



THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

National Convention of Workers



(Top) **CITU General Secretary Tapan Sen addressing the Convention;**
(Below) **A section of the participants in the Talkatora Indoor Stadium, New Delhi on 8 August, 2017**

9th August, 2017 Movement

(Report page 14)

Agricultural Workers Massive Protest



AIAWU Rally at Parliament Street, New Delhi

Countrywide Farmers Protest



Rohtak, Haryana



Kota, Rajasthan



Indore, Madhya Pradesh

WORKING CLASS**SEPTEMBER 2017
EDITORIAL BOARD****Editor****K. Hemalata****Working Editor****J.S. Majumdar****Members****Tapan Sen****A. K. Padmanabhan****Amitava Guha**

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**Defeat Attempt to
Gag the Voice**

The whole country was shocked. The signal is ominous. It is a serious threat to the democracy. Prasar Bharati, under the central government, had the audacity in censoring and not broadcasting the already recorded Independence Day speech of the Tripura Left Front government's chief minister Manik Sarkar.

It is also an insult to the people of Tripura. It must be noted that the people of Tripura elected the Left Front on the basis of its concrete policies and programmes contained in the election manifesto. As the chief minister of Tripura, Manik Sarkar is mandated to defend these policies and programmes. Modi government has no right to impose censorship, through Prasar Bharati, on propagating such policies and programmes of Tripura government. It is another attack on the foundation of the Constitution of the Secular, Democratic, Federal Republic of India.

Prasar Bharati is supposed to be an autonomous body made by the Act of the Parliament. Yet, it acts at the dictates of Modi government. Day in and day out PMO is going out of the way in promoting Narendra Modi government's policies and activities using Prasar Bharati's broadcasting network. Even personal views of Narendra Modi in his 'Man Ki Baat' programme are being broadcasted by Prasar Bharati.

Modi regime at the centre is attempting to gag the voice of criticism of its policies. Prime minister Narendra Modi's root in fascistic ideology is getting revealed in his authoritarian style of functioning in the governance.

We are reproducing the not-broadcasted-speech of Manik Sarkar. It is the Independence Day manifesto of the toiling

and socially discriminated and oppressed sections of the vast majority of our people. Let CITU accept the challenge of the authoritarian regime and unitedly propagate Manik Sarkar's speech to the widest sections of the people and defeat Modi government's design to gag the voice of the toilers of the country.

Manik Sarkar's Independence Day Speech

"The blackout by Doordarshan and AIR of the customary Independence Day speech of Tripura Chief Minister Manik Sarkar casts a dark shadow the day after. By all accounts, after a local official raised an objection, the decision not to broadcast the CM's speech – unless it was 'reshaped' – was taken at Prasar Bharati's Delhi office. In arrogating to itself the powers of censor over an elected chief minister, the broadcaster has revived serious questions about its mandate, its degree of autonomy from political-governmental control, and its very relevance in a quick changing media environment." (From the Editorial of Indian Express; 17.08.2017)

"Dear People of Tripura,

On the occasion of Independence Day, I convey my greetings and best wishes to you all. I pay my homage to the great memory of the martyrs of India's freedom struggle. I would also like to offer my profound regards to those freedom fighters who are amongst us today.

Celebration of Independence Day is not just a ceremonial occasion. Keeping in view the historical significance and tremendous emotional attachment to this day for Indians, it has to be treated as an important ceremonial occasion for national introspection.

Before us on this year's Independence Day are quite a few very relevant, important and contemporary issues."

On Unity

"Unity in diversity is India's traditional heritage. Great values of secularism have helped in keeping Indians together as a nation. But today, this spirit of secularism is under attack. Conspiracies and attempts are underway to create an undesirable complexity and divisions in our society; to invade our national consciousness in the name of religion, caste and community, by inciting passions to convert India into a particular religious country and in the name of protecting the cow. Because of all these, people of minority and dalit communities are under severe attack. Their sense of security is being shattered. Their life is under peril. These unholy tendencies cannot be harboured or tolerated. These disruptive attempts are contrary to the goals, dreams and ideals of our freedom struggle. The followers of those who were not associated with the Independence movement, rather sabotaged the freedom movement, were servile to the atrocious, plunderer and merciless British, aligned with the anti-national forces having decorated themselves today in different names and colours are striking at the root of unity and integrity of India. Every loyal and patriotic Indian must take the pledge today to remain committed to the ideal of a united India and to counter the attempts towards such destructive conspiracies and attacks. We must all work and collectively strive to ensure security of the minorities, dalits and preserve the unity and integrity of our country."

On Widening Disparity between Haves and Have Nots

"Today, the gulf between the have and have nots is speedily widening. Nation's vast resources and wealth are being concentrated in the hands of a very few. A large majority of our people are suffering from poverty. These people are the victims of inhuman exploitation. They are being deprived of food, shelter, clothing, education, health care and security of job for assured income. This is contrary to the aims and objectives of our Independence struggle. Our current national policies are squarely responsible for this state of affairs. Such anti-people policies shall have to be reversed. But words alone will not achieve this. For this, we need the deprived and the suffering Indians to arise, become vocal and to protest fearlessly, collectively in a ceaseless manner. We definitely need an alternative policy that serves the interests of the vast majority of

Indians. To bring this alternative policy into reality, the deprived and suffering Indians need to take a pledge on this Independence Day to launch an economic, political and social movement unitedly in a broad way.”

On Unemployment

“The mounting problem of unemployment has created a sense of despondency and gloom in our national psyche. On one hand, lakhs of employed are losing their jobs, on the other hand, crores of unemployed youths are waiting for jobs, which is nothing but like a mirage to them. It is not possible to solve this gigantic national problem without reversing the national economic policies which work to strengthen the very small group of profiteering corporates, and without increasing the purchasing power of the common people of India. Hence, the students, youth and working classes will have to take a pledge on this Independence Day to launch a collective and continuous movement to reverse these destructive policies.”

On the Alternative Path & Resistance against Attacks

“In contrast to the anti-people policies of the government at the centre, the state government of Tripura, despite its limitations, has been pursuing policies for the welfare of people in all walks of life with a special focus on the downtrodden and to advance forward with their cooperation. This is a totally different and an alternative path. This path has been able to not only attract the people of Tripura but also elicit a positive response of the downtrodden people of our country. This is not being tolerated by the reactionary forces here in Tripura. Hence, conspiracies are being hatched up one after another by the enemies of the people to disturb peace, fraternity and integrity of the state. And at the same time, attempts are on to disrupt the realm of developmental works. We need to counter all these unholy designs and isolate the reactionary forces. In this background, on this Independence Day, all the right thinking, peace loving and development seeking people of Tripura need to take a determined pledge to come forward and to work unitedly against such disruptive forces.”

Condolence

Comrade Manik Sanyal

Comrade Manik Sanyal, the veteran communist and working class leader; senior leader of CPI(M), Left Front and of CITU who was mostly active in the northern part of West Bengal particularly in Jalpaiguri district; breathed his last on 28 July, 2017 at the age of 82 in a nursing home in Kolkata after prolong illness. He was a member of the national working committee, West Bengal state working committee and two decades long former Jalpaiguri district secretary of CITU. His now deceased wife Ranu Sanyal was also his comrade in organising the tea garden workers. He left behind his son. Comrade Manik Sanyal was the organiser at grass root and forefront fighter of tea garden workers lasting over 50 years in the entire tea producing districts of West Bengal. He was jailed for workers struggles and during emergency. He was the founder and former president of CITU's tea garden workers' union in West Bengal.



His body was taken to Jalpaiguri for cremation. The local business establishments downed their shutters to pay respect to the departed leader. CITU general secretary Tapan Sen, plantation workers national federation general secretary Jiaul Alam, its leaders Asit Datta from Assam, Gopi Kumar from Tamil Nadu, Saman Pathak and Rabin Rai from West Bengal; leaders of CPI(M), Left Front and of tea workers and other sections in person paid floral tributes to the departed leader at Jalpaiguri. Thousands accompanied his body in procession for cremation. CITU pays respectful homage to the departed leader.

Condolence

Comrade R. Muthusundaram



Comrade R. Muthusundaram, was one of the founders of Tamilnadu Government Employees Association (TNGEA), its past general secretary, former general secretary of All India State Government Employees Federation (AISGEF) and its chairman when he breathed his last in the government hospital in Erode on 29 July, 2017 suffering from ailment for last few months.

As a young secretary of TNGEA at the age 32 and later as its general secretary since 2002 he led several struggles of Tamil Nadu government employees and teachers and was widely respected. He was a powerful speaker and organiser and extensively toured across the country as leader of AISGEF and as its general secretary since 2009. As a dedicated communist he worked selflessly and tirelessly in the struggle of the workers, employees and of other toiling sections.

His body was brought from Erode to TNGEA office in Chennai where hundreds of employees and leaders of several organisations paid floral tribute to the departed leader. CITU national vice president A. K. Padmanabhan, Tamil Nadu state president A. Soundararajan and others laid floral wreaths on behalf of CITU. AISGEF executive committee adjourned its ongoing meeting at Bengaluru, adopted condolence resolution and all its members travelled to Chennai to pay respect to him. Leaders of different organisations spoke in condolence paying respectful homage to the departed leader. Comrade R. Muthusundaram's body was taken in procession to the General hospital and was handed over to the authorities, as per his wish, for advancement of scientific research. CITU dips its flag in memory of Comrade R. Muthusundaram.

Comrade Gopal Bhattacharya



Comrade Gopal Bhattacharya, member of the West Bengal state working committee and former member of the national working committee of CITU, national vice president of All India Chemical and Pharmaceutical Employees Federation, general secretary of textile workers federation of West Bengal; 7 times MLA of Panihati Assembly constituency since 1967 to 2006 elections; leader of CPI(M) and of Left Front passed away on 3 August, 2017. He left behind his wife and daughter.

His body was brought in CITU North 24 Pargana district committee office where CITU state president Subhas Mukherjee, district secretary Gargi Chatterjee, Nepal Dev Bhattacharya and other leaders paid their respectful homage. CITU dips its flag in the memory of the departed leader.

Comrade Mantu Saha



Comrade Mantu Saha, member of the national working committee of CITU and of its West Bengal state working committee, founder leader of Calcutta State Transport Union and its former general secretary for many years; passed away on 19 June, 2017 in Kolkata at the age of 81.

Comrade Mantu Saha's body was brought to CITU and CPI(M) state committee offices where CITU national vice president Shyamal Chakraborty, its West Bengal state president Subhas Mukherjee, Rabin Dev and other CITU leaders and leaders of CPI(M) paid homage to the departed leader. CITU dips its flag in memory of Comrade Mantu Saha.

Impact of Marxist Ideology on Indian Trade Union Movement

A.K. Padmanabhan

The impact of Marxian ideology and that of the Great October Revolution on the humanity is well recorded. It is also irrefutable that both had deep reflections on National liberation movements during 20th Century.

As far as India is concerned, despite all out efforts to depict the Indian freedom movement as that with a single stream, the fact that the left and Socialist stream had played major role, could not be covered up. In this, the impact of Marxian ideology as well as that of the October Revolution on the Trade Union movement in our country is very important.

Modern working class movement is a product of Industrial Revolution. The characteristic of this was the appearance of the two basic classes – the owners of the factories and the means of production and the exploited wage labourers who do not own any means of production. The social changes that happened after the emergences of these distinct classes, brought forth the contradictions between these two classes. It has been noted by many scholars that ‘the triumph of the machine over man became synonymous with the insatiable greed of the Capitalists for maximum profits’. And this resulted to the increase in working hours and intensified exploitation.

In England, where the Industrial Revolution had its centre, the Trade Unions came into existence as early as 1752. Sporadic actions earlier got intensified. All the existing regulations by the rulers were actually against the interests of the workers. There were new rules and regulation directly forbidding the workers coming together to demand justice.

As Sukomal Sen notes in ‘Working Class of India, “Since the introduction of machinery, the machine – The instrument of labour-appeared to the workmen as the material embodiment of Capital. It was therefore hardly surprising that the workers immediate reaction was to destroy the machine. Sen quotes Marx to depict the changes later when workers could find their real target of attack in place of illusory one. ***“It took both time and experience before the working people learnt to distinguish between machinery and its employment by capital, and to direct their attacks, not against the material instruments of production, but against the mode in which they are used”.***

From this point, how the trade unions fought against the ruling classes and how the political and social developments forced the capitalist classes to concede certain demands etc. are all well depicted parts of history.

Various types of organizations sprang up in England at this juncture. One prominent organization among them was Robert Owen’s Grand National Consolidated Trade Union. Sukomal Sen notes - “Although Owen never thought in terms of class struggle, in reality, increasing trade unions activity provoked determined attack by State and vigorous counter-measures by entrepreneurs. This culminated in the collapse of Grand National Union and quick decline of Owen’s influence”.

It was in this phase, British workers built up a untied movement with a six point charter which was mainly political demands including universal suffrage at 21 years of age. This movement, the Great Chartist movement, could not attain the demands but ‘it radicalized the entire working class of England’. In the later period workers in England could realise, at least partly, some of the demands. A law enacted in 1847 limited the working day to ten hours to women and child labour. In effect, even men could get 10 hours working day in certain cases. Sukomal Sen quotes Marx ***“The English factory workers were champions, not only of***

the English, but of the modern working class generally, as their theorists were the first to throw down the gauntlet to the theory of capital”. It is evident from this quote that the working class in England had developed into a position of challenging the capitalist class in England.

The importance of the chartist movement and the gains in the later years was noted by Lenin also – ‘England was giving the world the first broad, truly mass and politically clear cut proletarian revolutionary movement’.

Till the development of scientific socialism by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, there were various types of movements of Utopian Socialism and also various trends in Trade Union activities. ‘The practical development of Trade Unions in the nineteenth century took place in the context of a running battle between the working class and the new governing classes including legislature and judiciary’.

In the back ground of strikes and struggles in various parts of Europe, the efforts to build up International Solidarity became fruitful in the year 1864. It was on 28 September 1864, the first meeting of representatives of working class of different countries was held in London. Beside English and French many other groups were represented. Karl Marx was there and he was elected as one of the German members in the Central Committee.

‘In drafting the Statutes, and formulating political programme Marx was able to establish his view. The Communist Manifesto was published in 1848 and `the political and social theories of Marx had been concretized. It was a splendid achievement for Marx having been able to incorporate these theories in the programme of the Association although in a limited form’.

Sukomal Sen concludes his notes on the emergence of this first international – “Marx’s draft for the statutes and Address of the International was accepted unanimously with only minor amendments. The address ended with the great historic slogan of The Communist Manifesto, `Proletarians of All Countries, Unite!’

The preamble to the constitution of the Association came out to be one of the historic documents of the Europeans working-class movement. Its ringing declaration:

That the emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves; that the struggle for the emancipation of the working classes means not a struggle for class privileges and monopolies, but for equal rights and duties, and the ablation of all class rule;.....

That the economic emancipation of the working classes is therefore the great end to which every political movement ought to be subordinate as a means;.....

That the emancipation of labour is neither a local nor a national, but a social problems, embracing all countries in which modern society exists; is to be recorded in history as an infallible guide to action for the working classes the world over for all time to come.

The modern working class movement assumed full form and marched forward through many contradictions, innumerable groupings and regroupings. It began vibrating the world. Emergence of Indian working class movement is an inseparable part of this world phenomenon.

Indian Working Class Movement

It is with this background, we have to assess the development of the Indian Working class movement. “Modern Indian Working Class first germinated in the construction of Railways in India. Hundreds of workers who were engaged in the Railway building were the harbingers of, modern Indian working class”.

In India, the colonial rulers destroyed traditional handicrafts and cottage industries. But, it did not result in development of modern industry as we witnessed in Europe. It was the introduction of Railways and later on growth of certain industries that helped these workers to get some jobs. Earlier they were all forced to get some rural jobs for their living. All these took generations to fructify.

The situation in India and other colonies has been analysed by the Communist International as, ***“The Working Class in the colonies and semi-colonies has characteristic features which are important in the formation of an independent working-class movement and proletarian class ideology in these countries. The greater part of the colonial proletariat comes from the pauperized village, with which the worker retains his connection even when engaged in industry. In the majority of colonies (with the exception of some large industrial towns such as Sanghai, Bombay & Calcutta et.) we find, as a general rule, only the first generation of a proletariat engaged in large-scale production. The rest is made of ruined artisans driven from the draying handicrafts, which are widespread even in the most advanced colonies. The ruined artisan, the small property owner, carries with him into the working class the narrow craft-sentiments and ideology through which national reformist influence can penetrate the colonial labour movement”.***

This basic character, as Sukomal Sen points out, was taken advantage of by the reformist leadership of Indian bourgeoisie, during the initial period of the Indian Labour Movement. By the period of First World War, the Indian working class had built up local level organizations, conducted struggles, and even massive strikes.

The sufferings due to the exorbitant prices of all essential commodities and the economic crisis resulting from destructive war, further intensified the agitation.

By the time, the war ended, the situation became more critical. In every part of the country, almost in every sector, there were strikes with massive participation. Workers could get wage increase and certain other benefits also through these struggles. In certain cases, workers were forced to withdraw their struggles, without any settlement. In Bombay (Mumbai now) there was an unprecedented strike in which more than 2 lakh workers, out of which 1.25 lakhs were textile workers. The strike which began on 2nd January 1920 continued up to 3rd February. Workers from 80 out of the 85 textile mills participated in this strike. Repeated strikes in that period included those in Railway, Port and Docks, Engineering workshop, Oil installations, Government Mint, Press, Tramways, Gas and Electricity supply, Municipal workers etc. All the industrial centres in the country reported about such strikes. These reports show that the strikes which began in 1917, gradually increased every year and by 1920, it turned into massive actions.

The British Govt. was much worried about the developments in India. From London the Secretary of State for India telegraphically asked viceroy to send a report on the industrial unrest.

The report submitted by the Viceroy in 1920 sated – “There is undoubtedly a considerable amount of Industrial unrest in India”. *It also said that the causes are primarily economic and listed the following reasons – The pressure of high prices, even after ‘considerable’ increase in wages, not uniformly, and not having kept pace with prices; Profiteering by the traders; knowledge about very large profits being made by capitalists, mill owners in particular, the contrast between comfort and wealth of few and the comparative poverty of workers; the reluctance of employers to grant increase of pay till the discontent manifested in the shape of strike’.*

The reasons being given by the colonial rulers to their superiors are really of great importance to understand the intensity of the situation.

Then the report says – “Apart from these economic causes there is in the air a sort of epidemic strike-fever partly engendered by worldwide political unrest, partly fostered by frequent reports of labour trouble in England and Europe”.

This report also notes that “there are inchoate organizations nursed by politicians”, and also talks about certain news papers like Bombay Chronicle encouraging the strikers and then it says – “Much hope is based by such papers on the All India Trade Union Congress which meets in Bombay at the end of this month and will it is said, be followed by Special Railway Conference”.

Sukomal Sen sums up the situation – “The report confirms the advancement of Indian labour movement during the period, especially after the war and betrays a deep anxiety which the movement caused to the colonial rulers. The internal economic situation and the national political movement of India having been pointed out as the two basic factors giving rise to these labour struggles, the report does not fail to recognize the great inspiration which these movements drew from the world-wide political unrest and the European and English labour movement of that period. Although, the official report did not spell out the ‘world-wide political unrest’, there is hardly any difficulty to realize what it really meant. The Russian Revolution of 1917 and the phenomenon of world-wide labour awakening that followed were the obvious implications. The real impact of these historic events on Indian labour did not escape the political insight of the shrewd imperialist government”.

Though the workers were strikes and on struggles, the leadership was with ‘petty bourgeois’ intellectuals. It was the outlook of these leaders that influenced the workers. As Rajani Palme Dutt the famous British Communist leader noted “there was not yet any political movement on the basis of Socialism, of the conceptions of the working class and class struggle”.

It was this – the above said influence – that changed from 1920; when the socialist ideas came into the political horizon in India.

Sukomal Sen sums it up with the following observations – “Having imbibed the idea of scientific socialism and getting inspired for action by the victorious Russian Revolution, a small group of young Indian intellectuals entered the labour scene in the 1920’s and boldly endeavored to channelize the workers’ movement in a different direction, the direction of sharpening class struggle and bringing class political consciousness into the labour movement. This marked a qualitatively new stage in the evolution of leadership of the Indian labour movement and set in motion a new dynamism, the struggle between the forces of revolution and reformism with far-reaching historical significance.”

This struggle between the forces of revolution and reformism continued in the trade union movement in the country and within the first central trade union also for a long time.

In this Centenary Year of Great October Revolution and 200th Birth Anniversary of Karl Marx, the cadres of the class oriented Trade Union movement in the country, have to pledge themselves to continue this struggle, by imbibing the Socialist principles put forward to us by our great teachers.

(This article is written fully on the basis of the two important books written by Comrade Sukomal Sen, veteran trade union leader and historian – All the Quotations used are also excerpted from his books. (1) International Working Class Movement (2) Working Class of India)

NOTICE

Meeting of Local Bodies Unions

- A national level meeting for coordination between CITU unions, working among municipal workers and other urban and rural local bodies
- **Schedule**
 - Date - 20 September, 2017
 - Time - 10.30 a.m. – Evening
 - Place - BTR Bhavan, New Delhi
- **Participants**
 - 1-2 representatives each from state federations / unions of employees in 3 tier urban municipal and rural panchayat local bodies; and one CITU state office bearer working with them
- State committees to send the names of participants to CITU centre at the earliest

National Convention of Workers

Talkatora Indoor Stadium, New Delhi; 8 August 2017

Worker-delegates from all states and union territories representing 10 central trade unions - INTUC, AITUC, HMS, CITU, AIUTUC, UTUC, AICCTU, SEWA, LPF and TUC; from their national industrial federations like coal, steel, electricity, oil, port & dock, road transport, construction, scheme workers etc; from all organised and unorganised sectors; from independent national federations of bank, insurance, railways, defence, state governments and central government employees joined the massive National Convention of Workers, held in the full 3000 plus capacity Talkatora Indoor Stadium, overflowing outside it in almost equal number, in New Delhi on 8 August.

INTUC vice president Ashok Singh, AITUC president Ramendra Kumar, HMS vice president S. N. Pathak, CITU president Dr. K. Hemalata, AIUTUC vice president Satyawan, Lata of SEWA, AICCTU vice president Uday Bhat, Satrujit Singh of UTUC and LPF president V. Subburaman constituted the presidium of the convention.

INTUC president Dr. Sanjiva Reddy addressed the convention and moved the draft declaration. The national trade union leaders, who addressed the convention in support of the declaration, include AITUC secretary Amarjeet Kaur, HMS general secretary Harbhajan Singh Siddhu, CITU general secretary Tapan Sen, AIUTUC general secretary Shankar Saha, SEWA general secretary Manali, AICCTU general secretary Rajiv Dimari, LPF general secretary M. Sanmugam and UTUC working committee member N. K. Premchandran.

The convention adopted the declaration unanimously. The convention also expressed solidarity with ongoing Narmada Bachao Andolan led by Medha Patkar.

The convention called upon all in trade union movement and the workers and employees, irrespective of their affiliation and those who are outside trade unions, to intensify sectoral struggles; unitedly launch countrywide campaign to reach the broadest sections of the workers and the people; stage 3 days parav of laks of workers in front of the Parliament on 9-11 November, 2017 and prepare for indefinire strike next year in pursuance of 12 point demands and on the issues raised in the declaration to resisist and reverse the anti-workers and anti-people policies of the Modi government.

Declaration of the Convention

The National Convention of Workers being held today, the 8th August 2017, in Talkatora Indoor Stadium, New Delhi jointly called by the ten Central Trade Unions, in association with all independent National Federations of Workers and Employees of both Industrial and Service sectors, expresses serious concern over the deteriorating situation in the national economy due to the pro-corporate, anti-national and anti-people policies pursued by the Narendra Modi Government, grievously impacting the livelihood of the working people across the country.

This National Convention unanimously condemns in strongest terms the conspiratorial and authoritarian attack of the BJP Govt. to deprive the biggest Central Trade Union in the country, the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC), from all representations in the tripartite and bipartite forums and committees, including in the international forum. This is nothing but a severe and heinous onslaught on the rights of the entire trade

union movement. It will be unitedly fought back and national convention pledges for that.

The Convention notes with utter dismay that the Government has been continuing to arrogantly ignore the 12 point Charter of Demands on minimum wage, social security, workers' status and pay and facilities for the scheme workers, against privatization and mass scale contractorisation etc. being jointly pursued by the entire trade union movement of the country. Despite numerous nationwide joint strike actions, the most prominent being those of 2nd September 2015 and 2nd September 2016, participated by crores of workers against the policies of the Governments, the ruling regime at the centre has been increasing onslaught on the rights and livelihood of the working people of the country. Both the organized as well as unorganized sectors are victims alike.

Unemployment situation is getting aggravated with employment generation practically turned negative even in the most labour intensive sectors. The phenomenon of closure and shut-down of industries and the forecast of huge job-loss in the IT sector is adding fuel to the fire. Price-rise of essential commodities including public transport, electricity, medicines etc is mounting pressure on daily life of the people in general leading to widening as well as deepening impoverishment. Hasty implementation of GST has added fuel to fire. Drastic cut in Government expenditure in social sector and various welfare schemes has made the conditions of workers, particularly those in unorganized sector more precarious.

The anti-labour authoritarian character of the Government is all the more evident in their refusal to implement even the consensus recommendations (in which the Government was also a party) of the successive Indian Labour Conferences in respect of equal pay and benefits for equal work for the contract workers, formulation of minimum wage on the norms agreed by 15th ILC / Supreme Court Judgment and workers status for the scheme workers viz., Anganwadi, Mid-Day-Meal and ASHA etc. Shockingly Modi Government is even refusing to implement the recent Judgments of the Supreme Court of the country on the most genuine issue of "equal wage and benefits for same work" and on EPS, 1995 on contribution and calculation of pension on actual pay and dearness allowance.

Despite opposition of all the trade unions in the country irrespective of affiliations, the Government has been aggressively pushing through its programme of pro-employer and utterly anti-worker labour law reforms which is aimed at imposing the condition of slavery on the working people. The latest onslaught is the move to evolve a 'Social Security Code' by dismantling and demolishing the existing statutory Social Security infrastructure under Employees Provident Fund Organization, Coal Mines Provident Fund and Employees State Insurance Corporation and many others welfare statutes, abolition of welfare related cess, and usurp the huge social security fund subscribed by the workers amounting to more than Rs.20 lakh crore and make them available for the speculation in share market under the most deceptive and fraudulent camouflage of 'universalisation of social security'.

Privatization of all strategic PSUs, including Defence Production, Public Sector Banks and Insurance and also Railways, public road transport, oil, power etc through disinvestment, strategic sale, outsourcing in favour of private sector, promoting 100 per cent FDI in many vital and strategic sectors are increasing day by day. Moreover stripping all the cash rich PSUs from the investible cash reserves are added assaults.

In fact Defence Sector privatization move is actually designed to destroy manufacturing capability and Research initiatives developed by the country over last six and half decades. The worst and most dubious is the game plan to outsource more than 50 per cent products including weapons and critical equipments, so long being produced by the Ordinance establishments.

Complete privatization of the Railways, step by step, are going on. Operating private trains in the existing tracks built by Railways is being permitted. Moreover free access to railway yards, sheds and workshops for maintenance of private coaches, wagons and engines etc are being offered to private operators. Already 23 railway stations in all metro cities have been shortlisted for privatisation. Railway employees shall be worst victims of privatization in terms of job security, democratic trade union rights and protection of achievements in the areas of pay, perks, social security etc. Like Central Electricity Regulatory Authority (CERC), a Railway Development Authority (RDA) has been created. Given the sky-rocketing increase in electricity tariff by CERC, under RDA railway fare and goods freight is poised to be hiked hurting the common people and benefiting the private profiteers.

Public sector Banks are under attack through various legislative and executive measures. The ultimate target of the Government is privatization and to extend undue favour to the same private corporate crooks, whose default of paying back the loan has put the banking sector in severe difficulties.

The retrenchment of contractual employees has been resorted to already in some banks. Insurance sector is also under such attack. Legislative measures to pave the way of privatization of our major ports are also in the advanced stage. CPSUs even including the core and strategic sectors like Energy, Petroleum, Telecom, Metal, Mining, Machine Building, Road, Air and Water Transport, Port & Dock and more are under the privatization onslaught of the Government. The Convention notes that workers of these industries are fighting sectoral battle unitedly. United struggles have been launched by the workers and employees of Government Services Sector including the Scheme Workers as a whole. The Convention extends full support to these struggles.

Attempts are being made by the state governments to dismantle Public sector road transport by issuing route- permits to private parties. The central government intends to get the new Motor Vehicle (Amendment) Bill 2017 hastily passed in the current session of parliament which will allow wholesale privatisation of road transport. The convention while taking note of the protest action by transport workers, condemns the state govts. and central govt's anti people and anti worker moves in the transport sector.

The National Convention of Workers extends full solidarity to the fighting farmers in various states as well as under the Joint National Forums of Peasants' Organizations. It is the same set of pro-corporate, pro-landlord policies which have created a severe crisis in agriculture, biggest livelihood provider in the economy leading to continuing increase in spite of suicides.

This National Convention of Workers records its strong denunciation against the communal and divisive machinations on the society being carried on with the active patronage of the Government machinery under the present polity. The peace loving secular people in the country are facing a stark situation of terror and insecurity all around. Communal forces are cultivating an atmosphere of conflicts within the society on non-issues. It is disrupting the unity of the workers and the toiling people in general, so vital to carry forward the ongoing struggles based on our 12-point Charter of Demands as detailed above. Working class must raise their strong voice of protest.

The situation before the nation is the deepening all round attack on the rights and livelihood of the working class and the toiling people in general by the private corporate friendly Government of the day. On the other hand the working class has achieved solid unity of the trade union movement and also achieved unprecedented response in the ongoing struggles including the strikes actions opposing such suicidal anti-people policies.

The task before the Joint Platform of Central Trade Unions and independent national federations is to further intensify the surging struggles in various sectors through a concerted united agitation and mobilization at national level to be followed by countrywide general strike action as a culmination and consolidation of all sectoral struggles. The National Convention of workers therefore adopts the following programmes:

1. To work for achieving and accelerating united struggles in all the sectors of the economy on respective demands, which has already begun
2. To Organize Block/District/Industrial Centres/State level massive campaign, mobilisation and convention in preparation to central mobilization to be followed
3. Massive three days dharna at National Capital on 9th,10th and 11th Nov. to be attended by lakhs of workers from all over the country.
4. The National Convention calls upon the working people to prepare for indefinite countrywide strike action against the anti people, anti national activities of the Govt. The National Convention calls upon working people across the sectors and throughout the country irrespective of affiliations to make the above programmes a total success.

9th August, 2017 Movement

Agricultural Workers Massive Rally

Braving rains, thousands of agricultural workers, coming from 12 states and distant parts of the country, marched under All India Agricultural Workers Union's (AIAWU) banner from Ramlila Ground to the Parliament in New Delhi to convey their grievances and present demands to Modi government. The march converted into rally near the police barricade in the Parliament Street.

The rally was addressed by AIAWU general secretary A. Vijayaraghavan, joint secretary Suneet Chopra and its state leaders; CPI(M) MPs A. Sampath, M. B. Rajesh, P. K. Sremathi Teacher, P. K. Biju and Joice George; fraternal organisation leaders general secretary Hannan Mollah and joint secretary N. K. Shukla from AIKS; and CITU vice president J. S. Majumdar.

The memorandum, submitted to the prime minister, rural development minister and labour minister, included demands like strengthening MNREGA, full work, full pay and unemployment allowance; equal wage for men and women; implementation of National Food Security Act for all agricultural workers and rural poor; social security to all; free education and healthcare for children; removal of child labour; land for cultivation to landless and housing for homeless; effective implementation of Forest Right Act; comprehensive central legislation for agricultural workers and punishment against atrocities against dalits, adivasis, minorities and women.

Countrywide Peasants Protest

Called by united platform of Bhoomi Adhikar Andolan, thousands of peasants with red flag of All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) brought out rallies and courted arrest in more than 150 districts across the country on 9 August, 2017 in pursuance of 7 point demands including demand to enact law on remunerative prices of 150% over cost of production of all types of crops; waiver of all kinds of loans; withdrawal of anti-farmer central government notification banning cattle trade; formal withdrawal of Land Acquisition Bill from the Parliament; implementation of Forest Rights Act; effective implementation of MNREGA; Rs.5000 as pension above 60 years of age; etc. Hundreds were arrested at different places.

Programme was implemented in 15 districts of In Rajasthan with detention at some places; 13 districts in Punjab; regional protest at Rohtak in Haryana; at Shimla in Himachal Pradesh; in more than 15 districts in Uttar Pradesh; 3 districts in Uttarakhand; 20 districts in Bihar; in 19 districts of West Bengal; 8 districts of Tripura; 13 districts in Madhya Pradesh with 400 cattle at Rewa; 15 districts Andhra Pradesh and 10 districts in Telangana; and in several districts in Karnataka, Odisha and in other states.

AIKS condemned arrest of Medha Patkar and 5 other Satyagrahis at Narmada Valley: AIKS condemned the BJP's Madhya Pradesh government for deploying huge number of armed police and arrest of Medha Patkar and others who were on indefinite fast at Narmada Valley demanding rehabilitation, resettlement and compensation to 40,000 families in 119 villages in Narmada valley as per Supreme Court order. AIKS and Bhumi Adhikar Andolan gave call to organise statewide protest in Madhya Pradesh and at other states and regional centres.

National Convention of Mass-Class-Social Organisations

Mavalankar Hall, New Delhi; 18 September, 2017

Several mass-class-social organisations in their second joint meeting at BTR Bhawan in New Delhi on 11 August 2017 decided to hold a National Convention of their functionaries at Mavalankar Hall in New Delhi on 18 September 2017.

The Meeting noted the background as “the grim situation under the NDA rule and increasing attacks on our Constitution and Constitutional rights, secular and democratic ethos, composite culture, unity of the people, communal harmony and scientific temper in our history, literature and the way of our life. Attacks on the livelihood of workers, peasants, employees and youth have intensified by aggressive implementation of neo-liberal policies. All the central trade unions and kisan organisations have unitedly identified their issues and decided to conduct massive struggles in the month of November. We extend our full support to these struggles. The youth, student, women, tribal and other organisations are also engaged in struggles and we also express solidarity with them.”

A 17-member Organising Committee was constituted with Hannan Mollah and P. Krishnaprasad of AIKS, K. Hemalata of CITU, Mariam Dhawale of AIDWA, Vikram Singh of SFI, Amarjeet Kaur, Rajeev Dhimari, Atul Kumar Anjan, Annie Raja, Kavita Krishnan, Tirumalai, Anil Chowdhury, Nikhil Dey, Gautam Modi, Roma Malik, Dr. Sunilam and K Madhuresh Kumar.

IN THE PARLIAMENT

Privatisation in Railways

During Zero Hour in Rajya Sabha on 31 July, 2017 CITU general secretary Tapan Sen, MP raised the issue of privatisation of Indian Railways stating, “I rise to voice my opposition and also draw the attention of the House to the destructive and disastrous move by the Government towards complete privatisation of the main transportation system, that is, the Indian Railways. A number of operations — ranging from cleaning, catering, maintenance, etc., — have already been outsourced. The locomotives are being ordered with the General Electric of the USA and the Alstom of France with a guarantee of purchasing 150 locomotives from them every year, thereby paving the way of closure of our loco production units at Chittaranjan and Varanasi, and also the capacity created in the BHEL. Coaches are also being ordered, thereby paving the way for closure of our coach factories.”

“...407 railway stations are being sought to be privatized by handing them over to the private players. 23 railway stations, to start with, have already been shortlisted in different metro cities. Tenders have already been floated by them. According to the terms of tender, the railway employees working in those stations will be forced out....”

“..a Railway Development Authority has been constituted with clear terms of reference to allow access of the railway tracks established by the Indian Railways to private operators.... To make the railway fares and freights on cost basis, subsidies are being eliminated (aiming to double the railway fares). This is a burden on the people. Instead of ‘Make-in India’, this is becoming a ‘Destruction of India’ and this is gravely antinational. I urge upon the Government to refrain from this; otherwise, people of the country will resist this disastrous move by exercising all their might,” Tapan Sen warned.

MPs across the opposition parties associated themselves with the statement of Tapan Sen including Jaya Bachchan, SP, UP; M.P. Veerendra Kumar, JD(U), Kerala; Wansuk Syiem, Congress, Meghalaya; Bhubaneswar Kalita, Congress, Assam; C. P. Narayanan, CPI(M), Kerala; D. Raja, CPI, Tamil Nadu; K. Somaprasad, CPI(M), Kerala; D. Bandyopadhyay, TMC, West Bengal; P. L. Punia, Congress, UP; Ravi Prakash verma, SP, UP; Raja Ram, BSP, UP; Neeraj Shekhar, SP, UP; and several other MPs whose names could not be recorded in the proceedings of the House.

INDUSTRIES & SECTORS

Schemes

ASHA Workers March to Parliament

Under the banner of All India Coordination Committee of ASHA Workers (AICCAW) of CITU; more than 6000 of them, coming from 11 states, marched from Ramlila Maidan to Parliament in New Delhi on 21 August to submit 50 lakhs signatures of ASHA workers, facilitators and beneficiaries and general public on the memorandum to the prime minister collected over the months in different states. The march was halted at police barricade at Jantar Mantar where it converted into a rally and mass meeting.

The meeting was inaugurated by CITU general secretary Tapan Sen and was addressed by AICCAW convener Ranjana Nirula. Leaders of fraternal organisations addressed the rally in solidarity with ASHA workers struggle. They include CITU's Anganwadi workers federation AIFAWH general secretary A. R. Sindhu, Midday Meal Workers Federation of India general secretary Jai Bhagawan, Asha Sharma of AIDWA, Suneet Chopra of AIAWU, Vijoo Krishnan of AIKS and V. P. Sanu of SFI.

A delegation of AICCAW, led by Tapan Sen, MP and Ranjana Nirula, met the union health secretary and submitted the memorandum and signatures. The memorandum contains the demands to: - Make NHM a permanent programme of the government; - No privatisation of the public health system; - Improve infrastructure in all public health facilities; - Increase budget allocation for health to at least 6% of the GDP; - Implement the recommendations of the 45th and 46th ILC regarding scheme workers including regularization of ASHA/USHA workers as 'Health Workers', paying them minimum wages of Rs.18,000 with VDA, provide all social security benefits like pension, gratuity, maternity benefits, etc; Pending regularization to pay them a fixed monthly remuneration equivalent to the statutory minimum wage for skilled workers in the respective states, in addition to the specified incentives. (*Inputs: Ranjana Nirula*)

Insurance

LIC Agents Rally before Parliament

About 7000 LIC agents, including more than one thousand women, from 19 state units of CITU-affiliated LIC Agents Organisation (LICAO) staged an all India dharna, rally and demonstration at Jantar Mantar in front of the Parliament in New Delhi on 2 August.

The dharna was inaugurated CITU president Dr. K. Hemalata. CITU general secretary Tapan Sen, MP was the main speaker. The others who addressed the rally include CPI(M) MPs P.K. Sreemathy, M.P. Rajesh; the working president of LICAO A. Sampath, MP; union's general secretary Dr. P.G. Dileep and other office bearers.

Led by MPs, delegation met the union finance minister and minister of state for finance and submitted memoranda on their demands. Both the ministers assured to consider the demands. A. Sampath already moved a private member's bill in the Parliament and Dr. Biju, MP raised the issue in the Parliament on the day.

The main demands include stopping LIC direct marketing, withdrawal of bank agency and no GST on LIC policies; and for the agents a legislation for their job security; introduction of real pension, welfare fund and EPF; enhancement of gratuity and amendment of gratuity calculation; implementation of IRDAI recommendation on commission, removal of anomalies in the club rules; etc.

Electricity

8th Conference of EEFI

Calls: Ensure Right to Energy for All; End Contractorisation

Prasanta N. Choudhury

8th conference of Electricity Employees' Federation of India (EEFI), held at Comrade Murari Bose Manch in Comrade Habibulla Nagar in Hyderabad city on 18-20 August, 2017, was attended by 389 delegates and observers from 22 states and 15 fraternal delegates.

Inaugurating the conference CITU president K. Hemalata drew attention of the electricity workers about the adverse situation created globally by the imperial capital and nationally by the corporates- communal combine through communal, divisionist, fundamentalist and separatist forces and anti-people and anti-working class policies by the governments. She called EEFI workers to vigorously implement the decisions of 8 August National Convention of Workers. With intensification of struggle, the governments will have to either change their anti people policies or quit, she asserted.

Leaders of fraternal organisations in National Co-ordination Committee of Electricity Employees & Engineers, including All India Power Engineers' Federation, All India Federation of Electricity Employees, All India Powermen's Federation and others also greeted the conference.

Presenting the general secretary's report, Prasanta N Chowdhury underlined 3 major issues on energy and electricity in particular. (i) More than 50% of installed generating capacity remains unutilised showing negative trend of projected growth contrary to Modi government's claim. Series of scams in the energy sector has been revealed exposing the real face of Modi's government's claim of 'war against corruption'. (ii) Government's claim of success of UDAY scheme in reducing AT&C loss and in reducing debt burden of DISCOMs is a hoax. In fact, the burden was shifted from DISCOMs to state governments. No benefit of cost reduction has been passed on to consumers. (iii) Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2014 is posing threat to consumers of rural area. If the Bill is enacted and the distribution business is split into two separate businesses of 'carriage' and 'content', the profiteers will rush for the revenue potential urban areas and scope of cross subsidy in rural areas will be eliminated. 35 delegates took part in the discussion on general secretary's report.

The conference had a separate session on the situation in the industry related to workers who are being engaged through contractors, jobs outsourcing and franchising in place of regular employees and are paid low wages in violation of the legal right of 'equal wage for equal work'.

The conference adopted a resolutions on implementation of 'equal wage for equal work' and for 'specific schedule for electricity workers under Minimum Wages Act'. The conference also adopted Action Plan for contract and other non-regular workers which includes – (1) countrywide awareness campaign against loot of energy resources by Adani, Ambani, Tata, Jindal, Goenka et al and Modi government's policy of curbing the people's right to electricity by different means; - (2) on 25 October 2017, the first anniversary of Supreme Court judgement on 'equal pay for equal work', lowest level mass mobilisation and memoranda submission addressed to the chairmen of electricity utilities; - (3) followed by staging demonstrations and memoranda submission at division, district / circle level; - (4) in the next phase, staging demonstrations in the state capitals and memoranda submission to the chief ministers and the prime minister; - (5) in the next phase, mass petition to the chief justices of respective high courts and the Supreme Court; - (6) submission of strike notice on 15 June, 2018 and countrywide strike of electricity workers on 1 August, 2018. The conference

decided to pursue with the independent Action Plan; but will strive for joint movement of electricity workers through discussion with all trade unions in power sector. 24 delegates took part in the discussion on the resolutions.

The conference unanimously adopted the general secretary's report, treasurer's report with audited statement of accounts and 12 other resolutions. The conference elected a 90 member working committee and 25 office bearers with K O Habeeb as president, Swadesh Devroye as working president and Prasanta N Chowdhury as general secretary.

CITU general secretary Tapan Sen addressed the concluding session of the conference greeting the delegates for the successful conclusion and nationwide struggle programme to protect and achieve the rights of electricity workers and for making electricity to the people at affordable cost. He appreciated various rich contents of general secretary's report and called upon the delegates utilise these for campaign as weapon of struggle. He called upon the electricity workers to join in huge number the Maha Padao in New Delhi on 9-11 November.

IT

Meeting of IT, ITES Activists

Called by CITU, an all India meeting of selected activists in the IT sector and CITU leaders from six states of Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and West Bengal with CITU centre's leadership was held at BTR Bhavan in New Delhi on 23 July.

The meeting noted the situation in IT and ITES industries, about large scale retrenchments of employees, changing attitude of employees in getting organised and the role of divisive and reformist organisations including some NGOs working in the sector. The meeting emphasised on the need for CITU's active intervention to channelise the growing despair and discontent of IT and ITES employees.

The meeting decided that (i) CITU state committees take urgent initiative to form unions of IT and ITES employees; (ii) to collect concrete details on violation of labour laws like non-payment of overtime, lack of maternity benefit, etc and send to CITU centre at the earliest for raising appropriately; and (iii) to hold next meeting with registered unions in IT and ITES to discuss developments and for national coordination.

The meeting called upon all CITU state committees, wherever possible, to urgently form and register unions of IT and ITE employees and convey these to CITU centre earliest

NOTICE

Meeting on Dalits Issues

- **Schedule**

Date - 19 September, 2017
Time - 10 a.m. - Evening
Place - BTR Bhawan, New Delhi.

- **Participants**

3-5 representatives from each state - preferably Dalits – including unions activists having large number of Dalits, state leaders of CITU affiliated unions of municipal sweepers, safai karmacharis, scavengers etc and one CITU state office bearer working / to be working with them

- State committees are requested to send the names of participants to the CITU centre at the earliest.

STATES

Karnataka

CITU's 'Save Labour Rights' Jatha & Sathyagraha

K. N. Umesh

The Jatha

CITU Karnataka state committee organised 16-days-long statewide Save Labour Rights Jatha from 29 July to 13 August, 2017 with slogan 'Save Labour Rights for Prolific-United-Harmonious Karnataka' and 'Save Labour Rights to Strengthen Labour Rights'.

The Jatha was inaugurated by CITU state vice president VJK Nair at Vidarashwatha on the banks of river Uttara Pinakini in Chikkaballapura district, known as 'Jalianwalabagh of Karnataka', the place of 9 martyrs of freedom struggle who were shot dead by the British police on 23 April in 1938; and ended at Kundapura in Udupi district, the land of Rani Abbakka who fought the Portuguese invaders till her last breath in 1559.

The Jatha team comprised of of CITU state president S. Varalakshmi, general secretary M. S. Meenakshi Sundaram, secretaries K. N. Umesh and B. V. Raghavendra, and vice president Harish Nayak. The Jatha travelled around 4,500 kms in 30 districts. More than 15,000 workers participated in the meetings, addressed by Jatha leaders in more than 50 organised meetings, hundreds of receptions at various places and at street corner meetings. On way of the Jatha, CITU national vice president A. K. Padmanabhan addressed public meeting at Kolar Gold Fields. The Jatha speeches focused on the anti-labour and anti-people policies of Modi led BJP-NDA government at the centre and Siddaramaiah led Congress government of the State.

Along with Jatha team the street play troupe consisting SFI-DYFI members staged 'Niddeyu Namagila Edeleli' (Arouse - No Sleep for Us), on the theme of 'Halla Bol' of Janam, at various places across the state.

The Sathyagraha

'Save Labour Rights' Jatha culminated in staging day-night dharna Sathyagraha beginning on the eve of Independence Day at the steps and street of the Town Hall in Bangalore on 14 August night. Night long Satyagraha was attended by thousands of young workers. The fervour of struggle was heightened by the revolutionary songs of *Bhoomi Tayi Balaga* cultural troupe. CITU general secretary Tapan Sen unfurled the national flag and spoke on Sathyagraha in the early hours of 15 August.

The Sathyagraha was inaugurated by Supreme Court's (retired) Justice V. Gopala Gowda and addressed by noted progressive thinkers and writers - Dr. G. Ramakrishna, chairman of Kuvempu Basha Bharathi Authority Dr. K. Maralisiddappa, Prof. G. K. Govindrao, Dr. Vijaya, chairperson of Kannada Book Authority Dr. Vasundara Bhoopathi, Dr. N. Gayathri, director of NSD of Bangalore C. Basavalingaiah, noted film director B. Suresh and other noted personalities and CITU leaders.

Simultaneously, around 20,000 workers participated in the nightlong Sathyagraha on 14 August in more than 112 Taluks.

The Future Programme

These programmes will be followed by district level Jathas in September first week to culminate in the state level rally 'Maha Nade' (Maha Padav) on 14 September in Bangalore.

The Demands

The programmes campaigned on the Labour Rights demands which included Rs.18,000 as minimum

wage; legislation for mandatory recognition of trade unions, permanent status to all non-regular and trainee workmen, PF for unorganised workers; labour courts in all districts; housing for unorganised workers; to bring scheme workers under minimum wages notification; social security fund for unorganised workers; tripartite Karnataka Labour Conference in line with Indian Labour Conference; expansion and strengthening of PDS; to stop strategic sale of BEML and other PSUs; and 10 point charter of demands of JCTU.

Assam

Mid Day Meal workers Raj Bhavan March



Despite being affected by rain - flood in the state, around 7,000 Mid Day Meal workers, coming from 17 districts, under CITU banner held a massive *March to Raj Bhavan* on 28 July in Guwahati demanding of the state government to increase wage by Rs.5,000 and to stop privatisation the move of the mid day meal scheme.

Maharashtra

Scheme Workers Successful Joint Rally



United under state coordination committee of CITU affiliated unions / federations of Anganwadi, ASHA, Mid Day Meal and child labour project workers in Maharashtra a scheme workers joint state rally was held in Mumbai on 3 August after weeks long intensive campaign by holding general meetings, workshops, project and PHC level meetings and district rallies in Chandrapur, Nagpur, Wardha, Amaravati, Buldana, Jalgaon, Nasik, Aurangabad, Jalna, Nanded, Beed, Pune, Solapur, Satara and in Mumbai.

On 3 August, more than 5000 strong militant scheme workers rally of mostly women was held at Azad Maidan addressed by CITU national secretary and AIFAWH president Usha Rani; state leaders of CITU and of scheme workers organisations; and AIDWA national general secretary Mariam Dhawale. As there was no communication from the concerned ministers to meet the delegation of respective organisations; the workers lost their patience and the women workers marched towards Vidhan Sabha Bhawan, broke the police barricade and blocked the main road in front of the Bombay Municipal Corporation building. Only after that respective ministers invited the respective delegations of the scheme workers organisations for discussion.

The WCD minister Pankaja Munde held discussion with Anganwadi employees delegation. On the demand for increasing 'honorarium' with service and education weightage, the minister informed that WCD ministry's proposal in this regard is already pending for cabinet's approval. On other issues like unilateral change in educational qualification criteria for promotion; handing over food supply to corporates taking away from women self-help groups; and supply of packed food instead of freshly cooked food; the minister assured to arrange a meeting of Anganwadi Action Committee with the chief minister next week.

Next was the health minister Deepak Sawant who met the delegation of ASHA workers on their demands for fixed honorarium in Kerala, Telangana and in other states pattern plus raising the work based incentives. Minister assured to consider the demand in consultation with union minister and put the proposal for next budget approval. Next was the education minister who met the delegation next day and assured to consider the demands of MDM workers especially raising their honorarium.

Meanwhile, a delegation with state president Dr D L Karad and general secretary M H Shaikh accompanied by CPI(M) MLA J P Gavit met the chief minister and submitted the memorandum on scheme workers demands. The chief minister assured to discuss the demands with the concerned ministers.

The rally was concluded by Dr Karad with appeal to strengthen the respective organisations of scheme workers under CITU and coordination committee banners.

Rajasthan

Construction Workers Struggle

Under the banner of *Rajasthan Nirman Mazdoor Union* (CITU), on 27 July, more than 1300 construction workers, coming from different parts of the state, brought out a massive rally in the state capital Jaipur, and on reaching the construction workers welfare board office, held demonstration, dharna and meeting in pursuance of 24 point demands including major demands like restoration of off-line registration and making diary within 15 days connecting it with food security; increasing marriage amounts; restoration of cycle scheme; immediate benefits on pending applications; continue MNREGA work as construction work; PF, ESI and pension; minimum wage etc. The workers meeting was addressed by CITU state leaders Ravindra Shukla, B. S. Rana, Hazarilal Sharma; union's leaders Bhanwar Singh Shekhawat, Harendra Singh, Kishore Singh and others. The joint secretary of the Board held district-wise delegations meetings on district problems and decided to hold discussion between the government and the union in convenient date during 8-11 August.



The union decided to continue agitation by staging dharna in front of labour offices in all districts in the state on 22-23 August. (Inputs; Bhanwar Singh)

West Bengal

Demanding Minimum Wage

Tea Garden Workers Massive March in Kolkata

In the midst of ongoing political agitation in Darjeeling hills; cutting across linguistic, regional, social and political identity; united under the joint forum of the tea garden workers unions of all affiliations; thousands of tea garden workers from Darjeeling, Dooars and plains travelled to Kolkata on 3 August to hold a rally and stage demonstration in front of the Vidhan Sabha demanding fixation of minimum wages, restoration of subsidised food and land pattas.

After 48 hours strike by tea garden workers on 12-13 June, 2017 and police repression (*Working Class, July, 2017*), the tea garden workers came to express their grievances against the state government before the state legislative assembly. The procession, which began from Sealdah station reached Rani Rasmoni Road and faced police barricade there where the procession converted into a rally and public meeting. The



rally was addressed by CITU state general secretary Anadi Sahu, UTUC state secretary Ashok Ghose, INTUC leader Ramen Pandey, Gorkha Janmukti Morcha's tea garden workers leaders Narayan Vishakarma, tea garden unions' leaders Gautam Ghose, Rabin Rai, Ramlal Murmu, Abhijit Majumdar and others. INTUC leader Manikumar Darnal presided.

A delegation of the joint forum of the tea garden workers unions

submitted memorandum to the legislative affairs minister Partha Chatterjee and to the Governor.

NOTICE

Meeting of CITU Unions in Automobile Manufacturing Units

- For all India coordination, a meeting of CITU unions / contacts in automobile manufacturing sector, as exists in 8 States of Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and West Bengal; will be held;
- **Schedule**
Date: 17 September, 2017
Time: 10.30 a.m.
Place: Chennai; (contact for exact venue)
- **Participants**
1-2 from each of 8 state; union leaders / contacts
- State committee to send names with details of participants soon

CITU's New Affiliations

Working Committee received applications for new affiliation from 48 unions having total 21,652 members. Applications of 37 unions were in order and the working committee approved their affiliation. Rest 11 applications of the unions, having 1297 members, were provisionally given affiliation subject to their submitting required documents within stipulated time.

The unions are:

Assam – 1;	Odisha – 3;
Andhra Pradesh – 11;	Punjab – 3;
Delhi – 1;	Rajasthan – 1;
Karnataka – 2;	Uttarakhand – 2;
Kerala – 19;	Uttar Pradesh – 1;
Maharashtra – 2;	West Bengal – 2

CITU Working Committee Meeting

Independent Campaign of CITU

August - October 2017

CITU working committee meeting in Shimla on 14-16 July decided on CITU's independent campaign and agitation pursuing 12 point joint demands of CTUOs and 10 point demands of CITU in August - October 2017 and called upon its units and affiliates to;

- Plan in detail to reach to the workers beyond its membership; and on distribution of leaflets, pamphlets, booklets on the demands during the campaign;
- Activate entire organisation up to the lowest tier of the committees of CITU / its affiliated unions / federations; and to
- Ensure that the campaign against communal and divisive forces form integral part of the independent campaign.

12 Demands of Joint Trade Union Movement

1. Urgent measures to contain price-rise through universalisation of PDS and banning speculative trade in commodity market;
2. Containing unemployment through concrete measures for employment generation;
3. Strict enforcement of all basic labour laws without any exception or exemption and stringent punitive measures for violation of labour laws;
4. Universal social security cover for all workers;
5. Minimum wages of not less than Rs 18,000 per month with provisions of indexation;
6. Assured enhanced pension not less than Rs.3,000 p.m. for the entire working population;
7. Stoppage of disinvestment in Central / State PSUs and strategic sale;
8. Stoppage of contractisation in permanent perennial work; and payment of same wage and benefits for contract workers as regular workers for same and similar work;
9. Removal of all ceilings on payment and eligibility of bonus, provident fund; increase the quantum of gratuity;
10. Compulsory registration of trade unions within 45 days from the date of submitting application; and immediate ratification of ILO Conventions C87 and C98;
11. Against Labour Law Amendments; and
12. Against FDI in Railways, Insurance and Defence

10 Demands for CITU's Independent Campaign

1. Workers' status for the Scheme Workers with minimum wages and social security rights;
2. No to Privatisation of PSUs and public utility services;
3. Remunerative price for the farmers at C2+50 as per Swaminathan Committee recommendations;
4. No forcible acquisition of land; effective implementation of the Land Acquisition Act 2013;
5. Waving farmers loans, particularly of small and marginal farmers; urgent drought relief; protection and promotion of animal husbandry chain;
6. Against removal of kerosene oil and sugar from the public distribution system;
7. Effective implementation of MGNREGA; 200 days work in a year for all card holders applying for work; payment of state minimum wage;
8. Ensure safety for women at workplace; constitute complaints committees against sexual harassment at all work places and in areas for the unorganised workers; provide separate toilets and rest rooms for working women; six months paid maternity leave for all women workers; crèches in all establishments where women are working; equal wage for women workers doing the same or similar job as men
9. Reservation in private sector;
10. Effective measures to stop caste discrimination and social oppression, atrocities against dalits and minorities

INTERNATIONAL

Cuba Solidarity Day; 26 July, 2017

Cuba Is Not Alone

In response to the call of WFTU to observe Cuba Solidarity Day, a joint delegation of its affiliates in India – CITU, AITUC, AICCTU, AIUTUC, TUCC and UTUC - went to the Cuban Embassy in New Delhi and conveyed their message of Solidarity on 26 July, 2017.

26 July is the National Rebellion Day which is the anniversary of the 1953 attack on the Moncada Barracks, heralding the revolution and March to Socialism in Cuba. This year it is more significant in the centenary year of Great October Revolution, 200th year of Karl Mark birth day and 150th year of Das Capital.

It is Solidarity and Support to Cuban Revolution condemning the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed on Cuba by United States imperialism 50 years back which has been opposed in all international forums including the United Nations; the illegitimate occupation of Guantanamo Bay by the USA since 1903 and demanded its return to Cuba. Cuba Is Not Alone!

Deputy Ambassador of Cuba Mrs. Marileydis Morales met the joint trade union delegation in the Cuban Embassy and received the joint solidarity message. Ambassador of Venezuela Augusto Montiel was also present and addressed the delegation.

The Cuba Solidarity Day was also observed by CITU in other parts of the country. In West Bengal, CITU Kolkata district committee held a hall meeting presided over by veteran trade union leader Rajdeo Goala. The main speaker was Santanu Day, a renowned journalist.

A Cuba Solidarity Day meeting of hundreds of plant level workers was held in the industrial area of Noida in Delhi-NCR.

In Punjab, processions and demonstrations were held by CITU unions in the districts of Ropar, Ludhiana, Hoshiarpur, Raikot, Dhanola, Mehal Kalan, Mansa, Bhatinda, Ghanaur, Amritsar and Chandigarh.

In Assam, a hall meeting was held in the state capital Guwahati.

Joint Trade Unions' Cuba Solidarity Day Message

Solidarity message to the people of Cuba and the Government of the Republic of Cuba from the Indian Trade Union affiliates of WFTU- through His Excellency, Ambassador of Republic of Cuba

We express our solidarity with Cuban revolutionary people in defense of their revolution and for achievements for their people

We, the representatives of WFTU affiliates in India - AITUC, CITU, AICCTU, TUCC, UTUC, AIUTUC and AIBEA, AIBOA and GIEAIA - are here with you at a critical historical juncture. Cuba has been one guiding light for all those in the world who are striving to keep the boat sailing against all odds towards the goal of socialism. But the U.S. imperialism is striving hard to put many hurdles against Cuba.

The issue of the blockade of Cuba is an age old issue since 1961 confronting the relentless fighters of Cuba. With US Ex-President Barrack Obama showing his willingness to ease the tension between the two

countries were promising. As we see, these promised have not fructified. They were bereft of any essence.

The hopes that were generated have led to a collective and worldwide dismay. The newly elected President Donald Trump has openly criticized Obama's policy towards Cuba. He had promised during his campaign in Miami to reverse the policies initiated by President Obama.

We all have seen, just a few days ago, the provocative declaration of the reactionary US government through its president Trump, cancelling overnight the previous Cuban- American Agreement. These unacceptable declarations of the US monopolies representative which were "enhanced" with anticommunism and hatred against the proud Cuban people, are being added to a series of anti- people decisions of the imperialists who, once more want to get rid of any voice that opposes and resists their new world order.

The blockade has been opposed on all international forums including United Nations by most of the countries of this planet. There is no parallel of such stubborn arrogance showed by successive governments of US in history. The blockade has brought plight, miseries and hardships to every single household of Cuba. Kids, elders, would be mother, lactating mothers, sick people are not getting medicines, healthy and young people are not getting the job opportunities which they rightfully deserve. However, the great Cuban people never surrendered to such difficulties. Freedom and sovereignty loving Cuban working class came out stronger by every such challenge and gave a befitting reply to every such mean move.

CUBA IS NEVER ALONE

We the trade unionists from all over India reiterate our international solidarity with the heroic Cuban people and demand the end of the criminal financial blockade, imposed by the US imperialists and their allies. Furthermore, in an internationalist spirit of solidarity, the class- oriented trade unionist organisations condemn the illegitimate usurpation of the Guantanamo territory by the US government since 1903, demanding its immediate return to the Cuban state and people.

Dear Comrades,

One among million things Com. Fidel has taught, not to see the nation in its narrow geopolitical boundaries but with a humanitarian world view. Today, Cubans are truly loved by people across the entire world.

We all together achieved the great victory of the past with the liberation of the 5 Cuban heroes who were imprisoned in the North American dungeons. This victory of ours was not an exception but the very start of what we are about to achieve in future. The burden of defending the Cuban people falls on the entire progressive thinking, class oriented working class of the globe. Let us all build international resistance and fight against the imperialism and capitalist exploitation.

We the representatives of central trade union affiliates to WFTU pledge once again and stand in unison with the fighting working class of Cuba.

Cuba is never alone! Down with the blockade!!

Immediate return of the Guantanamo Territory to the Cuban State!!!

**CONSUMER PRICE INDEX NUMBERS (GENERAL) FOR INDUSTRIAL WORKERS
(BASE 2001=100)**

State	Centre	May 2017	June 2017	State	Centre	May 2017	June 2017
AP	GUNTUR	272	274	MHR	MUMBAI	287	290
	VIJAYWADA	272	277		NAGPUR	308	312
	VISHAKHAPATHNAM	274	276		NASIK	291	291
ASM	DOOM DOOMA TINSUKIA	258	259		PUNE	272	274
	GUWAHATI	245	244		SHOLAPUR	290	295
	LABAC SILCHAR	257	259	ORI	ANGUL TALCHER	294	297
	MARIANI JORHAT	241	241		ROURKELA	288	292
	RANGAPARA TEZPUR	240	238	PUD	PUDUCHERRY	295	295
BIH	MUNGER JAMALPUR	293	294	PUN	AMRITSAR	275	276
CHD	CHANDIGARH	275	273		JALANDHAR	275	276
CHS	BHILAI	305	310		LUDHIANA	270	272
DLI	DELHI	252	252	RJN	AJMER	256	257
GOA	GOA	295	298		BHILWARA	271	272
GUJ	AHMEDABAD	262	267		JAIPUR	264	264
	BHAVNAGAR	261	266	TN	CHENNAI	258	263
	RAJKOT	264	270		COIMBATORE	263	267
	SURAT	253	259		COONOR	282	285
	VADODARA	257	259		MADURAI	273	279
HRY	FARIDABAD	257	258		SALEM	269	271
	YAMUNANAGAR	271	272		TIRUCHIRAPALLY	285	286
HP	HIMACHAL PRADESH	247	250	TEL	GODAVARIKHANI	292	296
J&K	SRINAGAR	260	260		HYDERABAD	242	246
JRK	BOKARO	272	276		WARRANGAL	285	286
	GIRIDIH	298	300	TRP	TRIPURA	253	251
	JAMSHEDPUR	320	325	UP	AGRA	296	303
	JHARIA	302	302		GHAZIABAD	270	270
	KODARMA	317	319		KANPUR	282	286
	RANCHI HATIA	310	312		LUCKNOW	270	278
KNT	BELGAUM	289	287		VARANASI	271	277
	BENGLURU	284	286	WB	ASANSOL	302	302
	HUBLI DHARWAR	296	297		DARJEELING	258	256
	MERCARA	294	296		DURGAPUR	301	301
	MYSORE	295	297		HALDIA	306	307
KRL	ERNAKULAM	286	291		HOWRAH	265	269
	MUNDAKKAYAM	299	302		JALPAIGURI	265	268
	QUILON	316	322		KOLKATA	264	264
MP	BHOPAL	269	271		RANIGANJ	245	245
	CHHINDWARA	278	281		SILIGURI	253	256
	INDORE	254	255				
	JABALPUR	275	277				
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Cuba Solidarity Day

26 July, 2017

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