiting for job!

The 'Voice' has quoted from the journal of Trade Unions International of Public and Allied Employees Vol. No. 63 March 1985 that "Due to the characterization of these technologies it is to be expected that in the long run, all office works will be automatised. Hence the majority of employees doing office work (in France) are potentially concerned...it can be assumed that, 8,00,000 employees will be affected by this transformation in the years to come." It further warns "Women will be particularly affected as they represent the large areas of typists and shorthand-typists...."

This warning is of a special significance for the working women and they must take a note of this. It is to everybody's knowledge that middle class women are employed most in Banks, Offices and so on — as clerks and typists. If the computers are introduced in Banks, as the Banking managements are seriously thinking, women will be the Victims

of computerisation and mechanisation. Read the following figures of the office employees affected by the computerisation in Britain in 1964 by installing the Electric Data Processing Machines.

	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Managers and Supervisers	: 620	80	700
Clerks	: 13,100	20,200	33,300
Office Machine Operators	: 400	14,200	14,600
Typists	: 5	2,395	2,400
	14,125	36,875	51,000

From the above figures it can be noted that the number of women as typists, machine operators, and clerks are the most affected by the machanised processes.

Therefore, the Working Women should not have any doubt about the serious-consequences of the computerisation, on their jobs, in the offices, Banks, Railways or P & T etc. If anybody still doubts, listen what the IBM corporation, the largest computer manufacturing concern of the world, has to say: "We can't argue that technological change and automation are not labour saving devices. Of course they are. They do cause displacement of people. In fact, to do so is one of their major purposes."

Computerisation or modernisation of the industry creates unemployment under capitalist system. It is the purpose of the monopolists to have surplus profits by installing such machinery. On the contrary, under Socialism, the same automation becomes a weapon in the hands of the working people to create more wealth, products at cheaper rates with less manual labour, shortening of working hours. It is acknowledged, the socialist countries have progressed rapidly due to highly modernised industries. In our country, with these steps the results will be just the opposite. There will be abundance of unemployed people.

In this connection the struggle of the employees of Hongkong and Mercantile Banks in Calcutta is praiseworthy. The management had decided to install a powerful computer in their premises at Calcutta from July 1st. The Bank employees Federation of India has launch-

ed day and night vigil from evening to morning in groups to resist the installation of this huge computer. It is to be noted that a large number of women members of the BEF branches and other women employees belonging to trade union organisations of state and central governments, LIC and other unions are participating in the struggle enthusiastically, squatting round the clock before Hongkong Bank.

The Gantantrik Mahila Samithi (AIDWA) also has assured its full support in the struggle and is participating in a number of conventions and meetings organised to carry out anti-automation campaign.

On the one hand, the Government and the planning commission, promise for more employment for men and women. Women were promised not to have mechanisation in the labour intensive industries in the 6th Five Year Plan. On the other, Government is allowing the private Capital in the industries to modernise them, allowing the import licences for those industries where women constitute a large number. With the new possible attacks due to computerisation in the different establishment like Banks, Railway and so on, women employed as clerks and typists are to be out. The slogans in the International Decade of Women for more employment and so on at Nairobi remain on papers. When women want to get employment under the present serious crisis they are denied jobs.

The 'Voice' has warned the common people, including women about the serious danger approaching the working people. With United efforts only we will be able to fight back the menace.

(Contd. from page 22)

On June 29, the AIDWA and several other mass organisations organised a protest action, demanding stern action against the Swami and his men. AIDWA District President Shamala Pujair narrated the whole episode to the 7000-strong audience. Parvathamma also addressed the meeting.

On July 2, a delegation met Chief Minister Hegde at Bangalore who heard the complaint and assured that enquiry into the episode would be ordered. The delegation also demanded medical care and other relief for the victims, and clarified that the agitation would continue till the culprits were brought to book. A press conference was also held on July 3.

Independence Day Pledge

India achieved independence thirty-eight years ago on this day, as a result of great sacrifices and self-denials made by freedom-fighters and martyrs. The struggle to free the country's masses from poverty and deprivation started from that day—keeping UNITY the target for this vast sub-continent inhabited by people of various caste and creed. The evil forces of separatism and communal feeling are impeding our progress and endangering the integrity of the country and its people.

As an outcome of the right policies followed by The Left Front Government, West Bengal is free from the danger of the sundering forces.

In this atmosphere of amity and unity, let us take the vow of bringing into being a new West Bengal—hand in hand with brothers from all caste, religion and language. Let us strive for fulfilling the objectives—emancipation from poverty, ensuring health for all, installation of new industries, spread of education among masses, upkeep of national unity and healthy culture, despite our limited resources and various obstacles through the concerted effort of the Government and the people. Let this be our Independence Day Pledge.

Government of West Bengal

Private Schools, Public Exploitation

Maimoona — Delhi

GETTING employment these days is a matter of great jubilation. But imagine your consternation if you go to your place of work and are told that your services are terminated. No, this is not a fable. This has happened and right here in Delhi.

Nine teachers of Sharada Public School, Defence Colony, Delhi were sacked because they protested against their exploitation by the school management. The teachers were made to sign blank cheques and were paid a very small sum as salary. In fact, they never handle their accounts themselves. When they protested, they were threatened with termination of jobs. In utter frustration, the teachers met the Education Minister K. C. Pant, who refused to intervene, since he himself had inaugurated the school in 1973. The managements often boasts of its connections with the higher-ups.

Many other irregularities have also come to light. The memorandum the teachers gave to K. C. Pant says that there are hardly five teachers who are confirmed. As a result, other teachers are asked to teach subjects for which they are not qualified. Also many Govt. School teachers work part time.

Students of other schools who fail in the examination are admitted here in the next higher class because the parents pay huge sums as donations and gifts. This also is the reason for bad results.

Also in the memorandum the teachers demanded that they be reinstated with full arrears paid and the administration take over the school under the Delhi Education Act with immediate effect.

All this to no avail.

It is then that the co-ordination committee of working women and Janawadi Mahila Samity got in touch with the affected teachers and offered their support. We just met the management. The "boss" of the school as the chowkidar told us. (he never told us his name) made us stand outside and spoke to us. (By the way, even parents are not allowed to go in

and see how their children are taught.) According to him, the teachers were on probation after which they were removed for "bad performance". Asked about the blank cheques and the newspaper story, "boss" dismissed it merely as "journalists" craze for sensationalism".

Then, with the help of the co-ordination committee and the JMS, the teachers went in a deputation to the CEC Jag Pravesh Chandra. They met the CEC and Mr. Kulanand Bharati also who said that an inquiry will be instituted into their case and into the running of the school. They hope to complete the inquiry in three weeks.

At the same time the teachers are planning to take their case to the tribunal. These efforts have made the management of the school a little cautious. In August, they have paid full salary to the teachers, it is learnt.

Meanwhile another case of similar irregularities has come to light. The school is *Adarsh Vidya Bhawan*.

The teachers are now getting organised to fight for a better deal for they know that this is the only way they can get redress. What is most infuriating is the fact that this is the Govt. which shouts from roof tops, of its new Education policy and the Minister refuses to help the educators — the key figures who would implement that policy whatever that is. It is this attitude of the Govt. which we most vehemently deplore. Also the co-ordination committee & JMS gave a call to all the teachers to take courage in both hands and expose any irregular practice of, or their exploitation by the managements of their schools.

Unite, organise and fight.

Condemn the Exploiters of Women Teachers

Com. Vimal Ranadive, Secretary, All India Co-ordination Committee of Working Women (AICCW), has issued the following statement:—

The women Primary teachers of Sharda Public School, Defence Colony and Adarsh Vidya Bhawan School run under Delhi Administration complained that their signatures were taken on the vouchers but, they were paid less salary than they were entitled to. Even when the payments were made through Cheques, they were forced to pay back most of the wages. When they came out against this gross injustice by the managements, they were dismissed from their services. Not only that, Smt. Anita Kochar said she was abused by Mr. Varma, the husband of the school Principal, in front of the children and was dragged out of the school. She was also threatened that if she tried to enter, her legs would be broken. Mr. Varma is reported to have arrogantly claimed that the Police, Administration and all are under his thumb.

The AICCWW denounces these parasites.

It congratulates Smt. Sumitra Gour and Anita Kochar for their courageous fight for their just demand to get the full salary from the management in spite of these threats and abuses. It welcomes their resolve to organise the teachers of such schools where such malpractices are continuing under the Delhi Administration.

AICCWW demands that these dismissed teachers be taken back to their services with all the dues paid forthwith. and a stringent action be taken against those managements adopting such methods. It appeals to these courageous teachers to continue their fight with vigour by uniting other teachers along with them so that their struggle for their just demands will further be strengthened. The AICCWW firmly supports their struggle and pledges solidarity with them.

Chitra Sen's Struggle Against Transfer

THE Management of M/s. Weighbird India Ltd. a Government of India undertaking was unnecessarily harassing their woman employee Smt. Chitra Sen since many years. She was appointed in the said company as a Receptionist-cum-Telephone Operator on March 12, 1966 at Titagarh, 24-Pargana Dist, West Bengal. When she got married, she asked for transfer to Calcutta as it was not possible to keep the Titagarh works timings by staying in Calcutta. She was posted as purchase Assistant in Calcutta in 1983. After a few days she was asked by her immediate superior, Shri R.N. Ghosh, to attend office on Saturday when the office was closed. She naturally refused to attend the office on Saturdays, alone. Mr. Ghosh, with vengeance transferred her back to Titagarh without any reason. She appealed against this stating that this would seriously breach their married life. When the appeal was in vain she filed a case in Calcutta High Court which went in her favour. The management while arguing pleaded that she was surplus, inefficient and so on and went to the Supreme Court against the Calcutta High Court judgement. The Weighbird Ltd., lost the case in the Supreme Court and Smt. Chitra Sen got her transfer back recently in the month of August 85.

The AICCWW while arguing the case also quoted the unanimous recommendation of the consultative committee of members of parliament for the Labour Ministry to the effect that the Govt. should not come in an appeal to Supreme Court against the decision of the High Court Division Benches. It also quoted a letter by Smt. Padma Ramchandran to Shri K.S.R. Chari, Secretary Dept. of Mines, Dhanbad in April 1976, in support of the case.

In the consultative committee of the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare held on 18th August 1975 on the subject of "posting of Husband-wife team in the same station", a suggestion was made there that husband-wife team should be posted in the same station. This, while helping to keep the family together and lessening the burden of the housewife, would also ease the problems of accommodation and of security of women employees...." The copy of this was forwarded from the Ministry of Energy Department of Coal for information and necessary action by Dy. Controller of Accounts.

Such cases of transfers, husband or wife,
(Contd. on page 16)

Nairobi Conference

Laxmi Sahgal

SUMMARY of Seminars and Work-shops On Women in the Trade Union Movement held in Nairobi at the N.G.O.'s Forum '85' attended by *Dr. Lakshmi Sahgal, Member of AICCWW and Vice-President of AIDWA.*

Certain well-defined trends emerged from the discussions in the various workshops on women in Trade Unions.

1. In the highly industrialised countries like the USA, Great Britain, West Germany and France, due to economic crisis giving rise to mass unemployment, women were the first to be sacked. There is also wage discrimination with women, in many cases, receiving only 30 per cent of the wage that a man gets for the same work. Due to pressure from the employers, women in these countries are reluctant to join trade unions. Even when they are unionised in strength, they cannot find places on the executive and decision-making bodies. In the Ford Motor Union in Britain, it is only after 17 years of struggle that women have won equal pay for equal work. In the more recent coal miners' strike, women stood firm with the men and held against tremendous odds. No wonder the new economic policy of Mrs. Thatcher's Govt. social security benefits including maternity and child care are being drastically cut.

The present governments of the USA and Canada blame the trade unions for the economic crisis and unemployment. They recognise trade unions if 51 per cent of the workers are members. To ensure that this percentage is not achieved, migrant workers, women and newly hired workers are all advised not to join the union. Black working women are especially discriminated against. Blacks in general have to work for a lower wage and can be dismissed for no reason.

In Australia, women are being pushed into the unorganised sector and anti-union labour laws are being passed based on the American example. In West Germany also there is discrimination and only 1 per cent of the working women are working in high technology jobs.

2. Women workers in all Third World countries had more or less the same experience. Due to lack of educational facilities, they

could not avail of any technological training and were pushed into the unorganised sector. They were exploited by the multinational corporations as a source of cheap labour. Their work was often done at home with their children which deprived them of all benefits and security. They were employed in trades which had grave health hazards like chemicals, electronics, cigarettes etc. Their efforts to unionize were being crushed. In the Philippines, several women had been shot by the police while picketting.

3. Women living in countries still under colonial rule or those fighting for national liberation, in addition to the general problems working women of the third world, face other special problems. In South Africa, apartheid had to be fought by the Black majority, at every level. Here again, women were the worst sufferers. They had no proper maternity, child or health welfare schemes with the result, the infant mortality rates were very high. Now the White Minority Govt. is trying to forcibly sterilize black women, without their being aware of it, by giving them Birth Control injections without their consent. There are very few schools for African children. Most black women had to work as domestic servants in White homes. They had to work 12 hours a day, 7 days a week on a very small salary and without any social security. The domestic workers had formed an organisation and, after their conference in 1984, had presented a Charter of Demands to the Govt. so far, they have not received any reply.

Palestinians living on the lands re-occupied by the Israelis were in constant danger. Their small plots of land were being encroached upon by the Israeli settlers. Many women have been killed while working on the fields. Many had the burden of heading their families because their husbands were either in jail or had been deported or had left in search of work.

Polisario women, in the midst of their national liberation movement, are arranging crash courses in teaching, health care, preventive medicine and handicrafts. These courses are held in the camps where the women live with their children and where the cooking is done on a community basis. The men are mostly away in the armed forces.

The Iran Iraq war has totally disrupted the lives of the women of both countries. Iraqi women delegates were keen to have a dialogue with their Iranian counterparts to discuss ways and means of ending the war. Unfortunately, the Iranian women, who seemed to be under heavy surveillance, would not agree to it.

In most Islamic countries, women are fighting for a just interpretation of the Islamic law and teachings of the Koran as far as education, inheritance, divorce, employment etc. are concerned. In Kuwait, for example, their experience is that their new-found prosperity is pushing them down socially as they are being confined to the home. While they enjoy material comforts they have no economic or political rights.

4. Japanese women held special workshops and seminars to highlight their plight.

In spite of being a highly industrialised society which gives them access to education and high technology, Japanese women are facing unemployment. Two unique features of the problems in Japan were brought to our notice. To keep down the registered unemployed, young women are employed only between the ages of 16 and 25. During this period, they are encouraged to retire voluntarily and get married. Attractive bonuses like fully-furnished homes, substantial dowries etc. are offered and often the employers arrange the marriages after the age of 35, they can be re-employed only as part-time workers on low wages.

In the socialist countries like USSR, GDR, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, working women had no special problems. They had complete equality in education, technical training, access to modern technology, wages, housing etc. as men. There was no unemployment and they also enjoyed adequate maternity and child-care benefits. Women were very active in trade unions and headed important executive, decision-making committees.

In the socialist countries which had recently emerged from anti-imperialist struggles like China, Vietnam, Cuba and, most recently, Afghanistan which is still engaged in a bitter struggle with those who want to destroy its freedom and progress, equality was guaranteed to women by law. They still however, had to overcome the effects of their feudal past and had to face the problems of economic hardships, deprivation etc.

A Summary of the Paper read by Tara Valanju on Women's Education in India on behalf of AIDWA at Nairobi Conference

Compulsory Primary Education is embodied in the Indian Constitution as the most urgent objective to be achieved but after 37 years of Independence we do not find noticeable change in women's education. Though from 1951 to 1979 there is considerable increase in school attending girls, comparing it to the increase in population not even one among five is attending the primary school.

In a survey taken on behalf of our organisation of a big slum called Azad Nagar, at a stones throw from highly elite area called Shivaji Park, we found that 96 per cent women were illiterate though this slum area is forty years old, even when Primary education is compulsory in the city of Bombay for a long time. According to 1982 report 3 crores and 30 lakh girls never attended even the Primary School. The total number of females who are illiterate has increased from 215 million in 1971 to 250 million in 1985.

There is a great inequality between the education of men and women. Out of 100 girls enrolled in Primary Schools half of them drop in the first standard and hardly 30 reach upto fourth standard. The result of this is that literacy among women increased very slowly. As we go to backward areas this disparity is more strikingly seen.

In Urban areas however primary education is common in lower middle-class and secondary and higher education in upper and higher classes. But with mass migration from rural areas we still find a large illiterate section in the lower classes and in slum areas where more than fifty per cent population lives.

Thus the problem of women's education assumes a very serious challenge. What must we realise is that the problem is linked up with economic, social political and cultural life of the whole Society. The failure must be seen in correct perspective and efforts will have to be made in entirely new direction. Women's education is part of struggle for emancipation and equality.

In the measure that we fight it as an integral part of struggle against poverty, struggle for social justice, equality and a real democracy of the people, it will be truly successful.

Giving shape to mass-based education

New spate of healthy culture

The Education and cultural affairs in West Bengal have undergone a radical change during the last eight years' regime of the Left Front Government. This present Government is engaged in the noble task of wide expansion of education, making education realistic and life oriented and reaching the same to all levels of people. A healthy and normal milieu has emerged in the field of education in place of chaos and despondency. In this State, education upto XII Class has been made free. Books are being distributed at the primary schools free of cost. The mother tongue has been given its due status making it the only language for compulsory study at the primary stage. Besides, more than six lakhs of people have been brought under the fold of Adult Education Scheme, now being implemented through 22,000 centres. Under the non-formal Education Scheme, children in urban and rural areas are getting the benefit of education through 16,000 centres. Democratic rights have been established in the Universities, getting them rid of undesirable controls. Recently Vidyasagar University has been set up at Midnapore. Continuous efforts are also being made unimpededly to make higher education research-oriented.

There has also been a new awakening in the cultural precincts of the State. While the age-old traditions are being kept unimpaired, new cultural developments, as a counter to the worn-out decadent culture, have come up during the last eight years through multifarious schemes of the Government. Rajya Sangeet Academy, Folk Culture Institute, Girish Mancha, Madhusudan Mancha, Art Gallery, Art Film Centre and the Colour Film Laboratory now under construction at the Salt Lake City, are but a few manifestations of the Govt. endeavours. Besides, Financial grants to the new and old authors for publication of books and financial assistance to the distressed persons in the fields of drama, yatra, art, painting and sculpture, music and folk culture bear testimony to the efforts of the present Government. To add to this, the introduction of Abanindra, Alauddin and Dinabandhu Awards by way of recognition to the distinguished talents for artistic creativity in the fields of art, painting and sculpture, drama and music respectively is an unprecedented achievement of the Left Front Government.

The Left Front Government is pledged to help growing a healthy culture.

Government of West Bengal

A Grand Women's Rally in Hyderabad

M. Udayam

THE women who gathered from all parts of the State have conducted and organised one of the greatest processions ever witnessed with immeasurable enthusiasm and excitement, demanding the solution for their outstanding problems that have still remained unsolved inspite of the completion of the women's decade. The procession which started from the Charminar Chowrasta proceeded to the legislative assembly. The inhabitants of the Bhagnagaram were virtually captivated by the slogans raised by their sisters.

One of the most noteworthy features of the occasion was that the ladies of all walks of life caste & creeds hailing from the various districts like Krishna, Guntur, East & West Godavaries, Khammam, Nalgonda, Warangal, Visakhapatnam, Hyderabad, Anantapur, Kurnool, Prakasam etc. arrived with zeal and determination and participated in this most purposeful event. As the procession progressed the participant ladies displayed banners and placards with writings as 'democracy', 'equality', 'liberation of women' etc., raised their voice with the slogans of "we are also human beings" and "we also deserve equal rights with men".

The zeal and interest exhibited by those ladies who live on manual labour, brought new light to the procession as they also merged with the main stream of the procession with their waists tied and adorned with their customary and traditional ear and nose studs. They participated carrying infants in one hand and the flag in the other.

The Urban ladies, working class women and students came together and shouted slogans demanding the fulfilment of their just demands and rights.

Undaunted by the down pour of rains in several districts the ladies from all over the state started flowing into the capital city by special vehicular transport and assembled by the morning of 14th.

The Office of the A.P. Mahila Sangham at the Charminar Chowrasta virtually overflowed with women.

The participants got ready for the procession after accepting whatever breakfast that was supplied by some hoteliers. Though the procession started by 11.00 A.M. due to the inflow of women from various parts of the state till mid-day, it had to move slowly to absorb all the Jathas from districts who came to participate in this great event.

The President, M. Swarajyam, the General Secretary M. Udayam, and Vice-President M. Suryavathi were leading the procession. The Joint Secretaries P. Bharathi and Y. Joya also were present. Besides these leaders N. Punyavathi, A. Manmohini, T. Aruna, the Treasurer Mrs. D. Ramadevi and representatives of various Branch Organisations led the procession. The Vice President of the All India Democratic Women's Association Vimala Ranadive had participated in this procession.

The women who arrived from remote villages of Telangana sang songs of the working class in their customary Janapada Style. The artists of Praja Natya Mandali also entertained and encouraged the participants by their songs.

Slogans like "we demand Change, in the Society!". "We demand Equal rights to women" "The atrocities against women should be put to end to", "Long live the Andhra Pradesh Mahila Sangham," "Equal wages for equal work", "The dowry act should be amended", echoed during the progress of the procession. Slogans also were shouted demanding "Maternity leave and allowance for working women, "Establishment of a maternity home in every villages", "Application of common law to all", and so on were heard condemning the atrocities committed at Karamchedu.

By the time the procession reached the Assembly the climate became cloudy and there was a slight drizzle. In spite of the drizzle the ladies remained seated and unmoved in their respective places in the most disciplined manner.

Addressing the gathering the Chief Minister

Shri N.T. Rama Rao regretted that the Court gave verdicts against the establishment of women's university and allotment of 30 per cent jobs for women. The Chief Minister added that the Govt. having considered the difficulties of women has decided to grant widow pension, maternity pension for the women of weaker sections during the 8th and 9th month of pregnancy.

The Chief Minister made clear that the advancement and Welfare of Women is possible only by the revolutionary methods and not by the old and outdated customs. Shri N.T. Rama Rao promised, the women will always have the co-operation and help of his Govt. On the completion of the speech, M. Swarajyam presented the Chief Minister with the bundles of Memorandum bearing the signatures of lakhs of women.

M. Swarajyam requested the Chief Minister to forward the Memorandum to the Prime Minister of India, Shri Rajiv Gandhi.

Later the Vice-President of the AIDWA, Vimala Ranadive in her speech said modernisation contemplated by Shri Rajiv Gandhi has proved disastrous to the working women. She reminded that already the working women in the Tobacco field are rendered jobless because of the mechanisation in the industry. She also showed her dismay that their request to late Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi to stop modernisation was turned down, and added that recently again such a memorandum was submitted to Shri T. Anjaiah, on 5th of August '85.

She said that the "equal wages for equal work", is not to be found in any capitalist country, and women are not even getting the minimum wages. She made it clear that to implement the minimum wage, equal wage policy, the representation of women is necessary on these committees.

While expressing that the Muslim ladies are deprived of the maintainance and harassed by their husbands, she expressed that all out efforts should be made to have a common civil code. She also welcomed the decision of Supreme Court which has upheld the payment of maintenance to the divorced Muslim ladies. She criticised the attitude of the Congress(I)

Party for making use of the Karanchedu incident for its narrow political gains while the same party conveniently overlooks the rampant atrocities being committed on Harijans in the Congress(I) ruled states.

While thanking Shri N.T. Rama Rao for coming to address women, she requested him to see that all the women welfare programmes are implemented expeditiously.

M. Swarajyam during her speech made it clear that though the Women's decade has come to an end, the fight for the Women's Rights will continue until the Society is completely changed. She requested the Chief Minister to work hard for the rights of the inheritance of the women.

M. Udayam in her introductory speech expressed her gratitude and thanks to all those ladies who reached Hyderabad in spite of the rainy season. She also reminded that the Andhra Pradesh Mahila Sangham has fought for the solution of the women's problems several times in the past.

The resolution introduced by P. Bharathi condemning the Karamchedu incident was unanimously adopted by the gathering.

N. Punyavathi, the Convenor of the Andhra Pradesh Co-ordination Committee of Working Women presented a Memorandum containing 13 demands of the working women, to the Chief Minister Shri N.T. Rama Rao.

(from page 11)

are reported in many states. The reasons may be promotion, harassment, or the security of a woman. In Chitra's case it was harassment and also breach in the family life. Besides the workers Union taking up the case, Com. Basudev Acharya, the leader of the CPM group in Parliament as well as Vimal Ranadive, Secretary of AICCWW wrote letters to Shri Virendra Patil Ministry of Industry, and also to Mrs. M. Chandrashekhara, the Minister of Women and Employment requesting them to look into the matter and also requesting them to withdraw the case from the Supreme Court and save the funds. This did not happen and ultimately the company went to the Supreme Court losing the case.

The AICCWW congratulated Smt. Chitra Sen for fighting for her just case.

Seminar on Common Civil Code in Kerala

IN the wake of the controversy on the Supreme Court judgement in the case of Mohamed Ahamed Khan vs Shahbanoo to pay maintenance for divorced wife, Kerala State Committee of Working Women's Co-ordination which met on 30th June decided to conduct seminars on "Common Civil Code" in Trivandrum and Ernakulam with a view to creating awareness among working women about the injustice meted out to Muslim women in the name of "Shariat" even at the close of International Women's Decade.

In Trivandrum the Seminar was held on 27th July, 1985 in the YMCA Hall. Inaugurating the Seminar a leading advocate Mr. N.A. Karim said that a considerable section in the Muslim community itself is against bringing out a common civil code as most of them happened to be illiterate. He pointed out that the social set up prevailed in the Muslim countries 1400 years ago when the Shariat was put into practice does not exist anywhere in the world at present. Even the provisions in the Muslim personal Law are not in conformity with Shariat. He exhorted the Working Women to strive earnestly to bring about radical changes in the society even if a Common Civil Code is created. Smt. Ammini Kuriakose a social worker and member of Women's Council and YMCA then spoke about the discriminations of women in the Christian Inheritance Act. Speaking on the occasion Shri K.O. Shamsuddin went at length explaining the various aspects of Koran, Shariat and Muslim Personal Law. Judgement of the Supreme Court on payment of maintenance is not against Shariat, but it is in line with what is stated in Koran. He was of the opinion that the Muslim women should come forward to vehemently oppose the evils and barbarism to which they are subjected to in the name of Shariat.

Concluding the Seminar Com. P. Devooty, M.C.A. explained the general plight of women and said that the ultimate remedy for all the evils is the social change for which we should strive hard.

Com. Girija Bai presided over the seminar

and Com. Nazimuneza welcomed the gathering. A large number of women workers attended the seminar. A similar seminar was conducted in Ernakulam which was inaugurated by retired Justice T. Chandrasekhar Menon. He said that it is ridiculous to argue that the laws enacted in the 8th century should continue for ever. The present judgement of the Supreme Court is not a new one. Similar verdict has been pronounced by the Division Bench of Kerala High Court consisting of justice Khalid and Janaki Amma, nine years ago. There was no hue and cry at that time. He recalled the sad plight of divorced Muslim Women wandering along the corridors of courts in Malabar area seeking maintenance from their departed husbands. The seminar was presided over by the District co-ordination Committee President Com Padman. Advocate Vimala Jacob, Margaret Cheriyan Jameela Jacobe and Chellammal spoke. Com. Soni Kameth welcomed the gathering.

Vimal Ranadive, Vice-President of the All India Democratic Women's Association has issued the following statement on 30th July '85.

The AIDWA expresses its shock in learning that a delegation of Congress members of Parliament led by Smt. Najma Heptulla, the Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, expressed their "Concern" to the Prime Minister over the recent judgement of the Supreme Court on the question of maintenance for a divorced Muslim women, instead of hailing it. This is nothing but a plea for continuing the enslavement of Muslim women. It is all the more noteworthy that all these Muslim members of Parliament are members of the Congress party which is supposed to have a secular outlook. The present statement of the Congress MPs comes in the wake of the courageous fight of Zulekhabai of the Bamaipalli case in Trivandrum and the tragic suicide of Nadira, a Muslim woman with three children when she was divorced without any maintenance. All women's organisations must come forward to combat this reactionary outlook and impress upon the Prime Minister not to pander to it.

Working Women's Co-ordination Committee Formed in Beawar

Madhu Sethia

BEAWAR is the oldest industrial centre of Rajasthan. It provides employment to a large number of women, whereas, the newly developing industrial centres in the State offer very few employment opportunities to women. One reason is the use of highly sophisticated technology for which women lack adequate training facilities. The seriousness of mass unemployment amongst women in Rajasthan can be gathered by the fact that in 1984 although twenty two thousand women registered their names in various employment exchanges of Rajasthan, but only two thousand managed to get it. The situation is equally serious for those women who are seeking employment in the industrial sector. Even in the older industrial centres the employment opportunities are shrinking for women. In Krishna and Laxmi textiles mill of Beawar whenever a woman worker retires or dies her place is filled by a male worker. Thus, whereas there used to be hundreds of women workers in these mills a few years ago now there are only 50 women left. These two mills had been taken over by the N.T.C. some time back. Even the N.T.C. finds a woman worker to be a greater financial liability than a male worker. This is because of the maternity leave benefits and the provision for a Creche which the workers of these two factories had won after a heroic struggle following unionisation. Thus because of a conscious policy of eliminating women from large factories at Beawar the women of this industrial township have been forced to work mainly in the yet unorganised sector, doing the most tedious and lowest paid jobs.

About fifteen thousand women are working in Beedi, Wool processing, cement pipe and stone-crasher factories. In some of the factories where a bit of unionisation has taken place even there neither minimum wages nor fixed working hours have been achieved. They are still working on piece-rate basis. They start working around 8 O'clock in the morning and

continue till late in the evening but still manage to earn just Rs. 8/- or 9/- per day. The minimum wage in the State is Rs. 11- per day. Due to low trade union consciousness and terrible inter-union rivalry, the unionisation process is very slow and extremely difficult amongst women workers.

Recently, a meeting of women working in Beedi, cement pipe, wool processing factories and stone crashers was organised by the Co-ordination Committee of Working women, at Beawar. This meeting held on June 24, was attended by some 30 women working in Beedi, 14 from a wool processing unit, 10 from a cement pipe, and 5 from two stone crusher factories. Women from some other small scale factories also participated in the meeting. Thus around 100 women gathered for the occasion. Madhu Sethia, Vanali Gupta and Archana Shrivastava from Jaipur also attended the meeting.

The women from Beedi industry reported that they had a spontaneous strike on their own in January 1983, but because of no proper organisation the strike failed to achieve much. Many of their long standing problems are still perpetuating. Arbitrary rejection of the finished project is one of the easiest way of cutting down their total payment. They are paid roughly at the rate between Rs. 7.40 to Rs. 9/- for one thousand Beedies, but hardly any women is able to get this much for 1000 beedies made by her because of this trick played by the factory owners. The thread for tying beedies, the tendu leaves and tobacco are given in a fixed quantity for 1000 beedies. If the tobacco is soggy and the leaves are bad and the thread insufficient, it becomes difficult to make 1000 beedies, the value for the remaining beedies is deducted from their payment. Thus even after working from ten to twelve hours a day along-with the help from her children on average a

(Contd. on page 28)

NEW HOPES FOR LABOUR

Under Left Front Rule

Inspite of constraints, for the last eight years the Left Front Government has taken various steps to make the industrial climate of the state conducive and favourable for growth in all sectors.

- * Industries have been encouraged to come up in the backward areas, where various facilities, financial support — like equity participation, long-term loan, gurantees, cash incentives etc.
- * For development of industry, joint-sector ventures with private sector partners have been planned, Haldia Petrochemical Project is a step ahead in this direction.
- * In 1984 approval for 152 industrial units involving investment of Rs. 79.95 crores was received. The West Bengal Industrial Development Corporation has so far assisted 318 units with project cost of Rs. 584 crores. Moreover, to assist the entrepreneurs, Industrial Development Agency (IDA) has been set up.
- * Development of an Electronics Complex in the Salt Lake area has been planned with a provision of Rs. 52 crores.
- * In the Small and Cottage Industry sector the State Government's policies have been fruitful. The number of registered small-scale units set up has been increased to 1,71,000 from 97,000 in 1977.

Through the years, the struggle of the working class received all support from the Left Front Government for improvement of their service conditions, employment security and re-opening of mills and factories which have been locked out or closed out by employers. Under the renewed pledge for the welfare of the working class, the workers have gained confidence — their dignity and self respect restored.

- * Broadbased tripartite bodies were revived and reconstituted and collective bargaining encouraged. As a result, major industry-wise wage settlement could be arrived at and harmonious industrial relations continued in the State.
- * Contract labour practice has been abolished in many places. Minimum wage for the workers has been fixed up.
- * State amendment of important labour laws has provided better relief, protection and benefits to workers.
- * West Bengal Labour Welfare Board has been running 54 welfare centres in industrial and plantation areas of West Bengal, Also two Holiday Homes of Digha and Darjeeling are run by the Board. Three more Holiday Homes at 'Procreabong' at Darjeeling, Haldia and Bakkhali are now under the plan.
- * During the last 8 years 95,347 persons have been appointed through employment Exchanges.
- * Over 52 lakhs people are now benefited under ESI scheme, 21 service dispensaries and 3 new hospitals with additional 1000 beds have been installed under this scheme.

Left Front Government facilitates industrial growth and supports the cause of the toiling masses.

Adunique 76/ICA/1/85 Eng.

Government of West Bengal

Jaipur Women's Struggle

ATROCITIES on women in Rajasthan are increasing everyday in the absence of a strong women's movement to resist this trend, and the indifferent attitude of the Government and police.

Recently, J.M.S. unit of Jaipur took an initiative to get cases of murder registered in two cases of death due to burning. Bijbala died at Pali on 3rd June and Kirti Mathur of Bhilwara died at Ajmer on 19th May '85. In both the cases the local police played the role of covering up the cases as cases of suicide and sheltering their murderer husbands. A deputation of J.M.S. consisting of Madhu Sethia, Chandra Kanta Mital, Vanali Gupta and Archana Srivastava, met the D.I.G. Crime branch and submitted a memorandum. A C.I.D. enquiry has been instituted in both the cases. A protest meeting was also organised in Jaipur in the area where Brijlal's parents live. The meeting was attended by more than 150 women and about a hundred men. The meeting began at 9 O'clock in the night and continued till 11.30 P.M. The women shocked and moved by the tragic end of Brijbala sat through out the meeting and shouted slogans to avenge her death. In Jaipur it was for the first time that women from the walled city area participated in such a meeting and resolved to fight against atrocities on women.

International Children's Day

Udaipur

On the occasion of International Children's day on 1st June 1985 a meeting was arranged by the J.M.S. of Udaipur unit under the presidency of Bhanwarlal Barber in Udaipur Kachibasti. Com. Hannan Mollah, M.P., the Chief guest, addressed the meeting and told about the poor condition of women which ultimately affects the conditions of their children also. He said due to poverty and mal-nutrition so many children are dying of starvation, prematured. Com. Hannan Mollah urged the women to unite and struggle for the betterment of their livelihood. Com. Bansilal Singhabi, Secretary-CPI (M) Udaipur laid more emphasis upon the unity and struggle of women for their improvement.

Smt. Kanku Bai, Smt. Rukmini Devi, Smt. Nageena Aya, Smt. Sita Devi and Smt. Manju Singhbi also addressed the meeting and told that under the banner of JMS all the women should have to unite and retain their strength to make themselves capable for making their future bright. At the end Smt. Mangery Michale, president of JMS gave thanks to all the women who were present.

Sri Ganga Nagar

On 1st June '85 on the occasion of International Children's Day a delegation of eleven representatives of J.M.S.—Ganganagar unit met the District Magistrate and presented a fourteen-point memorandum, which included, (a) Atleast one Primary health Centre for every ten thousands and a trained mid-wife in every village. (b) Child-care-centre for the working women. (c) Free and compulsory education upto the age of 14, (d) Enforcement of Child Labour Laws, (e) Availability of Drinking water in all the rural and urban areas.

The activists of J.M.S., went door to door of all the Kachi-basties and told them about the common diseases of children and the use of the vaccinations for the case and protection.

Under the leadership of JMS the vaccination of Polio, B.C.G., Measles, Diarrhoea and D.P.T. were given to the children.

United Voice of Sonapat Women — Won Some Demands

Sonapat Town in Haryana was roused by the slogan shouting women, about hundred and fifty with the festoon of Janawadi Mahila Samithi, held by two young girls and a flag. "Insaf Do" "Give us Taps and Drinking Water" were some of the slogans. The demonstration went round in the market & met the Administrator (There is no Municipality in Sonapat for more than 10 years), women police were ready to "receive" the demonstrators when it reached the office. A delegation led by Vimal Ranadive AIDWA met Mr. Dhankad along with local leaders of Mohallas and submitted the following memorandum signed by 110 women from Taranagar, Jivan Nagar and Indrapuri: 1. The colonies should have a proper sewage system and roads should be

repaired. 2. Drinking water taps be provided. 3. Latrines should be provided outside the colonies. 4. The deep well should be filled up and a small park be prepared for the children to play and 5. Arrangement for sweeper. Vimal Ranadive while placing the memorandum brought to the notice of the Administrator the recent statement made by him appealing to the public to make the city of Sonapat beautiful. In the statement he has given the figures of the money allotted for road repairing, for the repair of Lanes etc. Smt. Parmeshwari Devi, Ishwari Devi, Shanti Devi, Janakidevi and others in the delegation described the rotten conditions of the roads, lack of drinking water and street lights. The Administrator promised to come to visit these Mohallas and consider some of the demands. Later he with other officers went round the colonies. He promised to repair roads, and sewages and put the street lights. The

women who gathered and accompanied him were very happy to learn that their united strength, compelled him to visit the areas and see for himself as to how people in these colonies were passing their days with no drinking water tap or street lights and open manholes.

Later in a meeting held at the place Vimal Ranadive congratulated them for their unity which brought the results. She said that they would have to continue their fight with more strength and vigour to get their justified demands fulfilled.

Sonapat Mahila Samithi was formed on the 6th of August with an Ad Hoc committee with Ishwari Devi as President and Parmeshwari Devi as Convenor. Already more than 300 members were enrolled. With the present enthusiasm of women, it is hoped that the membership will increase manifold.

J.M.S. Participates in 22nd July Demonstration

Anagha Shinde

THERE was a demonstration at M.P. Vidhan Sabha with basic demands and problems of Bhopal gas-victims led by Communist party of India and Communist party of India (Marxist). Many other trade unions, women, student, and youth organisations took part in the demonstration. In spite of heavy rainfall and anti-campaign by the ruling party, police and administration, hundreds of women from gas-affected areas participated in the demonstration.

The procession marched for more than six Kilometres and reached Jahangirabad from where section 144 was ordered onwards. Member of Parliament, Sukomal Sen, Motilal Sharma Secretary of CPI(M) M.P. State committee and other leaders addressed the gathering. Demands regarding proper arrangement of treatment, ration and Milk supply, pension for widows and proper distribution of immediate cash relief of Rs. 1500 were forwarded. Main stress was laid upon demands of Life insurance of each gas-victims (for which premium should be paid either by Union carbide or Government of India) alternative employment and confiscation of Union carbide property.

Anagha Shinde explained the situation of women in the gas-affected area and negligence of the government in giving them proper medical aid, raising the problem of under-employment and un-employment because of the lack of physical energy after the gas-tragedy. She stressed the demand of employment and lighter jobs for gas-victims, and also postmortem of every gas-victim after death to trace the contribution of MIC for death and that compensation should be given to all such cases. Along with this she condemned the pro-multinational policies of government of India and said that AIDWA shall always actively fight for the problems and demands of gas-victims.

After the meeting first women from the demonstration offered to court arrest which was led by Mrs. Kamalam (Convenor BHEL unit of AIDWA Bhopal) and Anagha Shinde. During the procession and on the way to jail, women shouted slogans against imperialism and against the government of India's pro-multinational policies. Mrs. Kamalam, Mrs. Seeta Jagtap and Anagha Shinde from AIDWA were arrested. Thirty-eight women from the gas-affected areas along with their children also courted arrests.

Raichur AIDWA Fights Against the Indignities

Harini Kakkeri

RAICHUR District unit of the All India Democratic Women's Association has launched a determined agitation on the issue of the shameful indignities heaped upon two women by Mahant Swami, the religious head of Kuduremoti Math, and his henchmen.

One of the victims, Parvathamma, who was a devotee of the Swami and a regular visitor of the Math, detailed the shocking incidents to the AIDWA, at Yelburga. According to her, when she did not respond to the sexual advances of the Swami the latter threatened her with dire consequences.

Then started a campaign of harassment, threatening, hurling of abuses by Swami's henchmen, character assassination, and the despatch of anonymous letters to her husband to create suspicions about his wife's character. When the couple approached the Asst. Superintendent of Police, Koppal, Mr. Kempayya, the latter advised them not to lodge a complaint at that stage on the spurious plea that as the Swami was a powerful person, it would be difficult to get evidence against him.

On the morning of June 11, when the family was returning from Koppal, the Swami's henchmen took the husband down from the bus, beat him and forced him to sign a piece of paper. Then the lady, with her son, proceeded to Kuduremoti village on foot. There, to their dismay, the Swami's men gathered to shout at her, mob her, rip her clothes off, put a garland of neem twigs around her neck, dub her on the head, and paraded her naked for a full hour around the village.

The second victim Hussaina Bi, suffered a worse fate for not yielding to the advances of one of the Swami's men, and slapping him.

The police appeared on the scene and started investigations only on June 14 after several organisations of women, youth students, workers and others protested against the police apathy.

To demand justice for the two women and punishment to the culprits, a huge jatha march-

ed through hundreds of villages covering a 50 KM. distance from Yelburga to Koppal, arousing public opinion against such shameful atrocities on women and their perpetrators. Besides the AIDWA, the Kisan Sabha, SFI, AISF, Government Employees' Association, and many teachers also participated in the jatha.

The behaviour of the local MLA, Basawaraj Raya Reddy (Janata) has been indeed condemnable. He not only asked the villagers en route not to provide any help to the jatha, but even went out of his way to hush up the whole affair. However, the villagers simply ignored his advice. The jatha ended in a public meeting, 10,000 strong, at Koppal, addressed by Harini Kakkeri (AIDWA), Raghavendra Kustagi (DYFI), Gangadhar Kustagi (CPI-M), and others.

(Contd. on page 8)

Muslim Women Support Section 125 CPC

The Public meeting organised by Delhi J.M.S. on 24th of August was attended by more than 200 muslim women in support of the Section 125 of the CP code. Mrs. Hashmi, Indu Agnihotri and Zoya Hassan were elected on the Presidium. Maimoona explained the Supreme Court Judgement on maintainance in detail. Several women harassed by their husbands and then divorced, spoke in the meeting demanding maintainance from their husbands, till they are married again. Many women from Jamia Millia University, Nizamuddin, and from the resettlement colonies attended the meeting and a number of them spoke. Sakina, a writer said that the Muslim Jamat remember religion only when the question of women's rights arise. Rita Karat, the General Secretary and Indu Agnihotri, President spoke on the future plan of action such as agitation among women, signature campaign and meetings. The meeting was over after adopting the resolution in support of the maintainance to divorced women and welcoming the Supreme Court Judgement.



BETTER HEALTH CARE PROGRAMME

Significant achievements of the Left Front Government

Against so many impediments in a poor country like ours, West Bengal under Left Front Government ranks highest in so far as expenditure on health is concerned. The per capita annual expenditure on health is Rs. 37.86. The Left Front Government has put emphasis on extending its health care programme, confined till 1977 mainly to urban areas, to villages. All government departments are now working concertedly for prevention of disease and improvement of public health services. The objective of Left Front Government is to ensure primary health care for all by 2000 A.D. As a result of various training programmes undertaken in this state since 1977,

27,812 community health volunteers, 10,844 health workers and 22,516 trained midwives are now working in rural areas. Extensive measures for the treatment and control of Leprosy have led to the establishment of 405 Leprosy units. School health care programme has so far covered the health examination of as many as 18 lakh students. During the rule of the present Government 27 blood banks including 3 mobile units, a floating medical centre for the Sundarban areas and regional ophthalmic institute have been set up. Over the last eight years under family welfare programme, 9,55,958 persons have been operated on. Apart from

distribution of 5,88,630 packets of Nirodh and 42,793 contraceptive pills, IUD has been provided to 1,41,229 women.

Improvement of hospital administration, successful implementation of all programmes by the health department, putting an end to anarchy in the field of medical education, considerable efforts for promoting people's consciousness to public health, overall development of hospitals and introduction of modern technology and latest equipment at Medical College and S.S.K.M. Hospitals for diagnosis and better treatment of disease are among the significant achievements of the Left Front Government.

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

Paradise.

Women in Action

Great Britain

The *National Assembly of Women of Great Britain* organized a meeting in the House of Commons, on May 9, to which delegates of women's organizations from member countries of the anti-Hitler coalition were invited. The idea of the meeting was: "we were allies forty years ago and together defeated fascism. Should we not unite once again and win the peace?". Women and women's organizations of several other affiliations and political views and trade union representatives were present. Unity and the desire for peace and friendship was characteristic for the meeting, which was the only meeting in the House of Commons to celebrate the 40th anniversary of victory over fascism. The guests from abroad visited Greenham Common, met some of the Greenham women and saw the difficulties and hardships these women endure.

Greece

Under the slogan "No more war! No more fascism!" the *Federation of Greek Women* carried out a great number of activities throughout the country on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of victory over Hitlerite fascism. Signatures to the WIDF appeal "For the People's Right to Peace" and to the proclamation issued by the Federation of Greek women on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of victory over Hitlerite fascism were collected in the streets and squares of Athens and other Greek towns. The proclamation calls upon all Greek women to struggle jointly for a peaceful world, a ban on nuclear weapons and the dismantling of foreign military bases on Greek territory and against Reagan's aggressive plans for the militarization of space.

Portugal

A campaign to collect signatures for the people's right to peace is being carried out on the initiative of the *Democratic Movement of Portuguese Women (MDM)* under the motto "My Signature for Peace". The results of this campaign are to be presented to the WIDF on the 40th anniversary of its foundation. Many activities are taking place in connection with

this campaign. On the 40th anniversary of the victory over Hitlerite fascism and the end of World War II, for instance, an exhibition was shown in more than twenty cities and towns.

When President Reagan visited Portugal the MDM sent him an Open Letter expressing its deep concern over the foreign policy of the USA which supports the racist government in South Africa and the bloodthirsty dictatorships in Central America, attacks the people of Nicaragua and spends astronomic sums on armaments.

A cavalcade of small trucks, the "Friendship and Peace Cavalcade", toured the country in June. There were meetings, rallies and artistic performances wherever it went, directed against the NATO military bases in Portugal and calling for a nuclear weapons free zone on the Iberian Peninsula.

Resolution on Women Passed 15 Years ago in Hungary

Of the five million working people in Hungary, 23,65,000 are women. Women's employment is complete, with more than 81 per cent of women in the 15 to 55 age group working. The proportion was 35 per cent in 1949.

The Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party comprehensively analysed the situation of women in 1970 and brought measures to further improve their political, economic and social situation. Significant measures were made and the National Council of Hungarian Women, the partner of the government and the party leadership in women's policy issues, always plays a major or, in many cases, initiating role. The Women's Council promotes that the equality of women in work, the family, public life and all other walks of life become increasingly complete. The party resolution passed in 1970 particularly contributed to improving the situation of women.

More and more women undertake social and community tasks, and 30 per cent of the MPs are women. The extensive employment of women, their political preparedness and qualifications now offer the possibility for them to fulfil senior positions.

HIROSHIMA AND NAGASAKI MUST NOT BE REPEATED !

Statement by the Soviet Women's Committee

AT the time of a tragic anniversary of the American atom bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Soviet women, like women all over the world, are mourning over hundreds of thousands of victims who died in the fire of the atomic blast.

Now, forty years since the heinous crime of the American military, Japanese citizens, including many women, are still dying from the effects of radiation.

Humanity must not forget who was responsible for that horrible tragedy.

Owing to the arms race imposed by aggressive imperialist groups, nuclear arsenals accumulated thus far have a total yield millions of times greater than the bombs that were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Therefore, it is necessary to act immediately before Planet Earth has not been engulfed by a war that would destroy not only civilisation but life itself.

Soviet women join their voice of protest to those who oppose the mad arms build-up conducted by American imperialism which has placed humanity at the brink of nuclear catastrophe.

The Soviet public is particularly concerned about United States efforts to draw its allies in the nuclear arms race, including Japan. The United States is turning Japanese territory into a nuclear springboard and is stepping up attempts to knot together a military block with Tokyo and Seoul.

Grave danger is posed by the actions of forces in Japan who are trying to obliterate the

horrible past from people's memory, justify the presence of American military bases in Japan, and commit to oblivion the causes that led the Japanese people to the tragedy.

Soviet women together with all Soviet people will continue strongly opposing the arms race on earth and its spreading to outer space; they will support measures leading to the limitation of nuclear arsenals and the reduction of weapon stockpiles up to the banning of nuclear arms. We support the peace-oriented foreign policy of the Soviet government which has repeatedly called on the United States and other powers possessing nuclear weapons to set a moratorium on all nuclear tests until the signing of a treaty to impose a total and universal ban on nuclear weapons.

The latest proof of the Soviet Union's peaceful intentions was its unilateral decision to suspend all nuclear explosions from August 6th, the day when the Hiroshima tragedy is commemorated around the world, till January 1st, 1986. The Soviet Union is prepared to extend the moratorium if the United States refrains from conducting nuclear explosions.

Through joint efforts by the progressive public, peace on our planet can be preserved.

Human reason must gain the upper hand.

The tragedy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki must not be repeated.

Just 24 Nuclear Warheads!

Just 24 nuclear warheads would be enough to destroy the narrow and vital strip of space on which life on earth depends: the atmosphere, the source of our life and what makes the earth look so beautiful and blue on the photographs taken from space. The radioactivity from a nuclear explosion would destroy this blue belt and our earth would appear no longer blue but black; the pre-conditions for life would be annihilated.

20,000,000 People were killed in some 150 wars since 1945, more than the soldiers killed in World War II

World War II
17,000,000

From 1945 to 1982
20,000,000

All Glory to Women in Vietnam

THE Voice of the Working Woman warmly greets our sisters in Viet Nam on their 40th Anniversary of the founding of Republic. Women in Viet Nam have displayed great courage and valour in fighting against the American imperialism, a powerful enemy who used all kinds of military and biological weapons, against the small country like Viet Nam. The tremendous hardships, sacrifices the women there had gone through during the last war to rout the enemy had no parallel. The President Ho Chi Minh, the great leader of VietNameese people praised women in the following words: "The combatant's mothers have encouraged their children and their grand children to join the armed forces to fight the enemy and serve the country. Our country is

proud to have thousands, tens of thousands of such wonderful mothers." Plough in one hand and gun in the other, they joined the militia and self-defence forces en masse in all corners of the land, from plains to mountains. They have contributed in shooting down of a total 4181 American aircrafts. The role played by VietNameese women and the achievements recorded in the revolutionary struggle for their independence proved that the mass participation of women strengthened their role in the administration of the Government and for building Socialism. Under the guidance of Viet Nam women's Union, and the women's wings in the trade unions, they are marching forward for the progress of their country. All glory to women in Viet Nam.

(from page 4)

rent problems with the C.M.'s Secretary and demanded categorical answer. The Secy. on behalf of C.M. expressed his sympathy and assured to hand over the memorandum and note of discussion to the C.M. on his arrival.

IN Patna—Bihar

The 6th August was observed in Patna by submitting a memorandum to the Chief Secretary by about 15 working women led by Ram-pukari Devi, and Sudha Bindu Mitra, Com. Jogeshwar Gope, President CITU was also present. A rally of working women attended by about 30 women was addressed by the leaders explaining the significance of the working women's demands. The speakers also emphasised the need for fighting for peace while describing the Hiroshima Tragedy, occurred in 1945.

In Tamil Nadu

The Demands Day was observed by working women all over the state on August 6. Thousands of leaflets explaining the demands were distributed in various districts. At Tirpur a demonstration was held before the Taluk office which was addressed by Easwari, a member of the A.I. Co-ordination Committee of Working Women. Mythily Sivaraman, Convenor of the Tamilnadu Co-ordination Committee addressed a meeting at Industrial Estate

Guindy, Madras. The Tamilnadu Co-ordination Committee of Working Women has also decided to convene a state convention of working women in unorganised industries.

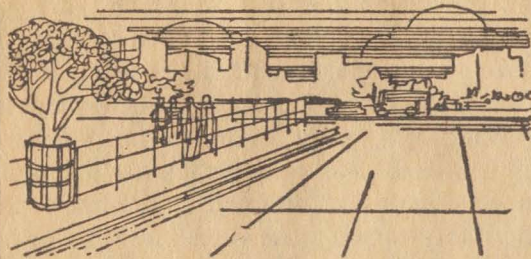
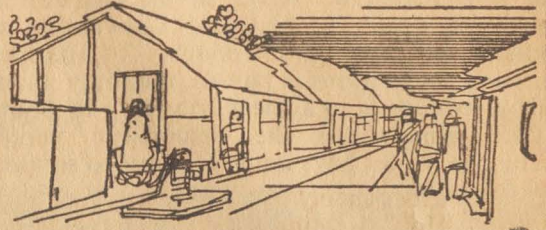
In Andhra Pradesh

The following memorandum was submitted to the Chief Minister of A.P., Shri N. T. Rama Rao by Com. Punnyavati on behalf of Andhra Co-ordination Committee of Working Women on 14th of August at Hyderabad, along with other main demands already submitted by the centre.

1. To stop the mechanisation in Tobacco Industry and provide job security for those women who have been thrown out.
- (2) To open Anarpati, Rajmundri Tobacco depots under ILTD multinational company where 4000 women were employed. These depots should be taken over by the Tobacco Board, so that employment of women can be provided to these women.
- (3) The Bandage cloth factory in Kurnool be opened so that women would be provided with jobs.
- (4) Unisankyo Management in Hyderabad should provide employment for women.
5. Minimum Wages should be declared for Sea Food Industries in Andhra Pradesh.
- (6) Medical diet should be provided for women employees who have been affected by occupational diseases, and medical facilities should be provided to them.
- (7) Special buses be provided for women during peak hours.

PROGRESS ON THE URBAN FRONT

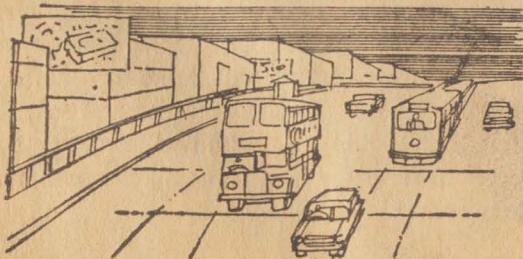
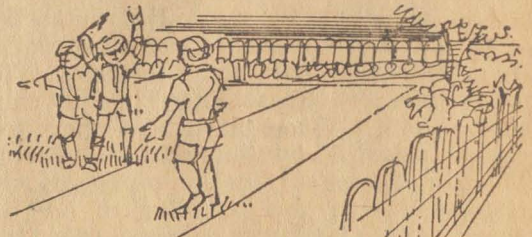
- ★ Elections were held in 110 municipalities and their administration turned over to the elected representatives, 14 new municipalities were set up over the past eight years. There are 111 Municipalities in the State at present.
- ★ Number of 'Notified Area' and 'Town committees' grew from 100 in 1977 to 114. Proposals for 15 more municipalities are under consideration.
- ★ Facilities like increased wages, pension scheme, group insurance scheme, ex-gratia schemes etc., have been extended to employees of Calcutta Corporation. The 28 employees, whose services were terminated between 1972 and 1977 on political consideration, have been reinstated. State aid to ease the financial crisis of municipalities exceeded Rs. 175 crores over the past eight years.



- ★ To render faster municipal services a 'Wireless Network' has been set up at Calcutta Corporation.
- ★ Drinking Water Supply in Calcutta has increased by 6 crore gallons over the past eight years. 2.5 crore gallons are being supplied now from the Garden Reach Water Supply Project. 2 new pumps have been installed at Tala. Booster Pumping Stations have been commissioned at Auckland Square and Subodh Mullick Square.
- ★ 85% of slum development work in Calcutta is nearly complete extending benefit to 11.5 lakh out of a total of 13.5 lakh slum-dwellers. Programmes for the development of the rest 2 lakh people have been taken up.
- ★ Garbage clearance has been accelerated with the help of modern equipment and vehicles.
- ★ A broad-based afforestation scheme has been taken up to prevent environmental pollution in Calcutta.

The Left-front Government's urban development measures over the past eight years.

- ★ In the five years 1972 to 1977, the internal income of Calcutta Corporation and state subsidy were Rs. 78.42 and Rs. 33.44 crores respectively. During the tenure of the Left-Front Government this income and state-aid increased to Rs. 205.44 and Rs. 174.99 crores respectively. Total expenditure of Calcutta Corporation between 1972-'77 was Rs. 90.96 crores. Over the past eight years this expenditure has gone up to Rs. 321.31 crores. It may be mentioned here that the total state-aid for Calcutta Road Development between 1972-'77 was Rs. 16 lakhs and 50 thousand. Under the present Government this aid has increased to Rs. 22 crores and 45 lakhs.



- ★ Automatic Traffic Signals have been installed at several important street crossings. The Metropolitan By-Pass has been opened to the public upto the Rash Behari Avenue Connector.
- ★ Work on the 2nd Hooghly Bridge will be completed by 1987. Ferry services across the Hooghly have also been expanded.
- ★ Fire Services in Calcutta have been modernised. All the Fire Service Centres in the city now have 'Wireless' facilities.
- ★ Mechanical means have been adopted for cleaning of the sewerage system and an allotment of Rs. 5 crores has been made under this head.

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

(from page 2)

all. It is correct as one of the reporters expressed that "The South Africa is in Flame"!

Nelson Mandela sent a message through his wife that the "ANC should abandon its conciliatory call for National Convention to redistribute power in the country". The time for such conventions is passed, and only alternative remains is to achieve power. In South Africa, almost all the democratic people including whites have come forward to support the demand.

Mrs. Mandela, who describes that "Poverty, Starvation, Misery and Death are experiences of our people" is absolutely correct. The magnificent role played by women in the struggle against Apartheid has no parallel. It began on 9th August 1956 when 20,000 women marched to Pretoria against the extension of pass laws to women. The song "Now you have touched the women you have struck the rock" became famous, since that time women poured in every place to face bullets, lathi charges, teargas, and the dogs! Many women gave their lives, many suffered hardships, many were detained in jail for years together. Dorothea Nyembe was released recently after 15 years. Alburtna Sisulu, Winni Mandela, Adelaide Tambo are some of the wellknown women personalities who have suffered tremendously under the Apartheid System. The Sharpsville massacre on 21st March 1960 against the pass laws when 69 men and women were killed has not been forgotten. The struggle became intense after the first emergency in 1960. Women have been their sons die and executed by white soldiers. Martha Mahlangu appeared in the public meeting immediately after the execution of her son Solomon and said "it is disgraceful for Black mothers to stand and Watch their children dying for their motherland without joining the struggle..." Sarha Mosaloh gave a send off to her son Jerry who was being executed in the morning, with the words:

"Go well, my son, I love you. I am proud of you because you are to die for our people.

We will meet you where you are going. You must know, the struggle will not end even after your death...."

We salute you the courageous women of South Africa. Your spirit assures the Victory of your people.

(Contd. from page 18)

women is able to earn only Rs. 6 or 7 per day. Around 7000 women are engaged in Beedi making industry at Beawar.

The women in Wool industry are facing even greater difficulties. They are employed for processing the raw wool, and are paid Rs. 11 for every one maund of raw wool. The cleaning of one maund of raw wool, at times takes almost three days even when they start working very early in the morning and work till it is dark. No unionisation has taken place in this industry, although more than three thousand women are involved in this work.

There are many other small and medium scale industries in which women work for 9 to 10 hours but are able to earn just Rs. 8 to 9 a day. No paid holidays and other welfare schemes have been implemented although in some factories, unions in many cases CITU unions, are there for the last eight or nine years.

CITU unit of Beawar finds the task of organising these women difficult in the absence of women activists. Now a unit of Kamgar Mahila Samiti has been formed consisting of thirty women representatives from various industries and it has been decided that women activists from Jaipur will regularly help and guide this committee to organise and take initiative in launching a sustained struggle for a better future for the working class women of Beawar.